

R. C. EVANS AND THE MORMONS

By T. W. Williams.

Mr. R. C. Evans has recently published a screed entitled "Mormonism, or Latter Day Saintism." From a perusal of this pamphlet we conclude that Mr. Evans is fairly beside himself. His language indicates the state of his mind. We present herewith some of the expressions.

"Insinuations"; "half-truths"; "downright lying"; "win the confidence of the unsuspecting, glib public"; "beneath the notice of honest people"; "despicable hypocrite"; "guilty of misrepresenting all the facts of the case"; "making lies his refuge"; "his deception is made apparent"; "detestable warfare"; "stoop so low"; "palming a deception on the people"; "stupendous and colossal attempt to deceive".

A man claiming to be a minister of Jesus Christ should not so far forget the proprieties as to resort to such harangue. We refuse to reply in kind. Very frequently a man's attitude toward another is the reflect of his own position.

Mr. Evans takes exception to interviews appearing—one in the Star Weekly for December 7th, 1918, and the other in the Sunday World for December 14th. The Star article was headed "Latter Day Saints Not Mormons". The heading to the Toronto World article was "Latter Day Saints Fully Orthodox".

Mr. Evans in his recent pamphlet objects to the statements made. Let us examine.

Are They Mormons?

Benham, in his "Dictionary of Religions," page 720, under the heading "Mormon," says:

"Mormon is derived from the Gaelic *Mor*, meaning Great, and the Egyptian *Mon*, meaning Good. Thus, put together, meaning Great Good."

The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge has it: "*Mor*, in Gaelic, means Great. *Mon* is Egyptian, and means Good. The two put together mean Great Good."

Mr. Evans gives a purported quotation from Webster's Dictionary. I have a copy of Webster on my desk. Under the term "Mormon" we find this definition: "One of a sect in the United States who believe in polygamy." Reference is also made to the Encyclopedia Britannica. If Mr. Evans had possessed the courage to quote the Britannica, it would have proven the very opposite to his statement. Mr. Evans seeks to confuse the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints with the Mormon Church in Utah. The Encyclopedia Britannica clearly defines the difference. We quote:

"The power of the Latter Day Saints and Young's autocracy were threatened by the growth of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints which was formed in 1852 upon the announcement of the doctrine of polygamy, which declared that polygamy had been foisted upon the Church and that Brigham Young was an interloper." Volume 18, page 846.

Speaking of the Mormon Church, it is stated: "The doctrine of plural marriage was a disadvantage to the Church, and many converts transferred their allegiance to the Josephites or Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who always opposed polygamy." Ibid. pag 847.

"The Reorganized Church has twice been declared by United States Courts the legal successor of the Church founded by Joseph Smith, Jun.; it holds that 'the Doctrine of Polygamy, human sacrifice, or killing men to save them, Adam being God, Utah being Zion or the gathering place of the saints, are Doctrines of Devils.'" Ibid. page 847.

If Mr. Evans was an educated man he would realize that terms become modified in meaning with the transition of time. The term "Mormon" was a nick-name, applied to the Latter Day Saints by their enemies as early as 1830. This was long before polygamy was foisted upon the Church by Brigham Young. In the beginning, this nick-name meant a believer in the Book of Mormon. To-day, the world over, the term "Mormon" is a synonym for polygamy. Mr. Evans knows this.

The quotation of Joseph Smith referred to by Mr. Evans, wherein the Church was called the "Mormon" Church, and the doctrine referred to as "Mormonism", was made at the very beginning of the organization. Joseph Smith used the term according to its general meaning at that time. Later, the followers of Brigham Young practically accepted the term, whereas the Reorganized Church has persistently and continuously repudiated it.

On July the 19th, 1860, President Joseph Smith issued his first general epistle to the Church. It is headed: "The first General Epistle of the Presidency of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." This epistle is signed "Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." True Latter Day Saints Herald, Vol. 2, pp. 121-124.

On February 15th, 1917, Mr. Evans, in his correspondence with the Rev. J. A. McKenzie of this city, who had charged the Reorganized Church with being the Mormon Church, and Mr. Evans as being a Mormon, said: "I have the honor to be a credentialed representative of, namely, that the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is an incorporated body, that they have no connection with the Church known as the Brigamite Mormon Church in Utah." Evans vs. McKenzie, page 4.

Despicable Methods.

Mr. Evans continues:

"I despise the methods you have chosen to protect your people against what you are pleased to call the 'Mormon propaganda.'" Ibid. pp. 5, 6.

"The courts of the United States and Canada have drawn plainly the line of demarcation between the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and that of the apostate faction known as Utah Mormonism. The great encyclopedias have also shown that the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints have no affiliation with the the Utah Church. The Senate of the United States has heard some of the most eloquent Senators confirm our position on this matter; in fact, the civilized world knows that the Reorganized Church is a body of worshippers who are patriotic, peaceable and law-abiding citizens, and were it not for some—would-be—parsons, who think their craft is in danger, there would be no one try to misrepresent the people known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." Evans vs. McKenzie, pp. 4, 5.

Mr. Evans, in his pamphlet, "Why I Am a Latter Day Saint," says: "We call this the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints from the fact that God called His people saints, and that we live in the latter days." Page 7.

Mr. Evans continues: "He did not call them Roman Catholics, Protestants, Unitarian, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Trinitarians. 'Saints' they were—former day saints—and you will find this name referred to in the New Testament. If the Church of Jesus Christ is to be organized again in the latter days, then certainly they will be called Latter Day Saints, for the word 'Christian' is a nick-name." Sermons of R. C. Evans, p. 399.

Mr. Evans, in his book of sermons, says: "The Utah Mormon Church is absolutely separate and distinct from the Latter Day Saint Church, and that we differ from them on this question of polygamy wider than do the Lutheran, the Methodist, the Presbyterian or Baptist Church, and several others." Sermons of R. C. Evans, pp. 321, 322.

Again, Mr. Evans says: "To say that Brigham Young's Church is the Latter Day Saints Church, as organized by Joseph Smith, is absolutely false.

My closing thought is to show you, from Senator Burroughs' speech in Congress, that there is no affiliation whatever between the Latter Day Saints and the Utah Mormons."

Statements of U. S. Senators.

Senator Burrough said:

"The death of Joseph Smith, in 1844, spread demoralization throughout the entire membership of the Church and scattered its adherents in divers directions, and, for the time being, seemed to presage the complete overthrow of the organization. Recovering from their shock, the scattered band soon reappeared in various parts of the country, promulgated their doctrine, and set to work to reorganize their scattered forces, resulting finally in what is

known and recognized as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, presided over by Joseph Smith, a son of the prophet." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 339.

Mr. Evans makes the following quotation from Senator Dubois' speech before the same Senatorial Committee:

"There is a branch of the Church called the Josephites, who ought to be clearly separated in the minds of all the Senators from the Brighamite Mormons, . . . wherever they are, in whatever part of the country they are among our best citizens in all respects. They do not believe in polygamy and never practised polygamy." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 340.

Mr. Evans, in speaking on this point, said: "Thank God, the brain power of the United States, after spending thousands of dollars on that case, probing every point to get evidence, has shown that the Church established by Joseph Smith was pure and clean and right, and that Brigham Young apostatized from the faith, and that the Reorganized Church are patriotic, law-abiding citizens." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 340.

The United States Government, after "probing every point to get evidence," exhonored the Reorganized Church from any connection with Mormonism. Mr. Evans never discovered (?) anything until the Church instituted an investigation of his official work, and then he began to see things."

Mr. Evans, in his Book of Sermons, refers to the Dickhout case. Elder Dickhout had been fined in a local court for performing an illegal marriage, the magistrate contending that he had no right to officiate, being a minister of the Reorganized Church. The matter went on appeal before Chief Justice Armour, and the decision was reversed. Judge Armour said:

"We think it quite clear that this conviction cannot be maintained. The defendant was clearly a duly ordained minister of this religious body, and there is no doubt that it is a religious denomination within the words of the statute. Assuming that Christianity is the law of the land, in a sense, there is nothing contrary to Christianity in the tenets of this body." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 340.

In view of the foregoing, it is evident to every fair-minded man that the attempt of Mr. Evans to confuse the two churches, and to make it appear that the Reorganized Church is one with Mormonism, is undignified and unfair, and reveals the true animus back of his effort. Mr. Evans tried with every power at his command, to retain his hold on the Church in Toronto. Failing in this, he has resolved to overthrow the work of a lifetime. This he cannot do. He is condemned by his own words.

Are They Orthodox?

Mr. Evans takes exception to the statement, "Our Church is distinctly orthodox." He then adds: "Webster defines the word 'orthodox' to mean 'sound in opinion or doctrine,' in religious doctrines, hence holding Christian Faith as formulated in the great church creeds or confessions."

Here is the definition which Webster really gives: "Orthodox—sound in opinion or doctrine, holding the Christian Doctrines taught in the Scriptures." We affirm that the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is orthodox, and in teaching, organization, and practice, is in harmony with the New Testament Scriptures. Our entire Epitome of Faith is based on the Holy Scriptures, and our members are admonished that any teaching or practice which does violence to the same should be rejected. That Mr. Evans is fully aware of this, I quote from his own lips, when he was a minister of the Church:

"Let me say to you, after a close following of this Church for nearly thirty years now, I have failed to discover a single thing in the teaching of this Church that need bring a blush of shame to the most modest maiden. It is the fullness of the Gospel restored in the latter times, in the hour of God's judgment. God has gone according to the prophecies, sent His angel; priesthood has again been restored, and the Church organized upon the original platform. with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, bishops, teachers, deacons and elders; teaching the doctrine as found in the New Testament, by which we may enter into the Kingdom of God; faith in the Father, Son and Spirit;

repentance; baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the blessing of children; for the ordination to the ministry and for the healing of the sick, and the teaching of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment; the Millennial Reign, and all that Jesus taught and established; the same cause producing the same effect; the signs following the believer, and not only the signs that the sick should be healed, but that men will speak with new tongues and work miracles, but there is another sign that always followed the believers, and does yet, "He that liveth Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "They hated me," said the Lord; "they will also hate you." "Marvel not if the world hate you, it hated me before it hated you." Latter-Day Polygamy—Its Origin, by R. C. Evans. Pp. 30, 31.

"This Church has been evilly spoken of the world over, and thousands still think that the Latter Day Saint Church and the Utah Mormon Church are one and the same. I have to disabuse your minds of that and show you clearly from their own books and ours, that we differ radically, and, as one has stated just lately, the greatest opposition that the Utah Mormon Church has ever received has been at the hands of the ministers, or the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 351.

Wilful Misrepresentation.

"Now, what are you going to do with those pious persons who in public and private tell the people that the Utah Church and the Latter Day Saint Church are one and the same? There is no excuse for this wilful misrepresentation of the history. That those learned men are ignorant of what Congress has done, and what the Courts of Canada have performed regarding this matter, is hard to believe." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 350.

"There are quite a number of people who still cling to the thought that the True Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Utah Mormon Church are one and the same. I may here say that there is as great a difference between the True Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the apostate faction known as the Utah Mormon Church as there is between truth and error, between light and darkness, between right and wrong." Sermons, page 342.

"Now, the brain part of the United States, the best judges of the Dominion of Canada, the prophecies of the Bible, and the history of both churches should surely have some weight with you, and I trust that from to-night no one will ever say that the Latter Day Saint Church has anything to do with Utah Mormonism. They are an offshoot, heretics and apostates from the faith, and are so decided to be by the Bible, the history of Canada, the courts of Canada, the history of the United States, the history of the Church, and by anyone who is intelligent enough to investigate the matter." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 341.

Again, Mr. Evans, in his defence of the Reorganized Church, said:

"It is beyond the power of men and women to see the difference between the Church of God, as organized by God in this last dispensation, and that organized over there in the centuries ago among the hills of Judea." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 219.

"The faith of the Former Day Saints and the Latter Day Saints is fully supported by the Bible." Sermons, page 420.

"I have tried to show you in previous lectures that Joseph Smith organized the Church according to the laws of the land, and in direct fulfilment of the prophecy contained in the Bible, and that in doctrine, organization and blessing it was in complete harmony with the Church of Christ as described in the New Testament." Sermons of R. C. Evans, page 331.

The reader will please bear in mind that Mr. Evans has not one particle of evidence in his possession which should cause him to reverse his utterances as quoted above. The one thing which caused Mr. Evans' change of attitude was the fact that a Committee of Investigation came to Toronto, and that Mr. Evans preferred to withdraw from the Church rather than meet an investigation. Mr. Evans cannot meet his own record or refute his former testimony. He is "weighed in the Balance and found wanting."