

HIS BACK TO THE WALL

By T. W. Williams.

Mr. Evans is now fighting **with his back to the wall**. He has been driven from one position to another during the past few months until he seemingly can retreat no farther. He is facing his own record.

Mr. Evans, the modern prophet; the man who claims to talk to angels; the man who claims that a little girl appeared to him, took him by the hand, warned him of imaginary foes lurking to destroy him, then vanished in air;—Mr. Evans who would have us believe that an angel appeared to him in broad daylight and told him to start a brand new church, which he now advertises as "**Bishop Evans' New Church**," is fighting with his back to the wall! Singular, is it not?

On the first Sunday after his sensational withdrawal from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, June 3, 1918, Mr. Evans, claiming to speak under the influence of the Spirit of God, declared in Broadway Hall: "**If it be a fact that I have been a true prophet, you will know that this very thing has been foretold. When I speak, the church shall tremble and the world shall feel the power. This will shake the church from centre to centre. Hundreds of thousands of souls will hear it with gladness, and the poor crushed soul, who dare not speak because there was no one brave enough to lead out, when they know that someone has taken a stand, will rally to the stand. You will see it.**" The church has not been shaken from "**centre to centre.**" "**Thousands**" did not "**rally to the stand**" of Mr. Evans. On the contrary, Mr. Evans is fighting with his back to the wall.

REASONS FOR RESIGNING.

Mr. Evans, at the time of his apostasy from the Reorganized Church, took particular pains to state in his letter of resignation to President Frederick M. Smith that his reasons for withdrawal were because of "**the many changes you have caused to be made in the faith and practice of the church. . . . I believe that you are leading the people away from the truth.**" Both before and immediately after his resignation, Mr. Evans avowed his belief in the Angel's Message to Joseph Smith, and the divinity of the Book of Mormon. One of the things charged against President Frederick M. Smith was that he was departing from the faith of his fathers, and was attempting to sidetrack the study of the Book of Mormon. In his speech at Broadway Hall, Mr. Evans said: "**Mark you, I believe God called Joseph Smith. . . . God called Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and they were ordained under angels' hands.**"

In his recent pamphlet, "**Mormonism, or Latter Day Saintism**," Mr. Evans attacks the Book of Mormon and ridicules the first vision of Joseph Smith. He essays to show that the Book of Mormon was introduced as a substitute for the Bible, and both cannot be true. In his lecture at Shea's Theatre on January 26, Mr. Evans made fun of the first vision of Joseph Smith, claiming that Joseph had God coming all the way from heaven to New York State simply to introduce Jesus to Joseph and Joseph to Jesus. He remarked that this looked "**fishy**" to him.

Throughout his career as a minister of the Reorganized Church, Mr. Evans claimed that angels had confirmed the mission of Joseph Smith and the divinity of the Book of Mormon to him. He relates in his published biography many remarkable and miraculous evidences in the way of visions, dreams, revelations and cases of healing, all confirmative of the call of Joseph Smith and the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. All of which are now discarded, and Mr. Evans in meeting his own record is fighting with his back to the wall.

WHY MR. EVANS WAS A LATTER DAY SAINT.

In a sermon entitled "Church Unity and How to Obtain It," Mr. Evans, in referring to his espousal of the Angel's Message to Joseph Smith, said, "I heard the gospel just as it is taught in the Bible. I obeyed it from the heart, and I have been made a recipient of the blessings that flow from God to the obedient ones; that is why I contend that the doctrine of the Latter Day Saint Church is right." p. 7.

In his Autobiography, Mr. Evans relates the following dream and fulfillment, which was given to him December 4, 1886: "I dreamed that as it had been announced that I would preach on the 'Divinity of the Book of Mormon,' the next day (Sunday), three ministers would come and cause trouble in my meeting, but that I should put my trust in God, and all would be well. I arose next morning and told my dream. All were surprised; said they had not heard a word of preachers coming, and all looked forward to the afternoon. While I was preaching to a large congregation, in walked three preachers. Two of them opened their Bibles and followed me, while the third wrote as much of my discourse as he could get. When I concluded, I gave liberty for any to ask questions. . . . When I replied, God's Spirit fell upon me, and in ten minutes nearly everyone in the house was in tears. I related the sufferings of the Saints in Missouri and Illincis; reviewed briefly the work of Joseph, and his cold-hearted murder." pp. 84, 85.

VISION OF MR. EVANS IN FAVOR OF BOOK OF MORMON.

I wish now to refer to a remarkable spiritual experience which Mr. Evans claims was given to him in vindication of the Vision of Joseph Smith and the Divinity of the Book of Mormon. It is recorded in his published Biography.

"One Sunday night, in the month of November, 1885, I was preaching on the 'Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon.' While the first hymn was being sung the noted detective, Hodge, and his wife came in. I had never spoken to them at that time, and I think it was the first time they had ever been to church. The meeting closed and all retired to their homes. After reaching my home, I thought how thankful I would be if God would give me a special evidence with reference to the Book of Mormon. I believed from the testimony of the Bible, American Antiquities, etc., that the Book of Mormon was a revelation from God, but I longed to be able to say, by some other way, that I know it is of God.

"Time came to retire, and we bowed in prayer around the family altar. While in prayer I was carried to a cooper shop, where I saw a man whom I seemed to know as the prophet, Joseph Smith, in the act of wrapping up a set of plates in some old garment. He placed them in a pile of straw, or something else, and left them there. I saw the plates, or a small part of the end of them, and felt convinced that those were the plates on which were written the Word of God contained in the Book of Mormon. Judge of my joy, dear reader, when some seven months after I read the life of Joseph, as written by his mother, and from that book learned that Joseph did at one time hide the plates in the loft of a cooper shop, placing them in a quantity of flax to hide them from a mob.

"While in the Spirit, I seemed to be carried from the cooper shop to the city of London. I stopped before a large brick house before the Court House, opened the door, went through the house and came to the stairs leading to the rooms above. I went into a room, saw a woman bowing at her bedside, and heard her praying in reference to the latter day work, and asking God to give her evidence concerning the divinity of the Book

of Mormon. After listening to the prayer and noticing the room, I recognized the woman to be Detective Hodge's wife. I turned, left the room, and found myself bowing at my bedside, where I had gone to pray with my wife. I then told her all I had seen in my vision. . . . The next night there was a meeting at Sr. Hunt's residence, and I attended that meeting. The house was crowded, and, to my surprise and joy, in walked Mrs. Hodge.

"I felt the Spirit rest upon me, arose, and addressing her, I said, 'Madam, I wish to relate to you a vision that I had last night. You are the only person on earth who knows as to whether it is true or false. If false, I wish you to denounce it before this congregation; if true, I wish you to say so in this meeting! I then described the house, both inside and out, the winding stairs and the way up to the room, the furniture of the room, the clothing on the walls, and even the quilt on the bed. I also described her appearance as she prayed, and repeated to her parts of her prayer. To make a long story a short one, let me say that Mrs. Hodge, in tears, acknowledged that all I said and described was correct. . . . This, with many other evidences which I have since received, proves to me that the Book of Mormon is of Divine origin, and that Joseph Smith was a chosen servant of God.'"—Autobiography of Elder R. C. Evans. p. 124.

MR. EVANS' CONFLICTING TESTIMONY.

In view of Mr. Evans' present position, that the Latter Day Saint religion, which he calls Mormonism, "is one religion, while Christianity is quite another," is it not pertinent to inquire what Mr. Evans is going to do with these manifestations which he claimed were given him from God? Were they true or false? If false, what assurance can Mr. Evans give that his present claims are any more reliable? Mr. Evans' boast has always been that he was never deceived in any spiritual manifestation. What of the foregoing? Mr. Evans is fighting with his back to the wall!

Mr. Evans saw (?) an angel June 3, 1918. On June 9, Mr. Evans reiterated his belief in the divine call of Joseph Smith. Now, on Jan. 26, 1919, he repudiates the vision of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. Why did the angel allow him to make this mistake on June 9, 1918.

If, as Mr. Evans now states, that "Mormonism is one religion and Christianity is quite another," what will Mr. Evans do with the following from his own lips?

"I am a Latter Day Saint because this gospel, with all of its charming promises, reached me when I was a wild, weak, ignorant boy, who had never mastered the multiplication table. I received with meekness and faith the simple gospel promises as I read them in the Bible. When I was baptized I was forsaken by most of those who knew me, but I was soon called by God to preach the gospel. I left everything that I ought in this world. . . . I certify to you to-night, in the name of Jesus Christ, that God has been true to his promises to me. I am a Latter Day Saint because there is absolutely nothing in the doctrine of this church that is not supported by the Bible. So far as I have been able to search, there is nothing that the Bible teaches that is not inculcated in the doctrine and principle of the Latter Day Saint Church." Sermons, pp. 400. Mr. Evans is fighting with his back to the wall.

CHEAP MELODRAMA.

On Sunday evening, January 26, in Shea's Theatre, Mr. Evans gave expression to the following: "I want to tell you that I have the best reason to believe that if it wasn't for the protection of God Almighty and the Union Jack, I wouldn't be here to-night. The spirit of murder has

gone out against me to such a degree that anything in the world that can cause me trouble is being heaped upon me." Stenographic report.

Mr. Evans, with his "back to the wall," compelled, as he is, to meet his own record, is evidently "seeing things." This time they are not angels. This is the cheapest kind of melodrama.

Is there an intelligent man or woman who can be swayed by such piffle? More's the pity! It seems almost incredible that any man should resort to such tactics in order to secure audience and elicit the sympathy of emotional men and women. Surely Mr. Evans is fighting with his back to the wall.

Mr. Evans must know that the men and women whose characters he has sought to traduce and blacken would not harm a hair of his head. By such tactics, however, he would create the impression that the men and women with whom he associated for forty-two years, and during which time he claimed that they were the best people in the world, have suddenly turned murderers. There should be some law to protect innocent men and women from such insinuations.

Regardless of all that Mr. Evans has said and done, yet, if I thought his life was in danger, I would willingly risk my own to protect him.

We challenge Mr. Evans' angel story. His assertion that an angel appeared to him in the form of a little girl is a figment or hallucination of his own brain. We question his statement that he saw an angel in broad daylight, whose glory was reflected in a looking-glass, and that any angel ever told him to leave the Latter Day Saint Church.

EVANS' CHURCH UNSCRIPTURAL.

We affirm that the so-called "Bishop Evans' New Church" is both unscriptural and untenable; that it is anti-Christ; that Mr. Evans' claim to being a bishop is false and unwarranted; that the doctrine which he teaches is un-Christian, and that he has neither scriptural nor ethical basis for his claim as a minister of Jesus Christ, for the doctrine which he teaches, or the church which he claims to represent.

We assert that the statements of Mr. Evans recently made in regard to Joseph Smith and the church are false and misleading; that most of the quotations which he has used in his recent publications are garbled and distorted, and that he has confused the writings of representatives of the Mormon Church with the teachings of the Reorganized Church to serve his purpose.

During all of the years of Mr. Evans' ministry in the Reorganized Church he expressed his willingness to meet any accredited minister of any church in public discussion. Facing his record and his former testimony and teachings, and with his back to the wall, he is afraid to do this now. Mr. Evans dare not meet the issue in public discussion. He dare not come out in the open and permit the people of Toronto to decide as to whether he or the Reorganized Church is right.

We are not fighting with our back to the wall. We are conscious of the justness of our cause, and, despite the calumny and misrepresentations which are now being heaped upon the Church by Mr. Evans, we know the gospel is true, and that God will vindicate His promises to the Church. God did bless Mr. Evans when he defended the church and supported the calling of Joseph Smith. Mr. Evans will yet realize that the testimony which he has borne in the passing years will not down. He must meet it. Mr. Evans, fighting with his back to the wall, is an object of pity rather than execration, and from the depths of my heart I am sorry for him.