

VT 000238

EXPOSURE

— OF —

CLERICAL SLANDER.

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*‘Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they  
y have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through  
gates into the city.*

FOR

*Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers,  
l murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and  
keth a lie.” Rev. xxii, 14, 15.*

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PREFACE.

THE object of this little Tract is to expose that Clerical slander, indulged in, especially in the West, in charging Seventh-day Adventists with Mormonism.

If but one case of the kind had come to notice, we should not have felt called upon to expose the slander. But there are many such, and it is time such mouths should be stopped.

Many, in their ignorance of the case, report the scandal with a good degree of relish. If they can be instructed, and the willful falsehood-bearer be rebuked and silenced, the object of this Tract is gained.

CLERICAL SLANDER.

THE following communication will show to what lengths ministers will sometimes go in their efforts against the truth and its adherents, and how also they often overshoot the mark.

EDITOR OF REVIEW—*Dear Sir*: I am not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church, but I am a friend to all who I think are trying to teach the way of God truly. I thought it would be well to give you an account of a meeting which occurred in this neighborhood last evening (March 6), in what is familiarly known here as Wesley Chapel. The discourse was delivered by the regular minister, Mr. Briggs, Methodist, on the subject of the Sabbath. He stated that a number of years ago, this country was considerably annoyed by the Mormons; that there was a considerable body of them at Battle Creek, Michigan; that they had all left except a small faction who split off from them, who differed somewhat from the Mormon body in their views; were somewhat purer in doctrine; that they were Materialists, something like the Sadducees of the Saviour's time, not believing in soul or spirit; that they were soul-sleepers; that they believed the soul dies with the body, &c.; that they had purchased an old printing-press from the Mormons, and for a number of years attracted no notice; but that they were now attracting some notice in certain localities

in regard to the Sabbath-day, teaching that the old Jewish Sabbath should be kept; that the observance of Sunday was a mark of the beast; that all who kept Sunday were resting under the anathemas of God and of the plagues that were to be poured out upon the beast.

The church is a large one, and it was filled, the subject having been given out previously. Addressing the assembly, mostly Methodists, he said, "We, friends, are all marked with the beast, and doomed to destruction, according to these Battle-Creek prophets." After these and many other like declarations, which would make this notice too lengthy to insert, he turned his attention to the history of the Sabbath. He stated that chronology had been but imperfectly understood during our world's history down till the present age; that some years ago a Mr. Aker, a well-known Methodist minister in Illinois, took up the subject, and by his knowledge of astronomy, the eclipses, &c., he had traced time back to its commencement to the minutiae of a second; that at the exodus from Egypt the Jews lost one day, throwing the Jewish Sabbath on the sixth instead of the seventh day; hence the Sunday or first day is the original seventh. He then went through with the eight places in the New Testament where the first day of the week is mentioned, making them all Sabbath-days, according to his version. He then stated that it was impossible for Constantine to have changed the Sabbath, from the fact that the church was divided; that one head was at Rome and the other at Constantinople; hence if one had made the attempt, the other would have detected and exposed it, which was nowhere on record.

He next went to work to illustrate by a mathemati-

cal problem the impossibility of keeping any day, by showing that while it is sunrise at one point, it is at the same moment, in other parts of the world, noon, sunset and midnight. In either case the Adventists could not possibly keep their Sabbath according to the law.

He then stated that at the poles it was six months day and six months night, hence the Adventists would have to keep six years for work-time, and one year for Sabbath. He then showed the many failures which had taken place in battle, where the attacks were made on Sunday; also that many who had gone on pleasure excursions on Sunday had been drowned and otherwise destroyed; that of the vessels which went to sea on the Sunday, two to one were destroyed more than those going on other days. He then became eloquent in an exhortation to stand by the Christian Sabbath, and that any departure from it led to infidelity; that children would have their minds confused, and conclude there was no Sabbath. Of course the crowd swallowed all he said, and, from appearance, considered it a mighty triumph. I have no doubt but in the opinion of most that were present, Adventism is among the things that has served its day, and is now laid in the narrow charnel-house, without the hope of a resurrection.

J. HARE.

Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

REPLY.

We have been unable to account for the origin or circulation of such reports as are above referred to, only on the ground that men love to have something to say against any cause to which they are opposed; and this love, the natural offspring of the carnal heart, will lead them to start rumors upon mere conjecture, if not wholly from the imagination, receive them upon the bare testimony of interested parties, and circulate them without examination and without proof.

But those who give currency to such reports as are mentioned above, betray a recklessness in regard to their veracity which is utterly reprehensible; for "this thing is not done in a corner," and the truth or falsity of such statements can be easily ascertained. Now if a person has any regard for the reputation of his word, he should ascertain, as can be easily done, the truthfulness of his information before he gives it circulation; but if in his eagerness to spread the scandal, he neglects to do this, he should remember that others may be sufficiently interested in the matter to look it up, and he stands liable to be proved, as in the present instance, either himself a willful misrepresenter, or the dupe of one who has thus misrepresented. Neither of these positions furnishes a very enviable light in which to appear, though the latter is, if possible, the more contemptible of the two. But being a dupe, will not shield a man from condemnation; for the Bible represents that he who *loves a lie* is equally guilty with him who *makes it*. Rev. xxii, 15.

To address ourselves more particularly to Mr. B.'s

misstatements, we will say that this part of the country never has been annoyed by the Mormons. By a faithful inquiry from the oldest citizens, we have ascertained that no Mormon lecture was ever delivered in Battle Creek, nor has any Mormon ever taken up his residence in this city. Consequently all the talk about the main body moving away, and leaving a small faction who had split off, applies somewhere else.

Touching our doctrines, we venture the assertion that those who so strenuously accuse us of being Mormons, endeavoring thereby to bring down upon us the just odium of the community, hold two points to our one in common with that body of impostors; hence if doctrines are to be the test of identity, they will find themselves Mormons long before they can prove us to be such.

The attention of Adventists was first called to the Sabbath question in 1845, by T. M. Preble, formerly a minister of the F. W. Baptist denomination. Elder Joseph Bates immediately commenced to keep and teach it. Previous to his embracing the Advent doctrine, he was a member of the Christian denomination. About this time Elder James White, the founder and conductor of the publishing interests of this people, commenced keeping the Sabbath. He also was from the Christian denomination. His wife, Ellen G. White, was a Methodist, as were her father and all his family. Elder Andrews was from the Methodists. Elder Waggoner from the Baptists. And thus we might go on, and mention other preachers, some from the ranks of former Adventists, more from the various churches of the land, and more still, from those who had previously professed no religion of any kind, but not one from any class of Mormons whatever.

The first volume of the paper, the Review and Herald, was published at Paris, Me., commencing Nov. 1, 1850. Volume ii, was published at Saratoga Springs, N. Y. Vols. iii, to No. 10, Vol. vii, in Rochester, N. Y., at which place the work was done on a hand press, purchased through the agency of Richard Oliphant, of Oswego, N. Y. From Rochester, the press was removed to its present location, Battle Creek, Mich., in the fall of 1855. In 1857 the power press was purchased of Isaac Adams, Boston, Mass., and shortly after a steam engine to drive it, from Hoard and Son, Watertown, N. Y. The Publishing Association, by whom the business is now carried on, was incorporated according to the law of this State, May 3, 1861. From these leading facts in our history, it will be seen that we have had no more connection with the Mormons, than we have with the Hindoos of India.

Concerning his theology we need not speak at length, considering the publications we have abroad on this subject. Had he acquainted himself with our positions, he could not, at least honestly, have charged us with believing that all who keep Sunday are marked with the mark of the beast, and doomed to destruction. That would be a rare piece of consistency, would it not, to hold such a view, and yet go forth to try to convert men to a knowledge of the truth?

Like many others, he appears to be in trouble on the Sabbath question. First it is Aker's chronology, that the first day of the week is the true seventh, then no day can be kept because the world is round, then there is no Sabbath, and finally it is infidelity to disregard the first day of the week.

As to Aker's chronology, it is entirely outside the Bible. The Scriptures are uniformly and throughout

against it. And the circumstances of the giving of the law on Sinai, God's pointing out the day by the miracle of the manna, and by the fourth commandment connecting that day with the seventh day of creation week, shows Dr. A.'s claim of a change of day at the Exode, to be foolishly false.

But Adventists cannot keep the Sabbath according to the law, because time differs east and west. Indeed! Has not God given a law binding upon men the world over? and in that law included a Sabbath, to say nothing now of the particular day? If you say he has not, the apostle Paul convicts you of error; for he says that there is such a law binding on all the world; and if you say he has, and yet that we, from the nature of the case, cannot keep it, you charge God foolishly. But how is it with the first day? Oh, that can undoubtedly be kept, east, west, north, and south, without any trouble. There is no difficulty with any day but the seventh, and there would be no difficulty with that, had not God commanded its observance. If the first day is the true seventh, as Dr. Aker claims, all who believe this, observe it doubtless in obedience to the fourth commandment. The missionaries on the other side of the globe do the same thing. How do they do it? It is midnight there when it is noon here. Why cannot we do the same with the seventh day? The truth is, all these things are mere idle quibbles. The observance of the same absolute time is nowhere required. The sun is given to rule the day. It marks off the days to all the inhabitants of the earth; and it brings to each in his turn the seventh day; and when that day comes, the commandment enjoins upon us its observance. Nor is there any difficulty at the poles; for there, both in summer and in winter, in the light

and the dark parts of the year, each revolution of the earth, which of course measures off a day, is as distinctly marked, as could for any possible occasion be required; so that the succession of days and weeks can be as accurately kept there as here. See Travels of Bayard Taylor, Kane, and others.

In regard to Constantine's changing the Sabbath, it is not claimed that he did. He made a law for the observance of Sunday. He did it as emperor of the Roman empire. The empire was then undivided, and all the churches east or west had to do was to obey. But this edict for Sunday was made by Constantine before his professed conversion to Christianity, and was in behalf of that day as a heathen festival. When the empire became nominally Christian, this statute was left unrepealed, and Sylvester, then bishop of Rome, with a shrewdness well becoming the prospective "man of sin," gave to Sunday the imposing title of "Lord's day," and availed himself of this law of Constantine's to enforce its observance. See History of the Sabbath, and the authorities there cited. pp. 252-264.

Concerning the loss of battles, and accidents on Sundays above other days, that is merely a relic of superstition. History will not bear out the claim. We deny the statement, and are prepared to bring proof when it is required.

In conclusion, we would say to our brethren everywhere, let ministers or other persons of influence, who are found engaged in circulating false statements like the foregoing, be reported and followed up with the facts.

TESTIMONIAL.

As far as the above reply relates to Mormonism, we the undersigned, citizens of Battle Creek, Michigan, can bear testimony to its truthfulness.

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| E. W. PENDILL, | <i>Mayor,</i> |
| J. S. UPTON, | <i>Alderman,</i> |
| C. FORD, | " |
| G. F. SMITH, | " |
| H. A. STONE, | " |
| T. WAKELEE, | " |
| A. C. HAMBELIN, | " |
| T. W. HALL, | " <i>& Post Master,</i> |
| B. F. GRAVES, | <i>Circuit Judge,</i> |
| A. NOBLE, | <i>Ex-Mayor,</i> |
| C. P. BUCKLEY, | " |
| NICHOLS & SHEPARD, | <i>Machinists,</i> |
| F. W. BROOKS, | <i>Hardware Merchant,</i> |
| COL. J. W. STUART, | " " <i>& Express Agt.</i> |
| C. S. GRAY, | <i>Boot and Shoe Merchant,</i> |
| A. WHITCOMB, | <i>Freight Agent,</i> |
| T. B. SKINNER, | <i>Dry Goods Merchant,</i> |
| A. SCHODER, | <i>Dept. Revenue Collector,</i> |
| W. W. WOOLNOUGH, | <i>15 years Editor B. C. Journal,</i> |
| A. ROWLEY, | " |
| H. J. CHAMPION, | <i>Insurance Agent,</i> |
| JOSEPH YOUNG, | <i>Deacon Presbyterian Church,</i> |
| EVAN L. DAVIES, | <i>Pastor " "</i> |
| SAMUEL J. ROGERS, | <i>" Reformed Dutch Church,</i> |
| D. HARRINGTON, | <i>Former Pastor Baptist Church.</i> |

None of the gentlemen who have given their names above are Seventh-day Adventists. Messrs Noble, Hall, Gray, Whitcomb, Champion, and Young were among the very first settlers.

[The following article, from Eld. M. E. Cornell, is copied from the Review and Herald, Vol. xxi, No. 19.]

Who are Mormons?

Sometimes our opponents, failing in argument, for effect, raise the cry of "Mormonism." They cannot show that our views of spiritual gifts are unscriptural, or unreasonable, but because the Mormons professed to have those gifts, they think it a happy hit to excite prejudice against us, by calling us Mormons. But this charge loses all its force when we consider that faith in spiritual gifts is not peculiar to the Mormons. The most devoted and learned men of the Protestant sects have claimed the same thing both in theory and practice. See work entitled, "Miraculous Powers," published at Review Office. The truth is, we do not believe with the Mormons on a single point that is peculiar to them. But if to agree with the Mormons on leading points of doctrine, makes a man worthy of their name, then verily the orthodox churches of the day are full of Mormons.

1. The Mormon Creed teaches the doctrine of the Trinity. "That Christ was the God, the Father of all things." Mormon Bible, Book of Mosiah, par. 5.

"Behold! I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son." Book of Esther, ch. i, par. 3.

"Is the Son of God the very eternal Father? Yea, he is the *very Eternal Father*." Book of Alma, ch. viii, par 7.

2. They believe in an *immaterial* God. "It is truth, light, and love, that we worship and adore; these are the same in all worlds; and as these constitute God, *he* is the same in all worlds; wherever you find a fullness of wisdom, knowledge, truth, goodness, love, and such like qualities, there you find God in all his

glory, power, and majesty—therefore if you worship these adorable *qualities* you worship God." Mormon Seer, pp. 24, 25.

Compare the above with Mr. H. W. Beecher in the Independent, A. D. 1859. "A *dim* and shadowy effulgence arises from Christ, and that I am taught to call the Father. A yet more tenuous and invisible film of thought arises, and that is the Holy Spirit. But neither are to me aught tangible, restful, accessible."

That Christ is the very and eternal God, and that God is immaterial, without body, parts or passions, is the teaching of most of the church creeds.

3. They believe in rewards and punishments at death.

"Immortal spirit joined with the choir above at Benjamin's death." Book of Mosiah, ch. i, par. 8.

4. They believe the second death is endless torment. "Then cometh a death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death. . . . They *cannot die* seeing there is no more corruption." Alma, ch. ix, par. 2, 3.

"Lake of fire is endless torment." Book of Jacob ch. iv, p. 140.

5. The Mormons keep the Pagan Sunday, so do Protestants in general. But why go farther? There is not a class of religious people in the world that differ with the Mormons in both theory and practice more widely than the Seventh-day Adventists. Those very men who charge us with "Mormonism," agree with the Mormons in ten points to our one. We conclude therefore that such persons have simply mistaken the parties, and raise a charge more applicable to themselves, to create prejudice against another class to whom it does not apply.

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