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HISTORY OF THE MORMONS.

DOMESTIC POLICY OF THE MORMONS.

CHAPTER I.

THEIR COUNTRY.

Among the teeming events of the present era, one of the most remarkable is the formation of a state by a peculiar people, in the far interior of America, which has assumed the name of Des-er-et, a mystic word, taken from the Book of Mormon,* signifying, the Land of the Honey-Bee.

Its present capital and principal settlement is in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. In this and contiguous vales are the gardens of the mountains, in which the bee and its fostering companion, man, have lately been colonized, and from which neither will carry away the stores gathered into the domestic hive. Industrious alike, the sweet bounties of Providence are collected, to be luxuriated upon at home, in all the freedom of their being and constitution of their nature. This valley is situated midway between the states of the great Mississippi and the golden empire rising to life and influence on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. It is isolated from habitable grounds; having inhospitable tracts to the north and south, and the unthundered slope of the Rocky Mountains, nearly a thousand miles wide on the east, and nearly a thousand miles of arid salt-deserts on the west, broken up by frequent ridges of sterile mountains. This fertile tract, therefore, presents itself to us with varied associations, an object of curious contemplation.

The Mormon settlements are in that remarkable depression styled The Great Basin—a region embraced in the Rocky Mountain land out of

* The "Latter-Day Saints" pretend to derive the word Mormon from the Gaelic and a branch of the Teutonic dialects: compounding it from *Mer, more or great*, and from *Mon*, signifying *good*, and therefore it imports—more good, great good. Mormon, mormones, Greek, signifies a female spectre, a phantom, a hideous monster.

These two definitions may be deemed to convey the different opinions of the supporters and opposers of Mormonism.