habit the islands of New Zealand, many
d hundred miles to the southward in the
Pacific Ocean, are also receiving the glad
tidings of the Gospel of Christ with joy, and
that hundreds are there being added to the Church at the present time. It
has long been the belief of the Latter-
day Saints that these races are offshoots
of the great people who once flourished
upon this continent; who were brought
out of the land of Jerusalem under Lehi,
Mulek and others, and who have inhab-
ited this land from about 600 years be-
fore Christ; that people whose remnants
are now found scattered far and wide
over the North and South American con-
tinents. There appears to be a great
similarity in the habits, customs, man-
ners and language of the natives of those
two groups of islands; which similarity,
in many respects, extends to some of the
races that inhabit this continent. And
for these and other reasons we believe
that in these islanders flows the blood
of Israel to a great extent; and where it
does, those who are thus blessed by being
the children of the fathers to whom the
promises were made, as races receive the
truths of the Gospel much more readily
and apparently, notwithstanding their
many weaknesses, cleave unto them
much more devotedly than do very many
of those who embrace its saving princi-
ples among the Gentile nations. It would
seem as though at the present time the
Gentile nations of the earth were turn-
ing from the truths of the Everlasting
Gospel; they have measurably rejected
them; and the consequence is we find
today that there is an increase of skepti-
cism, that there is an increase of a spirit
opposed to good order, to obedience,
to faith, and to many other admirable
characteristics of generations gone
by. The present is an age of unrest, of
turmoil, of contention, of a lack of faith,
not only in religious matters, but in al-
most everything else. We may be said
to be living in a period of transition, and
that transition does not always appear to
be in the most desirable direction. But
this spirit of doubt and incredulity, of un-
certainty and unrest is more manifest re-
garding religious subjects than any other
questions that attract the attention of
mandkind; and is perhaps more manifest
in those nations to whom the Gospel has
been preached for many years than in
any other parts of the world. This is the
natural result of the course the people
of those countries have taken. Having
rejected the principles that God in His
kindness has caused to be revealed, His
Spirit, which is the Spirit of life, light, in-
telligence and truth, is of necessity mea-
surably withdrawn from them, and they
are left to themselves to serve God as
best they may when they will not serve
Him as He requires. The consequence is
division and subdivision in the churches;
for every man's opinion is as good as that
of his neighbor; and there remains no
trustworthy, much less infallible, stan-
dard by which to gauge the beliefs of
mankind; consequently every man walks
in his own way and professes such a be-
lief as best suits his fancy. But with us
it is different. And the very fact that we
are united with regard to that which God
requires at our hands in all things is a
rock of offense to many; it is regarded
as an evil by those who do not love us;
by those who make it their business to
bring evil accusations against us. Our
union is an opposite condition of affairs
to that which exists among the sects in
the Christian world, and being contrary
they imagine ought to be stigmatized,