

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

FOR the last fifty years the "Manuscript Found" has been the staple stock in trade of almost every objector to the genuineness of the Book of Mormon. When every other imaginable theory and hypothesis were overthrown, this reputed romance was the unfailing refuge to which they fled. It could not be found, so their baseless assertions could not be disproved by an appeal to itself. But unfortunately for all such who make lies their refuge, this long-lost treasure has, at last, most unexpectedly to all parties, been brought to light, and is now given to the world with all its inanities, absurdities and inaccuracies. After carefully perusing both books, we believe we can truthfully assert that there is not one sentence, one incident, or one proper name common to both, and that the oft boasted similarity in matter and nomenclature is utterly false. No two books could be more unlike; in fact Mr. Spaulding's "Manuscript Story" no more resembles the Book of Mormon than "Gulliver's Travels" is like the Gospel of St. Matthew.

The history of the discovery of the Manuscript can be told in a few words. D. P. Hurlbut, an apostate, the originator of the fabrication that the Book of Mormon originated in Mr. Spaulding's tale, wrote a bitter assault on the Latter-day Saints in 1836, entitled "Mormonism Unveiled," which was published in the name of, and by E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio. During the time Hurlbut was gathering material for this work, he obtained from the family of the then deceased clergyman the original of the "Manuscript Story," but discovering that it would, if published, prove fatal to his assumptions, he suppressed it; and from that time it was entirely lost sight of until about two years ago, when a Mr. L. L. Rice,

residing at Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, found it among a numerous collection of miscellaneous papers which he had received from Mr. Howe, the publisher of Hurlbut's "Mormonism Unveiled," when in 1839-40, he, with his partner, purchased from that gentleman the business, etc., of the Painesville *Telegraph*.

In 1884 President James H. Fairchild, of Oberlin College, Ohio, was paying a visit to Mr. Rice, and he suggested that the latter look through his numerous papers, in the hope of finding amongst them some anti-slavery documents of value. In his search he discovered a package marked in pencil on the outside, "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," which, to their surprise, on perusal, proved to be the veritable, long-lost romance of Dr. Spaulding, to which so much undeserved importance had been ignorantly or maliciously given. After retaining the manuscript some time Mr. Rice presented it to Oberlin College, but before doing so, made an exact copy, with all its peculiarities of style, errors of grammar and orthography, alterations, erasures, etc., which copy he placed in our hands with the distinct understanding that it should be printed and published exactly as he had copied it.

We have endeavored to faithfully carry out our part of the agreement, and now present to the world this wishy-washy production, with all its peculiarities of spelling and grammar, whose only conceivable value is that it utterly dispels and demolishes a long existing error, and compels those who will not acknowledge the divinity of the Book of Mormon to seek in other directions plausible excuses for rejecting its truths.

Those portions of the work altered or erased by Mr. Spaulding have, in the following pages, been printed in italics and between brackets.