

pure and genuine than Jerome, Bel-larmine, and other ancient writers.

In relation to the manuscripts of the New Testament, Mr. Cressy writes in these words—"In my hearing, Bishop Usher professed that, whereas he had of many years before a desire to publish the New Testament in Greek, with various lections and annotations; and for that purpose had used great diligence and spent much money to furnish himself with manuscripts, yet, in conclusion, he was forced to desist utterly, lest, if he should ingenuously have noted all the several differences of reading which himself had collected, the incredible multitude of them almost in every verse should rather have made men atheistical than satisfy them in the true reading of any particular passage." (See Exomol. Ca. 8, Nu. 3.)

The learned admit that in the manuscripts of the New Testament alone there are no less than one hundred and thirty thousand different readings. (See *Encyclopedia Britannica*, eighth edition.) It is true that many of those differences are of no particular consequence, as they do not materially alter the sense. But there are many thousands of differences wherein the sense is entirely altered. How are translators to know which of the manuscripts, if any, contain the true sense? They have no original copies with which to compare them—no standard of correction. No one can tell whether even one verse of either the Old or New Testament conveys the ideas of the original author.

Just think! 130,000 different readings in the New Testament alone! How our translators could separate the spurious from the genuine is more than I can tell. How they could distinguish between the original communicated to the ancient Prophets and Apostles, and 130,000 different readings that were

introduced in the dark ages by copyists, is not easy to determine.

But, admitting that we had an ancient copy of the Bible, or the Old and New Testament—supposing the translators by some means were put in possession of such a copy, and that the individuals whose names are attached to many of those books professed to be inspired, yet how is this generation to determine whether those authors, if they were indeed the authors, were inspired men? How do we know they were inspired to write those books? The Latter-day Saints believe that the Bible in its original was the word of God, and was written by Divine inspiration. But we do not believe it because history informs us of this, or tradition tells us so; but we believe it because the Book of Mormon, confirmed by the ministry of angels, informs us of the fact.

But how is this generation to know that those ancient authors were inspired of God? Do they bear testimony of their own inspiration? Bishop Chillingworth, Hooker, and many other learned commentators have told us that the Bible cannot bear testimony of its own inspiration. If the Bible cannot prove its own inspiration, how are people in the present and past ages to know that these books are inspired? It is true, we are informed that some individuals wrote by commandment; and some, we are told, wrote according to their own opinions. How are we to detect, that part which they were inspired to write from that part which was written according to their own opinions? We cannot, without new revelation. Without some testimony of a higher nature than tradition, we never can learn these matters.

Having made these few remarks in regard to the Old and New Testaments in their present condition and bearing, and having learned that they