

**MORMONISM AND THE MORMONS:  
CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY SAINTS.  
AN EPITOME. AN EPISTLE OF THE FIRST  
PRESIDENCY, TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS  
CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, IN  
GENERAL CONFERENCE ASSEMBLED**

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**A. M. BULLOCK**

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From Pres. Angell  
Jan. 16, 1901

# MORMONISM

. . . AND . . .

# THE MORMONS.

CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY SAINTS.

# AN EPITOME.



## Mormonism and the Mormons.

[This paper was written in 1882. Some of the events alluded to as recent, and dates relative thereto, will thus be explained. Fifteen years ago the true inwardness and the defiant practices of Mormonism were conspicuous, and the careful observer could read between the lines of religious pretense, its real character. The evils, the un-Christian characteristics, and the anti-American ideas of this system were then being unveiled. "Our Mormon Turks," as Schuyler Colfax then put it, "were flinging their insolent defiance into the face of the nation." The continued aggression of this system seems now to warrant and to render advisable a pen picture of its debasing and disloyal character. Though the years have gone, the facts herein noted concerning Mormonism have not become obsolete. The most ardent defender of Mormonism to-day will not claim that it has revised itself out of its own existence, or that its cardinal doctrines have been materially changed. Recent publications from the Mormon press, which have come into my possession and acknowledged to be authoritative make doubly certain the fact that the characteristics, the doctrines and the spirit of Mormonism are the same to-day as when the system was practically isolated from civilization, and when our government found it necessary to interpose with the strong arm of law. Personal investigation in Utah, together with information obtained from resident citizens and those fully acquainted with the tenets and practices of the so-called church, add materially to the evidence. It will be seen that the highest and best authorities on either side have been summoned as witnesses. Various additional notes have been appended, to elucidate and to verify. Here and there the text has been carefully revised. Mormon missionaries are now at work in the different states of the Union seeking to draw into the corrupting folds of this so-called church the ignorant and the unwary. In view of these facts, well known citizens and christian workers have suggested the timeliness, and have advised the publication of this paper.—*Author.*]

CURRENT events command our thoughtful attention. In the presence of these events it is a healthful sign when the excellencies of our national virtues are not suffered to blind us to our

national faults, or to hinder us in our efforts to correct them.

It seems a characteristic of American thought to center itself upon some important question, to hold it up to the searching gaze of the people, to examine it under the keen scalpel of criticism, concentrate the eye of public opinion upon it as the one thing altogether important, pass judgment upon it, and then wave it to the background to make room for another to be looked upon, examined and disposed of in like manner. . . .

Important issues are, at present, suffered to remain in the shadowy background, while the great question with which the American people are just now concerned is Mormonism. There are other questions as great, other issues perhaps more vital to our national life than this. These will be met, grappled with in deadly conflict by the American people, and, as in the past, we shall come forth from the conflict victorious. Mormonism, too, with all its infamy, blasphemy, filthiness, fiendishness and despotism, will be put down. After forty years of unworthy trifling, the American people have begun the work in earnest. They seem thoroughly aroused to the importance of the issue and they will wipe out that foul leprous spot, even though the victory be sealed with human blood.

The evil spirit of Mormonism was born in the heart and brain of Joseph Smith. He was inspired, no doubt, by the vivid imagination and cunning duplicity of a vain, ignorant and superstitious mother, who believed in "wizzards and familiar spirits," which she fancied filled the earth and air about her.



The son partook of the characteristics of the mother.\*

The Mormon fraud was inaugurated in the state of New York, whence it fled to the west. It left its foul, slimy trail wherever it moved, in the states of Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, thence westward with its deluded victims, fanatical adherents, band of outlaws, desperadoes and law-defying leaders, across rivers, over plains and through mountain passes to the Great Salt Lake, where, shut out from civilization, it has developed into a strong organized system of imposture, lust and tyranny. Let us not forget, however, that the stain of this crime and filthiness is upon our government as a nation. The hand that signed the *Fugitive Slave Law* signed also the commission of Brigham Young as first Governor of

\* I glean from reliable sources the following facts: Joseph Smith was born in 1805 in the state of Vermont. Several of his near relatives were Revolutionary soldiers. While Joseph was yet a small boy his parents moved to west-central New York. He was one of nine children. His parents were exceedingly "illiterate and superstitious." They determined that one of their sons should be a prophet, and Joe was selected as the "genius." This idea was impressed upon the son. "The mother moved in the lowest walks of life." They lived in dishonest poverty. Nocturnal depredations were frequently committed in the Smith neighborhood. Clothes lines were now and then robbed, poultry yards looted and grain bins suffered in like manner; and these depredations were laid at the doorway of the Smith family. The testimony of the old neighbors of the Smith family in New York was uniform that their character was bad and that of Joseph was the worst of the lot. (P. M. C. of Mormonism Pg. 23.) Both mother and son possessed a vivid but vain imagination; and integrity, conscience and truth were subsidized to it. They were both noted for extravagant assertions, fancied stories and false statements, which were improvised for the occasion. Said one who knew them well: "You can't face them down. They'll lie and stick to it. Joe never worked save at 'chopping bees' and 'raisings' and whiskey was the impetus and the reward." His aversion to labor is seen in some of his after "revelations." He could read but could not write, or very inaccurately at best. His two standard volumes were the "Life of Stephen Burrows, the Clerical Scoundrel," and the autobiography of Capt. Kidd the pirate. He secured what he called a "seer" or "peek stone," with which he figured as a "water witch" and with which he divined and feigned to locate buried money and treasures, which were always spirited away just before the sound of the thud on the priceless chest reached the ears. By instruction of the mother he laid claim to miraculous power. Joseph Smith unquestionably had tact and perseverance and natural talents, which, had they been directed in the right channel, might have made him a useful man. (See History of Mormonism, Women of Mormonism, H. B. of M., Madame La Tour, H. B. of R., Polygamy, Mysteries and Crimes, of Mormonism, etc.)

Utah.\* For eight years nominally, twelve in fact, and virtually until near the close of his life, he was permitted to hold the almost undisputed power of that territorial government. It is known that Pres. Fillmore had serious misgivings and grave scruples of conscience concerning the approval of the "Utah Bill," and it was a surprise to all who knew his apprehensions concerning the calumny and trouble, when he endorsed the infamy by appointing Brigham Young as the chief executive of the New Territory. That appointment launched forth in the very heart of our country, and under national authority, an utterly un-American system, a system which embraces the most revolting features of Oriental polyg-

\* Mr. Fillmore knew perfectly well at that time, and every senator who advised and consented to the appointment knew, and every citizen of ordinary intelligence knew that Brigham Young was nothing better than a consummate scoundrel. (Rev. Leonard Bacon, D. D., L. L. D., W. of M. pg. 303.)

Note—Pres. Pierce sought in vain to find a suitable person to take the Governorship of the territory. The post was one so difficult that he failed to secure a permanent incumbent. U. S. Judges were appointed but the position was one so difficult and hazardous that where Brigham did not cause them to be slain or drive them out they would not long remain. Hostilities ensued between the Mormons and the anti-Mormons. In 1856, murders were frequent. The Gentiles became more and more exasperated. In 1857 the Government sent a military force across the plains to quell the disturbance, and to bring the Mormons under subjection to the law. Young treasonably declared the territory under martial law and in accordance therewith issued a proclamation forbidding any soldier of the U. S., under any pretense or by any authority, from entering the valley. Col. A. Sidney Johnson through tact and generalship brought the Mormon President partially to terms. Col. Viet, of Gen'l Harney's staff, visited Brigham, then went to Washington to use his influence in behalf of the Mormons. In 1857 Alfred Cumming of Georgia was appointed governor to succeed Brigham Young. Col. Thos. J. Kane the friend and eulogist of the Mormons, and by many supposed to have been a Mormon himself, set sail from New York for San Francisco under the assumed name of "Dr. Osborne" with the permission and tacit encouragement of President Buchanan, to arrange a peace. [P. M. C. of M.—pg. 180.] "Dr. Osborne" reached San Bernardino in time to accompany the returning Mormons to Salt Lake. He hastened to advise with Young, then laying aside his *alias*, and hastening to Camp Scott, he "convinced Gov. Cumming that the Mormons were rather more peaceable than average lambs." The Governor accompanied Kane to the Mormon capitol. He was flattered with his reception and was assured that "the rebellion in Utah was a pure invention. [See P. M. C. of M. pg. 161-163.] Thus influenced the governor became a willing vassal of the Mormon President. By virtue of the authority entrusted to him he gave a pardon to all guilty of sedition and treason.

amy, and one of the worst forms of domestic, social and political tyranny known to history, and gave it character in the eyes of other nations. Mr. Fillmore afterwards pronounced this his "greatest mistake" and he was conscious "that his course had been unwise and productive of a series of flagrant, political and social wrongs."\* But the generations which followed him must needs reap the bitter consequences of that mistake.

Nor was Pres. Fillmore the only guardian of Mormon interests.† Like a noxious plant, permitted to grow and thrive in its own adopted soil and chosen atmosphere, for more than twenty years this system drew to itself its own selected nutriments with scarcely the voice of authority to interpose. It is true that bills have occasionally been passed, and laws enacted by congress, but for want of determined prosecution and the enactment of other measures needed for such prosecution, they have fallen, in

\* Judge B. F. Hale.

† At the beginning of the Buchanan administration there seemed to be a determined purpose to correct matters in Utah. Col. Johnson, as already noted, was sent with troops to Utah. Party consistency, however, was apparently at stake. The "Squatter sovereignty" doctrine of Kansas could hardly allow interference in Utah. Mr. Cumming reported to Washington his flattering reception by the Mormons. Pres. Buchanan appointed a peace commission and sent them to Utah with a proclamation of Pardon to Mormon offenders. It seemed evident to those familiar with the condition of affairs in Utah at the time, that the Buchanan administration did not care to push matters too strenuously against this "Twin Rille of Barbarism." The Mormon interests were too often advanced by imbecile Federal appointments from the time of Fillmore "until Lincoln's administration." "Through three administrations Utah seemed to be the Botany Bay of worn-out politicians" (Beadle 345, 352.) There were some efficient officers like Judge Cradlebaugh but they had not the power or the law behind them to effect justice because of the perversion of legal and moral principles on the part of the Mormons. At the close of Cumming's term as Governor the Civil war was in progress, and this engaged the attention, and the utmost energy of the Government. During these years of strife and bloodshed, while the Mormon question was not lost sight of and legislation was at times enacted and competent officers appointed, the Mormons, practically shut out from the world, took advantage of the situation; and the nation could pay but little attention to the righting of matters in Utah. Pres. Johnson's administration was on the whole favorable to the Mormons. At the close of the war the adjusting of the affairs of the Union in the North and South, and in the starting out of the reestablished Union seemed for years to be the one thing altogether important.