

# NOTES AND COMMENTS

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## *Russian Writers Look at Mormon Manners, 1857–72*

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THE EARLY YEARS of the reign of Alexander II were among the most stirring in Russian history. After the repressive tenure of his father, Alexander brought hopes for innovation and projects for reform which the great majority of the informed and educated Russians felt were long overdue. This impulse to change that flourished early in Alexander's reign led to three reforms whose effects were palpable for the fifty or so years still left to the Romanovs: The complete remodeling of Russia's infamous judicial system, the beginnings of government decentralization known as the *Zemstvo* and, most important of all, the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

These great reforms had their counterpart in Russian cultural life. It is probably no accident that the reign of Alexander II was the golden age of the Russian novel, and that it saw a flowering of Russian music and a new élan in painting. A quickening was in the air, a widened curiosity, an urge to creativity, an openness and an eagerness, a seeking and restlessness that touched nearly every aspect of Russian social, artistic and intellectual life.

Among the new interests of the age was a curiosity about social and philosophical trends outside Russia, a curiosity that Nicholas had discouraged. For this reason, among others, the period saw a swelling interest in American society, literature, government and religions. Curiosity about reli-

gious developments in the United States was especially pronounced because many Russians believed that the absence of a state church, the lack of religious instruction in public schools and the extraordinary diversity of the American people encouraged vigorous experimentation which might be instructive for countries like Russia where religious conformity was the rule. As a Russian author said in 1861:

This Republic may serve us as a kind of gigantic laboratory where any kind of religious, social, and political theories may have their origins. There at one and the same time one may find total freedom together with the cruelest slavery, mortification of the flesh with its glorification, celibacy with polygamy, and communism with vassalage. It is a gigantic school where all the theories of the Old World founded upon the principle of authority or freedom may be tested to serve as instruction for the entire world. A theory, having barely seen the light of day, immediately puts down its roots in the virgin soil so exceptionally hospitable to all ideas and new immigrants.<sup>1</sup>

Russian writers took a lively interest in Mormonism, as is apparent in this writer's reference to polygamy. The reasons for that interest are obvious enough: Mormonism, like the Shakers and the Oneida Community—two other sects of great interest to nineteenth century Russians—was distinctively American and seemingly unencumbered with European antecedents; it had a colorful history with peregrinations and controversies culminating in the tragic death of its founder; the exodus and its mission of creating a civilized community in an uninhabited desert provoked compassion; and lastly, the emergence of polygamy intrigued the Russians as much as their American counterparts outside of Utah. Doctrinal matters or theological concerns did not interest the Russian writers. They were stirred by Mormonism because it had emerged as a social movement, a new society struggling to survive within a state often inimical to it with great advantages in population and power.

This interest in Mormonism was evidenced by a rash of articles which appeared in the reform years 1855–72 in the most important Russian journals, particularly those evincing a "Westernizing" tendency. They vary considerably in length and value; some are derivative, based on travel accounts written by French or English travelers, while at least one of them—that written by Petr Lavrov—is striking in its prescience and analytic power. To survey these articles is to gain an insight into the contribution the Mormon experiment made upon Russian intellectuals during this period. It also shows how the relatively bright image of Mormonism faded as it became increasingly identified with polygamy for which the Russian thinkers, dedicated as they were to the emancipation of women, could find little sympathy.

The first of these surveys, an anonymous article entitled "The History, Daily Life, and Morals of the Mormons," appeared in *The Fatherland Notes*<sup>2</sup> in 1857 shortly after the death of Nicholas I. This journal, founded in 1839, was the most respected moderate Russian periodical of the 1850s and 1860s. Ultimately shut down by the government in a period of reaction in 1884, it had as its editorial policy the transformation of the autocratic Russian state system

into something approaching a Western parliamentary model. It included articles intended to inform its readership of subjects concerning Western Europe and America; therefore, the article on Mormonism was concordant with its avowed editorial tendency.

To the author the rise of Mormonism and its subsequent history in the United States posed serious questions about the American social system and its government. To him Mormonism demonstrated the painful gap between the theory of religious toleration expressed in the Constitution and the actual workings of prejudice in America. This contradiction he expressed succinctly:

The history of the Mormons is interesting in and of itself, and at the same time it is instructive for us—although in a negative sense—concerning social life in the United States. It shows how far reality is from the principles announced in the Constitution; it shows us the extent to which partisan politics may be destructive if they are not based upon principles, but rather to the advantages of the parties, or rather, the parties' leaders, and if any means are considered acceptable to achieve a goal.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly sympathetic with Mormon society as the victim of majority outrage, he notes that members of the sect had been compelled in desperation to flee to the wilderness. He observes that the Mormons had succeeded in estranging public opinion in both the North and the South: The tendency toward theocracy in Mormon society offended Northern democrats while, at the same time, the suspicion that the Mormons seemed to represent a weighty body of abolitionists made them anathema to slave holders.

His generally sympathetic attitude is also apparent in an ironic statement about the controversial question of Eastern judges in Utah:

And so it happens that Federal judges sent to the territory of the Mormons remain barely for two or three months and return to their point of origin avowing that no non-Mormon could live in Great Salt Lake City, but nonetheless they do not meet with any substantive obstacles while they are there.<sup>4</sup>

The next question recurs in the work of virtually all Russian commentators in this period: Given the presence of persecution, how can one explain the dramatic rise in Mormon membership and the fidelity of its adherents to their oppressed faith? Our anonymous author rejects the theory that the promise of multiple wives could serve as a lascivious inducement to conversion. He supposes that Mormonism had its most spectacular successes before 1852 while polygamy was still a hermetic doctrine. No, the success of Mormonism must reside in the very fact of persecution which generates sympathy and compassion, in the compelling appeal of its eclectic doctrines and in the failure of the older Protestant churches to meet the spiritual needs of those who abandoned their traditional beliefs for the new faith.

Writing as the citizen of a country which had enjoyed a long and vigorous intercourse with the Turks and the peoples of Central Asia, he explores the question of Mormonism's similarity to Islam; this concern appears in nearly

every Russian writing on Mormon society. The two traits he, and others, saw as common to the two faiths were sensuality—as expressed in polygamy—and theocracy, the blurring of the lines between state and religion, as, for example, in Brigham Young's role as both spiritual and temporal leader of Mormonism. The sensual element in Mormon polygamy was as yet little understood, although already it was arousing some of the wilder surmises among non-Mormon commentators, the Russians among them. The theocratic tendency in the faith was to persist and was to occasion a heated controversy in the years to come. Although the writer noted these rather striking similarities between the two faiths, he observed an important difference: The Moslem use of the sword as a means of conversion was absent in Mormonism. True, he does state that all young Mormon men are trained in arms and every man from twenty to eighty years of age must possess a weapon, but the Mormons had not yet resorted to the use of arms to any extent. The suspicion that Mormonism might indeed become militant if suitable conditions were to exist is mentioned by nearly all Russian writers.

The second survey of Mormonism's place in America appeared in 1861 in the journal *Time*, an ephemeral periodical published by Fedor and Mikhail Dostoevskii.<sup>5</sup> Although the article is not signed, it has been ascribed to the pen of Artur Benni, a Polish Protestant journalist who played a brief but colorful role in the intensely partisan political controversies of the 1860s.<sup>6</sup> Although his father was Polish and Benni himself was born in Poland, he had lived and worked in England, the homeland of his mother. He had come to Russia in 1861 where he supported himself by writing for Russian journals, sometimes on the West. Originally inclined towards the left, after his arrival in Russia he became disillusioned with the fierce infighting among radicals and swung to the right. He was therefore able to find a market for his writings among conservative journals like *Time*. During his painful Siberian exile, Fedor Dostoevskii had acquired conservative political and social views reflected in the journal he and his brother established. It supported Russian imperialism and the claims of the Russian Orthodox Church, and perhaps as could be expected, Benni chose to emphasize several negative aspects of the new American religious movement.

Two of these were the assumed threat of Mormon military power and polygamy, which had been indelibly imprinted on the Russian mind as the hallmark of Mormonism.<sup>7</sup> The article was written, we are informed, in 1861 after Fort Sumter had been fired on but before open hostilities between the Union and the Confederate States. Benni asks, what course will be taken by the Mormon colony? Will it enter the war or remain an indifferent observer? He assumes that the Mormon settlement had the power to make this decision and that it had sufficient military resources to enforce its stand. Like the author of the earlier article in *The Fatherland Notes*, Benni appears to overestimate greatly Mormon military capabilities. He even describes the young Mormon settlements as fortresses, the outlying villages such as San Bernardino or Carson Valley as military outposts and the Western Indians as trusted and faithful Mormon scouts. He claims that local tribes can muster 30

thousand armed braves to support the Mormon armies. With this vision of the Mormon colony as a fortress besieged, hostilities are not merely a possibility but a probability in the years to come.

Benni is alarmed at the military threat presented by Mormon settlements; he is repelled by the institution of polygamy. The author of *The Fatherland Notes* article had dutifully noted the place of polygamy in determining the peculiar contours of Mormon society and its part in arousing the antagonism of non-Mormon society but had devoted little effort to its description and dissection. Benni, however, devotes four pages to a highly colored account of its evil influence, summarizing thusly:

Among a society [America] in which woman is more honored and free than in any other country in the world, the Mormons have declared for polygamy and the enslavement of women, the inevitable consequence of polygamy.<sup>8</sup>

As with other early writers on Mormonism, he is baffled by the willingness of Mormon women to enter polygamous marriages voluntarily, given what appears to be their slavish status in the institution; he concludes that the men of the faith have been very successful in propagandizing its advantages, whatever they may be. In addition to what appears to him to be the degradation of women as the indisputable consequence of polygamy he lists its other baleful effects on Mormon society as a reduced birthrate resulting from the premature marriage of Mormon women, high child mortality and the birth of more girls than boys, also a phenomenon in Turkey.

It is true that to counterbalance the negative Mormon traits of bellicosity and adherence to polygamy, he does see positive values in the Mormon accomplishment, particularly in creating a thriving community in an uninhabited wasteland.<sup>9</sup>

In spite of the aversion occasioned by the doctrines and manners of the Mormons, it is indisputable that they have rendered a valuable service to mankind and civilization by settling in these inhospitable regions. This barren plain which separates the slopes of the Pacific from the slopes of the Atlantic appeared to be useless for cultivation.

But in the center of this silent desert the Mormons laid the foundation of their holy city, which, it appears, must in a short time become a warehouse midway between New York and San Francisco, between Western Europe and Eastern Asia. How grateful must be those who are concerned with the cause of immigration to those fanatics who wished to flee civilization but in spite of that have become its most fervent advocates!<sup>10</sup>

The most perceptive study of Mormonism appearing early in the reign of Alexander II was published in 1868 as part of a four-part survey of North American religions.<sup>11</sup> The author, though his name does not appear on the title page, is Petr Lavrov, the father of Russian populism.<sup>12</sup> This long and discursive article, redoubtable in its erudition and breadth of view, was written under improbable circumstances: At the time of its composition, Lavrov

was in exile in the Vologda region north of Moscow from which he was to flee abroad in 1870, the same year his most influential book, *The Historical Letters*, appeared. A confirmed Westernizer, comfortable in the three major Western European languages, Lavrov was most at home with such questions as European philosophy, political thought and institutions. Of this type was the article on North American religions.

Although it purports to be a general survey of all the religions in America, Lavrov elects to focus his attention on three distinctively American faiths. The Shakers, who he concedes will never acquire great social significance because of their small numbers; Spiritualists who suffer from the lack of a hierarchy and formal organization; and Mormons, whose growth, he finds to be impressive and characteristic of its time and place.

Conceding that Mormonism has achieved notoriety in some scholarly circles, he cites as examples of such low estimation a volume by Robert Baird, *State and Prospects of Religion in America* (London: 1855) and the article "Nord-Amerika" in the German reference work *Realenzyklopaedie fuer Protestantische Theologie and Kirche* (Hamburg, 1854–68). With commendable scholarly discrimination, he turns to the eyewitness account of an informed English writer, William Hepworth Dixon, one of the more reliable and restrained authorities on the Utah settlements, who had visited Great Salt Lake City at considerable expense and hardship.<sup>13</sup>

As expected, Lavrov devotes little attention to theological questions or the history of the sect; his concern, and this is true of all the Russian critics, is with the structure, morals and character of Mormon society. For particular attention, he singles out two prominent traits of Mormonism: the manifest tendency toward theocracy with the subsequent subordination of the individual seemingly so atypical in American society, and the remarkable industry of Mormon society. To the latter he attributes its astonishing accomplishments in settling a new land. He relegates the putative Mormon bellicosity and the institution of polygamy to positions of secondary rank.

These two traits—theocracy and love of labor—he attempts to explain by a unifying theory: Mankind has always sought pleasure (in the most general sense), but the masses have known it as only an idle dream; the right to pleasure is granted to a select few. In the modern world, however, thanks to a rising standard of living and the mixture of classes attributable to revolution, the masses have become aware that such a possibility now exists. Furthermore, liberal institutions have opened many doors for those who wish to rise to a higher station with greater satisfactions. This is especially true in America. However, the fall of the ancient barriers between the majority of the deprived population and the privileged elect has created intense competition for entry into precincts of pleasure. It is becoming ever more obvious that the great masses of the population must remain essentially isolated from those who have achieved success and its rewards. The masses who cannot escape their fate must wait for a small gifted minority to present an institution for organizing cooperative action to meet their goals. These institutions will be granted to the underlings by ambitious leaders prepared to use the majority

for their own purposes. These demagogues or prophets lead revolutions or new religions. Such has it always been and such will it always be, in Lavrov's opinion. The result is that liberal institutions coexist with depotism because men, given the chance, will at any price follow leaders who promise them earthly happiness. Hence, in America, one finds both the most liberal institutions and institutions in which the majority willingly submits to the authority of the few.

Now the great masses engaged in endless labor do not seek boundless leisure as a goal; with them labor has become a deeply engrained habit. They desire only the fruits of their labor and to be assured that their labor is respected and honored. Such as has been precisely the development in Utah where labor is deified. Lavrov quotes Orson Hyde, "A lazy, inactive man cannot be a Christian and cannot be saved,"<sup>14</sup> as indicative of the Mormon veneration of work.

Such reasoning, whatever its merits, is characteristic of Lavrov's rationalistic analyses. Unlike the emotional and clearly prejudiced authorities he quotes early in his survey, or even the relatively objective Dixon, Lavrov strives to interpret the Mormon phenomenon in sociological terms as the working out of institutional tensions and dynamisms. The origins of this dispassionate attitude probably lie in Lavrov's wide acquaintance with European scholarship of his day, particularly French sociologists and utopian thinkers.

Polygamy does interest Lavrov, and he devotes considerable attention to it. "The Woman Question" preoccupied Russian journalism during the yeasty reform decade of the 1860s because it had come to be recognized that Russian women suffered under a wearisome burden of social inequality, economic deprivation and legal injustice. Lavrov's generation was characterized by an acute sensitivity for social victims whether as an economic class, like the peasantry or a sexual class. It is within this context—a heightened awareness of the unhappy condition of modern women—that he makes his statements on Mormon polygamy. He accepts the view that it was introduced by Brigham Young in order to accelerate the birth rate and thereby increase the economic and military strength of the isolated Mormon colony. Yet Lavrov will not accept this justification because it requires one half of the population to become instruments of reproduction thereby depriving women of their social role, lowering themselves in their own eyes and the eyes of men. At a time when the entire thinking world sought a rational solution of the Woman Question, it would retard that solution for centuries. As to its psychological origins, he can only abandon his scholarly stance, raise his hands in bewilderment, and say: "It can be explained only by a pathological urge toward the fantastic and the unheard of, which has so long persisted in mankind and has given birth to the strangest phenomena."<sup>15</sup> He is convinced that polygamy is the most harmful aspect of Mormon life, that children born to polygamous marriages are enervated, and that its baleful effects on the wives are unparalleled. He predicts, finally, that "if the Mormons do not in timely fashion abandon polygamy and adopt equality of the sexes, one may predict that

polygamy will destroy them:"<sup>16</sup> a premonition of the crisis that Mormonism would soon face. Rather facetiously he surmises that with increased enlightenment Mormon women might cease listening to the males of the community and refuse to enter into plural marriages. However, he is aware that the discarding of polygamy will not be a simple task, for "history has shown all too often that temporary dogmas so shape a sect that they merge with it even when these dogmas have lost any vital meaning."<sup>17</sup>

In spite of his concern for the harmful effects of polygamy as he saw them, and its potential insidious role in the future of Mormonism, Lavrov also grasped the essential feature of Mormon religious polity: The leader of the Church could at any time abolish polygamy in accordance with the principle of continuing revelation. This was also true of other doctrines which Lavrov saw in a negative light:

We consider that the doctrines of polygamy, spiritual wives, marriage by proxy, and baptism [for the dead] are not an essential part of Mormonism, and it is very possible that if the sect persists, then the new prophets, when warfare is no longer a probability, will abolish polygamy as more harmful than useful, and will choose to de-emphasize the mystic celestial relationships which sooner or later must evoke profound scepticism.<sup>18</sup>

To this list of transient articles of faith he later adds the prohibition against blacks as full participants in the Church.<sup>19</sup>

Lavrov's cool analysis of the characteristics of the Mormon community has no previous counterpart in Russian journalism. Nor was Lavrov's relative objectivity present in a long review article written by S. S. Shashkov, "The Mormon Kingdom," which appeared in *The Cause* in 1871,<sup>20</sup> a few years later.

Shashkov chose to review one of the many scurrilous works on Mormonism that appeared after the transcontinental railroad through Utah was built. Written by Nelson Winch Green, its title page was cited by Shashkov as *Mormonism its rise, progress and present condition. Embracina [sic] the narrative of mrs. [sic] Mary Ettie V. Smith, of her residence and experience of fifteen years with the mormons [sic]; with other startling facts and statements, being a full disclosure of the rites, ceremonies and mysteries of polygamy.*

Shashkov noted that the Russian reading public had come to rely on Dixon's *New America*<sup>21</sup> as its primary source on Mormonism, which, in his words, only describes the externals of Mormon life, since the author came to Great Salt Lake City as a stranger and based his narrative on limited interviews and observations. Had Dixon the privilege of living within the Mormon community, Shashkov continues, and thus be privy to its unspeakable excesses and crimes his account would have been vastly more unfavorable; he would have known that Mormonism presents as formidable a military threat as had the Southern Confederacy and that an armed confrontation with the United States government is inevitable.

This testimony of the excesses of Mormonism was provided by Mary Ettie V. Smith, who claimed to be party to many of its secrets described to Nelson, the book's ostensible author. She informs the reader that the major source of



income for the Mormon church is derived from counterfeiting and theft, that the Church maintains authority over its members and punishes its enemies through secret Danite bands, that Brigham Young has amassed 25 million dollars deposited in an English bank, that he has personally ordered the murder of a number of his gentile opponents and that the ceremonies practiced in the temple are too terrible to describe.

Since these aspects of Mormonism render it completely unacceptable to the United States, the inevitable outcome must be either armed conflict or another flight to a remote region, in South America, Shashkov predicts.<sup>22</sup> What else can be expected of a faith "which sanctifies pillage, murder, theft, and polygamy?"<sup>23</sup>

The same apocalyptic note is sounded in a brief anonymous article in another major journal of the day, *The Russian Messenger*, in 1872. Entitled "The Mormon Leader in Court,"<sup>24</sup> it describes the recent arrest and prosecution of Brigham Young, the outcome of which was still uncertain. The author concludes that in any case:

it is clear that the golden age of the Mormons has passed. Their territory is surrounded on all sides by civilized colonies and part of it has already been claimed by the states of Nevada and Colorado, so that in all probability, the last trace of the Mormons and their immoral customs will disappear under the weight of general contempt.<sup>25</sup>

Whatever the validity of this author's statement; there is no doubt that the golden age of the Russian interest in the Mormon experiment had slipped into the past. Curiosity about the Mormon community that welled up in the age of reform early in the 1860s had subsided, along with sympathy for a people victimized by mobocracy in spite of constitutional guarantees of religious freedom. Interest in Mormonism as social experimentation and as a remarkable colony was gone.

The causes for this loss of interest are not far to find: Waning enthusiasm for unorthodox social movements so prominent in the reforming 1860s, an increasingly unfavorable press in the United States because of exaggerated fears of Mormon military might and the increasingly important role polygamy had come to play in the image of Mormonism, along with a lively concern for the status of women and therefore the position of polygamist wives. Finally, honest and objective curiosity about the Mormon community in Russia, particularly as can be seen in Lavrov's work, was overwhelmed by a flood of unprincipled and intemperate literature, which appeared in Western European languages and in Russian, purporting to expose the criminal inner workings of the faith.<sup>26</sup> That wave of invective and innuendo was enough to drown curiosity, however well meant. By 1872 the Russian interest in Mormon colonization and Mormon social experimentation, born early in the reign of Alexander II, had clearly expired.<sup>27</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Artur Benni, "Mormonism i Soedinennnye Shtaty," [Mormonism and the U.S.] *Vremia*, 10 (1861): p. 329. All translations in this text are my own.

<sup>27</sup>Istoriia, byt, i navy Mormonov," *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 11: 1–10; 12: 101–18.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, II: 4.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2

<sup>5</sup>Artur Benni. "Mormonism i Soedinennye Shtaty," ["Mormonism and the U.S."] *Vremia* 10 (1861): 321–55. Fedor Dostoevskii himself referred briefly to Mormonism after a visit to Western Europe. In *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, he suggests that Mormonism is a last resort for the unhappy masses driven to desperation by the unholy spirit of the giant city of London. That he was skeptical about the ultimate value of such conversions is clear from the perjorative term he uses: "Mormonovshchina." (*Sobranie Sochinenii*, (Leningrad, 1973), 5: 70). Another brief reference appears in a review written by one of the controversial critics of the day, Nikolai Chernyshevskii, in a review of Henry Charles Carey's, *Letters to the President, on the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Union . . .* (Philadelphia: 1958). Carey had listed slavery and polygamy among the outstanding evils of American life, but Chernyshevskii contends that the American populace is to be condemned for allowing its dislike of Mormonism to lead it to bloody excesses. Chernyshevskii's review appeared originally in *Sovremennik*, No. 1, 1861. See his *Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii*, (St. Petersburg: 1906) 8: 32.

<sup>6</sup>Benni, an obscure figure, would have been even more obscure if he not been befriended by the Russian writer, N. S. Leskov. After Benni's premature death in Italy in 1867, Leskov wrote an adulatory, informative and polemical essay dedicated to Benni's memory entitled "an Enigmatic Man," ("Zagadochnyj chelovek" *Sobranie Sochinenii* (Moscow: 1957) 3: 276–381.) attributing the Mormonism article to Benni, and claiming to have helped Benni with his inadequate Russian. He also states that Benni wrote the very brief article (signed only "B") which was published in *Russian Speech* in 1861, "A Few Words About the Mormons," ("Neskol'ko slov o Mormonakh," *Russkaia Rech*, 61: 241–43), which I have been unable to obtain. Solomon Rejser's work in Russian about Benni clarified many facts. (*Artur Benni*, Moscow, 1933.) In English the best source on Benni is Hugh McLean, "Leskov and his Enigmatic Man," *Harvard Slavic Studies*, 4 (1957): 203–24.

<sup>7</sup>Further evidence is found in the title of an article appearing in Alexander Herzen's London journal, *Kolokol* (May 15, 1861), "Mormonism in the Chernigov Province," which describes a bigamist landlord shielded from prosecution by local officials. A. I. Herzen, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, (Moscow: 1958) 15: 253.

<sup>8</sup>Benni, "Mormonism," p. 337

<sup>9</sup>His source on the blossoming Mormon colonies is Jules Remy, *Voyage au pays des Mormons*, (Paris: 1860), while the author of *The Fatherland Notes* article used J. W. Gunnison's *The Mormons* (Philadelphia: 1852).

<sup>10</sup>Bennie, "Mormonism," p. 327–28

<sup>11</sup>P. Lavrov. "Severo-Amerikanskoe Sektatorstvo," *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1868) 4: 403–470; 6: 273–336; 7: 269–318; 8: 324–354., The passages dealing with Mormonism are 7: 269–300 and 8: 325–48.

<sup>12</sup>Lavrov is identified as the author in S. S. Borshchevskii's "*Otechestvennye zapiski*," (Moscow: 1966), p. 8–10. Two popular sources are available on Lavrov in English; however, neither of them discusses his article on American religions. They are Philip Pomper, *Peter Lavrov and the Russian Revolutionary Movement* (Chicago: 1972) and Peter Lavrov *Historical Letters* (Berkeley: 1967).

<sup>13</sup>Dixon was a prominent traveler, writer on social issues, and later, British magistrate. See the *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 1917–), 5: 1033–34. Lavrov punctiliously notes that he had read Dixon in English, but he could have read a Russian translation of Dixon's work which appeared the same year in St. Petersburg. A second translation, testifies to Russian interest in the subject, appeared in 1869. A lengthy anonymous review of Dixon's book appeared under the "Neizvedannye mesta i novye liudi v Amerike," ("New places and new people in America") in *Otechestvennye zapiski* (May 1867), 83–116.

<sup>14</sup>Lavrov, "Sektatorstvo," 7: 285–68. (Original source not given).

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 297

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 339

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 338

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 299

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 300

<sup>20</sup>S. S. Shashkov, "Tsarstvo Mormonov," *Delo*, 12 (December 1871): 97–118. Serafim Serafimovich Shashkov (1841–82) was a journalist and ethnographer of Siberian customs who had many points in common with Lavrov. A son of a priest—the classic origin of middle class intellectuals in nineteenth century Russia—he fell afoul of the Tsarist government for his efforts in the cause of Siberian separatism and so was exiled to Northern Russia (1868 to 1873). This article, like Lavrov's, was written in exile. See *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'* (St Petersburg: 1896–1918), 22: 609–11.

<sup>21</sup>That is, the two Russian translations of 1868 and 1869.

<sup>22</sup>Gene A. Sessions and Stephen W. Stathis examine the theory that the fear of a Mormon invasion of Alaska might have in part induced the Russians to sell that territory to the United States. ("The Mormon Invasion of Russian America: Dynamics of a Potent Myth." *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Winter 1977, 22–35). It is true that Russian writers consistently overestimate Mormon military power and their close relations with Indian tribes. To the Russian government a Mormon invasion of Alaska might have appeared as an authentic possibility, as remote as it now appears.

<sup>23</sup>Shashkov, "Tsarstvo Mormonov," p. 118

<sup>24</sup>"Glava Mormonov pred sudom," *Russkii vestnik*, 97 (February 1872): 795–96.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 796

<sup>26</sup>For example, John H. Beadle's *Life in Utah; or The Mysteries and crimes of Mormonism, Being an expose of the secret rites and ceremonies of the Latter-day Saints* (Philadelphia: 1870) was translated into Russian in St. Petersburg in 1872.

<sup>27</sup>Twenty years later, the great Russian poet-philosopher, Vladimir Solov'ev, contributed an article on "Mormonism" to the standard Russian 19th century encyclopedia. He based the article on conventional German secondary sources and evinced not a shred of sympathy for the Mormon experiment. "Mormonstvo, Mormony," *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'*, 19 (St. Petersburg, 1896): 863–67.