

munion are scattered here upon the banks of the river, but the association after having increased to twenty churches, and more than 800 communicants, a few years ago took alarm by the introduction of what once occasioned a like panic among our churches in England. They were not prepared for missions, bible societies, and other benevolent operations. Misguided opposition to these new and but little understood schemes of christian enterprise, inflicted a blight upon them, from which they have but slowly recovered.

Amidst the excitement occasioned by these controversies, some very absurd errors were taught by those who at the same time were the champions of the "*anti-effort*" party. Supralapsarian doctrines were commingled with the monstrous figment, that the non-elect are not literally the natural offspring of Adam, but that although Eve was their mother, the devil, who was eternal and self-subsistent, was their father. Much zeal had been manifested in this controversy; and if such absurdities as those taught by Southcott and her followers, were not without abettors even in the episcopalian churches of England, it is not surprising that views of this description, taught by men of good moral character and honest zeal, should have produced lamentable effects amidst a new and scattered people, in the depths of these boundless forests, and removed hundreds of miles from the light of cultivated cities! nor can it be deemed incredible that even now the Mormonites make a few disciples.*

* The Mormons may be regarded as a race of fanatics who are in no way connected with any portion of the baptists,

The legislative spirit of the times, among christians of all denominations, displayed itself in some of these associations, by rules against private christians and churches harbouring such as by their own

excepting that as they immerse their converts. From the information given me by a person who seemed strongly inclined to join them, and from Mr. Peck, I was induced to differ in opinion with Mr. P. on the propriety of even so far countenancing this heresy, as to publish any exposure of its follies; but as several thousands are said to have embraced mormonism, he thought it right to print a tract on the subject. The sect originated in the pretended discovery of a number of engraved plates, in the year 1830, by a man named Smith. The character of the engraving was that of some unknown tongue, and Smith professed to have been suddenly and miraculously gifted to translate it. He did so, and published an English version of the "Book of Mormon," or "The Golden Bible!" In point of style, this production is about as close an approximation to that of the New Testament, as the Koran is to the Old Testament. Whatever doctrines may therein be taught, it is impossible not to trace an analogy between the Mormon pretensions to the miraculous gifts of healing, and of tongues, and of prophecy, with similar delusions which at the same time were so rife in England and Scotland. It is not improbable but the Mormon pretenders of Missouri, adopted many of the notions of the Irvingite Millenarians. The book is styled "An Abridgment of the Record of the People of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the house of Israel; also to Jew and Gentile: written by commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and revelation. Written and sealed up, and hid up to the Lord, that they might not be destroyed, to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni," &c. &c. An angel is said to have pointed out the place where these plates were concealed, and eleven witnesses attest the fact of having seen and examined them. The Mormons are a sect of Millenarians, having high-priests, elders, bishops and

efforts appeared to take the work of God out of his own hands. Jealousy of the divine honour led to another remarkable result ; they would not tolerate the existence of an authority which could at pleasure abrogate or set at defiance the authority and laws of God ; accordingly, some of their rules not only *prohibited the holding of slaves*, but also corresponding with such as did hold them, or even with those who corresponded with them.

What may be deplored as extravagant, is thus to be traced to much that must be approved, and it is yielding to the influence of growing illumination. As the noxious exhalations of their own unwholesome swamps are dispersed by the clearings of the forest which admit the light of the sun, and the winds of heaven, that their beautiful river may roll its bright and healthful waters through a paradise ; so the moral gloom is yielding to the untiring efforts of zealous and pious advocates of wisdom and knowledge. It may be in part ascribed to these circumstances, that the advocates of infidelity have met with partial success. The true church was paralysed, and did not encounter the adversary with specific and appropriate weapons of the spiritual warfare.

I proceeded to New Harmony by the stage. The

deacons, who are sent forth on their ministry after the manner in which Christ sent his disciples, and in the mean time the families of these missionaries are supported by the church. In their ministry they dwell chiefly on the anticipated millennium, and many enthusiasts have made great sacrifices in expectation of the speedy coming of Christ to reign personally on the earth.