

BIOGRAPHY OF SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

Sidney Rigdon, who was quite closely associated with Joseph Smith in the early days of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was a man of superior ability, power, and influence; and such was the character of his service that his life work is so intertwined with the history of the church that the history of one can not be written without the other.

We think, therefore, that it is important that an account of his life and ministry, more full than has yet been published, should have place in the columns of the JOURNAL OF HISTORY. It is not our purpose to defend Elder Rigdon against the attacks made upon him by those who have undertaken to assail his record or character, but we design to tell the leading events of his life without seeking to influence the reader's opinion of the man. His work will speak for itself, and we are sure that all who read will find very much to admire in the character of the man.

We insert the following items which are doubtless authentic and reliable:

The following statement of facts in relation to the birth, life, education, and occupation of Sidney Rigdon, minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the Church of the Latter Day Saints, is taken from the family records, as kept by his parents and by the subscribers.

He (S. Rigdon) was born on his father's farm, Piny Fork of Peter's Creek, St. Clair township, Alleghany Co., Pa., Feb. 19, 1793, where he lived till the winter of 1818 and 1819, and followed farming and received a common English education. In the fall of 1817 he professed religion, and joined the regular Baptist Church of that place, and in the winter of 1818 and 1819 he went to Beaver Co., Pa., where he studied divinity with a Baptist preacher by the name of Clark, and was licensed to preach by the Conoquennessing Church (time not recollected) and went from there to Warren, Ohio, and was ordained a regular Baptist preacher,

and returned to Pittsburg in the winter of 1821 and '22, and took the care of the First Regular Baptist Church, and there continued to preach till the Baptist Association met in Pittsburg, (precise time not recollected, but we think about the fall of 1824) at which time they brought some charges against him for not being sound in the faith; brought him to trial, but denied him the liberty of speaking in self-defense, and he declared a non-fellowship with them, and began to preach Campbellism. And he, and they that joined with him got the liberty of the Court House, there they held their meetings, and he and his brother-in-law, Mr. Brooks, followed the tanning business till the winter of 1827-'28, when he (S. Rigdon) moved somewhere into the Western Reserve, in Ohio, and there continued to preach till the Latter Day Saints came to that part of the country, and he joined them, and continues to be an elder in that church (of Latter Day Saints, called Mormons.)

In confirmation of the above statements, we hereby subscribe our names.

CARVIL RIGDON.

PETER BOYER.

Upper St. Clair Township, Alleghany Co., Pa.

JANUARY 27, 1843.

During the time Elder Rigdon was associated with the movement referred to in the above as "Campbellism" he was closely associated with such leaders in that movement as Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, Adamson Bently, and might himself be counted as one of the founders of the Disciple or Christian Church.

In the History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve by A. S. Hayden he is quite prominently and frequently mentioned. We quote the following instances:

The appearance of that periodical, August, 1823, forms a marked epoch in the public announcements of the principles of a much-needed reformation. Mr. Scott remained yet a few years in Pittsburg, where he became acquainted, and for a time associated with Sidney Rigdon, then pastor of a small Baptist church in the city. The two communions, that under Rigdon and the company to whom Scott preached, united together and became one body.—Page 64.

Besides these accredited messengers, the following preachers were present, who, by a resolution of the association, were invited to a seat in its councils: Walter Scott, Samuel Holmes, William West, and Sidney Rigdon.—Pages 56, 57.

Among the seniors were Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander, Adamson Bently, and Sidney Rigdon, with Walter Scott, to whom the multitudes of young disciples looked with the affection of children to a

spiritual father. Of the younger preachers, may be named Jacob Osborne, Marcus Bosworth, William Hayden, John Henry, Symonds Ryder, Zeb Rudolph, John Applegate, John Secrest, A. G. Ewing, as also Aylett Raines, the Cottons, and Reuben Ferguson.—Page 163.

There occurred at this morning meeting a passage at arms between Mr. Campbell and Mr. Rigdon. It was only about two months previous to the fall of that star from heaven.—Page 298.

Sidney Rigdon was an orator of no inconsiderable abilities. In person, he was of full medium height, rotund in form; of countenance, while speaking, open and winning, with a little cast of melancholy. His action was graceful, his language copious, fluent in utterance, with articulation clear and musical. Yet he was an enthusiast and unstable. His personal influence with an audience was very great; but many, with talents far inferior, surpassed him in judgment and permanent power with the people. He was just the man for an awakening. He was an early reader of the "Christian Baptist," and admiring its strong and progressive teaching, he circulated the paper, and brought out its views in his sermons. Whatever may be justly said of him after he had surrendered himself a victim and a leader of the Mormon delusion, it would scarcely be just to deny sincerity and candor to him, previous to the time when his bright star became permanently eclipsed under that dark cloud.—Page 192.

Rigdon, who had taken no part in this discussion, becoming weary of it said: "You are consuming too much time on this question. One of the old Jerusalem preachers would start out with his hunting shirt and moccasins, and convert half the world while you are discussing and settling plans! Upon this Bro. Scott arose with a genial smile, and remarked: "Brethren, give me my Bible, my head, and Bro. William Hayden, and we will go out and convert the world." Then Rigdon, "I move that we give Bro. Scott his Bible, his head, and Bro. William Hayden." It was settled in a few moments as Rigdon's resolution was seconded and passed unanimously.—Page 174.

These references serve to show that he was prominently and favorably regarded among his colleagues in the Western Reserve.

In 1830 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, then in its infancy, sent four missionaries from New York into the western country, viz, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, jr., and Ziba Peterson. Elder Pratt having previously been acquainted with Mr. Rigdon, they called on him at Mentor, Ohio, where he was pastor of a congregation.

The following from the pen of Joseph Smith will be interesting in this connection and throw light upon the situation:

As there has been a great rumor, and many false statements have been given to the world respecting Elder Rigdon's connection with the church of Jesus Christ, it is necessary that a correct account of the same be given, so that the public mind may be disabused on the subject. I shall therefore proceed to give a brief history of his life down, from authentic sources, as also an account of his connection with the church of Jesus Christ.

Sidney Rigdon was born in Saint Clair Township, Allegheny County, State of Pennsylvania, on the 19th of February, A. D. 1793, and was the youngest son of William and Nancy Rigdon. William Rigdon, his father, was a native of Hartford County, State of Maryland; was born A. D. 1743, and died May 26, A. D. 1810, in the sixty-second (seventh) year of his age. William Rigdon was the son of Thomas Baker and Ann Lucy Rigdon. Thomas Baker Rigdon was a native of the State of Maryland, and was the son of Thomas Baker Rigdon, who came from Great Britain.

Ann Lucy Rigdon, grandmother of Sidney Rigdon, was a native of Ireland, and emigrated to the city of Boston, Massachusetts, and was there married to Thomas Baker Rigdon. Nancy Rigdon's mother was a native of Freehold, Monmouth County, New Jersey; was born March 16, 1759, and died October 3, 1839, and was the eldest daughter of Bryant Gallaher, who was a native of Ireland. Elizabeth Gallaher, mother to the said Nancy Rigdon, was the second wife of the said Bryant Gallaher, and whose maiden name was Reed, and who was a native of Monmouth County, New Jersey. Their parents were natives of Scotland.

His father, William Rigdon, was a farmer, and he removed from the State of Maryland some time prior to his marriage; to the State of Pennsylvania; and his mother had removed some time prior to that, from the State of New Jersey to the same State; where they were married and continued to follow agricultural pursuits. They had four children; viz, three sons, and one daughter. The eldest, sons, were called Carvil, Loami, and Sidney, the subject of this brief history. The fourth a daughter named Lucy.

Nothing very remarkable took place in the youthful days of Elder Rigdon; suffice it to say that he continued at home with his parents, following the occupation of a farmer till he was seventeen years of age, when his father died; after which event he continued on the same farm with his mother, until he was twenty-six years of age. In his twenty-fifth year he connected himself with a society which in that country was called Regular Baptists. The church he united with was at that time under the charge of the Rev. David Phillips, a clergyman from Wales. The year following he left the farm and went to reside with the Rev. Andrew Clark, a minister of the same order. During his continuance with him he received a license to preach in that society, and commenced from that

time to preach, and returned to farming occupations no more. This was in March, 1819.

In the month of May, of the same year, he left the State of Pennsylvania and went to Trumbull County, State of Ohio, and took up his residence at the house of Adamson Bentley, a preacher of the same faith. This was in July of the same year. While there he became acquainted with Phebe Brook, to whom he was married on the 12th of June, A. D. 1820. She was a native of the State of New Jersey, Bridgetown, Cumberland County, and had previously removed to Trumbull County, Ohio. After his marriage he continued to preach in that district of country until November, 1821, when he was requested by the First Baptist Church of the city of Pittsburg to take the pastoral charge of said church, which invitation he accepted, and in February, A. D. 1822, he left Warren, Trumbull County, and removed to that city and entered immediately upon his pastoral duties, and continued to preach to that church with considerable success. At the time he commenced his labors in that church, and for sometime before, the church was in a very low state and much confusion existed in consequence of the conduct of their former pastor. However, soon after Elder Rigdon commenced his labors there was a pleasing change effected, for by his incessant labors and his peculiar style of preaching the church was crowded with anxious listeners. The number of members rapidly increased, and it soon became one of the most respectable churches in that city. He was now a popular minister, and was much respected in that city, and all classes and persuasions sought his society. After he had been in that place some time, his mind was troubled and much perplexed with the idea that the doctrines maintained by that society were not altogether in accordance with the Scriptures. This thing continued to agitate his mind, more and more, and his reflections on these occasions were peculiarly trying; for according to his views of the word of God no other church that he was acquainted with was right, or with whom he could associate; consequently, if he were to disavow the doctrine of the church with whom he was then associated, he knew of no other way of obtaining a livelihood except by mental [man-ual] labor, and at that time had a wife and three children to support.

On the one hand was wealth, popularity, and honor; on the other appeared nothing but poverty and hard labor. But notwithstanding his great ministerial success and the prospect of ease and affluence, (which frequently swerve the mind, and have an undue influence on too many who wear the sacred garb of religion, who for the sake of popularity and of wealth can calm and lull to rest their conscientious scruples, and succumb to the popular church) yet his mind rose superior to all these considerations. Truth was his pursuit, and for truth he was prepared to make every sacrifice in his power. After mature deliberation, deep reflection, and solemn prayer to his heavenly Father, the resolve was made and the important step was taken; and in the month of August, A. D. 1824, after laboring among that people two years and six months, he made known his determination, to withdraw from the church, as he

could no longer uphold the doctrines taught and maintained by it. This announcement was like a clap of thunder. Amazement seized the congregation, which was then collected, which at last gave way in a flood of tears. It would be in vain to attempt to describe the feelings of the church on that occasion, who were zealously attached to their beloved pastor, or the feelings of their minister. On his part it was indeed a struggle of principle over affection and kindness.

There was at the time of his separation from the church a gentleman of the name of Alexander Campbell, who was formerly from Ireland, and who has since obtained considerable notoriety in the religious world, who was then a member of the same association and who afterwards separated from it. There was also another gentleman, by the name of Walter Scott, a Scotchman by birth, who was a member of the Scandinavian Church, in that city, and who separated from the same about that time.

Prior to those separations, Mr. Campbell resided in Bethany, Brook County, Virginia, where he published a monthly periodical, called the *Christian Baptist*. After they had separated from the different churches these gentlemen were on terms of the greatest friendship, and frequently met together to discuss the subject of religion, being yet undetermined respecting the principles of the doctrine of Christ, or what course to pursue. However from this connection sprung up a new church in the world, known by the name of "Campbellites"; they call themselves "Disciples." The reason why they were called Campbellites was in consequence of Mr. Campbell's publishing the periodical above mentioned, and it being the means through which they communicated their sentiments to the world. Other than this, Mr. Campbell was no more the originator of that sect than Elder Rigdon.

Having now retired from the ministry, and having no way by which to sustain his family besides his own industry, he was necessitated to find other employment in order to provide for his maintenance, and for that purpose he engaged in the humble capacity of a journeyman tanner, in that city, and followed his new employment, without murmuring, for two years, during which times he both saw and experienced that by resigning his pastoral vocations in that city and engaging in the humble occupation of a tanner he had lost many who once professed the greatest friendship, and who manifested the greatest love for his society; that when he was seen by them in the garb suited to the employment of a tanner, there was no longer that freedom, courtesy, and friendship manifested; that many of his former friends became estranged and looked upon him with coolness and indifference too obvious to admit of deception. To a well regulated and enlightened mind—to one who soars above the arbitrary and vain lines of distinction which pride or envy may draw, such conduct appears ridiculous, while at the same time it can not but cause feelings of a peculiar nature to those who for their honesty and integrity of heart have brought themselves into situations to be made the subject of it.

These things, however, did not affect his mind so as to change his purpose. He had counted the cost before his separation, and had made his mind known to his wife, who cheerfully shared his sorrow and humiliation, believing that all things would work together for their good, being conscious that what they had done was for conscience' sake and in the fear of the Lord.

After laboring for two years as a tanner, he removed to Bainbridge, Gauga County, Ohio, where it was known that he had been a preacher, and had gained considerable distinction as a public speaker, and the people soliciting him to preach, he complied with their request. From this time forward, he devoted himself to the work of the ministry, confining himself to no creed, but held up the Bible as the rule of faith, and advocating those doctrines which had been the subject of his, and Mr. Campbell's investigations; viz: Repentance and baptism, for the remission of sins.

He continued to labor in that vicinity one year, and during that time, his former success attended his labors. Large numbers invariably attended his meetings. While he labored in that neighborhood, he was instrumental in building up a large and respectable church, in the town of Mantua, Portage County, Ohio. The doctrines which he advanced being new, public attention was awakened, and great excitement pervaded throughout that whole section of country, and frequently the congregations which he addressed, were so large that it was impossible to make himself audible to all. The subjects he proposed were presented in such an impressive manner to the congregations, that those who were unbiased by bigotry and prejudice, had to exclaim, "We never heard it in this manner before." There were some, however, that opposed the doctrines which he advanced, but not with that opposition which ever ought to characterize the noble and ingenuous. Those by whom he was opposed well knew that an honorable and public investigation, would inevitably discover the weakness and fatality of their doctrines; consequently they shunned it, and endeavored, by ridiculing the doctrines which he promulgated, to suppress them.

This, however, did not turn him from the path which he felt to be his duty; for he continued to set forth the doctrines of repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, according to the teachings of Peter, on the day of Pentecost, exhorting his hearers in the meantime, to throw away their creeds of faith—to take the Bible as their standard and search its sacred pages—to learn to live by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of the Lord, and to rise above every sectarian sentiment, and the traditions of the age, and explore the wide and glorious fields of truth which the Scripture holds out to them.

After laboring in that neighborhood one year, he received a very pressing invitation to remove to the town of Mentor, in the same county, about thirty miles from Bainbridge, and within a few miles from Lake Erie, which he sometime after complied with. The persons by whom he was more particularly requested to move to that place were the remnants of a

Baptist Church, which was nearly broken up, the members of which had become attached to the doctrines promulgated by Elder Rigdon.

The town of Mentor was settled by wealthy and enterprising individuals, who had by their industry and good management made that township one of the most delightful in that country, or probably in the Western Reserve. Its advantages for agricultural purposes could hardly be surpassed, while the splendid farms, fertile fields, and stately mansions made it particularly attractive to the eye of the traveler, and gives evidence of enterprise and wealth. In that beautiful location he took up his residence, and immediately commenced his labors, with that zeal and assiduity which had formerly characterized him.

But being a stranger, and many reports being put in circulation of a character calculated to lessen him in the estimation of the people, and consequently destroy his influence, some persons were even wicked enough to retail those slanderous reports which were promulgated, and endeavored to stir up persecution against him; consequently many of the citizens were jealous, and did not extend to him that confidence which he might otherwise have expected.

His path was not strewn with flowers, but the thorns of persecution beset him, and he had to contend against much prejudice and opposition, whose swollen waves might have sunk one less courageous, resolute and determined; yet notwithstanding these unfavorable circumstances, he continued to meet the storm, to stem the torrent, and bear up under the reproach for some time.

At length the storm subsided, for after laboring in that neighborhood for about eight months, he so wrought upon the feelings of the people by his consistent walk and conversation—his sociability, combined with his overwhelming eloquence, that a perfect calm succeeded; their evil apprehensions and surmisings were allayed, their prejudices gave way, and the man whom they had looked upon with jealousy was now their theme of praise, and their welcome guest. Those who had been most hostile now became his warmest admirers and most constant friends.

The churches in which he preached, which had heretofore been filled with anxious hearers, were now filled to overflowing; the poor flocked to the services, and the rich thronged the assemblies.

The doctrines he advanced were new, but at the same time were elucidated with such clearness and enforced with an eloquence altogether superior to what they had listened to before that those whose sectarian prejudices were not too deeply rooted, who listened to the deep and searching discourses which he delivered from time to time, could not fail of being greatly affected and convinced that the principles he advanced were true and in accordance with the Scriptures. Nor were his labors and success confined to that township alone, but calls were made in every direction for him to preach, which he complied with as much as he possibly could, until his labors became very extensive, and spread over a vast extent of country.

Wherever he went the same success attended his ministry, and he was

everywhere received with kindness and welcomed by persons of all classes. Prejudice after prejudice gave way on every hand; opposition after opposition was broken down, and bigotry was rooted from its strongholds. The truths he advanced were received with gladness, and the doctrines he taught had a glorious ascendancy wherever he had the opportunity of promulgating them.

His fame as an orator and deep reasoner in the Scriptures continued to spread far and wide, and he soon gained a popularity and an elevation which has fallen to the lot of but few, consequently thousands flocked to hear his eloquent discourses.

When it was known where he was going to preach there might be seen long before the appointed time, persons of all classes, sects and denominations, flocking like doves to their windows, from a considerable distance. The humble pedestrian, the rich in their splendid equipages might be seen crowding the roads.

The churches in the different places where he preached were no longer large enough to contain the vast assemblies which congregated from time to time, so that he had to repair to the wide spread canopy of heaven, and in the woods and in the groves he addressed the multitudes which flocked to hear him. Nor was his preaching in vain. It was not empty sound that so closely engaged the attention of his audience and with which they were so deeply interested, but it was the truths which were imparted, the intelligence which was conveyed, the duties which were enforced.

Not only did the writings of the New Testament occupy his attention, but occasionally those of the ancient prophets, particularly those prophecies which had reference to the present and to the future, were brought up to review and treated in a manner entirely new and deeply interesting. No longer did he follow the old beaten track, which had been traveled for ages by the religious world, but he dared to enter upon new grounds; called in question the opinions of uninspired men; showed the foolish ideas of many commentators on the sacred Scriptures—exposed their ignorance and contradictions—threw new light on the sacred volume, particularly those prophecies which so deeply interest this generation, and which has been entirely overlooked, or mystified by the religious world but cleared up the scriptures which had heretofore appeared inexplicable, and delighted his astonished audience with things “new and old”—proved to a demonstration the literal fulfillment of prophecy, the gathering of Israel in the last days, to their ancient inheritances, with their ultimate splendor and glory; the situation of the world at the coming of the Son of Man—the judgments which Almighty God would pour out upon the ungodly prior to that event, the reign of Christ with his saints on the earth, in the millennium.

These important subjects could not fail to have their weight on the minds of his hearers, who clearly discerned the situation in which they were placed, by the sound and logical arguments which he adduced; and so soon numbers felt the importance of obeying that form of doctrine

which had been delivered them; so that they might be accounted worthy to escape those things which were coming on the earth, and many came forward desiring to be baptized for the remission of sins. He accordingly commenced to baptize, like John of old, there flocked to him people from all the region round about—persons of all ranks and standings in society—the rich, the poor, the noble and the brave, flocked to be baptized of him. Nor was this desire confined to individuals or families, but whole societies threw away their creeds and articles of faith and became obedient to the faith he promulgated, and he soon had large and flourishing societies throughout that whole region of country.

He now was a welcome visitor wherever he traveled—his society was courted by the learned, and intelligent, and the highest encomiums were bestowed upon him for his biblical lore and his eloquence.

The work of the ministry occupied all his time and attention; he felt deeply for the salvation of his fellow-man, and for the attainments of which he labored with unceasing diligence.

During this state of unexampled success, the prospect of wealth and affluence was fairly open before him; but he looked upon it with indifference, and made everything subservient to the promotion of correct principles; and having food and raiment, he learned therewith to be content. As a proof of this his family were in no better circumstances, and made no greater appearance in the world, than when he labored at the occupation of tanning. His family consisted of his wife and six children, and lived in a very small, unfinished frame house, hardly capable of making a family comfortable; which affords a clear proof that his affections were not set upon things of a worldly nature, or secular aggrandizement.

After he had labored in that vicinity for some time, and having received but little pecuniary aid, the members of the church which he had built up, held a meeting to take his circumstances into consideration, and provide for his wants, and place him in a position suitable to the high and important office which he sustained in the church. They resolved upon erecting him a suitable residence, where he could make his family comfortable, and accommodate his numerous friends, who visited him. A committee was appointed to make a purchase of land, and to erect such buildings as were necessary. The committee soon made a purchase of a farm in a beautiful situation in that township, made contracts for erecting a suitable dwelling house, stable, barn, etc., and soon made a commencement on the house, and had a quantity of the building materials on the spot. He being held in the highest respect by that people, they entered the work with pleasure, and seemed to vie with each other in their labors of love, believing it a duty to make their beloved pastor and his family comfortable. His prospects, with regard to temporal things, were now brighter than they ever had been; and he felt happy in the midst of a people who had every disposition to promote his welfare.

Under these pleasing circumstances, and enjoying this full tide of prosperity, he hardly thought that, for his attachment to truth, he would

soon see his prospects blasted, and himself and family reduced to a more humble situation than before.

At this time, it being in the fall of A. D. 1830, Elders Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, Oliver Cowdery, and Peter Whitmer, called at that town on their way to the Western Boundary of the State of Missouri, testifying to the truth of the "Book of Mormon," and that the Lord had raised up a prophet, and restored the priesthood. Previous to this, Elder Parley Pratt had been a preacher in the same church with Elder Rigdon, and resided in the town of Amherst, Lorain County, in that State, and had been sent into the State of New York, on a mission, where he became acquainted with the circumstances of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and was introduced to Joseph Smith, jr., and others of the church of Latter Day Saints. After listening to the testimony of the witnesses, and reading the "book," he became convinced that it was of God, and that the principles which they taught, were the principles of truth. He was then baptized and shortly after ordained an elder, and began to preach, and from that time became a strenuous advocate of the truth.

Believing there were many in the church with whom he had formerly been united, who were honest seekers after truth, induced him, while on his journey to the West, to call upon his friends, and make known the great things which the Lord had brought to pass. The first house at which they called was Elder Rigdon's; and after the usual salutations, presented him with the Book of Mormon—stating that it was a revelation from God. This being the first time he had ever heard of or seen the Book of Mormon, he felt very much prejudiced at the assertion; and replied, that he had one Bible which he believed was a revelation from God, and with which he pretended to have some acquaintance; but with respect to the book they had presented him he must say that he had "considerable doubt." Upon which they expressed a desire to investigate the subject, and argue the matter; but he replied "No, young gentlemen, you must not argue with me on the subject; but I will read your book, and see what claim it has upon my faith, and will endeavor to ascertain whether it be a revelation from God or not." After some further conversation upon the subject, they expressed a desire to lay the subject before the people, and requested the privilege of preaching in Elder Rigdon's church, to which he readily assented. The appointment was accordingly published, and a large and respectable congregation assembled. Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt severally addressed this meeting. At the conclusion Elder Rigdon arose and stated to the congregation that the information they had that evening obtained was of an extraordinary character, and certainly demanded their most serious consideration: and as the apostle advised his brethren to "prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good," so he would exhort his brethren to do likewise, and give the matter a careful investigation; and not turn against it, without being fully convinced of its being an imposition, lest they should, possibly, resist the truth.

This was, indeed, most generous on the part of Elder Rigdon, and gave evidence of his entire freedom from any sectarian bias; but allowing his mind full scope to range, untrammelled, through the Scriptures, embracing every principle of truth, and rejecting error, under whatever guise it may appear. He was perfectly willing to allow his members the same privilege. Having received great light on the Scriptures, he felt desirous to receive more, from whatever quarter it should come. This was his prevailing characteristic; and if any sentiment was advanced by anyone, that was new, or tended to throw any light on the Scriptures, or the dealings of God with the children of men, it was always gladly received, and treasured up in his mind. After the meeting broke up, the brethren returned home with Elder Rigdon, and conversed upon the important things which they had proclaimed. He informed them that he would read the Book of Mormon, give it a full investigation, and then would frankly tell them his mind and feelings on the subject—told them they were welcome to abide at his house until he had opportunity of reading it.

About two miles from Elder Rigdon's, at the town of Kirtland, were a number of the members of his church, who lived together, and had all things common—from which circumstance had arisen the idea that this was the case with the Church of Jesus Christ—to which place they immediately repaired and proclaimed the gospel to them, with some considerable success; for their testimony was received by many of the people, and seventeen came forward in obedience to the gospel.

While thus engaged, they visited Elder Rigdon occasionally, and found him very earnestly engaged in reading "the Book of Mormon"—praying to the Lord for direction, and meditating on the things he heard and read; and after a fortnight from the time the book was put in his hands, he was fully convinced of the truth of the work, by a revelation from Jesus Christ, which was made known unto him in a remarkable manner, so that he could exclaim "flesh and blood have not revealed it unto me, but my Father which is in heaven."

Being now fully satisfied in his own mind of the truth of the work, and the necessity of obedience thereto, he informed his wife of the same, and was happy to find that she was not only diligently investigating the subject, but was believing with all her heart, and was desirous of obeying the truth, which, undoubtedly, was a great satisfaction to his mind.

The consequences of obeying the truth, and embracing a system of religion so unpopular as that of the Church of Jesus Christ, presented itself in the strongest possible light.

At present the honors and applause of the world were showered down upon him, his wants were abundantly supplied, and were anticipated. He was respected by the entire community, and his name was a tower of strength. His counsel was sought for, respected and esteemed. But if he would unite with the church of Christ, his prospects of wealth and affluence would vanish; his family dependent upon him for support must necessarily share his humiliation and poverty. He was aware that his

character and his reputation must suffer in the estimation of the community.

Aware of all these things, there must have been feelings of no ordinary kind, agitate his bosom at that particular crisis; but yet they did not deter him from the path of duty. He had formerly made a sacrifice for truth and conscience' sake, and had been sustained; consequently, he felt great confidence in the Lord, believing that if he pursued the path of duty, no good thing would be withheld from him.

Although he felt great confidence in the Lord, yet he felt it a trial of some magnitude, when he avowed his determination to his beloved companion, who had before shared in his poverty, and who had cheerfully struggled through it without murmuring or repining. He informed her what the consequences would undoubtedly be respecting their worldly circumstances if they obeyed the gospel; and then said: "My dear you have followed me once into poverty, are you again willing to do the same?" She then said: "I have weighed the matter, I have contemplated upon the circumstances in which we may be placed; I have counted the cost, and I am perfectly satisfied to follow you; it is my desire to do the will of God, come life or come death." Accordingly they were both baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ; and, together with those who had previously been admitted to baptism, made a little branch in this section of Ohio, of about twenty members, whom the brethren, bound for the borders of the Lamanites, after adding to their number one of their converts, Dr. Frederick G. Williams, bade an affectionate farewell, and went on their way rejoicing.

Parley P. Pratt's account of the visit to Mr. Rigdon is as follows:

After traveling for some days we called on an Indian nation at or near Buffalo; and spent part of a day with them, instructing them in the knowledge of the record of their fore fathers. We were kindly received, and much interest was manifested by them on hearing this news. We made a present of two copies of the Book of Mormon to certain of them who could read, and repaired to Buffalo. Thence we continued our journey, for about two hundred miles, and at length called on Mr. Rigdon, my former friend and instructor, in the Reformed Baptist Society. He received us cordially and entertained us with hospitality.

We soon presented him with a Book of Mormon, and related to him the history of the same. He was much interested, and promised a thorough perusal of the book.

We tarried in this region for some time, and devoted our time to the ministry, and visiting from house to house.

At length Mr. Rigdon and many others became convinced that they had no authority to minister in the ordinances of God; and that they had not been legally baptized or ordained. They, therefore, came forward and were baptized by us, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

The news of our coming was soon noised abroad, and the news of the discovery of the Book of Mormon and the marvelous events connected with it. The interest and excitement now became general in Kirtland, and in all the region round about. The people thronged us night and day, insomuch that we had no time for rest or retirement. Meetings were convened in different neighborhoods, and multitudes came together soliciting our attendance; while thousands flocked about us daily; some to be taught, some for curiosity, some to obey the gospel, and some to dispute or resist it.

In two or three weeks from our arrival in the neighborhood with the news, we had baptized one hundred and twenty-seven souls, and this number soon increased to a thousand. The disciples were filled with joy and gladness; while rage and lying was abundantly manifested by gain-sayers; faith was strong, joy was great, and persecution heavy.

State of Ohio, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between John G. Smith and Julia Giles, on the second of November, 1826, agreeable to license obtained from court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded the 13th of Dec., 1826.

January, 1827. Elder Rigdon held public meetings in Mantua, Ohio. (Hayden's History of the Disciples of the Western Reserve.)

February, 1827. Preached funeral discourse of Hannah Tanner, Chester, Ohio. (Authenticated by Henry Tanner.)

March and April, 1827. Held protracted meetings at Mentor, Ohio; baptizing Nancy M. Sanford, William Dunson and wife, and others. (Evidence by Nancy M. Sanford, Mantua, Ohio.)

That his life prior to his uniting with the Latter Day Saints was an active one is indicated by the following items from the county records and other reliable sources.

State of Ohio, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that on the fifth of June, 1827, in the village of Painsville, I solemnized the marriage contract between Theron Freeman and Elizabeth Waterman, agreeable to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded June 7, 1827.

June 15, 1827. Baptized Thomas Clapp, and others, Mentor, Ohio.
 Personal testimony of Henry H. Clapp, Mentor, Ohio.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between James Gray and Mary Kerr, in township of Mentor, on the 3d of July, 1827.

SIDNEY RIGDON.
 EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded July 12, 1827.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that on the 19th of July, 1827, I solemnized the marriage contract in the township of Kirtland, between Alden Snow and Ruth Parker, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of the court of the said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.
 EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded August 10, 1827.

August 23, 1827. Elder Rigdon met with the Ministerial Association of the Western Reserve at New Lisbon, Ohio.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract, on the 9th of October, 1827, in the township of Mentor, between Stephen Sherman and Wealthy Matthews, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.
 EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded October 27, 1827.

October 20, 1827. A member of the ministerial council at Warren, Ohio.

November, 1827. Held a series of meetings at New Lisbon, Ohio.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Alvin Wait and Sophia Gunn, on the 6th of Dec., 1827, in the township of Kirtland, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.
 EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded December 12, 1827.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Roswell D. Cottrell and Matilda Olds, in the township of Concord, on the 13th day of December, 1827, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded January 8, 1828.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Otis Herrington and Lyma Corning, in the township of Mentor, on the 14th of February, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, JUN., *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded March 31, 1828.

March, 1828. Instructor of a class in theology at Mentor, Ohio; and also held a series of meetings at Mentor and Warren, Ohio. Zebulon Rudolph, afterwards an elder in the Disciple Church, was a member of this class in theology, with others. He became a man of note in the Western Reserve.

April, 1828. Elder Rigdon conducted a great religious revival at Kirtland, Ohio.

May, 1828. He meets with Alexander Campbell at Shalersville, Ohio, and held a protracted meeting at that place.

June, 1828. Elder Rigdon baptized Henry H. Clapp at Mentor, Ohio.

August, 1828. Attended great yearly association at Warren, Ohio.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Luther Dille and Clarissa Kent, in the township of Mentor, on the 7th day of September, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded October 13, 1828.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Nachor Corning and Phebe E. Wilson, in the township of Mentor, on the

18th day of September, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded October 13, 1828.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Albert Churchill and Anna Fosdick on the 1st of January, 1829, in the township of Concord, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded February 12, 1829.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Erastus Root and Rebecca Tuttle, on the 1st day of February, 1829, in the township of Mentor, agreeably to a license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded February 12, 1829.

March, 1829. Protracted meeting, Mentor, Ohio.

April 12, 1829. Protracted meeting at Kirtland, Ohio.

Lyman Wight, in his private journal, says: "I resided in this place (Warrensville, Ohio,) till 1829, about the month of May, when I heard Sidney Rigdon preach what was then called Rigdonite doctrine. After hearing him go through the principle of baptism for the remission of sins I went forward and was baptized by his hands."

July 1, 1829. Organized church at Perry, Ohio.

In the journal of Lyman Wight, he writes August (same year): "My wife was baptized together with John Murdock and many others by Sidney Rigdon."

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between John Strong and Ann Eliza More, on the 13th of August, 1829, in the township of Kirtland, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk Com. Pleas.*

Recorded September 14, 1829.

State of Ohio, }
 Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Darwin Atwater and Harriett Clapp, on the 14th day of September, 1829,

in the township of Mentor, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded October 7, 1829.

September, 1829. Series of meetings at Mentor, Ohio, baptizing J. J. Moss, who was afterwards Disciple minister of some note.

State of Ohio, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Joel Roberts and Relief Bates, on the 1st of October, 1829, in the township of Perry, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded October 7, 1829.

October, 1829. At Perry, Ohio.

November, 1829. Held meetings at Wait Hill, Ohio; baptizing Alvin Waite.

State of Ohio, }
Cuyahoga County. } ss.

This certifies that I solemnized the marriage contract between David Chandler and Polly Johnson in the township of Chagrin on the 31st day of December, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON,
*Pastor Baptist
Church in Mentor,
Geauga Co., Ohio.*

Filed and Recorded January 12, 1830.

March, 1830. At Mentor, Ohio.

June 1 to 30. At Mentor, Ohio.

July, 1830. Protracted meeting at Pleasant Valley, Ohio; baptized forty-five.

August, 1830. With Alexander Campbell at Austintown, Ohio.

State of Ohio, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This certifies that I married Lewis B. Wood to Laura Cleaveland in Kirtland Township, on the 4th of November, 1830.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, *Clerk of Com. Pleas.*

Recorded November 11, 1830.

Lyman Wight states that "my Family and myself were baptized on November 14, 1830." And his widow states that she distinctly remembers that Rigdon was baptized on the same day.

BIOGRAPHY OF SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

(Continued from page 20.)

In December, 1830, Elder Rigdon in company with Edward Partridge went to New York for the purpose of visiting Joseph Smith. Soon after his arrival in New York a revelation was received in which Elder Rigdon and his former work were recognized in the following language:

Behold, verily, verily I say unto my servant Sidney, I have looked upon thee and thy works. I have heard thy prayers and prepared thee for a greater work. Thou art blessed, for thou shalt do great things. Behold, thou wast sent forth even as John, to prepare the way before me, and before Elijah which should come, and thou knew it not. Thou didst baptize by water unto repentance, but they received not the Holy Ghost; but now I give unto thee a commandment, that thou shalt baptize by water, and they shall receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, even as the apostles of old.

Joseph Smith had previously commenced an inspired revision or correction of the Holy Scriptures, and Sidney Rigdon commenced to assist him in this important work and continued to do so at intervals until the translation was completed on July 2, 1833.

After a short sojourn in New York he returned to his home in Ohio, where he resided for several years, taking an active part in church work, which sometimes called him from home for weeks and months at a time.

June 19, 1831, in company with Joseph Smith, Martin Harris, Edward Partridge, William W. Phelps, Joseph Coe, and Algernon S. Gilbert and wife, he started from Kirtland, Ohio, for Missouri, prompted by a revealed promise that the land of their inheritance would be pointed out, and the place for the building of the New Jerusalem would be revealed.

They journeyed by wagon, boat, and stage as far as Saint Louis, going by way of Cincinnati, Louisville, and Cairo.

From Saint Louis the majority of the company went on foot to Independence, Missouri, but Elder Rigdon in company with Cilbert and wife made the journey by boat. Those walking arrived at Independence about the middle of July and those traveling by boat a few days later.

Several other elders who left Kirtland at the same time, but traveled by different routes, met this company at Independence. In July a revelation was received pointing out that Independence was the center place, and that the spot for the temple was lying westward upon a lot that was not far from the court-house.

He was present on August 2, when the land of Zion was consecrated, and offered the dedicatory prayer. He was also one of the participants on the following day when the spot for the temple was dedicated.

August 9, in company with ten others, he started on his return trip, leaving the landing near Independence in a canoe, and walking a part of the way to Saint Louis in company with Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Thence they went by stage, arriving at Kirtland August 27.

He then entered actively into the work before mentioned as scribe for Joseph Smith in the revision of the Scriptures, and in preaching in the vicinity. About this time he removed to Hiram, Ohio, where the work of revision or translation was being done. While thus engaged, on the night of March 25, 1832, a mob composed of overzealous religionists maltreated him and Joseph Smith, leaving Elder Rigdon on the ground apparently dead. He finally recovered, though delirious for several days. Immediately after his recovery he took his family back to Kirtland. On April 1 he again started for Missouri, accompanied by Joseph Smith, Newel K. Whitney, Peter Whitmer, and Jesse Gauze. They went by stage and boat, traveling via Wellsville, Steubenville, Wheeling, Cincin-

nati, Louisville, Cairo, and Saint Louis, arriving at Independence on April 24.

Here he participated in an important conference held on the 26th when the church was more fully organized.

May 6, in company with Joseph Smith and Newel K. Whitney, he commenced his return home. Leaving his companions, who were detained by an accident to Bishop Whitney at Greenville, Indiana, he proceeded alone to Kirtland. He then continued in the vicinity of home actively engaged in church interests.

March 8, 1833, a revelation was received providing for counselors to the president of the church, thus forming a quorum of three which was subsequently known as the "First Presidency." Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams were called to occupy in this important position. They were ordained on the 18th of March at the time of the organization of the school of the prophets.

On July 2, 1833, the day the translation was finished, he wrote to the "brethren in Zion" from which we quote as follows:

I, Sidney, write this in great haste, in answer to yours to Brother Joseph, as I am going off immediately, in company with Brother Frederick, to proclaim the gospel; we think of starting to-morrow. Having finished the translation of the Bible, a few hours since, and needing some recreation, we know of no way we can spend our time more to divine acceptance, than endeavoring to build up his Zion, in these last days, as we are not willing to idle any time away, which can be spent to useful purposes. Doors are open continually for proclaiming; the spirit of bitterness among the people is fast subsiding, and a spirit of inquiry is taking its place. I proclaimed last Sunday at Chardon, our county seat. I had the court-house. There was a general turnout, good attention, and a pressing invitation for more meetings, which will be granted if the Lord will, when we return from this tour.

October 5, in company with Joseph Smith and Freeman Nickerson, he started from Kirtland on a mission to Canada, where they preached for about one month with great success, returning to Kirtland November 4, 1833. When in 1834

Joseph Smith and Frederick G. Williams of the First Presidency were absent in Missouri, with Zion's Camp, seeking to reinstate to their homes their brethren who had been driven away, Sidney Rigdon remained at Kirtland, presiding over the church there. At this time the temple was in course of construction and to Sidney Rigdon's courage and faithfulness the success in building was largely due.

Elder Heber C. Kimball, who was with Zion's Camp, speaking of conditions during their absence, has this to say of Elder Rigdon:

Elder Rigdon when addressing the brethren upon the importance of building this house, spake to this effect: that we should use every effort to accomplish this building in the time appointed; and if we did, the Lord would accept it at our hands; and on it depends the salvation of the church, and also the world. Looking at the sufferings and poverty of the church, he frequently used to go upon the walls of the building both by night and day and frequently wetting the walls with his tears, crying aloud to the Almighty to send means whereby we might accomplish the building. After we returned from our journey to the West, the whole church united in this undertaking and every man lent a helping hand. Those who had no teams went to work in the stone quarry and prepared the stones for drawing to the house. President Joseph Smith, jr., being our foreman in the quarry; the Presidency, high priests, and elders all alike assisting. Those who had teams assisted in drawing the stone to the house. These all laboring one day in the week, brought as many stones to the house as supplied the masons through the whole week. We continued in this manner until the walls of the house were reared.

When the temple was finally completed and dedicated, March 27, 1836, Elder Rigdon preached the dedicatory sermon. Joseph Smith in commenting on this discourse states:

The speaker (S. Rigdon) selected the eighth chapter of Matthew, the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth verses from which he proposed to address the congregation, confining himself more closely to the twentieth verse. He spoke two hours and a half in his usual forcible and logical manner. At one time in the course of his remarks he was rather pathetic than otherwise, which drew tears from many eyes. He was then taking a retrospective view of the toils, privations, and anxieties of those who had labored upon the walls of the house to erect them; and added, there were those who had wet them with their tears, in the silent shades of night, while they were praying to the God of heaven to protect them and stay the unhallowed hand of ruthless spoilers, who had uttered a prophecy

when the foundation was laid that the walls would never be reared. . . . This was only a short digression from the main thread of his discourse, which he soon resumed. . . . But to conclude, we can truly say no one unacquainted with the manner of delivery and style of our speaker can from reading form any adequate idea of the powerful effect he is capable of producing in the minds of his hearers; and to say on this occasion he showed himself master of his subject and did well, would be doing him injustice, to say he acquitted himself with honor or did very well, would be detracting from his real merit; and to say that he did exceedingly well, would be only halting praise.

In the summer and autumn of 1836, Elder Rigdon visited the Eastern States, in company with Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and Oliver Cowdery.

In 1837 Elder Rigdon was one of the officers and promoters of what was known as the Kirtland Bank, a history of which has been published in the JOURNAL OF HISTORY.

On February 1, 1837, Elder Rigdon became interested as one of the proprietors of the *Messenger and Advocate*, published at Kirtland, Ohio.

In July and August, 1837, Elder Rigdon, in company with Joseph Smith, William Smith, and Vinson Knight started again for Missouri, arriving at Far West in Caldwell County about the last of October. He took part in regulating and more fully organizing the church in Missouri. Returning to Kirtland in December he found the church and church affairs in a serious condition in consequence of some being disaffected and stirring up opposition against Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and other leading men. This resulted in several, including Elder Rigdon, removing from Kirtland, Ohio, to Far West, Missouri, early in 1838.

Joseph Smith gives the following account of these extraordinary events:

A new year dawned upon the church in Kirtland in all the bitterness of the spirit of apostate mobocracy; which continued to rage and grow hotter and hotter, until Elder Rigdon and myself were obliged to flee from its deadly influence, as did the apostles and prophets of old, and as Jesus said, "when they persecute you in one city, flee to another." And on the evening of the 12th of January, about ten o'clock, we left Kirtland,

on horseback, to escape mob violence, which was about to burst upon us under the color of legal process to cover their hellish designs and save themselves from the just judgment of the law. We continued our travels during the night, and at eight o'clock on the morning of the 13th arrived among the brethren in Norton Township, Medina County, Ohio, a distance of about sixty miles from Kirtland; where we tarried about thirty-six hours, when our families arrived, and on the 16th pursued our journey with our families, in covered wagons, towards the city of Far West, in Missouri; passing through Dayton, Eaton, etc., to Dublin, Indiana, where we tarried nine days and refreshed ourselves.

The weather was extremely cold, and we were obliged to secrete ourselves in our wagons sometimes, to elude the grasp of our pursuers, who continued their race more than two hundred miles from Kirtland, armed with pistols, etc., seeking our lives. They frequently crossed our track; twice they were in houses where we stopped; once we tarried all night in the same house with them, with only a partition between us and them, and heard their oaths and imprecations and threats concerning us, if they could catch us; and late in the evening they came in our room and examined us, but decided we were not the men. At other times we passed them in the streets, and gazed upon them, and they on us; but they knew us not. One Lyons was one of our pursuers.

I parted with Brother Rigdon at Dublin, and traveling different routes we met at Terre Haute, where, after resting we separated again, and I pursued my journey, crossing the Mississippi River at Quincy, Illinois.

When I had arrived within one hundred and twenty miles of Far West the brethren met me with teams and money to help me forward; and when eight miles from the city we were met by an escort; viz, Thomas B. Marsh and others, who receive us with open arms; and on the 13th of March I with my family and some others put up at Brother Barnard's for the night. Here we were met by an escort of the brethren from the town, who came to make us welcome to their little Zion.

On the 14th, as we were about entering Far West, many of the brethren came out to meet us, who also with open arms welcomed us to their bosoms. We were immediately received under the hospitable roof of Bro. George W. Harris, who treated us with all possible kindness; and we refreshed ourselves with much satisfaction after our long and tedious journey, the brethren bringing in such things as we had need of for our comfort and convenience.

Sidney Rigdon arrived at Far West, April 4, 1838.

April 6, the eighth anniversary of the organization of the church was celebrated at Far West, Sidney Rigdon presiding.

During the summer Elder Rigdon was busy with others visiting and locating lands in Caldwell and adjoining counties.

July 4, there was a celebration at Far West at which Sidney Rigdon was the orator of the day.

In this oration, though bidding defiance (perhaps unwisely) to his enemies, he gave utterance to the most patriotic and loyal sentiments, of which the following is an extract:

We have been taught from our cradles to reverence the fathers of the Revolution, and venerate the very urns which contain the ashes of those who sleep; and every feeling of our hearts respond in perfect unison to their precept. Our country and its institutions are written on the tablet of our hearts, as with the blood of the heroes who offered their lives in sacrifice, to redeem us from oppression. On it towers the flag of freedom, and invites the oppressed to enter, and find an asylum; under the safeguard of its constitution the tyrant grasp is unfastened, and equal rights and privileges flow to every part of the grand whole. Protected by its laws, and defended by its powers, the oppressed and persecuted Saint can worship under his own vine and fig tree, and none can molest or make him afraid. We have always contemplated it, and do now, as the only true fabric of freedom and bulwark of our liberty in the world. Its very existence has taught the civilized world, far surpassing those of a Pitt, a Wilberforce, a Canning, or a Grey, and has cast all their efforts in the shade for ever. It has stood, and now stands, as the arbiter of the world, as the judge of the nations, and the rebuker of tyrants throughout the world: it is the standard of freedom, both civil and religious. By its existence, the fears of the superstitious have been removed, and the pretexts of tyrants have been swept away, as a refuge of lives (lies), and the rights of men have been restored, and freedom, both political and religious, have been made to triumph. Our Government is known throughout the civilized world, as the standard of freedom, civil, religious, and political: by it are the acts of all nations tried; and it serves to expose the frauds, the deceptions, and crafts of the Old World, in attempting to palm upon the people monarchy and aristocracy for republicanism and freedom. So powerful has been its influence that the hand of the oppressor, even in the Old World has been lightened, tyrants have been made to tremble, and oppressors of mankind have been filled with fear. Thrones, if they have not been cast down, have been stripped of their terror, and the oppressed subject has been measurably delivered from his bondage. Having been rocked in the cradle of liberty and educated in the school of freedom, all our prejudices and prepossessions are deeply rooted in favor of the superlative excellence of a government from which all our privileges and enjoyments have flown. We are wedded to it by the greatest ties,—bound to it by cords as strong as death,—to preserve which should be our thought and our aim, in all our pursuits, to maintain its Constitution inviolable, its institutions uncorrupted, its laws unviolated, and its order unchanged.

The following from the same oration will serve to show the sentiments of Elder Rigdon on religious freedom and religious rights:

There is one thing, in the midst of our political differences, which ought to create feelings of joy and gratitude in every heart, and in the bosom of every well-wisher of mankind, that all parties in politics express the strongest desire to preserve both the Union and the Constitution unimpaired and unbroken, and only differ about the means to accomplish this object—so desirable, as expressed by all parties. And while this, indeed, is the object of parties in this Republic, there is nothing to fear; the prospects for the future will be as flattering as the past, in celebrating this the anniversary of our independence: all party distinctions should be forgotten—all religious differences should be laid aside. We are members of our common Republic, equally dependent on the faithful execution of its laws for our protection in the enjoyment of our civil, political, and religious privileges; all have a common interest in the preservation of the Union, and in the defense and support of the Constitution. Northern, southern, and western interests ought to be forgotten, or lost, for the time being, in the more noble desire to preserve the Union;—we can not, by rending it to pieces. In the former there is hope; in the latter, there is fear;—in one, peace; in the other, war. In times of peace it ought to be our aim and our object to strengthen the bonds of the Union, by cultivating peace and good will among ourselves; and in times of war, to meet our foes sword in hand, and defend our rights at the expense of life. For what is life when freedom is fled? It is a name—a bubble: “Better far sleep with the dead, than be oppressed among the living.” All attempts on the part of religious aspirants to unite church and state ought to be repelled with indignation, and every religious society supported in its rights, and in the exercise of its conscientious devotions—the Mohammedan, the pagan, and the idolater not excepted—and be partakers equally in the benefits of government; for if the Union is preserved, it will be by endearing the people to it; and this can only be done by securing to all their most sacred rights. The least deviation from the strictest rule of right on the part of any portion of the people, or their public servants, will create dissatisfaction: that dissatisfaction will end in strife—strife, in war—war, in the dissolution of the Union. It is on the virtue of the people that depends the existence of the government; and not in the wisdom of legislators. Whereforeth serveth laws (it matters not how righteous in themselves) when the people, in violation of them, tear those rights from one another, which they (the laws) were designed to protect? If we preserve the nation from ruin and the people from war it will be by securing to others what we claim ourselves, and being as zealous to defend another’s rights as to secure our own. If, on this day our fathers pledged their fortunes, their lives, and their sacred honors to one another, and to the claims which they represented, to be free, or to lose all earthly inheritance (not life and honor excepted), so ought we to follow their example, and pledge our fortunes, our lives, and our sacred honors, as their children and their successors, in maintaining inviolable what they obtained by their treasure and their blood. With holy feelings, sacred desires, and grateful hearts to our divine Benefactor, ought we to perform the duties of this day, and enjoy the privileges which, as Saints of the living God, we enjoy in this land of liberty and freedom, where our most sacred rights, even that of worshiping our God according to his will, is secured unto us by law; and our religious rights are so identified with the existence of the nation that to deprive us of them will be to doom the nation to ruin and the Union to dissolution!

(To be continued.)

BIOGRAPHY OF SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

(Continued from page 286.)

In the fall of 1838 the former citizens of Missouri made an effort to prevent the Latter Day Saints from voting at the general election. This was in some instances resented, and was the beginning of hostilities between the new and old citizens. Governor Boggs, who was previously an open and bitter enemy of the Latter Day Saints, called out the militia, and without an investigation treated the Latter Day Saints as enemies of the State. The militia under the command of Generals Lucas, Clark, Wilson, Doniphan, and others, marched upon Far West.

Preparation was made for resistance. There was a regiment of the State's militia organized among the Saints, whose officers had been duly commissioned by the governor. This regiment was called out in defense, and for a time it seemed as if there would be a conflict with state militia on each side.

As the aggressors approached the city of Far West, October 31, 1838, a flag of truce, which was met by officers in the city, was sent out. A conference was held between militia officers on either side.

A demand was made that leading church officers appear in the council. Accordingly Lieutenant Colonel George M. Hinkle returned into the city and escorted to the enemies' camp, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, Lyman Wight, and George W. Robinson. Instead of these men being admitted to conference they were immediately taken into custody as prisoners of war. The next day Hyrum Smith and Amasa Lyman were brought into camp and added to the number of prisoners.

A court-martial was held and the prisoners were condemned to be shot on the public square at Far West at nine o'clock, November 2, 1838. The execution of this order was intrusted to Brigadier-General Alexander W. Doniphan. The following is a copy of the order :

Brigadier-General Doniphan; Sir: You will take Joseph Smith and other prisoners into the public square of Far West, and shoot them at nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

SAMUEL LUCAS,

Major-General Commanding.

Against this order General Doniphan rebelled, returning the following reply :

It is cold blooded murder. I will not obey your order. My brigade will march for Liberty to-morrow morning at eight o'clock; and if you execute these men; I will hold you responsible before an earthly tribunal, so help me God!

A. W. DONIPHAN, *Brigadier-General.*

This so disconcerted General Lucas and his advisers that the sentence was not executed, but the prisoners were sent at once to Independence, Missouri, arriving there November 3, under the escort of Generals Lucas and Wilson. In Independence they were held under custody for several days, when upon the order of General Clark they were taken to Richmond, Missouri, arriving there November 9 under the escort of General Sterling Price, subsequently of Confederate fame. Here many more church members were added to the number of prisoners of war. Another court-martial was held, and the sentence of death by shooting was passed upon the prisoners. General Clark, fearing that he might be transcending authority by trying and executing civilians by military authority, sent a messenger to Fort Leavenworth to ask advice. Lieutenant-Colonel Richard P. Mason, then in command at the fort, returned the answer: "It would be nothing more and nothing less than cold-blooded murder." General Clark then concluded to turn them over to civil authorities. An examination was had before Judge Austin A. King, who discharged the most of the prisoners, but held six of them to

answer further charges, and sent them to Liberty, Clay County, for safe-keeping. Though they were started from Richmond for Liberty, November 30, 1838, the mittimus committing them was not made out and signed until March, 1839. It read as follows:

State of Missouri,
Ray County.

To the Keeper of the Jail of Clay County; Greeting: Whereas, Joseph Smith, jr., Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Alexander MacCrae, and Caleb Baldwin, as also Sidney Rigdon, have been brought before me, Austin A. King, judge of the fifth judicial circuit in the State of Missouri, and charged with the offense of treason against the State of Missouri, and the said defendants, on their examination before me, being held to answer further to said charges, the said Joseph Smith, jr., Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Alexander MacCrae, and Caleb Baldwin to answer in the county of Daviess, and the said Sidney Rigdon to answer further in the county of Caldwell, for said charge of treason, and there being no jail in said counties: These are therefore to command that you receive the said Joseph Smith, jr., Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Alexander MacCrae, Caleb Baldwin, and Sidney Rigdon into your custody in the jail of the said county of Clay, there to remain till they be delivered therefrom by due course of law.

Given under my hand and seal the 29th day of November, 1838.

AUSTIN A. KING.

On January 30, 1839, Elder Rigdon was admitted to bail and released. The civil authorities seemed glad to be thus relieved of this case, as no persistent effort was made either to bring Elder Rigdon to trial or collect bail of the sureties. He proceeded at once to Illinois. His account of these events is as follows:

The trial lasted for a long time, the result of which I was ordered to be discharged from prison and the rest remanded back; but I was told by those who professed to be my friends that it would not do for me to go out of jail at that time, as the mob were watching and would most certainly take my life; and when I got out that I must leave the State, for the mob, availing themselves of the exterminating order of Governor Boggs, would, if I were found in the State, surely take my life; that I had no way to escape them but to flee with all speed from the State. It was some ten days after this before I dared leave the jail. At last the evening came in which I was to leave the jail. Every preparation was made that could be made for my escape. There was a carriage ready to take me in and carry me off with all speed. A pilot was ready—one

who was well acquainted with the country—to pilot me through the country so that I might not go on any of the public roads. My wife came to the jail to accompany me, of whose society I had been deprived for four months. Just at dark the sheriff and jailer came to the jail with our supper. I sat down and ate. There were a number watching. After I had supped, I whispered to the jailer to blow out all the candles but one, and step away from the door with that one. All this was done. The sheriff then took me by the arm and an apparent scuffle ensued, so much so that those who were watching did not know who it was the sheriff was scuffling with. The sheriff kept pushing me towards the door, and I apparently resisting until we reached the door, which was quickly opened and we both reached the street. He took me by the hand and bade me farewell, telling me to make my escape, which I did with all possible speed. The night was dark. After I had gone probably one hundred rods, I heard some person coming after me in haste. The thought struck me in a moment that the mob was after me. I drew a pistol and cocked it, determined not to be taken alive. When the person approaching me spoke I knew his voice, and he speedily came to me. In a few minutes I heard a horse coming. I again sprung my pistol cock. Again a voice saluted my ears that I was acquainted with. The man came speedily up and said he had come to pilot me through the country. I now recollected that I had left my wife in the jail. I mentioned it to them, and one of them returned, and the other and myself pursued our journey as swiftly as we could. After I had gone about three miles, my wife overtook me in a carriage, into which I got, and we rode all night. It was an open carriage, and in the month of February, 1839, we got to the house of an acquaintance just as day appeared. There I put up until the next morning, when I started again and reached a place called Tenny's Grove; and to my great surprise, I here found my family, and was again united with them, after an absence of four months, under the most painful circumstances. From thence I made my way to Illinois, where I now am. My wife after I left her went directly to Far West and got the family under way, and all unexpectedly met me at Tenny's Grove.

In Illinois he became immediately active in assisting to locate the Saints, who had been exiled from Missouri.

In May, 1839, Elder Rigdon was appointed by a conference of the church held at Quincy, Illinois, as a delegate to Washington to present the grievances of the Saints before Congress. It was when contemplating this mission that Governor Robert Lucas, of Iowa, who had been governor of Ohio when the Saints were operating there, gave Elder Rigdon a letter of introduction and recommendation to President Van Buren which read as follows:

BURLINGTON, IOWA TERRITORY, April 22, 1839.

To His Excellency, Martin Van Buren, President of the United States.
Sir: I have the honor to introduce to your acquaintance, the bearer Doctor Sidney Rigdon, who was for many years a citizen of the State of Ohio, and a firm supporter of the administration of the general Government.

Doctor Rigdon visits Washington (as I am informed) as the representative of a community of people called Mormons, to solicit from the Government of the United States, an investigation into the causes that led to their expulsion from the State of Missouri: together with the various circumstances connected with this extraordinary affair.

I think it due to that people to state, that they had for a number of years a community established in Ohio, and that while in that State they were (as far as I ever heard) believed to be an industrious, inoffensive people; and I have no recollection of having heard of any of them being charged in that State as violators of the laws.

With sincere respect, I am your obedient servant,

ROBERT LUCAS.

Governor Lucas also gave him the following letter to Governor Shannon, of Ohio:

BURLINGTON, IOWA TERRITORY, April 22, 1839.

To His Excellency, Wilson Shannon, Governor of the State of Ohio.

Sir: I have the honor to introduce to your acquaintance, Doctor Sidney Rigdon, who was for many years a citizen of Ohio. Doctor Rigdon wishes to obtain from the general Government of the United States, an investigation into the causes that led to the expulsion of the people called Mormons from the State of Missouri, together with all the facts connected with this extraordinary affair. This investigation, it appears to me, is due them as citizens of the United States, as well as to the nation at large.

Any assistance that you can render the Doctor towards accomplishing that desirable object, will be gratefully received and duly appreciated by your sincere friend and humble servant,

ROBERT LUCAS.

There were also letters given him by citizens of Quincy of which the following are copies:

To His Excellency, the President of United States, the Heads of Departments, and to all whom this may be shown: The undersigned citizens of Quincy, Illinois, beg leave to introduce to you the bearer, Rev. Sidney Rigdon. Mr. Rigdon is a divine, connected with the Church of Latter Day Saints, and having enjoyed his acquaintance for some time past, we take great pleasure in recommending him to your favorable notice as a man of piety and a valuable citizen.

Any representation he may make touching the object of his mission in your city may be implicitly relied on.

Very respectfully yours,

SAMUEL HOLMES.
 THOMAS CARLIN.
 RICHARD M. YOUNG.
 I. N. MORRIS.
 HIRAM RODGERS.
 J. T. HOLMES.
 NICHOLAS WREN.
 C. M. WOOD.

The bearer, the Rev. Sidney Rigdon, is a member of a society of people called Mormons, or Latter Day Saints, who have been driven from the State of Missouri, by order of the Executive of that State, and who have taken up their residence in and about this place in large numbers. I have no hesitation in saying that this people have been most shamefully persecuted and cruelly treated by the people of Missouri.

Mr Rigdon has resided in or near this place for three or more months, during which time his conduct has been that of a gentleman and a moral and worthy citizen.

SAMUEL LEACH.

Subsequently Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee were associated with Elder Rigdon, and they repaired to Washington, and in October, 1839, laid before Congress the following lengthy petition, giving an epitomized history of troubles in Missouri:

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled: Your petitioners, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee, would most respectfully represent, that they have been delegated, by their brethren and fellow-citizens, known as "Latter Day Saints" (commonly called Mormons), to prepare and present to you a statement of their wrongs, and a prayer for their relief, which they now have the honor to submit to the consideration of your honorable body.

In the summer of 1831 a portion of the society above named commenced a settlement in the County of Jackson, in the State of Missouri. The individuals making that settlement had immigrated from almost every State in the Union to that lovely spot in the far West, with the hope of improving their condition, of building houses for themselves and posterity, and of erecting temples, where they and theirs might worship their Creator according to the dictates of their conscience. Though they had wandered far from the homes of their childhood, still they had been taught to believe that a citizen born in any one State in this great Republic might remove to another and enjoy all the rights and immunities of citizens of the State of his adoption—that wherever waved the Ameri-

can flag, beneath its stars and stripes an American citizen might look for protection and justice, for liberty in person and in conscience.

They bought farms, built houses, and erected churches. Some tilled the earth, others bought and sold merchandise, and others again toiled as mechanics. They were industrious and moral, and they prospered; and though often persecuted and villified for their differences in religious opinion from their fellow-citizens, they were happy; they saw their society increasing in numbers, their farms teemed with plenty, and they fondly looked forward to a future big with hope. That there was prejudice against them, they knew; that slanders were propagated against them, they deplored; yet they felt that these were unjust; and hoped that time and an uprightness of life, would enable them to outlive them. While the summer of peace, happiness, and hope shone over the infant settlement of the Saints, the cloud was gathering, unseen by them, that bore in its bosom the thunderbolt of destruction.

On the 20th of July, 1833, around their peaceful village a mob gathered, to the surprise and terror of the quiet "Mormons"—why, they knew not; they had broken no law; they had harmed no man, in deed or in thought. Why they were thus threatened, they knew not. Soon a committee from the mob called upon the leading "Mormons" of the place; they announced that the store, the printing office, and the shops must be closed, and that forthwith every Mormon must leave the county. The message was so terrible, so unexpected, that the Mormons asked time for deliberation and consultation, which being refused, the brethren were severally asked, "Are you willing to abandon your home?" The reply was, "We will not go"; which determination being reported to the committee of the mob, one of them replied that he was sorry; for, said he, "The work of destruction must now begin." No sooner said than it was done. The printing office, a two-story brick building, was assailed by the mob and tore down, and with its valuable appurtenances, destroyed. They next proceeded to the store with a like purpose. Its owner in part, Mr. Gilbert, agreed to close it, and they delayed their purpose.

They then proceeded to the dwelling of Mr. Partridge, the beloved Bishop of the church there, dragged him and his family to the public square, where surrounded by hundreds, they partially stripped him of his clothing and tarred and feathered him from head to foot. A man by the name of Allen was at the same time treated in a similar manner. The mob then dispersed with an agreement to meet again on the next Tuesday, the above outrages having been committed on Saturday.

Tuesday came, and with it came the mob, bearing a red flag, in token of blood. They proceeded to the houses of Isaac Morley and others of the leading men, and seized them, telling them to bid their families farewell, that they would never see them again. They were then driven, at the point of the bayonet to jail, and there, amid the jeers and insults of the crowd, they were thrust in prison, to be kept as hostages; in case any of the mob should be killed, they were to die to pay for it. Here some two or three of the Mormons offered to surrender up their lives, if

that would satisfy the fury of the mob, and purchase peace and security for their unoffending brethren, their helpless wives and children. The reply of the mob was, that the Mormons must leave the county *en masse*, or that every man should be put to death.

The Mormons terrified and defenseless, then entered into an agreement to leave the county—one half by the 1st of January, and the other half by the 1st of April next ensuing. This treaty being made and ratified, the mob dispersed. Again, for a time, the persecuted “Mormons” enjoyed a respite from their persecutions; but not long was the repose permitted them.

Sometime in the month of October a meeting was held at Independence, at which it was determined to remove the Mormons or die. Inflammatory speeches were made, and one of the speakers swore he would remove the “Mormons from the county if he had to wade up to his neck in blood.”

Be it remarked that up to this time the Mormons had faithfully observed the treaty, and were guilty of no offense against the laws of the land or of society, but were peaceably following the routine of their daily duties.

Shortly after the meeting above referred to, another persecution commenced; some of the Mormons were shot at, others were whipped, their houses were assailed with brickbats, broken open, and thrown down, their women and children were insulted; and thus for many weeks, without offense, without resistance, by night and by day, were they harassed, insulted and oppressed.

There is a point beyond which endurance ceases to be a virtue. The worm when trampled upon will turn upon its oppressor. A company of about thirty Mormons fell in with twice that number of the mob engaged in the destruction of Mormon property, when a battle ensued, in which one Mormon was killed, and two or three of the mob; acting in concert with the officer who commanded the mob, was Lilburn W. Boggs, lieutenant governor of the State of Missouri. When the noise of the battle was spread abroad, the public mind became much inflamed. The militia collected in arms from all quarters and in great numbers, and inflamed to fury. They demanded that the “Mormons” should surrender up all their arms and immediately quit the county. Compelled by overpowering numbers, the “Mormons” submitted. They surrendered up fifty-one guns, which have never been returned or paid for.

The next day parties of the mob went from house to house threatening women and children with death if they did not immediately leave their homes. Imagination can not paint the terror which now pervaded the Mormon community: The weather was intensely cold, and women and children abandoned their homes and fled in every direction without sufficient clothing to protect them from the piercing cold. Women gave birth to children in the woods and on the prairies. One hundred and twenty women and children, for the space of ten days, with only three or four men in company, concealed themselves in the woods in hourly expectation and fear of massacre, until they finally escaped into Clay

County. The society of "Mormons," after the above disturbances, removed to the county of Clay, where they were kindly received by the inhabitants and their wants administered to by their charity.

In the meantime the houses of the "Mormons" in the county of Jackson, amounting to about two hundred, were burned down or otherwise destroyed by the mob, as well as much of their crops, furniture, and stock.

The damage done to the property of the "Mormons" by the mob in the county of Jackson as above related, as near as they can ascertain, would amount to the sum of one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. The number of "Mormons" thus driven from the county of Jackson amounted to about twelve hundred souls. For the property thus destroyed they have never been paid.

After the expulsion of the "Mormons" from the county of Jackson as above related, they removed to and settled in the county of Clay. They there purchased out some of the former inhabitants, and entered at the land office wild lands offered for sale by the general Government. The most of them became freeholders, owning each an eighty or more of land.

The "Mormons" lived peaceably in the county of Clay for about three years, and all that time increased rapidly in numbers, by immigration, also in wealth by their industry. After they had resided in that county about three years, the citizens not connected with them began to look upon them with jealousy and alarm. Reports were again put in circulation against them; public meetings were held in the counties of Clay and Jackson, at which violent resolutions were passed against the "Mormons" and rumors of mobs again began to spread alarm among the "Mormons." At this juncture the "Mormons," desirous of avoiding all conflict with their fellow-citizens, and anxious to preserve the peace and harmony of the society around them, as well as their own, deputed a committee of their leading men to make terms of peace with their fellow-citizens of Clay. An interview took place between them and a committee of citizens, at which it was agreed that the "Mormons" should leave the county of Clay, and that the citizens of Clay County should buy their lands.

These terms were complied with. The "Mormons" removed to and settled the county of Caldwell, and the citizens never paid them value for their lands. Many received nothing at all for their lands. The "Mormons" by their removal sacrificed much both of money and feeling, but the sacrifice was made upon the altar of duty, for the peace of the community.

Your memorialists would beg here to give what they believe a just explanation of the causes of the prejudice and persecution against the "Mormons" related above, and which will follow. That there might have been some unworthy members among them can not be denied; but many aver that as a community they were as moral, as upright, and as observant of the laws of the land as any body of people in the world. Why then this prejudice and persecution? An answer they trust will

be found in the fact that they were a body of people distinct from their fellow-citizens, in religious opinions, in their habits, and in their associations. They were numerous enough to make the power of their numerical and moral force a matter of anxiety and dread to the political and religious parties by which they are surrounded; which arose not from what the "Mormons" had done, but from the fear of what they might do.

In addition, the "Mormons" have purchased from the settlers, or of the Government, or obtained by preëmption, the best lands in all those regions of the State; and at the times of speculation, the cupidity of many was aroused to possess those lands by driving off the "Mormons," and taking forcible possession, or constraining them to sell, through fear or coercion, at a price merely nominal.

After the "Mormons" removed from Clay they settled in the county of Caldwell as aforesaid.

Your memorialists do not deem it necessary for their purpose to detail the history of the progress, the cares, and anxieties of the "Mormons" from the time they settled in Caldwell in the year 1836 until the fall of 1838. They would, however, state, that during all that time they deported themselves as good citizens, obeying the laws of the land, and the moral and religious duties enjoined by their faith. That there might have been some faithless among the faithful, is possible. They would not deny that there might have been some who were a scandal to their brethren; and what society, they would ask, has not some unworthy member? Where is the sect, where the community, in which there can not be found some who trample under foot the laws of God and man? They believe the "Mormon" community to have as few such as any other association, religious or political. Within the above period the "Mormons" continued to increase in wealth and numbers, until in the fall of the year 1838 they numbered about fifteen thousand souls.

They purchased of the Government, or of the citizen, or held by preëmption, almost all the lands in the county of Caldwell and a portion of the lands in Daviess and Carroll. The county of Caldwell was settled almost entirely by "Mormons," and "Mormons" were rapidly filling up the counties of Daviess and Caldwell [Carroll]. When they first commenced settling in these counties there were but few settlements made there; the lands were wild and uncultivated. In the fall of 1838 large farms had been made, well improved and stocked. Lands had risen in value and sold for from ten to twenty-five dollars. The improvement and settlement had been such that it was a common remark that the county of Caldwell would soon be the wealthiest in the State.

Thus stood their affairs in the fall of 1838, when the storm of persecution raged over the heads of the "Mormons," and the fierce demon of the mob drove them forth houseless and homeless and penniless upon the charities of the world, which to them, thank God! have been like angels' visits, but not few, or far between. This last persecution began at an election which was held in Daviess County on the first Monday of August, 1838. A "Mormon" went to the polls to vote. One of the mob

standing by opposed his voting, contending that a "Mormon" had no more right to vote than a negro; one angry word brought on another, and blows followed. They are, however, happy to state that the "Mormon" was not the aggressor, but was on the defensive; others interfered, not one alone, but many assailed the "Mormon." His brethren, seeing him thus assailed by numbers, rushed to the rescue; then came others of the mob, until finally a general row commenced. The "Mormons" were victorious. The next day a rumor reached the "Mormons" of Caldwell, that two of their brethren had been killed in this fight, and that a refusal had been made to surrender their bodies for burial. Not knowing at the time that this rumor was false, they became much excited, and several of them started for Daviess County with a view of giving the brethren, whom they supposed to have been killed, a decent interment; where they arrived next morning. Among the citizens this fight produced a great excitement. They held a public meeting and resolved to drive the "Mormons" from the county. Individuals also began to threaten the "Mormons" as a body, and swear that they should leave the county in three days. When the "Mormons" who had gone from Caldwell to Daviess, as aforesaid, arrived there, they found this state of excitement to exist. They also heard that a large mob was collecting against them, headed by Adam Black, one of the judges of the county court of Daviess County.

Under these circumstances, and with a view to allay the excitement, they called on Mr. Black, and inquired of him whether the reports they had heard in relation to him were true. Upon his denying them to be true, they then requested him to give that denial in writing, which he freely did. This writing they published with a view of calming the public mind and allaying the excitement. Having done this, they rested in quiet for some time after, hoping that their efforts would produce the desired effect. Their surprise can, under these circumstances, be easily imagined, when a short time after they learned that said Black had gone before Judge King and made oath that he was forced to sign the instrument by armed "Mormons" and procured a warrant for the arrest of Joseph Smith, jr., and Lyman Wight, which was placed in the hands of the sheriff. It was also reported that said individuals had refused to surrender themselves, and that an armed force was collecting to come and take them.

Your memorialists aver that the sheriff had never made any efforts to serve the writ, and that the said Smith and Wight, so far from making any resistance, did not know that such a writ had been issued until they learned it first by report as above related. In the meantime the rumor had run over the whole country that the "Mormons" were compelling individuals to sign certain instruments in writing, and that they were resisting the process of the law. The public mind became much inflamed, and the mob began to collect from all quarters and in great numbers, with pretension of assisting the sheriff to serve the process; and here let it be observed in passing that Adam Black had sold the

improvement and preëmption claim on which he then resided, to the "Mormons," received his pay for the same, and that through his instrumentality the "Mormons" were driven off, and now retains both their money and the improvements.

(To be continued.)

BEAUTIFUL IOWA.

There is nothing the matter with Iowa. The State is the soundest, wholesomest commonwealth in the American Union. From the point of view of the general happiness and welfare, of the moral and social well-being of the people you come upon an elevator into Iowa from any other State in the Republic.

I say this after having sojourned in and studied several other good States, and after having lived a long time in some of the most highly favored communities of the East.

Iowa is as fair outwardly as it is inwardly. It is about the only State into which a man could come from any other State and feel at home. Do you love the mountains? These green hills undulating back from countless rivers, will make you think of them, and yet will gladden you with a sense of something tenderer, something more feminine than the shaggy giants you have known.

Are the plains and prairies dear to you? Here are fair prairies, too, but dimpled, wherever you gaze, with a loving smile that wins your heart. Clean little cities; steady, quiet little cities, with happy-faced children bubbling out of innumerable school houses; endless little cities, all so much alike that they recall to me Solomon's flock of newly shorn ewes just coming up from the washing, whereof every one hath twins.

And between the cities long miles of fat farms with white or colored buildings, grouped amiably on the top of undulations; such is Iowa, incomparable Iowa, without a Pittsburg, or Jersey City, with not one festering slum in all its length and breadth; smiling amid its bursting corn cribs, agriculture and horticulture.—*New York Mail.*

BIOGRAPHY OF SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

(Continued from page 412, volume 3.)

As soon as the above reports reached ears of the said Smith and Wight, they determined immediately upon the course they ought to pursue which was to submit to the laws. They both surrendered themselves up to Judge King, underwent a trial, and in the absence of all sufficient testimony they were discharged. They hoped that this voluntary submission of theirs to the law and their triumphant vindication of the charge, would allay the excitement of the community. But not so—the long-desired opportunity had arrived when the oppression and extermination of the “Mormon” might be made to assume the form of legal proceedings. The mob that had assembled for the pretended purpose of assisting the officers in the execution of process did not disperse upon the acquittal of Smith and Wight, but continued embodied within the encampments and forms of military force, and committing depredations upon “Mormon” property. The “Mormons” in this extremity called upon the laws of the land and the officers of the law, for protection. After much delay, the militia under Generals Atchison, Doniphan, and Parks, were sent to their relief. They arrived September 13, and encamped between the “Mormons” and the mob.

The above officers made no attempt to disperse the mob, excusing themselves by saying, “that their own men had sympathies with the mob.” After remaining there for several days, these officers adopted the following expedient of settling the difficulties: they mustered the mob, and enrolled them with their own troops, and then disbanded the whole, with orders to seek their several homes. The officers went home excepting Parks, who remained for their protection, with his men.

The “Mormons” made an agreement with the citizens of Daviess to buy out their land and preëmption rights, and appointed a committee to make the purchase, and to go on buying till they had purchased to the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars. While these purchases were going on, the citizens were heard to say that as soon as they had sold out to the “Mormons” and received their pay, they would drive the “Mormons” off and keep both their lands and their money.

The mob, when disbanded in Daviess by the generals as aforesaid, instead of repairing to their homes as commanded, proceeded in a body to the adjoining County of Carroll and encamped around DeWitt, a village built and inhabited by “Mormons”; while thus encamped around DeWitt they sent to the County of Jackson and procured a cannon. They invested the place so closely that no person could leave the town in safety; when they did so, they were fired upon by the mob. The horses of the “Mormons” were stolen and their cattle killed. The citizens of DeWitt, amounting to about seventy families, were in great ex-

tremity and worn out by want and sickness. In their extremity they made application to Governor Boggs for protection and relief; but no protection, no relief, was granted them. When reduced to the last extremity, no alternative was left them but to seek protection by flight and the abandonment of their homes. Accordingly on the evening of the 11th of October, 1838, they retreated from DeWitt and made their way to the counties of Daviess and Caldwell, leaving many of their effects in the possession of the mob.

Your memorialists will not detail the horrors and sufferings of such a flight, when shared with women and children. They might detail many. One lady who had given birth to a child just before the flight commenced, died on the road and was buried without a coffin. Many others sick, worn out, starved, deprived of medical aid, died upon the road. The remnant of "Mormons" from DeWitt arrived in Daviess and Caldwell, and found a short relief and supply of their wants from their friends and brethren there.

After the abandonment of DeWitt and the flight of the "Mormons" from Carroll, one Sashiel Wood addressed the mob, advising them to take their cannon and march to the County of Daviess and drive the "Mormons" from that county and seize upon their lands and other property, saying that the "Mormons" could get no benefit of the law, as they had recently seen. They then commenced their march from Carroll to Daviess, carrying with them the cannon which they had received from Jackson. On their way they captured two "Mormons" and made them ride on the cannon, and taunted them as they went along, telling them that they were going to drive the "Mormons" from Daviess to Caldwell, and from Caldwell to hell; and that they would find no quarter but at the cannon's mouth. The mob at this time was reported to number about four hundred strong.

The "Mormons" in these distresses, in pursuance of the laws of Missouri, made application to Judge King, the circuit judge of that circuit, for protection, and for the aid of the officers of the law to protect them. Judge King, as they have been informed, and believe, gave an order to Major General D. R. Atchison to call out the militia to protect the "Mormons" against the fury of the mob. General Atchison thereupon gave orders to Brigadiers Parks and Doniphan. In pursuance of these orders issued as aforesaid, on the 18th of October, 1838, General Doniphan arrived at Far West, a "Mormon" village in the County of Caldwell, with a small company of militia. After he had been at Far West two days, General Doniphan disbanded his company, alleging to the "Mormons" as his reasons for so doing that his company had the same feelings as the mob, and that he could not rely upon them. In a short time General Parks arrived at Far West, and also disbanded his company. At this time the mob was marching from Carroll to Daviess. General Doniphan while at Far West directed the "Mormons" to raise a company to protect themselves, telling them that one Cornelius Gillium was raising a mob to destroy their town, and also advising them to place out guards to watch the motions of the mob. He also directed them to raise a

company and send them to Daviess to aid their brethren there against the mob which was marching down upon them from Carroll. This the "Mormons" did; they mustered a company of about sixty men, who proceeded to Diahman. When General Parks arrived at Far West as aforesaid and learned that General Doniphan had disbanded his men, he expressed great dissatisfaction. The same evening on which General Parks disbanded his company as aforesaid he proceeded to Diahman, in order to learn what the mob was doing there, and if possible to protect the "Mormons."

When General Parks had arrived in Daviess he found that the mob had commenced its operations there, which was on the 20th of October, 1838. They commenced by burning the house of a man who had gone to Tennessee on business and left his wife at home with two small children. When the house was burned down, the wife and two small children were left in the snow, and she had to walk three miles before she could find a shelter, carrying her two children all that distance, and had to wade Grand River, which was three feet deep. The mob on the same evening burned seven other houses, burning and destroying all the property that they thought proper. The next morning, Colonel Lyman Wight, an officer in the militia, inquired of General Parks what was to be done, as he now saw the course the mob was determined to pursue. General Parks replied that he (Wight) should take a company of men and give the mob battle, and that he would be responsible for the act, saying that they could have no peace with the mob until they had given them a scourging.

On the next morning, in obedience to his order, David W. Patten was dispatched with one hundred men under his command to meet the mob as they were advancing from Carroll, with directions to protect the citizens and collect and bring into Far West such of the "Mormons" as were scattered through the county, and unprotected, and if the mob interfered he must fight them. The company under the command of Patten was the same, in part, that had gone from Far West by the order of General Doniphan to protect the citizens of Daviess. As Patten went in the direction of the mob, they fled before him, leaving their cannon, which Patten took possession of. The mob dispersed. Patten with his men then returned to Daviess County. Patten in a few days after returned to Far West. It was now supposed that the difficulties were at an end. But contrary to expectation, on the evening of the 23d of October messengers arrived at Far West and informed the citizens that a body of armed men had made their appearance in the southern part of the county, and that they were burning houses, destroying property, and threatening the "Mormon" citizens with death unless they left the county the next morning by ten o'clock, or renounced their religion.

About midnight another messenger arrived with news of the like tenor. Patten collected about sixty men and proceeded to the scene of the disturbance, to protect if possible the lives and property of the "Mormon" citizens. On his arrival at the neighborhood where the first disturbance had commenced, he found that the mob had gone to another neighborhood

to prosecute their acts of plunder and outrage. He marched a short distance and unexpectedly came upon the encampment of the mob. The guards of the mob fired upon him and killed one of his men. Patten then charged the mob, and after a few fires the mob dispersed and fled, but Patten was killed and another of his men. After the fight and dispersion of the mob, Patten's company returned to Far West. The report of the proceedings created much excitement. The community were made to believe that the "Mormons" were in rebellion against the law; whereas the above facts show they were an injured people, standing up in defense of their persons and their property.

At this time the governor of the State issued an order to General Clark to raise several thousand men and march against the "Mormons" and drive them from the State, or exterminate them. Major-General Lucas and Brigadier-General Wilson collected three or four thousand men; and with this formidable force commenced their march and arrived at Far West. In their rear marched General Clark with another formidable force.

In the meantime the "Mormons" had not heard of these immense preparations, and so far from expecting an armed force under the orders of the State to war against them, were daily expecting a force from the governor to protect their lives and their property from the mob.

When this formidable array first made its appearance, intent upon peace the "Mormons" sent a white flag several miles to meet them, to ascertain the reason why an armed force was marching against them, and what we might expect at their hands. They gave us no satisfaction, but continued marching towards Far West. Immediately upon their arrival a man came bearing a white flag from their camp. He was interrogated about his business; he answered the interrogations, saying that they wanted three persons out of Far West before they massacred the rest. Those persons refused to go, and he returned back to the camp. He was closely followed by General Doniphan and his whole brigade marching to the city of Far West in line of battle. The citizens also formed a line of battle in front of Doniphan's army; upon this Doniphan ordered a halt, and then a retreat. Night closed upon both parties without any collision.

On the next day towards evening, the "Mormons" were officially informed that the governor of the State had sent this immense force against them to massacre them or drive them from the State. As soon as the "Mormons" learned that this order had the sanction of the governor of the State, they determined to make no resistance; to submit themselves to the authorities of the State, however tyrannical and unjust soever the exercise of that authority might be.

The commanders of the Missouri militia before Far West sent a messenger into the town, requesting an interview in their camp with five of the principal citizens among the "Mormons," pledging their faith for their safe return on the following morning at eight o'clock. Invited, as they supposed, to propose and receive terms of peace, and under the pledge of a safe conduct, Lyman Wight, George W. Robinson,

Joseph Smith, jr., P. P. Pratt, and Sidney Rigdon went towards the camp of the militia. Before they arrived at the camp, they were surrounded by the whole army; and by order of General Lucas put under guard, and marched to the camp, and were told they were prisoners of war. A court-martial was held that night, and they, without being heard, and in the absence of all proof, condemned to be shot next morning.

The execution of this bloody order was prevented by the manly protest of General Doniphan. He denounced the act as cold-blooded murder, and withdrew his brigade. This noble stand taken by General Doniphan prevented the murder of the prisoners. It is here worthy of note that seventeen preachers of the gospel were on this court-martial, and were in favor of the sentence.

The next day the prisoners were marched under a strong guard to Independence, in Jackson County, and after being detained there for a week, they were marched to Richmond, where General Clark then was with his troops. Here a court of inquiry was held before Judge King; this continued from the 11th to the 28th of November; while the five prisoners were kept in chains, and about fifty other "Mormons" taken at Far West, were penned up in an open, unfinished court-house. In this mock court the defendants were prevented from giving any testimony on their part, by an armed force at the court-house; they were advised by their lawyers not to bring any, as they would be in danger of their lives, or drove out of the country; so there was no testimony examined only against them.

In this inquiry a great many questions were asked relative to religious opinions. The conclusion of the court of inquiry was to send the prisoners to jail upon a charge of treason.

They do not deem it necessary to detail their sufferings while in prison; the horrors of a prison for four long months, in darkness, in want, alone, and during the cold of winter, can better be conceived than expressed. In the following April the prisoners were sent to the County of Daviess for trial; they were then indicted for treason, and a change of venue was taken to Boone County. The prisoners were sent to the County of Boone, and while on their way made their escape and fled to the State of Illinois.

That they were suffered to escape, admits of no doubt. The truth is, the State of Missouri had become ashamed of their proceedings against the "Mormons," and as the best means of getting out of the scrape, gave the prisoners an opportunity to escape. In proof of this, the prisoners have ever since been living publicly in Illinois, and the Executive of Missouri have made no demand upon the Executive of Illinois. Can it be supposed that the people of Missouri would thus tamely submit to the commission of treason by a portion of their citizens, and make no effort to punish the guilty, when they were thus publicly living in an adjoining State? Is not this passiveness evidence [that] they knew the "Mormons" were innocent and the citizens of Missouri wrong?

But to return to the operations of General Lucas before Far West;

we need only say that the exterminating order of Governor Boggs was carried into full effect. After the above-named individuals were taken prisoners, all the "Mormons" in Far West, about five hundred in number, surrendered up their arms to the militia without any resistance. The "Mormons" now fled in every direction—women and children, through the dead of winter, marked their footsteps with blood as they fled from the State of Missouri.

The orders of the governor were that they should be driven from the State or destroyed. About fifteen thousand souls, between the sacking of Far West and spring, abandoned their homes, their property, their all, hurried by the terrors of their armed pursuers, in want of every necessity of life, with bleeding hearts sought refuge in Illinois, where they now reside.

We can not trespass upon your time by the relation of cases of individual suffering; they would fill a volume. We forbear for our regard to humanity, to detail the particulars of the conduct of the Missouri militia. We could relate instances of house burnings, destruction of property, robberies, rapes, and murder, that would shame humanity. One instance as a sample of many which were enacted: Two hundred of the militia came suddenly upon some "Mormon" families emigrating to the State, and then encamped at Haun's Mill in Caldwell County. The "Mormon" men and children took refuge in an old log house which had been used as a blacksmith's shop. On seeing the militia approach, the "Mormons" cried for quarter, but in vain; they were instantly fired upon; eighteen fell dead; and their murderers, putting the muzzles of their guns between the logs, fired indiscriminately upon children, upon the dead and dying. One little boy, whose father (Warren Smith) had just been shot dead, cried piteously to the militia to spare his life. The reply was, "Kill him, kill him [with an oath]; he is the son of a damned Mormon." At this they shot his head all open and left him dead by the side of his father. About the same time an old man by the name of McBride, a soldier of the Revolution, came up to them and begged his life; but they hewed him to pieces with an old corn cutter. They then loaded themselves with plunder and departed.

Your petitioners have thus given a brief outline of the history of the "Mormon" persecutions in Missouri—all of which they can prove to be true if an opportunity be given them. It will be seen from this their brief statement, that neither the "Mormons" as a body nor individuals of that body have been guilty of any offense against the laws of Missouri, or of the United States; but their only offense has been their religious opinion.

The above statement will also show that the "Mormons" on all occasions submitted to the laws of the land, and yielded to its authority in every extremity, and at every hazard, at the risk of life and property. The above statement will illustrate another truth: that wherever the "Mormons" made any resistance to the mob, it was in self-defense; and for these acts of self-defense they always had the authority and sanction of the officers of the law for so doing. Yet they, to the number of about

fifteen thousand souls, have been driven from their homes in Missouri. Their property, to the amount of two millions of dollars, has been taken from them, or destroyed. Some of them have been murdered, beaten, bruised, or lamed, and have all been driven forth, wandering over the world without homes, without property.

But the loss of property does not comprise half of their sufferings. They were human beings, possessed of human feelings and human sympathies. Their agony of soul was the bitterest drop in the cup of their sorrows.

For these wrongs the "Mormons" ought to have some redress; yet how and where shall they seek and obtain it? Your constitution guarantees to every citizen, even the humblest, the enjoyment of life, liberty and property. It promises to all, religious freedom, the right to all to worship God beneath their own vine and fig tree, according to the dictates of their conscience. It guarantees to all the citizens of the several States the right to become citizens of any one of the States, and to enjoy all the rights and immunities of the citizens of the State of his adoption. Yet of all these rights have the "Mormons" been deprived. They have, without a cause, without a trial, been deprived of life, liberty, and property. They have been persecuted for their religious opinions. They have been driven from the State of Missouri, at the point of the bayonet, and prevented from enjoying and exercising the rights of citizens of the State of Missouri. It is the theory of our laws that for the protection of every legal right there is a legal remedy. What then, we would respectfully ask, is the remedy of the "Mormons"? Shall they apply to the legislature of the State of Missouri for redress? They have done so. They have petitioned, and these petitions have been treated with silence and contempt. Shall they apply to the federal courts? They were, at the time of the injury, citizens of the State of Missouri? Shall they apply to the court of the State of Missouri? Whom shall they sue? The order for their destruction, their extermination, was granted by the Executive of the State of Missouri. Is not this a plea of justification for the loss of individuals, done in pursuance of that order? If not, before whom shall the "Mormons" institute a trial? Shall they summon a jury of the individuals who composed the mob? An appeal to them were in vain. They dare not go to Missouri to institute a suit; their lives would be in danger.

For ourselves, we see no redress, unless it is awarded by the Congress of the United States. And here we make our appeal as American citizens, as Christians, and as men—believing that the high sense of justice which exists in your honorable body will not allow such oppression to be practiced upon any portion of the citizens of this vast republic with impunity; but that some measures which your wisdom may dictate may be taken, so that the great body of people who have been thus abused may have redress for the wrongs which they have suffered. And to your decision they look with confidence; hoping it may be such as shall tend to dry up the tear of the widow and orphan, and again place in situations of peace those who have been driven from

their homes and who have had to wade through scenes of sorrow and distress.

And your memorialists as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc.

This petition was referred to the committee on judiciary. This committee after summing up the points in the petition stated:

It can never be presumed that a State either wants the power or lacks the disposition to redress the wrongs of its own citizens, committed within her own territory, whether they proceed from the lawless acts of her officers or any other persons. The committee therefore report that they recommend the passage of the following resolution:

Resolved, that the committee on the judiciary be discharged from further consideration of the memorial in this case; and that the memorialists have leave to withdraw the papers which accompany their memorial.¹

This resolution was adopted by the Senate, March 23, 1840.

While in the East Elder Rigdon visited and preached in several cities.

On February 1, 1841, at the first city election of the city of Nauvoo, Elder Rigdon was elected a member of the city council.

At the General Conference of the church in October, 1843, complaints were made against Elder Rigdon, it being alleged that he had carried on a treacherous correspondence with Governor Carlin and others. A thorough investigation was had, but nothing was disclosed damaging to the character of Elder Rigdon.

The record contains the following entry:

President Joseph Smith arose and satisfactorily explained to the congregation the supposed treacherous correspondence with ex-Governor Carlin, which wholly removed suspicion from Elder Sidney Rigdon, and from every other person.

¹Technically the basis of this resolution is sound. The *presumption*, as stated in this report, should be in favor of the State, as it is in favor of the accused in all cases. But the report is lame and evasive in this: It finds the *presumption* in the case the final *conclusion* without hearing the testimony.—H. C. S.

About this time Elder Rigdon removed from Nauvoo, Illinois, to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

On May 17, 1844, at a convention held at Nauvoo, Illinois, Joseph Smith, of Nauvoo, Illinois, was nominated for President of the United States, and Sidney Rigdon, of Pennsylvania, for Vice-president.

There was probably no expectation of electing this ticket, but in view of the treatment they had received from both political parties, the Saints felt that they could not support any of them, hence nominated a ticket upon which they could conscientiously exercise the right of franchise. A short time after this ticket was named, viz, June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith was assassinated at Carthage, Illinois.

No one was nominated to take his place on the ticket, and hence the ticket was not presented at the polls.

After the death of Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon returned to Nauvoo and arranged with local church authorities for a public meeting in which to present his claims to leadership. The meeting was duly announced and convened on August 8, 1844. Brigham Young and some of his colleagues appeared at the meeting and practically took charge of it and dominated it in its proceedings; hence Rigdon was rejected.

An open rupture thenceforth existed between Elder Rigdon and Young and his associates. Rigdon was cited to trial before the Bishop's court, Bishop Newel K. Whitney presiding. He did not appear, but Brigham Young and his fellows appeared and again dominated the council, and Rigdon was expelled.

Rigdon had returned to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and there established a periodical entitled the *Messenger and Advocate*, the first issue appearing October 15, 1844. From this periodical we learn that as a counter movement from that which expelled him, he renounced all affiliation with the church in Nauvoo. In the *Messenger and Advocate* for April 15, 1845,

we find the following resolutions adopted by Rigdon and his followers:

Preamble and resolutions, of the Church of Christ.

Whereas, The connection which has heretofore existed between ourselves and the people calling themselves the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, renders it necessary that we publish to the world, a succinct statement of facts relating to the position we now sustain to God and our fellow-men; and

Whereas, In consequence of the rejection by that people, of what we undoubtedly deem to be the order of the church and kingdom of God, and introduction of doctrines and practices clearly inimical to the law of God, and altogether subversive of the laws of the land, abrogating the marriage contract, and substituting, under the professed sanction of heaven, a system of extreme licentiousness, uprooting every legal restraint, and eminently calculated in its very nature to produce the entire destruction of every virtuous tie, and pouring contempt upon every holy principle, contained in the revelations of God to his creature man; and must inevitably entail upon that people abject wretchedness and woe, subjecting them to the righteous condemnation of every virtuous intelligence, whether in heaven or on earth; and

Whereas, The better to conceal the justly odious system of polygamy—duplicity, hypocrisy, and falsehood, are inculcated as virtues—the most sacred obligations constantly violated, and families and individuals plunged into irrevocable ruin and despair; therefore

Resolved, That we hold no fellowship with the people calling themselves the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and can have no communion with them, unless they repent and obey the principles of righteousness and truth.

Resolved, That we maintain the truth and the truth only, at all hazards; renouncing at once, and for ever, the unsanctifying dogma, that it is sometimes lawful to lie.

Resolved, That our subjection to the law of God impels us to yield implicit obedience to the law of the land.

Resolved, That we do maintain and do earnestly contend for the faith which was once, and is again, delivered to the saints, contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Covenants.

Resolved, That we feel it a solemn and imperative obligation, we owe to God and our fellow-man, to disseminate to the extent of our ability, correct information regarding certain pernicious doctrines and practices which are secretly taught by the leaders and many of the members of the society called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; verily believing them demoralizing and destructive, combining all the worst features of barbarism, and containing all the elements of the wildest anarchy, and would if unchecked by the power of truth, ultimately extinguish the species.

Sidney Rigdon was then and ever after an uncompromising foe to polygamy, and condemned Brigham Young and his colleagues in unmeasured terms for its practice. He has been misunderstood in this. The misunderstanding has partly arisen from a misconception of a statement published in *Times and Seasons* for November 15, 1844, which reads as follows:

The saints of the last days have witnessed the outgoings and incomings of so many apostates that nothing but truth has any effect upon them. In the present instance, after the sham quotations of Sidney and his clique, from the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants, to skulk off, under the "dreadful splendor" of spiritual wifery, which is brought into the account as graciously as if the law of the land allowed a man a plurality of wives, is fiendish, and like the rest of Sidney's revelation, just because he wanted to go to Pittsburg and live. Woe to the man or men who thus willfully lie to injure an innocent people! The law of the land and the rule of the church do not allow one man to have more than one wife alive at once, but if any man's wife die, he has a right to marry another, and to be sealed to both for eternity; to the living and the dead! there is no law of man or God against it! This is all the spiritual wife system that was ever tolerated in the church and they know it.

It was not the intention of the writer, evidently, to accuse Rigdon of spiritual wifery, but to deny that it was practiced at Nauvoo, and to accuse Rigdon of lying about the people there as an excuse to skulk off under the splendor of the allegation, etc.

(To be continued.)

BIOGRAPHY OF SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

(Continued from page 103.)

The *Messenger and Advocate* is replete with condemnation of the practice of polygamy and the denunciation of those who practiced it. In this periodical for April 15, 1845, there is a sermon from Elder Rigdon in which he argues that it would not be consistent for the Lord to command a practice contrary to the existing laws of the land. The following are extracts from this discourse:

A SERMON DEDICATED TO THE SAINTS OF THE LAST DAYS.

BY S. RIGDON.

“Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God, hath no need to break the laws of the land: wherefore be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet.”—Book of Covenants 18: 15.

The above text, which is taken from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants of the church, demands the strictest attention of all who profess to be members of the Church of Christ. They were written particularly for their use and benefit, and in every respect suited to their present and future condition, be that as it may. It is said in the Book of Mormon, that the Lord had this Government established for the purpose of building his church under its protection, or words to this effect; clearly intimating that the laws and institutions of the Government were every way suited to the end for which they were intended.

If our text has any meaning at all, it establishes one fact beyond controversy, that such are the laws of this land, that in order to obtain salvation, it is not necessary to break them; that they are of a character that every duty can be performed and requirement complied with, that is in any way connected with our salvation, without violating in any degree or trampling on the political institutions of the country.

When the Lord says that he organized or caused political institutions to be organized for a particular purpose, we have all confidence that they were every way calculated to obtain the end for which they were instituted, and when, by after revelation, he says to those, for whose benefit he said he had caused them to be established, and after the church had been organized by special direction from himself, that in order to keep his commandments they (the church) need not break the laws of the land, we feel ourselves at liberty to believe, that there is nothing pertaining to the salvation of that church or people, which renders it

necessary for them to violate the laws of the land, and that every violation of the laws of the land, is uncalled for. In this case the language is very expressive, that those who keep his commandments, need not break the law of the land. He does not say that those who profess to keep his commandments, will not break the laws of the land; he only says they need not do it. The same as to say that there is nothing in his commandments that brings men into collision with the laws of the land, and if they do violate them it is not by virtue of his commands that they do so; for as far as keeping his commandments is concerned, they would not have driven them to such a necessity.

It is worthy of remark that the sayings in the Book of Mormon were written before the church was organized. Thus authorizing the people who believed the book to believe that, if on the belief of that book, and according to the things contained in it, they should be organized into a church, they could do it in a country, and among a people, where the Lord had previously prepared a code of laws suited to the upbuilding of the cause in which they were engaged. Query, Was this a false expectation or was it not? Or did the Lord, in causing the laws to be framed, do it for the purpose of causing those who believed the Book of Mormon to be persecuted? And those persecutions to be brought on by reason of the commandments of the Lord compelling those who obeyed them to break the laws? To obtain this object the Lord need not have given himself much trouble, to have had a special government formed for this purpose, any government would have answered his purpose. But to suppose this would only be to insult the deity.

When the Lord said that he had given freedom to this Nation, and caused the Government to be organized so as to make it a place suited for building his church, he could have but one meaning, and that was, that in this land he could build his church, without being brought into contact with the municipal laws of the country; and this view of the subject is put for ever at rest by the words of our text. We are here told that the commandments of the Lord do not come in contact with the laws of the land, and no man who keeps them need break the laws. From the above view of the subject, we learn firstly, that every commandment that renders it necessary to break the laws of the land in order to keep it, is not of God, or it was not given for salvation. And secondly, that those who obey such commandments, are not promoting the things of salvation.

No fact, we think, can be plainer to those who believe in the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants of the church, than the first position we have taken. Should it be admitted that the laws of this country, where the Lord has cast our lot, and where he has commanded us to build his church, were in opposition to the laws of God, so as to subject those who keep the law of heaven to punishment, we should like to know why it was that the Lord said he had caused this Government to be established for the express purpose of having his church built up in it, or under its protection? What is the use of

government? The answer is, To protect the rights and interests of those who are its subjects. Take this conservative principle from governments, and they are curses instead of blessings to any people. The only object a God could have in establishing a government for the benefit of any people, was that the people, for whose sake it was organized, might be protected by its laws and institutions. In this case it was said to be done for the purpose of establishing the laws of heaven in it, and for the building up of the church of Christ in it. Now, we ask, why establish a government for this purpose? No man can answer otherwise, than that those who belonged to the church, when built, might be protected by its laws and political institutions; for no other object but this could be, that was worthy of God, yea, we might say of men; but should it so happen, that in the course of events, the Lord should deliver commandments which were in opposition to the laws of this land, and thereby make the government punish those who obeyed them, of what avail would the government be? None only to be an engine to inflict punishment on those who obeyed the requirements of heaven; and pray what use was a government of this description to those whom the Lord had separated to himself? All must answer, none; but a great evil—a great curse. Are we, then, to understand the Lord as saying, that he caused liberty to be established on this land, that his church might be cursed in it, and the blood of his Saints shed? No man in his senses will or dare say it. What then; why, if the Lord did do as the Book of Mormon says he did, he certainly never intended to give commandments in opposition to the political institutions which he had caused to be established. If it should be otherwise, we must charge the great Jehovah with duplicity and baseness that would make the baser sort of men blush.

We ask the reader to notice, particularly, that the Lord is said to have caused this Government to be formed, long before his church was in existence, for the purpose of building his church in it, in his own due time. Had not the Lord power enough, and wisdom sufficient, having before him, at the same time, the entire platform of his church, being the author of both himself, to adapt the one to the other, so that the laws and institutions of the two need not come into collision? Who will answer he had not? We presume none. Then if the platform of this Government was such as not to admit of the introduction of all of the laws of the kingdom of heaven and not in contact with them, who is to blame? The Lord declares he was the author of both; either, then, he lacked ability or else will to do so, and in either case a man must have a sorry opinion of his God.

But our text comes happily to our relief, and declares that no man need break the laws of the land, in order to obey the religious institutions of heaven, the same as to say that the political and religious institutions of heaven were not in opposition to each other, and he who obeyed the religious institutions of heaven, had as good a right to the protection of the political institutions as those who obeyed the political institutions only. But let us suppose for a moment, that the Lord does give a com-

mand that is in violation of the law of the land, and can not be kept without breaking them, and what then becomes of the text? In that case need a man break the laws of the land in order to keep the laws of God? Judge ye, and what becomes of the truth of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and of the Book of Mormon, and when they fall, what becomes of the church?—all perish together.

Hence we conclude, and we think justly, too, that any commandment or revelation that comes in the last days, which is in opposition to the laws of this land, is not of God, for God can not contradict himself, or else he ceases to be God, or else it is not given for salvation.

But some say the Lord gives revelation to be only for a limited time, and then they are superseded by others. However true this may be in other cases, it can not be in this; for the difficulty in the Book of Mormon gets into our way, that the Lord organized this Government, or caused it to be done, for the purpose of building his church in it, and should he ever at any time give revelations commanding his people to do things which are in opposition to the laws of this land, he would impeach his own character.

View it in what point of light we can, and it amounts to the same thing, that as soon as there comes a commandment from the Lord, which is in opposition to the laws of the land, there is an end to both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; and as long as we believe these to be of God, so long shall we believe that any commandment coming, it matters not who from, prophet, apostle, revelator, or seer, that can not be kept without breaking the laws of this land, is not of God, unless it is given in wrath, and intended to be a curse to those to whom it is given. Our second position, we think, is not less manifest. That those who obey such commandment, do not promote the things of salvation by so doing.

It will not permit of controversy to suppose that any revelation which is not of God does in any degree promote the salvation of any. In relation to revelations in general, as given in the different ages of the world, a few words may not be amiss. There are things said on this subject which is of importance for all to know, who believe in prophets and revelators, in these last days.

In all ages of the world when the Lord, through men, revealed himself to the inhabitants of the earth, or any portion of them, there were certain things delivered, the object of which was to guard the people against imposition or fraud being practiced upon them, by designing men, or by the recklessness of prophets, should they prove recreant to their God or to their trust, and by these things both the people and the prophets were bound. The prophets were bound within certain limits in their revelations, and when they stepped beyond those limits, they were transgressors, and endangered their own salvation. The case of Moses is proof to the point—and the people were bound by the same rule; and anything which was delivered by the prophet, within the prescribed limits, they were

bound to receive; but beyond that they were not bound, but, on the contrary, became transgressors as well as the prophets, if they received or practiced anything contrary to the fixed principles laid down to govern them all.

When the Lord called Moses and sent him as a revelator to the children of Israel, he showed unto him a pattern of things, beyond which he was forbidden to go, and by him delivered a certain order of things, to be obtained and established by the revelations he was to give through him. Moses had a special charge not to go beyond, nor to come short of the pattern of things given him. And why was this charge given, seeing Moses received all his council direct from heaven? Why did not the Lord take the admonition himself, instead of giving it to Moses? There is a reason for this, and one to which all would do well to give heed. By this command Moses was forbid asking the Lord to permit him to do anything contrary to the pattern of things given, and also to see that what he did receive was carried into effect, and nothing else.

The people of Israel had bound themselves to the Lord, through Moses, to receive and carry into effect all things pertaining to the pattern given. Neither Moses nor the people were at liberty to part from it. If Moses had proved recreant, and either sought of the Lord revelations in opposition to the pattern given, or in opposition to the law that governed him as the leader of Israel the people were not bound to receive them, and if they did, they became transgressors. Take this conservative power away from the people, and there are things said in the Bible, which savor of nonsense. All the rebukes given to the people, for being led by false prophets—and all the admonitions to beware of false teachers, would be nothing but perfect folly, and an insult to them, for if they were bound to receive a prophet, and obey him, let him say what he would, if he did it in the name of the Lord, what sense would there be in admonishing them to beware of false prophets, and threatening them with condemnation if they received their teachings. The fact of such admonitions being given, supposes that there was a conservative power in the people by which they could detect false prophets and false teachers, and save themselves from the ruin that such would bring on them, and if they did not use that power, God would condemn them for it, and they should share the fate of the prophet.

As far as we have any knowledge of the dealings of God with men, in all ages, they have been regulated upon the above principle. The apostles, before they were permitted to go forth and preach the gospel, were commanded to tarry at Jerusalem till they were endowed with power from on high, that is, until they had received the entire platform of things or pattern of things, after which they were to build, which they could not receive until after they received the Holy Spirit; and after they had received the pattern of things, after which they were to build, they went forth proclaiming it to the world, and when the people believed, they baptized them into that church or order of things, and by virtue of their baptism, they were bound to aid in carrying out that plan or scheme

of things, and received everything the Lord commanded them to do for its accomplishment by those whom he had called for that purpose: but they were not under any obligation to receive or obey anything that was in opposition to the form of doctrine delivered unto them. . . . By what rule were they to judge both the world and the angels? Surely, by the form of doctrine which they had received. If an angel from heaven should come with any other pattern of things, they should reject him, or if *any* man did it, true prophet or false prophet, they should reject him. That the apostles themselves were bound by the pattern of things given, and that the people who had received and obeyed the form of doctrine delivered, were also bound by it, but not bound to follow the apostles, or anyone of them, when they departed from it, is so clearly set forth in the second chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, that no doubt can remain on the mind: "But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to blame. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with them; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." Here Peter is charged with being a sinner, for having departed from the form of doctrine delivered him, and sharply rebuked for it. Query. Were the people that followed him in his departure from truth justified, or did they promote their salvation in so doing? All will answer they did not.

From the above quotation we learn an important fact, that an apostle, commissioned of the living God, and one through whom the Lord reveals a dispensation to the world, can himself pervert that very order of things, revealed to the world through and by him, so as to make him the subject of severe rebuke by others. What further proof need we that there is a conservative power in the people to preserve in purity the order of things delivered to them through messengers sent for that purpose; and what further proof need we that such a power in the people is necessary?

There are many other things said in the scriptures, which go to establish the above view of the subject beyond controversy. In the fifth chapter of Jeremiah and the thirty-first verse the prophets says, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my peo-

ple love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Here the people are charged with loving to have it so, when the prophets prophesy lies; and the question is asked, What will ye do in the end thereof? For answer to this question see the twenty-ninth verse, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" The Lord here says, or asks if he will not be avenged on such a nation or people; and why be avenged on the people? Because they loved to have it so; instead of lifting their voice against the prophet—they loved his lies. But if the people were bound to receive, implicitly, all the prophet said, why were they to blame? If that were the case they could not: but the very fact of the people's being guilty, shows that they had a right to reject the prophet's lies. In the second chapter and second verse of Revelation, the church at Ephesus is commended for having tried them who say they are apostles and are not and found them liars,—“I know thy works and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.” Let us ask why are all these things said? There is but one answer can be given, and that is, that the people had both the right and the power to do so, and that their guilt, when they were guilty, was because they did not use their power.

The Lord has had one uniform way of dealing with mankind. When he began at any period of the world, to reveal himself to mankind, he, in the first instance, made known to the prophet or messenger whom he had sent, the things to be obtained, and the general platform of the scheme by which the end or ends were to be obtained, and the messenger sent, laid this platform of things before the people for their reception or rejection: when the people received it, the Lord held them bound to see that the order of things set forth, was preserved in purity, and if they departed from it they were to be judged accordingly, and, having the scheme of things before them, they could detect any prophet or apostle who attempted to teach a doctrine subversive of the things delivered unto them; and having this power they were held guilty if they did not exercise it. And hence it was that they were required to detect prophets, apostles, and even angels, if they attempted to corrupt the order of things, or form of doctrine delivered unto them.

By means of the above order of God's dealings with men, he placed into the hands of the people, a conservative power, that if prophets, seers, revelators, or even angels, proved recreant to their trust, the people could save themselves—detect their corruptions, and maintain the truth; separate themselves from the corruptors and the corrupted, and not be partakers with them, neither in their sins nor in their condemnation; and if the people did not exercise their rights, and use the power given to them, they also became transgressors, and shared in the judgments of God. In the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, the subject is still presented in a stronger point of light, if possible. In the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth verses we have the following sayings: “Where-

fore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." Here the apostle says that he prayed that the saints might have the spirit of revelation in the knowledge of God, and goes on till the close of the chapter, showing what they could know by this spirit of revelation. The eyes of their understanding would be enlightened. They would know the hope of their calling, the riches of glory, the excellency of God's power, and many other things to which we direct the attention of our readers. In the first epistle of John, second chapter and twentieth verse, we have the following: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One; and ye know all things." The saints are here said to have an unction from the Holy One and (by it) know, or may know all things.

We think sufficient has been said to settle the question for ever in the mind of all who wish to know. The order of heaven, which includes the gift of the Holy Spirit, puts it in the power of the people, in despite of corrupted apostles and prophets to the contrary, to understand the truth, and detect error, and if they do not use that power, they will be held responsible for it before God.

In relation to the saints of the last days, we think there ought to be but one opinion. The Lord, long before his church was established, caused a government to be organized, which he said he did in order that his church might be built up in it; and at an early day of its experience, said it was not necessary for his saints to break the laws of that Government in order to keep his commandments. From the view we have taken of the way and manner of God's dealings with those who have gone before us; we can see the limits which the Lord has set to his scheme of things delivered to us; that he has bound himself within the limits of the laws of this land in delivering his revelations to us. This he has done that we, as the ancients, may also be able to guard ourselves against the dissolute habits of prophets, and the corruptions of those who might seek to oppress us. To this end he has placed the matter in a situation that the people may see and understand. He has set bounds to the field of revelation, and told the saints that no revelation which is necessary for their salvation, will be in violation of the laws of the land. necessary for their salvation, will be in violation of the laws of the land. . . .

To conclude, we say to the saints, read, reflect, and save yourselves from this untoward generation.

This opposition to polygamy by Rigdon was very pronounced throughout his entire life. As late as March 27, 1866, he claimed to receive a divine communication on the subject from which we extract the following:

The word of the Lord to his servant Stephen Post concerning the things whereof he has inquired. I the Lord say unto my servant Stephen that the system of polygamy as had among a people who were called after my name was not of me saith the Lord, I the Lord your Redeemer disavow it. I never gave to Joseph Smith or any other man authority to introduce in my name that system as had among that people in any of its forms as a pretended spiritual relation or otherwise, and you shall not suffer it to exist in Zion. Yea, you shall not suffer it to make its appearance in Zion, nor among her children in any of its forms, for in so doing you will bring it before my face and it is before me saith the Lord an abomination. I forbid it among the Nephites and as you are properly classed as Nephites, I the Lord therefore forbid its appearance among you. Therefore if there come any to you who have been partakers in that abomination you shall require a baptism of them and it shall be between you and such a baptism of renunciation; they shall renounce that system to you before me, and their baptism shall be a pledge to you in my presence saith the Lord, that in their hearts they have renounced the system; and should it appear afterward by word or deed that they in their baptism had acted deceitfully, you shall cause their names to be blotted from among the names of the children of Zion for their abomination before me and their hypocrisy to you. . . .

As to those who have not polluted themselves with polygamy, the thing I the Lord hate, they can be baptized again or not. If they are dissatisfied with their baptism let them be baptized again so that they can act in good faith before me saith the Lord.

It has been asserted that Rigdon accused Joseph Smith of introducing polygamy at Nauvoo, Illinois, but diligent research has failed to disclose any statement from Rigdon that he personally knew of any such thing. He may have held that Joseph Smith was in some sense responsible, but he accepted it upon the testimony of others. In February, 1845, he visited Kirtland, Ohio, and there met William Law and William E. McLellin and from them heard statements upon this subject which were new to him, showing that he had not personal knowledge of the matter. In the *Messenger and Advocate* for March 15, 1845, he relates the incident as follows:

An unexpected circumstance took place that evening, it was the arrival of Brn. William Law, and Wiliam E. McLellin from Hampton, Rock Island County, Illinois. Brother Law addressed the congregation for some time, setting forth what he knew about the people and affairs at Nauvoo; some of which was new to us. He settled the question for ever on the public mind, in relation to the spiritual wife system, and the abomina-

tions concerning it. As Joseph Smith and others had attempted to get him into it, and in order to do so had made him acquainted with many things about it that we never knew before. The whole combined put the matter at rest, and the public mind was quieted, and all doubts removed.

If, then, Elder Rigdon entertained the opinion that Joseph Smith indorsed polygamy, he based his belief upon the testimony of these two men, both of whom were bitter enemies of Joseph Smith previous to his death.

At a conference convened upon his call in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, April 6 to 11, 1845, Elder Rigdon claimed to reorganize the church with himself as president, and with Ebenezer Robinson and Samuel James his counselors.

At this same conference the following were installed as the Quorum of Twelve apostles: Samuel Bennett, Hugh Herringshaw, Jeremiah Hatch, jr., James Blakeslee, Josiah Ells, Benjamin Winchester, William Small, E. R. Swackhammer, David L. Lathrop, Joseph M. Cole, George W. Robinson, and William E. McLellin. The following were constituted Presidents of the Seventy: Amos B. Tomlinson, John F. Olney, Frederick Merryweather, Leonard Rich, George T. Leach, James M. Greig, and William Hutchings.

A standing high council was organized, composed of Dennis Savary, Charles A. Beck, John Smith, Thomas J. Lanyon, James Logan, James A. Forgeus, Matthew Smith, Peter Boyer, Robert Kincaid, Lewis James, James Spratley, and John Frazier. The presiding bishopric were William Richards, bishop; Timothy L. Baker and Richard Croxall, counselors. A stake was organized at Pittsburg with Richard Savary, president; James Smith and Samuel G. Flag counselors.

Carvel Rigdon, brother of President Rigdon, was chosen patriarch. Austin Cowles was made president of the High Priests' Quorum, with William Stanley and Hiram Kellogg, counselors.

President of Elders' Quorum, John Duncan, with Briggs Alden and William White, counselors. Much business of impor-

tance was transacted at this conference, including the appointment of a committee of five, viz, Samuel Bennett, Jeremiah Hatch, jr., William E. McLellin, Joseph M. Cole, and George W. Robinson to draw up preamble and resolutions expressive of the views and feelings of the conference relative to the people of Nauvoo under the presidency of Brigham Young and his associates.¹ This committee was also directed to prepare an address to the people of the United States and the world.

A FRIEND TO MAN.

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
 In the place of their self-content;
 There are souls like stars, that dwell apart
 In a fellowless firmament;
 There are pioneer souls, that blaze their paths,
 Where highways never ran—
 But let me live by the side the road
 And be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
 Where the race of men go by,
 The men who are good, and the men who are bad
 As good and as bad as I.
 I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
 Nor hurl the cynic's ban
 Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
 And be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road,
 By the side of the highway of life,
 The men who press with the ardor of hope,
 The men who are faint with the strife:
 But I turn not away from their smiles and their tears,
 Both parts of an infinite plan,—
 Let me live in my home by the side of the road,
 And be a friend to man.

—Sam Walter Foss.

¹Resolutions on page 102 last issue.



ELDER SIDNEY RIGDON.

BIOGRAPHY OF ELDER SIDNEY RIGDON.

BY HEMAN C. SMITH.

(Continued from page 181.)

The organization under Sidney Rigdon entered actively into the work before it, both aggressively and defensively. The opposition to the organization at Nauvoo under the presidency of Brigham Young and his fellows was very pronounced, and polygamy was especially repudiated by Rigdon and his followers. Elder John E. Page, of the Quorum of Twelve, published a notice regarding the expulsion of Rigdon and the renunciation of his indorsers as follows:

Notice is hereby given to the public to beware of receiving the ordinance of baptism at the hands of Mr. Sidney Rigdon, esq.; or any of his adherents, thinking to attach themselves to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, for Mr. S. Rigdon is at this time expelled from the aforesaid church, and all his adherents are *suspended* from the performance or administration of any ordinance whatever, until they repent and adhere to the proper authorities of the said church. For whatever, Mr. S. Rigdon, or any of his adherents may say or do, under the pretention or nominal name of Latter Day Saints, in a *legal point of light*, will be no more in connection with the true Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, than the Republic of the United States has with the crown of England.

JOHN E. PAGE, *Elder.*

And one of the Twelve traveling high council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.—*Messenger and Advocate*, vol. 1, p. 48.

To this Elder Rigdon made a lengthy reply, addressed to James M. Greig, from which we extract as follows:

Bro. J. Grieg, Dear Sir: Yours of the 14th inst. was received per mail this morning. The intelligence was cheering; these early evidences of the virtue and firm integrity of the Saints speaks volumes in favor of their future prospects. What, dear brother, can withstand the truth when its advocates are uncompromising in their attachment to virtue and holy principles. Since the world began, all the dispensations delivered to men of the living God, have been thrown into confusion by the introduction of doctrines and practices which were at war with godliness, and subversive of all that was good and noble. Hence the distraction of the religious world. At some time past so great was the departures from the truth, by those who professed to be the people of God, that if a Noah, a Daniel, and a Job had been among them, they

could save their own souls only, and not even be able to save a son or daughter. Such an attempt has Satan made on us, and was maturing his plan so completely to effect our overthrow, that the few left who could not be corrupted could do nothing more than save their own souls; but the iniquity was discovered before the adversary had gotten the fangs of his corruption so fastened on us that we could not unfasten them.

I have been informed, since Mr. Page published this Bull, and subsequent departure from this place, that he had attempted to teach the doctrine of spiritual wives in this city some time since. This will account for his sudden departure from both this place and yours.

It would seem almost impossible that there could be found a set of men and women, in this age of the world, with the revelations of God in their hands, who could invent and propagate doctrines so ruinous to society, so debasing and demoralizing as the doctrine of a man having a plurality of wives; for it is the existence of this strange doctrine—worse than the strange fire offered on the altar, by corrupted Israel—that was at the root of all the evils which have followed, and are following in the church, the very mention of which could not fail to redden the cheek of decency with a blush.

The whole of the revelations of God in all ages, charge the prophets and leaders of the people, with being the authors of corruptions, which from time to time overrun the people of God. We need not marvel then that like evils have befallen us. The crime of the people was that they loved to have it so, they were not charged with introducing the corruptions, but having pleasure in them after the prophets and leaders, had introduced them. It is no small degree of satisfaction to me, to find the people rising in the exercise of their just rights, and casting off, not only the leaders, but those who are led by these corruptors, seducing spirits which introduce doctrines of demons.

Those who read the New Testament with care, can not avoid seeing that the apostles have declared that a corruption like that we complain of, was to make its appearance in the last days. See Second Timothy, 3d chapter, from the 1st to the 9th verses inclusive. These sayings, which the apostles, at Nauvoo, have applied to the professing world, are as applicable to themselves as to any others now living, or any others who have lived since the days of Paul. In the 6th verse we are told that "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts." Now of what sort are those who creep into houses and lead astray silly women? The answer is given in the preceding verse. Persons that can do that are such as are without natural affection, boasters, proud inventors of evil things, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. When we see such men, as above described, they, according to Paul, would do other things, that is, enter into houses and lead astray silly women.

That the Twelve and their adherents have entered into houses and led

astray silly women, is a fact susceptible of the highest proof; and we are authorized by Paul to apply all the rest he has said to them. "For of this sort enter into houses and lead astray silly women." What sort? we ask the before described religionists, for says Paul, "they have a form of godliness." The conclusion then is, that they effected the ruin of silly females, by, or through a form of godliness.

Paul says, the corruption he has described was to take place in the last days, now, from this, the people of the last days are authorized to call anything of the kind which may make its appearance, it matters not by whom these corruptions were introduced, prophet, apostle, evangelist, or pastor, whosoever introduces them, has an account to settle with Paul in the great day when the affairs of the universe shall be adjusted before an umpire who can not err, for either these doctrines and practices are corruptions, or else Paul stands charged with a departure from truth.

From what is said in the 9th verse, the iniquity complained of was to be a thing conducted in secret. "But they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men." Nothing can be plainer than this abomination of leading silly women astray, was to be a secret thing—carried on privately, and the exposure of it was to put a final stop to their wickedness. "But they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest."

This secret working in matters of religion is, and always has been evidence of corruption. The Saints always have been warned against the secret works of darkness; light and truth not only manifest themselves, but also that make manifest the secret works of darkness. It is equally plain according to Paul, that no such thing could be carried on, however secretly it might be done, without detection, "For their folly shall be made manifest."

Those leaders of silly women, if they had regarded the Scriptures, might have known that their race was a short one, and that their wickedness would be made manifest; for thus had Paul written more than seventeen hundred years ago, and as proof that Paul was inspired behold it has come to pass in our day and before our eyes.

It is a fact so well known, that the Twelve and their adherents have endeavored to carry on this spiritual wife business in secret, that I hardly need mention it here, and have gone to the most shameful and desperate lengths, to keep it from the public. First, insulting innocent females, and when they resented the insult, these monsters in human shape would assail their characters by lying and perjuries, with a multitude of desperate men to help them to effect the ruin of those whom they had insulted, and all this to enable them to keep these corrupt practices from the view of the world. I could bring facts which can be established in any court of justice, in relation to these vile abominations practiced under the garb of religion that would make humanity blush. No falsehood too great, and no perjury too daring, in order to conceal these heaven-daring abuses of mankind; but I say in the language of Paul, they shall

go no further, for their folly is now being made manifest, and will not cease until it is manifest unto all.

How often have these men and their accomplices stood up before the congregation, and called God and all the holy angels to witness, that there was no such doctrine taught in the church; and it has now come to light, by testimony which can not be gainsaid, that at the time they thus dared heaven and insulted the world, they were living in the practice of these enormities; and there were multitudes of their followers in the congregation at the time who knew it. These things only tend to confirm the fact that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the true church of God, for we now see in that body fulfilling, what the apostles and prophets said should take place in that order of things which God acknowledged. According to both prophets and apostles, the true church in the last days would be tried, with all the corruptions which had overthrown all the previous orders, kingdoms, or churches which God had set up; and before she could be exalted to her true glory, to overcome all the inventions of Satan or of man, but more of this in our next.

Dear brother, through this letter to you, I would call on all the Saints into whose hands this may come, to arise and deliver themselves from the corruption, disorder and ruin, that Satan through the Twelve as instruments, designs to bring upon them, know ye that no strange thing has befallen you, that an attempt is being made upon you by those in high authority, and those who are arrogating to themselves authority in violation of the order of heaven.—Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 12 to 14.

In an editorial published in the *Messenger and Advocate*, November 1, 1844, Elder Rigdon made a prediction concerning Nauvoo which, considered in connection with subsequent events, is very significant. He said:

Know, reader, that He who rules in the heavens, has declared the fate of Nauvoo; and all shall see his hand on Nauvoo for destruction, and not for salvation: for Nauvoo on account of the iniquities of her people, will be desolated; the Saints there have polluted their inheritances, and God will cast them down, and make an ensample to all, those who come after them; and all the efforts of man to the contrary will not save her.

It is not [now] our intention, in the future numbers of our paper, to devote very little of them to these local matters, but to a very different object—to the setting forth the doctrines of the revelations of heaven. We will leave Nauvoo, and those of her inhabitants who have corrupted their way before the Lord, to their fate; assuring them that an overthrow awaits them, and no earthly power can save them.

The ignorant corrupters at Nauvoo are busily engaged, up to the last dates, in spinning out the history of their own ignorance and shame, in an unceasing effort to do something to hide their secret doctrine from the public gaze. Do they think such fooling will any longer hide from the

world their system of polygamy? If they do they will find their mistake by and by.

The position of the church under the presidency of President Rigdon was set forth in the resolutions of a conference held at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, October 12, 1844, over which Richard Savery presided and James Logan was secretary.

Whereas the quorum of the Twelve, and their adherents in Nauvoo, have rejected Elder S. Rigdon as the presiding officer of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and thus violating the law of the church, as found in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, which we esteem most sacred and dear to all lovers of truth, for no other reasons, in our opinion, than his having claimed his lawful standing in the church, and his decided opposition to the nefarious doctrine of polygamy, and other things odious in their nature and tendency; for the truth of which, it now becomes our painful duty to say to all our friends and brethren in Christ, we have the most positive and decisive evidence; wherefore,

1. Resolved, That we feel it our imperative duty, to receive and sustain Elder S. Rigdon in the office of first president of the church, whereunto, according to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord has called him; and also that we uphold him in this office by our faith and prayers.

2. Resolved, That in consequence of the most flagrant violation of the original, or true principles and order of the church, by the Twelve and their abettors, by rejecting Elder Rigdon, and practicing the doctrine of polygamy, despoiling female virtue and chastity by seducing them, and tyrannizing over those who will not sanction their works of darkness, and many other like things, for which we regard them as apostates, and men fallen from the true order of the church, into a state of wickedness and corruption: therefore, we hold no fellowship with them, and as a branch of the true church, standing upon the original platform, and the acknowledged and received doctrine of said church, we do not consider ourselves identified with them.

3. Resolved, That we sincerely request and advise all of our friends and brethren that stand connected with us in the true cause of God, to join with us in our efforts that we may redeem our characters from the odium and disgrace that the Twelve and others have brought upon us all, or in other words, all the church, by their evil practices, as mentioned in preamble and previous resolutions.

Resolved, That we hereby avow to all men both far and near, that we have the most implicit confidence in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and that we receive them as our rule of practice and faith.

Resolved, That Elders Wingate, William Richards, J. B. Newton, and B. Winchester, have authority from this conference to go as messengers

to the eastern branches of the church and set before them the true state of the church, and regulate the affairs of the same.

Other churches in other places adopted resolutions of similar import.

Thus it will be seen they took a stand squarely upon the standard books of, and revelations to, the church. Notwithstanding this, this organization seemed to lack adhesive qualities and very soon many, including several of the leading men, became disaffected and united with other organizations. The organization maintained its struggle for several years, but was more numerous immediately after its establishment than ever afterward.

About 1865 and 1866, through the zealous efforts of Elder Stephen Post, then counselor to Elder Rigdon, there was a revival of interest, but it soon relapsed. The organization has become entirely extinct, though there may be a few individuals who yet retain faith in the claims of Elder Rigdon. He died at Friendship, Allegheny County, New York, July 14, 1876.

So far as we know, Elder Sidney Rigdon maintained his integrity and honor until the end of his eventful life. Had all other leaders condemned evil as he did and taught as he taught regarding the laws of the land, some of them would have avoided much trouble for themselves and followers and saved the United States much treasure and vexation. At the April conference of 1845 he said:

Brethren, hear my voice, to-day obey the principles of truth delivered, and you never, no never, shall have a charge preferred against one of you. But if you do not obey the laws of this kingdom, and work out salvation, you will be cursed with sore cursings. Never break the laws of this land at the suggestion of apostle, prophet, or even angel.

(To be continued.)