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Internal Evidences—The Evidence of Prophecy (Continued)

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CHAPTER XLII.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES—THE EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY. (Continued.)

The first Nephi, speaking of his people in the fifth century B. C., makes a number of prophecies respecting things that shall take place in the last days, following the coming forth of the scriptures of his people [i. e. the Book of Mormon] to the Gentiles. These predictions are found on one page of the Book of Mormon; and are at once so numerous and of such high import as to make that page unique in prophetic literature. With one exception, viz., the vision of Daniel, recorded in the second chapter of his prophecies, which deals with the succession of the several great earth-empires, I do not believe an equal number of prophecies of such high importance can be found within the whole range of prophetic literature in the same amount of space, and I here reproduce that page as it stands in the current editions of the Book of Mormon:

3. And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed.

4. And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews.

5. And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

6. And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and not many generations shall pass away among them, save they shall be a white and a delightsome people.

7. And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered, also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.

8. And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.

9. And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked;

10. For the time speedily cometh, that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people; and the wicked will he destroy: and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.

11. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.^a

^aII. Nephi xxx: 3-11.

A few lines extending on the next page completes the picture of peace and happiness that shall ultimately be diffused over the earth in that day:

12. And then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, together; and a little child shall lead them.

13. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

14. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

15. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.^b

Let us now consider this prophetic page item by item.

I.

Many Shall Believe the Words of the Book.

For after the book of which I have spoken [i. e. the Book of Mormon] shall come forth and be written unto the Gentiles and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written.

Whether this declaration be accredited to the first Nephi, five hundred years B. C., or allowed no other authorship than Joseph Smith, and no greater antiquity than 1830, when the Book of Mormon was published, it is equally prophetic in character. And if it be insisted upon that it had no earlier origin than Joseph Smith's utterance of it, then it becomes all the more remarkable as a prophecy; for by the time it was put forth by him, he had very good reason—human reason—to doubt if the Book of Mormon would be extensively believed, or believed in at all; for by this time such opposition had appeared against it, and such ridicule and derision heaped upon himself and associates; and every-

^bII. Nephi xxx: 12-15.

where there had been such a manifestation of opposition to the forth-coming book, that naturally one would wonder if it would be overwhelmed by a universal ignoring of it. Still there stands the prediction:

There shall be many which shall believe the words which are written.

The only question is, Has it been fulfilled? In answer we have only to point to the present membership of the Church in all the world, say three hundred thousand people. But to the number of those who now believe it, and hold it to be a volume of sacred scripture, there must be added all those who have died in the faith; and again those who once accepted it in their faith and afterwards, by transgression, lost the spirit of the work and departed from the Church; but who, singularly enough, in the majority of cases, still continued to assert their faith in the truth of the Book of Mormon. And then to all those numbers there must be added that still greater number of people who have been brought to a belief in the Book of Mormon, but who have not had sufficient moral courage to forfeit their good standing among their fellows, and make other sacrifices involved in a public profession of their faith.

Let the numbers of these several classes be added together and beyond question the prophecy has been fulfilled. Many have believed in the Nephite scriptures.

As a further instance of the wide acceptance of the Book of Mormon, it should be mentioned that it has passed through many editions in the English language, both in America and England; and has also been translated into and published in the following languages: French, German, Danish, Italian, Dutch, Welch, Swedish, Spanish, Hawaiian, Maori, Greek and Japanese.

II.

*The Book of Mormon to be Taken to the American Indians—
“and They Shall Rejoice.”*

Following the declaration that “many shall believe the words which are written” is the statement, “and they shall carry them forth [the words of the ancient Nephites] unto the remnant of our seed.” That is to the remnant of the seed of Lehi, the American Indians. And then follows this:

And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews.^c

And the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be declared among them, wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people.

Here we stand in the midst of prophecies. By which I mean that some of the predictions have been fulfilled, and others are yet to be fulfilled in the future, and involve the

^c“Descendants of the Jews.” This expression, I believe, is used in this instance as equivalent to “Descendants of the house of Israel.” That is, the American Indians will know they are Israelites. This sense of the phrase “the Jews” is used in other parts of the Book of Mormon: for instance, “That the father may bring about * * * his great and eternal purposes, in restoring the Jews, or all the House of Israel, to the land of their inheritance.” We have already pointed out in previous foot notes that according to the Book of Mormon the American Indians are a mixture of the tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim and Judah (see pp. 95, 325-6); and therefore we think the phrase “descendants of the Jews,” does not mean to confine native American race descent to the Jews alone, but merely to say that they are descendants of the House of Israel, for which “Jews” here stands as equivalent.

coming to pass of very remarkable events. Before calling attention to the parts that have been fulfilled I cite the prophecies under this subdivision as evidence against the claim that is sometimes made against the Book of Mormon, that all its prophetic parts end about the time the Book of Mormon came forth, viz., in 1830. The prophecies that many shall believe the book; that they shall carry its messages to the American Indians; that the Indians shall rejoice in the things the book makes known to them; that not many generations from that time the Indians shall become "a white and delightsome people"—as also indeed the prophecies relating to the Jews—all concern events that are to take place subsequent to the year 1830.

But now to take up the several prophecies being treated together under this sub-title II.

The "many" who believe the Book of Mormon, according to the prophecy, are to carry it forth unto the remnant of Lehi's people, the American Indians. It is notorious that they have done so. The Church had been organized but six months when in fulfillment of a divine appointment^d a mission was sent to the Lamanites consisting of Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jun., Parley P. Pratt, and Ziba Peterson. On returning from that mission Elder Pratt, after recounting their travels through the western states of the American Union, gives the following summary of what was done: "Thus ended our first mission in which we had preached the Gospel in its fulness and distributed the records of their forefathers among three tribes, viz., the Catteraugus Indians, near Buffalo, N. Y.; the Wyandots, of Ohio; and the Delawares, west of the Missouri."^e

^dSee Doc. & Cov. Section xxix and Section xxxii.

^eHistory of the Church, Vol. I, p. 185, note. Aut. P. P. Pratt, pp. 56-61.

Since that time numerous missions have been undertaken among the Indians which have met with more or less success. Since the Church has been located in the Rocky Mountains various tribes have been visited by the Apostles and other Elders, and some success has been attained in colonizing Indians and teaching them the ways and arts of civilization. Some success has also attended the preaching of the Gospel among the natives in Mexico; and similar efforts, though as yet unfruitful, have been made in some of the states of Central America. It is more than likely that the Sandwich Islanders are descendants of Nephite colonists who went from America to the Hawaiian Islands, about the time of Hagoth's migrations in ships from the shores of the land Bountiful—near where the isthmus of Panama joins the South American continent. Their traditions and racial peculiarities all favor this view; and if our supposition be true, then the success of preaching the gospel to the descendants of the Nephites has been considerably augmented, for a number of thousands of these islanders have embraced the gospel, some of whom have gathered to the stakes of Zion, and others have been established in a prosperous colony in their own land.

While success in bringing the native American race to a knowledge of their forefathers and an acceptance of the written work of God revealed to their forefathers has been limited, yet it has been sufficiently extensive to fulfill the terms of the Book of Mormon prophecies, and certainly sufficient to create the most sanguine belief in a further fulfillment of it.

“Then shall they rejoice.” This declaration, of course, indicates that the native American races would believe the message of the Book of Mormon; and so indeed they have, as

s witnessed by the fact of many of them joining the Church of the Latter-day Saints.

In his account of the first mission to the Indians, Elder Parley P. Pratt gives the substance of an address of Oliver Cowdery's to the chief of the Delaware tribe of Indians, and the leading men of the tribe, who had assembled to hear the message which the missionaries had to deliver; Elder Pratt also gives the substance of the chief's reply, in which the latter especially expresses his gladness^f at the message delivered to them. Elder Pratt represents the Chief as saying:

We feel truly thankful to our white friends who have come so far and been at such pains to tell us good news, and especially this new news concerning the Book of our forefathers; it makes us glad in here"—placing his hand on his heart. "It is now winter; we are new settlers in this place; the snow is deep; our cattle and horses are dying; our wigwams are poor; we have much to do in the spring—to build houses and fence and make farms; but we will build a council house and meet together, and you shall read to us and teach us more concerning the Book of our fathers, and the will of the Great Spirit.^g

During the sojourn of the Church at Nauvoo representatives of several tribes of Indians called upon the Prophet Joseph from time to time. One notable instance was the visit of a number of Pottawatamie chiefs in the summer of 1843, of which visit the Prophet in his journal gives the following brief account:

^fIt may be suspected that Elder Pratt colored his account of this speech to fit the prophecy of the Book of Mormon, but if that were so some reference to its fulfillment of the prediction—"then shall they rejoice"—would naturally be looked for; but it is a singular thing that nowhere in the early literature of the Church is reference made to this prophetic page. The full account of this first Indian mission will be found in the "History of the Church," Vol. I, pp. 111-120, and pages 182-185.

^g"History of the Church," Vol. I, pp. 184-5.

I had an interview with several Pottawatamie chiefs, who came to see me during my absence.^h

Elder Woodruff's journal gives the following more elaborate account of this event:

The Indian chiefs remained at Nauvoo until the Prophet returned and had his trial. During their stay they had a talk with Hyrum Smith, in the basement of the Nauvoo House. Wilford Woodruff and some others were present. They were not free to talk, and did not wish to communicate their feelings until they could see the great Prophet.

At length, on the 2nd day of July, 1843, President Joseph Smith and several of the Twelve met those chiefs in the courtroom with about thirty of the Elders. The following is a synopsis of the conversation which took place as given by the interpreter:

The Indian orator arose and asked the Prophet if the men who were present were all his friends. Answer, "Yes."

He then said: "As a people we have long been distressed and oppressed. We have been driven from our lands many times. We have been wasted away by wars, until there are but few of us left. The white man has hated us and shed our blood, until it has appeared as though there would soon be no Indians left. We have talked with the Great Spirit, and the Great Spirit has talked with us. We have asked the Great Spirit to save us and let us live, and the Great Spirit has told us that he had raised up a great Prophet, chief, and friend, who would do us great good and tell us what to do; and the Great Spirit has told us that you are the man (pointing to the Prophet Joseph). We have now come a great way to see you, and hear your words, and to have you tell us what to do. Our horses have become poor traveling, and we are hungry. We will now wait and hear your words."

The Spirit of God rested upon the Lamanites, especially

^h"History of the Church," Vol. V., Chapters xxiv and xxv. The prophet had been visiting relatives in Dixon, and while there fell into the hands of his enemies, who sought to take him to Missouri. He escaped them, however, by a writ of habeas corpus, on which he was tried and acquitted at Nauvoo.

[upon] the orator. Joseph was much affected and shed tears. He arose and said unto them: "I have heard your words. They are true. The Great Spirit has told you the truth. I am your friend and brother, and I wish to do you good. Your fathers were once a great people. They worshiped the Great Spirit. The Great Spirit did them good. He was their friend; but they left the Great Spirit, and would not hear his words or keep them. The Great Spirit left them, and they began to kill one another, and they have been poor and afflicted until now.

"The Great Spirit has given me a book, and told me that you will soon be blessed again. The Great Spirit will soon begin to talk with you and your children. This is the book which your fathers made. I wrote upon it (showing them the Book of Mormon). This tells me what you will have to do. I now want you to begin to pray to the Great Spirit. I want you to make peace with one another, and do not kill any more Indians; it is not good. Do not kill white men; it is not good; but ask the Great Spirit for what you want, and it will not be long before the Great Spirit will bless you, and you will cultivate the earth and build good houses, like white men. We will give you something to eat and [something] to take home with you."

When the Prophet's words were interpreted to the chiefs, they all said it was good. The chief asked, "How many moons it would be before the Great Spirit would bless them?" He [the Prophet] told them, "Not a great many."

At the close of the interview, Joseph had an ox killed for them, and they were furnished with some more horses, and they went home satisfied and contented.⁴

One other thing in these several prophecies should be observed, the very emphatic implication that the native American race will persist. The prevailing idea, however, is quite to the contrary. I may say it is the universal opinion that the native American race is doomed to extinction; and, in fact, that it is now on the high way to that finality. Against such general opinion, however, the Book of Mormon

⁴"Millennial Star," Vol: XXI, pp. 634-5.

utters the surprising declaration not only that the American race shall not become extinct, but that fallen as its fortunes are, and degraded as it is, yet shall it become, and that before many generations pass away, "a white and delightful people!" Than this declaration I can think of nothing more boldly prophetic, nor of any inspired utterance which so squarely sets itself against all that is accepted as the probabilities in the case. But with complete confidence we await the time of the fulfillment of God's decree; of its signal triumph over the opinions of men.

III.

The Jews Shall Begin to Believe in Christ, and to Gather.

And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.

There was nothing in the affairs of the Jews in the early decades of the 19th century that would lead any one to suppose that there was to be any marked change in the sentiments of that people towards Jesus of Nazareth; or that the time had come when there would be any disposition on their part to assemble upon the land of their forefathers—which is evidently meant by part of the prophecy just quoted. Yet the prophecy immediately before us makes both these astounding predictions; and, what is more to the point, both are now in progress of fulfillment. First let us consider the change which the Jewish mind is undergoing respecting Jesus of Nazareth.

To show the sentiment quite prevalent among the Jews during the life time of the Prophet Joseph, and to show that

he was quite aware of its existence, I quote an entry from his journal under date of May, 1839.

“Tuesday, May 21, 1839.—To show the feeling of that long scattered branch of the House of Israel, the Jews, I here quote a letter written by one of their number, on hearing that his son had embraced Christianity:

RABBI LANDAU'S LETTERS TO HIS SON.

Breslau, May 21st, 1839.

My Dear Son—I received the letter of the Berlin Rabbi, and when I read it there ran tears out of my eyes in torrents; my inward parts shook, my heart became as a stone! Now do you not know that the Lord sent me already many hard tribulations? That many sorrows do vex me? But this new harm which you are about to inflict makes me forget all the former, does horribly surpass them; as well respecting its sharpness as its stings! I write you lying on my bed, because my body is afflicted not less than my soul, at the report that you were about to do something which I had not expected from you. I fainted; my nerves and feelings sank, and only by the help of a physician, for whom I sent immediately, am I able to write these lines to you with a trembling hand.

Alas! you, my son, whom I have bred, nourished and fostered; whom I have strengthened spiritually as well as bodily, you will commit a crime on me! Do not shed the innocent blood of your parents, for no harm have we inflicted upon you; we are not conscious of any guilt against you, but at all times we thought it our duty to show to you, our first born, all love and goodness. I thought I should have some cheering account of you, but, alas! how terribly I have been disappointed!

But to be short; your outward circumstances are such that you may finish your study or [suffer] pain. Do you think that the Christians, to whom you will go over by changing your religion, will support you and fill up the place of our fellow believers? Do not imagine that your outward reasons, therefore, if you have any, are nothing. But out of true persuasion, you will, as I think, not change our true and holy doctrine, for that deceitful, untrue and perverse doctrine of Christianity.

What! will you give us a pearl for that which is nothing, which is of no value in itself? But you are light-minded; think of the last judgment; of that day when the books will be opened and hidden things will be made manifest; of that day when death will approach you in a narrow pass; when you cannot go out of the way! Think of your death bed, from which you will not rise any more, but from which you will be called before the judgment seat of the Lord!

Do you not know, have you not heard, that there is over you an all-hearing ear and an all-seeing eye? That all your deeds will be written in a book and judged hereafter? Who shall then assist you when the Lord will ask you with a thundering voice, Why hast thou forsaken that holy law which shall have an eternal value; which was given by my servant Moses, and no man shall change it? Why hast thou forsaken that law, and accepted instead of it lying and vanity?

Come, therefore, again to yourself, my son! remove your bad and wicked counselors; follow my advice, and the Lord will be with you! Your tender father must conclude because of weeping.

A. L. LANDAU,

Rabbi.

That the sentiments of this letter respecting Jesus and Christianity are not peculiar to Rabbi Landau, but are representative of the sentiments of the Hebrew race at that time, I may quote the words of Dr. Isadore Singer, editor of the "Jewish Encyclopædia," written in a letter to George Croly, author of "Tarry Thou Till I Come"—a version really of the legend of the "Wandering Jew" published in 1901. The letter here quoted was received from Dr. Singer in reply to one from the author of "Tarry Thou," asking the question, "What is the Jewish thought today of Jesus of Nazareth?"

Dr. Singer, answered:

I regard Jesus of Nazareth as a Jew of the Jews, one whom all Jewish people are learning to love. His teaching has been an

immense service to the world in bringing Israel's God to the knowledge of hundreds of millions of mankind. The great change in Jewish thought concerning Jesus of Nazareth, I cannot better illustrate than by this fact:

When I was a boy, had my father, who was a very pious man, heard the name of Jesus uttered from the pulpit of our synagogue, he and every other man in the congregation would have left the building, and the rabbi would have been dismissed at once.

Now, it is not strange, in many synagogues, to hear sermons preached eulogistic of this Jesus, and nobody thinks of protesting—in fact, we are all glad to claim Jesus as one of our people.

ISADORE SINGER.

New York, March 25, 1901.

The question submitted by Mr. Croly to Jewish theologians, historians and orientalists resulted in quite a large collection of Jewish opinions of Christ, all of which are published in the appendix of "Tarry Thou;" and of which the following communications are thoroughly characteristic:

The Jew of today beholds in Jesus an inspiring ideal of matchless beauty. While he lacks the element of stern justice expressed so forcibly in the law and in the Old Testament characters, the firmness of self-assertion so necessary to the full development of manhood, all those social qualities which build up the home and society, industry and worldly progress, he is the unique exponent of the principle of redeeming love. His name as helper of the poor, as sympathizing friend of the fallen, as brother of every fellow sufferer, as lover of man and redeemer of woman, has become the inspiration, the symbol and the watchword for the world's greatest achievements in the field of benevolence. While continuing the work of the synagogue, the Christian church with the larger means at her disposal created those institutions of charity and redeeming love that accomplished wondrous things. The very sign of the cross has lent a new meaning, a holier pathos to suffering, sickness and sin,

so as to offer new practical solutions for the great problems of evil which fill the human heart with new joys of self-sacrificing love.

KAUFMAN KOHLER, Ph. D.,

Rabbi of Temple Beth-El.

If the Jews up to the present time have not publicly rendered homage to the sublime beauty of the figure of Jesus, it is because their tormentors have always persecuted, tortured, assassinated them in his name. The Jews have drawn their conclusions from the disciples as to the Master, which was wrong, a wrong pardonable in the eternal victims of the implacable, cruel hatred of those who called themselves Christians. Every time that a Jew mounted to the sources and contemplated Christ alone, without his pretended faithful, he cried with tenderness and admiration: "Putting aside the Messianic mission, this man is ours. He honors our race and we claim him as we claim the gospels—flowers of Jewish literature and only Jewish."

MAX NORDAU, M. D.,

Paris, France.

Critic and Philosopher.

The Jews of every shade of religious belief do not regard Jesus in the light of Paul's theology. But the gospel of Jesus, the Jesus who teaches so superbly the principles of Jewish ethics, is revered by all the expounders of Judaism. His words are studied; the New Testament forms a part of Jewish literature. Among the great preceptors that have worded the truths of which Judaism is the historical guardian, none, in our estimation and esteem, takes precedence of the rabbi of Nazareth. To impute to us suspicious sentiments concerning him does us gross injustice. We know him to be among our greatest and purest.

EMIL G. HIRSCH, Ph. D., LL. D., L. H. D.

Rabbi of Sinai Congregation, Professor of Rabbinical Literature
in Chicago University, Chicago, Ill., January 26, 1901.

Later, viz. 1905, Dr. Isadore Singer, himself made such a collection of Jewish opinions on Jesus, which were published by the "New York Sun," and of which the following are typical:

It is commonly said that the Jews reject Jesus. They did so in the sense in which they rejected the teachings of their earlier prophets, but the question may be pertinently asked, Has Christianity accepted Jesus? The long hoped-for reconciliation between Judaism and Christianity will come when once the teachings of Jesus shall have become the axioms of human conduct.

DR. MORRIS JASTROW,

Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Pennsylvania.

I look upon him as a great teacher and reformer, one who aimed at the uplifting of suffering humanity, whose every motive was kindness, mercy, charity, and justice, and if his wise teaching and example have not always been followed the blame should not be his, but rather those who have claimed to be his followers.

SIMON WOLF,

President of the Independent Order B'nia B'rith.

If he had added to their [the Jewish prophets'] spiritual bequests new jewels of religious truth, and spoken words which are words of life because they touch the deepest springs of the human heart, why should we Jews not glory in him? The crown of thorns on his head makes him only the more our brother, for to this day it is borne by his people. Were he alive today who, think you, would be nearer his heart—the persecuted or the persecutors?

DR. GUSTAV GOTTHEIL.

The foregoing sentiments do not indicate the acceptance of Jesus by the Jews at his full value as the Messiah, or as the express revelation of God to man, or as God manifested in the flesh; but they do give evidence of a very marked change of sentiment among the Jews toward Jesus of Nazareth—and surely mark a “beginning” of belief in Christ, which has but to enlarge to become an acceptance of him as Messiah, so long expected by their race; and surely they indicate in quite a remarkable manner the *beginning* of the fulfillment of the part of the prophecy here being considered,

that declares that "the Jews which are scattered shall also *begin* to believe in Christ."

Moreover some few families of Jews have believed the gospel as presented by the elders of the Church in this dispensation, and are identified with the Latter-day Saints; among them Alexander Neibaur, who joined the Church in England in 1840. He afterwards emigrated to Nauvoo, and the family came with the saints to Utah. Several of his sons and grand-sons have filled honorable missions for the Church in preaching the gospel. He is the author of the following well known hymn, published in the "Times and Seasons," in May, 1841:

Come, thou glorious day of promise,
Come and spread thy cheerful ray;
When the scattered sheep of Israel
Shall no longer go astray;
When Hosannas
With united voice they cry.

Lord, how long wilt thou be angry?
Shall thy wrath for ever burn?
Rise, redeem thine ancient people,
Their transgressions from them turn.
King of Israel,
Come and set thy people free.

O that soon thou would'st to Jacob
Thine enliv'ning spirit send;
Of their unbelief and misery
Make, O Lord, a speedy end.
Lord, Messiah,
Prince of Peace, o'er Israel reign.

Glory, honour, praise and power,
Be unto the Lamb for ever;
Jesus Christ is our Redeemer,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise ye the Lord!
Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

Again:

And the Jews which are scattered * * * shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land.

Of course the idea that the Jews will sometime be gathered to the lands possessed by their forefathers is no new thought. It is not presented here as such. The Old Testament scriptures are full of predictions concerning the return of the Jews to Palestine of which the following are samples:

And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them.^j

The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.^k

For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.^l

The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.^m

For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land.ⁿ

Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: * * * and David, my servant, shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. * * * Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant

^jAmos ix: 14.

^kObadiah i: 17.

^lDeut. vii: 6.

^mZechariah ii: 12.

ⁿIsaiah xiv: 1.

with them: and I will place them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.^o

The fulfillment of these predictions has been the hope of scattered Israel, and from time to time societies have been formed to keep alive such hope as the promises inspired. It may be thought that said Jewish societies have accomplished but little. But really that little was much. They nourished in secret and through ages of darkness that spark of hope, the fire of which, when touched by the breath of God shall burst forth into a flame that not all the world shall be able to stay. These efforts in the past have made possible a larger movement which is now attracting the attention of the world, known as the "Zionite Movement." In reality this is but the federation of all Jewish societies that have had for their purpose the realization of the hopes of scattered Israel.

The Zionite movement proper, however, may be said to have arisen within very recent years, since it was in 1896 that it held its first general conference. This at Basel, Switzerland, in August 1896. Since then its conferences have been held annually and have steadily increased both in interest and the number of delegates representing various Jewish societies until now (1905) it takes on the appearance of one of the world's great movements. It is not so much a religious movement as a racial one; for prominent Jews of all shades of both political and religious opinions have participated in it. After saying through so many centuries at the feast of the Pass Over, "May we celebrate the next Pass Over in Jerusalem," the thought seemed to have occurred to some Jewish minds that if that hope was ever

^oEzekiel, xxxvii: 21-27.

to be realized some practical steps must be taken looking to the actual achievement of the possibility—hence the “Zionite Movement.”

The keynotes of that movement are heard in the following utterances of some of the Jewish leaders in explanation of it:

We want to resume the broken thread of our national existence; we want to show to the world the moral strength, the intellectual power of the Jewish people. We want a place where the race can be centralized.

LEON ZOLTOKOFF.

It tries to restore the old solidarity, the old unity, of Israel; not with a view to any mere monetary aggrandizement, but for the purpose of securing the right and the opportunity for the Jews to live and to develop. It believes that this is possible only if there is some spot on earth which the Jews can call their own, and which can be a place of refuge, legally secured by international obligations, to which the oppressed of Israel may flee whenever necessity arises.

RICHARD J. H. GOTTHEIL.

It is for these Jews (of Russia, Roumania and Galicia) that the name of their country (Palestine) spells “Hope.” I should not be a man if I did not realize that for these persecuted Jews, Jerusalem spells reason, justice, manhood and liberty.

RABBI EMIL G. HIRSCH.

Jewish nationalism on a modern basis in Palestine, the old home of the people.

MAX NORDAU.

Palestine needs a people; Israel needs a country. Give the country without a people to the people without a country.

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

To find for the Jews a legally established home in Palestine.

BASEL PLATFORM.

In a word, it is the purpose of "Zionism" to redeem Palestine, and give it back to Jewish control, create, in fact, a Jewish state in the land promised to their fathers.

A few years ago negotiations were entered into with the Sultan of Turkey, within whose political dominions Palestine is included, for the purchase of the Holy Land for the Jews, and some announcements in the press by Dr. Herzl, of Austria, just previous to the assembling of the Zion conference in 1902, for a time justified the high hopes that were entertained of securing the promised land by purchase. These hopes, however, were doomed to disappointment by reason of a sudden change coming over the ruler of Turkey with reference to the matter. It is more than likely that his advisors persuaded him that the establishment of a Jewish state under his suzerainty would be adding one more perplexing feature in the administration of that heterogeneous collection of such states which already constitute the loose-jointed empire over which the Sultan presides, by the sufferance of the European powers. The matter of the Sultan's present refusal to grant, or sell Palestine to Jews is not a serious difficulty in the progress of such a wide spread movement as Zionism, however, for ere now the Lord has changed the hearts of rulers in order to bring to pass his great purposes, and may do so again. So Israel Zangwill, one of the most enthusiastic leaders in the movement, views that subject; and in like spirit also he views the difficulty of obtaining the necessary millions to purchase the land. On this subject he says:

It matters little that the Zionists could not pay the millions, if suddenly called upon. They have collected not two and a half million dollars. But there are millions enough to come to the rescue once the charter was dangled before the Zionists. It is not likely that the Rothschilds would see themselves ousted

from their family headship in authority and well-doing. Nor would the millions left by Baron Hirsch be altogether withheld. The sultan's present refusal is equally unimportant, because a national policy is independent of transient moods and transient rulers. The only aspect that really matters is whether Israel's face be or be not set steadily Zionward—for decades, and even for centuries.

An interesting feature at the last Zion conference held in August of 1904, was the tender by the British foreign minister, Lord Lansdowne, on behalf of the British government of a tract of fertile territory in Uganda, British East Africa, for the establishment of the Jewish colony. It is an elevated tract of country extending some two hundred miles along the Uganda railway, between Man and Nairobi. It is said to be well watered, fertile, cool, covered with noble forests, almost uninhabited and as healthful for Europeans as Great Britain. This tender on the part of the British government was a cause of some confusion in the Basle conference, and is now a cause of great anxiety to the Zionists. It is a Jewish state in Palestine, not a colony in East Africa that the great body of Zionists are looking forward to; and when it was moved in the conference that a commission of nine be appointed to look into details and decide upon the advisability of sending an expedition to investigate the proposed site of the colony, even this preliminary step was so opposed by the Russian delegates that they arose en masse and left the conference hall, in protest against such a movement. The commission, however, was appointed and the investigation is in progress. Since the close of the Basle conference many of those interested in the proposition have been searching their scriptures and some claim to have found prophetic warrant for such a movement and come to regard the settlement in Africa as a preliminary to

the final movement into Palestine. The prophecies supposed to justify this view are to be found in the following from Isaiah:

In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of Hosts; and shall be called, the city of destruction.

In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord.

And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a savior, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.[†]

Whatever many come of this proposed colony scheme in Africa it can never be regarded as more than an incident in progress of this great movement among the Jews.^r The land of their final inheritance is Palestine, not Africa, nor Egypt; and if the Jews shall halt for a time in the land of Uganda, under the benign protection of the British government, it will be only a temporary abiding place, where, however, they may obtain a very necessary experience in controlling a state and bringing their people to a unity of faith and practice under the old law of Israel.

What I am concerned with in this strange movement

[†]Isaiah xix: 21.

^r"In the opinion of some, it may become a training-ground for those who are eventually to go to Zion. * * * Whatever solution the East African scheme may find, it can be but a temporary one. The eye of the people's soul cannot be turned from the object upon which it has rested for centuries and centuries. * * * The soul of Israel has always felt, and when occasion offered has always said, that such a concentration at such a rallying-point, can be induced only in the ancient home of the children of Israel, in Palestine."—Richard J. H. Gottheil.

among the Jews, however, is not the details of it, but the fact of it; and the further fact that "Zionism" is doubtless the inauguration of a series of movements that shall culminate in the complete fulfillment of this great Book of Mormon prophecy.

In addition to the prediction of the Book of Mormon which brought the subject of the gathering of the Jews to their land vividly before the Prophet Joseph's mind, he claims that in the Kirtland Temple, in 1836, Moses, the great Hebrew prophet, appeared to himself and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the keys of the gathering of Israel, and the power of restoring the tribes to the lands of their fathers.^q Acting under the divine authority thus received, Joseph Smith sent an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ to the land of Palestine to bless it and dedicate it to the Lord for the return of his people. This apostle was Orson Hyde, and he performed his mission in 1840-2. Again in 1872 an apostolic delegation consisting of the late President George A. Smith (cousin of the Prophet) and the late President Lorenzo Snow were sent to Palestine. The purpose of their mission in part is thus stated in President Young's letter of appointment to George A. Smith.

When you get to the land of Palestine we wish you to dedicate and consecrate that land to the Lord that it may be blessed with fruitfulness preparatory to the return of the Jews in fulfillment of prophecy and the accomplishment of the purposes of our heavenly Father.^r

Acting, then, under the divine authority restored to earth by the Prophet Moses, this Apostolic delegation—as well as the Apostle first sent—from the summit of Mount Olivet blessed the land, and dedicated it for the return of

^qSee Doc. & Cov., Sec. 110.

^r"Biography of Lorenzo Snow," p. 496.

the Jews. It is not strange, therefore, to those who look upon such a movement as Zionism with faith in God's great latter-day work to see the spirit now moving upon the minds of the Jews prompting their return to the land of their fathers. To them it is but the operation of the Spirit of God in their souls, turning their hearts to the promises made to the fathers.

Meantime, and quite apart from the Zionite movement, changes are taking place in the promised land that augur well for the fulfillment of this Book of Mormon prophecy. For instance, the British Consul reports for 1876 give the number of Jews in Judea at from fifteen to twenty thousand. Twenty years later, viz. in 1896, the same authority gives the number of Jews at from sixty to seventy thousand; and what was more promising for the future both for the people and the country inhabited, this new Jewish population was turning its attention to the cultivation of the soil, which but requires the blessings of God unto it to restore it to its ancient fruitfulness, and which will make it possible for it to sustain once more a numerous population.^s

^sSince the foregoing was written the following press dispatch from Jerusalem, under date of July 28th, 1906, appeared in the daily papers of the United States:

Jerusalem, July 28.—The Zionist movement—the return of the Jews to Palestine—is being carried actively on, and during the last few months there has been a remarkable influx of Israelites into the Holy Land.

A fertile region, east of the Jordan, toward Kerak, has been inspected by a party of Jewish financiers, with the idea of colonizing it. * * * * * The intending colonists are negotiating with the government for the purchase of land and for guarantees of protection against the Bedouins.

Five thousand Jewish emigrants from Russia and the Balkan States recently landed at Jaffa. They will be distributed among the various Jewish colonies, which are to be found in all the fertile districts of Palestine. It looks as if the Chosen People are literally coming to their own again.

Thus in the preparations evidently being made for the return of the Jews to the land of their forefathers, and their beginning to believe in Jesus, this remarkable Book of Mormon prophecy is in the way of fulfillment.

IV.

The Work of the Lord to Commence Among all Nations to Bring About the Restoration of His People Israel, and a Universal Reign of Peace and Righteousness.

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.

The 19th century of the Christian era, especially the last three quarters of it, will be regarded as a most wonderful period of human progress.¹ An age of inventions and discoveries in all departments of human knowledge and human activities. During that time, through human invention, machinery was so multiplied and made to serve the industrial requirements of man that we may say that the race was emancipated from the drudgery under which it had sweltered for ages. In field and factory machinery was made to perform the labor which in ages hitherto had been done by human hands. Husbandry, by reason of so much machinery being applied to agricultural pursuits, became a gentlemanly occupation as compared with the farm drudgery of former years. The increased product in all lines of manufactures multiplied comforts and placed them within the reach of all, so that the standard of living among the common people was immensely improved.

¹"A mighty dawn of ideas is peculiar to our own age (nineteenth century)."—Victor Hugo.

This period also witnessed great advancement in the matter of transportation. On land it developed from the ox team and horse carriage to the automobile and lightning express train, capable of covering from fifty to seventy and now ninety miles per hour. It saw Europe and America converted into a net work of railroads, binding all parts of the respective continents together with easy, safe, and swift means of traffic, and carried to the markets of every city the various products of all the countries of the globe.

Water transportation within the same period developed from the slow sailing vessel, dependent on the winds and ocean currents to the modern "ocean greyhound" capable of making its way against both ocean current and winds at a speed never realized by the sailing vessel with both wind and ocean currents in its favor. The stormy Atlantic, to cross which in the early years of the century was a tedious and dangerous journey of many weeks, by the close of the 19th century was a matter of five days pleasure trip. All mystery and dread of "old ocean" had disappeared, and men no longer mourned the fate of "those who go down to the sea in ships," since ocean travel is far less dangerous than overland travel, and the oceans so far from being regarded any longer with the old time awe and mystery are now looked upon as merely convenient highways for the commerce of the world. By the speed of ocean travel we may say that all the continents and islands of the globe are married.

Running parallel with this development of transportation on land and sea, is what may be called the growth of our instantaneous means of communication. At the opening of the period we are considering the pony express and mail coach were our most rapid means of communication, and looking back to those days such means of communica-

tion seem marvellously inadequate to civilized life. At the close of the century, however, by means of ocean cables and telegraph lines, and telephone instrumentalities—to say nothing of the more wonderful wireless telegraphy now coming into use—we are in instant communication with all the great centers of civilization, and each morning may read the world's daily history gathered by these agencies for our instruction.

In the same period, in the matter of illumination, we went from the tallow dip and farthing rush light to gas and electricity. From the slow working hand press to the lightning Hoe multicolor printing press, capable of printing, in different colors, folding, pasting and counting from twenty-four thousand to one hundred thousand impressions per hour! Within our period improvements in telescopes have revealed new wonders of the universe. Improvement in microscopes have revealed wonders undreamed of in former times both in organic and inorganic nature. In the laboratories of the world new mysteries of light and heat and other elementary forces of nature were revealed. Substances which aforetime had been regarded as opaque were found in some lights to be transparent. Indeed in all the arts and sciences such progress was made as had not before been made in a period of a thousand years.* There seemed to have come an awak-

*“No previous century ever saw anything approaching to the increase in social complexity which has been wrought in America and Europe since 1789. In science and in the industrial arts the change has been greater than in the ten preceding centuries taken together. Contrast the seventeen centuries which it took to remodel the astronomy of Hipparchus with the forty years which it has taken to remodel the chemistry of Berzelius and the biology of Cuvier. * * * How small the difference between the clumsy wagons of the Tudor period and the mail-coach in which our grandfathers rode, compared to the difference between the mail-coach and the railway train! How rapid the changes in philosophic thinking since the time of the Ency-

ening of intellectual power in men, and the whole world was transformed by means of it. Political liberties were enlarged, old tyrannies were rendered for the present and future impossible in many countries, because of the consciousness of inherent power in the people.

Our period witnessed also the rise and progress of the peace movement. A movement whose chief purpose is to substitute peaceful arbitration as a method of settling international differences for the dreadful arbitrament of war. The first peace society was formed in America early in the century—1815—and while not attracting much attention at first, the movement gradually increased in importance until at last it arose from a merely national movement to an international one, as is evidenced from the fact that at its great conference at the Hague in 1899 there were accredited representatives from the following nations: United States, Great Britain, Russia, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, China, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Japan, Sweden, Norway, Persia, Portugal, Roumania, Servia, Siam, Switzerland, and Turkey. It was this conference of 1899 that finally established the world's permanent court of arbitration at the Hague, to which several important international questions have already been referred and settled. And while the peace movement and arbitration has not yet relieved the world from recurrence of dreadful wars, still the establishment of the permanent court for international arbitration is a mighty stride in the interest of the world's peace. It gives more than hope. It establishes confidence that the time will

clonedistes, in comparison with the slow though important changes which occurred between the epoch of Aristotle and the epoch of Descartes! In morality, both individual and national, and in general humanity of disposition and refinement of manners, the increased rapidity of change has been no less marked."—Cosmic Philosophy (Fiske), Vol. IV., p. 54, 55.

come when there will be a disarmament of the nations, and the old prophet's dream figured forth in his vision of the nations beating their spears into pruning hooks and their swords into plow shares will be realized, and the nations shall learn war no more.

It cannot be that this wonderful transformation of the world within our period has no significance. A new era has certainly dawned upon the world. Old things are passing away. All things are becoming new. Surely such changing conditions in material things prophesy corresponding changes in men as individuals and in their community life. These material improvements will doubtless be met by corresponding improvements in moral and spiritual wellbeing. There is undoubtedly a close connection between this influx of intellectual light and the splendid opening of the great new dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the Lord renewed divine communication to man in the visions and revelations granted to Joseph Smith, there seemed to have accompanied this influx of spiritual light the intellectual light of which I have been speaking, and which has accomplished such transformations in the affairs of men and nations as are here noted. To the spirit which is in man the Spirit of the Lord has given inspiration to some purpose. It is not difficult to believe—nay to conceive the contrary seems impossible—that the Lord, according to the Book of Mormon prophecy, has commenced to bring about the restoration of his people Israel upon the earth, and to usher into the world that blessed reign of truth, peace and righteousness so long hoped for; so long the theme of poets, sages, statesmen and prophets; when with righteousness the Lord shall judge the pure and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and

the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; when the cow and the bear shall feed, and their young ones shall lie down together; when the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the suckling child shall play on the hole of the cockatrice's den; when they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain; when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; when man shall know how sweet and pleasant it is for men to dwell together in unity and peace; and when, to correspond with these moral and spiritual conditions of the world, the material forces and resources of the earth shall be developed; distance annihilated; all the ends of the earth brought together in instant communication; poverty and crime banished; when labor shall have its own and the idler shall not sit in the lap of luxury, a burden to labor, but all shall contribute by intelligent industry to an enlightened world's necessities. The realization of the dream has long been deferred, but we are taught by scripture that if the vision tarry, wait for it, for it will come. Surely we may wait in confidence when in such a marked manner as here indicated the hand of God is to be seen fashioning and directing those events which shall culminate in the perfect realization of all the good that has been decreed for the earth and the inhabitants thereof.

v.

The Sign of the Modern World's Awakening.

An interesting feature in the awakening of the world, considered in the last subdivision of this chapter, is the fact that not only did this awakening begin about the time the Book of Mormon was published to the world, but it is one of the prophecies of the book that it should be so. That is

to say, the spiritual and intellectual awakening of the modern world, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon were to be contemporaneous events.

In the course of his ministry among the Nephites, the Messiah directed especial attention to, and laid great stress upon one of the prophecies of Isaiah, which follows:

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.

Later in Messiah's ministry, when referring again to this prophecy, he remarked:

When they [the foregoing words of Isaiah] shall be fulfilled, then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel. And then shall the remnants which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east, and from the west, and from the south, and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them. * * * And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you. Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people. * * * And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people, and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fath-

ers, for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father. And it shall come to pass that the time cometh when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them. And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name. Then [referring to Isaiah] shall their watchmen lift up their voice, and with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye."

And now as to the sign which he gave by which the branch of the house of Israel in the American continents might know that this work of restoring the house of Israel to the land of their inheritance, together with the spiritual and intellectual awakening that should attend upon that event—of this Jesus said:

And, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place, that I shall gather in from their long dispersion my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion. And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign, for verily I say unto you, that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, which shall be given unto you of the Father—[when these things] shall be made known unto the Gentiles, that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them.—Verily, verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you— * * when these works, and the works which shall be wrought among you hereafter, shall come forth from the Gentiles, unto your seed [through publishing the Book of Mormon] * * * it shall be a sign unto them that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he [God] hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel. * * *

"III. Nephi 20.

And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people—verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people; yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people * * * to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name; yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father, among all nations, in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.^v

That is to say, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon was to be the signal for this modern world awakening; and the “sign” of the commencement of the work of the Lord among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring to pass the restoration of his people and the accomplishment of his purposes in all the earth. The facts already set forth establish the fulfillment of this no less venturesome—i. e. venturesome for an imposter to make—than remarkable prophecy.

VI.

Conditional Prophecies—The Evidence of Things Worthy of God to Reveal.

In closing these chapters on the prophecies of the Book of Mormon, I direct attention to what I shall call conditional prophecies. Not for the purpose of referring to their fulfillment, either accomplished or prospective, as evidence of the truth of the book, but as exhibiting the fact that the Book of Mormon has a prophetic message for the present genera-

^vIII. Nephi, chapter 21.

tion worthy of God to reveal, and one that it concerns the Gentile races now occupying the continents of America to know. These prophecies deal with the terms upon which the Gentile races may maintain for themselves and perpetuate to their posterity the inheritance they have secured in the goodly land of Joseph—the American continents. First let it be remembered that these continents, according to the Book of Mormon, are a promised land, especially to the seed of Joseph, son of the Patriarch Jacob, and also to the Gentiles whom God shall lead hither. To the leader of the Nephite colony the Lord said:

And in as much as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper, and shall be led to the land of promise. Yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands.

Subsequently, as is well known, the Nephite colony arrived in America, repeatedly referred to by them and their descendants as “the land of promise.”

Before his demise the prophet Lehi, who lived to arrive with his colony upon the promised land, made the following prophecy concerning the occupancy of the land by his people:

Notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever; and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord. Wherefore, I, Lehi, prophesy according to the workings of the Spirit which is in me, that there shall none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord. Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the com-

mandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound, cursed shall be the land for their sakes; but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever. And behold, it is wisdom that this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations; for behold, many nations would overrun the land, that there would be no place for an inheritance. Wherefore, I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that inasmuch as those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments they shall prosper upon the face of this land; and they shall be kept from all other nations, that they may possess this land unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of this land, and there shall be none to molest them, nor to take away the land of their inheritance; and they shall dwell safely forever. But, behold, when the time cometh that they shall dwindle in unbelief, after they have received so great blessings from the hand of the Lord; having a knowledge of the creation of the earth, and all men, knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord from the creation of the world; having power given them to do all things by faith; having all the commandments from the beginning, and having been brought by his infinite goodness into this precious land of promise; behold, I say, if the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold the judgment of him that is just shall rest upon them; yea, he will bring other nations unto them, and he will give unto them [the incoming nations] power, and he will take away from them [the remnants of the Nephites] the lands of their possessions; and he will cause them to be scattered and smitten. Yea, as one generation passeth to another, there shall be bloodshed, and great visitations among them.^a

This prophecy was fulfilled in the experiences of Lehi's descendants. Though in the course of their history they had some long periods, and some intermittent seasons of

^aII. Nephi i: 5-12.

righteousness, they eventually, even after the personal ministrations of the Son of God among them, departed from righteousness, rejected Jesus Christ, and the decreed judgment fell upon them to the uttermost. The Gentile races finally came to the land, and took possession of it, while the descendants of the once favored race that occupied it were dispossessed and broken, and scattered.

The promises made to the Nephites had also been given to the Jaredites who preceded them in possession of the land. To the brother of Jared, the leader of the Jaredite colony, the Lord said: I will go before thee into a land which is choice above all the lands of the earth."^b

Moroni, while abridging the records of the Jaredites, which give an account of that people's migration to America, refers to the decrees of God concerning the land in the following passage:

And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people; and he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them. And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity; for, behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off.

^bEther i: 42.

And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God, that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you, as the inhabitants of the land hath hitherto done. Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written.

Jesus also in the course of his ministry among the Nephites refers to these same decrees concerning the land; or, better say, makes them, since he is the "God of the land." His words follow:

The Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you [the Nephites] this land, for your inheritance. And I say unto you that if the Gentiles do not repent, after the blessing which they shall receive after they have scattered my people, then shall ye who are a remnant of the house of Jacob go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them, who shall be many; and ye shall be among them, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through, both treadeth down and tear-eth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And I will gather my people together, as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor, for I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it. And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent, it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.^c

^cIII. Nephi 20: 14-20.

Then follows an explanation of how, through the seed of Abraham, all the kindreds of the earth are blessed:

Unto the pouring out of the Holy Ghost through me [Jesus Christ] upon the Gentiles, which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all, unto the scattering of my people, O house of Israel; and they shall be a scourge unto the people of this land. Nevertheless, when they shall have received the fulness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me, I will return their iniquities upon their own heads, saith the Father.^d

Speaking further of the "great and marvelous work" which the Lord should bring forth in the last days, he again refers to the Gentiles upon the promised land, in the following words:

Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, whom the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said), they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant. And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as the young lion among the flock of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth to pieces, and none can deliver. Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off. Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles, except they repent, for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots, and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds; and I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy hand, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers; thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands; and I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

^dIII. Nephi 20: 27, 28.

And it shall come to pass that all lying, and deceiving, and envying, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away. For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; and I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. But if they [the Gentiles] will repent, and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them and they shall come in unto the covenant, and be numbered among this remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance. And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also, as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem; and then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.^e

Here then is the conditional prophecy that it concerns the proud Gentile races now inhabiting the American continents to know. These continents are a promised land; they are given primarily to the descendants of the Patriarch Joseph as an inheritance, but the Gentile races are also given an inheritance in them with the descendants of Joseph. The whole land, however, is dedicated to righteousness and liberty, and the people who possess it, whether of the house of Israel or Gentiles, must be a righteous people, and worship the "God of the land, who is Jesus Christ." In that event God stands pledged to preserve the land and the people thereof from all other nations, and to bless them with very great and peculiar blessings guaranteeing to them freedom and peaceful possession of the land forever. If the Gentile races shall observe these conditions they and their children are to share in the blessings of the land in connection with

^eIII. Nephi xxi: 11-25.

the descendants of the Patriarch Joseph. If they depart from justice, reject righteousness and Jesus Christ, then the judgments decreed will overtake them until they are wasted away. This is the decree of God respecting the Western hemisphere, and is one of the important messages that the Book of Mormon has to deliver to the present generation.

Nor is it the Book of Mormon alone that bears this message. So far as the people of the United States are concerned, I might say, if not one of their own prophets, at least their greatest statesman, gave substantially the same warning to the people of that nation, and I believe his utterances are equally applicable to the people occupying the other parts of the American continents. Read the following quotation from the speech delivered a few months before its author's death, and tell me if the American statesman, Daniel Webster, did not catch the same glow of inspiration when predicting the terms upon which the people now occupying our country may hold their heritage, as that which warmed the hearts of the Book of Mormon writers and speakers, whose words are quoted in the preceding passages. Mr. Webster's speech was delivered before the "New York Historical Society," on February 22nd—Washington's birthday—1852; as the great American died in October following, the address was one of his last speeches.

Unborn ages and visions of glory crowd upon my soul, the realization of all which, however, is in the hands and good pleasure of Almighty God; but, under his divine blessing, it will be dependent on the character and the virtues of ourselves, and of our posterity. If classical history has been found to be, is now, and shall continue to be, the concomitant of free institutions, and of popular eloquence, what a field is opening to us for another Herodotus, another Thucydides, and another Livy!

And let me say, gentlemen, that if we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion—if we and they shall live

always in the fear of God, and shall respect his commandments, if we and they shall maintain just, moral sentiments, and such conscientious convictions of duty as shall control the heart and life—we may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country; and if we maintain those institutions of government and that political union, exceeding all praise as much as it exceeds all former examples of political associations, we may be sure of one thing—that, while our country furnishing materials for a thousand masters of the historic art, it will afford no topic for a Gibbon. It will have no Decline and Fall. It will go on prospering and to prosper.

“But, if we and our posterity reject religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us, that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity. Should that catastrophe happen, let it have no history! Let the horrible narrative never be written! Let its fate be like that of the lost books of Livy, which no human eye shall ever read; or the missing Pleiad, of which no man can ever know more, than that it is lost, and lost forever!

I think my statement will be within reasonable limits when I say that this sublime doctrine and warning of Mr. Webster's has the same source of inspiration as the utterances of the Book of Mormon writers. I believe that all who read and compare these passages will conclude there is something more than mere coincidence in their agreement.

As before stated, it is not my purpose in calling attention to these conditional prophecies to point to their fulfillment, either accomplished or prospective, in evidence of the truth of the Book of Mormon. Their worth as evidence to the truth of the book rests solely upon the importance of the matter with which they deal. The demand of the world is, and it is a reasonable one, that a book purporting to be a

revelation from God should deal with subjects that it is important for men to know, and I regard the terms that constitute the conditions upon which the American continents may be securely held by the people who possess them, as a matter of the highest importance for the people to know, and hence worthy to be found in a book purporting to be a revelation from God. Such knowledge is no less important than to know the source whence the continents of America are peopled; the providences of God in dealing with them; and the fact that the Son of God visited the western hemisphere, and taught to the inhabitants thereof the gospel, and established here his church for the perpetuation of the truth and for the salvation of men. All this is revealed in the Book of Mormon, and makes up a mass of knowledge that it concerns mankind to know, and hence is worthy of God to reveal. Had the Book of Mormon dealt with light or trivial things—things unworthy of God to reveal, mankind would require no further evidence that its claims to a divine origin were baseless; and conversely: if the book reveals a mass of knowledge—worthy of God to reveal and important for man to know—then it is evidence of considerable weight that the book is of God.