

THE MORMONS.

605

THE MORMONS.



THE PROPHET.

WITHIN the last seven years, our Republic has been the theatre of a spectacle unparalleled in the history of the world in its general aspect and promised results. Two great migrations of people, from the bosom of our confederated States to the wilderness of the further West, have taken place; and two distinct commonwealths, already populous and full of progressive energy, have been founded, and added to our galaxy of united republics.

The motives which impelled these migrations were antipodal in essence, yet equally puissant in their attractive forces and interior energy. These were, *acquisitiveness* and *religious enthusiasm*, two powerful agents in moving the masses, and confined in their manifestations to no particular time, people, or creed. The former, addressing itself to the material nature of man—his to-day—makes him brave and enduring. With these qualities as a basis of action, a vast number of our political kindred have founded a flourishing State upon the far-off coast of the Pacific ocean, and are spreading the sails of trade upon the bosom of that hitherto almost solitary sea, bearing the key to the vast commercial treasures of the Oriental world. The latter, addressing itself to man's spiritual nature—his to-morrow—makes him still more brave and enduring, because the prize to be won lies beyond the events of Time, and is subject to no physical contingencies. Impelled by this higher motive, which has given martyrs to the fury of persecution in all ages, a large number of our political kindred, commingled with a greater host from the British Isles and the European continent, have congregated in fertile valleys among the rugged mountains of the interior of our continent, in the direct pathway from the elder States to the capital of the Pacific commonwealth. The memory of the fiery

Past, and the bright visions of the peaceful Future, inspire them with indomitable perseverance and surprising energy; and system, order, and political wisdom have there been wonderfully developed among a heterogeneous mass gathered from many nations, and out of almost every class of common society.

In the midst of the vast solitudes of the Rocky Mountain region, where, six years ago, the Utah and the grizzly bear disputed possession, a nation has been born, and a populous city, encircled by broad fields, made richer by the tiller's culture, is full of busy men, plying the implements of almost every industrial pursuit, and is continually sending forth from its swarming hive energetic workers, to found other cities and plant other gardens in Deseret—the land of the Honey Bee. Let us consider the origin and brief history of this wonderful people.

About thirty years ago, Joseph Smith, an illiterate and not over-scrupulous young man of eighteen years, residing with his parents, near Palmyra, in the interior of the State of New York, attracted the attention of his kindred and neighbors by his pretensions to the character of a favored recipient of direct revelations from the councils of the Most High. For some time his mind had been disturbed by excitements at religious meetings, when, as he asserts, while praying for light and spiritual guidance, two angels appeared to him, and announced that he was the chosen Apostle and Prophet of God, to preach the true gospel to the world in its purity and power. A few evenings afterward (September 21, 1823), he was again visited by a heavenly messenger, "whose countenance was as lightning, yet it was pleasing, innocent, and glorious." This personage announced himself as a special messenger from the Great Throne, to reveal to the chosen Apostle the hidden things of the Future, and to lead him to the depository of the written records of the lost tribes of Israel—"the progenitors of the American Indians." These records, engraved upon plates of gold, contained not only the history of the long-lost tribes, but also divine instructions pertaining to the promulgation of the true gospel, and vivid prophecies concerning the Millennial era, then about to dawn upon the world. Twice during the night the angel visited the fledgeling Seer, and the following morning, while the Chosen was at work in his father's field, the Divine Instructor came and bade him go immediately to the "hill of Cumorah,"* and unearth the golden book. The task was easy, for the storms of centuries had removed the soil, and a portion of the stone box in which the plates were secured was visible. In the bottom of the box (which was carefully made air and water tight by cement), were three short pillars, and upon these were laid the sacred oracles of God. Beneath them was a breast-plate.

* This hill is about four miles distant from Palmyra, on the east side of the post road leading from that village to Canandaigua, and near the little town of Manchester. The alleged place of deposit of the golden plates is marked by several trees on the western slope of the hill.

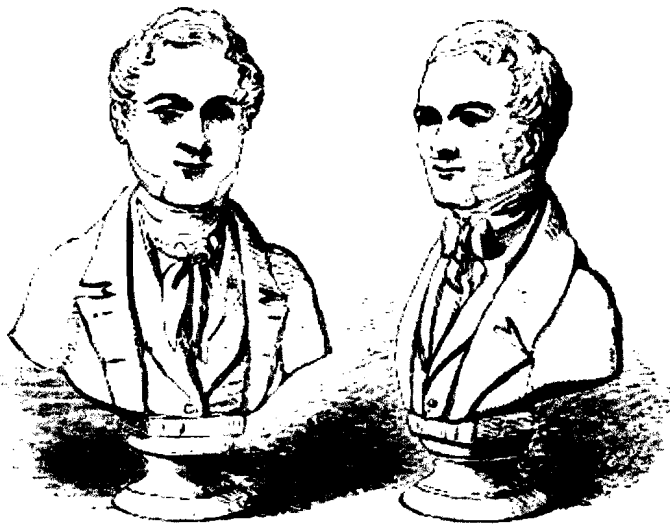
such as the ancients used, and lying upon it were two stones, "clear as crystal, set in two rims of a bow," like a pair of spectacles. These were reputed to be identical with the *Urim* and *Thummim* of the Hebrews, by which things distant or future were made manifest. While the young prophet was gazing upon these sacred objects in wonder and awe, the angel appeared, his interior vision was opened, and heaven with all its glory stood revealed to the mortal. Suddenly the Prince of Darkness and his demon train passed by, and the good and the evil were thus displayed before him. The dark host disappeared, and then the angel, after giving Smith many consoling promises, informed him that "the fullness of time" had not yet arrived when he should receive the plates, and translate the divine records.

For four years the chosen prophet was denied possession of the golden book, yet he was frequently comforted by the presence of the angel. On the morning of the 22d of September, 1827, "the fullness of time" arrived, and Smith received, with wonder and delight, the precious volume. Its leaves were apparently of fine gold, thinner than sheets of vulgar tin, seven by eight inches in size, and covered on both sides with "improved Egyptian" characters, neatly engraved. The leaves were fastened together by three rings, and formed a volume about six inches in thickness. A part of it was sealed, to be opened at a future time; the remainder Smith was directed to translate by the assistance of the enormous crystal spectacles found with the book. During these four years—the chrysalis period of the Anointed, while changing from the mortal grub known as "Joe Smith, the money-digger," to the immortal winged creature of the new revelation, whose element was the skies—he was not an idle dreamer nor ascetic recluse. He wandered up and down the head waters of the Susquehanna, in search of mineral treasures, duping one and swindling another, and finally eloped with and married the daughter of a mortal, an intelligent young lady of New Harmony, Pennsylvania. With his wife he settled down near his father's house, ceased money-digging, and, under the direction of his good angel, opened a far more productive treasure in the "hill of Cumorah."

Money, reputation, and learning were essential in the promulgation of the new gospel. Smith lacked these, and he at once sought for them among his credulous neighbors. His earli-

est disciples were his father and two brothers, whom the world would willingly believe were accessories in a most unblushing imposture. They immediately spread the wonderful story of the golden book. It was confirmatory of a legend long known to money-diggers in Canada that a golden Bible was somewhere buried. The credulous among the people of a sparsely populated district listened, wondered, and believed; and a farmer, possessing many acres but little knowledge of the world, became a dupe, and furnished Smith with money to enable him to engage in the holy work of translation. The curious began to ask questions, and Smith was almost daily hard pressed for answers. His natural shrewdness was brought into requisition, and he conceived an admirable method of evasion, and declared that he could divulge nothing except by "special revelation." This conception, the child of an impostor's necessity, was the germ of the power by which his career was made successful, and by which the chief ruler of the Mormon church now wields an autocratic sceptre. From that time, whatever Smith desired to do, he was sure to have a *special revelation* commanding him to do it. This policy marked his whole career, and such is still the ingenious and potential policy of his successors in the church.

By "special revelation" the farmer was made to contribute his money freely to the work of translating and publishing the sacred book. Common sense sometimes raised doubts in the farmer's mind. He once ventured to ask for proof of the divinity of the book in Smith's possession, and even made a journey to the city of New York with some of the "improved Egyptian" characters, transcribed by Smith on paper, to consult the learned Professor Anthon, of Columbia College. He was assured by that gentleman that all was gross deception, yet the poor man, under the influence of the basilisk eye of the special revelator, suppressed his wicked doubts, and



JOSEPH

HYMUN

piously lent his time and money to the holy work, until foreclosures of mortgages upon his farm expelled himself and family from his homestead. Yet piety was not the chief motive. The farmer was a miser, and Smith excited his acquisitiveness to the highest degree, by promises of great worldly treasure. He meekly became "a scribe like Baruch for Jeremiah," and wrote the words as the prophet delivered them from behind a screen. The scribe was not allowed to see the sacred plates, for the angel had said that no man but Joseph Smith could look upon them and live! To this day no mortal eyes have rested upon them, save those of the great Seer.

When the farmer's money was exhausted, his mission was ended, and Smith procured another scribe, and money from other sources. His disciples now numbered a half dozen. The sacred translations were printed under the title of *The Book of Mormon*, and its divinity was attested by the six disciples. Among these were Smith's father and two brothers; of the latter Hyrum was the most intelligent, and at the time of his death held a conspicuous place in the Mormon church.

The Book of Mormon professed to contain a history of the ancient inhabitants of America, who were a branch of the house of Israel, of the tribe of Joseph, the present tribes of North American Indians being a remnant. It asserts that the principal nation of them having fallen in battle in the fourth or fifth century of the Christian era, one of their prophets, whose name was Mormon, made an abridgment of their history, prophecies, and doctrine, which he engraved on plates of gold. Being afterward slain, the record fell into the hands of his son, Moroni, who, being hunted by his enemies, was directed to deposit the record safely in the earth, with a promise from God that it should be preserved, and brought to light in the latter days by means of a Gentile nation who should possess the land. The sacred deposit was made about the year 420, on a hill then called Cumorah, where the prophet Smith found it through the ministry of angels, and translated it by inspiration. Such is the belief of the followers of the prophet.

It was evident to the Gentiles that the *Book of Mormon* was the production of a mind far superior in spirituality and cultivation to those of Smith and his conferees, but was disfigured by ignorant men in endeavoring to adapt it to the purposes of the pretended revelation. For some time its origin was a puzzle to unbelievers, but at length "its sin found it out." The well attested fact was revealed that almost twenty years before, a highly educated clergyman of Cherry Valley, New York, married, and, with his wife, settled at New Salem, Ohio. His health there declined, and he was obliged to cease preaching. At that time the literati were engaged in the discussion of the theory that the North American Indians are descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel. In the vicinity of New Salem were mounds erected by the ancient inhabitants of the continent. These had excited

the curiosity of the invalid clergyman, and together with the discussion then going on, turned his thoughts to the subject of the Aborigines and their early history. He had a lively imagination, and he conceived the idea of writing a sort of religious novel, having that theory for its basis. He devoted the leisure of three years to the preparation of his work, which he entitled *The Manuscript Found*. It was written in the quaint style of the Scriptures, to give it the antique character claimed for it. In it *Mormon* and *Moroni* figured conspicuously. It was claimed to have been translated from a record made by one of the lost nations, and to have been recovered from the earth, where it was hidden by *Moroni*, the son of *Mormon*. In this manuscript, completed about the year 1813, was given most of the pretended history found in the *Book of Mormon*. The writer read many chapters to his wife and neighbors, and thus he beguiled the tedious hours of ill-health in the production of a work purely imaginative.

The appearance of the *Book of Mormon* awakened the memory of those who had heard chapters of *The Manuscript Found* read by the author. Among those was his wife, then a widow, and her testimony went forth to refute the imposture. It is clear and explicit; is corroborated by others, and is believed by all except the dupes of the prophet. The undoubted possession of this manuscript by Smith and his co-workers is as clearly proven as the strongest circumstantial evidence can establish a fact. The interpolations by hands guided by ignorant minds are every where visible in the *Book of Mormon*, and that "Bible of the Latter Days," upon which the faith of almost two hundred thousand souls is at this day grounded, is unquestionably the joint production of a pious heart and highly imaginative mind, innocent of all wrong, and of scheming men who became possessed of the fiction long after the pure spirit of its author had gone to its rest in

"The bosom of his Father and his God"

With great boldness and indomitable perseverance, Smith pressed forward in his scheme for establishing a new church upon the earth, with himself its founder and head. Promises of spiritual and temporal benefit were commingled in his doctrines, revealed from time to time, and his preaching soon began to show fruit. Men of character and cultivation became his disciples. On the 6th of April, 1830, they were organized at Manchester, Ontario County, New York, under the title of "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," and in June following their first conference was held, when Smith found himself at the head of a visible church of about thirty people. This was the grain of mustard seed now become a large and flourishing shrub.

Persecution began with the first organization of the Mormon church. A dam cast across a stream of water by Smith, for baptismal purposes, was destroyed by some of the people in the vicinity, and the prophet was boldly charged with robbery, swindling, and lying, and was menaced

with personal injury. With the cunning of a shrewd tactician, Smith meekly acknowledged his past sins, plead his repentance, and called God to witness his present purity of life. This disarmed violence, if not opposition. Yet the future appeared lowering, and from that time the eyes of the "Saints" were turned toward the more generous soil of the West. Oliver Cowdrey, a schoolmaster, and Sidney Rigdon, and Parly B. Pratt, ready writers and fluent speakers, who had been preaching heterodoxy in Pennsylvania and Ohio, had embraced the Mormon faith, and soon arrangements were made to plant the church on the borders of the Western wilderness. In January, 1831, a revelation was made, commanding the Saints to emigrate to Kirtland, Ohio, where Pratt and Rigdon had already gathered over a thousand converts to receive them. Great rejoicings were had on the arrival of the prophet, and the meetings of the Saints exhibited some of the wildest phases of fanaticism. Intelligence of the new wonder spread abroad, and from all the lake country, a hundred miles distant, people flocked to see and hear the novelty. The infection spread, and many of the illiterate backwoodsmen illustrated the line.

"Those who came to scoff, remained to pray."

A new revelation was given. A command went forth to plant the new Jerusalem, where Christ was to reign with his saints, a temporal King, deeper in the wilderness. Cowdrey explored the forests and prairies beyond the Mis-

issippi, and made reports of the beauty and fertility of the country, as glowing as those of the Hebrew spies from among the grape-vines of Eschol. Smith and a few friends started for the land of promise. Leaving St. Louis, they penetrated the wilderness on foot to Independence, in Jackson county, Missouri, three hundred miles distant. They were charmed with the climate and the scene, and near Independence Smith chose the spot for building Zion. It was designated by a special revelation, and he immediately set about the great work. He preached fervidly to crowds of Indians, squatters, and negroes, some of whom became converts. He laid out the area for the great temple and dedicated the spot to the Lord. He established a bishop there, and after a sojourn of three weeks departed for Kirtland, accompanied by ten Elders of the church.

Kirtland was made a "Stake" or support of Zion, and it was resolved to remain there five years, until the temple in the wilderness should be built. A bank was established, with Smith for president, and Rigdon, cashier. The chief men were also partners in a mill and store, and soon the whole of the Prophet's family were raised from poverty to affluence. Joseph continued to preach in various parts of the country, proselyting and procuring money from his dupes for the ostensible purpose of building the Temple and the City of Zion. The preaching and the practice of the Saints did not always agree and



SMITH PREACHING IN THE WILDERNESS

THE MORMONS.

609

they fell into disrepute with their neighbors. Feuds arose in the body of the church because "common men" pretended to receive revelations from God. Their meetings were often disturbed by the "Gentiles;" and on one occasion, in mid-winter, the Prophet was dragged from his bed,

at a little village called Hiram, where he was residing, and after being severely handled, was tarred and feathered. Rigdon was in the same village, and was similarly treated by the mob. Soon after this outrage Smith left Ohio to "fulfill the revelation" in Missouri.



TARRING AND FEATHERING OF JOSEPH SMITH.

A special revelation informed Smith that the spot he had selected for the Temple of Zion, was the very place where "Adam's altar was built, in the centre of the Garden of Eden." The corner stone of the Temple was laid, Saints were gathered, the forest was felled, and a city was soon seen springing up in the midst of the wilderness. All property was consecrated to the Lord; a tithe of all labor, and time, and earnings was devoted to the building of the Temple; public store-houses to receive the offerings and donations were built, and three hundred missionaries, approved by the Prophet, were sent out in all directions to preach the new gospel and gather the Saints to Zion. These apostles were successful, and company after company of converts crossed the broad Father of Waters and pressed forward toward the New Jerusalem. In less than two years, more than twelve hundred Saints were collected in Jackson County, a motley gathering of people of almost every hue, character, and creed. There were ambitious men among them, and feuds, bitter and uncompromising soon disturbed the peace of the church, and jeopardized its existence. These were speedily hushed by menaces of perils from without. The people of Jackson County became uneasy because of the clanship exhibited by the Mormons, and resolved to expel them before they became too

formidable in numbers. They were driven to the wilderness across the river, and their consecrated places fell into the hands of the "Gentiles." Smith and the heads of the church had returned to Kirtland. When the attack upon the Mormons was known, the Prophet sent a band of men called the "Army of Zion," to aid the persecuted brethren. Alone, these valiant men could not cope with the Missouri militia and armed settlers; and as Heaven did not seem disposed to assist the Saints, the expedition proved fruitless. Zion was left to the invaders. This persecution was unprovoked, and the Governor of Missouri exerted all his influence for the protection of the persons and property of the Mormons.

The expelled Mormons seated themselves in Clay County, and many returned to Kirtland. In May, 1834, Smith and a company of one hundred Saints visited the distressed brethren in Missouri. On the journey through the wilderness, Smith adduced a wonderful proof of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Among some ancient mounds was found a huge skeleton with an arrow between its ribs. It was immediately revealed to the Prophet that the skeleton was that of a Lamanite, the people treated of in the Book of Mormon; that his name was Zeph, a warrior known from Cumorah to the Rocky



DISCOVERY OF A LAMANITE SKELETON.

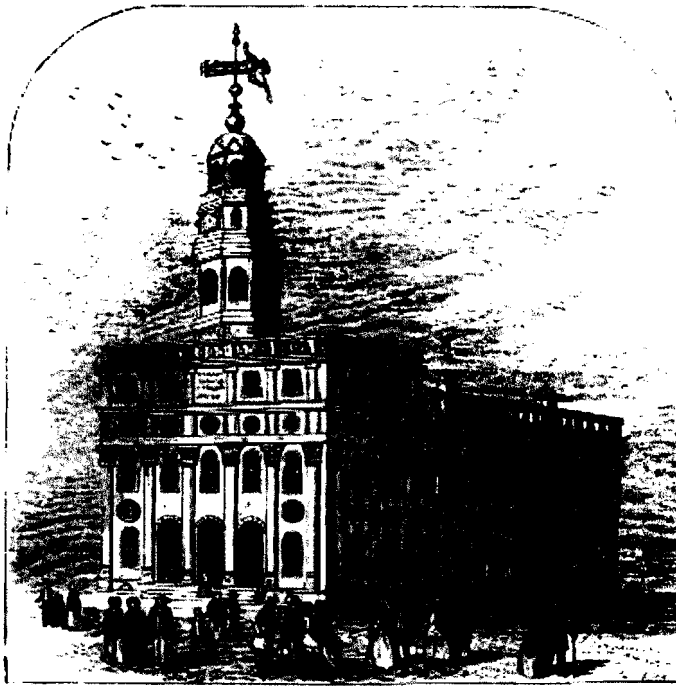
Mountains as one of the subjects of the great Prophet Omandagus; that the arrow was a Lamanitish one, and that the chief was killed in the last great battle fought between the Lamanites and Nephites. The people marveled, and the faith of all was strengthened.

In the autumn of 1834, Smith returned to Kirtland, and with others, entered largely into property speculations in 1835 and '36. The crash of 1837 came; the Bank at Kirtland failed;

the managers were prosecuted for swindling, and Smith had a revelation commanding himself, Rigdon, and others to leave Kirtland under cover of night, and go to the brethren in Missouri. There they found the church in great disorder. The numbers were rapidly increasing, and quarrels with the "Gentiles" around them often waxed into conflicts. A spirit of insubordination appeared in the church, and by revelation, Smith denounced Cowdrey, Rigdon, and other



MORMON ENCAMPMENT ON THE MISSISSIPPI.



MORMON TEMPLE AT NAUVOO.

early associates. Contentions within and without menaced the church with destruction, and for three years great excitement prevailed in Missouri. The Mormons and their opponents had frequent collisions, and many lives were sacrificed. Some of the fiery spirits among the

Mormons openly defied the people of Missouri, and even threatened to march upon St. Louis, and lay it in ashes. These imprudent menaces exasperated the people to such a degree that the civil power could not restrain them. Tales of polygamy, debauchery, theft, and murder, were



SMITH AT THE HEAD OF THE NAUVOO LEGION.

told of the Mormons, and their utter expulsion from the State was demanded. A lawless, heartless mob, under the implied sanction of the civil authority, assumed the task, and during the bleak days of November, 1838, the Mormons were driven before them like chaff on the blast, toward the Mississippi. Young and old, the sick, the feeble, delicate women and sucklings, were exposed to storms, hunger, and every privation. In sad plight, weighed down with intensest sufferings, twelve thousand of these miserable people arrived upon the western bank of the Mississippi, pursued by the exasperated Missourians. The people of Illinois, on the opposite shore, commiserated their fate, and opened to them the arms of succor. This cruel persecution of thousands of innocent people, is a lasting stain upon the character not only of Missouri, but the boasted enlightened age in which we live. Instead of damping the ardor of the Saints, it increased it a hundred fold; and in this case as in all others, "the blood of the martyrs" became "the seed of the church."

Upon a rich delta formed by the Des Moines and Mississippi Rivers, in Hancock County, Illinois, the homeless and starving fugitives

pitched their tents, and the spot was solemnly consecrated as an "everlasting residence" for the Saints. A town soon arose, and was named Nauvoo—the City of Beauty; and upon the brow of a lofty bluff a temple site was chosen, and consecrated. A plan of the Temple was revealed to Smith, and a Gentile architect was employed to construct it. With pomp and solemn ceremonials its corner-stone was laid on the 6th of April, 1841. It was built of beautiful white limestone, and in style, size, and decorations was intended to exceed in magnificence every other fane upon earth. The saints every where responded nobly to the call for contributions, and when the Mormons left Nauvoo for the land of the Honey Bee, they had expended almost a million of dollars upon this temple.

A day of peace now dawned upon the Mormon Church, and its head was assiduous in promoting its strength and extension. Made wiser by past conflicts, he prepared for future contingencies, and a large portion of his brethren were organized into a military corps, called "The Nauvoo Legion," of which he assumed command and the rank of Lieutenant-general. He was fond of military display, and this fine corps



SMITH PREACHING TO THE INDIANS

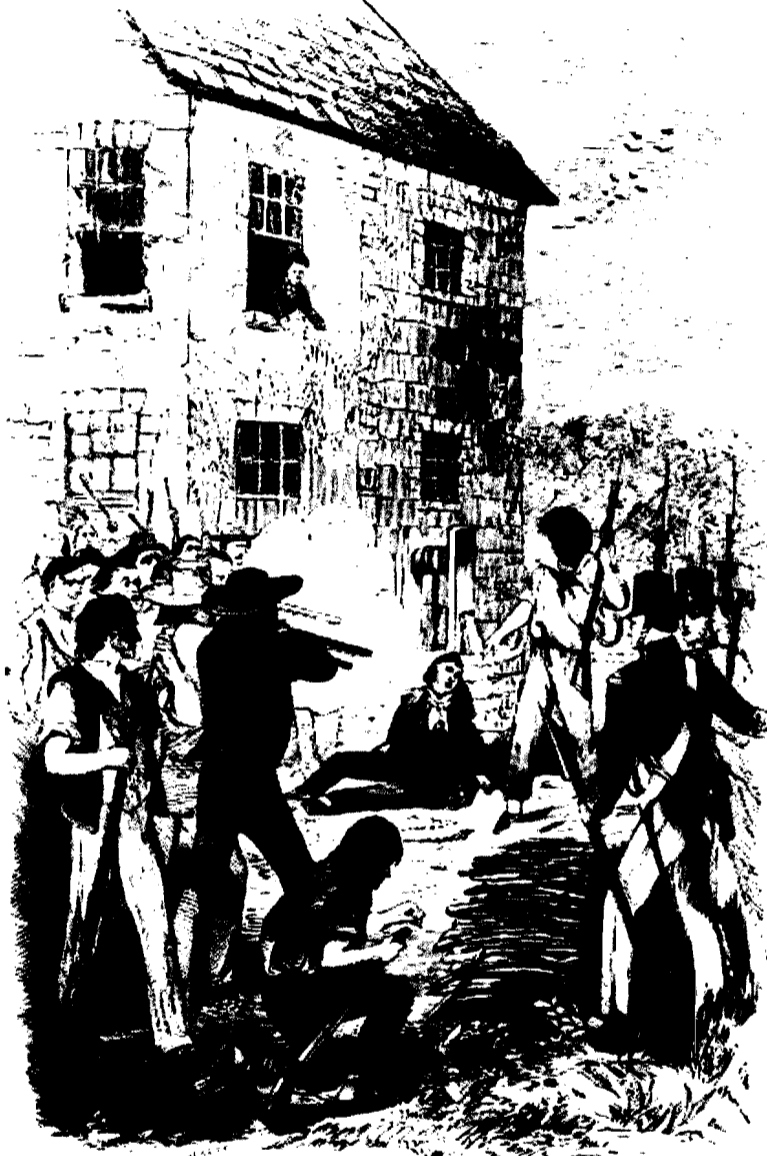
THE MORMONS.

619

was often paraded. On such occasions the Prophet usually appeared at their head, accompanied by a half-dozen ladies on horseback, who were dressed in black velvet, and wore waving plumes of white feathers. Yet he did not forget the spiritual interests of the Church, and he often crossed the Mississippi, and preached the new gospel to groups of Indians on the borders of the prairies of Iowa.

External peace seemed productive of internal troubles. Sidney Rigdon and others began to receive monstrous revelations, and among other things was authority for one man to have several "spiritual wives;" a doctrine which has now become settled as correct, and which is mani-

ifested by polygamy openly practiced and defended. Rumors of these immoral doctrines and corresponding practices went abroad, and the people of Illinois felt scandalized. Smith endeavored to allay the storm of indignation which he saw rising, by flat contradictions, excommunications of indiscreet revelators, and denunciations of some of the most active agitators in Nauvoo. The denounced and excommunicated retaliated. Smith was charged with all the crimes he had accused others of; and a newspaper was established in Nauvoo to expose his alleged vicious conduct. By his order the obnoxious press was destroyed, the printing materials were scattered to the winds and the



DEATH OF JOSEPH SMITH.

editors were obliged to flee for their lives. At Carthage they procured warrants for the arrest of the Prophet, his brother Hyrum, and sixteen others, accused of being accessories in the destruction of the printing-office. The constables sent to arrest them were expelled from the city. The people of the county resolved to vindicate their laws, and the militia were ordered out. The Mormons fortified their city, and the Nauvoo Legion slept upon their arms. The torch of civil war was lighted, and the Governor of the State took the field in person. To avoid bloodshed he parleyed with the Mormon leaders, and persuaded the Smiths to surrender themselves to the civil authority, with the assurance that they should receive protection and justice. The Prophet and his brother Hyrum were arrested and sent to Carthage jail. A new issue was now raised—the Smiths were charged with high treason. The fiercest animosity existed between the people of Hancock County and the Mormons. Rumor magnified every fact and event, and the idea prevailed that at the connivance of the Governor, the Mormon leaders would be allowed to escape. This idea grew into vigorous action. The people vowed that, "If law could not reach them, powder and shot should;" and on the evening of the 27th of June, 1844, a mob, with blackened faces, fell upon and dispersed the guard at Carthage jail, and rushed into the prison where the two Smiths were confined. Hyrum was shot dead in the cell, and the Prophet was mortally wounded while attempting to leap from a window. He

was placed against a wall by one of the gang, and dispatched by bullets from four muskets. The murderers were never identified. Thus died, by the hands of violence, the great head and founder of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," at the early age of thirty-nine years. His death is accounted a martyrdom by his followers, and his name and deeds are held in great reverence among them.

The death of the Prophet aroused the vengeance of the Mormons, and they burned with a desire to go forth and spread desolation among the Gentiles. Happily for all, moderate councils prevailed, and their thoughts were turned to the choice of a new head. Rigdon, next in office to Smith, claimed the honor; but the College of the Twelve Apostles conferred it upon the president of their council, Brigham Young. There were other aspirants, and these, with Rigdon, stirred up disaffection. They were all excommunicated, and since that time the influence of Rigdon has steadily waned.

Brigham Young, who is yet at the head of this remarkable "theo-democratic" community, seems well-fitted for his station. Modest and retiring in his private deportment, he is energetic and fervid in his public ministrations, and has unbounded influence over his people. His genius was felt and acknowledged by the College of Twelve before the death of Smith, and he received their unanimous suffrage. With great zeal he applied himself to the discharge of his responsible duties. He established order and quiet at Nauvoo. Around the City of Beauty the wilderness was



MORMONS CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI ON THE ICE.

THE MORMONS.

615

every where bursting into bloom under the hand of culture, when the mutterings of another storm of persecution were heard. The horizon began to darken, when Rigdon and other recusants, intent on revenge, sent forth horrid tales of debauchery and crime at Nauvoo, to be caught up and repeated by the myriad-tongued press in every part of the land. The Mormons were considered too vile for toleration in a Christian country, and again mobocracy sent forth its behests to lawless men. The smaller Mormon settlements were attacked by armed mobs, and all Illinois became the theatre of civil commotion. From distant States public indignation cheered on the assailants, and it was soon perceived that another Mormon exodus was inevitable. With moistened eyes and swelling hearts, the Saints prepared to leave the City of Beauty and the Temple they so much prized. A special revelation commanded a departure for the far-off wilderness toward the setting sun, and in February, 1846, sixteen hundred men, women, and children, crossed the Mississippi on the ice, and, traveling with ox-teams and on foot, penetrated the wilderness to the Indian country, near Council Bluffs, on the Missouri. Property was disposed of at Nauvoo, and during that spring company after company, with their cattle, hastened to join their brethren on the distant prairies.

Many lingered; for a revelation commanded the completion and dedication of their Temple. This tarrying excited distrust of Mormon faith, and the mob again armed to drive the Saints away. The *Legion* defended the city. Many conflicts ensued, but the assailants were kept at bay until the Temple was finished. Then came the dedication. It was a scene of great interest—a *tableau* such as our continent had never exhibited. The Temple itself was a magnificent work of art—a wonderful monument of the unity and energy of a strange people. Young men and maidens came with festoons of flowers, to deco-

rate the twelve elaborately-carved oxen, upon which rested the baptismal laver. The walls were enriched by symbolic ornaments, and in the splendor of lamps and torches, the sun, moon, and stars carved and gilded upon the walls, glittered like their great originals. Prayers were uttered, chants were sung, and the voice of the great Seer, in the midst of bishops in their sacerdotal robes, solemnly pronounced the Temple dedicated to Almighty God. Even while these impressive services were in progress, the sounds of preparation for departure were heard throughout the city; and an hour after the walls were stripped of the precious emblems, the lights extinguished, the portals closed, and the inscription,

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD:

BUILT BY THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS:

HOLINESS TO THE LORD:

was placed over it, the great body of the persecuted were crowding to the shores of the Mississippi, with their faces toward the occident. On the very day when the costly Temple was dedicated, it was abandoned to the "Gentiles." Thirty months afterward, it was destroyed by fire, at midnight; and in May, 1850, the City of Beauty, then inhabited by a colony of Icarians, from Paris, was desolated by a tornado, and the partially-restored Temple was cast to the earth, a heap of ruins. In September, 1846, the last lingering Mormons at Nauvoo were driven out, at the point of the bayonet, by 1600 troops; and these homeless exiles—sick men, feeble women, and delicate girls—were compelled to traverse the wildernesses of Missouri during the storms and frosts of autumn and winter.

Under the guidance of President Young, the Mormon host reached the banks of the Missouri, beyond the limits of the States, at the opening of summer. There they were met by an officer of the United States army, with a requisition to



MORMON TABERNACLE CAMP.

furnish a body of men to serve in the war with Mexico. Although smarting under the lash of persecution and a deep sense of wrong, they cheerfully obeyed; and within three days, a corps of five hundred men, the very sinews of the Mormon host, were organized, and departed for California, to fight in defense of a flag under which they had vainly sought protection. It was an exhibition of loyalty which greatly blunted the keen edge of detraction.

There, upon the broad prairies, they turned up the virgin soil and planted. Leaving a few to cultivate and gather for wanderers who might come after them, the host moved on. Never since the exodus of Israel from Egypt has a pageant so full of interest, so consecrated by loftiest heroism, been witnessed. Order marked every step of their progress. The voice of the

Seer was to them the voice of God, and implicit obedience was the result of his commands. Discipline every where prevailed. Every ten wagons were under the command of a captain, who obeyed a captain of fifty; and the latter, in turn, obeyed a centurion, or captain of a hundred, or else a member of the High Council of the Church. They formed *Tabernacle Camps*, or temporary "Stakes," at eligible points, where they stopped to sow and reap, to spin and weave, and perform necessary mechanical work. Great cheerfulness prevailed among them; and singing and dancing, sports and pastimes agreeably alternated with the duties of labor and devotion. They made short marches, and encamped in military order every night. No obstacles impeded their progress. They forded swift-running streams, and bridged the deeper floods. Disease could



MORMONS BUILDING A BRIDGE.

not chill their zeal, nor bridle their hopes. Many were swept away by miasmatic fevers, and were buried by the way during the summer and autumn; and when winter fell upon them, in the midst of those vast plains, inhabited by the Potawatimies and their neighbors, their sufferings were great, notwithstanding they enlisted the liveliest sympathies of the aborigines. They made caves in the sand-hills to shelter themselves from the fierce winds which came howling from the snowy mountains of Nebraska; and when spring came, they marked out the site of a city on the banks of the Missouri, in the midst of the Great Prairie inhabited by the Omahaws. More than seven hundred houses were built; a Tabernacle was raised; mills and workshops were constructed, and a newspaper

(*The Frontier Guardian*) was published.* The rich alluvium around was turned up by the plow, seed was sown, and during the summer and early autumn abundant harvests were gathered. Missionaries were sent to Oregon, California, and even to the Sandwich Islands and Australia. Others, like Caleb and Joshua, were sent to "spy out" the wilderness before them, and find another fitting place for an "everlasting habitation." The valley of the Great Salt Lake, inclosed within lofty and rugged mountains, fertile, isolated, and healthful, was chosen; and

* This city was named *Kane*, in honor of a gentleman of that name (a brother of Dr. E. K. Kane, the Polar explorer), who was then their guest, and who has since given a graphic account of this remarkable exodus, in a lecture before the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

THE MORMONS.

617



CROSSING THE PRAIRIES.

thitherward, early in the season, a pioneer company of 143 picked men and seventy wagons, drawn by horses, accompanied by their wives and children, and the members of the High Council, proceeded with seeds and implements of agriculture. Their route was up the left bank of the North Fork of the Platte River to Fort Laramie, where they crossed the stream; and following its course at the base of the rugged Black Hills, penetrated the South Pass. They were now fairly among the Rocky Mountains. Along the Sweet Water, through deep rocky cañons, across the Green River and the rushing Bear and Weber, and over the lofty summits of the Utah range, they toiled until the evening of the 20th of July, 1847, when they beheld, from the top of the Wasatch Mountains, the placid Salt Lake glittering in the beams of the setting sun. To those weary wanderers this mountain-top was a Pisgah—it was a scene of wondrous

interest. Westward, lofty peaks, bathed in purple air, pierced the sky; as far as the eye could reach, north and south, stretched the fertile Valley of Promise, and here and there the vapors of hot springs, gushing from rocky coverts, curled above the hills like smoke from the hearth-fires of home.

The pilgrims entered the valley on the 21st of July, and on the 24th the President and High council arrived. Within a week potatoes were planted, the site of a city chosen upon a gentle slope on the bank of a stream which they named Jordan, connecting the more southern Utah Lake with the Great Salt Lake, a fort was commenced, quite extensive seeding began, and with solemn ceremonies the land was consecrated to the Lord. When the seed put forth in autumn, an immense army of huge black bugs came and destroyed the tender blades, and a dearth menaced the pioneers. Soon great flocks of beautiful white



HOT SPRINGS THREE MILES FROM GREAT SALT LAKE CITY.

birds, strangers in the valley, came like kind angels every morning, devoured the "black Philistines," and at evening soared away to their mysterious retreats beyond the mountains. They saved a portion of the crop, but famine came. The Mormons boiled the hides of slaughtered animals for food, and dug roots for sustenance by the side of the savage Utes among the hills. Deliverance came. A large party came forward from the Missouri region with abundance of

grain. Fields were seeded; the mild autumn air and warm sun matured late planted crops, and they were blessed with plenty. The following year (1848) the inhabitants of *Kane* pressed forward to the valley, and Saints flocked thither from various points. The New Jerusalem was laid out within an area of four square miles, with broad streets and spacious side-walks. The work of building a city went on rapidly. A spacious house was built for the President and



PRESIDENT'S HOUSE AND MINT, SALT LAKE CITY.

Council, and in less than two years after the advent of the pioneers in the valley, a convention was called at Great Salt Lake City (March 5, 1849) to organize a civil government. A "free and independent government, by the name of the *State of Deseret*" was ordained, and a constitution was adopted designed to remain in force only until the Congress of the United States should erect the settlement into a Territory. Under this temporary instrument, whose pro-

visions were consonant with the Federal Constitution, governmental machinery for "Gentile" residents and travelers, was put in operation, the Mormons themselves being governed entirely by the Head of the Church. A territorial government was established in 1850, and in October of that year the President of the United States appointed Brigham Young governor. The Mormons are now making strenuous efforts to increase the population of their territory



ORSON PRATT

THE MORMONS

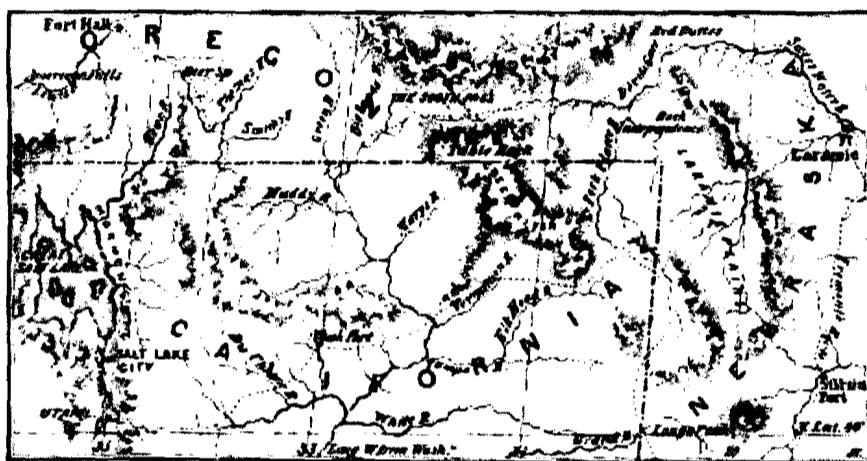
619

to the constitutional number (60,000), which will entitle them to a sovereign State-government. To this end they have sent emissaries abroad to invite the Saints to the new Zion, and a sum exceeding a quarter of a million of dollars has been provided, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of poor pilgrims thither. The pens of Orson Pratt (who has recently established a monthly publication called *The Seer*, at Washington City) their great expounder, and others, are busy in the promulgation of their peculiar views, and in encomiums upon the beauty of the country, the peacefulness and purity of society, and the general happiness of the people of *Deseret*.

In Great Britain their converts are very numerous, amounting at the present time to not less than 30,000. In the three kingdoms of England, Wales, and Scotland, they had, in 1851, 12 high priests, 1761 elders, 1590 priests, 1226 teachers, and 682 deacons. Since 1838 more than 50,000 converts have been baptized in

Great Britain, of whom about 17,000 have joined their brethren in America. A large portion of them land at New-Orleans, and others go around Cape Horn to California, and thence to *Deseret*, where, according to Elder Pratt, there are now about 30,000 Saints. They have missionaries in every quarter of the globe—even the Celestials of China have heard their preaching, and the sect numbers at the present time, not far from 200,000 souls! Should permanent prosperity attend the commonwealth of *Deseret*, the great bulk of these converts will doubtless be gathered there. What will be the result of the consolidation of such a people, one in interest and faith, in the heart of our continent, whose acknowledged head is supreme in all things, spiritual, temporal, social, and political, is a question worthy of the profound attention of statesmen and political economists.

The country inhabited by the Mormons is one of the most remarkable on the face of the globe. It consists of a series of extensive valleys and



THE GREAT SALT LAKE REGION.

rocky margins, spread out in an immense basin, surrounded by rugged mountains, out of which no waters flow. It is midway between the States on the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean, perfectly isolated from habitable regions, and embracing a domain "covering sixteen degrees of longitude in the Utah latitudes." On the east are the sterile spurs of the Rocky Mountains, stretching down to the vast plains traversed by the Platte River; on the west, extending nearly a thousand miles toward the Pacific, are arid salt deserts, broken by barren mountains; and north and south are immense mountain districts unsusceptible to habitation by man.

According to Kane, Stansbury, Gunnison and others who have visited that region, the Great Basin is more than four thousand feet above the ocean, between the Nevada and Wasatch ranges. The Great Salt Lake is on the eastern side of an interior basin five hundred miles in diameter; and its southeastern shore, where the Mormons have settl'd is the most fertile portion of the

whole region. The country along the Jordan from Utah Lake to the Great Salt Lake is very beautiful, and the numerous streams which gush from the hill sides, are cold, fresh, and sparkling.* The valleys afford perennial pasturage, and by early irrigation they are made to yield abundant crops. Sixty to seventy bushels of wheat to the acre is an average yield, and potatoes and Indian corn grow luxuriantly. It is estimated that the Great Valley is capable of giving sustenance, from each square mile, to four thousand persons, and that the Territory of *Deseret* will maintain, with ease, a million of inhabitants. Wild game abounds in the mountains, and the streams are filled with excellent fish, the climate is delightful at all seasons of the year, and "breathing is a real luxury."

* Lieutenant Gunnison says of the Great Salt Lake: "The water is perfectly saturated with salt, and so dense that persons float, cork-like, on its waves, or stand suspended with ease, with the shoulders exposed above the surface"—*The Mormons*, etc., p. 18.

Southward, over the rim of the basin, is a fine cotton-growing region into which the Mormons are penetrating. The vast hills and mountain-slopes present the finest pasturage in the world for sheep, alpacas and goats. The water power of the whole mountain region is immense. Iron mines every where abound; and in the Green River Basin are inexhaustible beds of coal. In these great natural resources and defenses, pos-

essed by a people of such indomitable energy and perseverance as the Mormons, we see the vital elements of a powerful mountain nation, in the heart of our continent, and in the direct pathway from the Atlantic to the Pacific States, that may yet play a most important part, for good or evil, in the destinies of our country and of the world.

The Mormons hold to the Sacrament of Bap-



MORMON BAPTISM.

tion, but teach that it is not only efficacious in the salvation of the recipient but that a person may be baptized for the unregenerated dead—that a man may become a saviour for a friend already in the spirit-world. They profess to adhere to the primitive forms of church government and have the several orders of officers. The efficacy of Confirmation, or laying on of hands for the impartation of the Holy Ghost, is taught, but this, like other rites, is variously interpreted by different teachers. In all their ministrations the Mormon teachers are liberal latitudinarians. Like the Epicureans they teach the enjoyment of all the pleasures of this life. Their church worship is opened and closed by the performance of lively airs by a band of music; the revered elders join in the dances, feasting, and sports of the people, and the whole College of Apostles are what pleasure-loving folk would call "jolly fellows." The bosom of the church of Latter

Day Saints offers the joys of a Mussulman's Paradise to its children.*

Polygamy has doubtless been practiced by the chief men of the Church, ever since the revelation on that subject to Sidney Rigdon, at Nauvoo. It was given the soft appellation of "Spiritual wife doctrine," and they sought to give the impression that its practice betook of the purity of Platonic love. But the world would not believe it, although the inspired Prophet himself declared it. They still asserted the purity of the relation, even after they had founded their isolated city in the wilderness; but intelligent Gentiles when visiting them, discovered the materiality of the doctrine. "I was not aware before" says a recent writer, "that polygamy was sanctioned by their creed, beyond a species of ethereal Platonism which accorded to its especial Saints chosen partners, called spiritual wives; but I now found that these, contrary to one's ordinary

* The reader, if desirous of becoming acquainted with the details of Mormon theology, faith and practice, will find them in the following books: The Book of Mormon—The Gospel Reflector—The Times and Seasons—Doctrines and Covenants—Voice of Warning, and The Millennial Star. These are canonical, and the writings of Joseph Smith and the two Pratts, and the General Epis-

tics of the Presidency in Deseret are acknowledged as authoritative commentaries. The most reliable "Gentile" accounts of the Mormons may be found in Kane's Discourse already alluded to; Bennett's History of the Saints; the Narrative of Catharine Lewis; The Mormons, London, 1851; Stansbury's Expedition to the Great Salt Lake, and Gunnison's Mormons or Latter Day Saints

THE MORMONS.

621



CEREMONY OF CONFIRMATION.

notions of Spiritualism, gave birth to cherubs, and unfledged angels." No longer able to conceal the monstrous fact from the world, they now openly avow and defend the practice of polygamy. They even give it the sanction of a religious duty as a means of greater happiness in the future world. They teach that *no woman can attain to celestial glory without a husband to introduce her into paradise; nor can a man arrive at full perfection without at least one wife; and the greater the number he is able to take with him the higher will be his seat in the celestial city!* In a recent number of *The Bee*, Pratt, the great expounder of their doctrines, boldly advocates this practice, at the same time explaining the various guards which they profess are thrown around the "peculiar institution" to prevent immoral results. Polygamy is now openly practiced in the Great Salt Lake City, and the dignitaries of the church have each as many wives as they are able to support. It is said that President Young, the Sovereign Pontiff, has at least thirty wives in his household! Yet we must not unfairly withhold the acknowledgment that, as a people, they practice many social virtues. They are temperate, industrious, frugal, and honest. They are kind and hospitable to strangers; and many a half-starved and weary emigrant on his way to California, has had reason to bless the Mormons for their charity. The surface of society there exhibits the aspect of the highest degree of public and private virtue and sound morality. But the poison is at work secretly; and not many years will elapse before its effects will be seen on the surface of the body politic.

To the mind of the Christian, the religious

character of the Mormons offers a dark picture. To the American patriot, the philanthropist, and the Christian philosopher, the political and social aspect of the sect awakens fearful apprehensions concerning the future. The Mormons are, ostensibly, loyal to the Federal Constitution, and profess great purity in their social relations. Will their loyalty survive the day of sufficient power to avenge the wrongs they have suffered, provoked or not, at the hands of American citizens? Is their allegiance to the Head of their Church as Supreme Pontiff—"prophet, priest, and king," spiritual and temporal—insignificant and without meaning? Will polygamy, now openly avowed and practiced, be productive of no social evils, which may menace the stability of public virtue and the best interests of society? These are questions of vast importance, and command our most serious attention. The fire of persecution is quenched, we hope, forever. The puissance of public opinion, formed on the basis of public virtue and supported by public law, must enter the lists as champion of social purity and uncorrupt republicanism. The sooner the trumpet of the herald is heard, the better. The sect is rapidly increasing in numbers, power, and influence. They really assume political, social, and religious independence of all the world. They will not tolerate public officers among them, who are not of their faith. They enact laws, regulate commerce, coin money, and do all other things which an independent state claims a right to do. Asserting their saintship *par excellence*, and consequently the whole earth as their patrimony, they look for universal dominion, temporal and spiritual. The Great Salt

Lake City—the New Jerusalem—is to be the central capital where the glory of the earth is to be displayed. The walls of a magnificent temple are rapidly rising, and soon the most gor-



NORMAN GOLD COIN.

geous flag that ever floated upon the breeze is to be unfurled upon "Ensign Mount," a lofty pinnacle overlooking the city, as a symbol of universal dominion. It is to be constructed of the banners of all nations and peoples, and to be a signal of the speedy verification of the decree of the Lord, as saith Isaiah: "All ye inhabitants of the world and dwellers upon earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign upon the mountains. And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it."

We are not prophets of evil, but deem it wise to keep the sentinels upon our towers awake by frequently inquiring, "Watchman, what of the night!"

NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

THE BRIDGE OF TILSIT.

UPON the banks of the Niemen, which separates the west of Europe from the boundless wastes of the Russian empire, Napoleon arrested the march of his triumphant columns. But twenty months had now elapsed since he left the camp of Boulogne. In that time he had traversed the Continent, and conquered all the armies of combined Europe. The storms of winter had passed away. The beauty of summer was blooming around him. His soldiers, flushed with victory, and adoring their chieftain, were ready to follow wherever he should lead. But his enemies were incapable of any further resistance. Alexander and Frederic William, in the extreme of dejection, were upon the northern bank of the river, with about 70,000 men, the broken bands of their armies. These troops, having lost most of their artillery and munitions of war, were utterly dispirited. On the other bank the eagles of Napoleon fluttered proudly over 170,000 victors.

Upon the left bank of the Niemen there is the little town of Tilsit. It contains about ten thousand inhabitants. Napoleon had just arrived in this place when a letter was placed in his hands from Alexander, proposing an armistice. Napoleon had now been absent from the capital of his empire nearly a year, enduring inconceivable toils and hardships. With the utmost cordiality

he accepted the proffered advances. Marshal Kalkreuth appeared, in behalf of the Prussians, to implore the clemency of the conqueror. Napoleon received him with great courtesy, and said, "You alone, of the Prussian officers, have treated the French prisoners humanely. On this account, and as a mark of my esteem and gratitude, I consent to a suspension of arms, without requiring the delivery of the remaining Prussian fortresses."

The Niemen alone now separated the belligerent armies. But Napoleon, with characteristic caution, concentrated his forces, reared an intrenched camp, collected immense stores, and posted the divisions of his army just as if the war had not been interrupted. The two vanquished sovereigns were now in great haste to open negotiations. The first interview was appointed for the 25th of June.

It is not often that the mathematical and the poetic elements combine in the same mind. They did so, in the most extraordinary degree, in the mind of Napoleon. No one ever had a more rich appreciation than he of beauty and of sublimity. He felt the impress of moral grandeur, and he well knew how to place that impress upon other hearts. The two most powerful sovereigns in the world were to meet, in friendly converse, to decide whether war should still desolate Europe. For a year their mighty armies had been engaged in one of the most sanguinary conflicts earth has ever witnessed. These hosts, consisting in the aggregate of more than two hundred thousand men, were now facing each other, separated but by a narrow stream. The eyes of all Europe were riveted upon the astonishing scene. Napoleon fully realized the grandeur of the occasion. With his accustomed tact, he seized upon it, to produce an impression never to be forgotten.

He ordered a large and magnificent raft to be moored in the middle of the Niemen, equidistant from both banks of the river. The raft was carpeted, and ornamented with the richest decorations. Upon one part a gorgeous pavilion was erected. No expense was spared to invest the construction with the most imposing magnificence. The two armies were drawn up upon each shore. Thousands of people from the neighboring country had thronged to the spot, to witness the extraordinary spectacle. God seemed to smile upon this scene of reconciliation. The sun rose brilliantly into the cloudless sky, and the balmy atmosphere of one of the most lovely of June mornings invigorated all hearts.

At one o'clock precisely the thunders of artillery rose sublimely from either shore, as each Emperor, accompanied by a few of his principal officers, stepped into a boat on his own side of the river. The numerous and gorgeously appareled suite of the respective monarchs followed in a boat immediately after their sovereigns. The main raft was intended solely for Napoleon and Alexander. Two smaller rafts, also of most beautiful construction, were anchored at a short distance, for the imperial retinue. Napoleon reached the raft first, and immediately crossed it