

LETTER TO ELDER ORSON SPENCER.

Merthyr, September 29, 1847.

Dear President Spencer,—Having but just retreated for a few hours from the battleground, while my guns are cooling for another broadside, I will report to you the progress of the war.

The rumbling of the thunders which echoed in the distant hills, when you had those placards, has increased as they neared, and thickened as they lowered, until surcharged with the electric fluid of both hemispheres; they have exploded like the concussion of tornadoes, and deluged the town of Dowlais and vicinity, impregnating the moral atmosphere with a stench as fatal to truth and holiness, as the poisonous breath of the Upas Tree is to those who inhale it!

The scene was truly picturesque, which presented the first of this crusade! It was in a Baptist chapel, one of their collegians being the hero. The big seat was crowded with reverends, &c., from far and near, and although they exacted sixpence for admission, yet the chapel was crowded with anxious listeners, who, with opened mouths, eagerly anticipated to hear the funeral sermon of Mormonism. I seated myself in front, and took notes of his topics, and were you to see the fingers and eyes that evidently marked me as a gone case, you would have thought that I had seven horns, if not as many heads, and every time that the harlequin would strike the pulpit with his paw, and cry "Down with Mormonism!" &c., in the midst of the echo of cheers, I had time and opportunity to inspect nearly all eyes in the place. To report this lecture here would only be for diversion, and to prove the dying fumes of sectarianism. Suffice it to say, that the lecturer brought forward some scores of what he termed "credible witnesses," "Rev. D.D's," and *holy, pious, and very godly* people, to prove that "Joe Smith" was a "money-digger," "fortune-teller," "liar," "thief," "drunkard," and "whore-master;" and, in fact, it would expend too much of my time and paper to enumerate the catalogue of titles which was heaped upon poor Joe! Furthermore he had the testimony of Mr. Hale, Ingersoll, &c., to prove that "Joe Smith discovered plates in the earth, translated their contents by means of a peep stone, which he held in a hat, and that Martin Harris was his scribe, situated on the other side of a blanket, &c. That this was the origin of the Book of Mormon!" This he placed beyond contradiction, he said, by the testimony of Mr. Hale, having seen and handled the box containing them while in his house! Hence proving the ideality of such plates. This he did with such eloquence and certainty, that his hearers really believed his task completed,—that such was the origin, and that Joe Smith was the author of the Book of Mormon. But, strange to say, the lecturer commenced pulling down his former fabric, and brought forth a greater number of still more *pious* and *holy* witnesses, to disprove every sentence of the above! Before he closed, he had succeeded to prove, as unanswerable, that "Solomon Spaulding was the author of the Book of Mormon!" You will know the rest. It was extracts from "Mormonism Unveiled," "Origin of Mormonism," "Caswell," &c. I had sent one of my placards (publishing that I should reply the following evening, and admission by buying a shilling book for sixpence, and thereby paying them sixpence for coming, which contained the history of the church, Joseph Smith, and refutations to most of those charges, &c.), to the chairman, with a request for him to read it at the close, but he refused to read it, and when one of the Saints asked him, I was replied to in the negative by one of them jumping on top of the seat in front of me, and in front of a seatful of the reverend divines, with his fist in my face, and gnashing his teeth, and in the attitude of sending me to judgment, apparently, if I said a word: and instead of allowing his hearers to come and hear both sides, as an honest man would do, behold, he published that he would deliver another lecture the following night gratis! and thus showing the white feather in his tail. However I fulfilled my appointment, and sent reporters to his second lecture, and from that time I have been lecturing there to crowded audiences of eager hearers, almost without cessation, and many believing the gospel.

We had baptized over 150 there in a short time, previous to this skirmish, and that is the cause of these hirelings coming out thus to save their crumbling and tottering crafts. Besides this clan of very reverend and holy persecutors, our streets are infested nightly with another sort of self-styled "Philanthropists," and devout men of the Teetotal cause, and all the other would-be men of renown, and the striplings who thus curry favour with the big nobs, and ascend the pinnacle of fame. These keep up a continual roar of "Great is the venerable goddess of Dowlais!" and banish the Mormon heretics, &c. These meetings sometimes are attended by shepherds and flocks, and thousands of the rabble reiterating the foul epithets of the clergy, the above-named authors, and such additions as they can think of themselves. They have exhausted all their ammunition at poor Joseph, and have of late beset poor Captain Jones, "his imp," and "arch impostor of Wales;" and it is truly amusing to witness the exertions of these Nothingarians, in ransacking the vocabu-

lary of Billingsgate itself for titles with which to crown me! Some say, they have proven me even worse than Joe Smith! Others say, "He is not quite so bad, but soon will be!" The scenes here are very like the continental rabbles of Missouri, &c., and still raging worse and hotter daily. You need not be surprised should you hear of Carthage tragedies in Wales, ere long. The whole towns and works hereabouts, containing over 60,000 people, are actually drunken with infatuation, and rage for or against Mormonism. This is all the topic, and reverends, out of the pulpits, have actually declared that we should be treated as Joe Smith was; others are doing all they can to prove us Chartists, and get us all banished by the iron masters, and secret councils are kept by desperate characters to devise the best means to rid the place of * * * and a few more names known, and that the others would die away. They denounce their unreserved anathemas on the only press in Wales, to my knowledge, that will publish for me; and, in fact, their black deeds of horror are rife, and too numerous and disgusting to mention!

The last two Sundays our hall was surrounded with hundreds of such characters, even in broad daylight, gnashing their teeth, and threatening everything, besides throwing stones through the windows. Even yesterday, being a kind of holiday, many thousands of such people congregated and incited the people against us all they could. It is dangerous for me to go among them now, for some declare that they consider it God's service to rid themselves of me! Thus is our pot boiling gloriously at their expense, the scum running over to the fire. I think our work here will be cut short in righteousness. If Brother Spencer wishes to know "the secret power of Welsh over English preaching," here it is! We fight hard for all we get, and contend toe to toe, and point to point, for every inch of ground we gain. And who would not fight when immortal souls are the prize and laurels of victory? Last Sunday, in despite of all, I preached four times; had a public baptism, and over 2000 hearers, and not a dog moved his tongue to me. We baptized five here last week, and through all the wars in one branch, we have baptized about 60, mostly from the very ranks of our persecutors, besides very many in other places all through Wales. Yes, Brother Spencer, were you here, and to walk with me through the streets, you would think of old scenes and lively times. But for all, thank my heavenly Father, my lips keep moisture and my lungs never tire, but just as ready now as ever, and my colours are firmly nailed to the mast-head, and will sink or swim on the deck of my Mormon barque.

I have much more news of strange doings about these "diggins," had I time. I have a reply or replies now in press, besides, dressing off these stripe-jacks in their own style, which will be out this week, I expect.

Please inform me whether my bill overruns the old balance yet; it cannot be far off it. I am afraid that by not having either mate or clerk, I have lost some of the bills you sent me. Excuse this extra trouble for once. Please send me about 20 hymn-books, and 24 M. Martin's. I am doing all that is possible to fulfil Brother Hyde's "Keepsake" by this fall. I hope to be able by Christmas to do much towards it. Poor folks, they need it much! Can Brother Spencer promise to visit this land of earthquakes in the cool of winter,—say at Christmas? If so, may I announce it in my publication, and hold a conference, &c.? Is it wisdom, think you, to rush into such a crowd as the above, to undertake to defend our characters or principles? Does Brother Hyde, in his complimentary remarks to me, intimate that they have discovered the far-famed "Welsh Indians?" Hope flatters me so!

I shall not now eulogise on your high encomiums on your humble servant, but thank you most sincerely for your good-will and favours to me, and will endeavour to prove myself worthy of the others. Humbly entreating for an interest in your prayers, that I may be endowed with wisdom from on high to govern my cause and precious freight, right side up, amidst this gale, which, bye-the-bye, is but a splash in a washhand basin in comparison to the gales both you and I have experienced, but the difference is, that all hands are merely apprentices on board, to the weather-beaten old tars of western climes.

But I had like to have forgotten that the post is going, amid loud calls for me. Breakers a-head again! Farewell, dear brother, just now. Do please to send me a word of advice, your letters revive my heart, and enlighten my eyes, like the honey on Jonathan's rod. Would that I were near you—near somebody! but here I am alone, like a beacon at sea, or a reed in the gale. My kind respects to Sister Spencer, and my wife joins me, hoping you will bring her with you to see the beauties of Wales. My kind love to Brother Richards, Carter, and all enquiring brethren there.

Dear brother, this moment I thought you would be at Birmingham Conference, and get this sooner there, as brother Wheelock had intimated, therefore I will address to you there. Excuse my great haste, and I should have liked to enjoy your company there were it possible, but I cannot. In addition to everything else, I hold a county conference on the same day and hour: then, oh then, pray for me. Your obedient servant in the gospel,

D. JONES.