

[MORMON STUDIES](#) PRESENTS:

THE STORY OF THE MORMONS

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BOOK II

IN OHIO

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST CONVERTS AT KIRTLAND

THE four missionaries who had been sent to Ohio under Cowdery's leadership arrived there in October, 1830. Rigdon left Kirtland on his visit to Smith in New York State in the December following, and in January, 1831, he returned to Ohio, taking Smith with him.

The party who set out for Ohio, ostensibly to preach to the Lamanites, consisted of Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson, the latter one of Smith's original converts, who, it may be noted, was deprived of his land and made to work for others a year later in Missouri, because of offences against the church authorities. These men preached as they journeyed, making a brief stop at Buffalo to instruct the Indians there. On reaching Ohio, Pratt's acquaintance with Rigdon's Disciples gave him an opportunity to bring the new Bible to the attention of many people. The character of the Smiths was quite unknown to the pioneer settlers, and the story of the miraculously delivered Bible filled many of them with wonder rather than with unbelief.

The missionaries began the work of organizing a church at once. Some members of Rigdon's congregation had already formed a "common stock society," and were believers in a speedy millennium, and to these the word brought by the new-comers was especially welcome. Cowdery baptized seventeen persons into the new church. Rigdon at the start denied his right to do this, and, in a debate between him and the missionaries which followed at Rigdon's house, Rigdon quoted Scripture to prove that, even if they had seen an angel, as they declared, it might have been Satan

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transformed. Cowdery asked if he thought that, in response to a prayer that God would show him an angel, the Heavenly Father would suffer Satan to deceive him. Rigdon replied that if Cowdery

made such a request of the Heavenly Father "when He has never promised you such a thing, if the devil never had an opportunity of deceiving you before, you give him one now."¹ But after a brief study of the new book, Rigdon announced that he, too, had had a "revelation," declaring to him that Mormonism was to be believed. He saw in a vision all the orders of professing Christians pass before him, and all were "as corrupt as corruption itself," while the heart of the man who brought him the book was "as pure as an angel."

The announcement of Rigdon's conversation gave Mormonism an advertisement and a support that had a wide effect, and it alarmed the orthodox of that part of the country as they had never been alarmed before. Referring to it, Hayden says, "The force of this shock was like an earthquake when Symonds Ryder, Ezra Booth, and many others submitted to the 'New Dispensation.'" Largely through his influence, the Mormon church at Kirtland soon numbered more than one hundred members.

During all that autumn and early winter crowds went to Kirtland to learn about the new religion. On Sundays the roads would be thronged with people, some in whatever vehicles they owned, some on horseback, and some on foot, all pressing forward to hear the expounders of the new Gospel and to learn the particulars of the new Bible. Pioneers in a country where there was little to give variety to their lives, they were easily influenced by any religious excitement, and the announcement of a new Bible and prophet was certain to arouse their liveliest interest. They had, indeed, inherited a tendency to religious enthusiasm, so recently had their parents gone through the excitements of the early days of Methodism, or of the great revivals of the new West at the beginning of the century, when (to quote one of the descriptions given by Henry Howe) more than twenty thousand persons assembled in one vast encampment, "hundreds of immortal beings moving to and fro, some preaching, some praying for mercy, others praising God. Such

¹ "It seemed to be a part of Rigdon's plan to make such a fight that, when he did surrender, the triumph of the cause that had defeated him would be all the more complete." -- Kennedy, "Early Days of Mormonism."

was the eagerness of the people to attend, that entire neighborhoods were forsaken, and the roads literally crowded by those pressing forward on their way to the groves."¹ Any new religious leader could then make his influence felt on the Western border: Dylkes, the "Leatherwood God," had found it necessary only to announce himself as the real Messiah at an Ohio camp meeting, in 1828, to build up a sect on that assumption. Freewill Baptists, Winebrennerians, Disciples, Shakers, and Universalists were urging their doctrines and confusing the minds of even the thoughtful with their conflicting views. We have seen to[o] what beliefs the preaching of the Disciples' evangelists had led the people of the Western Reserve, and it did not really require a much broader exercise of faith (or credulity) to accept the appearance of a new prophet with a new Bible.

While the main body of converts was made up of persons easily susceptible to religious excitement, and accustomed to have their opinions on such subjects formed for them, men of education and more or less training in theology were found among the early adherents to the new belief. It is interesting to see how the minds of such men were influenced, and this we are enabled to do from personal experiences related by some of them.

One of these, John Corrill, a man of intelligence, who stayed with the church until it was driven out of Missouri, then became a member of the Missouri Legislature, and wrote a brief history of the church to the year 1839, in this pamphlet answered very clearly the question often asked by his friends, "How did you come to join the Mormons?" A copy of the new Bible was given to him by Cowdery when the missionaries, on their Western trip, passed through Ashtabula County, Ohio, where he lived. A brief reading convinced him that it was a mere money-making scheme, and when he learned that they had stopped at Kirtland, he did not entertain a doubt, that, under Rigdon's criticism, the pretensions of the missionaries would be at once laid bare. When, on the contrary, word came that Rigdon and the majority of his society had accepted the new faith, Corrill asked himself: "What does this mean? Are Elder Rigdon and these men such fools as to be duped by these impostors?" After talking the

matter over with a neighbor, he decided to visit Kirtland, hoping to bring Rigdon home with him, with the

¹ "Historical Collections of the Great West."

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idea that he might be saved from the imposition if he could be taken from the influence of the impostors. But before he reached Kirtland, Corrill heard of Rigdon's baptism into the new church. Finding Kirtland in a state of great religious excitement, he sought discussions with the leaders of the new movement, but not always successfully.

Corrill started home with a "heart full of serious reflections." Were not the people of Berea nobler than the people of Thessalonica because "they searched the Scriptures daily; whether these things were so?" Might he not be fighting against God in his disbelief? He spent two or three weeks reading the Mormon Bible; investigated the bad reports of the new sect that reached him and found them without foundation; went back to Kirtland, and there convinced himself that the laying on of hands and "speaking with tongues" were inspired by some supernatural agency; admitted to himself that, accepting the words of Peter (Acts ii. 17-20), it was "just as consistent to look for prophets in this age as in any other." Smith seemed to have been a bad man, but was not Moses a fugitive from justice, as the murderer of a man whose body he had hidden in the sand, when God called him as a prophet? The story of the long hiding and final delivery of the golden plates to Smith taxed his credulity; but on rereading the Scriptures he found that books are referred to therein which they do not contain -- Book of Nathan the Prophet, Book of Gad the Seer, Book of Shemaiah the Prophet, and Book of Iddo the Seer (1 Chron. xxix. 29; 2 Chron. ix. 29 and xii. 15). This convinced him that the Scriptures were not complete. Daniel and John were commanded to seal the Book. David declared (Psalms xxxv.) "that truth shall spring out of the earth," and from the earth Smith took the plates; and Ezekiel (xxxvii. 15-21) foretold the existence of two records, by means of which there shall be a gathering together of the children of Israel. It finally seemed to Corrill that the Mormon Bible

corresponded with the record of Joseph referred to by Ezekiel, the Holy Bible being the record of Judah.

Not fully satisfied, he finally decided, however, to join the new church, with a mental reservation that he would leave it if he ever found it to be a deception. Explaining his reasons for leaving it when he did, he says, "I can see nothing that convinces me that God has been our leader; calculation after calculation has

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failed, and plan after plan has been overthrown, and our prophet seemed not to know the event till too late."

The two other most prominent converts to the new church in Ohio were the Rev. Ezra Booth, a Methodist preacher of more than ordinary culture, of Mantua, and Symonds Ryder, a native of Vermont, whom Alexander Campbell had converted to the Disciples' belief in 1828, and who occupied the pulpit at Hiram when called on. Booth visited Smith in 1831, with some members of his own congregation, and was so impressed by the miraculous curing of the lame arm of a woman of his party by Smith, that he soon gave in his allegiance. Ryder had always found one thing lacking in the Disciples' theology -- he looked for some actual "gift of the Holy Spirit" in the way of "signs" that were to follow them that believed. He was eventually induced to announce his conversion to the new church after "he read in a newspaper, an account of the destruction of Pekin in China, and remembered that, six weeks before, a young Mormon girl had predicted the destruction of that city. "This statement was made in the sermon preached at his funeral. Both of these men confessed their mistake four months later, after Booth had returned from a trip to Missouri with Smith.

Among the ignorant, even the most extravagant of the claims of the Mormon leaders had influence. One man, when he heard an elder in the midst of a sermon "speak with tongues," in a language he had never heard before, "felt a sudden thrill from the back of his head down his backbone," and was converted on the spot. John D. Lee, of

Catholic education, was convinced by an elder that the end of the world was near, and sold his property in Illinois for what it would bring, and moved to Far West, in order to be in the right place when the last day dawned. Lorenzo Snow, the recent President of the church, says that he was "thoroughly convinced that obedience to those {the Mormon} prophets would impart miraculous powers, manifestations, and revelations," the first manifestation of which occurred some weeks later, when he heard a sound over his head "like the rustling of silken robes, and the spirit of God descended upon me."¹

The arguments that control men's religious opinions are too varied even for classification. In a case like Mormonism they

¹ Biography of Snow, by his sister Eliza.

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range from the really conscientious study of a Corrill to the whim of the Paumotuan, of whom Stevenson heard in the South Seas, who turned Mormon when his wife died, after being a pillar of the Catholic church for fifteen years, on the ground that "that must be a poor religion that could not save a man his wife." Any person who will examine those early defences of the Mormon faith, Parley P. Pratt's "A Voice of Warning," and Orson Pratt's "Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," will find what use can be made of an insistence on the literal acceptance of the Scriptures in defending such a sect as theirs, especially with persons whose knowledge of the Scriptures is much less than their reverence for them.

Professor J. B. Turner,¹ writing in 1842, when the early teachings of Mormonism had just had their effect in what is now styled the middle West, observed that these teachings had made more infidels than Mormon converts. This is accounted for by the fact that persons who attempted to follow the Mormon argument by studying the Scriptures, found their previous interpretation of parts of the Holy Bible overturned, and the whole book placed under a cloud. W. J. Stillman mentions a similar effect in the case of Ruskin. When they

were in Switzerland, Ruskin would do no painting on Sunday, while Stillman regarded the sanctity of the first day of the week as a "theological fiction." In a discussion of the subject between them, Stillman established to Ruskin's satisfaction that there was no Scriptural authority for transferring the day of rest from the seventh to the first day of the week." The creed had so bound him to the letter, "says Stillman, "that the least enlargement of the stricture broke it, and he rejected, not only the tradition of the Sunday Sabbath, but the whole of the ecclesiastical interpretation of the texts. He said, 'If they have deceived me in this, they have probably deceived me in all.'" The Mormons soon learned that it was more profitable for them to seek converts among those who would accept without reasoning.

¹ "Mormonism in all Ages."

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CHAPTER II

WILD VAGARIES OF THE CONVERTS

THE scenes at Kirtland during the first winter of the church there reached the limit of religious enthusiasm. The younger members outdid the elder in manifesting their belief. They saw wonderful lights in the air, and constantly received visions. Mounting stumps in the field, they preached to imaginary congregations, and, picking up stones, they would read on them words which they said disappeared as soon as known. At the evening prayer-meetings the laying on of hands would be followed by a sort of fit, in which the enthusiasts would fall apparently lifeless on the floor, or contort their faces, creep on their hands or knees, imitate the Indian process of killing and scalping, and chase balls of fire through the fields.¹

Some of the young men announced that they had received

"commissions" to teach and preach, written on parchment, which came to them from the sky, and which they reached by jumping into the air. Howe reproduces one of these, the conclusion of which, with the seal, follows: --

"That you had a messenger tell you to go and get the other night, you must not show to any son of Adam. Obey this, and I will stand by you in all cases. My servants, obey my commandments in all cases, and I will provide.

"Be ye always ready,
Be ye always ready, Whenever I shall call,
Be ye always ready, My seal.

[Image not reproduced here]

¹ Corrill's "Brief History of the Church," p. 16; Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 104.

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"There shall be something of great importance revealed when I shall call you to go: My servants, be faithful over a few things, and I will make you a ruler over many. Amen, Amen, Amen."

Foolishly extravagant as these manifestations appear (Corrill says that comparatively few members indulged in them), there was nothing in them peculiar to the Mormon belief. The meetings of the Disciples, in the year of Smith's arrival in Ohio and later, when men like Campbell and Scott spoke, were swayed with the most intense religious enthusiasm. A description of the effect of Campbell's preaching at a grove meeting in the Cuyahoga Valley in 1831 says: --

"The woods were full of horses and carriages, and the hundreds already there were rapidly swelled to many thousands; all were of one race -- the Yankee; all of one calling, or nearly, the farmer.... When Campbell closed, low murmurs broke and ran through the awed crowd; men and women from all parts of the vast assembly with streaming eyes came forward; young men who had climbed into small trees from curiosity, came down from conviction, and went forward for baptism."¹

It is easy to cite very "orthodox" precedents for such manifestations. One of these we find in the accounts of what were called "the jerks," which accompanied a great revival in 1803, brought about by the preaching of the Rev. Joseph Badger, a Yale graduate and a Congregationalist, who was the first missionary to the Western Reserve. J. S. C. Abbott, in his history of Ohio, describing the "jerks," says: --

"The subject was instantaneously seized with spasms in every muscle, nerve and tendon. His head was thrown backward and forward, and from side to side, with inconceivable rapidity. So swift was the motion that the features could no more be discerned than the spokes of a wheel can be seen when revolving with the greatest velocity.... All were impressed with a conviction that there was something supernatural in these convulsions, and that it was opposing the spirit of God to resist them. "

The most extravagant enthusiasm of the Kirtland converts, and the most extravagant claims of the Mormon leaders at that time, were exceeded by the manifestations of converts in the early days of Methodism, and the miraculous occurrences testified to by Wesley himself,² -- a cloud tempering the sun in answer to

¹ Riddle's "The Portrait."

² For examples see Lecky's "England in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. III, Chap. VIII, and Wesley's "Journal."

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his prayer; his horse cured of lameness by faith; the case of a blind Catholic girl who saw plainly when her eyes rested on the New Testament, but became blind again when she took up the Mass Book.

These Mormon enthusiasts were only suffering from a manifestation to which man is subject; and we can agree with a Mormon elder who, although he left the church disgusted with its extravagances, afterward remarked, "The man of religious feeling will know how to pity rather than upbraid that zeal without knowledge which leads a man to fancy that he has found the ladder of Jacob, and that he sees the angel of the Lord ascending and descending before his eyes."

When Smith and Rigdon reached Kirtland they found the new church in a state of chaos because of these wild excitements, and of an attempt to establish a community of possessions, growing out of Rigdon's previous teachings. These communists held that what belonged to one belonged to all, and that they could even use anyone's clothes or other personal property without asking permission. Many of the flock resented this, and anything but a condition of brotherly love resulted. Smith, in his account of the situation as they found it, says that the members were striving to do the will of God, "though some had strange notions, and false spirits had crept in among them. With a little caution and some wisdom, I soon assisted the brothers and sisters to overcome them. The plan of 'common stock,' which had existed in what was called 'the family,' whose members generally had embraced the Everlasting Gospel, was readily abandoned for the more perfect law of the Lord," [1] -- which the prophet at once expounded.

Smith announced that the Lord had informed him that the ravings of the converts were of the devil, and this had a deterring effect; but at an important meeting of elders to receive an endowment, some three months later, conducted by Smith himself, the spirits got hold of some of the elders. "It threw one from his seat to the floor," says Corrill. "It bound another so that for some time he could not use his limbs or speak; and some other curious effects were experienced. But by a mighty exertion, in the name of the Lord, it was exposed and shown to be of an evil source."

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XIV, Supt., p. 56.

CHAPTER III

GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

IN order not to interrupt the story of the Mormons' experiences in Ohio, leaving the first steps taken in Missouri to be treated in connection with the regular course of events in that state, it will be sufficient to say here that Cowdery, Pratt, and their two companions continued their journey as far as the western border of Missouri, in the winter of 1830 and 1831, making their headquarters at Independence, Jackson County; that, on receipt of their reports about that country, Smith and Rigdon, with others, made a trip there in June, 1831, during which the corner-stones of the City of Zion and the Temple were laid, and officers were appointed to receive money for the purchase of the land for the Saints, its division; etc. Smith and Rigdon returned to Kirtland on August 27, 1831.

The growth of the church in Ohio was rapid. In two or three weeks after the arrival of the four pioneer missionaries, 127 persons had been baptized, and by the spring of 1831 the number of converts had increased to 1000. Almost all the male converts were honored with the title of elder. By a "revelation" dated February 9, 1831 (Sec. 42), all of these elders, except Smith and Rigdon, were directed to "go forth in the power of my spirit, preaching my Gospel, two by two, in my name, lifting up your voices as with the voice of a trump. "This was the beginning of that extensive system of proselyting which was soon extended to Europe, which was so instrumental in augmenting the membership of the church in its earlier days, and which is still carried on with the utmost zeal and persistence. The early missionaries travelled north into Canada and through almost all the states, causing alarm even in New England by the success of their work. One man there, in 1832, reprinted at his own expense Alexander Campbell's

pamphlet exposing the ridiculous features of the Mormon Bible, for distribution as an offset to the arguments of the elders. Women of means were among those who moved to Kirtland from Massachusetts. In three years after Smith and Rigdon met in

Palmyra, Mormon congregations had been established in nearly all the Northern and Middle states and in some of the Southern, with baptisms of from 30 to 130 in a place.¹

Smith had relaxed none of his determination to be the one head of the church. As soon as he arrived in Kirtland he put forth a long "revelation" (Sec. 43) which left Rigdon no doubt of the prophet's intentions. It declared to the elders that "there is none other {but Smith} appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken," and that "none else shall be appointed unto his gift except it be through him. "Not only was Smith's spiritual power thus intrenched, but his temporal welfare was looked after. "And again I say unto you," continues this mouthpiece of the Lord, "if ye desire the mysteries of the Kingdom, provide for him food and raiment and whatsoever he needeth to accomplish the work wherewith I have commanded him." In the same month came another declaration, saying (Sec. 41 " is meet that my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., should have a house built, in which to live and translate" (the Scriptures). With a streak of generosity it was added, "It is meet that my servant Sidney Rigdon should live as seemeth him good."

The iron hand with which Smith repressed Rigdon from the date of their arrival in Ohio affords strong proof of Rigdon's complicity in the Bible plot, and of Smith's realization of the fact that he stood to his accomplice in the relation of a burglar to his mate, where the burglar has both the boodle and the secret in his possession. An illustration of this occurred during their first trip to Missouri. Rigdon and Smith did not agree about the desirability of western Missouri as a permanent abiding-place for the church. The Rev. Ezra Booth, after leaving the Mormons, contributed a series of letters on his experience with Smith to the *Ohio Star* of Ravenna.² In the first of these he said: "On our arrival in the western part of the state of Missouri we discovered that prophecy and visions had failed, or rather had proved false. This fact was

¹ Turner's "Mormonism in all Ages," p. 38.

² Copied in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled."

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so notorious that Mr. Rigdon himself says that 'Joseph's vision was a bad thing.'" Smith nevertheless directed Rigdon to write a description of that promised land, and, when the production did not suit him, he represented the Lord as censuring Rigdon in a "revelation" (Sec. 63):

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"And now behold, verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, am not pleased with my servant Sidney Rigdon; he exalteth himself in his heart, and receiveth not counsel, but grieveth the spirit. Wherefore his writing is not acceptable unto the Lord; and he shall make another, and if the Lord receiveth it not, behold he standeth no longer in the office which I have appointed him."

That the proud-minded, educated preacher, who refused to allow Campbell to claim the foundership of the Disciples' church, should take such a rebuke and threat of dismissal in silence from Joe Smith of Palmyra, and continue under his leadership, certainly indicates some wonderful hold that the prophet had upon him.

While the travelling elders were doing successful work in adding new converts to the fold, there was beginning to manifest itself at Kirtland that "apostasy" which lost the church so many members of influence, and was continued in Missouri so far that Mayor Grant said, in Salt Lake City, in 1856, that "one-half at least of the Yankee members of this church have apostatized."¹ The secession of men like Booth and Ryder, and their public exposure of Smith's methods, coupled with rumors of immoral practices in the fold, were followed by the tarring and feathering of Smith and Rigdon on the night of Saturday, March 25, 1832. The story of this outrage is told in Smith's autobiography, and the details there given may be in the main accepted.

Smith and his wife were living at the house of a farmer named Johnson in Hiram township, while he and Rigdon were translating the Scriptures. Mrs. Smith had taken two infant twins to bring up, and on the night in question she and her husband were taking turns sitting up with these babies, who were just recovering from the measles. While Smith was sleeping, his wife heard a tapping on the window, but gave it no attention. The mob, believing that all within were asleep, then burst in the door, seized Smith as he lay partly

dressed on a trundle bed, and rushed him out of doors,

¹ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. III, p. 201.

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his wife crying "murder." Smith struggled as best he could, but they carried him around the house, choking him until he became unconscious. Some thirty yards from the house he saw Rigdon, "stretched out on the ground, whither they had dragged him by the heels." When they had carried Smith some thirty yards farther, some of the mob meantime asking, "Ain't ye going to kill him?" a council was held and some one asked, "Simmons, where's the tarbucket?" When the bucket was brought up they tried to force the "tarpaddle" into Smith's mouth, and also, he says, to force a phial between his teeth. He adds: --

"All my clothes were torn off me except my shirt collar, and one man fell on me and scratched my body with his nails like a mad cat. They then left me, and I attempted to rise, but fell again. I pulled the tar away from my lips, etc., so that I could breathe more freely, and after a while I began to recover, and raised myself up, when I saw two lights. I made my way toward one of them, and found it was father Johnson's. When I had come to the door I was naked, and the tar made me look as though I had been covered with blood; and when my wife saw me she thought I was all smashed to pieces, and fainted. During the affray abroad, the sisters of the neighborhood collected at my room. I called for a blanket; they threw me one and shut the door; I wrapped it around me and went in.... My friends spent the night in scraping and removing the tar and washing and cleansing my body, so that by morning I was ready to be clothed again.... With my flesh all scarified and defaced, I preached {that morning} to the congregation as usual, and in the afternoon of the same day baptized three individuals."

Rigdon's treatment is described as still more severe. He was not only dragged over the ground by the heels, but was well covered with tar and feathers; and when Smith called on him the next day he found him delirious, and calling for a razor with which to kill his wife.

All Mormon accounts of this, as well as later persecutions, attempt to make the ground of attack hostility to the Mormon *religious* beliefs, presenting them entirely in the light of outrages on liberty of

opinion. Symonds Ryder (whom Smith accuses of being one of the mob), says that the attack had this origin: The people of Hiram had the reputation of being very receptive and liberal in their religious views. The Mormons therefore preached to them, and seemed in a fair way to win a decided success, when the leaders made their first trip to Missouri. Papers which they left behind outlining the internal system of the new church fell

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into the hands of some of the converts, and revealed to them the horrid fact that a plot was laid to take their property from them and place it under the control of Smith, the Prophet.... Some who had been the dupes of this deception determined not to let it pass with impunity; and, accordingly, a company was formed of citizens from Shalersville, Garrettsville, and Hiram, and took Smith and Rigdon from their beds and tarred and feathered them."¹

This manifestation of hostility to the leaders of the new church was only a more pronounced form of that which showed itself against Smith before he left New York State. When a man of his character and previous history assumes the right to baptize and administer the sacrament, he is certain to arouse the animosity, not only of orthodox church members, but of members of the community who are lax in their church duties. Goldsmith illustrates this kind of feeling when, in "She Stoops to Conquer," he makes one of the "several shabby fellows with punch and tobacco" in the alehouse say, "I loves to hear him, the squire sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low," and another responds, "O, damn anything that's low." The Anti-Mormon feeling was intensified and broadened by the aggressiveness with which the Mormons sought for converts in the orthodox flocks.

Beliefs radically different from those accepted by any of the orthodox denominations have escaped hostile opposition in this country, even when they have outraged generally accepted social customs. The Harmonists, in a body of 600, emigrated to Pennsylvania to escape the persecution to which they were subjected in Germany, purchased 5000 acres of land and organized a town;

moved later to Indiana, where they purchased 25,000 acres; and ten years afterward returned to Pennsylvania, and bought 5000 acres in another place, -- all the time holding to their belief in a community of goods and a speedy coming of Christ, as well as the duty of practicing celibacy, -- without exciting their neighbors or arousing their enmity. The Wallingford Community in Connecticut, and the Oneida Community in New York State, practised free love among themselves without persecution, until their organizations died from natural causes. The leaders in these and other independent sects were clean men within their own rules, honest

¹ Hayden's "Early History of the Disciples' Church in the Western Reserve," p. 221.

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in their dealings with their neighbors, never seeking political power, and never pressing their opinions upon outsiders. An old resident of Wallingford writes to me, "The Community were, in a way, very generally respected for their high standard of integrity in all their business transactions." As we follow the career of the Mormons from Ohio to Missouri, and thence to Illinois, we shall read their own testimony about the character of their leading men, and about their view of the rights of others in each of their neighborhoods. When Horace Greeley asked Brigham Young in Salt Lake City for an explanation of the "persecutions" of the Mormons, his reply was that there was "no other explanation than is afforded by the crucifixion of Christ and the kindred treatment of God's ministers, prophets, and saints in all ages;" which led Greeley to observe that, while a new sect is always decried and traduced, -- naming the Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, and Universalists, -- he could not remember "that either of them was ever generally represented and regarded by the other sects of their early days as thieves, robbers, and murderers."¹

Another attempt by Rigdon to assert his independence of Smith occurred while the latter was still at Mr. Johnson's house and Rigdon was in Kirtland. The fullest account of this is found in Mother Smith's "History," pp. 204-206. She says that Rigdon came in late to

a prayer-meeting, much agitated, and, instead of taking the platform, paced backward and forward on the floor. Joseph's father told him they would like to hear a discourse from him, but he replied, "The keys of the Kingdom are rent from the church, and there shall not be a prayer put up in this house this day." This caused considerable excitement, and Smith's brother Hyrum left the house, saying, "I'll put a stop to this fuss pretty quick," and, mounting a horse, set out for Johnson's and brought the prophet back with him. On his arrival, a meeting of the brethren was held, and Joseph declared to them, "I myself hold the keys of this Last Dispensation, and will forever hold them, both in time and eternity, so set your hearts at rest upon that point. All is right." The next day Rigdon was tried before a council for having "lied in the name of the Lord," and was "delivered over to the buffetings of Satan," and deprived of his license,

¹ "Overland Journey," p. 214.

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Smith telling him that "the less priesthood he had, the better it would be for him." Rigdon, Mrs. Smith says, according to his own account, "was dragged out of bed by the devil three times in one night by the heels," and, while she does not accept this literally, she declares that "his contrition was as great as a man could well live through." After awhile he got another license.

CHAPTER IV

GIFTS OF TONGUES AND MIRACLES

IN January, 1833, Smith announced a revival of the "gift of tongues," and instituted the ceremony of washing the feet.¹ Under the new system, Smith or Rigdon, during a meeting, would call on some brother, or sister, saying, "Father A., if you will rise in the name of Jesus Christ you can speak in tongues." The rule which persons thus called on were to follow was thus explained, "Arise upon your feet, speak or make some sound, continue to make sounds of some kind, and the Lord will make a language of it." It was not necessary that the words should be understood by the congregation; some other Mormon would undertake their interpretation. Much ridicule was incurred by the church because of this kind of revelation. Gunnison relates that when a woman "speaking in tongues" pronounced "meliar, meli, melee," it was at once translated by a young wag, "my leg, my thigh, my knee," and, when he was called before the Council charged with irreverence, he persisted in his translation, but got off with an admonition.² At a meeting in Nauvoo in later years a doubting convert delivered an address in real Choctaw, whereupon a woman jumped up and offered as a translation an account of the glories of the new Temple.

At the conference of June 4, 1831, Smith ordained Elder Wright to the high priesthood for service among the Indians, with the gift of tongues, healing the sick, etc. Wright at once declared that he saw the Saviour. At one of the sessions at Kirtland at this time, as described by an eye-witness, Smith announced that the day would come when no man would be permitted to preach unless he had seen the Lord face to face. Then, addressing Rigdon, he asked, "Sidney, have you seen the Lord?" The

¹ This ceremony has fallen into disuse in Utah.

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