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## Orson Pratt's [An] Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions: A Seminal Scottish Imprint in Early Mormon History

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In September 1840, on the eve of his twentieth-ninth birthday and four months after arriving in Edinburgh, early missionary and leader Orson Pratt published one of the most important pamphlets issued in Mormonism during the nineteenth century. As part of an early Mormon mission to the British Isles, Pratt was assigned to Scotland to announce and defend the claims of Joseph Smith Jr. and the newly established Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1830). Building on earlier missionary work in western Scotland, he hired a public hall (the Whitefield Chapel) for six months upon arriving in Edinburgh and on 24 May preached the first Latter-day Saint public discourse in the city. Converts came slowly, and it was probably to boost his potential audience that he decided to prepare a work for the press.

It was the Edinburgh firm of Ballantyne and Hughes that issued his [An] *Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions, and of the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records* in an edition of three thousand copies. Although the church Pratt represented was already ten years old, no account of Joseph Smith's First Vision had yet appeared in print. This Edinburgh imprint was the first to do so. In addition, this seminal work contained an important summary of Mormon beliefs in the form of a logical summary of "articles of faith" that would shape the better-known list Joseph Smith himself would attach to his famous letter to John Wentworth of the *Chicago Democrat* in 1842.

Orson Pratt was clearly at home in the intellectual world of Edinburgh.

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He would later publish works on mathematics and astronomy in addition to a large number of imprints explaining and defending Mormon doctrines. Much of his later work can be seen as dating from his early experiences in Scotland, both in content and in general world-view.

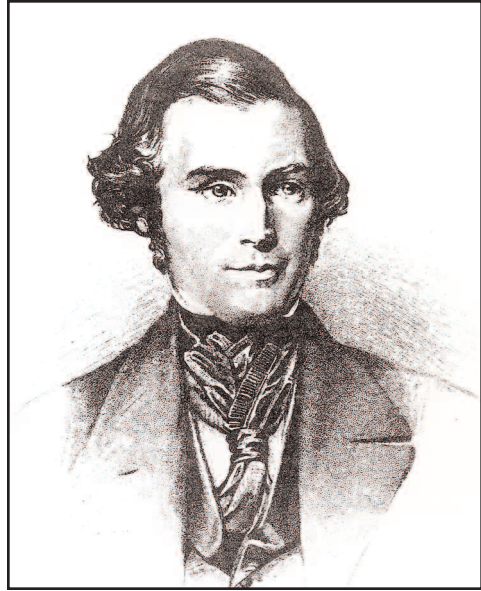
This article will take a close look at this important Scottish imprint by focusing on several topics. First, a short biography of Orson Pratt's life will provide the larger context for the discussion. Second, I will examine his Scottish mission with particular emphasis on this imprint. Finally, I will access the larger impact of this work as well as Pratt's natural theology as it influenced early Mormon polemics.

### **Orson Pratt: Summary of His Life<sup>2</sup>**

The most prolific and influential writer in the early Church of Jesus Christ was Orson Pratt. He authored over thirty works on topics that were both religious and scientific. Reflecting back on the first hundred years of the Church's history, Mormon historian John Henry Evans observed, "In the first century of 'Mormonism' there is no leader of the intellectual stature of Orson Pratt."<sup>3</sup> Even before his death in 1881, Pratt was held in high esteem by Church members. Edward Tullidge in 1876 called him the "Paul of Mormonism," and at his funeral, fellow Apostle and later Church President Wilford Woodruff asserted that Pratt had written "more upon the gospel and upon science than any other man in the Church."<sup>4</sup> In the first scholarly study of Orson Pratt's life, the author found that Pratt "did more to formulate the Mormon idea of God, the religious basis for polygamy (polygyny), the pre-existence of spirits, the doctrine of gathering, the resurrection, and eternal salvation than any other person in the church, with the exception of Joseph Smith. . . . Due to his efforts . . . the odds and ends of Joseph Smith's utterances were constructed and expanded into a philosophic system."<sup>5</sup>

Orson was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ on his nineteenth birthday, 19 September 1830, by his brother Parley. The Church had been institutionally incorporated only five months earlier in New York. Orson was born in Hartford, Washington County, New York, to Jared Pratt and Charity Dickinson, the fifth of six children. In about 1815, his family moved to New Lebanon, Columbia County, New York, where he attended school. His parents taught him to read the Bible, although he could not remember attending church more than a few times.<sup>6</sup> During the winter of 1829–30, he spent four months at a boarding school studying geography, grammar, and surveying. Coincidentally, it was while studying science and math that he began to seek a religious experience, which he found when his own brother Parley introduced him to the Book of Mormon and claims of Joseph Smith

to new revelation and restored priesthood authority.<sup>7</sup> Orson then traveled to Fayette, New York, to meet Joseph Smith. After being ordained an elder, he began a lifetime of missionary work.<sup>8</sup> By active participation, he experienced most of the history of the early Church, managed to continue his studies in math, and even undertook the study of Hebrew. In 1835, he was called to be a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a group of Church leaders who came to be second in authority to Joseph Smith himself.



Orson Pratt, ca 1850.

*Photograph courtesy of LDS Church Archives.*

In 1839, these Apostles were sent on a mission to the British Isles. Under the leadership of Brigham Young, these men expanded and strengthened an earlier 1837 mission to England. Arriving in Liverpool in April 1840, he and his companions baptized about six thousand people during the next twelve months.<sup>9</sup> Orson was assigned to Scotland.<sup>10</sup> He first organized a branch of the Church in Paisley, and then, traveling with Samuel Mulliner, he went to Edinburgh, the home of Mulliner's parents. He quickly had handbills printed to announce his presence and to advertise his planned lectures.<sup>11</sup> He preached his first public sermon on 24 May and in September published his first pamphlet. By the time he left Edinburgh on 30 March 1841, he had converted over two hundred people in the city.

He returned to find his people settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, a fast-growing religious community just up the Mississippi River from St. Louis. Here he participated in the activities of a growing community. Following the murder of Joseph Smith in June 1844, Orson and his fellow Apostles asserted their right to lead the church. Prior to traveling west to the Great Basin with his exiled people, he found time to study "algebra, geometry, trigonometry, conic sections, differential and integral calculus, astronomy, and most of the physical sciences" without the aid of a teacher.<sup>12</sup> His interest in math and astronomy found an outlet in his two *Prophetic Almanacs*, one published in 1845 and one in 1846.<sup>13</sup>

As it turned out, Orson Pratt was the first member of the advance company of Mormon pioneers to enter the Salt Lake Valley. Several days later, using his surveying skills, he established the baseline of the new settlement. He preached one of the first sermons in the valley that applied Isaiah's prophecy of establishing "Zion in the tops of the mountains" (see Isaiah 52:7–8) as applying also to the Latter-day Saint settlements in the Rocky Mountains, an identification that has remained in Mormon thought. In 1848, he was sent back to England to preside over the Church's European Mission. While overseeing the mission and directing immigration to America, he also wrote a series of fifteen pamphlets and reissued his Edinburgh pamphlet.<sup>14</sup>

Upon his return to Utah in October 1851, he was assigned to teach at the newly established University of Deseret, delivering twelve lectures on astronomy that winter in Salt Lake City.<sup>15</sup> When Brigham Young decided to make public the Mormon practice of plural marriage, he assigned Orson Pratt to give the public address on 29 August 1852, following which Orson was sent on another mission to publish a defense of the doctrine in *The Seer*, in Washington, D.C.<sup>16</sup> Pratt's series on "Celestial Marriage" remains the most comprehensive discussion of the doctrine of plural marriage in Mormon literature. During this time, he also managed to obtain a manuscript copy of Lucy Mack Smith's memoirs, which he sent to England for publication. This family memoir by the mother of the founding prophet was the first published Mormon biography when it appeared in October 1853.<sup>17</sup>

In 1856, Orson was again assigned to lead the European Mission, and he produced another eight pamphlets.<sup>18</sup> In 1864, he served additional missions in Austria and Britain; and, in May 1866, in England, he published his *New and Easy Method of Solution of the Cubic and Biquadratic Equations*. In 1876, he prepared a new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, a new edition of the Pearl of Great Price in 1878, and in 1879, he edited a new edition of the Book of Mormon (in verses with textual notes) and published his *Key to the Universe* at Liverpool.<sup>19</sup> By this time, he was suffering from diabetes. He preached his last discourse on 18 September 1881 and died on 3 October in Salt Lake City. Such a short summary of such a rich life hardly does justice to his contributions, but for our purposes here, it will provide a context.

### The Edinburgh Pamphlet

In a letter of 24 September 1840 from Edinburgh to fellow Apostle George A. Smith, Orson Pratt wrote:

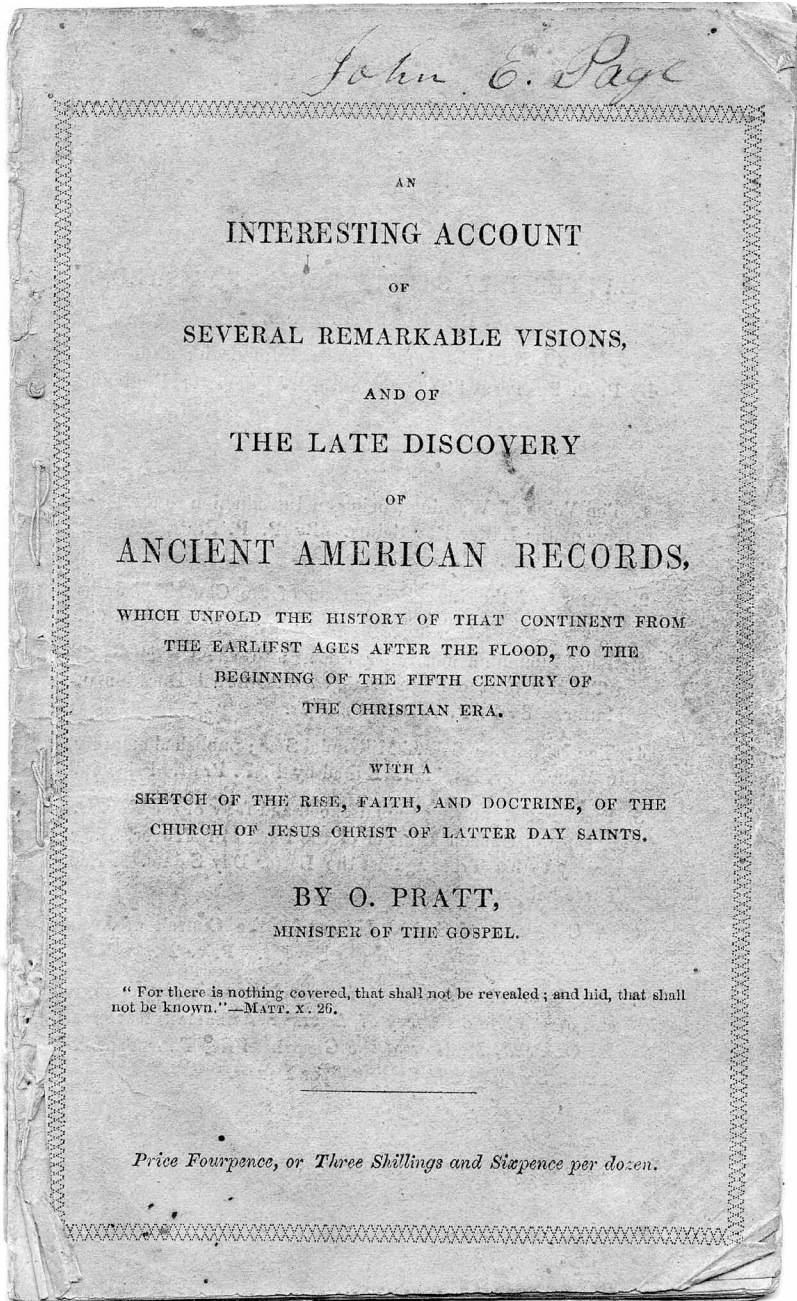
I shall be at conference [in Manchester] on the 6th of Oct., if the Lord will. I shall bring about 2000 pamphlets with me which are now in the press. It contains 24

pages with a cover & the title page reads as follows “An Interesting account of several remarkable visions and [of] the late discovery of Ancient American Records which unfold the history of that continent from the earliest ages after the flood to the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian era; with a sketch of the rise, faith & doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.” Price 4d. single copy or 25 shillings per hundred.<sup>20</sup>

It is presumed that he kept about a thousand copies in Edinburgh, thus making this first printing a three-thousand-copy run. This first printing exists in two states, both identical except for the presence or absence of the incorrect article *A* at the beginning of the title. As soon as the error was caught, the *A* apparently was simply eliminated. But since the *An* in the title does appear in the title on the yellow printed wrappers in which it was issued, we can assume the *An* was what he intended for the title page.<sup>21</sup> It was printed by the Edinburgh firm of John A. Ballantyne and John Hughes, who operated at “Paul’s Work” from 1839–47.<sup>22</sup> This printing shop was actually located fairly close to where Pratt obtained living quarters in Edinburgh, and the verso of the front wrapper of the printed work indicates “Latter-Day Saint’s Books for Sale, by Miss Sutherland, No. 40, North Richmond Street, Edinburgh.”

Pratt’s pamphlet filled an important gap in Mormon missionary literature. Doctrinal essays had begun to appear in early Mormon newspapers, but not until 1836 was the first tract published in Toronto, Canada;<sup>23</sup> and in 1837, Parley P. Pratt issued his influential *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People . . .* in New York.<sup>24</sup> Following the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints from Missouri in 1838–39, some of the first Mormon histories were published. The focus of these works was on the tragic Missouri experiences, and the publications were issued in an effort to seek redress for losses and to assist with active efforts to change public opinion about the Latter-day Saint religion.<sup>25</sup> Little had been published either in Mormon newspapers or tracts that focused on the founding visions of the Restoration, and when manuscripts were published, they dealt with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, not the First Vision.

Orson’s Edinburgh pamphlet can be divided into five sections. The first provides the dramatic account of Joseph Smith’s First Vision in 1820 (pages 3–5), the first time it appeared in print. The second part describes the appearances of the angel Moroni (the last prophet-historian in the Book of Mormon text) to Joseph Smith in 1823 and of the subsequent reception of the Book of Mormon plates in 1827 (pages 6–12). This material was taken from the historical letters Oliver Cowdery had sent to William W. Phelps, an early Mormon newspaper editor, which had been printed in the *Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate* in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1834–5.<sup>26</sup> The third



section (pages 12–14) summarizes Joseph Smith's work in translating the plates (mostly during a three-month period in 1829), following the account of Parley P. Pratt published in Manchester, England, in the recently begun *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* of June 1840.<sup>27</sup> Then comes a summary of the Book of Mormon and the testimonies of the three and eight witnesses (pages 14–23). The fifth section (pages 24–31) provides “a sketch of the faith and doctrine” of the Latter-day Saints that included fifteen unnumbered paragraphs summarizing the main doctrines and beliefs of the Church. This pamphlet was an ideal summary of the basic claims of the early Mormon missionaries.

Pamphlet literature did not emerge in the Church until missionaries began to move out of the small villages and hamlets of New England and the Old Northwest. This was occurring by 1836. But until then, the message was spread by word of mouth or through a personal reading of the Book of Mormon or through access to a Mormon newspaper.<sup>28</sup> Research has shown that although these early missionaries told of angels and gold plates and heavenly messengers restoring priesthood authority, very few people were privy to the story of the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820. Prior to Orson Pratt's Edinburgh pamphlet, the account had not appeared in print, although there were at least three earlier manuscript accounts of it.<sup>29</sup> There are, of course, tantalizing references to early visions through oral presentations by Joseph Smith before 1840. William W. Phelps, in a letter to his wife Sally on 2 June 1835, spoke of hearing the Prophet speak for three and a half hours on the topic “This Is My Beloved Son: Hear Ye Him,” but Phelps gave his wife no details!<sup>30</sup> Parley P. Pratt, writing from Kirtland, Ohio, to members of the Church in Canada in 1836, described a meeting he had attended:

One week before word was Publicly given that Br. J. Smith Jr. would give a relating of the coming forth of the Records, and also of the rise of the church and of his Experience accordingly a vast concourse assembled at an Early hour[.] Every seat was crowded and 4 or 5 hundred People stood up in the Aisles[.] Br. S[mith] gave the history of these things relating many particularly of the manner of his first visions, &c[.] The Spirit and Power of God was upon him in Bearing testimony Insomuch that many if not most of the Congregation was in tears—as for my Self I can say that all the reasonings in uncertainty and all the conclusions drawn from the writings of others . . . however great in themselves Dwindle into insignificance when compared with Living testimony when your Eyes and your Ears hear from the Living oracles of God.<sup>31</sup>

But the account in Orson Pratt's publication contains unique elements, and we must ask, Where did he get them? Apparently, Joseph Smith himself was the source, and his important but poorly documented visit to the East

## FACTS

IN RELATION TO THE LATE DISCOVERY OF

### ANCIENT AMERICAN RECORDS.

MR JOSEPH SMITH, jun., who made the following important discovery, was born in the town of Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont, on the 23d of December, A.D. 1805. When ten years old, his parents, with their family, moved to Palmyra, New York; in the vicinity of which he resided for about eleven years, the latter part in the town of Manchester. Cultivating the earth for a livelihood was his occupation, in which he employed the most of his time. His advantages, for acquiring literary knowledge, were exceedingly small; hence, his education was limited to a slight acquaintance with two or three of the common branches of learning. He could read without much difficulty, and write a very imperfect hand; and had a very limited understanding of the ground rules of arithmetic. These were his highest and only attainments; while the rest of those branches, so universally taught in the common schools throughout the United States, were entirely unknown to him. When somewhere about fourteen or fifteen years old, he began seriously to reflect upon the necessity of being prepared for a future state of existence: but how, or in what way, to prepare himself, was a question, as yet, undetermined in his own mind: he perceived that it was a question of infinite importance, and that the salvation of his soul depended upon a correct understanding of the same. He saw, that if he understood not the

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Coast of the United States in 1839–40 was the occasion when Orson Pratt first heard of this vision. It was while the Apostles were on the East Coast preparing to depart for their British mission that they heard Joseph Smith more publicly describe his earliest religious experiences.<sup>32</sup> Other published records from this critical period also reveal what Joseph was teaching more publicly during this East Coast visit. Samuel Bennett's 1840 pamphlet describes God as having a physical body like His children and hints that marriage can be eternal.<sup>33</sup> Benjamin Winchester, in a reply to an attack on some of the things Joseph Smith was preaching, spoke of a Mormon belief in a premortal existence.<sup>34</sup> And Parley P. Pratt issued a pamphlet in New York just before he left for England in which he spoke of the natural elements being eternal and the belief that the world was not created out of nothing, an early statement of Mormon cosmology.<sup>35</sup> Orson Pratt's Edinburgh pamphlet came out of the same milieu.<sup>36</sup>

No doubt the following was Orson Pratt's firsthand report of Joseph Smith's youthful search for a true church:

When somewhere about fourteen or fifteen years old, he began seriously to reflect upon the necessity of being prepared for a future state of existence: but how, or in what way, to prepare himself, was a question, as yet, undetermined in his own mind: he perceived that it was a question of infinite importance, and that the salvation of his soul depended upon a correct understanding of the same. He saw, that if he understood not the way, it would be impossible to walk in it, except by chance; and the thought of resting his hopes of eternal life upon chance, or uncertainties, was more than he could endure. If he went to the religious denominations to seek information, each one pointed to its particular tenets, saying—"This is the way, walk ye in it;" while, at the same time, the doctrines of each were, in many respects, in direct opposition to one another. It, also, occurred to his mind, that God was not the author of but one doctrine and therefore could not acknowledge but one denomination as his church; and that such denomination must be a people, who believe, and teach, that one doctrine (whatever it may be,) and build upon the same. He then reflected upon the immense number of doctrines, now, in the world, which had given rise to many hundreds of different denominations. The great question to be decided in his mind, was—if any one of these denominations be the Church of Christ, which one is it? Until he could be satisfied, in relation to this question, he could not rest contented. . . . To decide, without any positive and definite evidence, on which he could rely, upon a subject involving the future welfare of his soul, was revolting to his feelings. The only alternative, that seemed to be left to him, was to read the Scriptures, and endeavour to follow their directions. He, accordingly, commenced perusing the sacred pages of the Bible, with sincerity, believing the things that he read. His mind soon caught hold of the following passage:—"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James 1:5. . . . This was cheering information to him. . . . It was like a light shining forth in a dark place, to guide him to the path in which he should walk. . . . He, therefore, retired to a secret place, in a grove, but a short distance from his father's house, and knelt down, and began to call upon the Lord.

At first he was severely tempted by the powers of darkness, which endeavoured to overcome him; but he continued to seek for deliverance, until darkness gave way from his mind; and he was enabled to pray, in fervency of the spirit, and in faith. And, while thus pouring out his soul, anxiously desiring an answer from God, he, at length, saw a very bright and glorious light in the heavens above; which, at first, seemed to be at a considerable distance. He continued praying, while the light appeared to be gradually descending towards him; and, as it drew nearer, it increased in brightness, and magnitude, so that, by the time that it reached the tops of the trees, the whole wilderness, for some distance around, was illuminated in the most glorious and brilliant manner. He expected to have seen the leaves and boughs of the trees consumed, as soon as the light came in contact with them; but, perceiving that it did not produce that effect, he was encouraged with the hopes of being able to endure its presence. It continued descending, slowly, until it rested upon the earth, and he was enveloped in the midst of it. When it first came upon him, it produced a peculiar sensation throughout his whole system; and, immediately, his mind was caught away, from the natural objects with which he was surrounded; and he was enraptured in a heavenly vision, and saw two glorious personages, who exactly resembled each other in their features or likeness. He was informed, that his sins were forgiven. He was also informed upon the subjects which had for some time previously agitated his mind, viz.—that all the religious denominations were believing in incorrect doctrines; and, consequently, that none of them was acknowledged of God, as his church and kingdom. And he was expressly commanded, to go not after them; and he received a promise that the true doctrine—the fulness of the gospel, should, at some future time, be made known to him; after which, the vision withdrew, leaving his mind in a state of calmness and peace, indescribable.<sup>37</sup>

Several things are apparent in this account. The youth and religiosity of the young Joseph Smith are obvious, but what also strikes the reader is the physicality and concreteness of the religious experience he describes. In his first pamphlet, Orson Pratt is led to emphasize the rational and natural elements of the visions of his prophetic leader. It is almost Baconian in its rational depiction of the physical setting of the vision. Such an emphasis remained in his work—in fact, it would be the hallmark of Orson Pratt's natural theology.

Following his description of the First Vision, Pratt then provided an account of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon—again, a heavenly messenger appeared to Joseph Smith and again the physical reality of metal plates and witnesses to the literal existence of those plates are presented. This account borrowed directly from the published account of the main scribe for the Book of Mormon translation—Oliver Cowdery—who was one of the major witnesses to the existence of the plates and the angel. Finally, Orson listed the fundamental beliefs of his religion. Thus, the concluding section contains, in succinct paragraphs, the major articles of faith of the religion he represented in Scotland. Orson Pratt's listing lies midway between those that appeared in earlier works of his brother Parley and the more famous listing by Joseph Smith in 1842. Although Mormonism is not

a creedal church, there have appeared throughout its history attempts by individuals to summarize or systematize, in short form, the fundamental points of belief or doctrine. And though all the aspects of this need not concern us here, the specific antecedents for the Edinburgh pamphlet must.<sup>38</sup>

Orson's brother, Parley, had traveled to Michigan following the Mormon expulsion from the state of Missouri in 1838–39. Following instructions from Joseph Smith, he prepared a history of the Mormon Missouri experience, which was published in Detroit under the title, *History of the Late Persecutions Inflicted by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons* (Detroit: Dawson and Bates, Printers, 1839).<sup>39</sup> Parley reissued this work, with additional material, in New York City in 1840 prior to his leaving on a mission to the British Isles. The New York edition, retitled *Late Persecutions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, included a sketch of the rise and history and doctrines of the Church and included a summary of beliefs.<sup>40</sup> A short time later, when Parley was in Washington, D.C., he took the material at the end of the 1840 printing and issued it as a separate work: *An Address . . . to the Citizens of Washington*.<sup>41</sup> It was from this work that Orson Pratt drew for the concluding section of his Edinburgh pamphlet.

But Orson expanded and systematized the list by Parley, and the language in Orson's work found its way into the list Joseph Smith appended to his famous letter to John Wentworth.<sup>42</sup> Although the association with Joseph Smith assured the initial primacy of the Wentworth list and although the fact that this material was added to the fourth volume of Mormon scripture, the Pearl of Great Price, which was printed in 1851 (canonized in 1880), most Latter-day Saints make the association only with Joseph Smith. But again, it was Orson Pratt's Edinburgh work that was probably the immediate source for the wording found in the Wentworth letter.

### Orson Pratt's Natural Theology

Enough has been said to suggest that in his writings, Orson Pratt systematized and dissected his religious beliefs. It was, I suggest, his direct and rationally argued positions that early Mormon converts found so appealing. In a missionary church with no professional clergy, such systematizing was bound to exert a major influence. There is little question that Orson Pratt's writings were important tools in the Mormon missionary work in the British Isles that saw over sixty thousand individuals join by 1887, with another twenty thousand from the Scandinavian countries during the same period. In both areas, Orson Pratt's works were printed and read, especially when we consider that the center of Mormon publishing for much of the nineteenth century was Liverpool and that it was from England that Mormon mission-

aries in places like South Africa, India, and Australia were supplied with their own religious literature.<sup>43</sup>

Pratt's early training in surveying, mathematics, and bookkeeping reinforced his inclination for exactness and precision.<sup>44</sup> Mormons have sometimes made extravagant claims about his stature in non-Mormon scientific circles in mathematics and astronomy. Levi Edgar Young claimed that Pratt's works were even used as textbooks in England, Germany, and France, a claim mainly about his major published mathematical work, *New and Easy Method of Solution of the Cubic and Biquadratic Equations* (London and Liverpool, 1866). Pratt also published or wrote other mathematical works, contributed several articles to mathematical publications, and completed unpublished manuscripts on differential calculus and algebra. These works certainly demonstrate better-than-average skills in higher math, but Pratt cannot be considered a great mathematician. His most important contribution in these areas, as Edward R. Hogan has suggested, was his role as science teacher and educator on the Mormon frontier.<sup>45</sup> When we consider the great disadvantages he worked under, his work remains impressive.

Pratt's interest in mathematics led him to astronomy where he found in both fields the same evidence of God's existence and designs as contemporary scientist Benjamin Stilliman (1779–1864) found in his study of geology and chemistry, "a transcript of the divine Character."<sup>46</sup> Whether Pratt was aware of it, his own approach to nature was common among American thinkers by the 1820s. Identified as Baconianism, it was a thorough-going empiricism that had been borrowed from the Scottish Realists who believed that God spoke to humanity through scripture *and* nature, an attempt by orthodox Protestants to find a satisfactory answer to the challenges of the Enlightenment.<sup>47</sup>

Like many of his contemporaries, Orson Pratt was also a natural theologian whose religious views were held to be as empirical as his scientific observations. As Herbert Hovenkamp suggests, these conservative Protestants maintained that God created nature, that the evidence of His creativity is obvious everywhere, and that God provided equally reliable information about Himself in the Bible.<sup>48</sup> Although such beliefs would be seriously challenged during the second half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that Pratt was nurtured on these assumptions during the formative years he studied math, science, and religion. No doubt his time in Edinburgh was a significant influence on his world view as well.

In an address to the Nauvoo Lyceum on 19 November 1842,<sup>49</sup> following his return from Scotland, he posed the question, "Is there sufficient evidence in the works of Nature to prove the existence of a Supreme Being?" The contents of his later works suggest he argued strongly in the affirmative.

Throughout his life, Pratt combined science with theology; each gave support and assurance to the other. His first printed piece on astronomy appeared in the Nauvoo *Times and Seasons* in 1843, and his observations of the heavens continued throughout the rest of his life. His *Prophetic Almanac* for 1845 and 1846 provided outlets for his interest in astronomy (he played down the usual emphasis on astrology), as did his series of twelve lectures of 1851–52 in the Salt Lake Valley. These lectures were published in the *Deseret News* in 1854 and were expanded in a later series in early 1871. They provide the background for his principal scientific work, *The Key to the Universe*, published in 1879.<sup>50</sup> In these published works, Pratt most clearly revealed his natural theology. Woven through them is his central belief that “the study of science is the study of something eternal. If we study astronomy, we study the works of God.”<sup>51</sup>

In both his scientific and religious works, Pratt provides the most complete attempt in early Mormonism to establish a vast teleological argument for God's existence. “Nothing is calculated to inspire the mind of man with a more profound reverence for the Great author of nature than the contemplations of his marvelous works. For the exact mathematical adjustments of the various forces of nature—the consummate wisdom and skill exhibited in every department of the universe, accessible to finite minds—the omnipotent power and grandeur displayed in the construction of the magnificent machinery of creation—proclaim the majesty and glory of Him who formed and governs the mighty fabric.”<sup>52</sup>

The Scottish astronomer Charles P. Smyth's 1864 work, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*, sought to reveal the divine time line of history through mathematical measurement of the Great Pyramid.<sup>53</sup> Orson Pratt read Smyth's work and thought he could, using the same math, prove that it foretold the date of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (6 April 1830).<sup>54</sup>

Of course, Orson Pratt's science must be viewed in the context of Mormon theology, which was strongly materialistic and intensely teleological. God was material, inside space and time, as were His creations.<sup>55</sup> Creation was organization from unorganized matter (not *ex nihilo*), and the laws that governed the universe were eternal, not superseded by God or His human children.<sup>56</sup> Pratt's pamphlet, *The Absurdities of Immaterialism* (1849), remains a classic statement on Mormon materialism.

Pratt's greatest impact upon Mormonism came through his clearly and precisely written theological studies. His works were printed in such large editions that they are generally considered “common” rare books today. Within each work, he moved carefully from one point to another, gradually developing his position with the same exactness he would have used in solv-

ing a mathematical equation. More than anything else, a concern for definitiveness gave his works a finality that early Mormons found reassuring in an unstable world, and his ability to simplify—to reduce things to their lowest common denominator—was especially appreciated by missionaries defending the faith throughout the world.<sup>57</sup>

## Conclusion

All of Orson Pratt's religious pamphlets grew out of a missionary context. His first work, *[An] Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions*, set the basic pattern. This first pamphlet outlined the essentials, and the rest of his tracts expanded these basic positions—they filled out, we might say, the implications of the ideas he addresses in the 1840 work. With logic and biblical proof-texts, he challenged his readers by asserting throughout that they had only two alternatives—either Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon were divinely inspired or they were frauds. The evidence Pratt marshaled suggested that only the first alternative was possible for the honest seeker.<sup>58</sup> This simplifying of complex questions and issues to either/or answers had obvious benefits for missionary work and goes a long way to explain the popularity of Pratt's pamphlets.

By the time Pratt finished his second series of pamphlets, few, if any, doctrines were left to write about. Printed regularly in fairly large editions, it was in his pamphlets that the key Mormon doctrines of the gathering, pre-mortal existence, plural marriage, eternal progression, the eternal nature of matter, and several central millennial beliefs were articulated and analyzed. He was clearly the first systematizer of Mormon thought. Although Pratt's writings do not constitute a *Summa Theologia*, they do go further in that direction than any other writer's works in the nineteenth century.<sup>59</sup> All the above suggests that his early experiences in Edinburgh helped shape his world view and his writings and certainly would have given him a kind of international confirmation to his own views of science. And these have, in turn, helped shape what has recently been called a new world religion.<sup>60</sup>

## Notes

1. An earlier version of this article was given as an address at the conference on "The Production of Culture: The Scottish Press in a National and International Context, 1800–1880," University of Stirling, Scotland, 28–29 July 2001.

2. The biographical material that follows is summarized from David J. Whittaker, "Orson Pratt: Prolific Pamphleteer," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15, no. 3 (Autumn 1982): 27–41.

3. John Henry Evans, *The Heart of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, for

the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Department of Education, 1930), 411.

4. Edward Tullidge, *Life of Brigham Young* (New York: n.p., 1876), appendix, 74; and Wilford Woodruff, in *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 43, no. 45 (7 November 1881): 707.

5. T. Edgar Lyon, "Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader" (MA thesis, University of Chicago, 1932), 104, 99.

6. The fullest biography is Breck England, *The Life and Thought of Orson Pratt* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985). The extant personal papers and journals are housed in the LDS Church Archives, Family and Church History Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). A very useful compilation of the Pratt journals is Elden J. Watson, comp., *The Orson Pratt Journals* (Salt Lake City: Elden J. Watson, 1975). More specific studies will be noted later in the text.

7. Parley P. Pratt was as important as Orson in early Mormonism. His *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (New York: Russell, 1874) is a classic in Mormon literature, and his own extensive writing clearly had an influence on his brother Orson. See the summary in Peter Crawley, "Parley P. Pratt: Father of Mormon Pamphleteering," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15, no. 3 (Autumn 1982): 13–26.

8. On 4 November 1830, Joseph Smith received a revelation for Orson Pratt that called the young man to a lifetime of missionary work. See *The Book of Commandments* (Independence, Missouri: W. W. Phelps and Co., 1833), chapter 36, 74–75. More conveniently, see Doctrine and Covenants section 34.

9. For the details, see James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission, The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles, 1837–1841* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985).

10. Orson Pratt described his early work in Scotland in a letter to his brother Parley, dated 16 April 1841, in *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 2, no. 1 (May 1841): 11–12. By May 1840, when Pratt arrived in Scotland, about eighty people had been baptized by early Mormon missionaries Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner, primarily in southwestern Scotland. Mulliner's parents lived in Edinburgh, and he had told them of this conversion during a personal visit in December 1839. He was, therefore, the first Mormon missionary to preach privately in Edinburgh. He had been influenced earlier, in Canada, by reading Parley P. Pratt's *A Voice of Warning* (New York: Sanford, 1837) and had sent a copy to his family in Scotland. Wright had preached to relatives in such towns as Aberdeen and Marnock, but their main successes were in Johnstone, Paisley, and the areas around Glasgow prior to the arrival of Orson Pratt. As would continue to be the case (as suggested by Bernard Aspinwall), the greatest numbers of converts came from the industrial communities, the majority of whom were miners, iron mill and textile workers, literate craftsmen, and a few farmers. It was from these same groups that the Methodists drew their converts. Within the next twenty years, about ten thousand Scots would convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, about seven thousand of whom would immigrate to the American West where they would contribute their lives and talents to the settling of the Great Basin. One area in Utah's northern Cache Valley would have so many Scottish families that the town of Wellsville was dubbed "Scottish Town." Scottish stonemasons contributed their skills to the building of Utah towns, and some helped hue the granite stone used to build the Salt Lake Temple. Others, like John Lyon of Kilmarnock, wrote and published the first extensive book of Mormon poetry, titled *The Harp of Zion* (1853), and later served as a cultural critic for the *Deseret News* in Salt Lake City. Richard Ballantyne, of Whiteridgebog, organized the first Sunday School in the Salt Lake Valley and was one of the first Mormon missionaries to India. T. B. H. Stenhouse, of Dalkeith, wrote an important, if critical, history of the Mormons titled *The Rocky*

*Mountain Saints* (1873). Finally, David Eccles, once a street peddler in Glasgow, became a very successful businessman and banker in Utah (Utah's first multimillionaire), and his son, Marriner S. Eccles, followed his father's example, later serving in the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration as the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, beginning in 1935.

For information on the history of the Church in Scotland, see Breck England, "Gospel Seeds in Scottish Soil: Orson Pratt Planted and Nurtured the Message of the Restored Gospel," *The Ensign* 7, no. 2 (February 1987): 26–31; Frederick S. Buchanan, "The Ebb and Flow of Mormonism in Scotland, 1840–1900," *Brigham Young University Studies* 27, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 27–52; Frederick S. Buchanan, ed., *A Good Time Coming: Mormon Letters to Scotland* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988); Bernard Aspinwall, "A Fertile Field: Scotland in the Days of the Early Missions," in Richard L. Jensen and Malcom R. Thorp, eds., *Mormons in Early Victorian Britain* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), 104–17; Polly Aird, "Why Did the Scots Convert?" *Journal of Mormon History* 26 (Spring 2000): 91–122; Linda L. Bonar, "The Influence of the Scots Stonemasons in Beaver, Utah," *Utah Preservation/Restoration* 3 (1981): 54–60; and Frederick S. Buchanan, "Scots among the Mormons," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (Fall 1968): 328–52. The important story of emigration of Scottish converts is told in Frederick Stewart Buchanan, "The Emigration of Scottish Mormons to Utah, 1849–1900" (MA thesis, University of Utah, 1961). In October 2004, there were 25,751 members of the LDS Church in Scotland, organized into five stakes, twenty-nine wards, and sixteen branches. The Church has one mission in Scotland, with headquarters in Edinburgh.

11. The broadside, measuring 19 x 23 cm, contained the following: "The fulness of the gospel has been restored by the ministry of a holy angel; by whose ministry also, ancient American records have been discovered, giving the history of almost half a world for more than 100 years. A minister of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latterday [sic] Saints, respectfully informs the inhabitants of this place, that there will be preaching in [blank space] where the following subject will be illustrated: viz.—the gospel in its ancient fulness and glory, showing that the coming of the Lord is near at hand. And also a relation will be given concerning the ministry of a holy angel, and the discovery of sacred records as mentioned above." The only known copy of this broadside is in the LDS Church Archives. Although no author is given, it is assumed that this is the imprint Pratt refers to in an October 1840 letter to George A. Smith wherein he writes, "I had one thousand hand bills printed which were about the size of one page of this sheet on which I am now writing. I have about 200 of these posted up the first week then for a few weeks I post up about 100 since which I had posted up no more than a Dozen a week. I also have some pasted on to paste board & hung up in the most conspicuous places & keep two hanging up every sabbath in front of the Chapel." Orson Pratt to George A. Smith, 17 October 1840, LDS Church Archives. Peter Crawley also suggests that this handbill was used in Glasgow for missionary work. See Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church, Volume One, 1830–1847* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997), 117–18 (Item 76).

12. See Milando Pratt, "Life and Labors of Orson Pratt," *The Contributor* 12, no. 3 (January 1891): 85–87.

13. Details are in David J. Whittaker, "Almanacs in the New England Heritage of Mormonism," *Brigham Young University Studies* 29, no. 4 (Fall 1989): 89–113.

14. The 1848–50 pamphlets include the following: *Divine Authority, or Was Joseph Smith Sent of God* (30 September 1848), 16 pages; *The Kingdom of God, Part 1* (31 October 1848), 8 pages; Part 2 (30 November 1848), 8 pages; Part 3 (14 January 1849),



8 pages; Part 4 (14 July 1849), 16 pages; *Reply to "Remarks on Mormonism"* (30 April 1849), 16 pages; *Absurdities of Immaterialism, or a Reply to T. W. P. Taylder's Pamphlet, Entitled "The Materialism of the Mormons or Latter-day Saints Examined and Exposed"* (31 July 1849), 32 pages; *New Jerusalem or the Fulfillment of Modern Prophecy* (1 October 1849), 24 pages; *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, no. 1 (15 October 1850); no. 2 (1 November 1850); no. 3 (1 December 1850); no. 4 (15 December 1850); no. 5 (7 January 1851); no. 6 (n.d., probably 15 January 1851), 96 pages; and *Great First Cause, or the Self Moving Forces of the Universe* (1 January 1851), 16 pages. These works were published under one cover with some additional material (including *Remarkable Visions*) as *Orson Pratt's Works* in 1851. In 1848, Pratt also reissued as *Remarkable Visions* his earlier [An] *Interesting Account*. For bibliographical information on these and the other published works of Orson Pratt, including foreign-language editions, see Chad J. Flake and Larry W. Draper, eds., *Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930: Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Broad-sides Relating to the First Century of Mormonism*, 2 vols. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; and American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2004).

15. These lectures were published in the *Deseret News* in 1854. He delivered an expanded version in January and February 1871 in Salt Lake City. They are most conveniently found in N. B. Lundwall, comp., *Wonders of the Universe, or a Compilation of the Astronomical Writings of Orson Pratt* (Salt Lake City: N. B. Lundwall, 1937).

16. For the details, see David J. Whittaker, "The Bone in the Throat: Orson Pratt and the Public Announcement of Plural Marriage," *Western Historical Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (July 1987): 293–314. Pratt's influence on other Mormon defenders of the practice is followed in David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Polygamy Defenses," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984): 43–63.

17. Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (London: S. W. Richards for Orson Pratt, 1853). The best edition of and editorial comment on this important Mormon book is Lavina Fielding Anderson, ed., *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2001).

18. The eight pamphlets he issued in 1856–57 include the following: *The True Faith* (25 August 1856), 16 pages; *True Repentance* (8 September 1856), 16 pages; *Water Baptism* (22 September 1856), 16 pages; *Spiritual Gifts* (15 December 1856), 16 pages; *Necessity for Miracles* (15 January 1857), 16 pages; *Universal Apostasy, or the Seventeen Centuries of Darkness* (15 February 1857), 16 pages; and *Latter-day Kingdom, or the Preparation for the Second Advent* (15 March 1857), 16 pages. The second series of pamphlets were issued separately and then bound into a book, *Tracts by Orson Pratt* (Liverpool and London, 1857).

19. Discussions of Pratt's science within Mormon thought are in David J. Whittaker, "Orson Pratt, Prolific Pamphleteer," 27–41; Erich Robert Paul, "Theology in Science: The Case of Orson Pratt," in *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 127–45; and Craig James Hazen, "Mormon Cosmic Philosophy: Orson Pratt," in *The Village Enlightenment in America, Popular Religion and Science in the Nineteenth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 15–64.

20. Orson Pratt to George A. Smith, 24 September 1840, LDS Church Archives.

21. The bibliographical details are in Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography*, 127–29 (Item 82).

22. Information found in the Scottish Book Trade Index, Online Resources, National Library of Scotland. On the last page of Pratt's 1840 imprint is found, "Edinburgh: Printed by Ballantyne and Hughes, Paul's Work."

23. See Orson Hyde's *A Prophetic Warning to All the Churches . . .* (dated at end Toronto, August 1836). This broadside was also published in the *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* in July 1836. It was reprinted in England as *A Timely Warning . . .* in August 1837.

24. Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People* (New York: Printed by W. Sandford, 1837). This was the first missionary tract that began to show the differences between the Latter-day Saints and other churches. This popular work provided a summary of the basic beliefs of the Mormons but did not discuss the First Vision of Joseph Smith. Even when he discussed the Book of Mormon (chapter 4), he focused on the contents of the volume and stressed its prophetic role in biblical religious history. Parley affirmed the key role of revelation in the Mormon claims and even argued that God had spoken to certain men in the nineteenth century, but he did not use the First Vision to support his claims.

25. These histories and their petitions for redress were a direct outgrowth of the counsel they were given by Joseph Smith that directed members as an "imperative duty" to publish these things to the world (see Doctrine and Covenants 123). The histories included Parley P. Pratt, *History of the Late Persecution Inflicted by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons* (Detroit: Dawson and Bates, October 1839); John P. Greene, *Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons from the State of Missouri* (Cincinnati: R. P. Brooks, 1839); John Taylor, *Short Account of the Murders . . .* (Springfield, Illinois: n.p., 1839); Sidney Rigdon, *Appeal to the American People* (Cincinnati: Glezen and Shepard, 1840); and James Mulholland, *An Address to Americans* (Nauvoo, Illinois: E. Robinson, 1841). For a useful compilation of the redress petitions, see Clark V. Johnson, ed., *Mormon Redress Petitions: Documents of the 1833–1838 Missouri Conflict* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1992).

26. The eight letters appear in *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834–July 1835); and 2 (October 1835).

27. See especially *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 1, no. 2 (June 1840): 30–31, 42–44.

28. The story is told in David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering" (PhD dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1982). For the history of early missionary work, see S. George Ellsworth, "A History of Mormon Missions in the United States and Canada, 1830–1860" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1951); and Jan Shippy and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press; Provo, Utah: *BYU Studies*, 1994). See also Paul Gutjahr, "The Golden Bible in the Bible's Golden Age: The Book of Mormon and Antebellum Print Culture," *American Transcendental Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (December 1998): 275–93. The researcher can follow chronologically the emergence of Mormon printed literature in Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*.

29. The earliest written account, and the only one in Joseph Smith's own hand, can be dated between July and November 1832. His 9 November 1835 recital to Robert Matthias was recorded in his 1835–36 journal by Warren Cowdery. For the various recorded accounts of the First Vision, see Dean C. Jessee, "Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision," *Brigham Young University Studies* 9, no. 3 (Spring 1969): 275–94. For the early use of the accounts, see James B. Allen, "The Significance of Joseph Smith's First Vision in Mormon Thought," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1966): 28–45; and James B. Allen, "Emergence of a Fundamental: The Expanding Role of Joseph Smith's First Vision in Mormon Religious Thought," *Journal of Mormon History* 7 (1980): 43–61. For a study of the historical setting as well as transcribed copies of all the known contemporary accounts (eight) of this vision, see Milton

V. Backman Jr., *Joseph Smith's First Vision: The First Vision in Its Historical Context*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980). For a useful comparative study of the early accounts, see James B. Allen, "Eight Contemporary Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision—What Do We Learn from Them?" *The Improvement Era* 73, no. 4 (April 1970): 4–13. See also Alexander Baugh, "Parting the Veil: The Visions of Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies* 38, no. 1 (1999): 22–69.

30. Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2 June 1835, 1, LDS Church Archives. Dean C. Jessee has discussed the entire problem of our limited records of Joseph Smith's discourses in "Priceless Words and Fallible Memories: Joseph Smith as Seen in the Effort to Preserve His Discourses," *BYU Studies* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 19–40.

31. Parley P. Pratt to the Elders and Brethren of the Church Latter Day Saints in Canada, 27 November 1836, John Taylor Collection, LDS Church Archives.

32. This can be traced from a variety of sources. For a summary, with the evidence, see David J. Whittaker, "East of Nauvoo: Benjamin Winchester and the Early Mormon Church," *Journal of Mormon History* 21 (Fall 1995): 31–83, particularly 39–42. Parley P. Pratt wrote of hearing Joseph Smith speak in Philadelphia in December 1839 and noted that Joseph "spoke in great power, bearing testimony of the visions he had seen, the ministering of angels which he had enjoyed; and how he had found the plates of the Book of Mormon, and translated them by the gift and power of God. . . . The entire congregation was astounded; electrified, as it were, and overwhelmed with the sense of truth and power by which he spoke, and the wonders which he related." Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 299. Little wonder that Joseph Smith complained in 1842 that some of his followers, especially noting the Pratt brothers, were publishing his ideas as their own! See his comments in "Relief Society Minutes of Nauvoo," 28 April 1842, LDS Church Archives.

33. Samuel Bennett, *A Few Remarks by Way of Reply to an Anonymous Scribbler* [i.e., Caleb Jones] (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking and Guilbert, 1840).

34. Benjamin Winchester, *An Examination of a Lecture by the Rev. H[enry] Perkins* [n.p., 1840]. The recently found printed copy of Perkins's attack is in "Mormonism Contrasted with the Word of God," *State Gazette* [Trenton, New Jersey] vol. 1, nos. 83 and 84 (22 and 24 July 1840). These newspaper issues were called to my attention by Stephen Fleming, who kindly provided photocopies of both issues to me.

35. Parley P. Pratt, *The Millennium and Other Poems, to Which Is Attached a Treatise on the Eternal Nature and Regeneration of Matter* (New York: W. Molineux, 1840).

36. For a broader discussion, which places these matters into changes within the Church, see Peter Crawley, "The Passage of Mormon Primitivism," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13, no. 4 (Winter 1980): 26–37.

37. Orson Pratt, [An] *Interesting Account of Several Remarkable Visions, and of the Late Discovery of Ancient American Records* (Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840), 3–5. This first edition exists in two states, both typographically the same except for the presence or absence of the incorrect "A" at the beginning of the title. Obviously, several title pages had been printed before the error was discovered; then, the "A" was eliminated. However, an "An" appears on the title on the yellow wrappers prepared for this edition. See the discussion in Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography*, 127–29 (Item 82).

Until the late 1840s, Mormon pamphlets were issued in small editions, usually not exceeding two thousand copies per printing. But in the wake of the 1848 European revolutions, Mormon missionaries moved into Europe and into the British Empire (South Africa, India, and Australia) and then, anticipating the 1851 London Exposition, the printing sizes vastly increased. At the center was Orson Pratt, who, as European Mission

president, composed and then published his own as well as his coworkers' tracts in editions of fifteen thousand copies or more.

[An] *Interesting Account* remained in demand throughout the nineteenth century and has never really been out of print. The first American printing was in New York City (Joseph W. Harrison, Printer, 1841). Harrison issued a second American edition later in 1841 and a third edition in 1842. It was this third American edition that was reprinted as the first Australian edition (Sydney: Printed by Albert Mason, 1851). In 1848, the work was published in Liverpool by R. James under the title *Remarkable Visions . . .*, and it was bound into the 1851 edition of *A Series of Pamphlets by Orson Pratt* (Liverpool: Franklin D. Richards, 1851). This collection was reprinted in 1851 and 1852 in Liverpool, in Salt Lake City in 1884 (Juvenile Instructor Office) and 1891 (George Q. Cannon and Sons), and in Chattanooga, Tennessee, by the Southern States Mission in 1899. The work proved to be a very popular Mormon tract in Denmark (printed in Danish in Copenhagen in 1851, 1857, 1872, 1873, 1875, 1877, 1879, 1880, with later printings in 1901, 1903, and 1907). It also appeared in a number of Dutch and Swedish editions from 1860 to 1914. A number of reprints have been issued in the twentieth century. Most recently, see *The Essential Orson Pratt*, foreword by David J. Whittaker (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987), 63–92.

38. For the full story, see David J. Whittaker, "The 'Articles of Faith' in Early Mormon Literature and Thought," in Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, eds., *New Views of Mormon History, Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 63–92.

39. Parley P. Pratt, *History of the Late Persecutions Inflicted by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons* (Detroit: Dawson and Bates, Printers, 1839).

40. Parley P. Pratt, *Late Persecutions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (New York: J. W. Harrison, Printer, 1840).

41. The work was dated 9 February 1840 and listed Parley P. Pratt and Elias Higbee as the authors, but textual analysis reveals that Parley was the author. A copy of this rare four-page work is in the Beinecke Library, Yale University.

42. The full text of the Wentworth letter can be found in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 241–48. It was first printed in the *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 9 (1 March 1842): 706–10. For the wording comparisons of these early lists, see Whittaker, "The 'Articles of Faith,'" 70–73.

43. This important dimension of early Mormon publishing is discussed in David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977): 35–49.

44. The following discussion draws upon Whittaker, "Orson Pratt, Prolific Pamphleteer," 27–41. With minor changes, this essay appears as the "Foreword" to *The Essential Orson Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), xv–xxxii.

45. See Edward R. Hogan, "Orson Pratt as a Mathematician," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (Winter 1973): 59–68.

46. Jules Remy, *A Journey to Great Salt Lake*, 2 vols. (London, 1861), 2:12 ff, actually claims that Orson Pratt attended some of Stillman's lectures in the 1830s while doing missionary work in the Boston area.

47. The growing use of the inductive method and all Baconianism implied in the early nineteenth century are presented in George H. Daniels, *American Science in the Age of Jackson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), see particularly chapter 3; and Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in the Age of Science, The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977).

48. Herbert Hovenkamp, *Science and Religion in America, 1800–1860* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).

49. "Halos and Parhelia," *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 10 (1 April 1843): 151–52.

50. See Donald Skabelund, "Cosmology on the American Frontier: Orson Pratt's Key to the Universe," *Centaurus: International Magazine of the History of Mathematics, Science, and Technology* 11 (1965): 190–204.

51. *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–1886), 7:157, 12 February 1860.

52. Lundwall, *Wonders of the Universe*, 193, lecture of 11 August 1875.

53. Charles P. Smyth, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (London: Alexander Strahan and Co., 1864). This was a popular work with a much-expanded fourth edition issued in 1880 (London: W. Isbister).

54. See the material in *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 41, no. 18 (5 May 1879): 281.

55. It was this insistence on a material/corporeal deity that led to the 1849 attack on Orson Pratt by the Dunfermline minister Joseph Paton: *Remarks on Mormonism, Occasioned by the Question of Orson Pratt, a Mormon Apostle, "Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?" Printed with the Approbation of Clergymen of Different Denominations for a Committee for Working Men at the Forth Iron Works* (Glasgow: Printed by Bill and Baine, [1849]). A copy of this rare pamphlet is in the library of the LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City. Although issued anonymously, Pratt's *Reply* identified Paton as the author (see page 8). Pratt's reply, dated 30 April 1849 at the end of the last installment, was first published serially in the *Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star* 11, nos. 6–9 (15 March, 1 April, 15 April, and 1 May 1849): 85–88, 100–5, 113–17, 129–33; and then issued as a separate pamphlet under the title, *Reply to a Pamphlet Printed at Glasgow . . .* (Liverpool: R. James [1849]).

56. For a useful introduction, see Sterling M. McMurrin, *The Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1965), especially parts one and two.

57. For an overview of the history of Mormon imprints, see "Mormon Imprints as Sources for Research: A History and Evaluation," in Ronald W. Walker, David J. Whittaker, and James B. Allen, *Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 199–238. For an introduction within the broader context of American book history, see David J. Whittaker, "The Web of Print: Toward a History of the Book in Early Mormon Culture," *Journal of Mormon History* 23, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 1–41.

58. The movement from general to specifics in Pratt's thought can also be seen in the main changes he made to his Edinburgh pamphlet. In the first American edition (New York: Joseph W. Harrison Printer, 1841), Orson added four paragraphs (pp. 32–35) before the final paragraph, which warned in general terms that "the nations are fast ripening in wickedness, and that judgments, fearful and terrible, speedily await them." Pratt noted that the signs of the times were clearly pointing to the dissolution of all earthly governments. He suggested that a dreadful storm was gathering and that it would soon break forth with "inconceivable fury" upon the wicked. In the 1848 edition, retitled *Remarkable Visions* (Liverpool: R. James), these four paragraphs were replaced with five shorter ones, with much more specific prophetic pronouncements. Dated at Liverpool, 14 December 1848, and no doubt reflecting Pratt's reactions to the European revolutions of 1848, Pratt wrote with almost modern foresight:

We believe that the great and terrible judgments await the nations of the wicked, and, that after the message of the Book of Mormon has been sufficiently sounded in their ears, if they reject it, they will be overthrown and wasted away until the earth

shall no longer be encumbered with them. New and unheard of plagues will sweep through the nations, baffling the skill of the most experienced physicians, depopulating whole cities and towns, and carrying off millions of wretched beings in every quarter of our globe. Nations, no longer restrained by the Spirit of God, which will cease striving in them, will rise against nations till the whole earth, comparatively speaking, shall be filled with blood and carnage. Thrones and empires shall be cast down—new governments will be erected but to meet with the same fate. Peace shall be taken from among the nations. (pp. 15–16)

Pratt invited believers to gather with the Saints, and he remained a major voice for the importance of the Book of Mormon in the nineteenth century. See Whittaker, "Orson Pratt: Early Advocate of the Book of Mormon," *Ensign* 14, no. 4 (April 1984): 54–57. Coworker Orson Spencer spoke of the coming judgments as well—but not in the detail that Orson Pratt did. See Spencer's "Farewell Address," dated at Liverpool 20 December 1847, in his *Letters Exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines* (Liverpool: Published by Orson Spencer, 1848), 224–31. Spencer's address was removed from later editions.

59. A few of his works were actually condemned publicly by Brigham Young, a subject ignored here. A useful introduction is Gary James Bergera, "The Orson Pratt-Brigham Young Controversies: Conflict within the Quorums, 1853–1868," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1980): 7–49. For more detail, see Gary James Bergera, *Conflict in the Quorum: Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002).

60. See the comments of Rodney Stark, "The Rise of a New World Faith," *Review of Religious Research* 26, no. 1 (September 1984): 18–27. See also Jan Shipps, *Mormonism, The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).