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Filed in the office of the Judge on
the 10 day of May 1844 in trial
of Ed. John Howard DEFENCE

OF

ELDER WILLIAM SMITH,

AGAINST THE SLANDERS OF

ABRAHAM BURTIS, AND OTHERS;

In which are included several Certificates, and the
duties of Members in the Church of Christ,
in settling difficulties one with
another, according to
the Law of God.

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“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”—MATTH. 7 ; 21.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”—MATTH. 22; 14.

“Ye shall know them by their fruits; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.”—MATTH. 7 ; 16.

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1844.

## TO THE READER.

The following discourse, delivered by Elder William Smith, at the Brick School House, on Cream Ridge, Monmouth Co., N. J., Sunday, Dec. 2nd, 1843, on the subject of infractions and divisions in the Church, and his defence against the foul calumny and detraction of Abraham Burtis and his colleagues, including several certificates, together with the report of Council, and expulsion of Abraham Burtis from the Church of "Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."

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### PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Meeting convened at half past 11 o'clock, A. M., opened by reading Matthew 7; singing and prayer.

I arose and stated the object of my call for the meeting; that it was in justice to my friends in this part of the Country, and my feelings;—and for the interest of the cause of God and the preservation of the saints, and all good people, from the jaws of destruction.

I have felt it my duty, for this once to make a statement that the people may know the origin of this late persecution upon my head; and for this purpose I have thought proper to commence in due form and give a historical account, from beginning to end, and to make one general defence against the lying slanders of these, my enemies and persecutors; and to give a fair and impartial warning to all, that, after having done this, I shall take no further notice of the matter, no, not even to kick one of their lies out of the road, were I to come in contact with it: They can lie, slander, and defame, if they wish, and all that have a desire may notice and foster them; but, for my own part, I have no time to spend to pay any attention to them; and after I have made my statement, the people can judge for themselves; and if they are disposed to believe Burtis and his lying crew, they can, and welcome,—I cannot help it; and if they should be satisfied with my defence, I shall rejoice in that I have done my duty to my God, and to my brethren; in order to do this, I have chosen the following text, to speak from on this occasion.

## DEFENCE OF ELDER WILLIAM SMITH.

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### TEXT.

2 Tim. 3; 6 to 8—"For of this sort are they, which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts."

"Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"

"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobates concerning the faith."

RESPECTED CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND BROTHERS,—

As the subject of this text is one of a singular character, it will not be thought strange or improper I trust, if I introduce the subject of my own cause and personal abuse as a matter of interest on the present occasion. In fact, I consider that the circumstances under which I am placed, require some remarks from me, to rebut the foul aspersions and base calumny, that has been heaped with an unsparing hand upon me.

It is a fact, lamentable in the history of all ages, that infractions and divisions, more or less, have risen up in the Church of Christ; which a cursory examination of the past will prove.

I shall only call your attention to a few examples, and then proceed with matters connected with my own personal interest.

*First.*—Of infractions and divisions, and the various causes that lead to them, we will find as we trace the sacred volume, were the spirit of envy, malice, jealousy and hatred, which engenders strife and every other evil work, and where these are; there is the spirit of lying, persecution and murder, which the sequel will prove as we pursue. See Gen. 4; 3 to 16.

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering:

"But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door: And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

"And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

"And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground:

“And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand.

“When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength: a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

“And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

“Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth: and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

“And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

“And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the East of Eden.”

We learn from the above, that a sore and grievous difficulty took place between two brethren, not only of the flesh, but of the Church of Christ; as no other Church then existed, and it appears that the principle cause of this division and murder, was on account of the before mentioned spirit of jealousy, envy, malice and hatred, which is the spirit of the evil one, or as Paul terms it, the works of the flesh, hear him, Gal. 5; 15 to 21.

“But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

“But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

“Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

“But the fruits of the Spirit are contrary to these works, and hear the inspired Apostle as he continues, Verse 22 to 26.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

“Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

“Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

We find that where the last qualifications are, there is no strife, no disunion in the Church, for where the love of God is, there is Charity,

and "Charity covers a multitude of sins." But wars and fighting whence cometh they? not from God, neither by the love and Spirit of God, as Paul plainly tells us. Let us hear him further on this important subject. 1 Corth. 1; 10 to 16.

"Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

"For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloë, that there are contentions among you.

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.

"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

"I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

"Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

"And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other."

Here Paul speaks of a party spirit, divisions in the Church of God, as being incompatible with the Spirit of Christianity, and even thanks God, that he had baptized none of them, except "Crispus and Gaius," and "the household of Stephanas," because of their contentions and divisions.

These walk not, (where those divisions are,) according to that life, that is hid with Christ in God, putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man Christ Jesus.

Again 1 Corth. 3; 3 to 5. "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

"For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"

"Let no man deceive you (dear brethren) through Philosophy, and vain deceit; but mark them that do such things," this was the command of the Apostle of Jesus, to his Roman brethren, See Rom. 16; 17 and 18. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

But let me ask, says one, if offences arise between two brethren, how is this to be reconciled? Answer.—Not by entering your complaint to the world, falling into a rage, and blaspheming the name of the great God, but pursue the course that Jesus and his Apostle Paul have pointed out. First then, one testimony against a brother is not sufficient, "By two or three witnesses." See *Book of Covenants*, page 125. And it becomes necessary to adhere strictly

to the law of God in such cases, to prevent imposition upon the Saints, and preserve injured innocence. The case of Joseph being sold into Egypt, and thrown into prison by the false witness of Potipher's wife, (See Gen. 39 ; 6—22,) shows a sufficient example on this subject, i. e. the testimony of a single person is not sufficient to condemn a brother of the Church of God, and respecting an Elder, subjected as they are, to the malice and false accusations of wicked and ungodly men and women, borne on by a spirit of hatred and revenge. To prevent such evils, wise provision has been made in the law of God, upon this subject. Hear Paul concerning the matter, See 1 Tim. 5 ; 17 to 19. "Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour ; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

"For the Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and the labourer is worthy of his reward.

"Against an Elder, receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses:" and in verse 20, 21, he says, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins : keep thyself pure."

But if an evil arises, and a brother offends, what is to be done ? let us restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, (not malice, neither in the rage of a demon,) but let us always adhere to the law of Israel's God. See Gal. 6 ; 1 to 5.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

"But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

"For every man shall bear his own burden."

Again Matt. 18 ; 15 to 18. "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone : if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church (not to his enemies): but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

"Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

This, then, appears to be the way, and only way to reconcile difficulties between brethren of the same faith, according to the law of God ; but what are we to think of them that commune with us for years,



that say, "Come and welcome, preach for us, give us the hand of fellowship, bid us farewell when leaving, with cheerful countenances bestow upon us gifts and blessings, and invite us from distant lands to visit them, and then in an unexpected hour, in the time of trouble and in the hour of danger, and affliction, forsake us, and with pretended charges of a long standing, betray us into the hands of our enemies, this is a mystery I shall leave with the good intelligence of this audience to explain, and the history of the future to unfold.

The time to correct wrongs, is evident, at the time the wrong was committed, and not two years afterwards. For if a man be innocent of a crime, how shall he know that his brother has aught against him? and when he has committed no wrong, how shall he make reconciliation against false charges, unless his brother makes them known to him? Thanks be to the God of Elijah, his law is so adapted that it meets and reaches the capacity of man under all circumstances, condemnation to the wicked; but a safeguard to the saints, against all the shafts of satan, and his emissaries. See Matt. 5; 23 & 24. "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee.

"Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

We have eat and drank of the bread and wine; that holy communion and sacred ordinance of the "*Lord's Supper*," and you must be aware that it is said in holy writ: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself."

The christian principle supposes that in partaking of the bread and wine together; If a brother has aught against a brother, if he does not make it known at the time, it is strongly presumeable that he did not consider it an offence, or a crime sufficiently magnified into a transgression, and that the brother or sister had been belied, slandered, falsely charged, &c. Consequently, if he partakes of that holy emblem, it is considered that the spirit is right. Hence this is the principle and ground that should govern our judgments, and the only safe law or rule. Therefore, to charge a brother or a sister with a fault (known any length of time before communion,) afterwards, the presumption is, that it is false, and that it is the spirit of malice, envy, hatred, &c., and should not be taken in evidence against a brother or sister, and cannot be in justice; for it is more than probable, that if there was any real cause of complaint, the brother or sister would make it known, and would not have partaken of the communion, for fear of "*eating and drinking damnation*" to their own souls.

Almost the last thing before I left, two years ago, was to administer and partake of the communion, with Burtis and his colleagues, who now charge me with crimes, said to have been committed long before I left, yet they communing with me, attending my meetings, and giving me the friendly hand, and a welcome greeting. Since my return not one word has ever been said to my face, naming the offence or crime; and how it has been with them this length of time, according to their own statement, I leave it with you, my friends, to judge; one

thing however is certain, if what they now say be true, they must acknowledge, that they have acted the part of notorious hypocrites, and that for the space of two years and a half, a long time to harbour iniquity in the Church indeed, and this may account for the many violations of church government, and laws of God, in not following, and observing, the many christian duties involving upon them. And how many times they have eat and drank unworthily, is not for me to say.

Therefore I would remind those *beam diggers* and *mote finders* of "*Haman and Mordecai*," that Haman was hung upon his own gallows, although he had prepared it for Mordecai. "And he that diggeth a ditch for his neighbour to fall into, will fall into it himself." "And how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me get the *mote* out of thine eye, when a *beam* is in thine own eye. First cast the beam out of thine own eye; then canst thou see clearly to cast the *mote* out of thy brother's eye." "*Therefore thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eyes*," (I allude to Burtis and his emissaries), for they have need, as I trust the sequel will prove. And that there has been no cause or ground for complaint; but on the contrary, a wicked and malicious persecution; led on by a spirit of revenge.

This same spirit, we learn from what has been said, occasioned the downfall of Cain; and a division in the Church in the earlier ages of Christianity, Cain became jealous, because God had more respect to Abel's offering, than he had to his; and his heart on account thereof, was filled with hatred, and envy, and arose up in the spirit of a Demon, and slew his brother.

Thus we see those brethren, Cain and Abel, were once associated together in the bonds of brotherly love; in the same ministry, for it appears, they both made an offering, but unto Cain's the Lord had no respect, he being more selfish than his brother Abel.

Therefore, Dear Brethren, marvel not when this spirit of persecution and revenge is manifest among us, although they may have attained to the ministry, and been numbered among the servants of God, in these last days; yet their offering will savor so much of that of Cain's, that God will not accept it, "and they will go out from us, because they were not of us." And again Paul "delivered such over to the buffetings of satan for the destruction of the flesh, that their spirits might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," "ye did run well for a *season* who did hinder."

But it may be said, how can these fall?—seeing they have attained to such glory and inestimable privileges in the Church and ministry, and still say they, "we believe in the *Prophet, the anointed of God, and in the religion of Jesus Christ, promulgated by his servants in these last days*." We might ask with the same propriety; how did Cain fall? (He was an agent to act for himself, and so were they,) the most plain and conclusive answer, would be; he fell by transgression; but how did he transgress? Answer, by hating his brother, because the Lord accepted his brother's offering, and would not his, (one being offered in righteousness, and the other not,) and he became jealous, and shed his brother's blood.

Hence they must be separated, never more to be united again on earth, and God placed a *mark* upon Cain, that he might be known to all his brethren, "A hiss and a bye word shalt thou be, saith the Lord." And in like manner will God place a *mark* on every man that makes or causes a division in the Church of Christ; and is cut off from that Church, and a hiss, and a bye word, shall he be.

We find by perusing the sacred writ, that many have believed, and attained to great things, and afterwards fell, "The Devils also believe and tremble," angels believed and fell and became devils, Peter denied his Lord, although he said he would not, "though," said he "all men forsake thee; yet I will not," Judas pretended to believe, yet he fell, became a devil, persecuted and betrayed his Lord; Paul the Apostle of Jesus, also, was in perils by sea and land, and among false brethren, such were called by him deceitful workers, &c., hear him, 2 Corth. 11; 12 to 15.

"But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

We also learn "that some even preached Christ, out of envy to the saints, thinking to add affliction to their bonds," Phil. 1; 15 to 17. And it is not strange if they should do it now, saying they believe in the Church, and Latter-day religion, but they do not, "For with the lips confession is made, and with the heart men believe, unto righteousness," "By their fruits ye shall know them: do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles." Why do they persecute, (as did their fathers,) or speak evil of their brother; "By this ye may know, that ye have passed from death unto life; because ye love the brethren."

John C. Bennett, professed to believe in the *Prophet*, yet he transgressed and fell, and persecuted the *Prophet*, and many others have done the same: a Hinkle, a Hulbert, a Cowdery, a Parrish, and fine would fail to mention all. And of the Jewish Church, in the wilderness, that rebelled against Moses; and fell in a day, three and twenty thousand and where are they now? cut off from the Church of Christ, banished from his presence, and numbered with the perdition of ungodly men: where these my persecutors, and all that follow them will go, unless they repent in sackcloth and ashes: May God have mercy upon them, and give them a spirit of repentance, before it shall be everlastingly too late.

That such will be the case, and condition of the Church in these days, subject to "hypocrites," "apostacies," "impositions," "deceitful workers," "false apostles," more or less is very evident, See 1 Tim. 4; 1 and 2. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter

times (notice not the first times,) some shall depart from the faith, (could not depart, unless they had once been in the faith,) giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of Devils.

“Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”

See a continuation of the same subject, by the same Apostle, and more fully carried out; 2 Tim. 3; 1 to 5. “This know also, that in the last days (not the first days,) perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves: covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy: without natural affection; true breakers, (Covenant breakers,) false accusers, incontinent fierce despisers, (Burtis,) of those that are good, traitors, (to the cause of God,) heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God; having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.”

“Blasphemers and traitors,” this character is exemplified, in those that are cut off from the Church of Christ; They soon loose the spirit of God, and blaspheme that holy name, and Judas like, betray their brethren into the hands of their enemies, regardless of the covenants they have made unto their God, “to do good unto all men; and especially unto those who are of the household of faith.” The language that was used, the next day after council, to Elder Israel Ivins, by one of them, whose case the council had decided upon, (whose name I forbear to mention at present,) (here Burtis speaks and says he is the man,) (coat fits, put it on,) it makes my blood run cold at the thought, calling them “*a set of damned rascals.*” “And if he that should call his brother a fool, or rascal, should be in danger of hell fire, or the Judgment,” how much more shall he be in danger of hell fire, or the Judgment, that shall speak, thus blasphemously of the servants of the living God, holding the Priesthood given to man by the ministering of angels, from the Courts of Glory.

This language was used, in the presence of a number of the Citizens of New Egypt; making good that saying, “That the last state of that man, is worse than the first.” And is not this a transgression of the express command of God. See Matt. 5; 33 to 37.

“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

“But I say unto you, Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne:

“Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King:

“Neither shalt thou swear by thy head; because thou can’st not make one hair white or black,

“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”

And again, Math. 5; 22. “But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother, without a cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment,” &c.

Thus we see the wrath of God is against all who do those things, (i. e.) blaspheming their brethren, persecuting, causing innovations in the Church of Christ, and trampling the cause of God under their unhallowed feet, regardless of the same, his wrath, their own souls, or the feelings of their friends; and brethren, may God help such to repent and do their first works over again, before the sun of night shall set upon them, and it shall prove everlastingly too late, and with the wicked have to take up this lamentation: "The summer is past, the harvest is ended, and my soul is not saved."

I can freely forgive them, when they repent, although they have tried to do me a serious injury; for my own part I shall not fear, my God is my support, and he has said: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matt. 5; 11, 12.

Many more remarks might be made upon this subject, but this would be spinning out this address to a great length. But before leaving this portion of the subject, I wish to make one or two remarks by way of application, for the benefit of those who wish to try the spirits, and see whether they be of God, that make this division in the Church; and whether this persecution brought upon my head of late, is for righteousness sake or not.

It will be noticed that these great perfectionists, (anti-Mormons, or Apostates,) have from the first, set themselves up as special critics, fault finders, criticising and subjecting the teaching of all the Elders to their scrutiny; making themselves standards, and thereby putting at defiance the authorities of the Church, trampling upon all rule and Church government, bringing teacher, law, Church, and all good order into confusion, and treading the same under their unhallowed feet, and turning the Church of Christ, not into "a den of thieves," perhaps; but something worse.

It is evident, this spirit has been manifested in various ways, and on various occasions; it was proven that Mr. Burtis, in speaking of a young man that had died, said "what a pity it was not Bill Smith." And that he (to use his own language,) "would do all he could against me, and then leave the Church."

Brethren, does this look like the spirit of love, to wish a brother dead, do all he can to ruin his character, and then leave the Church. Is it not plain then, that the cause of the Church was not at heart, and that this aim in persecuting me, was not for righteousness sake. Look at the spirit of blasphemy, and profanity, before mentioned. These and many others, for modesty's sake, I forbear to mention, not one of which he denied, or attempted to disprove, but flew into a rage and left the council; a more full account of which will be given in a more appropriate place of this address.

But what appears more strange to me, is, that after all the evidence of the wickedness of Burtis and his colleagues, even from their own lips; yet some of the brethren will follow them, and believe their ly-

ing tales; and will, I fear (unless they stop) go down to the pit, or perdition of ungodly men. And now dear brethren, for Christ's sake and your sake, let me exhort you to come out and leave this ungodly crew, "Touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing." "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord," saith your God, or else with the blind leaders of the blind, you all fall in the ditch together.

In the commencement of this discourse, I proposed to speak upon one other subject, more immediately connected with my own personal interest, in the history of my proceedings, and how I came to visit the branches of the Church in this region of Country.

I left home (Nauvoo) early last spring, with a sick and helpless family; hoping to find in my travels some superior medical skill, that might restore my family to health again, if not to their former youthful bloom.

It was under the direction of a special conference, and the *first Presidency* of the Church; this with other duties involving upon me, I left the city of the Saints in the west, to preach the Gospel, build up, and regulate the Churches, wherever my lot might be cast; but since my arrival here, a most unhallowed persecution has been heaped upon my head, growing out of my chastisement upon the *Egyptian Saints*, for their selfishness, tale bearing, backbiting, apathy, and other wickedness.

Finding them in a somewhat disorganised state, I made a call for a meeting. The presiding Elder, Abraham Burtis, having withdrawn from his Presidency, and would not preside over that branch any longer, as he told me with his own lips. On coming to the appointed meeting, I found that some of the brethren had not respected my call; the reason I could not account for, as it was a business meeting. However I proceeded, and during my remarks, Mr. Burtis and wife became very uneasy, the latter behaving very disorderly, treating me with mocks and frowns. At the close of the meeting, wishing to know who would sustain me in keeping up meetings in that place this winter; I called on the brethren and friends to manifest the same by a vote, whereupon the congregation arose unanimous, with the exception of three or four; Burtis leaving the house without voting.

After meeting, I had some conversation with Burtis, concerning the course he was pursuing; telling him if he persisted in it, it would ruin him, break up the Church there, or make a division in it. To this he made no reply, but feigned ignorance, and manifested a stubbornness to continue his course. Soon after this, Brother Sill informed me that previous to my meeting, they had held a consultation among themselves, and came to the conclusion, that they could not (or would not,) assist me; but if I could sustain myself and keep up their meetings, they would have no objections; soon after receiving this information, I wrote Mr. Burtis the following letter.

"New Egypt, Sept. 16th, 1843.

"MR. BURTIS,—DEAR SIR :—

"It is with feelings of regret, that I have it to say, that the

course some of the saints in this place have taken against me, is most unchristian like, and in consequence thereof, I shall not fellowship them in the Church, until satisfaction is given to the Church; for the offence is not against me alone, but against all the authorities.

“Your course of yesterday, in not acting in conjunction with me, as well as the conduct of your wife in meeting, is a thing inexplicable to me, and which I shall not pass over as a trifling affair. To be treated thus without a cause, demands concession on the part of the offenders, and reconciliation or rejection from the communion.

“I hold myself amenable to no tribunal in the Church, except the first Presidency of the same.

“Yours, Respectfully,

“WM. SMITH, *One of the Twelve.*

“*To Mr. Abraham Burtis.*”

Soon after this Elder Grant being on a visit to my house, called on Mr. Burtis, and staid over night with him; and here follows his statement of the conversation, as it passed between them, as near as he can recollect, certified to by himself, which I received in answer to the following letter, sent to him.

“*Hornerstown, Nov. 26th, 1843.*

“ELDER J. M. GRANT,

DEAR BROTHER:—

I have just got home, or in other words, to my stopping place for the present. The health of my family is about as usual, no change has taken place of late, either for the better or worse, if any at all, we think it is in our favour. Dr. Newell has called on us once since our return, and appears quite as cheerful as ever, and I think the labour of Mr. Burtis, with the Doctor, to try to influence him to abandon his effort to cure my wife, has been quite unsuccessful.

Nothing appears more interesting at the present, than the news we have from the enemies' camp; there have been several arrivals of late, but no increase of intelligence or recruits, their stores of ammunition are nearly exhausted, and I am told, that the express mail is about to stop for the want of more horse flesh, and more efficient artillery. Three guns have been fired, and nobody killed or hurt, except a few boys and girls, that were nearly frightened to death, and the rest ran away.

It is expected that something awful will take place soon, and every body is on tiptoe to see it. But they cannot tell what it is, and time will only develope the mystery. The only guns now in the field, are one big gun, and three small ones, I think it would make you laugh to hear the big gun speak; I tell you she is a rattler, she can't be heard a great way off it is true; but she makes a most tremendous noise in the camp. The small guns are only kept as safeguards, and are only used in case of necessity. You ought to have been here, when the action first commenced, it would have pleased you, no doubt,

as it surprised the very natives, besides some white folks who think they are quite courageous sometimes. Off went one gun, and there went another, and here goes another, bang! wang! here they go, wang! bang! there it is again, but, I must not stop to count them, if I am going to write any thing else. The old gun you must know, was in the field all the time, and you would certainly have thought her to have been one of those "*double Revolvers*," that shoot seven times in a minute.

But what is more surprising than all, is, that notwithstanding all the firing, nobody was hit, killed or hurt, excepting those that stood at the breech of the guns, for the guns being a little trickey, and working rather too much on the re-action plan for their good success, those that stood behind them got the worst hurt. They have concluded to withdraw the *old gun* from the field of service, until it can be made not to kick; and break it of its old tricks. I judge then that the whole scenery will be looked upon by the intelligent, skilled in military tactics as a laughable farce. The enemy now appears to be changing their position to suit their low ground warfare; this they can do very easy, as their artillery is of that kind, that they can use it just as they please, to the right about face, or any other way. It is evident then, (the *big gun* being withdrawn) that war will not continue long, as there is confusion in the enemies' ranks, and their victors will soon wear off the laurels of their own blighted fame, (not as men that had fought, bled and died for their country,) but as men that knew nothing of war, or of managing the *big gun*—what a pity for them that she missed fire so many times, and when she did go off, happened to shoot wrong end foremost, and I understand that since she shot, she has been looking for the wad, and wants her load back again, as she wasted her amunition for nothing.

I think however the storm will soon be over and peace will be declared, the wind will blow away the smoke and these great warriors, with their nobles and guns, will retire to shelter, with this sweet and beautiful reflection—that their names have been immortalized in the field of battle, and that if the world never knew it before, they will know it now. That these invincibles have been tried and proven, and have never refused to do service. What immortal honours to husband, wife, brother and sister, father and mother, down to posterity's latest date, shall it be known, that these have passed through fiery trials, been honest and virtuous and have stood all the day long, with open arms to serve their country's cause, and that not even an enemy has ever scaled the ramparts of liberty's walls. Bot, with fidelity they have served, and ever been ready and waiting to open upon them, their hottest artillery, and vanquish the foe.

But I shall supercede the bounds of this sheet and must close, but before I do I wish to explain to you the object of this letter, I wish you to write me a statement of the conversation as it passed between you and Mr. and Mrs. Burtis, while you were at their house, as near as you can recollect, and make it in the form of a certificate, and forward it to me immediately by the bearer of these lines.

Yours Respectfully, WILLIAM SMITH.



P. S. I forgot to say that one gun had been fired since my return, (I had liked to have said since peace was declared), but you must know it was one of their small arms, and did not do much damage, although, they are considered the most dangerous, but this one was a perfect "flash in the pan," or else it went off half loaded. It made me think about the story you know concerning the old woman's gun that goes off without lock, stock or barrel.

Of all the carnage you ever saw, it exceeded I am truly glad now, that you were not here; the gun was shot at the brick School House, and it was a perfect burst; the noise reverberated so, that the people said it was like the braying of an ass. (How that is I cannot tell), others said it appeared like the sound of distant thunder, but the firing ceased and no one hurt; the small arms were packed in the carriage, and away they retired to recruit and get some more ammunition. The war continues down East they say, a great deal worse than it does here, I think that is unnecessary, as they expect another (the big gun) in a few days if they can get her, but they are afraid of her not shooting as they would wish, I should like you to come up here as soon as peace is declared, for if you should come before, you may come in contact with the "big gun," (as you do not know the road). For she has already shot a ball mighty close to your head, but you know it did not hurt you, as she generally shoots at random.

I hope you will bear with me a little in my folly, (as Paul said) the noise of thunder and mighty guns is fast dying away, the smoke is fast dispersing, the horizon is becoming clear again, and I hope we shall soon be permitted to set down by our own firesides in peace again, to sing our war songs no more and when I write to you again, I hope it will be upon some other subject.

WILLIAM SMITH.

ELDER J. M. GRANT, Philadelphia.

Philadelphia, Nov. 28th, 1843.

ELDER WILLIAM SMITH.

DEAR BROTHER,—Your letter came to hand this evening at 9 o'clock, the news relating to the health of your family was highly gratifying to me, nothing could please me more than their recovery. If you have been correctly informed, concerning the vain and unholy attempt of Mr. Burtis, to persuade Dr. Newell to give up your wife to the ravages of death. This fact is so glaring and exhibits the inherent meanness of Mr. B. so conspicuously, that the eyes of the blind will be opened, to see the corruption of a fallen, depraved, unmerciful being in the form of a man, but entirely destitute of those inherent qualities, which renders man a blessing to society. You however, have nothing to fear, the boundless popularity of the Dr., wherever he is acquainted, proves him to be not only a skilful practitioner, but a high minded philanthropist, above the persuasions of men governed by prejudice or passion.

My feelings are wounded, while reading your letter; the confusion you allude to is somewhat serious, and with all quite amusing, it makes

me think of the accounts given by travellers, of storms in the torrid zone, or of a sham fight of two ships at sea, where none are shot, or drowned—but to the surprise of the crew, after the action is over and the smoke settled, the roll called, some three or four are found frightened, not to death, but blind, deaf and dumb, entirely void of common sense.

One would come to the conclusion that your enemies, (as you are pleased to call them) have a distributing office as well as the express mail, of which you speak.

On close examination you will undoubtedly find that they have a forge, or a mint to coin, ( ) for the post boy or the post master general, to distribute to the lesser officers.

In conclusion let me say, if Mr. Burtis is not satisfied with the decision of the counsel, let him act like a man and appeal to the higher tribunals of the church, and their have the matter further adjusted.

Now for the certificate that you requested.

“To whom it may concern;—

“This is to certify, that Mr. Burtis and his wife did tell me that they had nothing against Elder William Smith, they also said that they were sorry to see him take the course that he was then taking against them, for they had always used him well, and did not intend to use an influence against him, and that they did not know why he staid away from their house; Mrs. Burtis remarked, that it had been reported that she laughed in meeting, made mouths, and mocked at Elder Smith, but said she, I did not do it, for there is nothing that I despise worse than to see a person do such things in meeting. The foregoing is to the best of my recollection.

“J. M. GRANT.”

“To whom it may concern;—

“This may certify that we the undersigned, were at the meeting (at New Egypt), of which Elder William Smith speaks and did see Sarah Burtis laugh, mock, and make mouths at Elder Smith, and behave otherwise disorderly and unbecoming the conduct of a christian in meeting, or a member in the church of Christ.

“SARAH CURTIS,

“KEZIAH MOORE,

“SARAH B. MOORE.”

Thus we see from the certificates above, that Mrs. Burtis has done a crime and then denied it, and I have heard it said, that persons who would lie about one thing will lie about another, and in most cases I believe it to be true, and at a meeting held by Elder Hyde, at this place, Sarah Burtis was heard to say many things in a public manner, casting reproach upon me, from which these and other things, I took occasion in a meeting held soon after, to call on the saints, to withdraw the hand of fellowship from her, which they accordingly did. Making mention at the time that her conduct in other respects, from

testimony that I had from two or three witnesses, members in the church, was insufferable, that it appeared from their statements, that (a Dr. Lee who is a stranger to me, I do not know the man, neither desire to say any thing against him, as he does not belong to the Church, having been cut off from it, so I have been told before I came into the country), had a private conference with her, at a house about a mile or two from her own home, unbeknown to her husband; the door shut and in a room by themselves, and what kind of practice this was in taking a woman through a course of Thompsonian medicine. I was entirely unacquainted with this and other things so notorious, (if true), I should not fellowship them, and that a person of such notorious character, need not throw out her slanders, and reproaches upon me, nor think to mock, make mouths, or frown me down in meeting. I then called on the church to dis-fellowship such conduct which they did, by a unanimous vote; and that the public may know that I had grounds for making such remarks, which are as near as I can recollect; please read the following certificate.

*To all whom it may Concern:*

This is to certify, that we the subscribers, in the month of April 1843, came to the house of Samuel Fenton, that Dr. Lee and Sarah Burtis were there when we came, that shortly after, Sarah Burtis went into a private room and called to the Dr. and said "Dr. have you seen these pictures," he answered, "I have not," and thereupon went into the room, the door was shut, (who by we do not say,) where they remained to the best of our recollection, from 10 A. M., until 2 P. M., as the time was long, a call was made to her, "Sarah are you ready to go," she replied, "as soon as I get the Dr. in a good humour." Soon after Conference broke up, and the parties dispersed. The forgoing is to the best of our recollection.

SARAH B. MOORE.

MARTHA MOORE.

This only added new fuel to the flame, and Burtis with his runner or assistant aid-de-camp, and armour bearer, who for a long time has been known as the news carrier penny post, and the man Burtis has kept, to do his dirty work for him, this long time, (the name I forbear to mention, as it would disgrace the columns of any sheet,) began to fill the arena of this part of the country, with all manner of lying reports, too scandalous to mention, and too ridiculous to believe.

Not being satisfied with this order of things I wrote Mr. Burtis another letter, suspending him from acting in the office of an Elder, and citing him to appear before a special council of Elders and answer made to certain charges that would be preferred against him: And I immediately proceeded to summons said council together—here let me remark that all the pretended charges put in circulation by A. Burtis and others against me are of a two year's old character, with the exception of a few, that are equally as false; a thing unheard of in ecclesiastical history, to harbor the iniquity so long and never men-

tion it, to any one, no not even to Elder Grant, after I had written to him the letter, disfellowshipping, for he and his wife told Elder Grant, that "they had nothing *against* me." There is a mystery in it, that I shall leave for a more skillful hand or penetrating genius to explain.

Perhaps if the letter writer of another land was here he could tell more about it, as he undoubtedly has more knowledge of the art of unfolding secrets,—(as his writing plainly shows,) than I profess to have. This Mr. Burtis would not believe, I suppose though, he (the letter writer) should declare it unto him, by word, deed, or *letter*.

But to my subject, council convened at the house of Br. Malsbury, and herein I have inserted a synopsis of the minutes of the same, for the satisfaction of my friends and the public.

NEW EGYPT, OCT. 18, 1843.

*Special Conference, &c., &c.*

Conference convened at the House of Br. Malsbury, present, Elders Curtis, Newton, Richards, Smith, Winchester, Grant, Ivins, Sill, Robbins, and Burtis.

Elder J. M. Grant was called to the chair, and Elders Newton and Winchester appointed Secretaries. Conference opened with solemn prayer by the President.

Elder Wm. Smith arose and stated the object of the conference; which was to reconcile some difficulties in the Church, which existed among the Brethren. And preferred the following charges against Elder Abraham Burtis.

1. For rejecting the authorities of the Church, in not acting in conjunction with him (Elder Smith) in keeping up the meetings in New Egypt, as his conduct plainly testified at a meeting held a few days since, in that place, for that purpose.

2. For misrepresenting my discourse on that occasion, to Elders Grant, Winchester and others.

3. For circulating slanderous reports, to the injury of my character and to the cause of truth, in this Country

4. For unchristian like conduct in the cool and indifferent manner in which he has treated me since my return, and for holding pretended charges, (as he says) of two year's standing, and not giving me a knowledge of them, so that I could have had an opportunity, of making my defence and to have proven them false; and thereby saved a division in the Church, and good and honest brethren and sisters from ruin, who may now perhaps, believe these falsehoods and make shipwreck of faith by his influence.

All these charges were abundantly established and proven by a number of witnesses, at which Elder Burtis became offended and withdrew from the conference, refusing to offer any rebutting testimony.

Elder Grant, (the President) then stated that inasmuch as Elder Burtis had withdrawn from the conference, and treated the same with contempt, he therefore offered a motion that his license be demanded, and he be suspended until he makes satisfaction, whereupon Elder Wm. Smith, offered an amendment, that he be cut off from the Church; which was carried, only two dissenting.

| Names for cutting off, as follows. | Residences.      |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| ELDER RICHARDS,                    | of Mount Holly.  |
| “ IVINS,                           | of Toms River.   |
| “ ROBBINS,                         | of Recklesstown. |
| “ NEWTON,                          | of Philadelphia. |
| “ CURTIS,                          | of Hornerstown.  |
| “ GRANT,                           | of Philadelphia. |
| “ SMITH,                           | of Hornerstown.  |

Making seven in the affirmative, Elders Winchester and Sill, (2) in the negative.

Since this council, I understand that many things, pertaining to the same; have been greatly exaggerated and misrepresented; and that the public mind may be rightly informed upon this subject, I have obtained the following certificate:

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

This is to certify, that we the undersigned, members of the above Council, do hereby state, that Elder William Smith, was not before us for trial, that no charge was preferred against him, and that the Council was not called to try him, but on the contrary, that Elder William Smith preferred charges against Elder A. Burtis, and that we were called, convened together, by Elder Wm. Smith, and held a council expressly to try Elder Burtis.

That Elder William Smith, did, of his own free will and accord, bring forward testimony, sufficient to our full satisfaction, or any reasonable man, or set of men, (whose minds were unbiased and untrammelled,) to prove himself clear of the foul charges that Elder Burtis and others had circulated concerning him, perfectly exonerating himself from any implication, in the foul aspersions, that had been heaped with an unsparing hand upon him.

|                                                |   |                |                   |
|------------------------------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|
| J. M. GRANT, <i>President of said Council,</i> | } | <i>Clerks,</i> | ISRAEL IVINS,     |
| JOSEPH H. NEWTON,                              |   |                | JAMES L. CURTIS,  |
| B. WINCHESTER,                                 |   |                | ISAAC R. ROBBINS. |
| WM. RICHARDS.                                  |   |                |                   |

No person of any considerable experience in Church Government affairs, will dispute me when I say, that, considering the disorderly state of the New Egypt Branch of the Church; the presiding Elder having withdrawn from his presidency, there being no rule, no order, no communion and all in confusion, members running without restraint upon their conduct—that some efficient means must be made use of, or the Church must go to ruin, “The head being sick, the whole body is faint,” and the only effectual way of remedying an evil, is to remove the cause of complaint, in order to do this the axe had to be laid at the root of the tree: “For every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit, must be hewn down and cast into the fire.” “And every branch that is not of my right hand planting will be plucked up,” and who does not see that this has been the cause

of all this persecution upon my head; had it not been for this all would have been well, if I had bowed my head like some fawning sycophant, and tamely looked on, and said, "all is well in Zion," and submitted to their insults, and have suffered them to run over me as they pleased, or walked hand in hand with them, upon the *Good Lord and Good Devil plan*, we should have been hale Christians (or Devils) well met.

Not even a dream of the past or present would have been called up, or would they have said aught was my name. And the devil would have looked on, and laughed in his sleeve, and said "*ha ! ha ! you are a beautiful set of Latter-Day Saints.*"


But what I have done I have done with right and authority, and according to the laws of God and man, I have nothing to retract, and no reflections to cast upon myself in this matter; and if I had it to do over again, I should do the same things. Hence, it is plain to be seen, that there has been no real cause of complaint; but that this whole affair has been set on foot by a most wicked spirit of persecution.

But, alas ! how hast thou fallen ! Oh, Lucifer ! the son of the morning, as Cain did by transgression, by not submitting to rule and authority—as every one will that drinks into the same spirit, and refuses to submit to the order of God.

Every person must be aware that every good has its evil, and every righteous and virtuous principle its opposite, and every good man his enemies; the devil is an enemy to God, righteousness, and all holy men; even Jesus and his apostles had their enemies, and even holy angels had their enemies. Light and darkness have no communion. "If we were of the world the world would love its own."

It is worthy of remark, that previous to the aforesaid Council, Elder B. Winchester called on Mr. Burtis several days, more or less, to effect a reconciliation, (as he said) but Burtis remained inexorable, savage, and impenitent, threatening me with the law.\*

\* A few days after this conversation took place, Elder Winchester called on me at my place of abode; and on enquiring of him how Mr. Burtis was getting along, he said not very well, he was very angry and would undoubtedly prosecute me soon. What for ? said I; for defamation of character, said he; what have I done ? said I; one thing, says he, they say is for what you said when you called on the Church to disfellowship Mr. Burtis, and the other is something concerning a letter that is said to have been written to Sarah Burtis, by Dr. Lee, in a clandestine manner; Burtis and his wife say there is no such letter in existence, and if there is, it is a forged one, and would insinuate that you have done it; and for my part, said B. Winchester, I do not believe there is any such a letter myself; well I do, said I, for I know it, for I have seen it; says he, if Mr. Burtis could but see the letter, this would stop all prosecutions, upon this I went to the person who had the letter and requested to see it, after which, Elder Winchester obtained the letter and read it to Mr. Burtis, which he said quelled his temper very much, and I have heard nothing about suing, lawing, or forgery since. But oh ! the sights of fingers, and hands, and love clasps you ever saw, it exceeds all; and a promise to write soon again, and tell her where she can direct her letters. All this is in the letter, or was when I read it, and is now if in existence, if not torn off or blotted out; immediately

Under the  is written, "Hand in Hand—A Token of Friendship."

[*So much for Thomsonian practice in private rooms*] Mrs. Burtis is a married lady, so I have been told, and the Doctor is a married man. If any doubt my statements, they can call on Mr. Burtis and see the letter for themselves, (if not destroyed) as I am informed the letter was left in his possession.

In passing Mr. Burtis' door, the day previous to the council, Elder Winchester being there, came to the door, and wished me to call in, I replied that I had no objections on my part, but presumed that it would not be agreeable to Mr. Burtis, as there was a difference between us; Elder Winchester replied, come in, there are no objections, accordingly I went in. The first one I encountered in stepping in at the door, was Mr. Burtis, setting leaned back in his chair, against the wall, his eyes red with anger, and sparkling with rage; I accosted him with the usual salutation, "How do ye do?" "Well enough, cocked and primed, tough, rugged and saucy able," was his reply; well, I remarked I was glad to hear it, I like to see people well; but thought it rather an uncourteous manner in returning a compliment. "That's me exactly," said he; eyes flashing. Here Elder Winchester interfered and said, "Come talk like brothers, and settle this difficulty," I remarked "I was willing to do all that was honourable on my part to settle difficulties, but as I had done nothing to offend in the least, I presumed that it would be of no use for me to say any thing more to Mr. Burtis than I had already said." "No, no," said he, "it is of no use to talk to me, I shall not retract one word I have said against you." I remonstrated with him as I was leaving the house, against such a course as he was pursuing, telling him it would throw him out of the Church, if he persisted, and deprive him of his Eldership. He replied that "we were all a set of —, that he cared nothing about us or the Church, and that I and the Church too might —." I replied "I thought the Church would have to stoop rather low to do that." He replied, "That at the time he received my letter, he had crossed his name out of the Church Book.

I remarked that I feared he had not only crossed his name out of the Church Book, but that he had or would if he continued long in the way he was pursuing, cross his name out of the Church of Christ. He replied "go ahead, go ahead, I defy your authority," and with the frequent appellation of "you are a liar;" "liar," and various other foul mouthed and vulgar expressions, too ridiculous to mention; continuing his remarks until I left, which closed the conversation.

On leaving him, I felt I had done my duty, and that my skirts were clear of his blood, and was gratified that I was released from his noise and rage, and counted it a glorious deliverance, as I was much disgusted with the uncourteous, ungentlemanly and unchristianlike conduct he had treated me with.

And now to close my remarks upon the subject, I must say, that I positively think, that if Mr. Burtis and my persecutors had "lived in the spirit," and walked in the spirit, and have tended to the concerns of their own homes, they would have found business enough in weeding their own gardens, sweeping their door yards, and cleansing their own houses, and getting the "beam" out of their own eyes, (which, by the by, is a monstrous large one,) without volunteering their services to settle other men's matters, and thereby becoming an agent and a tool for the devil to work with. "Creeping into houses, leading captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts."

This however is on a par with their cause. No man (I am bold to say it) would do it, unless he had a corrupt heart and mind, and was a "reprobate concerning the faith." "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth."

In making my defence against the many flying reports, I should have noticed them in point, but I consider them too trifling, futile, and heart sickening, to tax my friends' patience with hearing, much less to disgrace the columns of this address with them. To stop the mouths of fools and answer every lying tongue, would fill volumes, and be spending my time in perfect folly.

The Jews could hire the Roman soldiers to lie about the resurrection of Christ; false witnesses could swear away his life, and so can—be brought to testify against the servants of God in these last days; though none but traitors will seek their testimony, and none but fools believe them.

And now kind friends, you have a fair, plain and ungarlished statement of this whole affair, and if I have failed to render satisfaction, it is because I am not allowed the privilege of defence, to make use of further testimony, which I have at my command. But what I have done, I have done, and what I considered my duty to do towards my God and my brethren; and if satisfaction is not rendered complete in the same, I must leave the event with my God and my brethren, to judge between me and my persecutors.

I have learned with Paul, that in "whatever condition of life I am placed in, therewith to be content." If Paul "preached the Gospel in perils," "in nakedness," "in hunger," "in want," "in persecutions," "in stripes," among false brethren, "and suffered the spoiling of goods," so have I, and it is this unhallowed persecution that my enemies are heaping upon me at this present time, that takes away my children's bread, and adds new affliction to my bonds, and that raging disease, that has so long been the destroyer of the health of my family, and may God have mercy upon my persecutors, for Jesus' sake.

From the earliest rise in the history of Mormonism up to the present time, I have borne the heat and burthen of the day. Associated with those who are called the first Elders of the Church, that at this time forms the only impenetrable bulwark of mormonism, and the only object of all the contumely and abuse of this ungodly generation. To brave the storm, the tempest, the dangers of the deep, and the raging billows of the ocean. To travel o'er sea and land; to leave father, mother, home, houses and lands, wife, children, and friends; to preach the Gospel of our Blessed Saviour among strangers, and to seek an asylum in the midst of a cold and heartless people, in a strange land, far from the land that gave us birth, without purse or scrip, as we have done, requires men of more than ordinary courage.

That this has been our lot, the history of the present and the past will sufficiently explain. The evidences of a veteran soldier of the cross, are plainly to be seen, in the outline delineation of a grief worn cheek, whose locks are tinged with the frost of many winters, and as Abraham of old, they wander as strangers and pilgrims, in search of a city out of sight, whose maker and builder is God.



But it is time to close this address, your patience, perhaps, has already become wearied with this matter, and I hope and trust the subject will soon pass into oblivion, and there sleep forever.

I must beg leave however, before I conclude, to observe in further justification of my own conduct, that it is with pleasure I receive a reproof when reproof is due; because no person can be readier to accuse me, than I am to acknowledge an error when I have committed it, or more desirous of atoning for a crime when I am sensible of having committed one. But, on the other hand it is with concern I remark, that my best endeavours lose their reward, and that my conduct although I have uniformly studied to make it as unexceptionable as I could, does not appear to some in a favourable point of light. Otherwise, they would not have accused me of unchristianlike behaviour, and a remissness of duty in matters where I think I have rather exceeded, than fallen short of it.

That I have foibles, (and perhaps many) I shall not attempt to deny. I do not esteem myself above the rest of mankind, nor arrogate perfection; knowledge in religious matters, is only to be acquired by practice and experience, and if I have erred, great allowances should be made for the want of these, unless my errors should appear too wilful and designedly—and then I consider it would be more generous to charge me with my fault, and let me stand or fall according to evidence, than to stigmatize me behind my back.

It is uncertain in what light my course or conduct, may have appeared to you my friends, or whether I am deserving this persecution or not. But this I know, and it is the greatest consolation I am capable of feeling, that no man that was ever engaged in a public capacity, has endeavoured to discharge the duties and the trust reposed in him, with greater fidelity and honesty, or more zeal for the welfare and cause of Zion, than I have done both in proclaiming the Gospel, and in the legislative hall.

If there is any person living who can in justice say I have ever offered them any intentional wrong, either in public or private, I will cheerfully submit to the most ignominious punishment, that an injured and offended people ought to inflict.

On the other hand, it is hard to have my character arraigned, and my actions condemned when I am innocent, and no wrong has been committed, and not have the privilege to make a defence. I do not know that I ever gave these my persecutors during my present visit, or the one two years ago, any cause of complaint.

Crime I detest, and would most carefully avoid; if an open, plain and disinterested behaviour, (a reprover of sin) carries offence, I may have offended. For I have at all times adhered to this, as a maxim, (i. e.), to represent facts freely and impartially but not more so to others than to this present audience, being commanded to “cry aloud and spare not,” and “not to fear them that can kill the body, but to fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell.”

And now after all I have said in my defence with the decision of the council, composed of the Elders of the Church of Christ, with the

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addition of their names attached to a certificate, clearing and exonerating me honorably, from every charge of guilt whatever in the premises. If this will not satisfy the minds of the public, it will be impossible for me to satisfy them; consequently I will be obliged to leave my kind friends here, and seek a shelter from the stormy and wintry blasts, in some more favourable, or hospitable climate, but if I leave, it will be with a heart full of sorrow and grief. To have enjoyed your society the coming winter, in meeting at this place, and to have joined with you, in the services of God, and shared your smiles and graces would have been to me, a source of no ordinary pleasure.

But before I take leave of you, let me beg your indulgence once more on this wise, that I may test the feelings of my friends in this neighborhood, by a vote upon this subject, and if it should be satisfactory, I will yet endeavour to spend the remainder of this winter with you.

Therefore it is my special request that all the brethren and friends, (whether in or out of the Church) that are satisfied with my defence, should signify the same by rising upon their feet. The vote among the saints was unanimous, and some of the friends stood up—none voting in the negative.

Thanks to the brethren and friends for this token, manifest of their friendship. Oh! that my eyes were a fountain of tears; then could I weep over the depravity of man, and for these once my brethren, but now my persecutors, where are they now. As Jesus wept over Jerusalem, so could I weep over them; when will hatred, jealousy, envy and malice, cease to trouble the fair sons and daughters of God? When will sin have an end, and righteousness and peace fill all the plains of creation? When will the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary find rest? Not until man ceases to destroy his fellow man, and Christ the son of the blessed virgin, disarm him who has the power of death; and then there shall be nothing to molest, or make afraid in all God's holy mountain. If any have fallen, let us not glory in their fall, for they were once brethren, associated with us, in the bonds of brotherly love, and covenant of grace; therefore, "let him that thinketh he stand, take heed lest he fall."

W. S.



