

Many years ago a learned man, a member of the Roman Catholic Church, came to Utah and spoke from the stand of the Salt Lake Tabernacle. I became well acquainted with him, and we conversed freely and frankly. A great scholar, with perhaps a dozen languages at his tongue's end, he seemed to know all about theology, law, literature, science and philosophy. One day he said to me: "You Mormons are all ignoramuses. You don't even know the strength of your own position. It is so strong that there is only one other tenable in the whole Christian world, and that is the position of the Catholic Church. The issue is between Catholicism and Mormonism. If we are right, you are wrong; if you are right, we are wrong; and that's all there is to it. The

Protestants haven't a leg to stand on. For if we are wrong, they are wrong with us, since they were a part of us and went out from us; while if we are right, they are apostates whom we cut off long ago. If we have the apostolic succession from St. Peter, as we claim, there was no need of Joseph Smith and Mormonism; but if we have not that succession, then such a man as Joseph Smith was necessary, and Mormonism's attitude is the only consistent one. It is either the perpetuation of the Gospel from ancient times, or the restoration of the Gospel in latter days."

My reply was substantially as follows: "I agree with you, Doctor, in nearly all that you have said. But don't deceive yourself with the notion that we "Mormons" are not aware of the strength of our position. We are better aware of it than anyone else. We have not all been to college ; we cannot all speak the dead languages; we may be 'ig- noramuses', as you say; but we know that we are right, and we know that you are wrong". I was just as frank with him as he had been with me.

("A Catholic Utterance" from "The Strength of the Mormon Position pamphlet by Elder Orson F. Whitney of the Council of the Twelve)