

AN
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TO

AMERICANS:

A POEM IN BLANK VERSE,

By James Mulholland,

AN ELDER OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST,
OF LATTER DAY SAINTS.

INTENDED AS A BRIEF EXPOSURE OF THE CRUELITIES AND
WRONGS, WHICH THE CHURCH HAS LATELY EXPERIENCED
IN THE STATE OF MISSOURI.

"When the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn," Prov. 29: 2.

NAUVOO:

PRINTED BY E. ROBINSON.

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PREFACE.

JAMES MULHOLLAND, the author of the following poem, was a native of Ireland, was descended from a respectable family; but for his attachments to free institutions, he left the land of his forefathers and emigrated to the United States.

He was educated in the Roman Catholic religion to which he had a very strong attachment, until he heard the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints preach, when he was fully convinced of the errors of the "Mother Church," and became obedient to the gospel. Soon after which, he removed to Missouri, and shared in all the trials and persecutions which the church had to suffer while in that State.

Some time after his removal to Illinois, he composed the following poem; but before he could publish it, death put a period to his mortal career.

As a tribute of respect to departed worth, and thinking there were many sentiments in it worthy of notice; and as it told a tale of suffering and woe in a manner somewhat new and interesting, I have been induced to give it publicity.

R. B. THOMPSON.

Nauvoo, January 1, 1841.

POEM.

Hail, Great Republic of this Western World!
Ye sons of peace, Columbia's freemen, hail!
Hear me, a son of Erin, sing the woes,
The heartless persecutions, which a few
Of late have suffered for their conscience' sake:
Not in that land so famed for cruel wrongs,
Which gave me birth and reared me up to man:
Not in the lands of European rule,
Where despotism less or more prevails:
Neither on Asia, nor Afric's shores,
Where barbarous idolatry holds sway.
But in America, the boast of all the world;
The pattern of equality, of rights, of freedom,
Liberty, and all that would ensure to men,
Their homes secure, their various altars free.
O! that my muse, would now inspire my pen
To paint the scenes which on my heart are sketched;
Or could I show in colors just and true,
How liberty is threatened; even now
Whilst yet I write, her votaries would fear.]

Know then the fact, and be it known to all,
That great Missouri, (part of your republic,)
Has in her might arose, and claimed the privilege
At the cannon's mouth, to dictate modes of worship
Or forbid. To drive from out their State,
Or visit with extermination, such as dare
To worship God, as did the Saints of old:
Who dare to preach repentance, and direct
To be baptized, that sins may be remitted:
Who promise unto all who thus obey,
As Peter promised such in days of old,
The Holy Ghost—The Comforter—
Who teaches all things to the pure in heart.

Know it all earth, all nations, and all men,
That doctrines such as these have been promulged,
And taught, to men even now alive;
Taught, and believed, and practiced here on earth,
With consolation great, and holy joy.
Men who have left the world, with all its pride,
And sought a holy home, where together,
They might learn to know the Lord,
And walk in all his paths.
Far to the west, Missouri spreads to view

Her prairies vast, and there they seek a home ;
 By purchase ; not by right, as enemies have said.
 They raise their humble cots, and hope to escape
 The growing evils of the present world,
 By being lowly, humble, meek ;
 Adhering to the laws of God and man ;
 In all things subject to the powers that be.

But Satan, jealous of divided sway,
 And fearful lest his rule might be abridged,
 Or brought to nought, by fellowship like theirs :
 Here in his favorite reservoir of crime,
 He looks around him for a chosen few ;
 Who having found, he instigates and leads,
 To deeds of outrage, murder, rapine, war ;
 Proclaimed at large against those peaceful men.

Evil prevails ! The Saints of God must fly
 To save their lives, and all they hold most dear,
 In winter's blast, exposed on prairies bare,
 They wander forth unfriended by the world.
 Spoiled of their goods, deprived of house and home,
 Their children barefoot tread the frozen ground,
 And leave their footsteps red with infant blood.
 Mean time a few more honored than the rest,
 Stripped of their clothes, and tarred and feathered o'er,
 Are thus sent forth ; as living monuments
 Of mob-law charity, and mercy great ;
 Whilst yet, lest ought be wanting, to conclude,
 A few are butchered, that the scene be sealed
 With blood—to cry to heaven,—
 Like unto Abel's in the days of Cain.

From Jackson County driven, they wend their way,
 And in Clay County find a safe retreat ;
 With open arms, and sympathizing balm,
 The dwellers here receive these outcasts poor ;
 And every comfort which they can, bestow.
 O Charity ! greatest of the social three ;
 Thou great restorer of the human race ;
 On thee hangs all the law ; the prophets all
 Are by thy precepts mutually fulfilled.
 To seek the widow poor, the orphan babe ;
 To shelter houseless outcasts, and relieve
 The poor and needy, be he friend or foe ;
 These are the acts which constitute the plan
 Of wiping out a multitude of sins ;
 Obtaining favor in the sight of Him
 Who gave the law ; and meteth out to each,
 As he has measured to his fellow man.

Deep in our hearts with gratitude sincere,
 We'll still remember at the throne of grace,
 Those who have thus administered relief ;

Extended charity; and poured within our wounds,
The healing balm, in such a time of need.

Meanwhile, throughout the State
The friends of charity and peace, unite,
To deal out mercy to the injured Saints:
A region set apart of some extent
By State permission, for their special use;
Where they might purchase, and possess their lands,
And live in peace and harmony once more.
With happy prospects, such as these in view
They take possession, and commence again,
To till the earth, to raise the humble shed,
In hopes to spend their future years in peace,
And find a recompence for woes gone by.

And now behold! the County Caldwell rise,
As 'twere at once to notice in the world:
Behold the trains of emigrating Saints
Pour in from every State;
A steady stream continuous in its course:
Even from the north, where Britain still holds sway,
They journey westward, to fulfill the law
Of HIM who called them to embrace the Truth.

They purchase lands according to their means,
Or else embrace the rights, pre-emption laws extend;
In faith relying on Jehovah great;
That He who feeds the ravens, and who owns the cattle
On a thousand hills, will for themselves and little ones provide;
If they but do their best, in honesty and fear,
To do their duty, both to God and man.

Now all around prosperity prevails,
All gracious Providence smiling o'er the scene;
Behold the fields of waving grain extend
Their ample bosoms to the summer's sun;
And crown the labors of industrious faith:
Whilst herds of cattle of all kinds increase
Their numbers on the flowery prairies vast;
Where, by the hand of bounteous Heaven prepared,
Profusion waits them, willingly bestowed.

The various seasons of the rolling year,
Had nearly twice revolved their annual round,
Since first these outcasts settled here in peace;
And plenty now in prospect, still gave hopes,
That by their perseverance in the faith of Christ,
They would attain to rear up Zion in the latter days,
Substantially here upon the earth:
That through even their weak agency,
Would be established on the mountain tops,
The mountain of God's house; of which the Prophets spake
As something certain in the latter days;

Which shall take place, or God's own word must fail;
 And this that men might know the Lord;
 And thereby 'scape destruction, when he comes
 Revealed from heaven; in flaming fire,
 To vengeance take, on all who know not God,
 And disobey the gospel which He gave,
 For man's redemption from his fallen state.

Mean time, that all may know what God has done;
 And what he's going to do in these last days;
 They send their Elders forth, to preach repentance;
 And proclaim to ail, who'll hear them;
 That the Lord has set his hand, the second time
 To gather Israel, out from all the world;
 That they may learn His law, and know Him when He comes.
 Whilst thus the pure in heart are gathered up,
 And brought to Zion in these latter days;
 Their Pastors whom the Lord ordained them,
 [That they might be fed with knowledge;
 As he has promised in his sacred word;
 When Israel's backsliding children should return;]
 Zealously employ their time, to pour instruction,
 Knowledge to bestow; and rivet fast upon the hearts of all,
 Principles of Love, of righteousness and peace;
 And general charity towards all mankind:
 And after God's own word, as sacred next,
 They labor to instil, most perfect reverence
 For "the powers that be;" who now preside,
 O'er these United States of North America.

Of hath my heart rejoiced, with holy joy,
 To hear their voices raised, in happy eloquence,
 Teaching their brethren in the gospel bonds,
 That their most sure belief on this great subject was,
 That God's own wisdom had inspired the hearts,
 Of all that sacred band, who raised the standard,
 And maintained the cause, and reared the fabric here,
 Of Freedom, Liberty, and their attendant train
 Of blessings; not to be obtained where earthly kings hold sway;
 Where foreign sovereigns dominate at will;
 Thwart the free impulse of the virtuous soul;
 Cramp all the energy of enterprise;
 Require submission to their sapient wills;
 And wish mankind to tremble at their nod.
 But in a free republic like to yours, and yours alone,
 Whose virtuous people do possess the power, the faith,
 The honor to be self controlled: Who 'schew the plan
 Of many toiling, that the few may reign:
 Whose policy holds out to all mankind,
 Inducements many, to become your friends;
 Freedom of conscience, in that sacred right
 Of worshiping Almighty God, secured:
 Encouragement of enterprise held forth:
 "Whilst genius rises to his sure reward
 And merit only is the road to fame."

Allow me to relate why 'twas my heart felt glad;
 Yea, why my soul rejoiced, when such a theme as this
 Was introduced in our assemblies, and dwelt upon
 As something sacred; not to be abused,
 Nor lightly thought of by the Saints of God.

Whilst yet residing in my native land, (poor Ireland,)
 Where tyranny and superstition still hold sway;
 Where oftentimes, (as her own poet sings.)
 "A sigh is treason, and a murmur death."
 Oft have I listened to my aged Sire,
 Speak of the wrongs Americans withstood;
 Their noble struggle to shake off the yoke,
 Their mother country would impose on them:
 And whilst he breathed the heartfelt, fervent prayer;
 That finally, their tyrant taskmasters might fail
 In all attempts to fetter freedom, and oppress the poor;
 My mind drank in these sentiments, and imbibed
 A love of freedom, which I still retain;
 Which urged me on to leave my much loved home,
 And seek a refuge in Columbia's land;
 So famed for equal rights, freedom of thought,
 And liberty of speech, and conscience free,
 Unshackled in her views.

Induced thus, I bade adieu to home, and all its joys;
 To try your nation if her fame were true,
 Which I had heard; and realize myself,
 Whether America, did still maintain,
 Her love of virtue, harmony, and peace;
 Her love of freedom, jealous of her charge.
 And if you ask me, if I met with here
 What I expected; I can answer yes—
 I've found Americans, the poor man's friends;
 The stranger's hosts; the advocates of equal rights;
 The stern opposers of despotic power;
 The warm supporters of all free will acts,
 And offerings pure, unsullied aught by guile.

I speak at large;—
 No general rule without exception holds;
 No nation stands completely undefiled;
 No people great or small can say,
 We're perfect to a man:—
 But whilst this world exists, and I shall live
 A pilgrim here on earth; give me my choice,
 I choose America for my abode:
 I hail her constitution of united powers;
 I claim to be her son adopted;
 In due time partake, of all the privileges held out,
 To those who honorably defend her laws;
 Her constitution, and her freedom's fame.
 For I do feel, that I have found, in her economy
 Of self control; a plan congenial to my simple mind;

A precedent set forth, which must eventually
 Pervade the world; and harmonize the nations;
 If they will embrace, both truth and virtue when they burst their
 bonds;
 And dare try freedom's self controlling power.

Hence then of course, it made my heart rejoice,
 That I'd found the truth, of Jesus' gospel verified on earth;
 And that I'd also found, my brethren in the gospel's bonds,
 To advocate the cause, uphold the principle of equal rights;
 Teach us to revere a virtuous people's power;
 And always pray Almighty God to bless them;
 To bless the rulers of this Union great,
 That they might honorably maintain her fame
 Among the nations: shine forth a terror to despotic power;
 And teach mankind a lesson, to be free.

Such doctrines we've been always taught
 By those the world call "Mormons:"
 Such are the doctrines we intend to teach,
 The Church of Christ; "the Saints of latter days."
 Throughout the world, to every nation, kindred, tongue;
 To every people on this earthly globe; we'll preach
 "The gospel," we've received of Jesus Christ;
 By revelation in these latter days.
 And when believers have been gathered up;
 We'll teach them first to observe; the "all things
 Whatsoever," he has commanded us;
 And next, "be subject to the powers that be."
 To great Jehovah render all your souls;
 With-hold not Cæsar's lawful tribute due.
 Such with God's help we'll practice while we live;
 Such with His help we'll cleave to till we die.

But, lo! Missouri's mobbers have convened,
 Once more in council; to debate at length,
 The Mormon question; with importance big.
 Behold! the reverend, pious, long faced priest,
 [Seeing his craft in danger]
 Grasp at the help of villiany and crime:
 Behold! the Squire, who swore the other day,
 To uphold, administer, and observe the laws;
 Commingle now with those, (and cheer them on)
 Who here propose to drive the Mormons out:
 Despite the laws of either God or man.
 Behold the Judges, and the Generals next,
 Descend from honor's station; tamper with mobs;
 Wink at their outrage; and cheer on its course.
 And finally, though last not least, behold,
 That cruel man; even Lilburn W. Boggs;
 (Who led the Jackson mob; and by such means,
 Obtained the station of Missouri's Governor);
 Send forth his mandate to his General's brave;
 "Exterminate! or drive from out this State,

Those Mermons! Treat them as foes!
 Be sure cut off retreat!—
 Act as you may, I authorize it all!
 And give you power to exercise at will!"

Need I detail the scenes which now ensued;
 The slaughter, rapine, plunder, rape and crime;
 The murders at Haun's mill; great Bogart's flight;
 And subsequent career of infamy and vice?
 Or need I tell, how General Clark came on,
 And sanctioned Lucas' treaty.
 Made us a speech, invoked the unknown God;
 Claimed all the power to treat us as he would;
 Told us our innocence was nought to him;
 Advised us to forsake our modes of faith,
 Never again to organize our church;
 Prophesied our leaders fate was sealed,
 The die was cast; we ne'er should see them more.
 Appointed when we all must leave the State;
 Claimed us his debtors for the brief respite;
 Warned us to not attempt to disobey;
 If he had to return, extermination was our certain doom;
 Expressed his grief and sorrow for our fate;
 Marched off his army, and his exit made?
 No, I need not detail them; (if I could);
 In heaven they're registered, on earth they're known;
 And when all hidden things are brought to light,
 And all men judged according to their works;
 The wronged, the innocent, shall then appear;
 The unrepenting sinner know his doom,

Behold us now!—————
 Our leaders doomed to death, close iron'd in a jail:
 Our brethren martyred; widows and their babes
 Driven houseless on the snowy prairies bare;
 To pitch their tents, to wend their weary way;
 To save themselves from worse than monster rage:
 Our properties conveyed away by deed of trust,
 Enforced upon us at the risk of life,
 To pay the wages of our ruthless foes;
 And compensate for deeds, which they themselves had done:
 Our houses plundered, fields of corn laid waste;
 Our cattle driven, or wantonly destroyed;
 Our lives in constant danger, from a band
 Of prowling robbers; licensed by their chief,
 To spoil, molest, and plunder us at will.
 Yet 'midst these scenes, a ray of comfort came,
 We felt the spirit in our bosoms burn;
 Bestowing consolation, and the hope
 That better days, and happier scenes were nigh;
 When free from persecution, we might still remain
 A people; worship our great Creator, and proclaim
 Our faith and doctrines, to a willing world.

This was the mighty charm, which held us bound
 In gospel's bonds, and brotherly esteem;
 Whil'st tauntingly, our haughty foes did boast,
 The death blow struck, and all our cause undone:
 Our Heavenly Father, sent his spirit down,—
 That "still small voice," spoke peace unto our souls;
 Ye are my Sheep; hold on; I'll bear you through;
 I'll find you pasturage, and keep you safe;
 Be true, be patient, and you still are mine.
 Such were the comforts which we still enjoyed,
 Whil'st our sad foes were black with reckless crime;
 Such are the comforts of the faithful Saint,
 Whate'er his fate, where'er his lot be cast:
 Hence truer joys, we as a people found,
 Than those by whom in thralldom we were bound;
 Hence truer joys, our Prophet, felt enchained
 Than Lilburn, in the station he's attained.

But hark! A voice from Mississippi's shore,
 Comes gently wafted o'er the prairies wide;
 From Illinois—from Quincy it proceeds;
 A voice of charity—a voice of peace;—
 Come over here, ye houseless outcasts poor;
 We'll give you comfort, and your wants supply;
 There's room in Illinois, you're welcome here;
 We'll hail you brethren, citizens, and friends;
 We worship as we will; do you the same;
 Enjoy again your conscientious faith;
 Enjoy again, your native free born rights:
 Enjoy again, prosperity and peace!

With joyous gratitude unfeigned we hail
 The happy change, the proffered boon of grace;
 We leave Missouri, at the rude command
 Oh heartless tyrants placed on high by crime:
 In Illinois we've found a safe retreat;
 A home, a shelter from oppression dire;
 Where we can worship God, as we think right;
 And mobbers come not, to disturb our peace;
 Where we can live, and hope for better days;
 Enjoy again our liberty, our rights;
 That social intercourse which freedom grants;
 And charity requires of man with man.

And long may social intercourse prevail;
 And long may charity pervade each breast;
 And long may Illinois remain the scene,
 Of rich prosperity—by peace secured;
 May Quincy flourish, and the regions round;
 Where dwell those friends, who kindly lent us aid;
 And may those friends, when that great day appears
 When King Messiah comes, the world to judge;
 Hear from his lips the blessed sentence; come!
 Inherit joys which I've prepared for you!
 For unto these my brethren did you give,

Raiment, and food, and drink, in time of need;
 You found them strangers, and you took them in;
 Sick and in prison, and you came to them;
 And inasmuch, as thus to them you did;
 So did you do it, even unto me.

Or rather, may those friends be found among;
 These "brethren;" whom he looks on as himself;
 Those who've been baptized; been born again,
 Of water and the spirit; kept the faith;
 Fought the good fight; and thus insured their crown:
 Celestial glory, and celestial joy.

And even our enemies, may they repent,
 And find their way to mercies throne of grace;
 Obtain forgiveness, and amend their lives;
 Obtain salvation from the sinners doom;
 Obtain the prize, the virtuous shall receive.

And Oh! Americans of every State!
 Of every policy—of every faith;
 Who wish to uphold your envied country's fame,
 And stay the torrent of abuse and crime:
 May great Jehovah grant you power to sway,
 Your nations sceptre with a master hand;
 Watch o'er her honor with a jealous care;
 Maintain her constitution and her laws;
 Put down misrule, protect pure virtue's cause;
 Maintain fair Freedom; Liberty uphold:
 And show mankind, you're worthy of the charge.

And Oh! Ye Saints throughout this happy land,
 Praise ye the Lord, all glory give to him,
 Who stretched forth his arm, and kept us safe,
 'Midst threatened death, 'midst dangers great and dread;
 Who's given us friends and home, and peace, and hope;
 And favor in the eyes of virtuous men;
 Who in his own due time, put forth his hand,
 And through our prayers, gave unto us again
 Our brethren whom our foes had doomed to death;
 Gave us again our Prophet safe and free; }
 Gave us again our Presidential three }
 Gave us again our FRIENDS, our LIBERTY. }

"Praise ye the Lord," and let his praise resound,
 Fill all the earth, and Heaven shall hear the sound:
 And whilst we praise him, let our prayers ascend,
 Before his throne, for every faithful friend;
 For all the honest, over all the earth,
 Whate'er their station, or whate'er their birth;
 And when Messiah comes, our King to reign,
 Descends on earth, with all his shining train;
 May Truth and Liberty our motto be;
 We're all UNITED, and we all are FREE.

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