

DESERET EVENING NEWS.

Wednesday, November 11, 1858.

AN ANSWER

TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE HISTORY AND DOCTRINE OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS AND THE SETTLEMENT AND PROGRESS OF UTAH TERRITORY.

(Continued.)

PROCLAMATION

TO THE CITIZENS OF HANCOCK COUNTY:

Whereas, a mob of from one to two hundred men, under arms, have gathered themselves together in the South West part of Hancock county, and are at this time destroying the dwellings and other buildings, stacks of grain and other property, of a portion of our citizens, in the most inhuman manner, compelling defenceless children and women to leave their sick beds, and exposing them to the rays of the parching sun, there to lay and suffer without the aid or assistance of a friendly hand to minister to their wants, in their suffering condition.

The rioters spare not the widow nor orphan, and while I am writing this proclamation, the smoke is rising to the clouds and the flames are devouring four buildings which have just been set on fire by the rioters. Thousands of dollars worth of property has already been consumed, an entire settlement of about sixty or seventy families laid waste, the inhabitants thereof are fired upon, narrowly escaping with their lives, and forced to flee before the ravages of the mob.

By the revised laws of our State under the Criminal code, sixth division, 55 section, page 181, the crime of Arson is defined as follows: "Every person who shall wilfully and maliciously burn, or cause to be burned, any dwelling house, kitchen, office, shop, barn, stable, store house, &c., &c., shall be deemed guilty of arson, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary for a term not less than one year, nor more than ten years, and should the life or lives of any person be lost in consequence of any such offence aforesaid, such offender shall be guilty of murder, and shall be indicted and punished accordingly."

And whereas the laws of this State make it my duty as a peace officer of this county to suppress all riots, routs, &c., &c., and all other crimes, Therefore, I, J. B. Backenstos, sheriff of the county of Hancock, and State of Illinois, in the name of the People of said State and by the authority vested in me by virtue of my office, hereby solemnly command the said rioters and other peace breakers to desist forthwith, disperse, and go to their homes, under the penalty of the laws; And I hereby call upon the law abiding citizens, as a posse comitatus of Hancock county to give their united aid in suppressing the rioters, and maintain the supremacy of the law.

J. B. BACKENSTOS, Sheriff of Hancock county, Illinois. P. S. It is a part of my policy that the citizens of Nauvoo remain quiet and not a man from that city leave as a posse until it be made manifest that the law and order citizens without the city will not have force sufficient to suppress the rioters of this disgraceful outrage, but that 2,000 effective men hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning to any point in Hancock county.

J. B. B., Sheriff, Green Plains, Hancock county, Ills., Sept. 13th, 1845.

To this Proclamation no attention whatever was paid except by the mob, who used it as a justification for trying to kill the Sheriff, although he was not a "Mormon" and was only acting in the discharge of his official duty. In the attempt, however, to kill the Sheriff one of the mob was killed.

Subsequently another proclamation was issued calling upon the "Mormon" people of the county as well as all other law-abiding citizens to arm themselves, and be in readiness to act at a moment's notice in the defence of the lives and property of peaceful citizens and to suppress mob violence throughout the county. The leaders of the mob then fled the county to avoid being arrested, upon which Gov. Thomas Ford sent Gen. John J. Harding, with 400 militia, to Nauvoo, who dismissed the Sheriff's posse, but made no attempt to arrest the house burners. Gen. Harding informed the Latter-day Saints in Hancock county that "the State could not protect them, the mob were determined to drive them from the State, and they must therefore go." Previous to this, a council of the authorities of the church had passed a resolution which, as a matter of policy, was kept private, to send one thousand five hundred men as pioneers to make a settlement in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, being determined, in accordance with the design and policy of Joseph Smith the Prophet, to leave Illinois.

Meantime a proposition was made to the mob (the State authorities saying they were powerless) to cease vexatious law-suits, stop burning and plundering, and aid the "Mormon" people by purchasing their property on fair terms allowing them a reasonable time, and they would remove from the State. This proposition was accepted, and in accordance therewith companies were immediately formed, the construction of several thousand wagons was commenced, and during the Winter of 1845-46 and the ensuing Spring they were built, principally of green timber, which was boiled in brine to facilitate its seasoning. All the iron that could be procured was used in their construction, and the deficiency was made up with raw-hides, hickory withes, &c. Nearly all the old wagons in the surrounding country were purchased, and all possible preparations were made by many for an early start in the Spring; but the persecution being renewed, in violation of the before named pledge, one thousand families commenced their journey in the month of February, 1846, some crossing the Mississippi, on the ice, thinking by so doing to allay the excitement against those who remained.

Prest. Young, and the leaders of the church, with a scanty outfit, pursued their journey westward, having to make the road for about three hundred miles through an unsettled country, bridging numerous streams and encountering nearly every vicissitude of weather, making a settlement called Garden Pigeon on the east fork, and one called Grove on the west fork, of Grand river, in the State of Iowa, breaking and planting a thousand acres of prairie land

for the benefit of those who were not able to go farther, as well as those who were coming after.

MORMON BATTALION.

The advanced companies arrived at Council Bluffs in July, where they were met by Capt. James Allen of the U. S. army, who called upon them, in behalf of the War Department, for five hundred men to assist in the war with Mexico. Prest. Young's reply to this requisition was, "You shall have your battalion if it has to be composed of our Elders." [To be continued.]

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