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Confirmatory Evidences of "Mormonism": Eastern Culture in America

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Abstract: This article argues that growing evidence shows that Columbus was late in his discovery of America. Ancient manuscripts indicate that the first inhabitants of America came from the East and that they had elephants as reported in the *Sheffield Weekly Telegraph*, November 4.

Those modes of dancing that have such appeals should not be tolerated. But play in its broad and proper sense—recreation—is necessary for the normal development and well-being of the individual—so our modern scientific experts tell us. And the Church has always favoured and tried to provide for wholesome recreation. It did this in the early days of its history, many years before science taught the need of play activities for the normal person. Herein lies one evidence of the divinity that has inspired and guided the leaders of this Church from the beginning.

In the early days the soul-stirring, familiar hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints," was sung around many a camp fire during the long, toilsome journey by many companies of Latter-day Saints in their one thousand miles weary trek across the "plains" from the Missouri River to the Great Salt Lake Valley. But, the singing of the hymns was only one of the recreational activities indulged in by these loyal, devoted people. The camp fire dance was one of their common recreations. Music, singing, dancing—these were potent factors in cheering the patient trekkers on their slow and toilsome journey. Who can measure the beneficent influence of dancing on the morale of those faithful Latter-day Saints? And during the frontier days of the saints in the Rocky Mountain regions dancing was one of their chief recreations.

Yes, dancing has always been one of the favourite and wholesome pastimes in "Mormon" communities. But like any other good thing, dancing can be made into an evil by the evil-minded. We should choose the good and eschew the evil.—M.

CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCES OF "MORMONISM"

EASTERN CULTURE IN AMERICA

The following article is the first of a series to be presented in the columns of the "Star" under the title of "Confirmatory Evidences of 'Mormonism.'" The purpose of this series will be to provide a "clearing house" for the mass of new evidence, and new light on old evidence, that is continually being increased by the research of scholars in nearly all branches of learning—evidence that confirms the truths set forth in the message of the Restored Gospel. One who is wide-awake and Gospel-minded may see statements and material of a confirmatory nature on every hand, in the press, in new publications, in reports. The "Star" will welcome suggestions and contributions to this column from its readers.

MAN must know and obey principles of eternal truth for their progress and salvation. From the beginning it has ever been the work of the Lord to bring men to a knowledge of these truths. To do this He has used ways adapted to the times and conditions. He has spoken to His servants "after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding." In the meridian of times the type of approach and the argument was adapted to the different peoples of that time. The Scriptures were opened to the Jews (Luke 24: 27). The Greeks were approached with a reference to the altar erected "To the Unknown God," and a quotation from their poets (Acts 17).

In the early days of the Restored Church, when most people believed literally in the Bible as the Word of God, to prove a contention it was merely necessary to establish it as Biblical. But with many to-day, to show a contention to be Biblical, if the exponent is not accused of "wresting" the Scripture, is merely to show that it is Biblical, and that is all. The Bible and other standards of belief of the past have lost much ground among most people. Indeed, with some there is an evident attitude of disbelief in them as being of any particular value.

Yet to-day people still obey the natural law stated by Paul in Hebrews (11: 1), that faith is based on evidence. Peter (1 Peter 3: 15) said, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." That is, to give the evidence on which your faith is based. If to-day we are expected to give acceptable evidence, not only from the prophets of old, but also from the newer knowledge of man, then the Latter-day Saint claim of possessing an outlook containing "all truth" must be harmonized with all the knowledge in possession of man. Indeed, we are asked to support even divine truths by the information gained by man in his search for knowledge. Man does not accept things blindly, but on evidence.

To-day, as man is better informed with regard to his surroundings than ever before, he requires more evidence to establish any particular claim.

IN leading man to a knowledge of the truth, it is often necessary to start with knowledge he understands, and then, from there lead him to a confirmation and understanding of divinely given truths. Early the Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith, "It is my will that you should hasten . . . to obtain a knowledge of history and of countries, and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man, and all this for the salvation of Zion." (Doctrine and Covenants 93: 53.) Thus all knowledge available is to be used in presenting the work of the Lord to the world.

The history of "Mormonism" is filled with striking confirmatory evidences of the truthfulness of its beliefs and practices. Prophecies have been uttered and fulfilled. The vast, increasing body of evidences of the truthfulness of the history and teachings of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price, is growing almost daily. The "fruits" of the Church, as an organization, and the lives of its members, give strong evidential witness of its divine origin. Man, in his search for knowledge, in particulars often confirms some part of "Mormonism," and, in general, as he accumulates truth, he is being led to the truths of "Mormonism." Such striking evidences may help lead a person to the Truth. Still, he can only know for a certainty the Great Realities by getting in touch with them and knowing through personal revelation.

"The worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (Doctrine and Covenants 18: 10), and "every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God" (Moroni 7: 13). Thus every means which will help to bring people to an understanding of the truth, and increase faith, should be used. "Teach the children of men the things which I have put into your hands by the power of my Spirit" (Doctrine and Covenants 43: 15).

As an instance of a confirmatory evidence of the type with which this column will concern itself, the *Sheffield Weekly Telegraph* of November 4th may be quoted. Commenting on a new book by G. Elliot Smith, it has to say :

Another whack at our historical beliefs! Professor G. Elliott Smith has put forward the suggestion, and supported it with rare researches, that Columbus was far behind in his "discovery." According to ancient manuscripts the first inhabitants must have been a race that came from the East. Recent researches have shown that these races had similar ideas to Indian races. For instance, the pictures of the Maya ruins of Central America show elephants with trunks. These must have been carved by people who knew the Indian elephant. There are other points of semblance. But how did these people cross the ocean? Was a native boat journey of 2,000 miles possible?

The interesting part, however, follows with the Latter-day Saint answer to that query :

As a matter of fact, all these suggestions are very curious, because the "Mormon" belief to-day is based to a large extent on such a journey having been made. The founder of "Mormonism," Joseph Smith, was ridiculed for his idea of saying that Eastern races had come to America from the East and fought on American soil. These new discoveries and theories will probably strengthen Smith's much criticised theories.

The establishing by modern research of the influence of Eastern civilization in America is a confirmatory evidence of the Book of Mormon, a book given to the world through Joseph Smith. The Jaredites from the Tower of Babel and the groups from Palestine under the leadership of Lehi and Mulek, brought Old World civilization to America.

"Another whack at our historical beliefs"—and another evidence for "Mormonism."—FRANKLIN S. HARRIS, JR.

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of the trials as well as the joys and honours of the work. Her appreciation for the great responsibilities that her husband carried has given to her an interpretation of life that is sympathetic and real.

Perhaps the greatest critics of a mission president, those who come to know him best in his relation to his work, are the missionaries who work under him. Their feelings toward him, their respect and love are indeed an effective measure of him as a man. Writing for the *Relief Society Magazine*, Joseph Quinney, Jr., in telling of the esteem in which the missionaries hold President Callis, says :

The missionaries love and respect Elder Callis and will feel highly honoured in his elevation to the exalted position that has come to him, not alone because of their love for him, but because of his great ability and worthiness. Perhaps it is proper to say that no Mission President was ever more loved by the elders and lady missionaries than President Callis. It is a high tribute to any man who places his expectations of reward on a solid foundation of service rendered and who is willing to pay the price of success in honest effort. And this is exactly what Elder Callis has always done. The poise and power with which he has moved among the people of the south will be the same power with