NAUVO*

It was in the late winter of 1838-1839 that the followers of Joseph Smith straggled across the Mississippi to Quincy, a ragged, poverty-stricken band, bitter with the memory of Haun's Mill and Crooked River, but burning with a religious zeal that persecution could not quench and opposition only fanned into flame. The people of Quincy had long been on strained relations with those on the other side of the river. The Missourians claimed that their slaves, once crossed into Quincy, were not only harbored by the people of Quincy, but even helped on their way to freedom in Canada. The feeling reached fever pitch when in 1836, a Doctor Nelson, a brilliant preacher who had a private school in Palmyra, Missouri, and who was by sentiment a strong abolitionist, made an unwise remark in a camp meeting and had to flee for his life. He ran through high grass and brush to the river and was nearly caught, but finally reached Quincy, wet and exhausted. Following this, many fiery messages were exchanged, and relations anything but amicable had since obtained.

Here was another opportunity to reach a hand to the oppressed from Missouri, and the Quincy patriots, who like the Saints were mostly from the East (Maine and Ohio), offered no uncertain asylum to the Saints as they straggled across the river.

Among them was Emma Smith. She knew not where her husband was, nor whether he was dead or alive. In her arms were her two smallest children, Alexander and Frederick. The older two, Julia and little Joseph, clung to her skirts, as she crossed the frozen river on the ice. It was the 15th day of February, 1839,[1] and bitterly cold.

Before leaving Missouri, she had visited her husband in prison at Liberty, Missouri. Neither knew whether or not it would be their last meeting. On that occasion, he had placed his hands upon little Joseph and blessed him. Although so very young at the time, the boy did not forget that blessing pronounced upon his head "by lips tainted by dungeon damps, and by the Spirit confirmed through attesting witnesses."[2]

It remained for one of his father's fellow prisoners to remember some of the words spoken on that occasion. Lyman Wight, writing to the editor of the Northern Islander published by Jas. J. Strang, from Medina, Texas, in July, 1855, wrote, "Now, Mr. Editor, if you had been present when Joseph Smith called on me shortly after [we] came out of jail to lay hands with him on the head of a youth and heard him cry aloud 'You are my successor when I depart,' and heard the blessing poured on his head.[3] I say had you heard all this, and seen the tears streaming from his eyes, you would not have been led by blind fanaticism or a zeal without knowledge."[4]

Emma with her family found shelter at the home of Judge Cleveland in Quincy where she was made welcome and kindly cared for throughout the rest of the winter. Others of the Saints found homes with

prominent families in Quincy, and received kindly treatment from all.

Not far from Quincy, Illinois, there resided upon his broad acres a wealthy Virginian by the name of George Miller. During the so-called "Mormon war," Mr. Miller, who was a lover of a good argument, took a business trip to Missouri, and there in a tavern one night engaged in a very lively discussion on the merits of the treatment accorded the Saints (of whom he was hearing for the first time). With the support of one other, and with every other man in the crowded room against him, he denounced roundly the persecution to which this people had been subjected. He had never seen a "Mormon," never until that night heard of one, but as he rode home he thought over the argument that had occurred at the tavern, and became more and more satisfied with himself for his outspoken defense of this peculiar sect.

Later he heard that numbers of them were refugees in Quincy, and he somewhat impulsively determined to ride over to Quincy and invite a family of "Mormons" to be tenants upon one of his farms. He readily enough secured "Father" and "Mother" Smith, the parents of the Prophet himself, and some of their family who were at home. He became greatly interested in his tenants, driving in his carriage nearly every Sunday afternoon to listen to "Father" Smith tell of his experiences. One Sunday, returning from such a trip, he met another carriage, and in it, a large man whom he seemed instinctively to know, though he had never met him, was the "Prophet Joseph Smith." There and then before a word ever passed between them his heart went out in an allegiance to the stranger in the other carriage--an allegiance that was never to waver while life lasted. This man is characterized by Dr. H. W. Mills in his article "De Tal Palo Tal Astilla" (A Chip off the Old Block) in the annual Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California for 1917 as having "indomitable energy, self-confidence, self-reliance in his own line, and courage that will not be denied and does not know the word 'can't'." George Miller soon joined the church, and after the beloved Bishop Edward Partridge died, succeeded him in 1841 as Presiding Bishop of the church.

Nor were the politicians in the older State of Illinois averse to the incoming tide of voters. On the eve of the most exciting election in the history of their state, the game of politics was being played in earnest. Almost evenly divided politically between Whig and Democrat, they welcomed the host of "Mormon" voters with wide-open arms. Stephen A. Douglas, "The Little Giant," cultivated the friendship of the Prophet and became a welcome guest at Nauvoo and in the Smith home. Lesser politicians followed his example.

Judge Richard M. Young, Democratic Senator from Illinois (1837-1843), presented in Congress the petition of the Saints for redress, took care to have the name "Commerce" changed to Nauvoo, saw that George W. Robinson, Rigdon's son-in-law, received appointment as postmaster, and urged the necessity of having the Nauvoo mail carried twice a week from Carthage, saying that the "additional expense would not be more than one hundred and fifty dollars, as the mail is carried on horseback." In the same letter he asks that his respects "be presented to Mr. Smith."[5] Young was a tall, handsome Kentuckian with "the polished manners of a Chesterfield,"[6] and the help he gave Elias Higbee was friendly and ardent while Higbee was in Washington, seeking redress for the Missouri troubles. He even advanced money from his private funds to aid the Saints' commission while it was in the city. He is one of the list

of prominent men of whom Joseph Smith recorded in his journal, "They will long be remembered by a grateful community for their philanthropy to a suffering people, and whose kindness on that occasion is indelibly engraved on the tables of our hearts in golden letters of love."[7] Another named in that list was the fiery, redheaded young lawyer, Ralston, from Quincy, who was accused in the Whig press of the day as "coquetting with the Mormons." This was the man who helped to defend Joseph Smith in his trial before Judge Douglas at Monmouth.

Associated with Ralston was Orville H. Browning, also of Quincy, afterward Honorable O. H. Browning, secretary of the interior under President Johnson, a "scholarly lawyer and statesman,"[8] and the man to whom Joseph Smith wrote his last letter[9] just a few hours before he was shot to death. He asked Browning to come to Carthage to assist in his defense. In the case at Monmouth before judge Douglas, Browning spoke so well that the mother of the Prophet felt he was "moved upon by the Spirit that was given to him in answer to the prayers of the Saints."

In the brief period of a few weeks after his arrival in Illinois, Joseph Smith had made choice of the malaria-ridden lowland about the deserted village of Commerce, an experimental community, then consisting of several empty farmhouses surrounded by unweeded farmlands. The two great political parties vied in favors to the incoming tide of voters. The year 1840 was a presidential year, the most exciting campaign that Illinois had ever seen. The Illinois Legislature, trembling on a hair-trigger balance between Whig and Democrat, voted the infant city, now rechristened Nauvoo, a charter unique in the annals of city government. John C. Bennett, then quartermaster of the State of Illinois, lobbied the charter through political shoals with a suavity born of experience. Among those favoring the charter in the lower house was an awkward, long-limbed, but aspiring lawyer by the name of Abraham Lincoln, whose heart, notoriously tender towards all human suffering, was so deeply moved by the stories of massacre and suffering related, that he rushed forward to the bar at the final passing of the bill to congratulate Bennett personally and wish the new city success.

In the fall of 1840, the first company of English immigrants arrived on the "North America." Through these the church authorities became first informed of the abuse of immigrants by the ship companies and set about with characteristic Latter Day Saint passion for organization to correct matters.

On account of economic conditions in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a period of unprecedented emigration. Between 1841 and 1851 the United Kingdom was reduced by over two millions. Unscrupulous ship owners were not slow to seize upon the opportunity, and until conditions came to be a public scandal, overcrowded their ships, made no effort at furnishing sanitation or comfortable quarters, and otherwise abused their unfortunate passengers. Ships furnished only water and "firing," that is fires upon which the emigrants cooked food brought from home. The ships were often so crowded that each family had a chance at a fire only once in several days, and when a ship was in port, even though it might be for a week at a time, all fires must be out. Every effort was made to keep the emigrants below decks, where they were herded in miserable and loathsome quarters. When Parliament eventually made an investigation, it was found that a ship seldom reached America without the loss of from 1 to 10 per cent of its emigrant passengers with typhoid fever, caused by polluted water.

One harbor master at Quebec, in his report to Parliament, claimed that it was easy for him to distinguish at distance of gunshot, "an immigrant ship by the odor alone."[10] Such conditions were intolerable to the average English convert, therefore something must be done.

One fact only dominated the situation for the church, English Saints must be transported to Zion some way, and that without delay. An agent for immigration was appointed in England, who managed the outfitting of Latter Day Saint companies by co-operative buying. As time went on, ships were chartered when necessary. Each company, before sailing, elected officers and adopted regulations to govern the trip. From morning prayer to "lights out," everything was carried on with military regularity. Joseph Smith reported to a conference in Nauvoo that they were bringing European converts to Nauvoo at the average cost of from three pounds fifteen shillings to four pounds per person, depending upon the length of the voyage. Speaking of the Saints some years later, the Cambridge Independent Press said, "There is one thing which in the opinion of the House of Commons, the Latter Day Saints can do, viz., teach Christian shipowners how to send poor people decently, cheaply, and healthfully across the Atlantic."[11]

Once in Nauvoo, enthusiastic church members wrote to friends at home that they could live for one-eighth what they had in Old England with beef and pork at a penny a pound, Indian meal sixty pounds for a shilling, and butter four pence a pound. True, they needed to live for less, for the infant industries of Nauvoo were taxed to the utmost to provide employment for all who came. Skilled tradesmen found themselves in a strange country, dependent upon the charity of their brethren, but that charity was cheerfully given, and they were in "Zion."

The church became proud possessors of a small steamboat, "Maid of Iowa," built in 1842 at Augusta, Iowa, by Levi Moffitt and Dan Jones, which helped to transport the immigrants up the river to Nauvoo under the able captaincy of Dan Jones, the proselyting Welshman.[12]

So thousands came to Nauvoo, although it took their last shilling to pay their passage. Those who had no shillings left to buy "Indian meal," found "shorts" at Newell Knight's mill on the river and got through the winter by making porridge of that. Many were the homesick hearts in those days of readjustment, but ere long prosperity began to dawn on the little city by the river. Before that day, not a few victims of "fever and ague" found rest in the growing cemetery east of Nauvoo. It was not easy to be courageous. England might be "Babylon," but it was home, and many an English housewife sighed over her first shilling's worth of corn meal as she thought of the snowy-white loaves of the jolly English bakers and the cozy neighborliness of snugly built English villages far from a wide, frozen river and a wilderness of woods. Just as fervently, New England Saints in their rude log cabins thought of old elms tapping on many-paned windows, of rains whispering in the leaves of ancient "laylock" bushes, of winged armchairs in front of roaring fires on winter nights, and enormous kitchens with the black bulk of fragrant kettles against the red glow of embers.

Little wonder, then, as Hortensia Merchant wrote,[13] "there was almost every kind of house" in Nauvoo; for when the new settler was at last able to build for himself, the long dreams of the homeland went into the wood, brick, and stone. Old-world houses, filled with the finest examples of English cabinetmakers'

art, stood side by side with green-shuttered New England mansions of purest colonial type.

Perhaps the first problem that confronted the Saints was the reclamation of the swampy lowland, upon which part of the city was built.

The whole community had been stricken almost at once with malaria. Only one person in every ten was well. Hardly a family but lost at least one member and in one case, five adults from one family died within the week.[14] The home of Joseph Smith, "the old Homestead" was filled with the sick, while the family occupied a tent in the yard.[15] Other homes were similarly filled with dead and dying, for the scourge struck them before they were fairly established in their new home. The hunger, cold, and privation suffered through the past winter and spring in Missouri had so undermined their resistance, that almost no one was immune.

Gradually this land was drained, the Saints were persuaded to use water from deep wells instead of surface water, and the scourge of fever began to disappear. Advertisements for pills and powders that would surely cure "chills and fever" no longer appeared with such frequency on the last page of the Times and Seasons. Some strange ideas had been advanced. Doctor Bennett, who was always working with laboratory experiments, had urged the people to eat raw "and use for culinary purposes" a plant he called "tomato," but which most people knew as "love apple," and which grew in their flower gardens, though it was popularly supposed to be poisonous.

He declared there was some element in this strange fruit that would give health to those who used it, and he even wrote a series of articles upon its culture in the Times and Seasons. He pointed out the superiority of the plan of saving seed by drying the fruit whole rather than waiting for the plant to self sow, and said that tomatoes might well be raised in shallow boxes in their windows in early spring, thus insuring an early supply of this life-giving "fruit," but he deplored vehemently the tendency of some gardeners to train the tomato to a stake, or frame, when "the God of heaven" had so apparently intended it for "an incumbent plant."

As early as 1839, the church authorities met in council to consider a church publication, but the prospect seemed almost hopeless. There was no money in the treasury. The man among them most eminently suited to take care of the printing interests of the church was Ebenezer Robinson, who had come to the church as a journeyman printer of nineteen, employed in the publishing house in Kirtland. Here he became acquainted with the church, and with Joseph Smith who as he was wont to declare "translated the Book of Mormon, by gift and power of God, as I verily know" and united his interests with the church. He went to Missouri; was one of the sixty-six confined in Richmond prison, where with others he was forced to sign over all his property "to defray the expense of the Mormon War." Released in late January, he made his way on foot to Illinois, where he arrived with just one dollar in his pocket. He did not find his wife as he expected, and so worked at setting type in the office of the Quincy Whig, until he could bring his family from Missouri. By June this man was camping in an old log cabin above the "Stone House" on the Mississippi, and had no money to start a business. Don Carlos Smith, the youngest of the Smith brothers, was also a printer, but he, too, had lost everything in the Missouri exodus.

However, the two young men were called into a council of church authorities and told that if they would publish a paper in the interests of the church, they could have all the profits arising from it (if any). The press, which had been buried in Missouri, was soon in their possession, with what remnants of type and printing material had been saved. The paper-to-be had already been christened by the council Times and Seasons. Smith and Robinson set to work with a will. The basement of an old warehouse near the river was obtained. This cellar was damp and dark and as it had no floor there was a constant trickle of seepage water from the river. Neither thought of the danger to his health. While they cleaned "the Missouri soil" from the press and type, they looked about for a loan. Dr. Isaac Galland sold them $50 worth of type on credit, and they borrowed $50 from another brother, with which they purchased paper and printed a prospectus to send out to the Saints throughout the United States.

In the meantime, type was set for the first number and two hundred copies printed, when both the young editors came down with malaria fever, almost simultaneously. Paper enough for two thousand copies of the paper had been wet down, and it mildewed and was spoiled. Francis Higbee wet down more paper, and tried to run off the edition, but failed. Weeks and months passed. Money was coming in plentifully for subscriptions, but no paper was forthcoming. A plan at last was evolved. With part of the subscription money an 18x22, story-and-a-half printing office was built, and the press moved into the lower floor, while obliging neighbors and brethren carried Robinson and his wife (who had been stricken with malaria the day after he was) into the upper rooms on their beds. A printer was hired, and from his bed, Robinson directed the printing of the first number of Times and Seasons, in November, 1839. By February the young editors were both far enough recovered from their illness to be at work again, and by spring, a lot next the printing office having been given them by the church, they each built a comfortable log cabin[16] and the Times and Seasons was a going concern. It was printed monthly, and the subscription price was one dollar the first year.

As was fitting in a religious periodical, the news and editorials often assumed a note of melancholy piety, so universal in that day. New Year editorials especially were adapted to mourning for the good old times and deploring the reckless speed of 1840.

> In looking back over the years [says the Times and Seasons in January, 1840], we see the world of mankind appear to grow worse and worse, wickeder and wickeder. They seem to be determined more than ever to build themselves up in wealth and fame upon the ruin of each other. Steamboats and railroad cars are caused to strive, to outvie others in speed, that they may gain advantage over them, while thousands of lives are endangered thereby, and accident after accident is happening in consequence thereof.

In spite of the enormous growth in membership of the church, but few members of the church owned a copy of the Book of Mormon. The three thousand copies printed by E. B. Grandin in Palmyra, New York in 1830, were early exhausted. Another edition was printed at Kirtland in the winter of 1836-37, but that also was long out of print, and the demand for the book was increasing, and yet because of the panic of 1837, followed by the Missouri troubles which had practically stripped the Saints of every earthly possession, the initial cost of such a venture seemed absolutely prohibitive.

One morning in May, 1840, as Ebenezer Robinson was walking across to the printing office from his

home, thinking of the miracle by which the first edition had been printed and given to the church, and the present great need of another such miracle, he says he was spoken to, and told "in plain and distinct language what course to pursue in getting the Book of Mormon stereotyped and printed." He hurried into the office and as soon as Joseph Smith entered, he made his proposal with all the eagerness of a boy. "Brother Joseph, if the church will furnish $200, and give us the privilege of printing two thousand copies of the Book of Mormon, Carlos and I wilt get $200 and get it stereotyped and printed." Joseph sat with his face in his hands for several minutes, then answered, "We'll do it. How soon will you want the money?" "In two weeks."

Robinson and Don Carlos went immediately to work to raise their part. A brother would loan them $120 until April at 35 per cent interest to be incorporated in the note, all to draw 6 per cent if not paid at maturity. The proposition didn't look too good, but they accepted it. Later the man increased the original loan by $25, but not another dollar could they raise. Then church authorities came to them and explained that they had utterly failed to raise any part of their share. The project was not abandoned, but the money laid by hopefully.

Now subscriptions were coming in, but they were often in the form of eggs, poultry, butter, grain, and other produce, which the "firm" had advertised that they would cheerfully accept in payment of subscriptions in lieu of cash. But they had to pay their debts in hard coin, so the $145 began to dwindle a little. Both felt they could not let it disappear in this fashion, so Carlos suggested that Robinson go to Cincinnati and buy some much-needed type and paper with the money. He answered, "Yes, I will go, and I will not come back until the Book of Mormon is stereotyped," for he says, "it was as a fire shut up in my bones both day and night that if I could get to Cincinnati the work would be accomplished." He mentioned this hope to Hyrum Smith, who branded it as "Impossible!" All others but Joseph agreed; he merely said, "God bless you!" and went over the two former editions with him and compared them. Joseph Smith's own experience had made him chary of the word "impossible!"

June 18, 1840, Robinson boarded the steam packet "Brazil" that plied between the Galena lead "diggings" and Cincinnati, with a Kirtland edition of the Book of Mormon in his pocket. When the paper was bought and loaded on the "Brazil," he had remaining $105.06 1/4 cents. He was almost inclined to abandon the idea. But he went to a stereotype foundry and told them the size of the book and asked the price. The man named a price per 1,000 ems. Robinson felt depressed as though something was not right and turned away, but thought to ask if there was another stereotype foundry in Cincinnati. There was. Gleason and Shepherd in Bank Alley off Third Street. He went there at once. Three men were conversing at a desk. One approached and held out his hand, saying, "My name is Gleason." Without any further introduction, Robinson said bluntly, "I have come to have the Book of Mormon stereotyped!" A man stepped up from the rear of the room, and Robinson was astounded to hear him say, "When that book is stereotyped, I am the man to stereotype it." He later introduced himself as Shepherd the other member of the firm.

He took the book, went over to a case of type, of the size named by Robinson, set up one line, counted it, counted the lines in a page, multiplied the two numbers together, and then multiplied by the number of pages. "It will cost $550," he announced. Robinson offered to pay $100 down, $250 within the next three

months and $200 three months after delivery. The contract was drawn up and signed, with the proviso that if Robinson remained in Cincinnati and read proof, and otherwise assisted, his time at twenty-five cents an hour would be deducted.

He next arranged for board with one Oliver, Shepherd's molder and finisher and paid $5 on that. Shepherd offered to take him around to a bookbinder on Main Street. Here he signed another contract, for 2,000 books bound in leather for $250 (twelve and one-half cents each), $80 while work was being done, balance six weeks after the books were finished. Another contract for $250 was signed, and when the paper house said city references must be furnished by strangers, Shepherd stepped up and said, "I am Mr. Robinson's backer."

Night found the young Nauvoo publisher with an old Spanish sixpence in his pocket, contracts for over one thousand dollars folded up in his trunk, and a lighter heart than he had felt for over a year. From then on, he felt no doubt of the outcome though things looked dark at times. Mr. Shepherd bought three new fonts of type and hired three compositors, while Robinson went to his room and wrote a notice for the Times and Seasons. To every elder taking $100 worth of subscriptions paid in advance, the firm would give 120 books.

Several weeks passed, his board was due, and just when things seemed darkest, there came a twenty dollar bill on the State Bank of Indiana, from Don Carlos. This was a specie paying bank, and the bills were at a premium of 13 per cent. With the $22.60 so received, he was able to meet present expenses; then his brother Joseph L. Robinson whom he had baptized at Boonville, Oneida County, New York, when on a mission in the fall of 1836, sent him a draft on the Leather Manufacturing Bank of New York for $95, which he also cashed at a premium of 13 per cent. Later a letter from a perfect stranger, John A. Forgeus of Chester, Pennsylvania, (later of Little Sioux, Iowa) enclosed a draft on a Philadelphia bank for $200--an unsolicited loan. In short, all the contracts were met before they were due, except the paper, and he bought that for cash when needed from another house, as the one with which he had contracted had not the desired grade. The bookbinder was paid his $80 before he began work at all. Two thousand copies of the "Nauvoo edition of the Book of Mormon" were printed as the work was stereotyped. Before the last twenty-four pages were stereotyped, the books were all finished, except these last twenty-four pages. When everything was paid for, and the missionaries furnished the books promised, there were nearly a thousand books left for sale at a clear profit; they had the plates, which had been promised to the church; and Robinson purchased three fonts of type, materials for a stereotype foundry and a bookbindery, and a winter's supply of news and book paper, making a large down payment on it all. In October he took the "Brazil" for Nauvoo, feeling that the Saints of latter days were still dealing with a God of miracles.

When Robinson sold the printing interests sometime later (his partner having died in 1841), he went to Cincinnati to make final settlement with Shepherd with whom he had dealt from time to time; on the subject of their first meeting, Shepherd said, "Mr. Robinson, do you want to know what made me do as I did when you came here? It was not business, it was not what I saw in you, but it was what I felt here," putting his hand upon his heart.

And thus, by that something that touched the heart of a hardheaded business man, the Saints were again able to purchase for themselves a book that had changed their entire lives, and which some of them had long yearned to possess.[17]

The young people of Nauvoo constituted a problem of great anxiety to the priesthood, who hoped with many forebodings that the young might "carry on the work when they laid it down," but the proposition seemed doubtful. They neglected the church books and gave themselves up "to frivolity." Sometimes an elder was strongly urged "by the spirit" to remonstrate with the mothers from the pulpit for permitting their daughters "to neglect the spinning wheel for the piano." The Times and Seasons plaintively asked, "What would our Pilgrim forefathers think of the effeminate luxury in which we live?"

The young people themselves were stirred to contrition, and one night at the home of Heber C. Kimball, "the follies of youth and the temptations to which they are exposed generally, and especially in our city, became the subject of conversation." According to account, this gathering of young folk had the good grace to "lament the frivolous manner in which they spent their time, and their too frequent attendance at balls, parties, etc." At this, Brother Kimball offered to call a meeting and "give them such instruction as the Spirit of the Lord might suggest to him, which if followed would doubtless lead to a reformation in the conduct" of the young of the church. To the credit of the young people, if we may believe the historical chronicles, this suggestion was "received with delight and acted upon with alacrity," and early in January, 1843, "The Young Gentlemen and Young Ladies' Relief Society" came into being. Its first project was the building of a house for a lame English brother by the name of Maudsley.

The women of the church had also united for benevolent purposes into what was known as the "Ladies' Relief Society of the City of Nauvoo," which was organized on Thursday, the 24th of March, A. D. 1842. Seventy, elders, and priests were organized into social groups. The seventy had always possessed a great amount of friendliness and cohesion. In 1838, they with their families had moved in a body from Kirtland,[18] being several months on the road. In Nauvoo they had their own hall, a library of their own, and a museum in which they planned to put curiosities gathered from the far parts of the world in which they expected to travel. For instance, such treasures as the "tooth of a whale, some coral, the bone of an albatross's wing, the skin of its foot, the jawbone of a porpoise, and the tooth of a South Sea whale" were presented by some interested person. There was a Dramatic Society[19] with no mean membership. Thomas A. Lyne had played second tragedian in the first American cast of Richelieu, and he and his brother-in-law, George J. Adams, once put on a performance of Richard III in Philadelphia in order to get money to hire a hall in which to preach. There was a company of militia, as provided by law, called the Nauvoo Legion.

The Legion in 1840 had a membership of over one thousand! And why not! For Nauvoo in her day was the largest city in Illinois. When Nauvoo was founded, Warsaw, her most formidable rival in the neighborhood, had a population of about three hundred, Carthage about the same. The whole population of Hancock County was six thousand.

Honorable Orville F. Berry has described Nauvoo as she was in the days of her glory. He says:

If you have never been to Nauvoo and have the means and desire to confirm your belief that the men who selected the location of Nauvoo made no mistake, it will pay you to take a trip to the city, or, more particularly to this unique locality or situation. The word "Nauvoo" comes from the Hebrew and signifies "beautiful situation," or "beautiful situation for rest." It is situated on the east bank of the Mississippi River, in Hancock County, Illinois, near the headwaters of the Des Moines River, twelve miles above Keokuk, Iowa, ten miles above Hamilton, Illinois, eighteen miles above Warsaw, Illinois, fifty miles above Quincy, Illinois, nine miles below Fort Madison, and one hundred miles below Rock Island.

Most of these cities, especially the larger ones, were organized prior to the Mormon settlement, and a careful study of their situation would indicate the wisdom of the choice of the Mormons at Nauvoo. I have traveled the Mississippi River practically from New Orleans to Saint Paul, and I say without any reservation that few, if any, locations along this mighty river can compare with Nauvoo. . . . The river, over a mile in width, in perfect symmetry, swings around a rockbound shore in a semicircle, then drops away into the first chain of the rapids. The river approaches in a westerly course below it and goes over the rapids southward, presenting to the view a long reach of wooded bluffs from Fort Madison to Keokuk. In this bend is a most beautiful second bottom, just above the high-water mark, containing eight or nine blocks; then begins a gradual ascent to the Temple Block, and then another, and then comes the level land and prairie to the eastward. The curve in the river is something like a horseshoe. A straight line at the back of the city from shore to shore would be four miles, while the distance measured along the river would be twice that long. Just across between Nauvoo and Montrose is an island about a mile in length and from seventy-five to three hundred yards in width. The island makes a heavy growth of timber and makes a beautiful break in the river. This is the place selected in 1839 by the Mormons when they were driven from the State of Missouri. . . . Nauvoo at that time bade fair to become the leading city of all the West; and in four years from the time the Mormons first settled in Nauvoo it was a city of three thousand inhabitants. The Gentiles, so called, meaning thereby all persons not Mormons, especially in Hancock and surrounding counties, became alarmed at the growing power, and especially the political power, of this strange people, and, as Smith charged, became intensely jealous of their material, political, and religious progress. From facts obtained by the writer from interviews with old settlers and persons familiar with the facts about Hancock County, it cannot be doubted that they wielded a wonderful political power.[20]

Even in the early days, Nauvoo was not a place of prosperity and happiness only. The grim Reaper was too busy among them. Edward Partridge, gentle and incorruptible Bishop of the church, died May 27, 1840, and Joseph Smith, Sr., patriarch of the church, the following September 14. Don Carlos Smith and Robert B. Thompson, youthful editors of the Times and Seasons, crossed the dark valley within three weeks of each other, August 7, and August 27, 1841. But as these stalwarts fell, others stepped forward to take their places, undeterred by the fact that the persecution centering on the men in high places was an active aid to the Reaper in his work. Hyrum Smith took the place vacated by his father; George Miller became Bishop in the stead of Bishop Partridge; Ebenezer Robinson and John Taylor took over editorial responsibilities, and the gospel continued to be preached.

Jacob Scott,[21] who had come from Canada, only to lose a small fortune in Missouri, and who was originally a schoolmaster from Belfast, Ireland, wrote to his daughter in Canada in script as clear cut as the finest engraving and told her about Nauvoo:

Nauvoo, March 17, 1843. We had a long and cold winter, pretty good sleighing for nearly four months. Isaac works occasionally at the cabinet and carpenter business; such as tables, panel doors, window sash, frame sleighs, etc. Great preparations are made and making to prosecute with ardour the temple and the Nauvoo House this spring and ensuing summer. . . . The legislature of Illinois have granted the privilege to the citizens of Nauvoo to make a canal through the city for mercantile and machinery purposes. There are two steam grist and sawmills and one water mill, one iron foundry,

one pottery, quite a number of stores (I do not know how many), cabinetmakers, shoemakers, masons, tailors, silk weavers, cotton ditto, white smith, black ditto, doctors, lawyers, bricklayers, brickmakers, tinsmiths, watchmakers, barbers, bakers, stonecutters, laborers, etc. I think there are more than one hundred handsome brick houses in Nauvoo now--... we planted last spring some corn, potatoes, and garden vegetables, all of which did remarkably well, turnips also very good. We sowed fall wheat last fall which looks very promising. The boys have taken quite a number of saw logs to mill this winter. I intend building another dwelling house. Land is rising in price about Nauvoo, fourfold (the Saints are gathering in so fast from different States and Europe). Provisions here are very cheap, corn as low as twelve and one-half cents a bushel, potatoes twelve cents, wheat from twenty-five to thirty-five cents per bushel, flour two dollars a barrel, pork twenty-five cents per hundred pounds, bacon two dollars per hundred pounds, best hams three cents per pound, all other eatables in proportion. Perhaps there is not any city on this globe improving as fast as Nauvoo. It is supposed there are at present ten to twelve thousand inhabitants in the city alone, and the country around it and Montrose is swarming with the Saints. The church has now rest on every hand and increasing in numbers daily. It is supposed there are at present two thousand from England, Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man, waiting between New Orleans and this place until navigation opens, and two thousand more are expected out next spring and summer from the same places.[22]

By 1843, the pride of Nauvoo centered in the white stone temple, already visible for miles up and down the Mississippi that circled the hill upon which it stood. Day by day oxen plodded through the streets of Nauvoo and labored up the hill with great blocks of stone to be put in place by eager workmen. Daily Alpheus Cutler, the master stonemason, rang the great bell at the tithing office at seven o'clock, twelve, one, and six to tell the workmen when to begin and cease from work. "Many times in later years, in the lonely watches of night," old-time Saints were to fancy, "they heard it ring as in long ago." There was no laborer in all Nauvoo, however poor, that was not proud to give his tenth day's work to the temple, feeling that in doing so he was handing down to his children a priceless heritage of tradition. Elder Elijah Fordham of New York, spent eight long months carving with infinite patience the twelve lifelike wooden oxen that were to support the great baptismal bowl in the basement. "The Temple," writes Jacob Scott, "exceeds in splendor and magnificence any building I have ever seen."

The temple was built of gray limestone, one hundred and twenty-eight feet long, eighty-eight feet wide, sixty feet high, and two hundred feet to the dome of the tower. It had thirty hewn pilasters costing three thousand dollars each. The whole cost of the building was around a million dollars. Says Thomas Edward O'Donnell, associate professor of architecture, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, "Of all structures erected by religious colonies, the largest and most unique was, no doubt, the famous Mormon Temple at Nauvoo. Although never fully complete on the interior, the exterior was essentially complete when the Mormons departed. From the standpoint of architecture alone, it was a great loss to the state when the structure was burned. The architectural and decorative features involved in this Temple were wholly different from anything in the state, and were it standing today, it would be one of our most unique historical structures."[23]

The temple was burned by an incendiary on October 9, 1848.[24]

* Adapted and expanded from "In Old Nauvoo," by author, Vision, Volume 45, page 3.
1 Historical Record, Volume 8, page 735.
2 True Latter Day Saints' Herald, Volume 14, page 105.
3 This may not have been the same occasion, referred to by Young Joseph, but I am inclined to think that it was, and that Wight referred to the blessing, as not taking place in the cell room of the jail, but in some other portion of the building,

where the men had been permitted to meet their visitors. There may have been another occasion when Wight assisted in such a ceremony.

4 From Lyman Wight's letter-book, in Heman C. Smith collection. 5 Church History, Volume 2, page 450.

6 "Forgotten Statesmen of Illinois," by Doctor J. P. Snyder, Publication No. 11 of Historical Library of Illinois (1906).

7 "Proclamation [of First Presidency] to the Saints Scattered Abroad," January 15, 1841. Times and Seasons, Volume 2, pages 273-277.

8 "Famous Men I Have Known in the Military Tract," Transactions of Illinois Historical Society (1908), page 157.

9 "Lawyer Browning Carthage Jail

"Sir: June 27th, 1844

"Myself and brother Hyrum are in jail on charge of treason, to come up for examination on Saturday Morning, 29th inst. and we request your professional services, at that time, on our defence, without fail.

"Most Respectfully

"Your Sevt.

"Joseph Smith

"N.B. There is no cause of action for we have not been guilty of any crime, neither is there any just cause of suspicion against us--but certain circumstances make your attendance very necessary. J.S."

Addressed to "Lawyer Browning, Durney Adams County, Illinois."

From original letter in Daniel Macgregor collection.

Josesh Smith and His Progenitors, by Lucy Smith, pages 344, 345, Lamoni Edition.

10 Story of Emigration from the United Kingdom to North America, 1763-1912 page 107.

11 From Liverpool to Great Salt Lake Valley, by Frederick Piercy, Liverpool, 1855, page 18, quotes the Morning Advertiser of June 2, 1853, as follows: "On Tuesday," says the London correspondent of the Cambridge Independent Press, I heard a rather remarkable examination before a committee of the House of Commons. The witness was none other than the supreme authority in England of [Elder S. W.Richards] and the subject upon which he was giving information was the mode in which the emigration . . . is conducted. . . . He gave himself no airs but was so respectful in his demeanor, and so ready in answers, that at the close of the examination he received the thanks of the Committee in rather a marked manner. . . . There is one thing which in the opinion of the Emigration Committee of the House of Commons, they [the L. D. Saints) can do-teach Christian shipowners how to send poor people decently, cheaply, and healthfully across the Atlantic." Although this investigation was at a somewhat later date, the system was developed early and carried out with efficiency from the beginning of immigration to "Zion".

12 Augusta, Iowa, a little village situated on the Skunk River in Des Moines County, Iowa, about ten miles southwest of Burlington, and sixteen miles in a straight line northeast of Nauvoo. Here in 1835 Levi Moffet, one of the first settlers, built the first water-power "flouring" mill in the state of Iowa.

13 In a letter written from Nauvoo, January 15, 1844. See "Testimony of the Past", by Alma Fyrando, Journal of History, Volume 3, pages 252, 253. Hortensia Merchant was the wife of Lucius Merchant. They left the western migration at Winter Quarters and spent the remainder of their lives near Magnolia, Iowa. They became members of the Reorganized Church.

14 "Testimony on the Book of Mormon," by Ebenezer Robinson, Saints' Herald, 1886, page 779.

15 "What Do I Remember of Nauvoo," by Joseph Smith, Journal of History, Volume 3, page 133.

16 "Testimony on the Book of Mormon," by Ebenezer Robinson, Saints' Herald, 1886, page 778, seq.

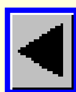
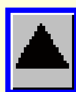
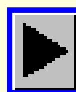
17 "Testimony on the Book of Mormon," by Ebenezer Robinson, Saints' Herald, 1886, page 778.

18 Under the leadership of the Presidents of Seventies, the Seventies went ito camp on July 5, 1838 at Kirtland, and started on the 6th. The camp numbered 515 persons. They located together at Adam-ondi-ahman. This camp is known as "Kirtland Camp."

19 This society was no amateur affair. Joseph Smith, son of the Prophet remembers their performance of King Lear, As You Like It, Wilhelm Tell, Damon and Pythias. Some of the actors were nationally known. From the Adams family of Nauvoo came Maude Adams, daughter of Annie Adams Kiskadden, granddaughter of Barnabas Adams; who made her debut in lieu of the property baby in the old Salt Lake theater, after a portion of the Saints had gone west.

20 "The Mormon Settlement in Illinois," by Honorable Orville P. Berry, in Transactions of the Illinois Historical Society for 1906.

21 Scott, see pages 115-116: Born in Armagh, Ireland. Father of Ann Davis formerly of Lyons, Wisconsin; I.F. Scott, formerly of Randallville, Columbia County, Wisconsin, and Mary Warnock, formerly of Farmington, Iowa. He was baptized March 22, 1837, in Churchville, Ontario, by Isaac Russell and died in Nauvoo, January 2, 1845. His descendants are in the church today.
22 From a letter in the private collection of Paul M. Hanson, Thurman, Iowa.
23 "An Outline of the History of Architecture in Illinois," by Thomas Edward O. Donnell, in Transactions of Illinois Historical Society for 1931.
24 Conflicting dates are given for this event, but this one seems to be correct. It is supported by Joseph Smith III, who in his "Memoirs" (Herald, Volume 82, page 177) says that it occurred "on the night of October 8." The Liberty Tribune for October 20, 1848, carried a story of the burning received by "telegraphic dispatch dated October 9." The Millennial Star for February 1, 1849, Volume 11, page 46, carried a story copied from the Nauvoo Patriot (date of issue not given) setting the date of the fire as "Monday, November 19, 1848." Yet in the January 1 issue, page 15, is a letter from Nathaniel H. Felt to Orson Pratt in England, dated from St. Louis, November 16, 1848, which says: "The incendiary torch has been applied." This letter, if correctly dated, would make the date of November 19 impossible and the date of November 10 (given in Volume 3, page 22 of the Comprehensive History of the Church--a Utah publication) improbable. The date of "Monday, November 19" is impossible in the year 1848, since November 19 fell on Sunday in that year; but October 9 did fall on Monday. For the confession of the man who set the fire, Mr. J. B. Agnew, see Autumn Leaves for December, 1905, page 549. He gives no date.

 **Previous chapter**  **Table of Contents**  **Next chapter**