

selves of the existence of this extraordinary volume. The family went accordingly, and dug up the ground with implements provided for the purpose. But when the chest had just met their view, it was supernaturally removed out of their sight. Again they disinterred it, but amidst thunder and lightning the same process was repeated, and they fled in terror to their home. Joseph alone remained behind them. As he was slowly returning to his house, he encountered a dreadful vision of an angel, who in a fearful voice spoke to him, whilst lightning was flashing around, upbraiding him for the disobedience of which he had been guilty, in communicating the dreadful secret. He was afterwards sent alone to the spot, and was commanded to take the chest, and to bury it under his hearth-stone, but forbidden to investigate its contents. Together with the book, he professed to have found two stones, designated in his first narratives a pair of spectacles, but afterwards termed 'the Urim and Thummim'—'two transparent stones, set in the two rims of a bow,' which were to enable him to decipher these wonderful records. Dr. Authon, of whom we shall speak hereafter, relates:—"The way that Smith made his translations and transcripts was the following: Although in the same room, a thick curtain or blanket was suspended between them, and Smith, concealed behind the blanket, pretended to look through his spectacles or transparent stones, and would then write down or repeat what he saw, which, when repeated aloud, was written down. The severest judgments were denounced against the scribe, if he should presume to draw near to, or even to look upon Smith, whilst thus dictating. One Sidney Rigdon was largely engaged in this work of transcription, and at length, under these auspices, what is called 'The Book of Mormon,' was brought forth to the world as a new revelation. It professes to have been written on golden plates, in a mysterious character, which only Smith himself was able to read, and he simply by a supernatural impulse. Its contents relate to different periods, and contain fifteen books, the productions of as many authors. It comprehends a period of a thousand years, from the time of Zedekiah, king of Judah, down to the year 420.

"About the same time a document was put forth, bearing the names of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, declaring that an angel from heaven had shewed them the golden plates, and commanded them to bear witness to J. Smith's testimony. Simultaneously another paper was put forth by eight other witnesses, declaring that they had seen the plates, which bore the appearance of gold, and that they had also seen the engravings upon them. Such, then, is the basis of the Mormon imposture. Joseph Smith, who appears to have had Mohammed in his eye, and to have imitated some of his leading transactions, professes a new revelation, declares that an angel from heaven has directed him to a Divine Book, long hidden from the world; supports his declaration by bringing forward three witnesses, who avow they have seen an angel, who corroborates Smith's statements, and eight others, who declare that they have seen the golden volume. But it remains invisible to all other eyes, and is, as Mormons pretend, divinely shut up from the view of all besides. On this testimony, the Book of Mormon claims to be received as a special revelation from God!!!

"It may appear strange, that an illiterate man like Smith should have been able to invent

a story such as that contained in the Book of Mormon. But there are other circumstances which explain the wonder. It appears that, in the year 1809, one Solomon Spaulding, who had been previously a clergyman, set himself to compose a religious tale, based upon the assumed fact that the North American Indians were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. As he proceeded in his story, he read portions of his manuscript to his neighbours, who became greatly interested in it, especially in that part in which he fictitiously related how he had found an ancient record, imitating the style of the Old Testament. This volume was afterwards put into the hands of a bookseller for publication, and whilst this was copied by Sidney Rigdon, who, it is to be observed, was one of the promoters of the Mormon imposture, Spaulding's brother declared that the pretended Scriptures were altogether compiled from his deceased brother's manuscript. The widow of Spaulding bore the same testimony; and it is added, that the neighbors to whom the original tale had been read, instantly recognized the production with which they had been heretofore familiar, as incorporated in the Book of Mormon, which came forth from Joseph Smith as a new revelation from heaven. Rigdon denied, indeed, the whole transaction; but in so abusive a style and manner, as by no means to add to our conviction of his veracity.

"The manner in which this pretended revelation is compiled, is extremely clumsy and illiterate. Such phrases as the following are frequent:—"I saith unto them"—"these things had not ought to be"—"ye saith unto him"—"ye are like unto they." The mariner's compass is spoken of as having piloted these ancient Israelites upon their voyage, though well known not to have been applied as a nautical instrument until many ages later than the professed period. The Messiah is called by names not known at all to ancient Hebrews, and of well known Greek origin.

"It was about this time that one of the leaders of the Mormons, Sidney Rigdon, promulgated the abhorrent doctrine of plurality of wives, in imitation of Mohammed himself—a doctrine which Smith was regarded as greatly favouring. Smith now at the very height of his ambition, was put forward as a candidate for the Presidentship of the United States, and published what he termed 'General Smith's Views of the Government and Policy of the United States.' It is needless to say that his pretensions were regarded in the main with contempt. Soon after this, the accusation against Smith of promoting the 'spiritual wife' doctrine, sustained, as it was, by the affidavits of sixteen persons, led to the destruction by the Mormons of the newspaper which had published them, and thence to a serious conflict between the Mormons of Nauvoo and the surrounding inhabitants, in the course of which Joseph Smith and his brother were shot. The prophet's death gave to him a power, which it is probable his life, had it been prolonged, would have utterly prevented—he became enshrined and worshipped.

"After the death of Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon endeavoured to vault into the vacant chair. His reputation was, however, so low, that this was found to be impossible. He was expelled from the society, and Brigham Young was appointed the leader,—a post which he still holds.

An association has been formed in Scotland in aid of the "Society for Exploring and Evangelizing Central Africa, by means of Native Agency."

Sir Peregrine Maitland's Prize on Missions.

The sum of £1000 having been accepted by the University of Cambridge for the purpose of instituting a prize, to be called "Sir Peregrine Maitland's Prize," for an English essay on some subject connected with the propagation of the gospel through missionary exertions in India and other parts of the heathen world, the prize to be given once in every three years, the Vice-Chancellor gives notice that the prize will this year be given for the best essay on the following subject:—"The Religious History of the Sikhs, considered with especial reference to the Prospects of Christianity in North-West India." Sir Peregrine Maitland was a devoted friend of Christian missions, and a zealous promoter of the cause of Christ in India.

John Pounds, the founder of the Ragged Schools.

John Pounds, the cripple and the cobbler, yet, at the same time, one of nature's true nobility, was born in Portsmouth, in 1766. His father was a sawyer, employed in the royal dock-yard. At fifteen, young Pounds met with an accident, which disabled him for life. During the greater part of his benevolent career, he lived in a small weather-boarded tenement in St. Mary's Street, Portsmouth, where he might be seen every day, seated on his stool, mending shoes in the midst of his busy little school. One of his amusements was that of rearing singing-birds, jays, and parrots, which he so perfectly domesticated that they lived harmoniously with his cats and guinea-pigs. Often, it is said, might a canary-bird be seen perched upon one shoulder, and a cat upon the other. During the latter part of his life, however, when his scholars became so numerous, he was able to keep fewer of these domestic creatures. Poor as he was, and entirely dependent upon the hard labour of his hands, he nevertheless adopted a little cripple nephew, whom he educated and cared for with truly paternal love, and, in the end, established comfortably in life. It was out of this connection that his attempts and success in the work of education arose. He thought, in the first instance, that the boy would learn better with a companion; he obtained one, the son of a wretchedly poor mother; then another and another was added, and he found so much pleasure in his employment, and was the means thereby of effecting so much good, that, in the end, the number of his scholars amounted to about forty, including a dozen girls.

His humble workshop was about six feet by eighteen, in the midst of which he would sit, engaged in that labour by which he won his bread, and attending, at the same time, to the studies of the little crowd around him. So efficient was John Pounds' mode of education, to say nothing about its being perfectly gratuitous, that the candidates were always numerous. He, however, invariably gave the preference to the worst, as the poorest children—to the little "blackguards," as he called them. He has been known to follow such to the Town Quay, and offer them the bribe of a roasted potato if they would come to his school. His influence on these degraded children was extraordinary.

As a teacher, his manners were pleasant and facetious. He amused his "little blackguards" while he taught them. Many hundred persons, now living usefully and creditably in life, owe the whole formation of their