

[MORMON STUDIES](#) PRESENTS:

THE STORY OF THE MORMONS

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[Contents](#) (With Links to All Chapters)

[Book I](#) | [Book II](#) | [Book III](#) | [Book IV](#) | [Book V](#) | [Book VI](#) | [Index](#)

Bk. IV chaps.: [1](#) | [2-3](#) | [4-5](#) | [6-7](#) | [8-9](#) | [10-11](#) | [12-13](#) | [14-15](#) | [16-17](#) | [18-19](#) | [20-21](#)

Go back to: [Page 218](#)

[219]

BOOK IV

IN ILLINOIS

CHAPTER I

THE RECEPTION OF THE MORMONS

THE state of Illinois, when the Mormons crossed the Missouri River to settle in it, might still be considered a pioneer country. Iowa, to the west of it, was a territory, and only recently organized as such. The population of the whole state was only 467,183 in 1840, as compared with 4,821,550 in 1900. Young as it was, however, the state had had some severe financial experiences, which might have served as warnings to the new-comers. A debt of more than \$14,000,000 had been contracted for state improvements, and not a railroad or a canal had been completed. "The people," says Ford, "looked one way and another with surprise, and were astonished at their own folly." The payment of interest on the state debt ceased after July, 1841, and "in a short time Illinois became a stench in the nostrils of the civilized world.... The impossibility of selling kept us from losing population; the fear of disgrace or high taxes prevented us from gaining materially."¹ The State Bank and the Shawneetown Bank failed in 1842, and when Ford became governor in that year he estimated that the good money in the state in the hands of the people did not exceed one year's interest on the public debt.

The lawless conditions in many parts of the state in those days can scarcely be realized now. It was in 1847 that the Rev. Owen {sic} Lovejoy was killed at Alton in maintaining his right to print there an abolition newspaper. All over the state, settlers who had occupied lands as "squatters" defended their claims by force, and serious mobs often resulted. Large areas of military lands were

¹ Ford's "History of Illinois," Chap. VII.

owned by non-residents, who were in very bad favor with the actual settlers. These settlers made free use of the timber on such lands, and the non-residents, failing to secure justice at law, finally hired preachers, who were paid by the sermon to preach against the sin of "hooking" timber.¹

Bands of desperadoes in the northern counties openly defied the officers of the law, and, in one instance, burned down the courthouse (in Ogle County in 1841) in order to release some of their fellows who were awaiting trial. One of these gangs ten years earlier had actually built, in Pope County, a fort in which they defied the authorities, and against which a piece of artillery had to be brought before it could be taken. Even while the conflict between the Mormons was going on, in 1846, there was vitality enough in this old organization, in Pope and Massac counties, to call for the interposition of a band of "regulators," who made many arrests, not hesitating to employ torture to secure from one prisoner information about his associates. Governor Ford sent General J. T. Davies there, to try to effect a peaceable arrangement of the difficulties, but he failed to do so, and the "regulators," who found the county officers opposed to them, drove out of the county the sheriff, the county clerk, and the representative elect to the legislature. When the judge of the Massac Circuit Court charged the grand jury strongly against the "regulators," they, with sympathizers from Kentucky, threatened to lynch him, and actually marched in such force to the county seat that the sheriff's posse surrendered, and the mob let their friends out of jail, and drowned some members of the posse in the Ohio River.

The reception and treatment of the Mormons in Illinois, and the success of the new-comers in carrying out their business and political schemes, must be viewed in connection with these incidents in the early history of the state.

The greeting of the Mormons in Illinois, in its practical shape, had both a political and a business reason.² Party feeling ran very high throughout the country in those days. The House of Representatives at Washington, after very great excitement, organized

¹ Ford's "History of Illinois," Chap. VI.

² "The first great error committed by the people of Hancock County was in accepting too readily the Mormon story of persecution. It was continually rung in their ears, and

believed as often as asserted." -- Gregg, "History of Hancock County," p. 270.

---- THE RECEPTION OF THE MORMONS 221 ----

early in December, 1839, by choosing a Whig Speaker, and at the same time the Whig National Convention, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, nominated General W. H. Harrison for President. Thus the expulsion from Missouri occurred on the eve of one of our most exciting presidential campaigns, and the Illinois politicians were quick to appraise the value of the voting strength of the immigrants. As a residence of six months in the state gave a man the right to vote, the Mormon vote would count in the presidential election.

Accordingly, we find that in February, 1839, the Democratic Association of Quincy, at a public meeting in the court-house, received a report from a committee previously appointed, strongly in favor of the refugees, and adopted resolutions condemning the treatment of the Mormons by the people and officers of Missouri. The *Quincy Argus* declared that, because of this treatment, Missouri was "now so fallen that we could wish her star stricken out from the bright constellation of the Union." In April, 1839, Rigdon wrote to the "Saints in prison" that Governor Carlin of Illinois and his wife "enter with all the enthusiasm of their nature" into his plan to have the governor of each state present to Congress the unconstitutional course of Missouri toward the Mormons, with a view to federal relief. Governor Lucas of Iowa Territory, in the same year (Iowa had only been organized as a territory the year before, and was not admitted as a state until 1845), replying to a query about the reception the Mormons would receive in his domain, said: "Their religious opinions I consider have nothing to do with our political transactions. They are citizens of the United States, and are entitled to the same political rights and legal protection that other citizens are entitled to." He gave Rigdon at the same time cordial letters of introduction to President Van Buren and Governor Shannon of Ohio, and Rigdon received a similar letter to the President, recommending him "as a man of piety and a valuable citizen," signed by Governor Carlin, United States Senator Young, County Clerk Wren, and leading business men of Quincy. Thus began that recognition of the Mormons as a political power in Illinois which led to concessions to them that had so

much to do with finally driving them into the wilderness.

The business reason for the welcome of the Mormons in Illinois and Iowa was the natural ambition to secure an increase of population. In all of Hancock County there were in 1830 only

----- 222 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

483 inhabitants as compared with 32,215 in 1900. Along with this public view of the matter was a private one. A Dr. Isaac Galland owned (or claimed title to) a large tract of land on both sides of the border line between Illinois and Iowa, that in Iowa being included in what was known as "the half-breed tract," an area of some 119,000 acres which, by a treaty between the United States government and the Sacs and Foxes, was reserved to descendants of Indian women of those tribes by white fathers, and the title to much of which was in dispute. As soon as the Mormons began to cross into Illinois, Galland approached them with an offer of about 20,000 acres between the Mississippi and Des Moines rivers at \$2 per acre, to be paid in twenty annual installments, without interest. A meeting of the refugees was held in Quincy in February, 1839, to consider this offer, but the vote was against it. The failure of the efforts in Ohio and Missouri to establish the Mormons as a distinct community had made many of Smith's followers skeptical about the success of any new scheme with this end in view, and at this conference several members, including so influential a man as Bishop Partridge, openly expressed their doubt about the wisdom of another gathering of the Saints. Galland, however, pursued the subject in a letter to D. W. Rodgers, inviting Rigdon and others to inspect the tract with him, and assuring the Mormons of his sympathy in their sufferings, and "deep solicitude for your future triumphant conquest over every enemy." Rigdon, Partridge, and others accepted Galland's invitation, but reported against purchasing his land, and the refugees began scattering over the country around Quincy.

----- [223] -----

CHAPTER II

THE SETTLEMENT OF NAUVOO

SMITH'S Smith's leadership was now to have another illustration. Others might be discouraged by past persecutions and business failures, and be ready to abandon the great scheme which the prophet had so often laid before them in the language of "revelation;" but it was no part of Smith's character to abandon that scheme, and remain simply an object of lessened respect, with a scattered congregation. He had been kept advised of Galland's proposal, and, two days after his arrival in Quincy, we find him, on April 24, presiding at a church council which voted to instruct him with two associates to visit Iowa and select there a location for a church settlement, and which advised all the brethren who could do so to move to the town of Commerce, Illinois. Thus were the doubters defeated, and the proposal to scatter the flock brought to a sudden end. Smith and his two associates set out at once to make their inspection.

The town of Commerce had been laid out (on paper) in 1834 by two Eastern owners of the property, A. White and J. B. Teas, and adjoining its northern border H. R. Hotchkiss of New Haven, Connecticut, had mapped out Commerce City. Neither enterprise had proved a success, and when the Mormon agents arrived there the place had scarcely attained the dignity of a settlement, the only buildings being one storehouse, two frame dwellings and two blockhouses. The Mormon agents, on May 1, bought two farms there, one for \$5000 and one for \$9000 (known afterward as the White purchase), and on August 9 they bought of Hotchkiss five hundred acres for the sum of \$53,500. Bishop Knight, for the church, soon afterward purchased part of the town of Keokuk, Iowa, a town called Nashville six miles above, a part of the town of Montrose, four miles above Nashville, and thirty thousand acres

----- 224 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

in the "half-breed tract," which included Galland's original offer, and ten thousand acres additional. Thus was Smith prepared to make another attempt to establish his followers in a permanent abiding-place. But how, it may be asked, could the prophet reconcile this abandonment of the Missouri Zion and this new site for a church settlement with previous revelations? By further "revelation," of course. Such a mouthpiece of God can always enlighten his followers provided he can find speech, and Smith was not slow of utterance. While in jail in Liberty he had advised a committee which was sent to him from Illinois to sell all the lands in Missouri, and in a letter to the Saints, written while a prisoner, he spoke favorably of Galland's offer, saying, "The Saints ought to lay hold of every door that shall seem to be opened unto them to obtain foothold on the earth." In order to make perfectly clear the new purpose of the Lord in regard to Zion he gave out a long "revelation" (Sec. 124), which is dated Nauvoo, January 19, 1841, and which contains the following declarations: --

"Verily, verily I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men to do a work under my name, and those sons of men go with all their might and with all they have, to perform that work and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them and hinder them from performing that work, behold, it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept their offerings.

"And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not and hate me, saith the Lord God.

"Therefore for this cause have I accepted the offerings of those whom I commanded to build up a city and house unto my name in Jackson County, Missouri, and were hindered by their enemies, saith the Lord your God."

This announcement seems to have been accepted without question by the faithful, as reconciling the failure in Missouri with the new establishment farther east.

The financiering of the new land purchases did credit to Smith's genius in that line. For some of the smaller tracts a part payment in cash was made. Hotchkiss accepted for his land two notes signed by Smith and his brother Hyrum and Rigdon, one payable in ten, and the other in twenty years. Galland took notes, and, some time later, as explained in a

letter to the Saints abroad, the Mormon lands in Missouri, "in payment for the whole amount,

THE SETTLEMENT OF NAUVOO

225 ----

and in addition to the first purchase we have exchanged lands with him in Missouri to the amount of \$80,000."¹ Galland's title to the Iowa tract was vigorously assailed by Iowa newspapers some years later. What cash he eventually realized from the transaction does not appear.² Smith had influence enough over him to secure his conversion to the Mormon belief, and he will be found associated with the leaders in Nauvoo enterprises.

The Hotchkiss notes gave Smith a great deal of trouble. Notwithstanding the influx of immigrants to Nauvoo and the growth of the place, which ought to have brought in large profits from the sale of lots, the accrued interest due to Hotchkiss in two years amounted to about \$6000. Hotchkiss earnestly urged its payment, and Smith was in dire straits to meet his demands. In a correspondence between them, in 1841, Smith told Hotchkiss that he had agreed to forego interest for five years, and not to "force payment" even then. Smith assured Hotchkiss that the part of the city bought from him was "a deathly sickly hole" on which they had been able to realize nothing, "although," he added, with unblushing affrontery for the head of a church, "we have been keeping up appearances and holding out inducements to encourage immigration that we scarcely think justifiable in consequence of the mortality that almost invariably awaits those who come from far distant parts."³ In pursuance of this same policy (in a letter dated October 12, 1841), the Eastern brethren were urged to transfer their lands there to Hotchkiss in payment of the notes, and to accept lots in Nauvoo from the church in exchange.

The name of the town was changed to Nauvoo in April, 1840, with the announcement that this name was of Hebrew origin, signifying "a beautiful place."⁴

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. II, p. 275.

² "Galland died a pauper in Iowa." -- "Mormon Portraits," p. 253.

³ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII, p. 631.

⁴ In answer to a query about this alleged derivation of the name of the city, a competent Hebrew scholar writes to me: "The nearest approach to Nauvoo in Hebrew is an adjective which would be transliterated Naveh, meaning pleasant, a rather rare word. The letter correctly represented by v could not possibly do the double duty of uv, nor could a of the Hebrew ever be au in English, nor eh of the Hebrew be oo in English. Students of theology at Middletown, Connecticut, used to have a saying that that name was derived from Moses by dropping 'iddletown' and adding 'oses.' "

----- [226] -----

CHAPTER III

THE BUILDING UP OF THE CITY -- FOREIGN PROSELYTING

THE geographical situation of Nauvoo had something in its favor. Lying on the east bank of the Mississippi, which is there two miles wide, it had a water frontage on three sides, because of a bend in the stream, and the land was somewhat rising back from the river. But its water front was the only thing in its favor. "The place was literally a wilderness," says Smith. "The land was mostly covered with trees and bushes, and much of it so wet that it was with the utmost difficulty a foot man could get through, and totally impossible for teams. Commerce was so unhealthy very few could live there, but, believing it might become a healthy place by the blessing of heaven to the Saints, and no more eligible place presenting itself, I considered it wisdom to make an attempt to build up a city."

Contemporary accounts say that most of the refugees from Missouri suffered from chills and fevers during their first year in the new settlement. Smith, in his autobiography, laments the mortality among the settlers. The Rev. Henry Caswall, in his description of three days at Nauvoo in 1842, says: --

"I was informed again and again in Montrose, Iowa, that nearly half of the English who emigrated to Nauvoo in 1841 died soon after their arrival... In his sermon at Montrose in May 9, 1841, the following words of most Christian consolation were delivered by the Prophet to the poor deluded English: 'Many of the English who have lately come here have expressed great disappointment on their arrival. Such persons have every reason to be satisfied in this beautiful and fertile country. If they choose to complain, they may; but I don't want to be troubled with their complaints. If they are not satisfied here, I have only this to say to them, "Don't stay whining about me, but go back to England, and go to h -- l and be d -- d."'"¹

¹ "City of the Mormons," p. 55.

THE BUILDING UP OF THE CITY

227 ----

Brigham Young, in after years, thus spoke of Smith's exhibition of miraculous healing during the year after their arrival in Illinois: "Joseph commenced in his own house and dooryard, commanding the sick, in the name of Jesus Christ, to arise and be made whole, and they were healed according to his word. He then continued to travel from house to house, healing the sick as he went."¹ Any attempt to reconcile this statement by Young with the previously cited testimony about the mortality of the place would be futile.

The growth of the town, however, was more rapid than that of any of the former Mormon settlements. The United States census shows that the population of Hancock County, Illinois, increased from 483 in 1830 to 9946 in 1840. Statements regarding the population of Nauvoo during the Mormon occupancy are conflicting and often exaggerated. In a letter to the elders in England, printed in the *Times and Seasons* of January, 1841, Smith said, "There are at present about 3000 inhabitants in Nauvoo." The same periodical, in an article on the city, on December 15, 1841, said that it was "a densely populated city of near 10,000 inhabitants." A visitor, describing the place in a letter in the *Columbus* (Ohio) *Advocate* of March, 1842, said that it contained about 7000 persons, and that the buildings were small and much scattered, log cabins predominating. The *Times and Seasons* of October, 1842, said, "It will be no more than probably correct if we allow the city to contain between 7000 and 8000 houses, with a population of 14,000 or 15,000,"

with two steam mills and other manufacturing concerns in operation. W. W. Phelps estimated the population in 1844 at 14,000, almost all professed Mormons. The *Times and Seasons* in 1845 said that a census just taken showed a population of 11,057 in the city and one third more outside the city limits.

As soon as the Mormons arrived, Nauvoo was laid out in blocks measuring about 180 by 200 feet, with a river frontage of more than three miles. An English visitor to the place in 1843 wrote "The city is of great dimensions, laid out in beautiful order; the streets are wide and cross each other at right angles, which will add greatly to its order and magnificence when finished. The city rises on a quick incline from the rolling Mississippi, and as you stand near the Temple you may gaze on the picturesque scenery

¹ "Life of Brigham Young" (Cannon & Son, publishers), p. 32.

----- 228 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

round. At your side is the Temple, the wonder of the world; round about and beneath you may behold handsome stores, large mansions, and fine cottages, interspersed with varied scenery."¹

Whatever the exact population of the place may have been, its rapid growth is indisputable. The cause of this must be sought, not in natural business reasons, such as have given a permanent increase of population to so many of our Western cities, but chiefly in active and aggressive proselyting work both in this country and in Europe. This work was assisted by the sympathy which the treatment of the Mormons had very generally secured for them. Copies of Mormon Bibles were rare outside of the hands of the brethren, and the text of Smith's "revelations" bearing on his property designs in Missouri was known to comparatively few even in the church. While the Nauvoo edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants" was in course of publication, the *Times and Seasons*, on January 1, 1842, said that it would be published in the spring, "but, many of our readers being deprived of the privilege of perusing its valuable pages, we insert the first section." Mormon emissaries took advantage of this situation to tell their story in their own way at all

points of the compass. Meetings were held in the large cities of the Eastern states to express sympathy with these victims of the opponents of "freedom of religious opinion," and to raise money for their relief, and the voice of the press, from the Mississippi to the Atlantic, was, without a discovered exception, on the side of the refugees.

This paved the way for a vast extension of that mission work which began with the trip of Cowdery and his associates in 1830, was expanded throughout this country while the Saints were at Kirtland, and was extended to foreign lands in 1837. The missionaries sent out in the early days of the church represented various degrees of experience and qualification. There were among them men like Orson Hyde and Willard Richards, who, although they gave up secular callings on entering the church, were close students of the Scriptures and debaters who could hold their own, when it came to an interpretation of the Scriptures, before any average audience. Many were sent out without any especial equipment for their task. John D. Lee, describing his first trip, says: --"I started forth an illiterate, inexperienced person, without purse

¹ Mackay's "The Mormons," p. 128.

THE BUILDING UP OF THE CITY

229 ----

or scrip. I could hardly quote a passage of Scripture. Yet I went forth to say to the world that I was a minister of the Gospel." He was among the successful proselyters, and rose to influence in the church.¹ Of the requirement that the missionaries should be beggars, Lorenzo Snow, who was sent out on a mission from Kirtland in 1837, says, "It was a severe trial to my natural feelings of independence to go without purse or scrip especially the purse; for, from the time I was old enough to work, the feeling that 'I paid my way' always seemed a necessary adjunct to self respect." "

Parley P. Pratt, in a letter to Smith from New York in November, 1839, describing the success of the work in the United States, says, "You would now find churches of the Saints in Philadelphia, in Albany, in Brooklyn, in New York, in Sing Sing, in Jersey, in Pennsylvania, on

Long Island, and in various other places all around us," and he speaks of the "spread of the work" in Michigan and Maine.

The importance of England as a field from which to draw emigrants to the new settlement was early recognized at Nauvoo, and in 1840 such lights of the church as Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, P. P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, were sent to cultivate that field. There they ordained Willard Richards an Apostle, preached and labored for over a year, established a printing-office which turned out a vast amount of Mormon literature, including their Bible and "Doctrine and Covenants," and began the publication of the *Millennial Star*.

In 1840 Orson Hyde was sent on a mission to the Jews in London, Amsterdam, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, and the same year missionaries were sent to Australia, Wales, Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the East Indies. In 1844 a missionary was sent to the Sandwich Islands; in 1849 others were sent to France, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland, Italy, and Switzerland; in 1850 ten more elders were sent to the Sandwich Islands; in 1851 four converts were baptized in Hindostan; in 1852 a branch of the church was organized at Malta; in 1853 three elders reached the Cape of Good Hope; and in 1861 two began work in Holland, but with poor success. We shall see that this proselyting labor has

¹ For an account of his travels and successes, see "Mormonism Unveiled.

continued with undiminished industry to the present day, in all parts of the United States as well as in foreign lands.

England provided an especially promising field for Mormon missionary work. The great manufacturing towns contained hundreds of people, densely ignorant,¹ superstitious, and so poor that the ownership of a piece of land in their own country was practically beyond the limit of their ambition. These people were naturally susceptible to the Mormon teachings, easily imposed upon by stories of alleged miracles, and ready

to migrate to any part of the earth where a building lot or a farm was promised them. The letters from the first missionaries in England gave glowing reports of the results of their labors. Thus Wilford Woodruff, writing from Manchester in 1840, said, "The work has been so rapid it was impossible to ascertain the exact number belonging to each branch, but the whole number is 33 churches, 534 members, 75 officers, all of which had embraced the work in less than four months." Lorenzo Snow, in a letter from London in April, 1841, said: "Throughout all England, in almost every town and city of any considerable importance, we have chapels or public halls in which we meet for public worship. All over this vast kingdom the laws of Zion are rolling onward with the most astonishing rapidity."

The visiting missionaries began their work in England at Preston, Lancashire, in 1836 or 1837, and soon secured there some five hundred converts. Then they worked on each side of the Ribble, making converts in all the villages, and gaining over a few farm owners and mechanics of some means. Their method was first to drop hints to the villagers that the Holy Bible is defective in translation and incomplete, and that the Mormon Bible corrects all these defects. Not able to hold his own in any theological discussion, the rustic was invited to a meeting. At that meeting the missionary would announce that he would speak simply as the Lord directed him, and he would then present the Mormon view of their Bible and prophet. As soon as converts were won over, they were immersed, at night, and given the sacrament. Then they were initiated into the secret "church meeting," to

¹ "It has been calculated that there are in England and Wales six million persons who can neither read nor write, that is to say, about one-third of the population, including, of course, infants; but of all the children more than one-half attend no place of public instruction." -- Dickens, "Household Words."

THE BUILDING UP OF THE CITY

231 ----

which only the faithful were admitted, and where the flock were told of visions and "gifts," and exhorted to stand firm (along with their earthly goods) for the church, and warned against apostasy.

One way in which the prophetic gift of the missionaries was proved in the early days in England was as follows: "Whenever a candidate was immersed, some of the brethren was given a letter signed by Hyde and Kimball, setting forth that 'brother will not abide in the spirit of the Lord, but will reject the truth, and become the enemy of the people of God, etc., etc.' If the brother did not apostatize, this letter remained unopened; if he did, it was read as a striking verification of prophecy."¹

Miracles exerted a most potent influence among the people in England with whom the early missionaries labored, and the *Millennial Star* contains a long list of reported successes in this line. There are accounts of very clumsy tricks that were attempted to carry out the deception. Thus, at Newport, Wales, three Mormon elders announced that they would raise a dead man to life. The "corpse" was laid out and surrounded by weeping friends, and the elders were about to begin their incantations, when a doubting Thomas in the audience attacked the "corpse" with a whip, and soon had him fleeing for dear life.²

Thomas Webster, who was baptized in England in 1837 by Orson Hyde and became an elder, saw the falsity of the Mormon professions through the failure of their miracles and other pretensions, and, after renouncing their faith, published a pamphlet exposing their methods. He relates many of the declarations made by the first missionaries in Preston to their ignorant hearers. Hyde declared that the apostles Peter, James, and John were still alive. He and Kimball asserted that neither of them would "taste death" before Christ's second coming. At one meeting Kimball predicted that in ten or fifteen years the sea would be dried up between Liverpool and America. "One of the most glaring things they ever brought before the public," says Webster, "was stated in a letter written by Orson Hyde to the brethren in Preston, saying they were on the way to the promised land in Missouri by hundreds, and the wagons reached a mile in length. They fell in with some of their brethren in Canada, who told him

¹ Caswall's "City of the Mormons," appendix.

² Tract by Rev. F. B. Ashley, p. 22.

----- 232 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

the Lord had been raining down manna in rich profusion, which covered from seven to ten acres of land. It was like wafers dipped in honey, and both Saints and sinners partook of it. I was present in the pulpit when this letter was read."

However ridiculous such methods may appear, their success in Great Britain was great.¹ In three years after the arrival of the first missionaries, the General Conference reported a membership of 4019 in England alone; in 1850 the General Conference reported that the Mormons in England and Scotland numbered 27,863, and in Wales 4342. The report for June, 1851, showed a total of 30,747 in the United Kingdom, and said, "During the last fourteen years more than 50,000 have been baptized in England, of which nearly 17,000 have migrated from her shores to Zion." In the years between 1840 and 1843 it was estimated that 3758 foreign converts settled in and around Nauvoo.²

The emigration of Mormon converts from Great Britain to the United States, in its earlier stages, was thoroughly systemized by the church authorities in this country. The first record of the movement of any considerable body tells of a company of about two hundred who sailed for New York from Liverpool in August, 1840, on the ship *North American*, in charge of two elders. A second vessel with emigrants, the *Sheffield*, sailed from Bristol to New York in February, 1841. The expense of the trip from New York to Nauvoo proved in excess of the means of many of these immigrants, some of whom were obliged to stop at Kirtland and other places in Ohio. This led to a change of route, by which vessels sailed from British ports direct to New Orleans, the immigrants ascending the Mississippi to Nauvoo.

¹ "There is no page of religious history which more proudly tells its story than that which relates this peculiar phase of Mormon experience. The excitement was contagious, even affecting persons in the higher ranks of social life, and the result was a grand outpouring of spiritual and miraculous healing power of the most astonishing description. Miracles were heard of everywhere, and numerous competent and most reliable witnesses bore testimony to their genuineness." -- "Rocky Mountain Saints," p. 10.

² Two of the most intelligent English converts, who did proselyting work for the

church and in later years saw their error, have given testimony concerning this work in Great Britain. John Hyde, Jr., summing up in 1857 the proselyting system, said: "Enthusiasm is the secret of the great success of Mormon proselyting; it is the universal characteristic of the people when proselyted; it is the hidden and strong cord that leads them to Utah, and the iron clamp that keeps them there." -- "Mormonism," p. 171.

Stenhouse says: "Mormonism in England, Scotland and Wales was a grand triumph, and was fast ripening for a vigorous campaign in Continental Europe" (when polygamy was pronounced).

---- THE BUILDING UP OF THE CITY 233 ----

The extent of this movement to the time of the departure of the Saints from Nauvoo is thus given by James Linforth, who says the figures are "as complete and correct as it is possible now to make them": --¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Vessels</u>	<u>No. of Emigrants</u>
1840	1	200
1841	6	1177
1842	8	1614
1843	5	769
1844	5	644
1845-46	3	346
<u>Total</u>		<u>3750</u>

The Mormon agents in England would charter a vessel at an English port² when a sufficient company had assembled and announce their intention to embark. The emigrants would be notified of the date of sailing, and an agent would accompany them all the way to Nauvoo. Men with money were especially desired, as were mechanics of all kinds, since the one sound business view that seems to have been taken by the leaders at Nauvoo was that it would be necessary to establish manufactures there if the people were to be able to earn a living. In some instances the passage money was advanced to the converts.

¹ "Route from Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley," 1855.

² For Dickens's description of one of these vessels ready to sail, see "The Uncommercial Traveller," Chap. XXII

----- [234] -----

CHAPTER IV

THE NAUVOO CITY GOVERNMENT -- TEMPLE AND OTHER BUILDINGS

A tide of immigration having been turned toward the new settlement, the next thing in order was to procure for the city a legal organization. Several circumstances combined to place in the hands of the Mormon leaders a scheme of municipal government, along with an extensive plan for buildings, which gave them vast power without incurring the kind of financial rocks on which they were wrecked in Ohio.

Dr. Galland¹ should probably be considered the inventor of the general scheme adopted at Nauvoo. He was at that time a resident of Cincinnati, but his intercourse with the Mormons had interested him in their beliefs, and some time in 1840 he addressed a letter to Elder R. B. Thompson, which gave the church leaders some important advice.² First warning them that to promulgate new doctrinal tenets will require not only tact and energy, but moral conduct and industry among their people, he confessed that he had not been able to discover why their religious views were not based on truth. "The project of establishing extraordinary religious doctrines being magnificent in its character," he went on to say, would require "preparations commensurate with the plan." Nauvoo being a suitable rallying-place, they would "want a temple that for size, proportions and style shall attract, surprise and dazzle all beholders;" something "unique externally, and in the interior peculiar, imposing and grand." The "clergymen" must be of the

¹ "In the year 1834 one Dr. Galland was a candidate for the legislature in a district composed of Hancock, Adams, and Pike Counties. He resided in the county of Hancock, and, as he had in the early part of his life been a notorious horse thief and counterfeiter, belonging to the Massac gang, and was then no pretender to integrity, it

was useless to deny the charge. In all his speeches he freely admitted the fact." -- FORD's "History of Illinois," p. 406.

² *Times and Seasons*, Vol. II, pp. 277-278. The letter is signed with eight asterisks Galland's usual signature to such communications.

THE NAUVOO CITY GOVERNMENT

235 ----

best as regards mental and vocal equipment, and there should be a choir such as "was never before organized." A college, too, would be of great value if funds for it could be collected.

These suggestions were accepted by Smith, with some important additional details, and they found place in the longest of the "revelations" given out by him in Illinois (Sec. 124), the one, previously quoted from, in which the Lord excused the failure to set up a Zion in Missouri. There seemed to be some hesitation about giving out this "revelation." It is dated after the meeting of the General Conference at Nauvoo which ordered the building of a church there, and it was not published in the *Times and Seasons* until the following June, and then not entire. The "revelation" shows how little effect adversity had had in modifying the prophet's egotism, his arrogance, or his aggressiveness.

Starting out with, "Verily, thus with the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, I am well pleased with your offerings and acknowledgments," it calls on him to make proclamation to the kings of the world, the President of the United States, and the governors of the states concerning the Lord's will, "fearing them not, for they are as grass," and warning them of "a day of visitation if they reject my servants and my testimony." Various direct commands to leading members of the church follow. Galland here found himself in Smith's clutches, being directed to "put stock" into the boarding-house to be built.

The principal commands in this "revelation" directed the building of another "holy house," or Temple, and a boarding-house. With regard to the Temple it was explained that the Lord would show Smith everything about it, including its site. All the Saints from afar were ordered to come to Nauvoo, "with all your gold, and your silver, and your precious

stones, and with all your antiquities,... and bring the box tree, and the fir tree, and the pine tree, together with all the precious trees of the earth, and with iron, with copper, and with brass, and with zinc, and with all your most precious things of the earth."

The boarding-house ordered built was to be called Nauvoo House, and was to be "a house that strangers may come from afar to lodge therein... a resting place for the weary traveler, that he may contemplate the glory of Zion." It was explained that a company must be formed, the members of which should

----- 236 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

pay not less than \$50a share for the stock, no subscriber to be allotted more than \$1500 worth.

This "revelation" further announced once more that Joseph was to be "a presiding elder over all my church, to be a translator, a revelator, a seer and a prophet," with Sidney Rigdon and William Law his counsellors, to constitute with him the First Presidency, and Brigham Young to be president over the twelve travelling council.

Legislation was, of course, necessary to carry out the large schemes that the Mormon leaders had in mind; but this was secured at the state capital with a liberality that now seems amazing. This was due to the desire of the politicians of all parties to conciliate the Mormon vote, and to the good fortune of the Mormons in finding at the capital a very practical lobbyist to engineer their cause. This was a Dr. John C. Bennett, a man who seems to have been without any moral character, but who had filled positions of importance. Born in Massachusetts in 1804, he practised as a physician in Ohio, and later in Illinois, holding a professorship in Willoughby University, Ohio, and taking with him to Illinois testimonials as to his professional skill. In the latter state he showed a taste for military affairs, and after being elected brigadier general of the Invincible Dragoons, he was appointed quartermaster general of the state in 1840, and held that position at the state capital when the Mormons applied to the legislature for a charter for Nauvoo.

With his assistance there was secured from the legislature an act incorporating the city of Nauvoo, the Nauvoo Legion, and the University of the City of Nauvoo. The powers granted to the city government thus established were extraordinary. A City Council was authorized, consisting of the mayor, four aldermen, and nine councillors, which was empowered to pass any ordinances, not in conflict with the federal and state constitutions, which it deemed necessary for the peace and order of the city. The mayor and aldermen were given all the power of justices of the peace, and they were to constitute the Municipal Court. The charter gave the mayor sole jurisdiction in all cases arising under the city ordinances, with a right of appeal to the Municipal Court. Further than this, the charter granted to the Municipal Court the right to issue writs of *habeas corpus* in all cases arising under the

---- THE NAUVOO CITY GOVERNMENT 237 ----

city ordinances. Thirty-six sections were required to define the legislative powers of the City Council. A more remarkable scheme of independent local government could not have been devised even by the leaders of this Mormon church, and the short-sightedness of the law makers in consenting to it seems nothing short of marvellous. Under it the mayor, who helped to make the local laws (as a member of the City Council), was intrusted with their enforcement, and he could, as the head of the Municipal Court, give them legal interpretation. Governor Ford afterward defined the system as "a government within a government; a legislature to pass ordinances at war with the laws of the state; courts to execute them with but little dependence upon the constitutional judiciary, and a military force at their own command."¹

This military force, called the Nauvoo Legion, the City Council was authorized to organize from the inhabitants of the city who were subject to military duty. It was to be at the disposal of the mayor in executing city laws and ordinances, and of the governor of the state for the public defence. When organized, it embraced three classes of troops -- flying artillery, lancers, and riflemen. Its independence of state control was provided for by a provision of law which allowed it to be governed by a court martial of its own officers. The view of its independence taken by

the Mormons may be seen in the following general order signed by Smith and Bennett in May, 1841, founded on an opinion by judge Stephen A. Douglas: --

"The officers and privates belonging to the Legion are exempt from all military duty not required by the legally constituted authorities thereof; they are therefore expressly inhibited from performing any military service not ordered by the general officers, or directed by the court martial."²

¹ A bill repealing this charter was passed by the Illinois House on February 3, 1843, by a vote of fifty-eight to thirty-three, but failed in the Senate by a vote of sixteen ayes to seventeen nays.

² *Times and Seasons*, Vol. II, p. 417. Governor Ford commissioned Brigham Young to succeed Smith as lieutenant general of the Legion from August 31, 1844. To show the Mormon idea of authority, the following is quoted from Tullidge's "Life of Brigham Young," p. 30: "It is a singular fact that, after Washington, Joseph Smith was the first man in America who held the rank of lieutenant general, and that Brigham Young was the next. In reply to a comment by the author upon this fact Brigham Young said: 'I was never much of a military man. The commission has since been abrogated by the state of Illinois; but if Joseph had lived when the {Mexican} war broke out he would have become commander-in chief of the United States armies.'"

----- 238 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

In other words, this city military company was entirely independent of even the governor of the state. Little wonder that the Presidency, writing about the new law to the Saints abroad, said, "'Tis all we ever claimed." In view of the experience of the Missourians with the Mormons as directed by Smith and Rigdon, it would be rash to say that they would have been tolerated as neighbors in Illinois under any circumstances, after their actual acquaintance had been made; but if the state of Illinois had deliberately intended to incite the Mormons to a reckless assertion of independence, nothing could have been planned that would have accomplished this more effectively than the passage of the charter of Nauvoo.

What next followed remains an unexplained incident in Joseph Smith's career. Instead of taking the mayoralty himself, he allowed that office to be bestowed upon Bennett, Smith and Rigdon accepting places among

the councillors, Bennett having taken up his residence in Nauvoo in September, 1840. His election as mayor took place in February, 1841. Bennet was also chosen major general of the Legion when that force was organized, was selected as the first chancellor of the new university, and was elected to the First Presidency of the church in the following April, to take the place of Sidney Rigdon during the incapacity of the latter from illness. Judge Stephen A. Douglas also appointed him a master in chancery.

Bennett was introduced to the Mormon church at large in a letter signed by Smith, Rigdon, and brother Hyrum, dated January 15, 1841, as the first of the new acquisitions of influence. They stated that his sympathies with the Saints were aroused while they were still in Missouri, and that he then addressed them a letter offering them his assistance, and the church was assured that "he is a man of enterprise, extensive acquirements, and of independent mind, and is calculated to be a great blessing to our community." When his appointment as a master in chancery was criticised by some Illinois newspapers, the Mormons defended him earnestly, Sidney Rigdon (then attorney-at-law and postmaster at Nauvoo), in a letter dated April 23, 1842, said, "He is a physician of great celebrity, of great versatility of talent, of refined education and accomplished manners; discharges the duties of his respective offices with honor to himself and credit to the people." All this

THE NAUVOO CITY GOVERNMENT

239 ----

becomes of interest in the light of the abuse which the Mormons soon after poured out upon this man when he "betrayed" them. Bennett's inaugural address as mayor was radical in tone. He advised the Council to prohibit all dram shops, allowing no liquor to be sold in a quantity less than a quart. This suggestion was carried out in a city ordinance. He condemned the existing system of education, which gave children merely a smattering of everything, and made "every boarding school miss a Plato in petticoats, without an ounce of genuine knowledge, "pleading for education "of a purely practical character." The Legion he considered a matter of immediate necessity, and he added, "The winged warrior of the air perches upon the pole of American liberty, and the

beast that has the temerity to ruffle her feathers should be made to feel the power of her talons. "Smith was commissioned lieutenant general of this Legion by Governor Carlin on February 3, 1841, and he and Bennett blossomed out at once as gorgeous commanders. An order was issued requiring all persons in the city, of military obligation, between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, to join the Legion, and on the occasion of the laying of the corner-stone of the Temple, on April 6, 1841, it comprised fourteen companies. An army officer passing through Nauvoo in September, 1842, expressed the opinion that the evolutions of the Legion would do honor to any militia in the United States, but he queried: "Why this exact discipline of the Mormon corps? Do they intend to conquer Missouri, Illinois, Mexico? Before many years this Legion will be twenty, perhaps fifty, thousand strong and still augmenting. A fearful host, filled with religious enthusiasm, and led on by ambitious and talented officers, what may not be effected by them? Perhaps the subversion of the constitution of the United States."¹

Contemporary accounts of the appearance of the Legion on the occasion of the laying of the Temple corner-stone indicate that the display was a big one for a frontier settlement. Smith says in his autobiography, "The appearance, order, and movements of the Legion were chaste, grand, imposing." The *Times and Seasons*, in its report of the day's doings, says that General Smith had a staff of four aides-de-camp and twelve guards, "nearly all in splendid uniforms. The several companies presented a beautiful

¹ Mackay's "The Mormons," p. 121.

and interesting spectacle, several of them being uniformed and equipped, while the rich and costly dresses of the officers would have become a Bonaparte or a Washington." Ladies on horseback were an added feature of the procession. The ceremonies attending the cornerstone laying attracted the people from all the outlying districts, and marked an epoch in the church's history in Illinois.

The Temple at Nauvoo measured 83 by 128 feet on the ground, and was

nearly 60 feet high, surmounted by a steeple which was planned to be more than 100 feet in height. The material was white limestone, which was found underlying the site of the city. The work of construction continued throughout the occupation of Nauvoo by the Mormons, the laying of the capstone not being accomplished until May 24, 1845, and the dedication taking place on May 1, 1846. The cost of the completed structure was estimated by the Mormons at \$1,000,000.¹ Among the costly features were thirty stone pilasters, which cost \$3000 each.

The portico of the Temple was surrounded by these pilasters of polished stone, on the base of which was carved a new moon, the capital of each being a representation of the rising sun coming from under a cloud, supported by two hands holding a trumpet. Under the tower were the words, in golden letters: "The House of the Lord, built by the Church of Latter-Day Saints. Commenced April 6, 1841. Holiness to the Lord." The baptismal font measured twelve by sixteen feet, with a basin four feet deep. It was supported by twelve oxen "carved out of fine plank glued together," says Smith, "and copied after the most beautiful five-year-old steer that could be found." From the basement two stairways led to the main floor, around the sides of which were small rooms designed for various uses. In the large room on this floor were three pulpits and a place for the choir. The upper floor contained a large hall, and around this were twelve smaller rooms.

The erection of this Temple was carried on without incurring such debts or entering upon such money-making schemes as caused disaster at Kirtland. Labor and material were secured by successful

¹ "The Temple is said to have cost, in labor and money, a million dollars. It may be possible, and it is very probable, that contributions to that amount were made to it, but that it cost that much to build it few will believe. Half that sum would be ample to build a much more costly edifice to-day, and in the three or four years in which it was being erected, labor was cheap and all the necessaries of life remarkably low." -- GREGG'S "History of Hancock County," p. 367.

appeals to the Saints on the ground and throughout the world. Here the

tithing system inaugurated in Missouri played an efficient part. A man from the neighboring country who took produce to Nauvoo for sale or barter said, "In the committee rooms they had almost every conceivable thing, from all kinds of implements and men and women's clothing, down to baby clothes and trinkets, which had been deposited by the owners as tithing or for the benefit of the Temple."¹

Nauvoo House, as planned, was to have a frontage of two hundred feet and a depth of forty feet, and to be three stories in height, with a basement. Its estimated cost was \$100,000.² A detailed explanation of the uses of this house was thus given in a letter from the Twelve to the Saints abroad, dated November 15, 1841: --

"The time set to favor the Stakes of Zion is at hand, and soon the kings and the queens, the princes and the nobles, the rich and the honorable of the earth, will come up hither to visit the Temple of our God, and to inquire concerning this strange work; and as kings are to become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers in the habitation of the righteous, it is right to render honor to whom honor is due; and therefore expedient that such, as well as the Saints, should have a comfortable house for boarding and lodging when they come hither, and it is according to the revelations that such a house should be built... All are under equal obligations to do all in their power to complete the buildings by their faith and their prayers; with their thousands and their mites, their gold and their silver, their copper and their zinc, their goods and their labors."

Nauvoo House was not finished during the Prophet's life, the appeals in its behalf failing to secure liberal contributions. It was completed in later years, and used as a hotel.

Smith's residence in Nauvoo was a frame building called the Mansion House, not far from the river side. It was opened as a hotel on October 3, 1843, with considerable ceremony, one of the toasts responded to being as follows, "Resolved, that General Joseph Smith, whether we view him as a prophet at the head of the church, a general at the head of the Legion, a mayor at the head of the City Council, or a landlord at the head of the table, has few equals and no superiors."

Another church building was the Hall of the Seventies, the upper story of which was used for the priesthood and the Council

¹ Gregg's "History of Hancock County," p. 374

² *Times and Seasons*, Vol. II, p. 369.

----- 242 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

of Fifty. Galland's suggestion about a college received practical shape in the incorporation of a university, in whose board of regents the leading men of the church, including Galland himself, found places. The faculty consisted of James Keeley, a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, as president; Orson Pratt as professor of mathematics and English literature; Orson Spencer, a graduate of Union College and the Baptist Theological Seminary in New York, as professor of languages; and Sidney Rigdon as professor of church history. The tuition fee was \$5 per quarter.

----- [243] -----

CHAPTER V

THE MORMONS IN POLITICS -- MISSOURI REQUISITIONS FOR SMITH

THE Mormons were now equipped in their new home with large landed possessions, a capital city that exhibited a phenomenal growth, and a form of local government which made Nauvoo a little independency of itself; their prophet wielding as much authority and receiving as much submission as ever; a Temple under way which would excel anything that had been designed in Ohio or Missouri, and a stream of immigration pouring in which gave assurance of continued numerical

increase. What were the causes of the complete overthrow of this apparent prosperity which so speedily followed? These causes were of a twofold character, political and social. The two were interwoven in many ways, but we can best trace them separately.

We have seen that a Democratic organization gave the first welcome to the Mormon refugees at Quincy. In the presidential campaign of 1836 the vote of Illinois had been: Democratic, 17,275, Whig, 14,292; that of Hancock County, Democratic, 260, Whig, 340. The closeness of this vote explained the welcome that was extended to the new-comers.

It does not appear that Smith had any original party predilections. But he was not pleased with questions which President Van Buren asked him when he was in Washington (from November, 1839, to February, 1840) seeking federal aid to secure redress from Missouri, and he wrote to the High Council from that city, "We do not say the Saints shall not vote for him, but we do say boldly (though it need not be published in the streets of Nauvoo, neither among the daughters of the Gentiles), that we do not intend he shall have our votes."¹

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVII, p.452.

On his return to Illinois Smith was toadied to by the workers of both parties. He candidly told them that he had no faith in either; but the Whigs secured his influence, and, by an intimation that there was divine authority for their course, the Mormon vote was cast for Harrison, giving him a majority of 752 in Hancock County. In order to keep the Democrats in good humor, the Mormons scratched the last name on the Whig electoral ticket (Abraham Lincoln)¹ and substituted that of a Democrat. This demonstration of their political weight made the Mormons an object of consideration at the state capital, and was the direct cause of the success of the petition which they sent there, signed by some thousands of names, asking for a charter for Nauvoo. The representatives of both parties were eager to show them favor. Bennett, in a letter to the *Times and Seasons* from Springfield, spoke of the

readiness of all the members to vote for what the Mormons wanted, adding that "Lincoln had the magnanimity to vote for our act, and came forward after the final vote and congratulated me on its passage."

In the gubernatorial campaign of 1841-1842 Smith swung the Mormon vote back to the Democrats, giving them a majority of more than one thousand in the county. This was done publicly, in a letter addressed "To my friends in Illinois,"² dated December 20, 1841, in which the prophet, after pointing out that no persons at the state capital were more efficient in securing the passage of the Nauvoo charter than the heads of the present Democratic ticket, made this declaration: --

"The partisans in this county who expect to divide the friends of humanity and equal rights will find themselves mistaken. We care not a fig for Whig or Democrat; they are both alike to us; but we shall go *for our friends*, OUR TRIED FRIENDS, and the cause of human liberty which is the cause of God.... Snyder and Moore are *known* to be our friends.... We will never be justly charged with the sin of ingratitude, -- they *have* served us, and we *will* serve them."

If Smith had been a man possessing any judgment, he would have realized that the political course which he was pursuing, instead of making friends in either party, would certainly soon

¹ This is mentioned in "Joab's" (Bennett's) letter, *Times and Seasons*, Vol, II, p. 267.

² *Times and Seasons*, Vol. III, p. 651.

THE MORMONS IN POLITICS

245 -----

arraign both parties against him and his followers. The Mormons announced themselves distinctly to be a church, and they were now exhibiting themselves as a religious body already numerically strong and increasing in numbers, which stood ready to obey the political mandate of one man, or at least of one controlling authority. The natural consequence of this soon manifested itself.

A congressional and a county election were approaching, and a mass meeting, made up of both Whigs and Democrats of Hancock County, was held to place in the field a non-Mormon county ticket. The fusion

was not accomplished without heart-burnings on the part of some unsuccessful aspirants for nominations. A few of these went over to Smith, and the election resulted in the success of the state Democratic and the Mormon local ticket, legislative and county, Smith's brother William being elected to the House. It is easy to realize that this victory did not lessen Smith's aggressive egotism.

Some important matters were involved in the next political contest, the congressional election of August, 1843. The Whigs nominated Cyrus Walker, a lawyer of reputation living in McDonough County, and the Democrats J. P. Hoge, also a lawyer, but a weaker candidate at the polls. Every one conceded that Smith's dictum would decide the contest.

On May 6, 1842, Governor Boggs of Missouri, while sitting near a window in his house in Independence, was fired at, and wounded so severely that his recovery was for some days in doubt. The crime was naturally charged to his Mormon enemies,¹ and was finally narrowed down to O. P. Rockwell,² a Mormon living

¹ The hatred felt toward Governor Boggs by the Mormon leaders was not concealed. Thus, an editorial in the *Times and Seasons* of January 1, 1841, headed "Lilburn W. Boggs," began, "The THING whose name stands at the head of this article," etc. Referring to the ending of his term of office, the article said, "Lilburn has gone down to the dark and dreary abode of his brother and prototype, Nero, there to associate with kindred spirits and partake of the dainties of his father's, the devil's, table."

Bennett afterward stated that he heard Joseph Smith say, on July 10, 1842, that Governor Boggs, "the exterminator, should be exterminated," and that the Destroying Angels (Danites) should do it; also that in the spring of that year he heard Smith, at a meeting of Danites, offer to pay any man \$500 who would secretly assassinate the governor. Bennett's statement is only cited for what it may be worth; that some Mormon fired the shot is within the limit of strict probability.

² Rockwell, who, in his latter days, was employed by General Connor to guard stock in California, told the general that he fired the shot at Governor Boggs, and was sorry it did not kill him. -- "Mormon Portraits," p. 255.

in Nauvoo, as the agent, and Joseph Smith, Jr., as the instigator.

Indictments were found against both of them in Missouri, and a requisition for Smith's surrender was made by the governor of that state on the governor of Illinois. Smith was arrested under the governor's warrant. Now came an illustration of the value to him of the form of government provided by the Nauvoo charter. Taken before his own municipal court, he was released at once on a writ of *habeas corpus*. This assumption of power by a local court aroused the indignation of non-Mormons throughout the state. Governor Carlin characterized it somewhat later, in a letter to Smith's wife, as "most absurd and ridiculous; to attempt to exercise it is a gross usurpation of power that cannot be tolerated."¹

Notwithstanding his release, Smith thought it best to remain in hiding for some time to escape another arrest, for which the governor ordered a reward of \$200. About the middle of August his associates in Nauvoo concluded that the outlook for him was so bad, notwithstanding the protection which his city court was ready to afford, that it might be best for him to flee to the pine woods of the North country. Smith incorporates in his autobiography a long letter which he wrote to his wife at this time,² giving her directions about this flight if it should become necessary. Their goods were to be loaded on a boat manned by twenty of the best men who could be selected, and who would meet them at Prairie du Chien: "And from thence we will wend our way like larks up the Mississippi, until the towering mountains and rocks shall remind us of the places of our nativity, and shall look like safety and home; and there we will bid defiance to Carlin, Boggs, Bennett, and all their whorish whores and motley clan, that follow in their wake, Missouri not excepted, and until the damnation of Hell rolls upon them by the voice and dread thunders and trump of the eternal God."

In October Rigdon obtained from Justin Butterfield, United States attorney for Illinois, an opinion that Smith could not be held on a Missouri requisition for a crime committed in that state when he was in Illinois. In December, 1842, Smith was placed under arrest and taken before the United States District Court at Springfield, Illinois, under a writ of *habeas corpus* issued by

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, p. 23.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 693-695.

Judge Roger B. Taney of the State Supreme Court. Butterfield, as his counsel, secured his discharge by Judge Pope (a Whig) who held that Smith was not a fugitive from Missouri.

While these proceedings were pending, the Nauvoo City Council (Smith was then mayor), passed two ordinances in regard to the *habeas corpus* powers of the Municipal Court, one giving that court jurisdiction in any case where a person "shall be or stand committed or detained for any criminal, or supposed criminal, matter."¹ This was intended to make Smith secure from the clutches of any Missouri officer so long as he was in his own city.

But Smith's enemy, General Bennett (who before this date had been cast out of the fold), was now very active, and through his efforts another indictment against Smith on the old charges of treason, murder, etc., was found in Missouri, in June, 1843, and under it another demand was made on the governor of Illinois for Smith's extradition. Governor Ford, a Democrat, who had succeeded Carlin, issued a warrant on June 17, 1843, and it was served on Smith while he was visiting his wife's sister in Lee County, Illinois. An attempt to start with him at once for Missouri was prevented by his Mormon friends, who rallied in considerable numbers to his aid. Smith secured counsel, who began proceedings against the Missouri agent and obtained a writ in Smith's behalf returnable, the account in the *Times and Seasons* says, before the nearest competent tribunal, which "it was ascertained was at Nauvoo" -- Smith's own Municipal Court. The prophet had a sort of triumphal entry into Nauvoo, and the question of the jurisdiction of the Municipal Court in his case came up at once. Both of the candidates for Congress, Walker (who was employed as his counsel) and Hoge, gave opinions in favor of such jurisdiction, and, after a three hours' plea by Walker, the court ordered Smith's release. Smith addressed the people of Nauvoo in the grove after his return. From the report of his remarks in the *Journal of Discourses* (Vol. II, p. 163) the following is taken: --

"Before I will bear this unhallowed persecution any longer, before I will be dragged away again among my enemies for trial, I will spill the last drop of

¹ For text of these ordinances, see *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, p. 165.

----- 248 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

blood in my veins, and will see all my enemies in hell.... Deny me the writ of *habeas corpus*, and I will fight with gun, sword, cannon, whirlwind, thunder, until they are used up like the Kilkenny cats.... If these {charter} powers are dangerous, then the constitutions of the United States and of this state are dangerous. If the Legislature has granted Nauvoo the right of determining cases of *habeas corpus*, it is no more than they ought to have done, or more than our fathers fought for."

Smith expressed his gratitude to Walker for what the latter had accomplished in his behalf, and the Whig candidate now had no doubt that the Mormon vote was his.

But the Missouri agent, indignant that a governor's writ should be set aside by a city court, hurried to Springfield and demanded that Governor Ford should call out enough state militia to secure Smith's arrest and delivery at the Missouri boundary. The governor, who was not a man of the firmest purpose, had no intention of being mixed up in the pending congressional fight and struggle for the Mormon vote; so he asked for delay and finally decided not to call out any troops.

The Hancock County Democrats were quick to see an opportunity in this situation, and they sent to Springfield a man named Backenstos (who took an active part in the violent scenes connected with the subsequent history of the Mormons in the state) to ascertain for the Mormons just what the governor's intentions were. Backenstos reported that the prophet need have no fear of the Democratic governor so long as the Mormons voted the Democratic ticket.¹

When this news was brought back to Nauvoo, a few days before the election, a mass meeting of the Mormons was called, and Hyrum Smith (then Patriarch, succeeding the prophet's father, who was dead) announced the receipt of a "revelation" directing the Mormons to vote for Hoge. William Law, an influential businessman in the Mormon

circle, immediately denied the existence of any such "revelation." The prophet alone could decide the matter. He was brought in and made a statement to the effect that he himself proposed to vote for Walker; that he considered it a "mean business" to influence any man's vote by dictation, and that he had no great faith in revelations about elections; "but

¹ Governor Ford, in his "History of Illinois," says that such a pledge was given by a prominent Democrat, but without his own knowledge.

THE MORMONS IN POLITICS

249 -----

brother Hyrum was a man of truth; he had known brother Hyrum intimately ever since he was a boy, and he had never known him to tell a lie. If brother Hyrum said he had received such a revelation, he had no doubt it was a fact. When the Lord speaks, let all the earth be silent."¹

The election resulted in the choice of Hoge by a majority of 455!

¹ Ford's "History of Illinois," p. 318.

----- [250] -----

CHAPTER VI

SMITH A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

SMITH'S latest triumph over his Missouri enemies, with the feeling that he had the governor of his state back of him, increased his own and his followers' audacity. The Nauvoo Council continued to pass ordinances to protect its inhabitants from outside legal processes, civil and criminal. One of these provided that no writ issued outside of Nauvoo for the arrest of a person in that city should be executed until it had received the mayor's approval, anyone violating this ordinance to be liable to imprisonment for life, with no power of pardon in the governor without the mayor's consent! The acquittal of O. P. Rockwell on the charge of the attempted assassination of Governor Boggs caused great delight among the Mormons, and their organ declared on January 1, 1844, that "throughout the whole region of country around us those bitter and acrimonious feelings, which have so long been engendered by many, are dying away."

Smith's political ideas now began to broaden. "Who shall be our next President?" was the title of an editorial in the *Times and Seasons* of October 1, 1843, which urged the selection of a man who would be most likely to give the Mormons help in securing redress for their grievances.

The next month Smith addressed a letter to Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, who were the leading candidates for the presidential nomination, citing the Mormons' losses and sufferings in Missouri, and their failure to obtain redress in the courts or from Congress, and asking, "What will be your rule of action relative to us as a people should fortune favor your ascendancy to the chief magistracy?" Clay replied that, if nominated, he could "enter into no engagements, make no promises, give no pledges to any particular portion of the people of the United States," adding, "If I ever enter into that high office, I must go into it

----- SMITH A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT 251 -----

free and unfettered, with no guarantees but such as are to be drawn from

my whole life, character and conduct." He closed with an expression of sympathy with the Mormons "in their sufferings under injustice." Calhoun replied that, if elected President, he would try to administer the government according to the constitution and the laws, and that, as these made no distinction between citizens of different religious creeds, he should make none. He repeated an opinion which he had given Smith in Washington that the Mormon case against the state of Missouri did not come within the jurisdiction of the federal government.

These replies excited Smith to wrath and he answered them at length, and in language characteristic of himself. A single quotation from his letter to Clay (dated May 13, 1844) will suffice: --

"In your answer to my question, last fall, that peculiar trait of the modern politician, declaring 'if you ever enter into that high office, you must go into it unfettered, with no guarantees but such as are to be drawn from your whole life, character and conduct,' so much resembles a lottery vender's sign, with the goddess of good luck sitting on the car of fortune, astraddle of the horn of plenty, and driving the merry steeds of beatitude, without reins or bridle, that I cannot help exclaiming, 'O, frail man, what have you done that will exalt you? Can anything be drawn from your *life, character or conduct* that is worthy of being held up to the gaze of this nation as a model of *virtue, character and wisdom?*'"

... 'Your whole life, character and conduct' have been spotted with deeds that causes a blush upon the face of a virtuous patriot; so you must be contented with your lot, while crime, cowardice, cupidity or low cunning have handed you down from the high tower of a statesman to the black hole of a gambler Crape the heavens with weeds of woe; gird the earth with sackcloth, and let hell mutter one melody in commemoration of fallen splendor! For the glory of America has departed, and God will set a flaming sword to guard the tree of liberty, while such mint-tithing Herods as Van Buren, Boggs, Benton, Calhoun, and Clay are thrust out of the realms of virtue as fit subjects for the kingdom of fallen greatness -- *vox reprobri, vox Diaboli.*"

Calhoun was admonished to read the eighth section of article one of the federal constitution, after which "God, who cooled the heat of a Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, or shut the mouths of lions for the honor of a Daniel, will raise your mind above the narrow notion that the general government has no power, to the sublime idea that Congress, with the President as executor, is as almighty in its sphere as Jehovah is in his."¹

¹ For this correspondence in full, see *Times and Seasons*, January 1, and June 1, 1844, or Mackay's "The Mormons," p. 143.

----- 252 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Smith's next step was to have judge Phelps read to a public meeting in Nauvoo on February 7, 1844, a very long address by the prophet, setting forth his views on national politics.¹ He declared that "no honest man can doubt for a moment but the glory of American liberty is on the wane, and that calamity and confusion will sooner or later destroy the peace of the people," while "the motto hangs on the nation's escutcheon, 'every man has his price.'"

Smith proposed an abundance of remedies for these evils: Reduce the members of Congress at least one-half; pay them \$2 a day and board; petition the legislature to pardon every convict, and make the punishment for any felony working on the roads or some other place where the culprit can be taught wisdom and virtue, murder alone to be cause for confinement or death; petition for the abolition of slavery by the year 1850, the slaves to be paid for out of the surplus from the sale of public lands, and the money saved by reducing the pay of Congress; establish a national bank, with branches in every state and territory, "whose officers shall be elected yearly by the people, with wages of \$2 a day for services," the currency to be limited to "the amount of capital stock in her vaults, and interest;" "and the bills shall be par throughout the nation, which will mercifully cure that fatal disorder known in cities as brokery, and leave the people's money in their own pockets;" give the President full power to send an army to suppress mobs; "send every lawyer, as soon as he repents and obeys the ordinances of heaven, to preach the Gospel to the destitute, without purse or scrip;" "spread the federal jurisdiction to the west sea, when the red men give their consent;" and give the right hand of fellowship to Texas, Canada, and Mexico. He closed with this declaration: "I would, as the universal friend of man, open the prisons, open the eyes, open the ears, and open the hearts of all people to behold and enjoy freedom, unadulterated freedom; and God, who once cleansed the violence of the earth with a flood, whose Son laid down his life for the salvation of all his father gave him out of the world, and who has promised that he will come and purify the world again with fire in the last days, should be supplicated by me for the good of all people. With the highest esteem, I am a friend of virtue and of the people."

¹ For its text, see *Times and Seasons*, May 15, 1844, or Mackay's "The Mormons," p. 133.

----- SMITH A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT 253 -----

It seems almost incomprehensible that the promulgator of such political views should have taken himself seriously. But Smith was in deadly earnest, and not only was he satisfied of his political power, but, in the church conference of 1844, he declared, "I feel that I am in more immediate communication with God, and on a better footing with Him, than I have ever been in my life."

The announcement of Smith's political "principles" was followed immediately by an article in the *Times and Seasons*, which answered the question, "Whom shall the Mormons support for President?" with the reply, "General Joseph Smith. A man of sterling worth and integrity, and of enlarged views; a man who has raised himself from the humblest walks in life to stand at the head of a large, intelligent, respectable, and increasing society;... and whose experience has rendered him every way adequate to the onerous duty." The formal announcement that Smith was the Mormon candidate was made in the *Times and Seasons* of February 15, 1844, and the ticket --

FOR PRESIDENT,
GENERAL JOSEPH SMITH,
Nauvoo, Illinois.

was kept at the head of its editorial page from March 1, until his death.

A weekly newspaper called the *Wasp*, issued at Nauvoo under Mormon editorship, had been succeeded by a larger one called the *Neighbor*, edited by John Taylor (afterward President of the church), who also had charge of the *Times and Seasons*. The *Neighbor* likewise placed Smith's name, as the presidential candidate, at the head of its columns, and on March 6 completed its ticket with "General James A. Bennett of New York, for Vice-President."¹ Three weeks later Bennett's name was taken

down, and on June 19, Sidney Rigdon's was substituted for it. There was nothing modest in the Mormon political ambition.

¹ This General Bennett was not the first mayor of Nauvoo, as some writers like Smucker have supposed, but a lawyer who gave his address as "Arlington House," on Long Island, New York, and who in 1843 had offered himself to Smith as "a most undeviating friend," etc.

----- 254 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Proof of Smith's serious view of his candidacy is furnished in his next step, which was to send out a large body of missionaries (two or three thousand, according to Governor Ford) to work-up his campaign in the Eastern and Southern states. These emissaries were selected from among the ablest of Smith's allies, including Brigham Young, Lorenzo Snow, and John D. Lee. Their absence from Nauvoo was a great misfortune to Smith at the time of his subsequent arrest and imprisonment at Carthage.

The campaigners began work at once. Lorenzo Snow, to whom the state of Ohio was allotted, went to Kirtland, where he had several thousand pamphlets printed, setting forth the prophet's views and plans, and he then travelled around in a buggy, distributing the pamphlets and making addresses in Smith's behalf. "To many persons," he confesses, "who knew nothing of Joseph but through the ludicrous reports in circulation, the movement seemed a species of insanity."¹ John D. Lee was a most devout Mormon, but his judgment revolted against this movement. "I would a thousand times rather have been shut up in jail," he says. He began his canvassing while on the boat bound for St. Louis. "I told them," he relates, "the prophet would lead both candidates. There was a large crowd on the boat, and an election was proposed. The prophet received a majority of 75 out of 125 votes polled. This created a tremendous laugh."²

We have an account of one state convention called to consider Smith's candidacy, and this was held in the Melodeon in Boston, Massachusetts, on July 1, 1844, the news of Smith's death not yet having reached that city. A party of young rowdies practically took possession of the hall as

soon as the business of the convention began, and so disturbed the proceedings that the police were sent for, and they were able to clear the galleries only after a determined fight. The convention then adjourned to Bunker Hill, but nothing further is heard of its proceedings. The press of the city condemned the action of the disturbers as a disgrace. Mention is made in the *Times and Seasons* of July 1, 1844, of a conference of elders held in Dresden, Tennessee, on the 25th of May previous, at which Smith's name was presented as a presidential candidate. The meeting was broken up by a mob,

¹ "Biography of Lorenzo Snow."

² "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 149.

----- SMITH A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT 255 -----

which the sheriff confessed himself powerless to overcome, but it met later and voted to print three thousand copies of Smith's views.

The prophet's death, which occurred so soon after the announcement of his candidacy, rendered it impossible to learn how serious a cause of political disturbance that candidacy might have been in neighborhoods where the Mormons had a following.

----- [256] -----

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN NAUVOO

HAVING followed Smith's political operations to their close, it is now necessary to retrace our steps, and examine the social conditions which prevailed in and around Nauvoo during the years of his reign -- conditions which had quite as much to do in causing the expulsion of the Mormons from the state as did his political mistakes.

It must be remembered that Nauvoo was a pioneer town, on the borders of a thinly settled country. Its population and that of its suburbs consisted of the refugees from Missouri, of whose character we have had proof; of the converts brought in from the Eastern states and from Europe, not a very intelligent body; and of those pioneer settlers, without sympathy with the Mormon beliefs, who were attracted to the place from various motives. While active work was continued by the missionaries throughout the United States, their labors in this country seem to have been more efficient in establishing local congregations than in securing large additions to the population of Nauvoo, although some "branches" moved bodily to the Mormon centre.¹

Of the class of people reached by the early missionaries in England we have this description, in a letter from Orson Hyde to his wife, dated September 14, 1837: --

"Those who have been baptized are mostly manufacturers and some other mechanics. They know how to do but little else than to spin and weave cloth, and make cambric, mull and lace; and what they would do in Kirtland or the city of Far West, I cannot say. They are extremely poor, most of them not having a change of clothes decent to be baptized in."²

In a letter of instructions from Smith to the travelling elders in Great Britain, dated October, 1840, he warned them that the

¹ Lee's "Mormonism Unveiled;" p. 135.

² *Elders' Journal*, Vol. I, No. 2.

gathering of the Saints must be "attended to in the order that the Lord intends it should;" and he explains that, as "great numbers of the Saints in England are extremely poor,... to prevent confusion and disappointment when they arrive here, let those men who are accustomed to making machinery, and those who can command a capital, though it be small, come here as soon as convenient and put up machinery, and make such other preparations as may be necessary, so that when the poor come on they may have employment to come to."

The invitation to all converts having means was so urgent that it took the form of a command. A letter to the Saints abroad, signed by Joseph and Hyrum Smith, dated January 15, 1841, directed those "blessed of heaven with the possession of this world's goods" to sell out as soon as possible and move to Nauvoo, adding in italics: "This is agreeable to the order of heaven, and the only principal (sic) on which the gathering can be effected."¹

We have seen how hard-pressed Smith was for money with which to meet his obligations for the payment of land purchased. It was not necessary that a newcomer should be a Mormon in order to buy a lot, special emphasis being laid on the freedom of religious opinion in the city; but it was early made known that purchasers were expected to buy their lots of the church, and not of private speculators. The determination with which this rule

¹ The following is a quotation from a letter written by an American living near Nauvoo, dated October 20, 1842, printed in the postscript to Caswall's "The City of the Mormons": --

"If an English Mormon arrives, the first effort of Joe is to get his money. This in most cases is easily accomplished, under a pledge that he can have it at any time on giving ten days' notice. The man after some time calls for his money; he is treated kindly, and told that it is not convenient to pay. He calls a second time; the Prophet cannot pay, but offers a town lot in Nauvoo for \$1000 (which cost perhaps as many cents), or land on the 'half-breed tract' at \$10 or \$15 per acre.... Finally some of the irresponsible Bishops or Elders execute a deed for land to which they have no valid title, and the poor fellow dares not complain. This is the history of hundreds of cases.... The history of every dupe reaches Nauvoo in advance. When an Elder abroad wins one over to the faith, he makes himself perfectly acquainted with all his family arrangements, his standing in society, his ability, and (what is of most importance) the amount of ready money and other property which he will take to Nauvoo.... They make no converts in Nauvoo, and it appears to me that they would never make another if all could witness their conduct at Nauvoo for one month.... In regard to this communication, I prefer, on account of my own safety, that you should not make

known the author publicly. You cannot appreciate these fears {in England}. You have no idea what it is to be surrounded by a community of Mormons, guided by a leader the most unprincipled."

----- 258 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

was enforced, as well as its unpopularity in some quarters, may be seen in the following extract from Smith's autobiography, under date of February 13, 1843: "I spent the evening at Elder O. Hyde's. In the course of conversation I remarked that those brethren who came here having money, and purchased without the church and without counsel, must be cut off. This, with other observations, aroused the feelings of Brother Dixon, from Salem, Mass., and he appeared in great wrath."

The *Nauvoo Neighbor* of December 27, 1843, contained an advertisement signed by the clerk of the church, calling the attention of immigrants to the church lands, and saying, "Let all the brethren, therefore, when they move into Nauvoo, consult President Joseph Smith, the trustee in trust, and purchase their land from him, and I am bold to say that God will bless them, and they will hereafter be glad they did so."

A good many immigrants of more or less means took warning as soon as they discovered the conditions prevailing there, and returned home. A letter on this subject from the officers of the church said: --

"We have seen so many who have been disappointed and discouraged when they visited this place, that we would have imagined they had never been instructed in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and thought that, instead of coming into a society of men and women, subject to all the frailties of mortality, they were about to enjoy the society of the spirits of just men made perfect, the holy angels, and that this place should be as pure as the third heaven. But when they found that this people were but flesh and blood . . . they have been desirous to choose them a captain to lead them back."

The additions to the Mormon population from the settlers whom they found in the outlying country in Illinois and Iowa were not likely to be of a desirable class. The banks of the Mississippi River had long been hiding-places for pirate bands, whose exploits were notorious, and the "half-breed tract" was a known place of refuge for the horse thief, the

counterfeiter, and the desperado of any calling. The settlement of the Mormons in such a region, with an invitation to the world at large to join them and be saved, was a piece of good luck for this lawless class, who found a covering cloak in the new baptism, and a shield in the fidelity with which the Mormon authorities, under their charter, defended their flock. In this way Nauvoo became a great receptacle for stolen goods,

----- SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN NAUVOO 259 -----

and the river banks up and down the stream concealed many more, the takers of which walked boldly through the streets of the Mormon city. The retaliatory measures which Smith encouraged his followers to practise on their neighbors in Missouri had inculcated a disregard for the property rights of non-Mormons, which became an inciting cause of hostilities with their neighbors in Illinois.

The complaints of thefts by Mormons became so frequent that the church authorities deemed it necessary to recognize and rebuke the practice. Lee quotes from an address by Smith at the conference of April, 1840, in Nauvoo, in which the prophet said: "We are no longer at war, and you must stop stealing. When the right time comes, we will go in force and take the whole state of Missouri. It belongs to us as our inheritance; but I want no more petty stealing. A man that will steal petty articles from his enemies will, when occasion offers, steal from his brethren too. Now I command you that have stolen must steal no more."¹

The case of Elder O. Walker bears on this subject. On October 11, 1840, he was brought before a High Council and accused of discourtesy to the prophet, and "suggesting (at different places) that in the church at Nauvoo there did exist a set of pilferers who were actually thieving, robbing and plundering, taking and unlawfully carrying away from Missouri certain goods and chattels, wares and property; and that the act and acts of such supposed thieving, etc., was fostered and conducted by the knowledge and approval of the heads and leaders of the church, viz., by the Presidency and High Council."²

The action of the church authorities themselves shows how serious they considered the reports about thieving. As early as December 1, 1841, Hyrum Smith, then one of the First Presidency, published in the *Times and Seasons* an affidavit denying that the heads of the church "sanction and approbate the members of said church in stealing property from those persons who do not belong to said church," etc. This was followed by a long denial of a similar character, signed by the Twelve, and later by an affidavit by the prophet himself, denying that he ever "directly or indirectly encouraged the purloining of property, or taught the doctrine of stealing." On March 25, 1843, Smith, as mayor, issued

¹ Lee's "Mormonism Unveiled;" p. 111.

² *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII, p. 185.

----- 260 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

a proclamation beginning with the declaration, "I have not altered my views on the subject of stealing," reciting rumors of a secret band of desperadoes bound by oath to self-protection, and pledging pardon to any one who would give him any information about "such abominable characters." This exhibition of the heads of a church solemnly protesting that they were opposed to thieving is unique in religious history.

The Patriarch, Hyrum Smith, made an announcement to the conference of 1843, which further confirms the charges of organized thieving made by the non-Mormons. While denouncing the thieves as hypocrites, he said he had learned of the existence of a band held together by secret oaths and penalties, "who hold it right to steal from anyone who does not belong to the church, provided they consecrate one-third of it to the building of the Temple. They are also making bogus money.... The man who told me this said, 'This secret band referred to the Bible, Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and Book of Mormon to substantiate their doctrines; and if any of them did not remain steadfast, they ripped open their bowels and gave them to the catfish.'" He named two men, inmates of his own house, who, he had discovered, were such thieves. The prophet followed this statement with some remarks, declaring, "Thieving must be stopped."¹

The Rev. Henry Caswall, in a description of a Sunday service in Nauvoo in April, 1842 ("City of the Mormons," p. 15) says: --"The elder who had delivered the first discourse now rose and said a certain brother whom he named had taken a keg of white lead. 'Now,' said he, 'if any of the brethren present has taken it by mistake, thinking it was his own, he ought to restore it; but if any of the brethren present have stolen a keg, much more ought he to restore it, or else maybe he will get caught.'... Another person rose and stated that he had lost a ten dollar bill. If any of the brethren had found it or taken it, he hoped it would be restored." This introduction of calls for the restoration of stolen property as a feature of a Sunday church service is probably unique with the Mormons.

That the Mormons did not do all the thieving in the counties around Nauvoo while they were there would be sufficiently proved by the character of many of the persons whom they found there

¹ Millennial Star, Vol. XX, pp. 757-758.

----- SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN NAUVOO 261 -----

on their arrival, and also by the fact that their expulsion did not make those counties a paradise.¹ The trouble with them was that, as soon as a man joined them, no matter what his previous character might have been, they gave him that protection which came with their system of "standing together." An early and significant proof of this protection is found in the action of the conference held in Nauvoo on October 3, 1840, two months before the charter had given the city government its extended powers, which voted that "no person be considered guilty of crime unless proved by the testimony of two or three witnesses."²

It became notorious in all the country round that it was practically useless for a non-Mormon to attempt the recovery of stolen property in Nauvoo, no matter how strong the proof in his possession might be. S. J. Clarke³ says that a great deal of stolen stock was traced into Nauvoo, but that, "when found, it was extremely difficult to gain possession of

it." He cites as an illustration the case of a resident of that county who traced a stolen horse into Nauvoo, and took with him sixty witnesses to identify the animal before a Mormon justice of the peace. He found himself, however, confronted with seventy witnesses who swore that the horse belonged to some Mormon, and the justice decided that the "weight of evidence," numerically calculated, was against the non-Mormon.

A form of protection against outside inquirers for property, which is well authenticated, was given by what were known as "whittlers." When a non-Mormon came into the city, and by his questions let it be known that he was looking for something stolen, he would soon find himself approached by a Mormon who carried a long knife and a stick, and who would follow him, silently whittling. Soon a companion would join this whittler, and then another, until the stranger would find himself fairly surrounded by these armed but silent observers. Unless he was a man of more than ordinary grit, an hour or more of this companionship would convince him that it would be well for him to start for home.⁴

¹ "Long afterward, while the writer was travelling through Hancock, Pike and Adams Counties, no family thought of retiring at night without barring and double-locking every ingress." -- Beadle, "Life in Utah," p. 65.

² *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII, p. 153.

³ "History of McDonough County," p. 83.

⁴ Lee's "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 168.

CHAPTER VIII

SMITH'S PICTURE OF HIMSELF AS AUTOCRAT

SMITH'S autobiography gives incidentally many interesting glimpses of the prophet as he exercised his authority of dictator during the height of his power at Nauvoo. It is fortunate for the impartial student that these records are at his disposal, because many of the statements, if made on any other authority, would be met by the customary Mormon denials, and be considered generally incredible.

That Smith's life, aside from the constant danger of extradition which the Missouri authorities held over him, was not an easy one at this time may readily be imagined. He had his position to maintain as sole oracle of the church. He was also mayor, judge, councillor, and lieutenant-general. There were individual jealousies to be disposed of among his associates, rivalries of different parts of the city over wished-for improvements to be considered, demands of the sellers of church lands for payment to be met, and the claims of politicians to be attended to. But Smith rarely showed any indication of compromise, apparently convinced that his position at all points was now more secure than it had ever been.

The big building enterprises in which the church was engaged were a heavy tax on the people, and constant urging was necessary to keep them up to the requirements. Thus we find an advertisement in the *Wasp* dated June 25, 1842, and signed by the "Temple Recorder," saying, "Brethren, remember that your contracts with your God are sacred; the labor is wanted immediately." Smith referred to the discontent of the laborers, and to some other matters, in a sermon on February 21, 1843. The following quotations are from his own report of it. "If any man {working on the Nauvoo House} is hungry, let him come to me and I will feed him at

----- SMITH'S PICTURE OF HIMSELF AS AUTOCRAT 263 -----

my table... and then if the man is not satisfied I will kick his backside.... This meeting was got up by the Nauvoo House committee. The Pagans, Roman Catholics, Methodists and Baptists shall have place in Nauvoo -- only they must be ground in Joe Smith's mill. I have been in their mill... and those who come here must go through my smut machine, and

that is my tongue."¹ The difficulty of carrying on these building enterprises at this time was increased by the financial disturbance that was convulsing the whole country. It was in these years that Congress was wrestling with the questions of the deposits of the public funds, the United States Bank, the sub-treasury scheme, and the falling off of customs and land-sale revenues, with a threatened deficit in the federal treasury. The break-down of the Bank of the United States caused a general failure of the banks of the Western and Southern states, and money was so scarce at Nauvoo that one Mormon writer records the fact that "when corn was brought to my door at ten cents a bushel, and sadly needed, the money could not be raised."

The relations between Smith and Rigdon had been strained ever since the departure of the Mormons from Missouri. The trouble between them was finally brought before a special conference at Nauvoo, on October 7, 1843, at which Smith stated that he had received no material benefits from Rigdon's labors or counsel since they had left Missouri. He presented complaints against Rigdon's management of the post-office, brought up a charge that Rigdon had been in correspondence with General Bennett and Governor Carlin, and offered "indirect testimony" that Rigdon had given the Missourians information of Smith's whereabouts at the time of his last arrest. Rigdon met these accusations, some with denials and some with explanations, closing with a pitiful appeal to the all-powerful head of the church, whose nod would decide the verdict, reciting their long associations and sufferings, and signifying his willingness to resign his position as councillor to the First Presidency, but not concealing the pain and humiliation that such a step would cause him. Smith became magnanimous. "He expressed entire willingness to have Elder Rigdon retain his station, provided he would magnify his office, and walk and conduct himself in all honesty, righteousness and integrity; but signified his

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, p. 583.

lack of confidence in his integrity and steadfastness."¹ **This incident**

once more furnishes proof of some great power which Smith held over Rigdon that induced the latter to associate with the prophet on these terms.

Smith's creditors finally pressed him so hard that he attempted to secure aid from the bankruptcy act. In this he did not succeed,² and he was very bitter in his denunciation of the law because it was interpreted against him. It was about this time that Smith, replying to reports of his wealth, declared that his assets consisted of one old horse, two pet deer, ten turkeys, an old cow, one old dog, a wife and child, and a little household furniture. On March 1, 1843, the Council of the Twelve wrote to the outlying branches of the church, calling on them "to bring to our President as many loads of wheat, corn, beef, pork, lard, tallow, eggs, poultry, venison, and everything eatable, at your command," in order that he might be relieved of business cares and have time to attend to their spiritual interests. It was characteristic of Smith to find him, at a conference held the following month, lecturing the Twelve on their own idleness, telling them it was not necessary for them to be abroad all the time preaching and gathering funds, but that they should spend a part of their time at home earning a living.

At this same conference Smith was compelled to go into the details of a transaction which showed of how little practical use to him were his divining and prophetic powers. A man named Remick had come to him the previous summer and succeeded in getting from him a loan of \$200 by misrepresentation. Afterward Remick offered to give him a quit-claim deed for all the land bought of Galland, as well as the notes which Smith had given to Galland, and one-half of all the land that Remick owned in Illinois and Iowa, if Smith would use his influence to build up the city of Keokuk, Iowa. Smith actually agreed to this in writing. At the conference he had to explain this whole affair. After alleging that Remick was a swindler, he said: "I am not so much of a 'Christian' as many suppose I am. When a man undertakes to ride me for a

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. IV, p. 330. H. C. Kimball stated afterward at Rigdon's church trial that Smith did not accept him as an adviser after this, but took Amasa Lyman in his place, and that it was Hyrum Smith who induced his brother to show some apparent magnanimity.

² See chapter on this subject in Bennett's "History of the Saints."

----- SMITH'S PICTURE OF HIMSELF AS AUTOCRAT 265 -----

horse I feel disposed to kick up, and throw him off and ride him. David did so, and so did Joshua."¹

The old Kirtland business troubles came up to annoy Smith from time to time, but he always found a way to meet them. While his writ of *habeas corpus* was under argument out of the city in 1841, a man presented to him a five-dollar bill of the Kirtland Bank, and threatened to sue him on it. As the easiest way to dispose of this matter, Smith handed the man \$5.

Smith's Ohio experience did not lessen his estimation of himself as an authority on finance. We find him, at the meeting of the Nauvoo City Council on February 25, 1843, denouncing the state law of Illinois making property a legal tender for the payment of debts; asserting that their city charter gave them authority to enact such local currency laws as did not conflict with the federal and state constitutions, and continuing: --

"Shall we be such fools as to be governed by their {Illinois} laws which are unconstitutional? No. We will make a law for gold and silver; then their law ceases, and we can collect our debts. Powers not delegated to the states, or reserved from the states, are constitutional. The constitution acknowledges that the people have all power not reserved to itself. I am a lawyer. I am a big lawyer, and comprehend heaven, earth and hell, to bring forth knowledge that shall cover up all lawyers, doctors and other big bodies."²

Smith had his way, as usual, and on March 4, the Council passed unanimously an ordinance making gold and silver the only legal tender in payment of debts and fines in Nauvoo, and fixing a punishment for the circulation of counterfeit money. Perhaps this Council never took a broader view of its legislative authority than in this instance.

Smith never laid aside his natural inclination for good fellowship, nor took himself too seriously while posing as a mouthpiece of the Lord. Along with the entries recording his predictions he notes such matters as these: "Played ball with the brethren." "Cut wood all day." A visitor at

Nauvoo, in 1843, describes him as "a jolly fellow, and one of the last persons whom he would have supposed God would have raised up as a Prophet."³ Josiah

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, pp. 758-759.

² *Ibid.*, p. 616.

³ This same idea is presented by a writer in the *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVII, p. 820: "When the fact of Smith's divine character shall burst upon the nations, they will be struck dumb with wonder and astonishment at the Lord's choice, -- the last individual in the whole world whom they would have chosen."

----- 266 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Quincy said that Smith seemed to him to have a keen sense of the humorous aspects of his position. "It seems tome, General," Quincy said to him, "that you have too much power to be safely trusted in one man." "In your hands or that of any other person," was his reply, "so much power would no doubt be dangerous. I am the only man in the world whom it would be safe to trust with it. Remember, I am a prophet." "The last five words," says Quincy, "were spoken in a rich comical aside, as if in hearty recognition of the ridiculous sound they might have in the ears of a Gentile."¹

Smith makes this entry on February 20, 1843: "While the {Municipal} Court was in session, I saw two boys fighting in the street. I left the business of the court, ran over immediately, caught one of the boys and then the other, and after giving them proper instruction, I gave the bystanders a lecture for not interfering in such cases. I returned to the court, and told them nobody was allowed to fight in Nauvoo but myself."

In January, 1842, Smith once more became a "storekeeper." Writing to an absent brother on January 5, 1842, he described his building, with a salesroom fitted up with shelves and drawers, a private office, etc. He added that he had a fair stock, "although some individuals have succeeded in detaining goods to a considerable amount. I have stood behind the counter all day," he continued, "dealing out goods as steadily

as any clerk you ever saw."²

The following entry is found under date of June 1, 1842: "Sent Dr. Richards to Carthage on business. On his return, old Charley, while on a gallop, struck his knees and breast instead of his feet, fell in the street and rolled over in an instant, and the doctor narrowly escaped with his life. It was a trick of the devil to kill my clerk. Similar attacks have been made upon myself of late, and Satan is seeking our destruction on every hand."

Smith practically gave up "revealing" during his life in Nauvoo. At Rigdon's church trial, after Smith's death, President Marks said, "Brother Joseph told us that he, for the future, whenever there was a revelation to be presented to the church, would first present it to the Quorum, and then, if it passed the Quorum, it should be presented to the church." Strong pressure must have been exerted upon the prophet to persuade him to

¹ "Figures of the Past;" p. 397.

² *Millennial Star*, Vol. XIX, p. 21.

----- SMITH'S PICTURE OF HIMSELF AS AUTOCRAT 267 -----

consent to such a restriction, and it is the only instance of the kind that is recorded during his career. But if he did not "reveal," he could not be prevented from uttering oral prophecies and giving his interpretation of the Scriptures. That he had become possessed with the idea of a speedy ending of this world seems altogether probable. All through his autobiography he notes reports of earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, etc., and he gives special emphasis to accounts that reached him of "showers of flesh and blood." Under date of February 18, 1843, he notes, "While at dinner I remarked to my family and friends present that, when the earth was sanctified and became like a sea of glass, it would be one great Urim and Thummim, and the Saints could look in it and see as they are seen." Another of his wise sayings is thus recorded, "The battle of Gog and Magog will be after the Millennial."

In some remarks, on April 2, 1843, Smith made the one prediction that came true, and one which has always given the greatest satisfaction to the Saints. This was: "I prophesy in the name of the Lord God that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of man will be in South Carolina. It may probably arise through the slave trade." This prediction was afterward amplified so as to declare that the war between the Northern and Southern states would involve other nations in Europe, and that the slaves would rise up against their masters. It would have been better for his fame had he left the announcement in its original shape. Such is the picture of Smith the prophet as drawn by himself. Of the rumors about the Mormons, current in all the counties near Nauvoo, which cannot be proved by Mormon testimony there were hundreds.

----- [268] -----

CHAPTER IX

SMITH'S FALLING OUT WITH BENNETT AND HIGBEE

SURPRISE has been expressed that Smith would permit the newcomer, General John C. Bennett, to be elected the first mayor of Nauvoo under the new charter. Much less surprising is the fact that a falling-out soon occurred between them which led to the withdrawal of Bennett from the church on May 17, 1842, and made for the prophet an enemy who pursued him with a method and vindictiveness that he had not before encountered from any of those who had withdrawn, or been driven, from the church fellowship.

The exact nature of the dispute between the two men has never been explained. That personal jealousy entered into it there is little doubt.

Smith never had submitted to any real division of his supreme authority, and when Bennett entered the fold as political lobbyist, mayor, major general, etc., a clash seemed unavoidable. It was stated, during Rigdon's church trial after Smith's death, that Bennett declared, at the first conference he attended at Nauvoo, that he sustained the same position in the First Presidency that the Holy Ghost does to the Father and the Son; and that, after Smith's death, Bennett visited Nauvoo, and proposed to Rigdon that the latter assume Smith's place in the church, and let Bennett assume that which had been occupied by Rigdon.¹

The Mormon explanation given at the time of Bennett's expulsion was that some of their travelling elders in the Eastern states discovered that the general had a wife and family there while he was paying attention to young ladies in Nauvoo; but a very slight acquaintance with Smith's ideas on the question of morality at that time is needed to indicate that this was an afterthought. The course of the church authorities showed that they were ready to

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, p. 655.

---- SMITH'S FALLING OUT WITH BENNETT AND HIGBEE 269 ----

make any concession to avoid a public explanation by Bennett. Only about three weeks before his withdrawal, Rigdon wrote that he was "honorable in his intercourse with his fellows,... and every way qualified to be a useful citizen. Smith directed the clerk of the church to permit Bennett to withdraw "if he desires to do so, and this with the best of feelings toward you and General Bennett." But as soon as Bennett began his attacks on Smith the church made haste to withdraw the hand of fellowship from him, and framed a formal writ of excommunication, and Smith could not find enough phials of wrath to pour upon him. Thus, in a statement published in the *Times and Seasons* of July 1, 1842, he called Bennett "an impostor and a base adulterer," brought up the story of his having a wife in Ohio, and charged that he taught women that it was proper to have promiscuous intercourse with men.

As soon as Bennett left Nauvoo he began the publication of a series of letters in the *Sangamon (Illinois) Journal*, which purported to give an

inside view of the Mormon designs, and the personal character and practices of the church leaders. These were widely copied, and seem to have given people in the East their first information that Smith was anything worse than a religious pretender. Bennett also started East lecturing on the same subject, and he published in Boston in the same year a little book called "History of the Saints; or an Expose of Joe Smith and Mormonism," containing, besides material which he had collected, copious extracts from the books of Howe and W. Harris.

Bennett declared that he had never believed in any of the Mormon doctrines, but that, forming the opinion that their leaders were planning to set up "a despotic and religious empire" over the territory included in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri, he decided to join them, learn their secrets, and expose them. Bennett's personal rascality admits of no doubt, and not the least faith need be placed in this explanation of his course, which, indeed, is disproved by his later efforts to regain power in the church. It does seem remarkable, however, that neither the Lord nor his prophet knew anything about Bennett's rascality, and that they should select him, among others, for special mention in the long revelation of January 19, 1841, wherein the Lord calls

----- 270 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

him "my servant," and directs him to help Smith "in sending my word to the kings of the people of the earth." There is no doubt that Bennett obtained an inside view of Smith's moral, political, and religious schemes, and that, while his testimony un-corroborated might be questioned, much that he wrote was amply confirmed.

According to Bennett's statements, Mormon society at Nauvoo was organized licentiousness. There were "Cyprian Saints," "Chartered Sisters of Charity," and "Cloistered Saints," or spiritual wives, all designed to pander to the passions of church members. Of the system of "spiritual wives" (which was set forth in the revelation concerning polygamy), Bennett says in his book:

"When an Apostle, High Priest, Elder or Scribe conceives an affection for a female, and he has satisfactorily ascertained that she experiences a mutual claim, he

communicates confidentially to the Prophet his *affaire du coeur*, and requests him to inquire of the Lord whether or not it would be right and proper for him to take unto himself the said woman for his spiritual wife. It is no obstacle whatever to this spiritual marriage if one or both of the parties should happen to have a husband or wife already united to them according to the laws of the land."

Bennett alleged that Smith forced him, at the point of a pistol, to sign an affidavit stating that Smith had no part in the practice of the spiritual wife doctrine; but Bennett's later disclosures went into minute particulars of alleged attempts of Smith to secure "spiritual wives," a charge which the commandments to the prophet's wife in the "revelation" on polygamy amply sustain. A leading illustration cited concerned the wife of Orson Pratt.¹ According to the story as told (largely in Mrs. Pratt's words), Pratt was sent to England on a mission to get him out of the way, and then Smith used every means in his power to secure Mrs. Pratt's consent to his plan, but in vain. Nancy Rigdon, the eldest unmarried daughter of Sidney Rigdon, was another alleged intended victim of the prophet, and Bennett said that Smith offered him \$500 in cash, or a choice lot, if he would assist in the plot. One day, when Smith was alone with her, he pressed his request so hard that she threatened to cry for help. The continuation of the story is not by General Bennett, but is taken from

¹ Ebenezer Robinson says that when Orson Pratt returned from his mission to England, and learned of the teaching of the spiritual wife doctrine, his mind gave way. One day he disappeared, and a search party found him five miles below Nauvoo, hatless, seated on the bank of the river. -- *The Return*, Vol. II, p. 363.

---- SMITH'S FALLING OUT WITH BENNETT AND HIGBEE 271 ----

a letter to James A. Bennett, he of "Arlington House," dated Nauvoo, July 27, 1842, by George W. Robinson, one of Smith's fellow prisoners in Independence jail, and one of the generals of the Nauvoo Legion: --

"She left him with disgust, and came home and told her father of the transaction; upon which Smith was sent for. He came. She told the tale in the presence of all the family, and to Smith's face. I was present. Smith attempted to deny at first, and face her down with a lie; but she told the facts with so much earnestness, and the fact of a letter being proved which he had caused to be written to her on the same subject, the day after the attempt made on her virtue, breathing the same spirit, and which he had fondly hoped

was destroyed, all came with such force that he could not withstand the testimony; and he then and the reacknowledged that every word of Miss Rigdon's testimony was true. Now for his excuse. He wished to ascertain if she was virtuous or not!"

To offset this damaging attack on Smith, a man named Markham was induced to make an affidavit assailing Miss Rigdon's character, which was published in the *Wasp*. But Markham's own character was so bad, and the charge caused so much indignation, that the editor was induced to say that the affidavit was not published by the prophet's direction.

Bennett's charges aroused great interest among the non-Mormons in all the counties around Nauvoo, and increased the growing enmity against Smith's flock which was already aroused by their political course and their alleged propensity to steal.

A minor incident among those leading up to Smith's final catastrophe was a quarrel, some time later, between the prophet and Francis M. Higbee. This resulted in a suit for libel against Smith, tried in May, 1844, in which much testimony disclosing the rotten condition of affairs in Nauvoo was given, and in the arrest of Smith in a suit for \$5000 damages. The hearing, on a writ of *habeas corpus*, in Smith's behalf, is reported in *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, No. 10. The court (Smith's Municipal Court) ordered Smith discharged, and pronounced Higbee's character proved "infamous."

----- [272] -----

CHAPTER X

THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY

THE student of the history of the Mormon church to this date, who seeks an answer to the question, Who originated the idea of plural marriages among the Mormons? will naturally credit that idea to Joseph Smith, Jr. The Reorganized Church (non-polygamist), whose membership includes Smith's direct descendants, defend the prophet's memory by alleging that "in the brain of J. C. Bennett was conceived the idea, and in his practice was the principle first introduced into the church." In maintaining this ground, however, they contend that "the official character of President Joseph Smith should be judged by his official ministrations as set forth in the well authenticated accepted official documents of the church up to June 27, 1844. His personal, private conduct should not enter into this discussion."¹ The secular investigator finds it necessary to disregard this warning, and in studying the question he discovers an incontrovertible mass of testimony to prove that the "revelation" concerning polygamy was a production of Smith,² was familiar to the church leaders in Nauvoo, and was lived up to by them before their expulsion from Illinois.

The Book of Mormon furnishes ample proof that the idea of plural marriages was as far from any thought of the real "author" of the doctrinal part of that book as it was from the mind of Rigdon's fellow-Disciples in Ohio at the time. The declarations on the subject in the Mormon Bible are so worded that they distinctly forbid any following of the example of Old Testament leaders

¹ Pamphlets Nos. 16 and 46 published by the Reorganized Church.

² "Elder W. W. Phelps said in Salt Lake Tabernacle in 1862 that while Joseph was translating the Book of Abraham in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835, from the papyrus found with the Egyptian mummies, the Prophet became impressed with the idea that polygamy would yet become an institution of the Mormon Church. Brigham Young was present, and was much annoyed at the statement made by Phelps; but it is highly probable that it was the real secret that the latter then divulged." -- "Rocky Mountain Saints," p. 182.

----- THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY 273 -----

like David and Solomon. In the Book of Jacob ii. 24-28, we find these commands: --

"Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me saith the Lord; wherefore, thus with the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph.

"Wherefore, I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old. Wherefore my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you hath save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; for I, the Lord God, delighteth in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts."

The same view is expressed in the Book of Mosiah, where, among the sins of King Noah, it is mentioned that "he spent his time in riotous living with his wives and concubines," and in the Book of Ether x. 5, where it is said that "Riplakish did not do that which was right in the sight of the Lord, for he did have many wives and concubines."

Smith, at the beginning of his career as a prophet, inculcated the same views on this subject in his "revelations." Thus, in the one dated at Kirtland, February 9, 1831, it was commanded (Sec. 42), "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else; and he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her shall deny the faith, and shall not have the spirit, and if he repents not he shall be cast out." In another "revelation," dated the following month (Sec. 49), it was declared, "Wherefore it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation."¹ These teachings may be with justness attributed to Rigdon, and we shall see on how little ground rests a carelessly made charge that he was the originator of the "spiritual wife" notion.

That there was a loosening of the views regarding the marriage tie almost as soon as Smith began his reign at Kirtland can be shown on abundant proof. Booth in one of his letters said, "It has been made known to one who has left his wife in New York

¹ "It is the strongest proof of the firm hold of a party, whether religious or political, upon the public mind, when it may offend with impunity against its own primary principles." -- MILMAN, "History of Christianity."

----- 274 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

State, that he is entirely free from his wife, and he is at pleasure to take him a wife from among the Lamanites" (Indians).¹ That reports of polygamous practices among the Mormons while they were in Ohio were current was conceded in the section on marriage, inserted in the Kirtland edition of the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants" -- "Inasmuch as this Church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and polygamy," etc.; and is further proved by Smith's denial in the *Elders' Journal*,² and by the declaration of the Presidents of the Seventies, withholding fellowship with any elder "who is guilty of polygamy."

Of the enmity of the higher powers toward transgressors of the law of morality of this time, we find an amusing (some will say shocking) mention in Smith's "revelation" of October 25, 1831 (Sec. 66). This "revelation" (announced as the words of "the Lord your Redeemer, the Saviour of the world") was addressed to W. E. McLellin (who was soon after "rebuked" by the prophet for attempting to have a "revelation" on his own account). It declared that McLellin was "blessed for receiving mine everlasting covenant," directed him to go forth and preach, gave him power to heal the sick, and then added, "Commit no adultery, a temptation with which thou hast been troubled." Could religious bouffe go to greater lengths?

Testimony as to the liberal Mormon view of the marriage relation while the church was in Missouri is found in the case of one Lyon, reported by Smith on page 148 of Vol. XVI of the *Millennial Star*. Lyon was the presiding high priest of one of the outlying branches of the church. Desiring to marry a Mrs. Jackson, whose husband was absent in the East, Lyon announced a "revelation," ordering the marriage to take place, telling her that he knew by revelation that her husband was dead. He gained her consent in this way, but, before the ceremony was performed, Jackson returned home, and, learning of Lyon's conduct, he had him brought before the authorities for trial. The high priest was found guilty enough to be deposed from his office, but not from his church membership.

There is abundant testimony from Mormon sources to show that the doctrine of polygamy, with the "spiritual wife" adjunct, was practised in Nauvoo for some time before Joseph Smith's

¹ Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled."

² p. 157, *ante*.

THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY

275 -----

death. A very orthodox Mormon witness on this point is Eliza R. Snow. In her biography of her brother, Lorenzo Snow,¹ the recent head of the church, she gives this account of her connection with polygamy: --

"While my brother was absent on this {his first} mission to Europe {1840-1843}, changes had taken place with me, one of eternal import, of which I supposed him to be entirely ignorant. The Prophet Joseph had taught me the principle of plural or celestial marriage, and I was married to him for time and eternity. In consequence of the ignorance of most of the Saints, as well as people of the world, on this subject, it was not mentioned, only privately between the few whose minds were enlightened on the subject. Not knowing how my brother {he returned on April 12, 1843} would receive it, I did not feel at liberty, and did not wish to assume the responsibility, of instructing him in the principle of plural marriage.... I informed my husband {the prophet} of the situation, and requested him to open the subject to my brother. A favorable opportunity soon presented, and, seated together on the bank of the Mississippi River, they had a most interesting conversation. The prophet afterward told me he found that my brother's mind had been previously enlightened on the subject in question. That Comforter which Jesus says shall I lead unto all truth had penetrated his understanding, and, while in England, had given him an intimation of what at that time was to many a secret. This was the result of living near the Lord.

"It was at the private interview referred to above that the Prophet Joseph unbosomed his heart, and described the trying ordeal he experienced in overcoming the repugnance of his feelings, the natural result of the force of education and social custom, relative to the introduction of plural marriage. He knew the voice of God -- he knew the command of the Almighty to him was to go forward -- to set the example and establish celestial plural marriage Yet the prophet hesitated and deferred from time to time, until an angel of God stood by him with a drawn sword, and told him that, unless he moved forward and established plural marriage, his priesthood would be taken from him and he should be destroyed. This testimony he not only bore to my brother, but also to others."²

¹ "This biography and autobiography of my brother Lorenzo Snow has been written as a tribute of sisterly affection for him, and as a token of sincere respect to his family. It is designed to be handed down in lineal descent, from generation to generation, -- to be

preserved as a family memorial." -- Extract from the preface.

² "Biography of Lorenzo Snow" (1884), pp. 68-70. Young married some of Smith's spiritual widows after the prophet's death, and four of them, including Eliza Snow, appear in Crockwell's illustrated "Biographies of Young's Wives," published in Utah.

Catherine Lewis, who, after passing two years with the Mormons, escaped from Nauvoo, after taking the preliminary degrees of the endowment, says: "The Twelve took Joseph's wives after his death. Kimball and Young took most of them; the daughter of Kimball was one of Joseph's wives. I heard her say to her mother: 'I will never be sealed to my father {meaning as a wife}, and I would never have been sealed {married} to Joseph had I known it was anything more than ceremony. I was young, and they deceived me by saying the salvation of our whole family depended on it.' The Apostles said they only took Joseph's wives to raise up children, carry them through

----- 276 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Smith's versatility as a fabricator seems to give him a leading place in that respect in the record of mankind. Snow says that he asked the prophet to set him right if he should see him indulging in any practice that might lead him astray, and the prophet assured him that he would never be guilty of any serious error. "It was one of Snow's peculiarities," observes his sister, "to do nothing by halves;" and he exemplified this in this instance by having two wives "sealed" to him at the same time in 1845, adding two more very soon afterward, and another in 1848. "It was distinctly understood," says his sister, "and agreed between them, that their marriage relations should not, for the time being, be divulged to the world."

The testimony of John D. Lee in regard to the practice of polygamy in Illinois is very circumstantial, and Lee was a conscientious polygamist to the day of his death. He says¹ that he was directed in this matter by principle and not by passion, and goes on to explain: --

In those days I did not always make due allowance for the failings of the weaker vessels. I then expected perfection in all women. I know now that I was foolish in looking for that in anything human. I have, for slight offences, turned away good-meaning young women that had been sealed to me, and refused to hear their excuses, but sent them away broken-hearted. In this I did wrong. I have regretted the same in sorrow for many years.... Should my history ever fall into the hands of Emeline Woolsey or Polly Ann Workman, I wish them to know that, with my last

breath, I asked God to pardon me the wrong I did them, when I drove them from me, poor young girls as they were"

Lee says that in the winter of 1843-1844 Smith set one Sidney Hay Jacobs to writing a pamphlet giving selections from the Scriptures bearing on the practice of polygamy and advocating that doctrine. The appearance of this pamphlet created so much unfavorable comment (even Hyrum Smith denouncing it "as from beneath") that Joseph deemed it best to condemn it in the *Wasp*, although men in his confidence were busy advocating its teachings.

The "revelation" sanctioning plural marriages is dated July 12, 1843, and Lee says that Smith "dared not proclaim it publicly, "but taught it "confidentially," urging his followers "to surrender themselves to God" for their salvation; and "in the winter of 1845,

to the next world, and there deliver them up to him; by so doing they would gain his approbation." -- "Narrative of Some of the Proceedings of the Mormons."

¹ "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 200"

THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY

277 -----

meetings were held all over the city of Nauvoo, and the spirit of Elijah was taught in the different families, as a foundation to the order of celestial marriage, as well as the law of adoption."¹ The Saints were also taught that Gentiles had no right to perform the marriage ceremony, and that their former marriage relations were invalid, and that they could be "sealed" to new wives under the authority of the church.

Lee gives a complete record of his plural marriages, which is interesting, showing how the business was conducted at the start. His second wife, the daughter of a wealthy farmer near Quincy, Illinois, was "sealed" to him in Nauvoo in 1845, after she had been an inmate of his house for three months. His third and fourth wives were "sealed" to him soon after, but Young took a fancy to wife No. 3 (who had borne Lee a son), and, after much persuasion, she was "sealed" to Young. At this same "sealing" Lee took wife No. 4, a girl whom he had baptized in

Tennessee. In the spring of 1845 two sisters of his first wife *and their mother* were "sealed" to him; he married the mother, he says, "for the salvation of her eternal state." At the completion of the Nauvoo Temple he took three more wives. At Council Bluffs, in 1847, Brigham Young "sealed" him to three more, two of them sisters, in one night, and he secured the fourteenth soon after, the fifteenth in 1851, the sixteenth in 1856, the seventeenth in 1858 ("a dashing young bride"), the eighteenth in 1859, and the nineteenth and last in Salt Lake City. He says he claimed "only eighteen true wives," as he married Mrs. Woolsey "for her soul's sake, and she was nearly sixty years old." By these wives he had sixty-four children, of whom fifty-four were living when his book was written.

Ebenezer Robinson, explaining in the Return a statement signed by him and his wife in October, 1842, to offset Bennett's charges, in which they declared that they "knew of no other form of marriage ceremony" except the one in the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants," said that this statement was then true, as the heads of the church had not yet taught the new system to others. But they had heard it talked of, and the prophet's brother, Don Carlos, in June, 1841, had said to Robinson, "Any man who will teach and practise spiritual wifery will go to hell, no matter if it is

¹ "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 165.

----- 278 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

my brother Joseph." Hyrum Smith, who first opposed the doctrine, went to Robinson's house in December, 1843, and taught the system to him and his wife. Robinson was told of the "revelation" to Joseph a few days after its date, and just as he was leaving Nauvoo on a mission to New York. He, Law, and William Marks opposed the innovation. He continues: "We returned home from that mission the latter part of November, 1843. Soon after our return, I was told that when we were gone the 'revelation' was presented to and read in the High Council in Nauvoo, three of the members of which refused to accept it as from the Lord, President Marks, Cowles, and Counsellor Leonard Soby." Cowles at once resigned from the High Council and the Presidency of the

church at Nauvoo, and was looked on as a seceder.

Robinson gives convincing testimony that, as early as 1843, the ceremonies of the Endowment House were performed in Nauvoo by a secret organization called "The Holy Order," and says that in June, 1844, he saw John Taylor clad in an endowment robe. He quotes a letter to himself from Orson Hyde, dated September 19, 1844, in which Hyde refers guardedly to the new revelation and the "Holy Order" as "the charge which the prophet gave us, "adding, "and we know that Elder Rigdon does not know what it was."¹

We may find the following references to this subject in Smith's diary: --

"April 29, 1842. The Lord makes manifest to me many things which it is not wisdom for me to make public until others can witness the proof of them."

"May 1. I preached in the grove on the Keys of the Kingdom, etc. The Keys are certain signs and words by which the false spirits and personages can be detected from true, and which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed."

"May 4. I spent the day in the upper part of my store... in council with (Hyrum, Brigham Young and others) instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments.... The communications I made to this Council were of things spiritual, and to be received only by the spiritually minded; and there was nothing made known to these men but what will be made known to all the Saints of the last days as soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them."²

In one of Smith's dissertations, which are inserted here and there in his diary, is the following under date of August, 1842: --

¹ *The Return*, Vol. II, p. 252.

² *Millennial Star*, Vol. XIX, pp. 390-393.

THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY

279 -----

"If we seek first the kingdom of God, all good things will be added. So with Solomon. First he asked wisdom and God gave it to him, and with it every desire of his heart, even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part, but which in reality were right, because God gave and sanctioned

them by special revelation."¹

While the Mormon leaders, Lorenzo Snow and others, were in the Utah penitentiary after conviction under the Edmunds anti-polygamy law, refusing pardons on condition that they would give up the practice of polygamy, the *Deseret News* of May 20, 1886, printed an affidavit made on February 16, 1874, at the request of Joseph F. Smith, by William Clayton, who was a clerk in the prophet's office in Nauvoo and temple recorder, to show the world that "the martyred prophet is responsible to God and the world for this doctrine." The affidavit recites that while Clayton and the prophet were taking a walk, in February, 1843, Smith first broached to him the subject of plural marriages, and told him that the doctrine was right in the sight of God, adding, "It is your privilege to have all the wives you want." He gives the names of a number of the wives whom Smith married at this time, adding that his wife Emma "was cognizant of the fact of some, if not all, of these being his wives, and she generally treated them very kindly." He says that on July 12, 1843, Hyrum offered to read the "revelation" to Emma if the prophet would write it out, saying, "I believe I can convince her of its truth, and you will hereafter have peace." Joseph smiled, and remarked, "You do not know Emma as well as I do," but he thereupon dictated the "revelation" and Clayton wrote it down. An examination of its text will show how largely it was devoted to Emma's subjugation. When Hyrum returned from reading it to the prophet's lawful wife, he said that "he had never received a more severe talking to in his life; that Emma was very bitter and full of resentment and anger." Joseph repeated his remark that his brother did not know Emma as well as he did, and, putting the "revelation" into his pocket, they went out.²

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XIX, p. 774. ² Jenson's "Historical Record," Vol. VI, pp. 233-234, gives the names of twenty-seven women who, "besides a few others about whom we have been unable to get all the necessary information, were sealed to the Prophet Joseph during the last three years of his life."

"At the present time," says Stenhouse ("Rocky Mountain Saints"), p. 185, "there are probably about a dozen sisters in Utah who proudly acknowledge themselves to be

At the conference in Salt Lake City on August 28, 1852, at which the first public announcement of the revelation was made, Brigham Young said in the course of his remarks: "Though that doctrine has not been preached by the Elders, this people have believed in it for many years."¹ The original copy of this revelation was burned up. William Clayton was the man who wrote it from the mouth of the Prophet. In the meantime it was in Bishop Whitney's possession. He wished the privilege to copy it, which brother Joseph granted. Sister Emma burnt the original." The "revelation," he added, had been locked up for years in his desk, on which he had a patent lock.²

Further proof is not needed to show that this doctrine was the offspring of Joseph Smith, and that its original object was to grant him unrestricted indulgence of his passions.

Justice to Sidney Rigdon requires that his memory should be cleared of the charge, which has been made by more than one writer, that the spiritual wife doctrine was of his invention. There is the strongest evidence to show that it was Smith's knowledge that he could not win Rigdon over to polygamy which made the prophet so bitter against his old counsellor, and that it was Rigdon's

the `wives of Joseph, 'and how many others there may be who held that relationship no man knoweth."

¹ As evidence that polygamy was not countenanced by Smith and his associates in Nauvoo, there has been cited a notice in the *Times and Seasons* of February, 1844, signed by Joseph and Hyrum Smith, cutting off an elder named Brown for preaching "polygamy and other false and corrupt doctrines," and a letter of Hyrum, dated March 15, 1844, threatening to deprive of his license and membership any elder who preached "that a man having a certain priesthood may have as many wives as he pleases." The *Deseret News* of May 20, 1886, noticing these and other early denials, justifies the falsehoods, saying that "Jesus enjoined his Disciples on several occasions to keep to themselves principles that he made known to them," that the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants" gave the same instruction, and that the elders, as the "revelation" was not yet promulgated, "were justified in denying those imputations, and at the same time avoiding the avowal of such doctrines as were not yet intended for this world." P. P. Pratt flatly denied, in England, in 1846, that any such doctrine was known or practised by the Saints, and John Taylor (afterward the head of the church), in a discussion in France in July, 1850, declared that "these things are too outrageous to admit of belief." The latter false statements would be covered by the excuse of the *Deseret News*.

² *Deseret News*, extra, September 14, 1852. Young declared in a sermon in Salt Lake City in July, 1855, that he was among the doubters when the prophet revealed the new doctrine, saying: "It was the first time in my life that I desired the grave, and I could

hardly get over it for a long time.... And I have had to examine myself from that day to this, and watch my faith and carefully meditate, lest I should be found desiring the grave more than I ought to." His examinations proved eminently successful.

----- THE INSTITUTION OF POLYGAMY 281 -----

opposition to the new doctrine that made Young so determined to drive him out of church after the prophet's death.

When Rigdon returned to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, to establish his own Mormon church there, he began in October, 1844, the publication of a revived Latter-Day Saints' *Messenger and Advocate*. Stating "the greater cause" of the opposition of the leaders of Nauvoo to him, in an editorial, he said: --

"Know then that the so-called Twelve Apostles at Nauvoo are now teaching the doctrine of what is called Spiritual Wives; that a man may have more wives than one; and they are not only teaching it, but practising it, and this doctrine is spreading alarmingly through that apostate branch of the church of Latter-Day Saints. *Their greatest* objection to us was our opposition to this doctrine, knowing, as they did, that we had got the fact in possession. It created alarm, great alarm; every effort was made while we were there to effect something that might screen them from the consequence of exposure....

"This doctrine of a man having more wives than one is the cause which has induced these men to put at defiance the ecclesiastical arrangements of the church, and, what is equally criminal, to do despite unto the moral excellence of the doctrine and covenants of the church, setting up an order of things of their own, in violation of all the rules and regulations known to the Saints."

In the same editorial Rigdon prints a statement by a gentleman who was at Nauvoo at the time, and for whose veracity he vouches, which said, "It was said to me by many that they had no objection to Elder Rigdon but his opposition to the spiritual wife system."

Benjamin Winchester, who was one of the earliest missionaries sent out from Kirtland, adds this testimony in a letter to Elder John Hardy of Boston, Massachusetts, whose trial in 1844 for opposing the spiritual wife doctrine occasioned wide comment:

"As regards the trial of Elder Rigdon at Nauvoo, it was a forced affair, got up by the

Twelve to get him out of their way, that they might the better arrogate to themselves higher authority than they ever had, or anybody ever dreamed they would have; and also (as they perhaps hope) to prevent a complete expose of the spiritual wife system, which they knew would deeply implicate themselves."

----- [282] -----

CHAPTER XI

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY

ALTHOUGH there was practically no concealment of the practice of polygamy by the Mormons resident in Utah after their arrival there, it was not until five years from that date that open announcement was made by the church of the important "revelation." This "revelation" constitutes Sec. 132 of the modern edition of the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants," and bears this heading: "Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including Plurality of Wives. Given through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12, 1843." All its essential parts are as follows:--

"Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand, to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines:

"Behold! and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter:

"Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same;

"For behold! I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted

to enter into my glory;

"For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world:

"And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fullness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fullness thereof, must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

"And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made, and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through

THE DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY

283 -----

the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time, on whom this power and the keys of this Priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force, in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end, have an end when men are dead....

"I am the Lord thy God, and I give unto you this commandment, that no man shall come unto the Father but by me, or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord;...

"Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word; and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world;

"Therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory;

"For these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods, but are angels of God, for ever and ever.

"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me, or by my word, which is my

law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have anointed, and appointed unto this power -- then it is not valid, neither of force when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world, it cannot be received there, because the angels and the Gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory, for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God.

"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power, and the keys of this Priesthood; and it shall be said unto them, ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths -- then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity, and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the Gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fullness and a continuation of the seeds for ever and ever

----- 284 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

"Then shall they be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be Gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye abide my law, ye cannot attain to this glory;...

"And verily, verily I say unto you, that whatsoever you seal on earth, shall be sealed in Heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name, and by my word, with the Lord, it shall be eternally bound in the heavens; and whosoever sins you remit on earth shall be remitted eternally in the heavens; and whosoever sins you retain on earth, shall be retained in heaven.

"And again, verily I say, whomsoever you bless, I will bless, and whomsoever you curse, I will curse, with the Lord; for I, the Lord, am thy God....

"Verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith, your wife, whom I have given unto you, that she stay herself, and partake not of that which I commanded you to offer unto her; for I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham; and that I might require an offering at your hand, by covenant and

sacrifice.

"And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me; and those who are not pure, and have said they were pure, shall be destroyed, with the Lord God;

"For I am the Lord, thy God, and ye shall obey my voice; and I give unto my servant Joseph that he shall be made ruler over many things, for he hath been faithful over a few things, and from henceforth I will strengthen him.

"And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment, she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her, if she abide not in my law;

"But if she will not abide this commandment, then shall my servant Joseph do all things for her, even as he hath said; and I will bless him and multiply him, and give unto him an hundredfold in this world, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and lands, wives and children, and crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds.

"And again, verily I say, let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses; and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses, wherein she has trespassed against me; and I, the Lord thy God, will bless her, and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice....

"And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood, if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery, for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery. with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else.

"And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him, therefore is he justified.

THE DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY

285 -----

"But if one or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man; she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed; for they are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfill the promise which was given by my Father before the foundation of the world; and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified.

"And again, verily, verily I say unto you, if any man have a wife who holds the keys

of this power, and he teacheth unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe, and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God, for I will destroy her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law.

"Therefore, it shall be lawful in me, if she receive not this law, for him to receive all things, whatsoever I, the Lord his God, will give unto him, because she did not administer unto him according to my word; and she then becomes the transgressor; and he is exempt from the law of Sarah; who administered unto Abraham according to the law, when I commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife.

"And now, as pertaining to this law, verily, verily I say unto you, I will reveal more unto you, hereafter; therefore, let this suffice for the present. Behold, I am Alpha and Omega. Amen."

This jumble of doctrinal and family commands bears internal evidence of the truth of Clayton's account of its offhand dictation with a view to its immediate submission to the prophet's wife, who was already in a state of rebellion because of his infidelities.

The publication of the "revelation" was made at a Church Conference which opened in Salt Lake City on August 28, 1852, and was called especially to select elders for missionary work.¹ At the beginning of the second day's session Orson Pratt announced that, unexpectedly, he had been called on to address the conference on the subject of a plurality of wives. "We shall endeavor," he said, "to set forth before this enlightened assembly some of the causes why the Almighty has revealed such a doctrine, and why it is considered a part and portion of our religious faith."

He then took up the attitude of the church, as a practiser of this doctrine, toward the United States government, saying: --

"I believe that they will not, under our present form of government (I mean the government of the United States), try us for treason for believing and practising our religious notions and ideas. I think, if I am not mistaken, that the

¹ For text of the addresses at this conference, see *Deseret News*, extra, September 14, 1852.

----- 286 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

constitution gives the privilege to all of the inhabitants of this country, of the free exercise of their religious notions, and the freedom of their faith and the practice of it. Then, if it can be proved to a demonstration that the Latter-Day Saints have actually embraced, as a part and portion of their religion, the doctrine of a plurality of wives, it is constitutional. And should there ever be laws enacted by this government to restrict them from the free exercise of their religion, such laws must be unconstitutional"

Thus, at this early date in the history of Utah, was stated the Mormon doctrine of the constitutional foundation of this belief, and, in the views then stated, may be discovered the reason for the bitter opposition which the Mormon church is still making to a constitutional amendment specifically declaring that polygamy is a violation of the fundamental law of the United States.

Pratt then spoke at great length on the necessity and rightfulness of polygamy. Taking up the doctrine of a previous existence of all souls and a kind of nobility among the spirits, he said that the most likely place for the noblest spirits to take their tabernacles was among the Saints, and he continued: --

"Now let us inquire what will become of those individuals who have this law taught unto them in plainness, if they reject it." (A voice in the stand "They will be damned.") "I will tell you. They will be damned, saith the Lord, in the revelation he hath given. Why? Because, where much is given, much is required. Where there is great knowledge unfolded for the exaltation, glory and happiness of the sons and daughters of God, if they close up their hearts, if they reject the testimony of his word and will, and do not give heed to the principles he has ordained for their good, they are worthy of damnation, and the Lord has said they shall be damned."

After Brigham Young had made a statement concerning the history of the "revelation," already referred to, the "revelation" itself was read.

The *Millennial Star* (Liverpool) published the proceedings of this conference in a supplement to its Volume XV, and the text of the "revelation" in its issue of January 1, 1853, saying editorially in the next number: --

"None {of the revelations} seem to penetrate so deep, or be so well calculated to shake to its very center the social structure which has been reared and vainly nurtured by this professedly wise and Christian generation; none more conclusively exhibit how surely an end must come to all the works, institutions, ordinances and covenants of men; none more portray the eternity of God's purpose --

THE DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY

287 -----

and, we may say, none have carried so mighty an influence, or had the power to stamp their divinity upon the mind by absorbing every feeling of the soul, to the extent of the one which has appeared in our last."

With the Mormon church in England, however, the publication of the new doctrine proved a bombshell, as is shown by the fact that 2164 excommunications in the British Isles were reported to the semi-annual conference of December 31, 1852, and 1776 to the conference of the following June.

The doctrine of "sealing" has been variously stated. According to one early definition, the man and the woman who are to be properly mated are selected in heaven in a pre-existent state; if, through a mistake in an earthly marriage, A has got the spouse intended for B, the latter may consider himself a husband to Mrs. A. Another early explanation which may be cited was thus stated by Henry Rowe in the *Boston Investigator* of February 3, 1845: --

"The spiritual wife doctrine I will explain, as taught me by Elder W---e, as taught by Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Elder Adams, William Smith, and the rest of the Quorum, etc., etc. Joseph had a revelation from God that there were a number of spirits to be born into the world before their exaltation in the next; that Christ would not come until all these spirits received or entered their 'tabernacles of clay'; that these spirits were hovering around the world, and at the door of bad houses, watching a chance of getting into their tabernacles; that God had provided an honorable way for them to come forth -- that was, by the Elders in Israel sealing up virtuous women; and as there was no provision made for woman in the Scriptures, their only chance of heaven was to be sealed up to some Elder for time and eternity, and be a star in his crown forever; that those who were the cause of bringing forth these spirits would receive a reward, the ratio of which reward should be the greater or less according to the number they were the means of bringing forth."

Brigham Young's definition of "spiritual wifeism" was thus expressed: "And I would say, as no man can be perfect without the woman, so no woman can be perfect without a man to lead her. I tell you the truth as it is in the bosom of eternity; and I say to every man upon the face of the earth, if he wishes to be saved, he cannot be saved without a woman

by his side. This is spiritual wifeism, that is, the doctrine of spiritual wives."¹

The Mormon, under polygamy, was taught that he "married" for time, but was "sealed" for eternity. The "sealing" was therefore the more important ceremony, and was performed in the Endowment

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. VI, p. 955.

----- 288 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

House, with the accompaniment of secret oaths and mystic ceremonies. If a wife disliked her husband, and wished to be "sealed" to a man of her choice, the Mormon church would marry her to the latter¹ -- a marriage made actual in every sense -- if he was acceptable as a Mormon; and, if the first husband also wanted to be "sealed" to her, the church would perform a mock ceremony to satisfy this husband. "It is impossible," says Hyde, "to state all the licentiousness, under the name of religion, that these sealing ordinances have occasioned."²

A Mormon preacher never hesitated to go to any lengths in justifying the doctrine of plural marriages. One illustration of this may suffice. Orson Hyde, in a discourse in the Salt Lake Tabernacle in March, 1857, made the following argument to support a claim that Jesus Christ was a polygamist: --

"It will be borne in mind that, once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and on a careful reading of that transaction it will be discovered that no less a person than Jesus Christ was married on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha, and the other Mary also, whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper, to say the best of it. I will venture to say that, if Jesus Christ was now to pass through the most pious countries in Christendom, with a train of women such as used to follow him, fondling about him, combing his hair, anointing him with precious ointments, washing his feet with tears and wiping them with the hair of their heads, and unmarried, or even married, he would be mobbed, tarred and feathered, and rode, not on an ass, but on a rail.... Did he multiply, and did he see his seed? Did he honor his Father's law by complying with it, or did he not? Others may do as they like, but I will not charge our Saviour with neglect or transgression in this or any other duty."³

The doctrine of "adoption," referred to, taught that the direct line of the true priesthood was broken with the death of Christ's apostles, and that the rights of the lineage of Abraham could be secured only by being "adopted" by a modern apostle, all of whom were recognized as lineal descendants of Abraham. Recourse was here had to the Scriptures, and Romans iv. 16 was

¹ One of Stenhouse's informants about the "reformation" of 1856 in Utah writes: "It was hinted, and secretly taught by authority, that women should form relations with more than one man." On this Stenhouse says: "The author has no personal knowledge, from the present leaders of the church, of this teaching; but he has often heard that something would then be taught which 'would test the brethren as much as polygamy had tried the sisters.'" -- "Rocky Mountain Saints," p. 301.

² "Mormonism," p. 84.

³ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. IV, p. 259.

----- THE DOCTRINE OF POLYGAMY 289 -----

quoted to sustain this doctrine. The first "adoptions" took place in the Nauvoo Temple. Lee was "adopted to" Brigham Young, and Young's and Lee's children were then "adopted" to their own fathers.

With this necessary explanation of the introduction of polygamy, we may take up the narrative of events at Nauvoo.

----- [290] -----

CHAPTER XII

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE EXPOSITOR

SMITH was now to encounter a kind of resistance within the church that he had never met. In all previous apostasies, where members had dared to attack his character or question his authority, they had been summarily silenced, and in most cases driven at once out of the Mormon community. But there were men at Nauvoo above the average of the Mormon convert as regards intelligence and wealth, who refused to follow the prophet in his new doctrine regarding marriage, and whose opposition took the very practical shape of the establishment of a newspaper in the Mormon city to expose him and to defend themselves.

In his testimony in the Higbee trial Smith had accused a prominent Mormon, Dr. R. D. Foster, of stealing and of gross insults to women. Dr. Foster, according to current report, had found Smith at his house, and had received from his wife a confession that Smith had been persuading her to become one of his spiritual wives.¹

Among the leading members of the church at Nauvoo at this time were two brothers, William and Wilson Law. They were Canadians, and had brought considerable property with them, and in the "revelation" of January 19, 1841, William Law was among those who were directed to take stock in Nauvoo House, and was named as one of the First Presidency, and was made registrar of the University. Wilson Law was a regent of the University and a major general of the Legion. General Law had been an especial favorite of Smith. In writing to him while in hiding from the

¹ "At the May, 1844, term of the Hancock Circuit Court two indictments were found against Smith by the grand jury -- one for adultery and one for perjury. To the surprise of all, on the Monday following, the Prophet appeared in court and demanded that he be tried on the last-named indictment. The prosecutor not being ready, a continuance was entered to the next term." -- GREGG, "History of Hancock County," p. 301.

Missouri authorities in 1842, Smith says, "I love that soul that is so nobly established in that clay of yours."¹ At the conference of April, 1844, Hyrum Smith said: "I wish to speak about Messrs. Law's steam mill. There has been a great deal of bickering about it. The mill has been a great benefit to the city. It has brought in thousands who would not have come here. The Messrs. Law have sunk their capital and done a great deal of good. It is out of character to cast any aspersions on the Messrs. Law."

Dr. Foster, the Laws, and Counsellor Sylvester Emmons became greatly stirred up about the spiritual wife doctrine, and the effort of Smith and those in his confidence to teach and enforce the doctrine of plural wives; and they finally decided to establish in Nauvoo a newspaper that would openly attack the new order of things. The name chosen for this newspaper was the *Expositor*, and Emmons was its editor.² Its motto was: "The Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth," and its prospectus announced as its purpose, "Unconditional repeal of the city charter -- to correct the abuses of the unit power -- to advocate disobedience to political revelations." Only one number of this newspaper was ever issued, but that number was almost directly the cause of the prophet's death.

The most important feature of the *Expositor* (which bore date of June 7, 1844) was a "preamble" and resolutions of "seceders from the church at Nauvoo," and affidavits by Mr. and Mrs. William Law and Austin Cowles setting forth that Hyrum Smith had read the "revelation" concerning polygamy to William Law and to the High Council, and that Mrs. Law had read it.³

The "preamble" affirmed the belief of the seceders in the Mormon Bible and the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants," but declared their intention to "explode the vicious principles of Joseph Smith," adding, "We are aware, however, that we are hazarding every earthly blessing, particularly property, and probably

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, p. 695.

² Emmons went direct to Beardstown, Illinois, after the destruction of the paper, and lived there till the day of his death, a leading citizen. He established the first newspaper

published in Beardstown, and was for sixteen years the mayor of the city.

³ These were the only affidavits printed in the *Expositor*. More than one description of the paper has stated that it contained many more. Thus, Appleton's "American Encyclopedia," under "Mormons," says, "In the first number (there was only one) they printed the affidavits of sixteen women to the effect that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon and others had endeavored to convert them to the spiritual wife doctrine."

----- 292 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

life itself, in striking this blow at tyranny and oppression." Many of them, it was explained, had sought a reformation of the church without any public exposure, but they had been spurned, "particularly by Joseph, who would state that, if he had been or was guilty of the charges we would charge him with, he would not make acknowledgment, but would rather be damned, for it would detract from his dignity and would consequently prove the overthrow of the church. We would ask him, on the other hand, if the overthrow of the church were not inevitable; to which he often replied that we would all go to hell together and convert it into a heaven by casting the devil out; and, says he, hell is by no means the place this world of fools supposes it to be, but, on the contrary, it is quite an agreeable place."

The "preamble" further set forth the methods employed by Smith to induce women from other countries, who had joined the Mormons in Nauvoo, to become his spiritual wives, reciting the arguments advanced, and thus summing up the general result: "She is thunderstruck, faints, recovers and refuses. The prophet damns her if she rejects. She thinks of the great sacrifice, and of the many thousand miles she has travelled over sea and land that she might save her soul from pending ruin, and replies, 'God's will be done and not mine.' The prophet and his devotees in this way are gratified." Smith's political aspirations were condemned as preposterous, and the false "doctrine of many gods" was called blasphemy.

Fifteen resolutions followed. They declared against the evils named, and also condemned the order to the Saints to gather in haste at Nauvoo, explaining that the purpose of this command was to enable the men in control of the church to sell property at exorbitant prices, "and thus the wealth that is brought into the place is swallowed up by the one great

throat, from whence there is no return." The seceders asserted that, although they had an intimate acquaintance with the affairs of the church, they did not know of any property belonging to it except the Temple. Finally, as speaking for the true church, they ordered all preachers to cease to teach the doctrine of plural gods, a plurality of wives, sealing, etc., and directed offenders in this respect to report and have their licenses renewed. Another feature of the issue was a column address signed by Francis M. Higbee, advising the citizens

----- THE SUPPRESSION OF THE EXPOSITOR 293 -----

of Hancock County not to send Hyrum Smith to the legislature, since to support him was to support Joseph, "a man who contends all governments are to be put down, and one established upon its ruins."

The appearance of this sheet created the greatest excitement among the Mormon leaders that they had experienced since leaving Missouri. They recognized in it immediately a mouthpiece of men who were better informed than Bennett, and who were ready to address an audience composed both of their own flock and of their outlying non-Mormon neighbors, whose antipathy to them was already manifesting itself aggressively. To permit the continued publication of this sheet meant one of those surrenders which Smith had never made.

The prophet therefore took just such action as would have been expected of him in the circumstances. Calling a meeting of the City Council, he proceeded to put the *Expositor* and its editors on trial, as if that body was of a judicial instead of a legislative character. The minutes of this trial, which lasted all of Saturday, June 8, and a part of Monday, June 10, 1844, can be found in the *Neighbor* of June 19, of that year, filling six columns. The prophet-mayor occupied the chair, and the defendants were absent.

The testimony introduced aimed at the start to break down the characters of Dr. Foster, Higbee, and the Laws. A mechanic testified that the Laws had bought "bogus" -- (counterfeit) dies of him. The prophet told how William Law had "pursued" him to recover \$40,000 that Smith owed him. Hyrum Smith alleged that William Law had

offered to give a man \$500 if he would kill Hyrum, and had confessed adultery to him, making a still more heinous charge against Higbee. Hyrum referred "to the revelation of the High Council of the church, which has caused so much talk about a multiplicity of wives," and declared that it "concerned things which transpired in former days, and had no reference to the present time." Testimony was also given to show that the Laws were not liberal to the poor, and that William's motto with his fellow-churchmen who owed him was, "Punctuality, punctuality."¹ This was naturally a serious offence in the eyes of the Smiths.

¹ The *Expositor* contained this advertisement: "The subscribers wish to inform all those who, through sickness or other misfortunes, are much limited in their means of

----- 294 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

The prophet declared that the conduct of such men, and of such papers as the *Expositor*, was calculated to destroy the peace of the city. He unblushingly asserted that what he had preached about marriage only showed the order in ancient days, having nothing to do with the present time. In regard to the alleged revelation about polygamy he explained that, on inquiring of the Lord concerning the Scriptural teaching that "they neither marry nor are given in marriage in heaven," he received a reply to the effect that men in this life must marry in one of eternity, otherwise they must remain as angels, or be single in heaven.

Smith then proposed that the Council make some provision for putting down the *Expositor*, declaring its allegations to be "treasonable against all chartered rights and privileges." He read from the federal and state constitutions to define his idea of the rights of the press, and quoted Blackstone on private wrongs. Hyrum openly advocated smashing the press and pieing the type. One councillor alone raised his voice for moderation, proposing to give the offenders a few days' notice, and to assess a fine of \$300 for every libel. W. W. Phelps (who was back in the fold again) held that the city charter gave them power to declare the newspaper a nuisance, and cited the spilling of the tea in Boston harbor as a precedent for an attack on the *Expositor* office. Finally, on June 10, this resolution was passed unanimously: --

"Resolved by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo that the printing office from whence issues the *Nauvoo Expositor* is a public nuisance, and also all of said Nauvoo *Expositors* which may be or exist in said establishment; and the mayor is instructed to cause said printing establishment and papers to be removed without delay, in such manner as he shall direct."

Smith, of course, made very prompt use of this authority, issuing the following order to the city marshal: --

"You are hereby commanded to destroy the printing press from whence issues the *Nauvoo Expositor*, and pi the type of said printing establishment in the street, and burn all the *Expositors* and libellous hand bills found in said establishment; and if resistance be offered to the execution of this order, by the owners or others, destroy the house; and if any one threatens you or the Mayor or the officers of the city, arrest those who threaten you; and fail not to execute this order without delay, and make due return thereon.

"JOSEPH SMITH, *Mayor*."

procuring bread for their families, that we have allotted Thursday of every week to grind *toll free* for them, till grain becomes plentiful after harvest. -- W. & W. Law."

----- THE SUPPRESSION OF THE EXPOSITOR 295 -----

To meet any armed opposition which might arise, the acting major general of the Legion was thus directed: --

"You are hereby commanded to hold the Nauvoo Legion in readiness forthwith to execute the city ordinances, and especially to remove the printing establishment of the *Nauvoo Expositor*; and this you are required to do at sight, under the penalty of the laws, provided the marshal shall require it and need your services.

"JOSEPH SMITH,
"Lieutenant General Nauvoo Legion."

The story of the compliance with the mayor's order is thus concisely told in the "marshal's return," "The within-named press and type is destroyed and pied according to order on this 10th day of June, 1844, at

about eight o'clock P. M." The work was accomplished without any serious opposition. The marshal appeared at the newspaper office, accompanied by an escort from the Legion, and forced his way into the building. The press and type were carried into the street, where the press was broken up with hammers, and all that was combustible was burned.

Dr. Foster and the Laws fled at once to Carthage, Illinois, under the belief that their lives were in danger. The story of their flight and of the destruction of their newspaper plant by order of the Nauvoo authorities spread quickly all over the state, and in the neighboring counties the anti-Mormon feeling, that had for some time been growing more intense, was now fanned to fury. This feeling the Mormon leaders seemed determined to increase still further.

The owners of the *Expositor* sued out at Carthage a writ for the removal to that place of Joseph Smith and the Nauvoo counsellors on a charge of a riot in connection with the destruction of their plant. This writ, when presented, was at once set aside by a writ of *habeas corpus* issued by the Nauvoo Municipal Court, but the case was heard before a Mormon justice of the peace on June 17, and he discharged the accused. As if this was not a sufficient defiance of public opinion, Smith, as mayor, published a "proclamation" in the *Neighbor* of June 19, reciting the events in connection with the attack on the *Expositor*, and closing thus:

--

"Our city is infested with a set of blacklegs, counterfeiters and debauchees, and that the proprietors of this press were of that class, the minutes of the Municipal Court fully testify, and in ridding our young and flourishing city of such characters, we are abused by not only villanous demagogues, but by some who,

----- 296 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

from their station and influence in society, ought rather to raise than depress the standard of human excellence. We have no disturbance or excitement among us, save what is made by the thousand and one idle rumors afloat in the country. Every one is protected in his person and property, and but few cities of a population of twenty thousand people, in the United States, hath less of dissipation or vice of any kind than the city of Nauvoo.

"Of the correctness of our conduct in this affair, we appeal to every high court in the

state, and to its ordeal we are willing to appear at any time that His Excellency, Governor Ford, shall please to call us before it. I, therefore, in behalf of the Municipal Court of Nauvoo, warn the lawless not to be precipitate in any interference in our affairs, for as sure as there is a God in Israel we shall ride triumphant over all oppression.

"JOSEPH SMITH, *Mayor*."

----- [297] -----

CHAPTER XIII

UPRISING OF THE NON-MORMONS -- SMITH'S ARREST

THE gauntlet thus thrown down by Smith was promptly taken up by his non-Mormon neighbors, and public meetings were held in various places to give expression to the popular indignation. At such a meeting in Warsaw, Hancock County, eighteen miles down the river, the following was among the resolutions adopted: --

"Resolved, that the time, in our opinion, has arrived when the adherents of Smith, as a body, should be driven from the surrounding settlements into Nauvoo; that the Prophet and his miscreant adherents should then be demanded at their hands, and, if not surrendered, a war of extermination should be waged, to the entire destruction, if necessary for our protection, of his adherents."

Warsaw was considered the most violent anti-Mormon neighborhood, the Signal newspaper there being especially bitter in its attacks; but the people in all the surrounding country began to prepare for "war" in earnest. At Warsaw 150 men were mustered in under General Knox, and \$1000 was voted for supplies. In Carthage, Rushville, Green Plains, and

many other towns in Illinois men began organizing themselves into military companies, cannon were ordered from St. Louis, and the near-by places in Iowa, as well as some in Missouri, sent word that their aid could be counted on. Rumors of all sorts of Mormon outrages were circulated, and calls were made for militia, here to protect the people against armed Mormon bands, there against Mormon thieves. Many farmhouses were deserted by their owners through fear, and the steamboats on the river were crowded with women and children, who were sent to some safe settlement while the men were doing duty in the militia ranks. Many of the alarming reports were doubtless started by non-Mormons to inflame the public feeling against their opponents, others were the natural outgrowth of the existing excitement.

----- 298 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

On June 17 a committee from Carthage made to Governor Ford so urgent a request for the calling out of the militia, that he decided to visit the disturbed district and make an investigation on his own account.¹ On arriving at Carthage he found a considerable militia force already assembled as a *posse comitatus*, at the call of the constables. This force, and similar ones in McDonough and Schuyler counties, he placed under command of their own officers. Next, the governor directed the mayor and council of Nauvoo to send a committee to state to him their story of the recent doings. This they did, convincing him, by their own account, of the outrageous character of the proceedings against the *Expositor*. He therefore arrived at two conclusions: first, that no authority at his command should be spared in bringing the Mormon leaders to justice; and, second, that this must be done without putting the Mormons in danger of an attack by any kind of a mob. He therefore addressed the militia force from each county separately, urging on them the necessity of acting only within the law; and securing from them all a vote pledging their aid to the governor in following a strictly legal course, and protecting from violence the Mormon leaders when they should be arrested.

The governor then sent word to Smith that he and his associates would be protected if they would surrender, but that arrested they should be, even if it took the whole militia force of the state to accomplish this.

The constable and guards who carried the governor's mandate to Nauvoo found the city a military camp. Smith had placed it under martial law, assembled the Legion, called in all the outlying Mormons, and ordered that no one should enter or leave the place without submitting to the strictest inquiry. The governor's messengers had no difficulty, however, in gaining admission to Smith, who promised that he and the members of the Council would accompany the officers to Carthage the next morning (June 23) at eight o'clock. But at that time the accused did not appear, and, without any delay or any effort to arrest the men who were wanted, the officers returned to Carthage and reported that all the accused had fled.

Whatever had been the intention of Smith when the constable first appeared, he and his associates did surrender, as the governor

¹ The story of the events just preceding Joseph Smith's death are taken from Governor Ford's report to the Illinois legislature, and from his "History of Illinois."

----- UPRISING OF THE NON-MORMONS 299 -----

had expressed a belief that they would do. Statements of the circumstances of the surrender were written at the time by H. P. Reid and James W. Woods of Iowa, who were employed by the Mormons as counsel, and were printed in the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, No. 12. Mr. Woods, according to these accounts, arrived in Nauvoo on Friday, June 21, and, after an interview with Smith and his friends, went to Carthage the next evening to assure Governor Ford that the Nauvoo officers were ready to obey the law. There he learned that the constable and his assistants had gone to Nauvoo to demand his clients' surrender; but he does not mention their return without the prisoners. He must have known, however, that the first intention of Smith and the Council was to free from the wrath of their neighbors. The "Life of Brigham Young," published by Cannon & Sons, Salt Lake City, 1893, contains this statement: --

"The Prophet hesitated about giving himself up, and started, on the night of June 22, with his brother Hyrum, W. Richards, John Taylor, and a few others for the Rocky Mountains. He was, however, intercepted by his friends, and induced to abandon his project, being chided with cowardice and with deserting his people. This was more

than he could bear, and so he returned, saying: 'If my life is of no value to my friends, it is of no value to myself. We are going back to be slaughtered.'"

It will be remembered that Young, Rigdon, Orson Pratt, and many others of the leading men of the church were absent at this time, most of them working up Smith's presidential "boom." Orson Pratt, who was then in New Hampshire, said afterward, "If the Twelve had been here, we would not have seen him given up."

Woods received from the governor a pledge of protection for all who might be arrested, and an assurance that if the Mormons would give themselves up at Carthage, on Monday, the 24th, this would be accepted as a compliance with the governor's orders. He therefore returned to Nauvoo with this message on Sunday evening, and the next morning the accused left that place with him for Carthage. They soon met Captain Dunn, who, with a company of sixty men, was going to Nauvoo with an order from the governor for the state arms in the possession of the Legion.¹ Woods made an agreement with Captain Dunn that the arms

¹ It was stated that on two hours' notice two thousand men appeared, all armed, and that they surrendered their arms in compliance with the governor's plans.

----- 300 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

should be given up by Smith's order, and that his clients should place themselves under the captain's protection, and return with him to Carthage. The return trip to Nauvoo, and thence to Carthage, was not completed until about midnight. The Mormons were not put under restraint that night, but the next morning they surrendered themselves to the constable on a charge of riot in connection with the destruction of the *Expositor* plant.

----- [301] -----

CHAPTER XIV

THE MURDER OF THE PROPHET -- HIS CHARACTER

ON Tuesday morning, Joseph and Hyrum Smith were arrested again in Carthage, this time on a charge of treason in levying war against the state, by declaring martial law in Nauvoo and calling out the Legion. In the afternoon of that day all the accused, numbering fifteen, appeared before a justice of the peace, and, to prevent any increase in the public excitement, gave bonds in the sum of \$500 each for their appearance at the next term of the Circuit Court to answer the charge of riot.¹ It was late in the evening when this business was finished, and nothing was said at the time about the charge of treason.

Very soon after their return to the hotel, however, the constable who had arrested the Smiths on the new charge appeared with a mittimus from the justice of the peace, and, under its authority, conveyed them to the county jail. Their counsel immediately argued before the governor that this action was illegal, as the Smiths had had no hearing on the charge of treason, and the governor went with the lawyers to consult the justice concerning his action. The justice explained that he had directed the removal of the prisoners to jail because he did not consider them safe in the hotel. The governor held that, from the time of their delivery to the jailer, they were beyond his jurisdiction and responsibility, but he granted a request of their counsel for a military guard about the jail. He says, however, that he apprehended neither an attack on the building nor an escape of the prisoners, adding that if they had escaped, "it would have been the best way of getting rid of

¹ The trial of the survivors resulted in a verdict of acquittal. "The Mormons," says Governor Ford, "could have a Mormon jury to be tried by, selected by themselves, and the anti-Mormons, by objecting to the sheriff and regular panel, could have one from the anti-Mormons. No one could {then} be convicted of any crime in Hancock

County." -- "History of Illinois," p. 369.

----- 302 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

the Mormons," since these leaders would never have dared to return to the state, and all their followers would have joined them in their place of refuge.

The militia force in Carthage at that time numbered some twelve hundred men, with four hundred or five hundred more persons under arms in the town. There was great pressure on the governor to march this entire force to Nauvoo, ostensibly to search for a counterfeiting establishment, in order to overawe the Mormons by a show of force. The governor consented to this plan, and it was arranged that the officers at Carthage and Warsaw should meet on June 27 at a point on the Mississippi midway between the latter place and Nauvoo.

Governor Ford was not entirely certain about the safety of the prisoners, and he proposed to take them with him in the march to Nauvoo, for their protection. But while preparations for this march were still under way, trustworthy information reached him that, if the militia once entered the Mormon city, its destruction would certainly follow, the plan being to accept a shot fired at the militia by someone as a signal for a general slaughter and conflagration. He determined to prevent this, not only on humane grounds, -- "the number of women, inoffensive and young persons, and innocent children which must be contained in such a city of twelve hundred to fifteen thousand inhabitants" -- but because he was not certain of the outcome of a conflict in which the Mormons would outnumber his militia almost two to one. After a council of the militia officers, in which a small majority adhered to the original plan, the governor solved the question by summarily disbanding all the state forces under arms, except three companies, two of which would continue to guard the jail, and the other would accompany the governor on a visit to Nauvoo, where he proposed to search for counterfeiter, and to tell the inhabitants that any retaliatory measures against the non-Mormons would mean "the destruction of their city, and the extermination of their people."

The jail at Carthage was a stone building, situated at the northwestern boundary of the village, and near a piece of woods that were convenient for concealment. It contained the jailer's apartments, cells for prisoners, and on the second story a sort of assembly room. At the governor's suggestion, Joseph and Hyrum were allowed the freedom of this larger room, where their friends were

THE MURDER OF THE PROPHET

303 -----

permitted to visit them, without any precautions against the introduction of weapons or tools for their escape.

Their guards were selected from the company known as the Carthage Grays, Captain Smith, commander. In this choice the governor made a mistake which always left him under a charge of collusion in the murder of the prisoners. It was not, in the first place, necessary to select any Hancock company for this service, as he had militia from McDonough County on the ground. All the people of Hancock County were in a fever of excitement against the Mormons, while the McDonough County militia had voted against the march into Nauvoo. Moreover, when the prisoners, after their arrival at Carthage, had been exhibited to the McDonough company at the request of the latter, who had never seen them, the Grays were so indignant at what they called a triumphal display, that they refused to obey the officer in command, and were for a time in revolt. "Although I knew that this company were the enemies of the Smiths," says the governor, "yet I had confidence in their loyalty and their integrity, because their captain was universally spoken of as a most respectable citizen and honorable man." The governor further excused himself for the selection because the McDonough company were very anxious to return home to attend to their crops, and because, as the prisoners were likely to remain in jail all summer, he could not have detained the men from the other county so long. He presents also the curious plea that the frequent appeals made to him direct for the extermination or expulsion of the Mormons gave him assurance that no act of violence would be committed contrary to his known opposition, and he observes, "This was a circumstance well calculated to conceal from me the secret machinations on foot!"

In this state of happy confidence the governor set out for Nauvoo on the morning of June 27. On the way, one of the officers who accompanied him told him that he was apprehensive of an attack on the jail because of talk he had heard in Carthage. The governor was reluctant to believe that such a thing could occur while he was in the Mormon city, exposed to Mormon vengeance, but he sent back a squad, with instructions to Captain Smith to see that the jail was safely guarded. He had apprehensions of his own, however, and on arriving at Nauvoo simply made an address

----- 304 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

as above outlined, and hurried back to Carthage without even looking for counterfeit money. He had not gone more than two miles when messengers met him with the news that the Smith brothers had been killed in the jail.

The Warsaw regiment (it is so called in the local histories), under command of Colonel Levi Williams, set out on the morning of June 27 for the rendezvous on the Mississippi, preparatory to the march to Nauvoo. The resolutions adopted in Warsaw and the tone of the local press had left no doubt about the feeling of the people of that neighborhood toward the Mormons, and fully justified the decision of the governor in countermanding the march proposed. His unexpected order disbanding the militia reached the Warsaw troops when they had advanced about eight miles. A decided difference of opinion was expressed regarding it. Some of the most violent, including Editor Sharp of the *Signal*, wanted to continue the march to Carthage in order to discuss the situation with the other forces there; the more conservative advised an immediate return to Warsaw. Each party followed its own inclination, those who continued toward Carthage numbering, it is said, about two hundred.

While there is no doubt that the Warsaw regiment furnished the men who made the attack on the jail, there is evidence that the Carthage Grays were in collusion with them. William N. Daniels, in his account of the assault, says that the Warsaw men, when within four miles of Carthage, received a note from the Grays (which he quotes) telling them

of the good opportunity presented "to murder the Smiths" in the governor's absence. His testimony alone would be almost valueless, but Governor Ford confirms it, and Gregg (who holds that the only purpose of the mob was to seize the prisoners and run them into Missouri) says he is "compelled" to accept the report. According to Governor Ford, one of the companies designated as a guard for the jail disbanded and went home, and the other was stationed by its captain 150 yards from the building, leaving only a sergeant and eight men at the jail itself. "A communication," he adds, "was soon established between the conspirators and the company, and it was arranged that the guards should have their guns charged with blank cartridges, and fire at the assailants when they attempted to enter the jail."

THE MURDER OF THE PROPHET

305 -----

Both Willard Richards and John Taylor were in the larger room with the Smith brothers when the attack was made (other visitors having recently left), and both gave detailed accounts of the shooting, Richards soon afterward, in a statement printed in the *Neighbor* and the *Times and Seasons* under the title "Two Minutes in Gaol," and Taylor in his "Martyrdom of Joseph Smith."¹ They differ only in minor particulars.

All in the room were sitting in their shirt sleeves except Richards, when they saw a number of men, with blackened faces, advancing around the corner of the jail toward the stairway. The door leading from the room to the stairs was hurriedly closed, and, as it was without a lock, Hyrum Smith and Richards placed their shoulders against it. Finding their entrance opposed, the assailants fired a shot through the door (Richards says they fired a volley up the stairway), which caused Hyrum and Richards to leap back. While Hyrum was retreating across the room, with his face to the door, a second shot fired through the door struck him by the side of the nose, and at the same moment another ball, fired through the window at the other side of the room, entered his back, and, passing through his body, was stopped by the watch in his vest pocket, smashing the works. He fell on his back exclaiming, "I am a dead man," and did not speak again.

One of their callers had left a six-shooting pistol with the prisoners, and,

when Joseph saw his brother shot, he advanced with this weapon to the door, and opening it a few inches, snapped each barrel toward the men on the other side. Three barrels missed fire, but each of the three that exploded seems to have wounded a man; accounts differ as to the seriousness of their injuries. While Joseph was firing, Taylor stood by him armed with a stout hickory stick, and Richards was on his other side holding a cane. As soon as Joseph's firing, which had checked the assailants for a moment, ceased, the latter stuck their weapons through the partly opened doorway, and fired into the room. Taylor tried to parry the guns with his cudgel. "That's right, Brother Taylor, parry them off as well as you can," said the prophet, and these are the last words he is remembered to have spoken. The assailants hesitated to enter the room, perhaps not knowing what weapons the Mormons had, and Taylor concluded to take his chances of a

¹ To be found in Burton's "City of the Saints."

----- 306 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

leap through an open window opposite the door, and some twenty-five feet from the ground. But as he was about to jump out, a ball struck him in the thigh, depriving him of all power of motion. He fell inside the window, and as soon as he recovered power to move, crawled under a bed which stood in one corner of the room. The men in the hallway continued to thrust in their guns and fire, and Richards kept trying to knock aside the muzzles with his cane. Taylor in this way, before he reached the bed, received three more balls, one below the left knee, one in the left arm, and another in the left hip.

Almost as soon as Taylor fell, the prophet made a dash for the window. As he was part way out, two balls fired through the doorway struck him, and one from outside the building entered his right breast. Richards says: "He fell outward, exclaiming 'O Lord, my God.' As his feet went out of the window, my head went in, the balls whistling all around. At this instant the cry was raised, 'He's leaped the window,' and the mob on the stairs and in the entry ran out. I withdrew from the window, thinking it of no use to leap out on a hundred bayonets, then around General Smith's body. Not satisfied with this, I again reached

my head out of the window and watched some seconds, to see if there were any signs of life, regardless of my own, determined to see the end of him I loved. Being fully satisfied that he was dead, with a hundred men near the body and more coming round the corner of the gaol, and expecting a return to our room, I rushed toward the prison door at the head of the stairs." Finding the inner doors of the jail unlocked, Richards dragged Taylor into a cell and covered him with an old mattress. Both expected a return of the mob, but the lynchers disappeared as soon as they satisfied themselves that the prophet was dead. Richards was not injured at all, although his large size made him an ample target.

Most Mormon accounts of Smith's death say that, after he fell, the body was set up against a well curb in the yard and riddled with balls. Taylor mentions this report, but Richards, who specifically says that he saw the prophet die, does not. Governor Ford's account says that Smith was only stunned by the fall and was shot in the yard. Perhaps the original authority for this version was a lad named William N. Daniels, who accompanied the Warsaw men to Carthage, and, after the shooting, went to Nauvoo and had his

----- THE MURDER OF THE PROPHET 307 -----

story published by the Mormons in pamphlet form, with two extravagant illustrations, in which one of the assailants is represented as approaching Smith with a knife to cut off his head.¹

The bodies of the two brothers were removed to the hotel in Carthage, and were taken the next day to Nauvoo, arriving there about three o'clock in the afternoon. They were met by practically the entire population, and a procession made up of the City Council, the generals of the Legion with their staffs, the Legion and the citizens generally, all under command of the city marshal, escorted them to the Nauvoo Mansion, where addresses were made by Dr. Richards, W. W. Phelps, the lawyers Woods and Reid, and Colonel Markham. The utmost grief was shown by the Mormons, who seemed stunned by the blow.

The burial followed, but the bodies did not occupy the graves.

Stenhouse is authority for the statement that, fearing a grave robbery (which in fact occurred the next night), the coffins were filled with stones, and the bodies were buried secretly beneath the unfinished Temple. Mistrustful that even this concealment would not be sufficient, they were soon taken up and reburied under the brick wall back of the Mansion House.²

Brigham Young said at the conference in the Temple on October 8, 1845, "We will petition Sister Emma, in the name of Israel's God, to let us deposit the remains of Joseph according as he has commanded us, and if she will not consent to it, our garments are clear." She did not consent. For the following statement about the future disposition of the bodies I am indebted to

¹ A detailed account of the murder of the Smiths, and events connected with it, was contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* for December, 1869, by John Hay. This is accepted by Kennedy as written by "one whose opportunities for information were excellent, whose fairness cannot be questioned, and whose ability to distinguish the true from the false is of the highest order." H. H. Bancroft, whose tone is always pro-Mormon, alludes to this article as "simply a tissue of falsehoods." In reply to a note of inquiry Secretary Hay wrote to the author, under date of November 17, 1900: "I relied more upon my memory and contemporary newspapers for my facts than on certified documents. I will not take my oath to everything the article contains, but I think in the main it is correct." This article says that Joseph Smith was severely wounded before he ran to the window, "and half leaped, half fell into the jail yard below. With his last dying energies he gathered himself up, and leaned in a sitting posture against the rude stone well curb. His stricken condition, his vague wandering glances, excited no pity in the mob thirsting for his life. A squad of Missourians, who were standing by the fence, leveled their pieces at him, and, before they could see him again for the smoke they made, Joe Smith was dead:" This is not an account of an eye-witness.

² "Rocky Mountain Saints," p. 174

----- 308 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

the grandson of the prophet, Mr. Frederick Madison Smith, one of the editors of the *Saints' Herald* (Reorganized Church) at Lamoni, Iowa, dated December 15, 1900: --

"The burial place of the brothers Joseph and Hyrum has always remained a secret, being known only to a very few of the immediate family. In fact, unless it has lately

been revealed to others, the exact spot is known only to my father and his brother. Others who knew the secret are now silent in death. The reasons for the secrecy were that it was feared that, if the burial place was known at the time, there might have been an inclination on the part of the enemies of those men to desecrate their bodies and graves. There is not now, and probably has not been for years, any danger of such desecration, and the only reason I can see for still keeping it a secret is the natural disinclination on the part of the family to talk about such matters.

"However, I have been on the ground with my father when I knew I was standing within a few feet of where the remains were lying, and it is known to many about where that spot is. It is a short distance from the Nauvoo House, on the bank of the Mississippi. The lot is still owned by the family, the title being in my father's name. There is not, that I know, any intention of ever taking the bodies to Far West or Independence, Missouri. The chances are that their resting places will never be disturbed other than to erect on the spot a monument. In fact, a movement is now underway to raise the means to do that. A monument fund is being subscribed to by the members of the church. The monument would have been erected by the family, but it is not financially able to do it."

In the October following, indictments were found against Colonel Williams of the Warsaw regiment, State Senator J. C. Davis, Editor Sharp, and six others, including three who were said to have been wounded by Smith's pistol shots, but the sheriff did not succeed in making any arrests. In the May following some of the accused appeared for trial. A struck jury was obtained, but, in the existing state of public feeling, an acquittal was a foregone conclusion. The guards at the jail would identify no one, and Daniels, the pamphlet writer, and another leading witness for the prosecution gave contradictory accounts.

But the prophet, according to Mormon recitals, did not go unavenged. Lieutenant Worrell, who commanded the detachment of the guards at the jail, was shot not long after, as we shall see. Murray McConnell, who represented the governor in the prosecution of the alleged lynchers, was assassinated twenty-four years later. P. P. Pratt gives an account of the fate of other "persecutors." The arm of one Townsend, who was wounded by Joe's

pistol, continued to rot until it was taken off, and then would not heal. A colonel of the Missouri forces, who died in Sacramento in 1849, "was

eaten with worms, a large, black-headed kind of maggot, seeming a half-pint at a time." Another Missourian's "face and jaw on one side literally rotted, and half his face actually fell off."¹

It is difficult for the most fair-minded critic to find in the character of Joseph Smith anything to commend, except an abundance of good-nature which made him personally popular with the body of his followers. He has been credited with power as a leader, and it was certainly little less than marvellous that he could maintain his leadership after his business failure in Ohio, and the utter break-down of his revealed promises concerning a Zion in Missouri. The explanation of this success is to be found in the logically impregnable position of his character as a prophet, so long as the church itself retained its organization, and in the kind of people who were gathered into his fold. If it was not true that *he* received the golden plates from an angel; if it was not true that *he* translated them with divine assistance; if it was not true that *he* received from on high the "revelations" vouchsafed for the guidance of the church, -- then there was no new Bible, no new revelation, no Mormon church. If Smith was pulled down, the whole church structure must crumble with him. Lee, referring to the days in Missouri, says, "Every Mormon, if true to his faith, believed as freely in Joseph Smith and his holy character as they did that God existed."² Some of the Mormons who knew Smith and his career in Missouri and Illinois were so convinced of the ridiculousness of his claims that they proposed, after the gathering in Utah, to drop him entirely. Proof of this, and of Brigham Young's realization of the impossibility of doing so, is found in Young's remarks at the conference which received the public announcement of the "revelation" concerning polygamy. Referring to the suggestion that had been made, "Don't mention Joseph Smith, never mention the Book of Mormon and Zion, and all the people will follow you," Young boldly declared: "What I have received from the Lord, I have received by Joseph Smith; he was the instrument made use of. If I drop him, I must drop these principles. They have not been revealed, declared, or

¹ Pratt's "Autobiography," pp. 475-476.

² "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 76.

----- 310 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

explained by any other man since the days of the apostles." This view is accepted by the Mormons in Utah to-day.

If it seems still more surprising that Smith's associates placed so little restraint on his business schemes, it must be remembered that none of his early co-laborers -- Rigdon, Harris, Cowdery, and the rest -- was a better business man than he, and that he absolutely brooked no interference. It was Smith who decided every important step, as, for instance, the land purchases in and around Nauvoo; and men who would let him originate were compelled to let him carry out. We have seen how useless better business men like the Laws found it to argue with him on any practical question. The length to which he dared go in discountenancing any restriction, even regarding his moral ideas, is illustrated in an incident related in his autobiography.¹ At a service on Sunday, November 7, 1841, in Nauvoo, an elder named Clark ventured to reprove the brethren for their lack of sanctity, enjoining them to solemnity and temperance. "I reprov'd him," says the prophet, "as pharisaical and hypocritical, and not edifying the people, and showed the Saints what temperance, faith, virtue, charity, and truth were. I charged the Saints not to follow the example of the adversary {non-Mormons} in accusing the brethren, and said, 'If you do not accuse each other, God will not accuse you. If you have no accuser, you will enter heaven; if you will follow the revelations and instructions which God gives you through me, I will take you into heaven as my back load. If you will not accuse me, I will not accuse you. If you will throw a cloak of charity over my sins, I will over yours -- for charity covereth a multitude of sins. What many people call sin is not sin. I do many things to break down superstition.'" A congregation that would accept such teaching without a protest, would follow their leader in any direction which he chose to indicate.

Smith was the farthest possible from being what Spinoza has been called, "a God-intoxicated man." Real reverence for sacred things did not enter into his mental equipment. A story illustrating his lack of reverence for what he called "long-faced" brethren was told by J. M. Grant in Salt Lake City. A Baptist minister, who talked much of "my dee-e-ar brethren," called on Smith in Nauvoo, and, after conversing with him for a short time, stood up

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII, p. 743.

THE MURDER OF THE PROPHET

311 -----

before Smith and asked in solemn tones if it were possible that he saw a man who was a prophet and who had conversed with the Saviour.

"'Yes,' says the prophet, 'I don't know but you do; would you not like to wrestle with me?'" After he had whirled around a few times, like a duck shot in the head, he concluded that his piety had been awfully shocked."¹

In manhood Smith was about six feet tall, weighing something over two hundred pounds. From among a number of descriptions of him by visitors at Nauvoo, the following may be cited. Josiah Quincy, describing his arrival at what he calls "the tavern" in Nauvoo, in May, 1844, gives this impression of the prophet: "Pre-eminent among the stragglers at the door stood a man of commanding appearance, clad in the costume of a journeyman carpenter when about his work. He was a hearty, athletic fellow, with blue eyes standing prominently out on his light complexion, a long nose, and a retreating forehead. He wore striped pantaloons, a linen jacket which had not lately seen the wash-tub, and a beard of three days' growth. A fine-looking man, is what the passer-by would instinctively have murmured upon meeting the remarkable individual who had fashioned the mould which was to shape the feelings of so many thousands of his fellow-mortals."²

The Rev. Henry Caswall, M.A., who had an interview with the prophet at Nauvoo, in 1842, thus describes him: "He is a coarse, plebeian, sensual person in aspect, and his countenance exhibits a curious mixture of the knave and the clown. His hands are large and fat, and on one of his fingers he wears a massive gold ring, upon which I saw an inscription. His eyes appear deficient in that open and straightforward expression which often characterizes an honest man."

John Taylor had death-casts taken of the faces of Joseph and Hyrum after their murder. By the aid of these and of sketches of the brothers which he had secured while they were living, he had busts of them made

by a modeller in Europe named Gahagan, and these were offered to the Saints throughout the world, for a price, of course.³

The proofs already cited of Smith's immorality are convincing.

¹ *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. III, p. 67.

² "Figures of the Past," p. 380.

³ *Millennial Star*, November 1, 1850.

----- 312 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Caswall names a number of occasions on which, he charges, the prophet was intoxicated after his settlement in Nauvoo. He relates that on one of these, when Smith was asked how it happened that a prophet of the Lord could get drunk, Smith answered that it was necessary that he should do so to prevent the Saints from worshipping him as a god!¹

No Mormon ever concedes that proof of Smith's personal failings affects his character as a prophet. A Mormon doctor, with whom Caswall argued at Nauvoo, said that Smith might be a murderer and an adulterer, and yet be a true prophet. He cited St. Peter assaying that, in his time, David had not yet ascended into heaven (Acts ii. 34); David was in hell as a murderer; so if Smith was "as infamous as David, and even denied his own revelations, that would not affect the revelations which God had given him.

¹ "Mormonism and its Author," 1852.

CHAPTER XV

AFTER SMITH'S DEATH -- RIGDON'S LAST DAYS

THE murder of the Smiths caused a panic, not among the Mormons, but among the other inhabitants of Hancock County, who looked for summary vengeance at the hands of the prophet's followers, with their famous Legion to support them. The state militia having been disbanded, the people considered themselves without protection, and Governor Ford shared their apprehension. Carthage was at once almost depopulated, the people fleeing in wagons, on horseback, and on foot, and most of the citizens of Warsaw placed the river between them and their enemies. "I was sensible," says Governor Ford, "that my command was at an end; that my destruction was meditated as well as the Mormons', and that I could not reasonably confide longer in one party or the other." The panic-stricken executive therefore set out at once for Quincy, forty miles from the scene of the murder.

From that city the governor issued a statement to the people of the state, reciting the events leading up to the recent tragedy, and, under date of June 29, ordered the enlistment of as many men as possible in the militia of Adams, Marquette, Pike, Brown, Schuyler, Morgan, Scott, Cass, Fulton, and McDonough counties, and the regiments of General Stapp's brigade, for a twelve days' campaign. The independent companies of all sorts, in the same counties, were also told to hold themselves in readiness, and the federal government was asked to station a force of five hundred men from the regular army in Hancock County. This last request was not complied with. The governor then sent Colonel Fellows and Captain Jonas to Nauvoo by the first boat, to find out the intentions of the Mormons as well as those of the people of Warsaw.

Meanwhile the voice of the Mormon leaders was for peace. Willard Richards, John Taylor, and Samuel H. Smith united in a

----- 314 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

letter (written in the first person singular by Richards), on the night of the murders, addressed to the prophet's widow, General Deming (commanding at Carthage), and others, which said: --

"The people of the county are greatly excited, and fear the Mormons will come out and take vengeance. I have pledged my word the Mormons will stay at home as soon as they can be informed, and no violence will be on their part. And say to my brethren in Nauvoo, in the name of the Lord, be still, be patient; only let such friends as choose come here to see the bodies. Mr. Taylor's wounds are dressed and not serious. I am sound."

This quieting advice was heeded without even a protest, and after the funeral of the victims the Mormons voted unanimously to depend on the law for retribution.

While things temporal in Nauvoo remained quiet, there were deep feeling and great uncertainty concerning the future of the church. The First Presidency had consisted, since the action of the conference at Far West in 1837, of Joseph and Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Two of these were now dead. Did this leave Rigdon as the natural head, did Smith's son inherit the successorship, or did the supreme power rest with the Twelve Apostles? Discussion of this matter brought out many plans, including a general reorganization of the church, and the appointment of a trustee or a president. Rigdon had been sent to Pittsburg to build up a church,¹ and Brigham Young was electioneering in New Hampshire for Smith. Accordingly, Phelps, Richards; and Taylor, on July 1 issued a brief statement to the church at large, asking all to await the assembling of the Twelve.

Rigdon arrived in Nauvoo on August 3, and preached the next day in the grove. He said the Lord had shown him a vision, and that there must be a "guardian" appointed to "build the church up to Joseph" as he had begun it. Cannon's account, in the "Juvenile Instructor," says that at a meeting at John Taylor's the next day Rigdon declared that the church was in confusion and must have ahead, and he wanted a special meeting called to choose a "guardian." On the evening of August 6, Young, H. C. Kimball, Lyman Wight, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, and Wilford Woodruff arrived from the East. A meeting of the Twelve

¹ John Taylor so stated at Rigdon's coming trial. This, perhaps, contradicts the statement in the Cannons' "Life of Brigham Young" that Rigdon had gone there "to escape the turmoils of Nauvoo."

----- AFTER SMITH'S DEATH -- RIGDON'S LAST DAYS 315 -----

Apostles, the High Council, and high priests was called for August 7, at 4 P. M., which Rigdon attended. He declared that in a vision at Pittsburg it had been shown to him that he had been ordained a spokesman to Joseph, and that he must see that the church was governed in a proper manner. "I propose," said he, "to be a guardian of the people. In this I have discharged my duty and done what God has commanded me, and the people can please themselves, whether they accept me or not."

A special meeting of the church was held on the morning of August 8. Rigdon had previously addressed a gathering in the grove, but he had not been winning adherents. As we have seen, he had alienated himself from the men who had accepted Smith's new social doctrines, and a plan which he proposed, that the church should move to Pennsylvania, appealed neither to the good judgment nor the pecuniary interests of those to whom it was presented. Young made an address at this meeting which so wrought up his hearers that they declared that they saw the mantle of Joseph fall upon him. When he asked, "Do you want a guardian, a prophet, a spokesman, or what do you want?" not a hand went up. Young then went on to give his own view of the situation; his argument pointed to a single result -- the demolition of Rigdon's claim and the establishment of the supreme authority of the Twelve, of whom Young himself was the head. W. W. Phelps, P. P. Pratt, and others sustained Young's view. Before a vote was taken, according to the minutes quoted, Rigdon refused to have his name voted on as "spokesman" or guardian. The meeting then voted unanimously in favor of "supporting the Twelve in their calling," and also that the Twelve should appoint two Bishops to act as trustees for the church, and that the completion of the Temple should be pushed.¹

On August 15 Young, as president of the Twelve, issued an epistle to the church in all the world in which he said: --

"Let no man presume for a moment that his {the Prophet's} place will be filled by another; for, *remember he stands in his own place*, and always will, and the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation stand in their own place, and always will, both in time and eternity, to minister, preside, and regulate the affairs of the whole church."

¹ For minutes of this church meeting, see *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, p. 637. For a full account of the happenings at Nauvoo, from August 3 to 8, see "Historical Record" (Mormon), Vol VIII, pp. 785-800.

----- 316 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

The epistle told the Saints also that "it is not wisdom for the Saints to have anything to do with politics, voting, or president-making at present."

Rigdon remained in Nauvoo after the decision of the church in favor of the Twelve, preaching as of old, declaring that he was with the brethren heart and soul, and urging the completion of the Temple. But Young regarded him as a rival, and determined to put their strength to a test. Accordingly, on Tuesday, September 3, he had a notice printed in the *Neighbor* directing Rigdon to appear on the following Sunday for trial before a High Council presided over by Bishop Whitney. Rigdon did not attend this trial, not only because he was not well, but because, after a conference with his friends, he decided that the case against him was made up and that his presence would do no good.¹

When the High Council met, Young expressed a disbelief in Rigdon's reported illness. He said that, having heard that Rigdon had ordained men to be prophets, priests, and kings, he and Orson Hyde had obtained from Rigdon a confession that he had performed the act of ordination, and that he believed he held authority above any man in the church. That evening eight of the Twelve had visited him at his house, and, getting confirmation of his position, had sent a committee to him to demand his license. This he had refused to surrender, saying, "I did not receive it from you, neither shall I give it up to you." Then came the order for his trial.

Orson Hyde presented the case against Rigdon in detail. He declared that, when they demanded the surrender of his license, Rigdon threatened to turn traitor, "His own language was, 'Inasmuch as you have demanded my license, I shall feel it my duty to publish all your secret meetings, and all the history of the secret works of this church, in the public journals.'² He intimated that

¹ For the minutes of this High Council, see *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, pp. 647-655, 660-667.

² Lee thus explains one of these "secret works;" "The same winter {1843} he {Smith} organized what was called 'The Council of Fifty.' This was a confidential organization. This Council was designated as a lawmaking department, but no record was ever kept of its doings, or, if kept, they were burned at the close of each meeting. Whenever anything of importance was on foot, this Council was called to deliberate upon it. The Council was called the 'Living Constitution.' Joseph said that no legislature could enact laws that would meet every case, or attain the ends of justice in all respects." -- "Mormonism Unveiled," p.173.

----- AFTER SMITH'S DEATH -- RIGDON'S LAST DAYS 317 -----

it would bring a mob upon us." Parley P. Pratt, the member of Rigdon's old church in Ohio, who, according to his own account, first called Rigdon's attention to the Mormon Bible, next spoke against his old friend.

After Amasa Lyman, John Taylor, and H. C. Kimball had spoken against Rigdon, Brigham Young took the floor again, and in reply to the threat that Rigdon would expose the secrets of the church, he denounced him in the following terms: --

"Brother Sidney says, if we go to opposing him, he will tell our secrets. But I would say, 'O, don't, brother Sidney! don't tell our secrets -- O, don't!' But if he tells our secrets, we will tell his. Tit for tat. He has had long visions in Pittsburg, revealing to him wonderful iniquity among the Saints. Now, if he knows of so much iniquity, and has got such wonderful power, why don't he purge it out? He professes to have the keys of David. Wonderful power and revelations! And he will publish our iniquity. O, dear brother Sidney, don't publish our iniquity! Now don't! If Sidney Rigdon undertakes to publish all our secrets, as he says, he will lie the first jump he takes. If he knew of all our iniquity why did he not publish it sooner? If there is so much iniquity in the church as you talk of, Elder Rigdon, and you have known of it so long, you are a

black-hearted wretch because you have not published it sooner. If there is not this iniquity, you are a black-hearted wretch for endeavoring to bring a mob upon us, to murder innocent men, women and children. Any man that says the Twelve are bogus-makers, or adulterers, or wicked men is a liar; and all who say such things shall have the fate of liars, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Who is there who has seen us do such things? No man. The spirit that I am of tramples such slanderous wickedness under my feet."¹

At this point the proceedings had a rather startling interruption. William Marks, president of the Stake at Nauvoo, and a member of the High Council (who, as we have seen, had rebelled against the doctrine of polygamy when it was presented to him) took the floor in Rigdon's defence. But it was in vain.

W. W. Phelps moved that Rigdon "be cut off from the church, and delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until he repents." The vote by the Council in favor of this motion was unanimous, but when it was offered to the church, some ten members voted against it. Phelps at once moved that all who had voted

¹ William Small, in a letter to the *Pittsburg Messenger and Advocate*, p. 70, relates that when he met Rigdon on his arrival at St. Louis by boat after this trial, Orson Hyde, who was also a passenger and thought Small was with the Twelve, addressed Small, asking him to intercede with Rigdon not to publish the secret acts of the church, and telling him that if Rigdon would come back and stand equal with the Twelve and counsel with them, he would pledge himself, in behalf of the Twelve, that all they had said against Rigdon would be revoked.

to follow Rigdon should be suspended until they could be tried by the High Council, and this was agreed to unanimously, with an amendment including the words, "or shall hereafter be found advocating his principles." After compelling President Marks, by formal motion, to acknowledge his satisfaction with the action of the church, the meeting adjourned.

Rigdon's next steps certainly gave substance to his brother's theory that his mind was unbalanced, the family having noticed his peculiarities

from the time he was thrown from a horse, when a boy.¹ He soon returned to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, where his first step was to "resuscitate" the *Messenger and Advocate*, which had died at Kirtland. In a signed article in the first number he showed that he then intended "to contend for the same doctrines, order of government, and discipline maintained by that paper when first published at Kirtland," in other words, to uphold the Mormon church as he had known it, with himself at its head. But his old desire for original leadership got the better of him, and after a conference of the membership he had gathered around him, held in Pittsburg in April, 1845, at which he was voted "First President, Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Translator," he issued an address to the public in which he declared that his Church of Christ was neither a branch nor connection of the church at Nauvoo, and that it received members of the Church of Latter-Day Saints only after baptism and repentance.² In an article in his organ, on July 15, 1845, he made assertions like these: "The Church of Christ and the Mormons are so widely different in their respective beliefs that they are of necessity opposed to one another, as far as religion is concerned.... There is scarcely one point of similarity.... The Church of Christ has obtained a distinctive character."

Rigdon told the April conference that he had one unceasing desire, namely, to know whether God would accept their work. At the suggestion of the spirit, he had taken some of the brethren into a room in his house that morning, and had consecrated them. What there occurred he thus described: --

"After the washing and anointing, and the patriarchal seal, as the Lord had directed me, we kneeled and in solemn prayer asked God to accept the work we

¹ *Baptist Witness*, March 1, 1875.

² Pittsburg *Messenger and Advocate*, p. 220.

----- AFTER SMITH'S DEATH -- RIGDON'S LAST DAYS 319 -----

had done. During the time of prayer there appeared over our heads in the room a ray of light forming a hollow square, inside of which stood a company of heavenly messengers, each with a banner in his hand, with their eyes looking downward upon

us, their countenance expressive of the deep interest they felt in what was passing on the earth. There also appeared heavenly messengers on horseback, with crowns upon their heads, and plumes floating in the air, dressed in glorious attire, until, like Elisha, we cried in our hearts, 'The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.' Even my little son of fourteen years of age saw the vision, and gazed with great astonishment, saying that he thought his imagination was running away with him. After which we arose and lifted our hands to heaven in holy convocation to God; at which time was shown an angel in heaven registering the acceptance of our work, and the decree of the Great God that the kingdom is ours and we shall prevail."

While the conference was in session, Pittsburg was visited by a disastrous conflagration. Rigdon prayed for the sufferers by the fire and asked God to check it. "During the prayer" (this quotation is from the official report of the conference in the *Messenger and Advocate*, p. 186), "an escort of the heavenly messengers that had hovered around us during the time of this conference were seen leaving the room; the course of the wind was instantly changed, and the violence of the flames was stayed."

Rigdon's attempt to build up a new church in the East was a failure. Urgent appeals in its behalf in his periodical were made in vain. The people addressed could not be cajoled with his stories of revelations and miraculous visions, which both the secular and religious press held up to ridicule, and he had no system of foreign immigration to supply ignorant recruits. He soon after took up his residence in Friendship, Allegheny County, New York, where he died at the residence of his son-in-law, Earl Wingate, on July 14, 1876. In an obituary sketch of him the *Standard* of that place said: --

"He was approached by the messengers of young Joseph Smith of Plano, Ill., but he refused to converse or answer any communication which in any way would bring him into notice in connection with the Mormon church of to-day. It was his daily custom to visit the post-office, get the daily paper, read and converse upon the chief topics of the day. He often engaged in a friendly dispute with the local ministers, and always came out first best on New Testament doctrinal matters. Patriarchal in appearance, and kindly in address, he was often approached by citizens and strangers with a view to obtaining something of the unrecorded mysteries of his life; but citizen, stranger and persistent reporter all alike failed in eliciting any information as to his knowledge of the Mormon imposture, the motives of his early life, or the religious faith, fears and hopes of his

----- 320 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

declining years. Once or twice he spoke excitedly, in terms of scorn, of those who attributed to him the manufacture of the Mormon Bible; but beyond this, nothing. His library was small: he left no manuscripts, and refused persistently to have a picture of himself taken. It can only be said that he was a compound of ability, versatility, honesty, duplicity, and mystery."

One person succeeded in drawing out from Rigdon in his later years a few words on his relations with the Mormon church. This was Charles L. Woodward, a New York bookseller, who some years ago made an important collection of Mormon literature. While making this collection he sent an inquiry to Rigdon, and received a reply, dated May 25, 1873. After apologizing for his handwriting on account of his age and paralysis, the letter says: --

"We know nothing about the people called Mormons now.¹ The Lord notified us that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints were going to be destroyed, and for us to leave. We did so, and the Smiths were killed a few days after we started. Since that, I have had no connection with any of the people who staid and built up to themselves churches; and chose to themselves leaders such as they chose, and then framed their own religion.

"The Church of Latter-Day Saints had three books that they acknowledged as Canonical, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Commandments. For the existence of that church there had to be a revelater, one who received the word of the Lord; a spokesman, one inspired of God to expound all revelation, so that the church might all be of one faith. Without these two men the Church of Latter-Day Saints could not exist. This order ceased to exist being overcome by the violence of armed men, by whom houses were beaten down by cannon which the assailants had furnished themselves with.

"Thus ended the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and it never can move again till the Lord inspires men and women to believe it. All the societies and assemblies of men collected together since then is not the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, nor never can there be such a church till the Lord moves it by his own power, as he did the first.

"Should you fall in with one who was of the Church {of} Christ, though now of advanced age, you will find one deep red in the revelations of heaven. But many of them are dead, and many of them have turned away, so there are few left.

"I have a manuscript paper in my possession, written with my own hands while in my 80th. year, but I am too poor to do anything with it; and therefore

¹ The statement has been published that, after Young had established himself in Utah, he received from Rigdon an intimation that the latter would be willing to join him. I could obtain no confirmation of this in Salt Lake City. On the contrary, a leading member of the church informed me that Young invited Rigdon to join the Mormons in Utah, but that Rigdon did not accept the invitation.

----- AFTER SMITH'S DEATH -- RIGDON'S LAST DAYS 321 -----

it must remain where it {is}. During the great fight of affliction I have had, I have lost all my property, but I struggle along in poverty to which I am consigned. I have finished all I feel necessary to write.

"Respectfully,
"SIDNEY RIGDON."¹

Rigdon's affirmation of his belief in Smith as a prophet and the Mormon Bible when he returned to Pennsylvania was **proclaimed by the Mormons as proof that there was no truth in the Spaulding manuscript story**, but it carries no weight as such evidence. Rigdon burned all his old theological bridges behind him when he entered into partnership with Smith, and his entire course after his return to Pittsburg only adds to the proof that he was the originator of the Mormon Bible, and that his object in writing it was to enable him to be the head of a new church. Surely no one would accept as proof of the divinity of the Mormon Bible any declaration by the man who told the story of angel visits in Pittsburg.

¹ The original of this letter is in the collection of Mormon literature in the New York Public Library. An effort to learn from Rigdon's descendants something about the manuscript paper referred to by him has failed.

CHAPTER XVI

RIVALRIES OVER THE SUCCESSION

RIGDON was not alone in contending for the successorship to Joseph Smith as the head of the Mormon church. The prophet's family defended vigorously the claim of his eldest son to be his successor.¹ Lee says that the prophet had bestowed the right of succession on his eldest son by divination, and that "it was then {after his father's death} understood among the Saints that young Joseph was to succeed his father, and that right justly belonged to him," when he should be old enough. Lee says further that he heard the prophet's mother plead with Brigham Young, in Nauvoo, in 1845, with tears, not to rob young Joseph of his birthright, and that Young conceded the son's claim, but warned her to keep quiet on the subject, because "you are only laying the knife to the throat of the child. If it is known that he is the rightful successor of his father, the enemy of the Priesthood will seek his life."² Strang says, "Anyone who was in Nauvoo in 1846 or 1847 knows that the majority of those who started to the Western exodus, started in this hope," that the younger Joseph would take his father's place.³

At the last day of the Conference held in the Temple in Nauvoo, in October, 1845, Mother Smith, at her request, was permitted to make an address. She went over the history of her family, and asked for an expression of opinion whether she was "a mother in Israel." One universal "yes" rang out. She said she hoped all her children would accompany the Saints to the West, and if they did she would go; but she wanted her bones brought back to be buried beside her husband and children. Brigham

¹ The prophet's sons were Joseph, born November 6, 1832; Fred G. W., June 20, 1836; Alexander, June 2, 1838; Don Carlos, June 13, 1840; and David H., November 18, 1844.

² "Mormonism Unveiled," pp. 155, 161.

³ Strang's "Prophetic Controversy," p. 4.

----- RIVALRIES OVER THE SUCCESSION 323 -----

Young then said: "We have extended the helping hand to Mother Smith. She has the best carriage in the city, and, while she lives, shall ride in it when and where she pleases."¹ Mother Smith died in the summer of 1856 in Nauvoo, where she spent the last two years of her life with Joseph's first wife, Emma, who had married a Major Bideman.

Emma caused the Twelve a good deal of anxiety after her husband's death. Pratt describes a council held by her, Marks, and others to endeavor to appoint a trustee-in-trust for the whole church, the necessity of which she vigorously urged. Pratt opposed the idea, and nothing was done about it.² Soon after her husband's death the *Times and Seasons* noticed a report that she was preparing, with the assistance of one of the prophet's Iowa lawyers, an exposure of his "revelations," etc. James Arlington Bennett, who visited Nauvoo after the prophet's death, acting as correspondent for the *New York Sun*, gave in one of his letters the text of a statement which he said Emma had written, to this effect, "I never for a moment believed in what my husband called his apparitions or revelations, as I thought him laboring under a diseased mind; yet they may all be true, as a prophet is seldom without credence or honor, excepting in his own family or country." Mrs. Smith, in a letter to the *Sun*, dated December 30, 1845, pronounced this letter a forgery, while Bennett maintained that he knew that it was genuine.³

The organization -- or, as they define it, the reorganization of a church by those who claim that the mantle of Joseph Smith, Jr., descended on his sons, had its practical inception at a conference at Beloit, Wisconsin, in June, 1852, at which resolutions were adopted disclaiming all fellowship with Young and other claimants to the leadership of the church, declaring that the successor of the prophet "must of necessity be the seed of Joseph Smith, Jr." At a conference held in Amboy, Illinois, in April, 1860, Joseph Smith's son and namesake was placed at the head of this church, a position which he still holds. The Reorganized Church has been twice pronounced by United States courts to be the one founded under the administration of the prophet. Its

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. VII, p. 23.

² Pratt's "Autobiography," p. 373.

³ Emma Smith is described as "a tall, dark, masculine looking woman" in "Sketches and Anecdotes of the Old Settlers."

----- 324 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

teachings may be called pure Mormonism, free from the doctrines engrafted in after years. It holds that "the doctrines of a plurality and community of wives are heresies, and are opposed to the law of God." Its declaration of faith declares its belief in baptism by immersion, the same kind of organization (apostles, prophets, pastors, etc.) that existed in the primitive church, revelations by God to man from time to time "until the end of time," and in "the powers and gifts of the everlasting gospel, viz., the gift of faith, discerning of spirits, prophesy, revelation, healing, visions, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues." No one ever heard of this church having any trouble with its Gentile neighbors.

The Reorganized Church moved its headquarters to Lamoni, Iowa, in 1881. It has a present membership of 45,381, according to the report of the General Church Recorder to the conference of April, 1901. Of these members, 6964 were foreign, -- 286 in Canada, 1080 in England, and 1955 in the Society Islands. The largest membership in this country is 7952 in Iowa, 6280 in Missouri, and 3564 in Michigan. Utah reported 685 members.

The most determined claimant to the successorship of Smith was James J. Strang. Born at Scipio, New York, in 1813, Strang was admitted to the bar when a young man, and moved to Wisconsin. Some of the Mormons who went into the north woods to get lumber for the Nauvoo Temple planted a Stake near La Crosse, under Lyman Wight, in 1842. Trouble ensued very soon with their non-Mormon neighbors, and after a rather brief career the supporters of this Stake moved away quietly one night. Strang heard of the Mormon doctrines from these settlers, accepted their truth, and visiting Nauvoo, was baptized in February, 1844, made an elder, and authorized to plant another Stake in Wisconsin. He first attempted to found a city called Voree, where a temple covering more than two acres of ground, with twelve towers,

was begun.

When Smith was killed, Strang at once came forward with a declaration that the prophet's revelations indicated that, at the close of his own prophetic office, another would be called to the place by revelation, and ordained at the hands of angels; that not only had he (Strang) been so ordained, but that Smith had written to him in June, 1844, predicting the end of his own work, and telling Strang that he was to gather the people in a Zion in Wisconsin.

----- RIVALRIES OVER THE SUCCESSION 325 -----

Strang began at once giving out revelations, describing visions, and announcing that an angel had shown him "plates of the sealed record," and given him the Urim and Thummim to translate them.

Although Strang's whole scheme was a very clumsy imitation of Smith's, he drew a considerable number of followers to his Wisconsin branch, where he published a newspaper called the *Voree Herald*, and issued pamphlets in defence of his position, and a "Book of the Law," explaining his doctrinal teachings, which included polygamy. He had five wives. His *Herald* printed a statement, signed by the prophet's mother and his brother William, his three married sisters, and the husband of one of them, certifying that "the Smith family do believe in the appointment of J. J. Strang." Among other Mormons of note who gave in their allegiance to Strang were John E. Page, one of the Twelve (whom Phelps had called "the sun-dial"), General John C. Bennett, and Martin Harris.

Strang gave the Mormon leaders considerable anxiety, especially when he sent missionaries to England to work up his cause. The *Millennial Star* of November 15, 1846, devoted a good deal of space to the subject. The article began: --

"SKETCHES OF NOTORIOUS CHARACTERS: James J. Strang, successor of Sidney Rigdon, Judius Iscariot, Cain & Co., Envoy Extraordinary and a Minister Plenipotentiary to His Most Gracious Majesty Lucifer L, assisted by his allied contemporary advisers, John C. Bennett, William Smith, G. T. Adams, and John E. Page, Secretary of Legation."

Strang announced a revelation which declared that he was to be "King in Zion," and his coronation took place on July 8, 1850, when he was crowned with a metal crown having a cluster of stars on its front. Burnt offerings were included in the programme.

This ceremony took place on Beaver Island, in Lake Superior, where in 1847 Strang had gathered his people and assumed both temporal and spiritual authority. Both of these claims got him into trouble. His non-Mormon neighbors, fishermen and lumbermen, accused the Mormons of wholesale thefts; his assumption of regal authority brought him before the United States court, (where he was not held); and his advocacy of the practice of polygamy by his followers aroused insubordination, and on June

----- 326 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

15, 1856, he was shot by two members of his flock whom he had offended, and who were at once regarded as heroes by the people of the mainland. A mob secured a vessel, visited Beaver Island, where Strang had maintained a sort of fort, and compelled the Mormon inhabitants to embark immediately, with what little property they could gather up. They were landed at different places, most of them in Milwaukee. Thus ended Strang's Kingdom.¹

Another leader who "set up for himself " after Smith's death was Lyman Wight, who had been one of the Twelve in Missouri, and was arrested with Smith there. Wight did not lay claim to the position of President of the church, but he resented what he called Brigham Young's usurpation. In 1845 he led a small company of his followers to Texas, where they first settled on the Colorado River, near Austin. They made successive moves from that place into Gillespie, Burnett, and Bandera counties. He died near San Antonio in March, 1858. The fact that Wight entered into the practice of polygamy almost as soon as he reached Texas, and still escaped any conflict with his non-Mormon neighbors, affords proof of his good character in other respects. The *Galveston News*, in its notice of his death, said, "Mr. Wight first came to Texas in November, 1845, and has been with his colony on our extreme frontier ever since, moving

still farther west as settlements formed around him, thus always being the pioneer of advancing civilization, affording protection against the Indians."

After Wight's death his people scattered. A majority of them became identified with the Reorganized Church, a few gave in their allegiance to the organization in Utah, and others abandoned Mormonism entirely.

¹ "A Moses of the Mormons," by Henry E. Legler, Parkman Club Publications, Nos. 15-16, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, May 11, 1897; "An American Kingdom of Mormons," *Magazine of Western History*, Cleveland, Ohio, April, 1886.

----- [327] -----

CHAPTER XVII

BRIGHAM YOUNG

BRIGHAM YOUNG, the man who had succeeded in expelling Rigdon and establishing his own position as head of the church, was born in Whitingham, Windham County, Vermont, on June 1, 1801. The precise locality of his birth in that town is in dispute. His father, a native of Massachusetts, is said to have served under Washington during the Revolutionary War. The family consisted of eleven children, five sons and six daughters, of whom Brigham was the ninth. The Youngs moved to Whitingham in January, 1801. In his address at the centennial celebration of that town in 1880, Clark Jillson said, "Henry Goodnow, Esq., of this town says that Brigham Young's father came here the poorest man that ever had been in town; that he never owned a cow, horse, or any land, but was a basket maker." Mormon accounts represent the elder Young as having been a farmer.

His circumstances permitted him to give his children very little education, and, when sixteen years old, Brigham seems to have started out to make his own living, working as a carpenter, painter, and glazier, as jobs were offered. He was living in Aurelius, Cayuga County, New York, in 1824, working at his trade, and there, in October of that year, he married his first wife, Miriam Works. In 1829 they moved to Mendon, Monroe County, New York.

Joseph Smith's brother, in the following year, left a copy of the Mormon Bible at the house of Brigham's brother Phineas in Mendon, and there Brigham first saw it. Occasional preaching by Mormon elders made the new faith a subject of conversation in the neighborhood, and Phineas was an early convert. Brigham stated in a sermon in Salt Lake City, on August 8, 1852, that he examined the new Bible for two years before deciding to receive it. He was baptized into the Mormon church on April 14, 1832.

----- 328 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

His wife, who also embraced the faith, died in September of that year, leaving him two daughters.

Young married his second wife, Mary A. Angel, in Kirtland on March 31, 1834. His application for a marriage license is still on file among the records of the Probate Court at Chardon, now the shire town of Geauga County, Ohio, and his signature is a proof of his illiterateness, showing that he did not know how to spell his own baptismal name, spelling it "Bricham."

Young began preaching and baptizing in the neighborhood, having at once been made an elder, and in the autumn of 1832, after Smith's second return from Missouri, he visited Kirtland and first saw the prophet. Mormon accounts of this visit say that Young "spoke in tongues," and that Smith pronounced his language "the pure Adamic," and then predicted that he would in time preside over the church. It is not at all improbable that Joseph did not hesitate to interpret Brigham's "tongues," but at that time he was thinking of everything else but a

successor to himself.

Young, with his brother Joseph, went from Kirtland on foot to Canada, where he preached and baptized, and whence he brought back a company of converts. He worked at his trade in Kirtland (preaching as called upon) from that time until 1834, when he accompanied the "Army of Zion" to Missouri, being one of the captains of tens. Returning with the prophet, he was employed on the Temple and other church buildings for the next three years (superintending the painting of the Temple), when he was not engaged in other church work. Having been made one of the original Quorum of Twelve in 1835, he devoted a good deal of time in the warmer months holding conferences in New York State and New England.

When open opposition to Smith manifested itself in Kirtland, Young was one of his firmest defenders. He attended a meeting in an upper room of the Temple, the object of which was to depose Smith and place David Whitmer in the Presidency, leading in the debate, and declaring that he "knew that Joseph was a prophet." According to his own statement, he learned of a plot to kill Smith as he was returning from Michigan in a stage-coach, and met the coach with a horse and buggy, and drove the prophet to Kirtland unharmed. When Smith found it necessary to flee from Ohio, Young followed him to Missouri with his family, arriving at Far

BRIGHAM YOUNG

329 -----

West on March 14, 1838. He sailed to Liverpool on a mission in 1840, remaining there a little more than a year.

In all the discords of the church that occurred during Smith's life, Young never incurred the prophet's displeasure, and there is no evidence that he ever attempted to obtain any more power or honor for himself than was voluntarily accorded to him. He gave practical assistance to the refugees from Missouri as they arrived at Quincy, but there is no record of his prominence in the discussions there over the future plans for the church. The prophet's liking for him is shown in a revelation dated at Nauvoo, July 9; 1841 (Sec. 126), which said: --

"Dear and beloved brother Brigham Young, verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Brigham, it is no more required at your hand to leave your family as in times past, for your offering is acceptable to me; I have seen your labor and toil in journeyings for my name. I therefore command you to send my word abroad, and take special care of your family from this time, henceforth, and forever. Amen."

The apostasy of Marsh and the death of Patton had left Young the President of the Twelve, and that was the position in which he found himself at the time of Smith's death.

One of the first subjects which Young had to decide concerned "revelations." Did they cease with Smith's death, or, if not, who would receive and publish them? Young made a statement on this subject at the church conference held at Nauvoo on October 6 of that year, which indicated his own uncertainty on the subject, and which concluded as follows, "Every member has the right of receiving revelations for themselves, both male and female." As if conscious that all this was not very clear, he closed by making a declaration which was very characteristic of his future policy: "If you don't know whose right it is to give revelations, I will tell you. It is I."¹ We shall see that the discontinuance of written "revelations" was a cause of complaint during all of Young's subsequent career in Utah, but he never yielded to the demand for them.

At the conference in Nauvoo Young selected eighty-five men from the Quorum of high priests to preside over branches of the church in all the congressional districts of the United States; and he took pains to explain to them that they were not to stay six months and then return, but "to go and settle down where they

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, pp. 682-683.

can take their families and tarry until the Temple is built, and then come and get their endowments, and return to their families and build up a Stake as large as this." Young's policy evidently was, while not

imitating Rigdon's plan to move the church bodily to the East, to build up big branches all over the country, with a view to such control of affairs, temporal and spiritual, as could be attained. "If the people will let us alone," he said to this same conference, "we will convert the world."

Many members did not look on the Twelve as that head of the church which Smith's revelations had decreed. It was argued by those who upheld Rigdon and Strang, and by some who remained with the Twelve, that the "revelations" still required a First Presidency. The Twelve allowed this question to remain unsettled until the brethren were gathered at Winter Quarters, Iowa, after their expulsion from Nauvoo, and Young had returned from his first trip to Salt Lake valley. The matter was taken up at a council at Orson Hyde's house on December 5, 1847, and it was decided, but not without some opposing views, to reorganize the church according to the original plan, with a First Presidency and Patriarch. In accordance with this plan, a conference was held in the log tabernacle at Winter Quarters on December 24, and Young was elected President and John Smith Patriarch. Young selected Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards to be his counsellors, and the action of this conference was confirmed in Salt Lake City the following October. Young wrote immediately after his election, "This is one of the happiest days of my life." The vacancies in the Twelve caused by these promotions, and by Wight's apostasy, were not filled until February 12, 1849, in Salt Lake City, when Lorenzo Snow, Erastus Snow, C. C. Rich, and F. D. Richards were chosen.

----- [331] -----

CHAPTER XVIII

RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS -- "THE BURNINGS"

THE death of the prophet did not bring peace with their outside neighbors to the Mormon church. Indeed, the causes of enmity were too varied and radical to be removed by any changes in the leadership, so long as the brethren remained where they were.

In the winter of 1844-1845 charges of stealing made against the Mormons by their neighbors became more frequent. Governor Ford, in his message to the legislature, pronounced such reports exaggerated, but it probably does the governor no injustice to say that he now had his eye on the Mormon vote. The non-Mormons in Hancock and the surrounding counties held meetings and appointed committees to obtain accurate information about the thefts, and the old complaints of the uselessness of tracing stolen goods to Nauvoo were revived. The Mormons vigorously denied these charges through formal action taken by the Nauvoo City Council and a citizens' meeting, alleging that in many cases "outlandish men" had visited the city at night to scatter counterfeit money and deposit stolen goods, the responsibility for which was laid on Mormon shoulders.

It is not at all improbable that many a theft in western Illinois in those days that was charged to Mormons had other authors; but testimony regarding the dishonesty of many members of the church, such as we have seen presented in Smith's day, was still available. Thus, Young, in one of his addresses to the conference assembled at Nauvoo about two months after Smith's death, made this statement: "Elders who go to borrowing horses or money, and running away with it, will be cut off from the church without any ceremony. *They will not have as much lenity as heretofore.*"¹

¹ *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, p. 696.

A lady who published a sketch of her travels in 1845 through Illinois and Iowa wrote: --

"We now entered a part of the country laid waste by the desperadoes among the Mormons. Whole farms were deserted, fields were still covered with wheat unreaped, and cornfields stood ungathered, the inhabitants having fled to a distant part of the country.... Friends gave us a good deal of information about the doings of these Saints at Nauvoo -- said that often, when their orchards were full of fruit, some sixteen of these monsters would come with bowie knives and drive the owners into their houses while they stripped their trees of the fruit. If these rogues wanted cattle they would drive off the cattle of the Gentiles."¹

A trial concerning the title to some land in Adams County in that year brought out the fact that there existed in the Mormon church what was called a "Oneness." Five persons would associate and select one of their members as a guardian; then, if any of the property they jointly owned was levied on, they would show that one or more of the other five was the real owner.

While the Mormons continued to send abroad glowing pictures of the prosperity of Nauvoo, less prejudiced accounts gave a very different view. The latter pointed out that the immigrants, who supplied the only source of prosperity, had expended most of their capital on houses and lots, that building operations had declined, because houses could be bought cheaper than they could be built, and that mechanics had been forced to seek employment in St. Louis. Published reports that large numbers of the poor in the city were dependent on charity received confirmation in a letter published in the *Millennial Star* of October 1, 1845, which said that on a fast-day proclaimed by Young, when the poor were to be remembered, "people were seen trotting in all directions to the Bishops of the different wards" with their contributions.

We have seen that the gathering of the Saints at Nauvoo was an idea of Joseph Smith, and was undertaken against the judgment of some of the wiser members of the church. The plan, so far as its business features were concerned, was on a par with the other business enterprises that the prophet had fathered. There was nothing to sustain a population of 15,000 persons, artificially collected, in this frontier settlement, and that disaster must have resulted from the experiment, even without the hostile opposition of their neighbors, is evident from the fact that Nauvoo today,

¹ "Book for the Married and Single," by Ann Archbold.

----- RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS 333 -----

when fifty years have settled up the surrounding district and brought it in better communication with the world, is a village of only 1321 inhabitants (census of 1900).

Politics were not eliminated from the causes of trouble by Smith's death. Not only was 1844 a presidential year, but the citizens of Hancock County were to vote for a member of Congress, two members of the legislature, and a sheriff. Governor Ford urgently advised the Mormons not to vote at all, as a measure of peace; but political feeling ran very high, and the Democrats got the Mormon vote for President, and with the same assistance elected as sheriff General Deming, the officer left by Governor Ford in command of the militia at Carthage when the Smiths were killed, as well as two members of the legislature who had voted against the repeal of the Nauvoo city charter.

The tone of the Mormons toward their non-Mormon neighbors seemed to become more defiant at this time than ever. The repeal of the Nauvoo charter, in January, 1845, unloosened their tongues. Their newspaper, the *Neighbor*, declared that the legislature "had no more right to repeal the charter than the United States would have to abrogate and make void the constitution of the state, or than Great Britain would have to abolish the constitution of the United States -- and the man that says differently is a coward, a traitor to his own rights, and a tyrant; no odds what Blackstone, Kent or Story may have written to make themselves and their names popular, to the contrary."

The *Neighbor*, in the same article, thus defined its view of the situation, after the repeal: --

"Nor is it less legal for an insulted individual or community to resist oppression. For this reason, until the blood of Joseph and Hyrum Smith has been atoned for by hanging, shooting or slaying in some manner every person engaged in that cowardly, mean assassination, no Latter-Day Saint should give himself up to the law; for the presumption is that they will murder him in the same manner.... Neither should civil process come into Nauvoo till the United States by a vigorous course, causes the State of Missouri and the State of Illinois to redress every man that has suffered the loss of lands, goods or anything else by expulsion.... If any man is bound to maintain the law, it is for the benefit he may derive from it.... Well, our charter is repealed; the murderers

of the Smiths are running at large, and if the Mormons should wish to imitate their forefathers and fulfil the Scriptures by making it 'hard to kick against the pricks' by wearing cast steel pikes about four or five inches long in their boots and shoes to kick with, *what's the harm?*"

----- 334 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

Such utterances, which found imitation in the addresses of the leaders, and were echoed in the columns of Pratt's *Prophet* in New York, made it easy for their hostile neighbors to believe that the Mormons considered themselves beyond the reach of any law but their own. Some daring murders committed across the river in Iowa in the spring of 1845 afforded confirmation to the non-Mormons of their belief in church-instigated crimes of this character, and in the existence and activity of the Danite organization. The Mormon authorities had denied that there were organized Danites at Nauvoo, but the weight of testimony is against the denial. Gregg, a resident of the locality when the Mormons dwelt there, gives a fair idea of the accepted view of the Danites at that time: --

"They were bound together with oaths of the most solemn character, and the punishment of traitors to the order was death. John A. Murrell's Band of Pirates, who flourished at one time near Jackson, Tennessee, and up and down the Mississippi River above New Orleans, was never so terrible as the Danite Band, for the latter was a powerful organization, and was above the law. The band made threats, and they were not idle threats. They went about on horseback, under cover of darkness, disguised in long white robes with red girdles. Their faces were covered with masks to conceal their identity."¹

Phineas Wilcox, a young man of good reputation, went to Nauvoo on September 16, 1845, to get some wheat ground, and while there disappeared completely. The inquiry made concerning him led his friends to believe that he was suspected of being a Gentile spy, and was quietly put out of the way.²

William Smith, the prophet's brother, contributed to the testimony against the Mormon leaders. Returning from the East, where he had been living for three years when Joseph was killed, he was warmly welcomed by the Mormon press, and elevated to the position of

Patriarch, and, as such, issued a sort of advertisement of his patriarchal wares in the *Times and Seasons*³ and *Neighbor*, inviting those in want of blessings to call at his residence. William was not a man of tact, and it required but a little time for him to arouse the jealousy of the leaders, the result of which was a notice in the *Times and Seasons* of November 1,

¹ "History of Hancock County." See also "Sketches and Anecdotes of the Old Settlers," p. 34.

² See Lee's "Mormonism Unveiled," pp. 158-159, for accounts of methods of disposing of objectionable persons at Nauvoo.

³ Vol. VI, p. 904.

----- RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS 335 -----

1845, that he had been "cut off and left in the hands of God." But William was not a man to remain quiet even in such a retreat, and he soon afterward issued to the Saints throughout the world "a proclamation and faithful warning," which filled eight and a half columns of the *Warsaw Signal* of October 29, 1845, in which, "in all meekness of spirit, and without anger or malice" (William possessed most of the family traits), he accused Young of instigating murders, and spoke of him in this way: --

"It is my firm and sincere conviction that, since the murder of my two brothers, usurpation, and anarchy, and spiritual wickedness in high places have crept into the church, with the cognizance and acquiescence of those whose solemn duty it was to guardedly watch against such a state of things. Under the reign of one whom I may call a Pontius Pilate, under the reign, I say, of this Brigham Young, no greater tyrant ever existed since the days of Nero. He has no other justification than ignorance to cover the most cruel acts -- acts disgraceful to any one bearing the stamp of humanity; and this being has associated around him men, bound by oaths and covenants, who are reckless enough to commit almost any crime, or fulfil any command that their self-crowned head might give them"

William was, of course, welcomed as a witness by the non-Mormons. He soon after went to St. Louis, and while there received a letter from Orson Hyde, which called his proclamation "a cruel thrust," but urged him to return, pledging that they would not harm him. William did not

accept the invitation, but settled in Illinois, became a respected citizen, and in later years was elected to the legislature. When invited to join the Reorganized Church by his nephew Joseph, he declined, saying, "I am not in sympathy, very strongly, with any of the present organized bands of Mormons, your own not excepted."

By the spring of 1845 the Mormons were deserted even by their Democratic allies, some three hundred of whom in Hancock County issued an address denying that the opposition to them was principally Whig, and declaring that it had arisen from compulsion and in self-defence. Governor Ford, anxious to be rid of his troublesome constituents, sent a confidential letter to Brigham Young, dated April 8, 1845, saying, "If you can get off by yourselves you may enjoy peace," and suggesting California as opening "a field for the prettiest enterprise that has been undertaken in modern times."

An era of the most disgraceful outrages that marked any of

----- 336 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

the conflicts between the Mormons and their opponents east of the Rocky Mountains began in Hancock County on the night of September 9, when a schoolhouse in Green Plain, south of Warsaw, in which the anti-Mormons were holding a meeting, was fired upon. The Mormons always claimed that this was a sham attack, made by the anti-Mormons to give an excuse for open hostilities, and probabilities favor this view. Straightway ensued what were known as the "burnings." A band of men, numbering from one hundred to two hundred, and coming mostly from Warsaw, began burning the houses, outbuildings, and grain stacks of Mormons all over the southwest part of the county. The owners were given time to remove their effects, and were ordered to make haste to Nauvoo, and in this way the country region was rapidly rid of Mormon settlers.¹

The sheriff of the county at that time was J. B. Backenstos, who, Ford says, went to Hancock County from Sangamon, a fraudulent debtor, and whose brother married a niece of the Prophet Joseph.² He had been elected to the legislature the year before, and had there so openly

espoused the Mormon cause opposing the repeal of the Nauvoo charter that his constituents proposed to drive him from the county when he returned home. Backenstos at once took up the cause of the Mormons, issued proclamation after proclamation,³ breathing the utmost hostility to the Mormon assailants, and calling on the citizens to aid him as a posse in maintaining order.

A sheriff of different character might have secured the help that was certainly his due on such an occasion, but no non-Mormon would respond to a call by Backenstos. An occurrence incidental to these disturbances now added to the public feeling. On September 16, Lieutenant Worrell, who had been in command of the guard at the jail when the Smith brothers were killed, was shot dead while riding with two companions from Carthage to Warsaw. His death was charged to Backenstos and to O. P. Rockwell,⁴ the man accused of the attempted assassination of Governor Boggs, and

¹ Gregg's "History of Hancock County," p. 374.

² Ford's "History of Illinois," pp. 407-408.

³ For the text of five of these proclamations, see *Millennial Star*, Vol. VI.

⁴ "Who was the actual guilty party may never be known. We have lately been informed from Salt Lake that Rockwell did the deed, under order of the sheriff, which is probably the case." -- Gregg, "History of Hancock County," p. 341."

----- RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS 337 -----

both were afterward put on trial for it, but were acquitted. The sheriff now turned to the Nauvoo Legion for recruits, and in his third proclamation he announced that he then had a posse of upward of two thousand "well-armed men" and two thousand more ready to respond to his call. He marched in different directions with this force, visiting Carthage, where he placed a number of citizens under arrest and issued his Proclamation No. 4., in which he characterized the Carthage Grays as "a band of the most infamous and villanous scoundrels that ever infested any community."

"During the ascendancy of the sheriff and the absence of the

anti-Mormons from their homes," said Governor Ford,¹ "the people who had been burnt out of their houses assembled at Nauvoo, from whence, with many others, they sallied forth and ravaged the country, stealing and plundering whatever was convenient to carry or drive away." Thus it seems that the governor had changed his opinion about the honesty of the Mormons. To remedy the chaotic condition of affairs in the county, Governor Ford went to Jacksonville, Morgan County, where, in a conference, it was decided that judge Stephen A. Douglas, General J. J. Hardin, Attorney General T. A. McDougal, and Major W. B. Warren should go to Hancock County with such forces as could be raised, to put an end to the lawlessness. When the sheriff heard of this, he pronounced the governor's proclamation directing the movement a forgery, and said, in his own Proclamation No. 5, "I hope no armed men will come into Hancock County under such circumstances. I shall regard them in the character of a mob, and shall treat them accordingly."

The sheriff labored under a mistake. The steps now taken resulted, not in a demonstration of his authority, but in the final expulsion of all the Mormons from Illinois and Iowa.

¹ Ford's "History of Illinois," p. 410.

----- [338] -----

CHAPTER XIX

THE EXPULSION OF THE MORMONS

GENERAL HARDIN announced the coming of his force, which numbered about four hundred men, in a proclamation addressed "To the

Citizens of Hancock County," dated September 27. He called attention to the lawless acts of the last two years by both parties, characterizing the recent burning of houses as "acts which disgrace your county, and are a stigma to the state, the nation, and the age." His force would simply see that the laws were obeyed, without taking part with either side. He forbade the assembling of any armed force of more than four men while his troops remained in the county, urged the citizens to attend to their ordinary business, and directed officers having warrants for arrests in connection with the recent disturbances to let the attorney-general decide whether they needed the assistance of troops.

But the citizens were in no mood for anything like a restoration of the recent order of things, or for any compromise. The *Warsaw Signal* of September 17 had appealed to the non-Mormons of the neighboring counties to come to the rescue of Hancock, and the citizens of these counties now began to hold meetings which adopted resolutions declaring that the Mormons "must go," and that they would not permit them to settle in any of the counties interested. The most important of these meetings, held at Quincy, resulted in the appointment of a committee of seven to visit Nauvoo, and see what arrangements could be made with the Mormons regarding their removal from the state. Notwithstanding their defiant utterances, the Mormon leaders had for some time realized that their position in Illinois was untenable. That Smith himself understood this before his death is shown by the following entry in his diary: --

Feb. 20, 1844. I instructed the Twelve Apostles to send out a delegation, and investigate the locations of California and Oregon, and hunt out a good location

----- RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS 339 -----

where we can remove to after the Temple is completed, and where we can build a city in a day, and have a government of our own, get up into the mountains, where the devil cannot dig us out, and live in a healthy climate where we can live as old as we have a mind to."¹

The Mormon reply to the Quincy committee was given under date of September 24 in the form of a proclamation signed by President

Brigham Young.² In a long preamble it asserted the desire of the Mormons "to live in peace with all men, so far as we can, without sacrificing the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences"; recited their previous expulsion from their homes, and the unfriendly view taken of their "views and principles" by many of the people of Illinois, finally announcing that they proposed to leave that country in the spring "for some point so remote that there will not need to be a difficulty with the people and ourselves." The agreement to depart was, however, conditioned on the following stipulations: that the citizens would help them to sell or rent their properties, to get means to assist the widows, the fatherless, and the destitute to move with the rest; that "all men will let us alone with their vexatious lawsuits;" that cash, dry goods, oxen, cattle, horses, wagons, etc., be given in exchange for Mormon property, the exchanges to be conducted by a committee of both parties; and that they be subjected to no more house burnings nor other depredations while they remained.

The adjourned meeting at Quincy received the report of its committee on September 26, and voted to accept the proposal of the Mormons to move in the spring, but stated explicitly, "We do not intend to bring ourselves under any obligation to purchase their property, nor to furnish purchasers for the same;. but we will in no way hinder or obstruct them in their efforts to sell, and will expect them to dispose of their property and remove at the time appointed." To manifest their sympathy with the unoffending poor of Nauvoo, a committee of twenty was appointed to receive subscriptions for their aid. The resignation of Sheriff Backenstos was called for, and the judge of that circuit was advised to hold no court in Hancock County that year.

The outcome of the meetings in the different counties was a

¹ *Millennial Star*, Vol. XX, p. 819.

² For text, see *Millennial Star*, Vol. VI, p. 187.

convention which met in Carthage on October 1 and 2, and at which

nine counties (Hancock not included) were represented. This convention adopted resolutions setting forth the inability of non-Mormons to secure justice at the hands of juries under Mormon influence, declaring that the only settlement of the troubles could be through the removal of the Mormons from the state, and repudiating "the impudent assertion, so often and so constantly put forth by the Mormons, that they are persecuted for righteousness' sake." The counties were advised to form a military organization, and the Mormons were warned that their opponents "solemnly pledge ourselves to be ready to act as the occasion may require."

Meanwhile, the commissioners appointed by Governor Ford had been in negotiation with the Mormon authorities, and on October 1 they, too, asked the latter to submit their intentions in writing. This they did the same day. Their reply, signed by Brigham Young, President, and Willard Richards, Clerk,¹ referred the commission to their response to the Quincy committee, and added that they had begun arrangements to remove from the county before the recent disturbances, one thousand families, including the heads of the church, being determined to start in the spring, without regard to any sacrifice of their property; that the whole church desired to go with them, and would do so if the necessary means could be secured by sales of their possessions, but that they wished it "distinctly understood that, although we may not find purchasers for our property, we will not sacrifice it or give it away, or suffer it illegally to be wrested from us." To this the commissioners on October 3 sent a reply, informing the Mormons that their proposition seemed to be acquiesced in by the citizens of all the counties interested, who would permit them to depart in peace the next spring without further violence. They closed as follows: --

"After what has been said and written by yourselves, it will be confidently expected by us and the whole community, that you will remove from the state with your whole church, in the manner you have agreed in your statement to us. Should you not do so, we are satisfied, however much we may deprecate violence and bloodshed, that violent measures will be resorted to, to compel your removal, which will result in most disastrous consequences to yourselves and your opponents, and that the end will be your expulsion from the state. We think that steps should be taken by you to make it apparent that you are actually preparing to remove in the spring.

¹ Text in *Millennial Star*, Vol. VI, p. 190.

----- RENEWED TROUBLE FOR THE MORMONS 341 -----

"By carrying out, in good faith, your proposition to remove, as submitted to us, we think you should be, and will be, permitted to depart peaceably next spring for your destination, west of the Rocky Mountains. For the purpose of maintaining law and order in this county, the commanding general purposes to leave an armed force in this county which will be sufficient for that purpose, and which will remain so long as the governor deems it necessary. And for the purpose of preventing the use of such force for vexatious or improper objects, we will recommend the governor of the state to send some competent legal officer to remain here, and have the power of deciding what process shall be executed by said military force."

"We recommend to you to place every possible restraint in your power over the members of your church, to prevent them from committing acts of aggression or retaliation on any citizens of the state, as a contrary course may, and most probably will, bring about a collision which will subvert all efforts to maintain the peace in this county; and we propose making a similar request of your opponents in this and the surrounding counties."

"With many wishes that you may find that peace and prosperity in the land of your destination which you desire, we have the honor to subscribe ourselves,

"JOHN J. HARDIN, W. B. WARREN.
S. A. DOUGLAS, J. A. MCDUGAL."

On the following day these commissioners made official announcement of the result of their negotiations, "to the anti-Mormon citizens of Hancock and the surrounding counties." They expressed their belief in the sincerity of the Mormon promises; advised that the non-Mormons be satisfied with obtaining what was practicable, even if some of their demands could not be granted, beseeching them to be orderly, and at the same time warning them not to violate the law, which the troops left in the county by General Hardin would enforce at all hazards. The report closed as follows: --

"Remember, whatever may be the aggression against you, the sympathy of the public may be forfeited. It cannot be denied that the burning of the houses of the Mormons in Hancock County, by which a large number of women and children have been rendered homeless and houseless, in the beginning of the winter, was an act criminal in itself, and disgraceful to its perpetrators. And it should also be known that it has led many persons to believe that, even if the Mormons are so bad as they are represented, they are no worse than those who have burnt their houses. Whether your cause is just or unjust, the acts of these incendiaries have thus lost for you something of the sympathy and good-will of your fellow-citizens; and a resort to, or persistence in, such a course

under existing circumstances will make you forfeit all the respect and sympathy of the community. We trust and believe, for this lovely portion of our state, a brighter day is dawning; and we beseech all parties not to seek to hasten its approach by the torch of the incendiary, nor to disturb its dawn by the clash of arms."

----- 342 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

The *Millennial Star* of December 1, 1845, thus introduced this correspondence: --

THE END OF AMERICAN LIBERTY

"The following official correspondence shows that this government has given thirty thousand American citizens THE CHOICE OF DEATH or BANISHMENT beyond the Rocky Mountains. Of these two evils they have chosen the least. WHAT BOASTED LIBERTY! WHAT an honor to American character!"

----- [343] -----

CHAPTER XX

THE EVACUATION OF NAUVOO -- "THE LAST MORMON WAR"

THE winter of 1845-1846 in Hancock County passed without any renewed outbreak, but the credit for this seems to have been due to the firmness and good judgment of Major W. B. Warren, whom General Hardin placed in command of the force which he left in that county to

preserve order, rather than to any improvement in the relations between the two parties, even after the Mormons had agreed to depart.

Major Warren's command, which at first consisted of one hundred men, and was reduced during the winter to fifty and later to ten, came from Quincy, and had as subordinate officers James D. Morgan and B. M. Prentiss, whose names became famous as Union generals in the war of the rebellion. Warren showed no favoritism in enforcing his authority, and he was called on to exercise it against both sides. The local newspapers of the day contain accounts of occasional burnings during the winter, and of murders committed here and there. On November 17, a meeting of citizens of Warsaw, who styled themselves "a portion of the anti-Mormon party," was held to protest against such acts as burnings and the murder of a Mormon, ten miles south of Warsaw, and to demand adherence to the agreement entered into. On February 5, Major Warren had to issue a warning to an organization of anti-Mormons who had ordered a number of Mormon families to leave the county by May 1, if they did not want to be burned out.

Governor Ford sent Mr. Brayman to Hancock County as legal counsel for the military commander. In a report dated December 14, 1845, Mr. Brayman said of the condition of affairs as he found them: --

"Judicial proceedings are but mockeries of the forms of law; juries, magistrates and officers of every grade concerned in the civil affairs of the county partake so deeply of the prevailing excitement that no reliance, as a general thing,

----- 344 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

can be placed on their action. Crime enjoys a disgraceful impunity, and each one feels at liberty to commit any aggression, or to avenge his own wrongs to any extent, without legal accountability.... Whether the parties will become reconciled or quieted, so as to live together in peace, is doubted.... Such a series of outrages and bold violations of law as have marked the history of Hancock County for several years past is a blot upon our institutions; ought not to be endured by a civilized people."¹

Meanwhile, the Mormons went on with their preparations for their westward march, selling their property as best they could, and making every effort to trade real estate in and out of the city, and such personal

property as they could not take with them, for cattle, oxen, mules, horses, sheep, and wagons. Early in February the non-Mormons were surprised to learn that the Mormons at Nauvoo had begun crossing the river as a beginning of their departure for the far West. "We scarcely know what to make of this movement," said the *Warsaw Signal*, the general belief being that the Mormons would be slow in carrying out their agreement to leave "so soon as grass would grow and water run." The date of the first departure, it has since been learned, was hastened by the fact that the grand jury in Springfield, Illinois, in December, 1845, had found certain indictments for counterfeiting, in regard to which the journal of that city, on December 25, gave the following particulars: --

"During the last week twelve bills of indictment for counterfeiting Mexican dollars and our half dollars and dimes were found by the Grand Jury, and presented to the United States Circuit Court in this city against different persons in and about Nauvoo, embracing some of the 'Holy Twelve' and other prominent Mormons, and persons in league with them. The manner in which the money was put into circulation was stated. At one mill \$1500 was paid out for wheat in one week. Whenever a land sale was about to take place, wagons were sent off with the coin into the land district where such sale was to take place, and no difficulty occurred in exchanging off the counterfeit coin for paper... So soon as the indictments were found, a request was made by the marshal of the Governor of this state for a posse, or the assistance of the military force stationed in Hancock County, to enable him to arrest the alleged counterfeiters. Gov. Ford refused to grant the request. An officer has since been sent to Nauvoo to make the arrests, but we apprehend there is no probability of his success"

The report that a whole city was practically for sale had been widely spread, and many persons -- some from the Eastern states -- began visiting it to see what inducements were offered to new

¹ *Warsaw Signal*, December 24, 1845.

THE EVACUATION OF NAUVOO

345 -----

settlers, and what bargains were to be had. Among these was W. E. Matlack, who on April 10 issued, in Nauvoo, the first number of a weekly newspaper called the *Hancock Eagle*. Matlack seems to have been a fair-minded man, possessed of the courage of his convictions, and his paper was a better one in, a literary sense than the average

weekly of the day. In his inaugural editorial he said that he favored the removal of the Mormons as a peace measure, but denounced mob rule and threats against the Mormons who had not departed. The ultra-Antis took offence at this at once, and, so far as the *Eagle* was supposed to represent the views of the new-comers, -- who were henceforth called New Citizens, -- counted them little better than the Mormons themselves. Among these, however, was a class whom the county should have welcomed, the boats, in one week in May, landing four or five merchants, six physicians, three or four lawyers, two dentists, and two or three hundred others, including laborers.

The people of Hancock and the surrounding counties still refused to believe that the Mormons were sincere in their intention to depart, and the county meetings of the year before were reassembled to warn the Mormons that the citizens stood ready to enforce their order. The vacillating course of Governor Ford did not help the situation. He issued an order disbanding Major Warren's force on May 1, and on the following day instructed him to muster it into service again. Warren was very outspoken in his determination to protect the departing Mormons, and in a proclamation which he issued he told them to "leave the fighting to be done by my detachment. If we are overpowered, then recross the river and defend yourselves and your property."

The peace was preserved during May, and the Mormon exodus continued, Young with the first company being already well advanced in his march across Iowa. Major Warren sent a weekly report on the movement to the *Warsaw Signal*. That dated May 14 said that the ferries at Nauvoo and at Fort Madison were each taking across an average of 35 teams in twenty-four hours. For the week ending May 22 he reported the departure of 539 teams and 1617 persons; and for the week ending May 29, the departure of 269 teams and 800 persons, and he said he had counted the day before 617 wagons in Nauvoo ready to start.

But even this activity did not satisfy the ultra element among

----- 346 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

the anti-Mormons, and at a meeting in Carthage, on Saturday, June 6,

resolutions drawn by Editor Sharp of the *Signal* expressed the belief that many of the Mormons intended to remain in the state, charged that they continued to commit depredations, and declared that the time had come for the citizens of the counties affected to arm and equip themselves for action. The *Signal* headed its editorial remarks on this meeting, "War declared in Hancock."

When the news of the gathering at Carthage reached Nauvoo it created a panic. The Mormons, lessened in number by the many departures, and with their goods mostly packed for moving, were in no situation to repel an attack; and they began hurrying to the ferry until the streets were blocked with teams. The New Citizens, although the Carthage meeting had appointed a committee to confer with them, were almost as much alarmed, and those who could do so sent away their families, while several merchants packed up their goods for safety. On Friday, June 12, the committee of New Citizens met some 600 anti-Mormons who had assembled near Carthage, and strenuously objected to their marching into Nauvoo. As a sort of compromise, the force consented to rendezvous at Golden Point, five miles south of Nauvoo, and there they arrived the next day. This force, according to the *Signal's* own account, was a mere mob, three-fourths of whom went there against their own judgment, and only to try to prevent extreme measures. A committee was at once sent to Nauvoo to confer with the New Citizens, but it met with a decided snubbing. The Nauvoo people then sent a committee to the camp, with a proposition that thirty men of the Antis march into the city, and leave three of their number there to report on the progress of the Mormon exodus.

On Sunday morning, before any such agreement was reached, word came from Nauvoo that Sheriff Backenstos had arrived there and enrolled a posse of some 500 men, the New Citizens uniting with the Mormons for the protection of the place. This led to an examination of the war supplies of the Antis, and the discovery that they had only five rounds of ammunition to a man, and one day's provision. Thereupon they ingloriously broke camp and made off to Carthage.

After this nothing more serious than a war of words occurred

THE EVACUATION OF NAUVOO

347 -----

until July 11, when an event happened which aroused the feeling of both parties to the fighting pitch. Three Mormons from Nauvoo had been harvesting a field of grain about eight miles from the city.¹ In some way they angered a man living near by (according to his wife's affidavit, by shooting around his fields, using his stable for their horses, and feeding his oats), and he collected some neighbors, who gave the offenders a whipping, more or less severe, according to the account accepted. The men went at once to Nauvoo, and exhibited their backs, and that night a Mormon posse arrested seventeen Antis and conveyed them to Nauvoo. The Antis in turn seized five Mormons whom they held as "hostages," and the northern part of Hancock County and a part of McDonough were in a state of alarm.

Civil chaos ensued. General Hardin and Major Warren had joined the federal army that was to march against Mexico, and their cool judgment was greatly missed. One Carlin, appointed as a special constable, called on the citizens of Hancock County to assemble as his posse to assist in executing warrants in Nauvoo, and the Mormons of that city at once took steps to resist arrests by him. Governor Ford sent Major Parker of Fulton County, who was a Whig, to make an inquiry at Nauvoo and defend that city against rioting, and Mr. Brayman remained there to report to him on the course of affairs.

What was called at that time, in Illinois, "the last Mormon war" opened with a fusillade of correspondence between Carlin and Major Parker. Parker issued a proclamation, calling on all good citizens to return to their homes, and Carlin declared that he would obey no authority which tried to prevent him from doing his duty, telling the major that it would "take something more than words" to disperse his posse. While Parker was issuing a series of proclamations, the so-called posse was, on August 25, placed under the command of Colonel J. B. Chittenden of Adams County, who was superseded three days later by Colonel Singleton. Colonel Singleton was successful in arranging with Major Parker terms of peace, which provided among other things that all the Mormons should be out of the state in sixty days, except heads of families who remained to close their business; but the

¹ The *Eagle* stated that the farm where the Mormons were at work had been bought by a New Citizen, who had sent out both Mormons and New Citizens to cut the grain.

----- 348 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

colonel's officers rejected this agreement, and the colonel thereupon left the camp. Carlin at once appointed Colonel Brockman to the chief command. He was a Campbellite preacher who, according to Ford, had been a public defaulter and had been "silenced" by his church. After rejecting another offer of compromise made by the Mormons, Brockman, on September 11, with about seven hundred men who called themselves a posse, advanced against Nauvoo, with some small field pieces. Governor Ford had authorized Major Flood, commanding the militia of Adams County, to raise a force to preserve order in Hancock; but the major, knowing that such action would only incense the force of the Antis, disregarded the governor's request. At this juncture Major Parker was relieved of the command at Nauvoo and succeeded by Major B. Clifford, Jr., of the 33rd regiment of Illinois Volunteers.

On the morning of September 12, Brockman sent into Nauvoo a demand for its surrender, with the pledge that there would be no destruction of property or life "unless absolutely necessary in self-defence." Major Clifford rejected this proposition, advised Brockman to disperse his force, and named Mayor Wood of Quincy and J. P. Eddy, a St. Louis merchant then in Nauvoo, as recipients of any further propositions from the Antis.

The forces at this time were drawn up against one another, the Mormons behind a breastwork which they had erected during the night, and the Antis on a piece of high ground nearer the city than their camp. Brayman says that an estimate which placed the Mormon force at five hundred or six hundred was a great exaggeration, and that the only artillery they had was six pieces which they fashioned for themselves, by breaking some steamboat shafts to the proper length and boring them out so that they would receive a six-pound shot.

When Clifford's reply was received, the commander of the Antis sent out the Warsaw riflemen as flankers on the right and left; directed the Lima Guards, with one cannon, to take a position a mile to the front of the camp and occupy the attention of the men behind the Mormon

breastwork, who had opened fire; and then marched the main body through a cornfield and orchard to the city itself. Both sides kept up an artillery fire while the advance was taking place.

When the Antis reached the settled part of the city, the firing

THE EVACUATION OF NAUVOO

349 -----

became general, but was of an independent character. The Mormons in most cases fired from their houses, while the Antis found such shelter as they could in a cornfield and along a worm fence. After about an hour of such fighting, Brockman, discovering that all of the sixty-one cannon balls with which he had provided himself had been shot away, decided that it was perilous "to risk a further advance without these necessary instruments." Accordingly, he ordered a retreat and his whole force returned to its camp. In this engagement no Antis were killed, and the surgeon's list named only eight wounded, one of whom died. Three citizens of Nauvoo were killed. The Mormons had the better protection in their houses, but the other side made rather effective use of their artillery.

The Antis began at once intrenching their camp, and sent to Quincy for ammunition. There were some exchanges of shots on Sunday and Monday, and three Antis were wounded on the latter day.

Quincy responded promptly to the request for ammunition, but the people of that town were by no means unanimously in favor of the "war." On Sunday evening a meeting of the peaceably inclined appointed a committee of one hundred to visit the scene of hostilities and secure peace "on the basis of a removal of the Mormons." The negotiations of this committee began on the following Tuesday, and were continued, at times with apparent hopelessness of success, until Wednesday evening, when terms of peace were finally signed. It required the utmost effort of the Quincy committee to induce the anti-Mormon force to delay an assault on the city, which would have meant conflagration and massacre. The terms of peace were as follows:

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- "1. The city of Nauvoo will surrender. The force of Col. Brockman to enter and take possession of the city tomorrow, the 17th of September, at 3 o'clock P.M.
- "2. The arms to be delivered to the Quincy Committee, to be returned on the crossing of the river.
- "3. The Quincy Committee pledge themselves to use their influence for the protection of persons and property from all violence; and the officers of the camp and the men pledge themselves to protect all persons and property from violence.
- "4. The sick and helpless to be protected and treated with humanity.
- "5. The Mormon population of the city to leave the State, or disperse, as soon as they can cross the river.

----- 350 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

- "6. Five men, including the trustees of the church, and five clerks, with their families (William Pickett not one of the number), to be permitted to remain in the city for the disposition of property, free from all molestation and personal violence.
- "7. Hostilities to cease immediately, and ten men of the Quincy Committee to enter the city in the execution of their duty as soon as they think proper."

The noticeable features of these terms are the omission of any reference to the execution of Carlin's writs, and the engagement that the Mormons should depart immediately. The latter was the real object of the "posse's" campaign.

The Mormons had realized that they could not continue their defence, as no reinforcements could reach them, while any temporary check to their adversaries would only increase the animosity of the latter. They acted, therefore, in good faith as regards their agreement to depart. How they went is thus described in Brayman's second report to Governor Ford:¹ --

"These terms were not definitely signed until the morning of Thursday, the 17th, but, confident of their ratification, the Mormon population had been busy through the night in removing. So firmly had they been taught to believe that their lives, their city, and Temple, would fall a sacrifice to the vengeance of their enemies, if surrendered to them, that they fled in consternation, determined to be beyond their reach at all hazards. This scene of confusion, fright and distress was continued throughout the forenoon. In every part of the city scenes of destitution, misery and woe met the eye. Families were hurrying away from their homes, without a shelter, -- without means of conveyance, -- without tents, money, or a day's provision, with as much of their household stuff as they could carry in their hands. Sick men and women were carried upon their beds -- weary mothers, with helpless babes dying in the arms, hurried away -- all fleeing, they

scarcely knew or cared whither, so it was from their enemies, whom they feared more than the waves of the Mississippi, or the heat, and hunger and lingering life and dreaded death of the prairies on which they were about to be cast. The ferry boats were crowded, and the river bank was lined with anxious fugitives, sadly awaiting their turn to pass over and take up their solitary march to the wilderness."

On the afternoon of the 17th, Brockman's force, with which the members of the Quincy committee had been assigned a place, marched into Nauvoo and through it, encamping near the river on the southern boundary. Curiosity to see the Mormon city had swelled the number who entered at the same time with the posse to nearly two thousand men, but there was no disorder. The

¹ For Brayman's reports, see *Warsaw Signal*, October 20, 1846.

THE EVACUATION OF NAUVOO

351 -----

streets were practically deserted, and the few Mormons who remained were busy with their preparations to cross the river. Brockman, to make his victory certain, ordered that all citizens of Nauvoo who had sided with the Mormons should leave the state, thus including many of the New Citizens. The order was enforced on September 18, "with many circumstances of the utmost cruelty and injustice," according to Brayman's report. "Bands of armed men," he said, "traversed the city, entering the houses of citizens, robbing them of arms, throwing their household goods out of doors, insulting them, and threatening their lives."

----- [352] -----

CHAPTER XXI

NAUVOO AFTER THE EXODUS

BROCKMAN'S force was disbanded after its object had been accomplished, and all returned to their homes but about one hundred, who remained in Nauvoo to see that no Mormons came back. These men, whose number gradually decreased, provided what protection and government the place then enjoyed. Governor Ford received much censure from the state at large for the lawless doings of the recent months. A citizens' meeting at Springfield demanded that he call out a force sufficient "to restore the supremacy of the law, and bring the offenders to justice." He did call on Hancock County for volunteers to restore order, but a public meeting in Carthage practically defied him. He, however, secured a force of about two hundred men, with which he marched into Nauvoo, greatly to the indignation of the Hancock County people. His stay there was marked by incidents which showed how his erratic course in recent years had deprived him of public respect, and which explain some of the bitterness toward the county which characterizes his "History." One of these was the presentation to him of a petticoat as typical of his rule. When Ford was succeeded as governor by French, the latter withdrew the militia from the county, and, in an address to the citizens, said, "I confidently rely upon your assistance and influence to aid in preventing any act of a violent character in future." Matters in the county then quieted down. The Warsaw newspapers, in place of anti-Mormon literature, began to print appeals to new settlers, setting forth the advantages of the neighborhood. But a newspaper war soon followed between two factions in Nauvoo, one of which contended that the place was an assemblage of gamblers and saloon-keepers, while the other defended its reputation. This latter view, however, was not established, and most of the houses remained tenantless.

NAUVOO AFTER THE EXODUS

353 -----

Amid all their troubles in Nauvoo the Mormon authorities never lost sight of one object, the completion of the Temple. To the non-Mormons, and even to many in the church, it seemed inexplicable

why so much zeal and money should be expended in finishing a structure that was to be at once abandoned. Before the agreement to leave the state was made, a Warsaw newspaper predicted that the completion of the Temple would end the reign of the Mormon leaders, since their followers were held together by the expectation of some supernatural manifestation of power in their behalf at that time¹ Another outside newspaper suggested that they intended to use it as a fort.

Orson Pratt, in a letter to the Saints in the Eastern states, written at the time of the agreement to depart, answering the query why the Lord commanded them to build a house out of which he would then suffer them to be driven at once, quoted a paragraph from the "revelation" of January 19, 1841, which commanded the building of the Temple "that you may prove yourselves unto me, that ye are faithful in all things whatsoever I command you, that I may bless you and cover you with honor, immortality, and eternal life."

The cap-stone of the Temple was laid in place early on the morning of May 24, 1845, amid shouts of "Hosannah to God and the Lamb," music by the band, and the singing of a hymn.

The first meeting was held in the Temple on October 5, 1845, and from that time the edifice was used almost constantly in administering the ordinances (baptism, endowment, etc.). Brigham Young says that on one occasion he continued this work from 5 P. M. to 3:30 A. M., and others of the Quorum assisted.

The ceremony of the "endowment," although considered very secret, has been described by many persons who have gone through it. The descriptions by Elder Hyde and I. McGee Van Dusen and his wife go into details. A man and wife received notice to appear

¹ A man from the neighborhood who visited Nauvoo in 1843 to buy calves called on a blind man, of whom he says: "He told me he had a nice home in Massachusetts, which gave them a good support. But one of the Mormon elders preaching in that country called on him and told him if he would sell out and go to Nauvoo the Prophet would restore his sight. He sold out and had come to the city and spent all his means, and was now in great need. I asked why the Prophet did not open his eyes. He replied that Joseph had informed him that he could not open his eyes till the Temple was finished." -- Gregg, "History of Hancock County," p. 375.

----- 354 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

at the Temple at Nauvoo at 5 A. M., he to wear white drawers, and she to bring her nightclothes with her. Passing to the upper floor, they were told to remove their hats and outer wraps, and were then led into a narrow hall, at the end of which stood a man who directed the husband to pass through a door on the right, and the wife to one on the left. The candidates were then questioned as to their preparation for the initiation, and if this resulted satisfactorily, they were directed to remove all their outer clothing. This ended the "first degree." In the next room their remaining clothing was removed and they received a bath, with some mummeries which may best be omitted. Next they were anointed all over with oil poured from a horn, and pronounced "the Lord's anointed," and a priest ordained them to be "king (or queen) in time and eternity." The man was now furnished with a white cotton undergarment of an original design, over which he put his shirt, and the woman was given a somewhat similar article, together with a chemise, nightgown,, and white stockings. Each was then conducted into another apartment and left there alone in silence for some time. Then a rumbling noise was heard, and Brigham Young appeared, reciting some words, beginning "Let there be light," and ending "Now let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Approaching the man first, he went through a form of making him out of the dust; then, passing into the other room, he formed the woman out of a rib he had taken from the man. Giving this Eve to the man Adam, he led them into a large room decorated to represent Eden, and, after giving them divers instructions, left them to themselves.

Much was said in later years about the requirement of the endowment oath. When General Maxwell tried to prevent the seating of Cannon as Delegate to Congress in 1873, one of his charges was that Cannon had, in the Endowment House, taken an oath against the United States government. This called out affidavits by some of the leading anti-Young Mormons of the day, including E. L. T. Harrison, that they had gone through the Endowment House without taking any oath of the kind. But Hyde, in his description of the ceremony, says: --

"We were sworn to cherish constant enmity toward the United States Government for

not avenging the death of Smith, or righting the persecutions of the Saints; to do all that we could toward destroying, tearing down or overturning

NAUVOO AFTER THE EXODUS

355 -----

that government; to endeavor to baffle its designs and frustrate its intentions; to renounce all allegiance and refuse all submission. If unable to do anything ourselves toward the accomplishment of these objects, to teach it to our children from the nursery, impress it upon them from the death bed, entail it upon them as a legacy."¹

In the suit of Charlotte Arthur against Brigham Young's estate, to recover a lot in Salt Lake City which she alleged that Young had unlawfully taken possession of, her verified complaint (filed July 11, 1874) alleged that the endowment oath contained the following declaration: --

"To obey him, the Lord's anointed, in all his orders, spiritual and temporal, and the priesthood or either of them, and all church authorities in like manner; that this obligation is superior to all the laws of the United States, and all earthly laws; that enmity should be cherished against the government of the United States; that the blood of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and Apostles slain in this generation shall be avenged."

As soon as the agreement to leave the state was made, the Mormons tried hard to sell or lease the Temple, but in vain; and when the last Mormon departed, the structure was left to the mercy of the Hancock County "posse." Colonel Kane, in his description of his visit to Nauvoo soon after the evacuation, says that the militia had defiled and defaced such features as the shrines and the baptismal font, the apartment containing the latter being rendered "too noisome to abide in."

Had the building been permitted to stand, it would have been to Nauvoo something on which the town could have looked as its most remarkable feature. But early on the morning of November 19, 1848, the structure was found to be on fire, evidently the work of an incendiary, and what the flames could eat up was soon destroyed. The *Nauvoo Patriot* deplored the destruction of "a work of art at once the most elegant in its construction, and the most renowned in its celebrity, of any in the whole West."

When the Icarians, a band of French Socialists, settled in Nauvoo, they undertook, in 1850, to rebuild the edifice for use as their halls of reunion and schools. After they had expended on this work a good deal of time and labor, the city was visited by a cyclone on May 27 of that year, which left standing only a part of the west wall. Out of the stone the Icarians then built a school

¹ Hyde's "Mormonism," p. 97.

----- 356 THE STORY OF THE MORMONS -----

house, but nothing original now remains on the site except the old well.

The Nauvoo of to-day is a town of only 1321 inhabitants. The people are largely of German origin, and the leading occupation is fruit growing. The site of the Temple is occupied by two modern buildings. A part of Nauvoo House is still standing, as are Brigham Young's former residence, Joseph Smith's "new mansion," and other houses which Mormons occupied.

The Mormons in Iowa were no more popular with their non-Mormon neighbors there than were those in Illinois, and after the murders by the Hodges, and other crimes charged to the brethren, a mass meeting of Lee County inhabitants was held, which adopted resolutions declaring that the Mormons and the old settlers could not live together and that the Mormons must depart, citizens being requested to aid in this movement by exchanging property with the emigrants. In 1847 the last of these objectionable citizens left the county.

continue on: [page 357](#)

[back to the top of this web-page](#)

Mormon Studies Home Page