

ORSON PRATT'S MISSION

Orson Pratt, that solid pillar of the Mormon Church, embarked at New York, a few days ago, for Europe. It is given out that his business is to superintend the printing of the *Book of Mormon* and *Doctrine and Covenants* in some phonetic characters. Having the trust of educating Utah's best crop, and not daring to avow to the world that they are opposed to all diffusion of intelligence, it is amusing to see to what shifts and subterfuges this inspired priesthood is reduced in making a great ado about nothing, in pretending to keep school when there is no pedagogue engaged, in throwing sand in the people's eyes and unfolding a new and expensious method of how not to do it. Not long ago this same erudite apostle announced his willingness to get up a new set of school books after some revealed plan. The text books brought to this heavenly kingdom were ~~revealed~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~Rebels~~ ~~to~~ ~~savor~~ ~~too~~ ~~much~~ ~~of~~ ~~Gentilism~~ ~~to~~ ~~suit~~ ~~the~~ ~~views~~ ~~of~~ ~~God's~~ ~~chosen~~ ~~servants~~. Brother Orson in his searchings after the unknowable, has turned aside from purely theological inquiry to take in and comprehend the physical nature of the Lord's handiwork. Thus in his delocated, semi-lunatic, incoherent manner he has become quite a scientist and can discourse on Shakspeare and the musical glasses in a manner entrancing to behold. Some laws regulating the planetary sphere have also been revealed to him, and the devout disciple who listens to Orson Pratt's astonishing lecture on astronomy, requires no other knowledge; he is fitted for habitation in inter stellar space by that one surprising exposition. In his generous enthusiasm in the cause of education, this progressive Churchman has announced his willingness to reduce universal wisdom to such a condition of pulpiness as to be fit for deglutition and assimilation by the immature Saints. And if Brigham, in his divine wisdom, thought it best, this encyclopedic oracle was willing to cast his educational labors in the mould of the Deseret alphabet. The Prophet Brigham seems to favor this idea, for Orson Pratt is now on his road to England to get those two very valuable school books, above named, printed in some incomprehensible shape, which only those who are divinely illuminated will ever have the gift to understand.

Evidently there is some fresh conspiracy entered into by the infallible priesthood to cheat the lambs of the fold out of all educational advantages. School Superintendent Riggs is made to do penance on a foreign mission for being too earnest in his labors, and proposing a plan (of his own incubation) to the City Council for building a few school houses in Salt Lake. Apostle John Taylor, who is proof against any such ~~temptations~~ ~~of~~ ~~his~~ ~~offending~~ ~~Saint~~, is set up as chief of our public schools. This man is advanced in years, is a gloomy fanatic, ruffianly in his instincts, a hater of his race, and quite illiterate. Aside from his perversity, which renders him yet more reactionary, he knows no more of educational methods than he does of truth and decency.

And Brigham has been quite outspoken of late in giving his views of the nature of the studies that should be pursued in the schools. We know his estimate of scholastic attainment. "Study twenty years in the world's knowledge," he says, "and God Almighty will give the poorest Saint more knowledge in five minutes than you will get in all that time." He wants *doctrines* taught the ingenuous youth; a full understanding of those marvelous revelations made to the prophet Joe Smith, and a complete unfolding of the mysteries of the Latter-day dispensation. Dr. Park, the efficient principal of the defunct "Deseret University," departed from this divine plan, and taught "the world's knowledge" to his classes. As a consequence his scholars began to think for themselves, and no more dangerous practice could be encouraged in this divinely mirrored kingdom. We may interjectionally remark that intelligence, (to put it broadly) means the habit of thinking for one's self. Under prophetic influence, this individual culture is rigorously excluded, and as a consequence the people are never clamorous for freedom, and they never indulge the dangerous habit of thought. But the Babylonians who intrude upon this sacred soil, audaciously assert their individual freedom, and irreverently claim the right of self government.

The little game being put up for the brethren to defraud their children of all educational opportunities may be thus briefly sketched. Apostle John, our new School Superintendent, is fully in accord with his master in keeping the people ignorant. As chairman of the committee on education in the Assembly, he has always reported adversely on all bills and popular petitions looking to the provision of school facilities; and he is so preternaturally endowed with brazen effrontery, that he can stand off any pressure for pedagogic concessions that the whole congregation of the elect may bring to bear. Then the priests and teachers of the people will harp and iterate upon the necessity of religious instruction in the schools. All "the world's learning" is utter foolishness; the humblest Saint, with the divine effluvia working in him, can confound those who are most puffed up with such false attainment. This being dinned into the ears of the hamboozled Saints, Orson Pratt will come back bringing a few Church works printed in some unknown tongue. These will be introduced into school, and the old fraud and perfidy will be tried of isolating the children of this dispensation from the literature and thoughts of the age by teaching them to read in some kind of a Choctaw dialect.

Every session of the Legislature liberal sums of the people's money are voted to aid the cause of education in this Territory. Never one cent of this is legitimately applied. Quite an amount of money has been appropriated to the support of the so-called "Deseret University," (D.

H. Wells being the Chancellor (I) of that hall of learning), but after he and Brigham had taken their whack, what remained for the benefit of the school was not visible to the naked eye. Some years ago some eight or ten thousand dollars of the school fund was fraudulently applied to printing the book of Mormon in the Deseret letter, Orson Pratt being the translator and proof corrector, and the only man in the kingdom who could read the book after it was printed. For any good the public derived from the expenditure, Brigham might as well have taken the money to buy mirrors and upholstery for the Amoria palace. And now this sinuosity is to be repeated. Church publications and school books in phonetic, after a system miraculously made known to that unconfined lunatic, Orson Pratt. Brigham has declared his opposition to free schools, and he is making quite apparent to the world his perfidious opposition to any schools at all. How well these crafty priests understand that intelligence and infallible misrule cannot co-exist.