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SALT LAKE CITY, DEC. 23, 1907.

THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY.

The beginning of the last century witnessed violent convulsions in the political world. It was a time of upheavals. Old institutions, time-honored landmarks of civilization, were given over to destruction, boundaries between nations were obliterated, and new lines drawn. The effects of the French revolution were felt throughout the world.

From the historical distance from which we can view the events of that time, it is easy to see that, as a net result of the operation of those destructive forces, seemingly raging without any intelligent control, mighty strides forward were made toward liberty and light. As an outcome of the conflicts between the European nations, England rose to supremacy in the Old World. The wonderful exploits of Lord Nelson, and more particularly his renowned victory at Trafalgar, gave to Great Britain world influence. He proved the futility of any attempt at foreign invasion of British soil. He enabled the British government to take possession of French and Dutch colonies, and though many of these were restored, the gates to the great highways of commerce were kept. The power of Great Britain was established. The importance of this to the world can be understood only when we consider what the benevolent influence of England has been upon the civilization of our age.

But, a still more important result followed. The fall of Napoleon and the return of the British troops from the continental campaign made it possible for Great Britain to engage in a decisive conflict with the United States. The war of 1812 was fought, and England became thoroughly convinced that any thought of subduing the American States must be given up. The British found a militia against which they could make no headway. They found that their merchant marine was at the mercy of American privateers. Consequently, they made peace on favorable terms, and the independence of this country was forever guaranteed. Again, the importance of this must be viewed in the light of history, to be understood. We must consider the tremendous power for good this country has been, and is, in the family of nations.

At the time these mighty preparations for a complete reconstruction of the political world were going on, the Prophet Joseph was born, in his humble home in Vermont, in 1805, the very year of the battle of Trafalgar. His entrance upon the stage of history at that time indicates that he, too, was to have an historic role; he was to be a leader in the field of thought, a herald of liberty, equality, and fraternity, a messenger from the Almighty to the children of men of the coming of the Millennium, which will form the great climax in human history. He was to be a Prophet of the Most High, a standard bearer of truth. Like Moses he came at a time when his mission was most needed, and when the world had been prepared for his work, through the upheavals we have just noticed. But progress is not through revolutions and wars, alone, as some seem to think. They may be necessary before progress can be made, as the cutting down of trees and obstacles sometimes is necessary before an exploring party can proceed on its way. But destruction is not progress. The true leaders of the onward march of humanity are not those who wield the ax, but those who organize the ranks, who point the way, and lead the columns. The humble Vermont boy was to become a leader, a builder. And God prepared the world for his work by the establishment of a form of government, under which freedom prevails.

The Prophet Joseph was born on Dec. 23, 1805. He came from a pious, industrious, and well respected family. Some of his people had held offices of trust in the communities in which they lived. His education was such as a boy in humble circumstances at that time could secure, but his faith in God, even at an early age, was strong, and when, therefore, he was called upon to give to the world the Book of Mormon, he accepted the divine call without hesitation, and, in spite of poverty, persecution, and all adverse circumstances, completed the task entrusted to him. The literature of the world was enriched by the most wonderful literary production since the inspired writers of the New Testament laid down their pens. The very circumstances under which that volume was given to the world is a proof of its genuineness.

And then the Prophet was commissioned to sound the trumpet of repentance and call the trumpet in heart in all nations together, as a preparation for the second advent of the Son of Man. He was empowered to organize the Church of Christ with all the gifts and powers enjoyed anciently, including divine authority to administer in the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven. To this work he devoted his life. For his faithfulness to God, his loyalty to his country, and his love for his fellowmen, he, after a brief but intensely useful career, was crowned with a martyr's crown.

But Calvary did not end the mission of Christ. Calvary did not terminate the work of the Prophet of the Savior. The martyrdom was only an incident in the warfare for the redemption of the human race, that will not end until it is finished and Christ is in all.

Throughout the arduous labors of the

Prophet, he had by his side as his faithful, devoted companion and co-laborer, his brother Hyrum, the Patriarch, who shared with him the glory of the martyrdom. The two may be said to be the human instruments through which the Church, under divine guidance, was founded.

When they were taken away, the enemies were jubilant, for they considered their victory complete. But the Church was more firmly established. The blood of the martyrs again proved the seed of the Church. And so it will ever be. The futility of opposing the work of God is one of the great lessons of the life and death of Joseph and Hyrum.

THE FIRST VISION.

The first vision of the Prophet Joseph, given to him in answer to earnest prayers for truth, was one of the most glorious ever vouchsafed to man. In the pillar of light that descended upon him he saw two Beings, one of which said, pointing to the other, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." This was a glorious vision. But it was only to be expected that the most important dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times, should be ushered in with a vision, transcending in glory those of previous dispensations.

But opponents of the Church ridicule the story of this revelation. They accept the Mosaic account of the appearance of the Lord in the burning bush, and the New Testament story of the transfiguration. But a testimony of a vision of heaven and heavenly beings in this age, they brand as absurd.

Those who venture an attempt at argument generally say that the testimony of the Prophet Joseph concerning his first vision contradicts the statement of John: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1: 18). But it is evident that if this verse of the gospel of John contradicts the statement of the Prophet Joseph, it is a still stronger contradiction of Ex. 33: 11, in which Jehovah is said to have spoken to Moses "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." But, as we cannot admit that one portion of the Scriptures contradicts another in matters relating to fundamental truths, there must be some explanation of the portion of John's gospel quoted, other than that offered by the opponents of the Church.

The context shows that when John says, "No man hath seen God," he argued that no man, not even Moses and the Prophets, had known God perfectly, but that that knowledge could be had only through the Son of God. "He who is most intimately connected with the Father, and the dearest to Him."

This is not a strained construction. The word in the original means to know as well as to see. The evangelist is proving to his readers that the grace of the gospel is superior to the benefits of the ancient law, and in the course of that argument he points out that through Christ more perfect, more complete revelations have been given to the human race than through any man before Him. So John does not contradict Moses. Nor does the Prophet Joseph contradict the Apostle John.

A PIONEER'S TESTIMONY.

We have received the following communication from a friend of the "News" in Provo, Kady Colvin Cluff, giving the testimony of one of the few personal acquaintances of the Prophet, still living on this side of the veil, and who is anxious to leave his testimony to the world, before he shall be called away. The letter is very appropriate today on the one hundred and second anniversary of the Prophet's birthday, and we therefore gladly comply with the request to publish it.

"George Curtis was born Oct. 7, 1823, at Silver Lake, near Pontiac, Oakland county, Michigan. He went to Missouri in 1834; was baptized in September, 1837, and moved to Nauvoo in 1838. At the age of seventeen, he became a member of the Red Coat company in the Nauvoo Legion, and remained at his post of duty for six years, ready, at a moment's notice, to defend city, state, or nation.

"He has often described the Prophet as being about six feet in height, weighing nearly 150 pounds, of a commanding appearance, with a voice strong and clear, his face indicative of kindness. As a speaker he was very earnest, wielding a wonderful influence. When not weighed down with care or sorrow, he was faithful, even boyish in his manners. Joseph was certainly an inspired man of God and by his divine power was able, at times, to control the elements, or call them to his aid.

"Mr. Curtis relates that on one occasion, in 1843, when about six hundred people were assembled, the Prophet addressed them on work for the dead. The sky was cloudy, and a large drop of rain began to fall; then it stopped for a few minutes, and began to rain faster. A few umbrellas were raised, two being at the left of Joseph. He then stepped about four feet to the right, when another umbrella was raised. Joseph thought a moment, then in a powerful voice said, 'I am speaking for the Lord Almighty, and if He wants me to speak, He will stop the rain.' The rain ceased and he spoke for half or three quarters of an hour longer. When the meeting was dismissed, he told the people to hurry home, or they would get wet, and in about one hour there was a heavy shower.

"In 1844, while talking to the people, Joseph prophesied that the Saints would come to the Rocky Mountains and become a great people. He said, in substance: 'Follow the main body of the Church and the records, and you will be all right.' He then straightened up and said: 'The Lord will not permit the majority of the people to apostatize at once.' He added that some of them would live to go to the Rocky Mountains. He spoke from a stand that was about twenty rods southwest of the walls of the Temple house in Nauvoo. Grandfather (George Curtis), standing about 25 feet north-east of the stand, heard the Prophet prophesy and knows it has been fulfilled, as he, himself, came with the majority of the Church to the Rocky Mountains.

The Nauvoo Legion. When this order was made known to the people, they immediately prepared to fight the state arms. As Joseph stood on the steps of the Masonic hall taking a last look at the beloved city of Nauvoo, George Curtis approached him and asked, where the guns were. The Prophet answered by pointing his finger, as his heart was too full to speak.

"Soon after this he was made prisoner, in a few days more he and his devoted brother Hyrum were massacred, thus leaving the Church temporarily without a visible leader. They were martyred in the Carthage jail in Illinois, June 27, 1844.

"The night before their burial, Grandfather Curtis and his brother were notified to go to the Prophet's house and stand guard over the bodies, as fears were entertained that the mob would mutilate the bodies.

"In the midst of every sorrowing saint was this question, 'What will the Church do now that the shepherd has left us?'

"Many lost their faith and turned away, but the great majority remained true, as the Prophet had foretold they would.

"At a meeting held on Aug. 10, 1844, for the purpose of choosing a president, about 1,500 people were assembled. Among them was Sidney Rigdon, who came from the east and offered his services as a guardian for the Church; he spoke about twenty minutes. Then Brigham Young arose. As he did so, the Prophet's features and voice came upon him. He looked just like the Prophet and his voice was the same as the Prophet's, and the people felt that the mantle of their beloved Prophet had fallen upon Brigham. Brigham Young was made the leader. Later he became the president of the Church. (George Curtis says he stood about 30 feet from Brigham Young while he was speaking.) He is still a living testimony of these experiences, and they are ever fresh in his memory.

"He is now 84 years old, has belonged to the Church 70 years, and resides at Payson, Utah Co., Utah, being one of the first settlers there.

"KADY COLVIN CLUFF."

Never strike a man, for money, when he is down.

It is quite the vogue to talk shop at Christmas time.

In Kansas City they say, "Actors who have wif Wallace bleed."

The season has arrived when officers should be given the toboggan test.

Over in Goldfield men are born unto trouble as the Sparks flies upward.

Even in times of financial stringency it is a long lane that has no turning.

It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than to bust a trust.

The receiver of the Jamestown exposition will not receive very much, unless it be blame.

The tobacco war in Kentucky may yet assume the proportions of a whisky rebellion in Pennsylvania.

A man never seems so safe as when he takes the unwritten law into his hands and enforces it.

The President kills a third term boom with the ease and accuracy with which he kills a grizzly.

There would be small interest in the Harden-Von Moltke libel suit were it not held behind closed doors.

Governor Sparks acted according to his lights in requesting that federal troops be sent to Goldfield.

It will be harder than ever to turn over a new leaf next year for the reason that white paper will be more expensive.

"Certain enemies may prove to be your best friends," says the Baltimore American. These must be the kind one is bidden to love as himself.

Not Virginia nor Ohio is the mother of Presidents but rather Chicago. Lincoln, Grant, Garfield, Cleveland and Roosevelt were all nominated there.

A Salem, Or., man dreamed that his throat was cut and woke up and found that it was. That is the kind of a dream one would not want to come true.

A fool cried "Fire!" in a Chicago theater and was promptly knocked senseless. He was given the proper treatment at the psychological moment.

Asked who was his choice for President, Secretary Taft answered, "I guess I will have to leave that to inference." What modesty, what self-abnegation!

Over half a hundred actors have been arrested in Kansas City for violating the Sunday laws. Why cannot those actors who violate the laws of the drama be arrested?

The Rigby Star's holiday number, consisting of sixteen pages of interesting information about Rigby and neighborhood is on our exchange desk. Well written articles, profusely illustrated and all put on the very best paper, make the Star's Christmas edition a credit to its bustling little home city.

And still they come. The latest holiday editions to reach the exchange desk are those of the Bingham Bulletin, Blackfoot Optimist, and Nampa Leader. All have the now familiar colored covers and are filled with good reading matter, newsy and retrospective.

The country paper nowadays is a credit to the editors and to the community. Never have finer examples of enterprise been turned out of the country shops than there are this year.

ANTI-ROOSEVELT REACTION.

Springfield Republican.

The week is now a rare one that does not witness some assault by a Republican of distinction upon President Roosevelt and his policies. As the reaction proceeds, the opposition to him is recruited by men who had been dumb or had shouted his praises during the prolonged period of his great popular ascendancy. Let the impression prevail that the lord and master has reached his zenith and has become a falling star, then all the exponents and time servers and place hunters and lovers of the warmth and comfort that go with accessibility to the dominant men of the hour turn squarely against him. There are faint glimmers of criticism, moreover, as there are faint glimmers of the reaction respond to them with supple celerity.

A SERMONET FOR WORKERS.

For the "News" by H. J. Hapgood.

SERMONET.

(For the "News," by H. J. Hapgood.)
 A process of natural selection is going on in every shop and office in the country. This financial scare may be only a fake panic; prices are still high, and business conditions sound. Nevertheless, every concern in the country is cutting down its salary roll, and the best employees are the ones who will be retained. It is a natural process of the survival of the fittest.

During the past few weeks the Central Electric company laid off 7,000 men, and the New York Central railroad has discharged 1,600 employees. Ten thousand men on the Pacific coast extension of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad have been out twenty-five cents a day, and notice has been given that a similar reduction in wages will be made in a few weeks. Tiffany & Company has temporarily suspended 500 employees, and the Smith Carpet works of Yonkers, N. Y., 200.

It is true that most of these figures represent laborers and mechanics; but every certain number of these necessarily includes a foreman, a superintendent or a manager. It is said that a large paint concern in Cleveland, has recently suspended 200 of their salesmen. The changed conditions affect all classes of labor, from the man who works by the day, to the high-grade executive.

Who is going to take your place? Or have you been handling the proposition in such a manner that nobody else can hold your job down as well as you? During such a crisis, you've got to be strong enough to take somebody else's place, or somebody else will take yours.

Don't growl at the conditions! The fittest will survive—the best, and not the cheapest. The man who has always tried to be the best man in the establishment need have no fear for his job. He will always come out on top.

JUST FOR FUN.

A Timely Exception.

Two negroes in Virginia were lounging before a high billboard glaring with all the glory of Barnum's circus posters.

"Jeff, de circus gat am comin' is de best on earth, for I see it."

"Look, yeh, nigger. I know dere am a better no' betta show, Dere's Mistah Ringling, Mistah Sells, Mistah Poppaugh's, and udders too numerous fer me to recollect, and reconcile to you."

"Shucks, Jeff, what's de matter wiv you? Can't you read dat sign on de bill, 'Barnum's circus, de best show on earth, Sept. 1.'"

"Dat, jes it, you fool nigger, you can't read dat sign. Den let's say: 'Barnum's circus, de best show on earth' 'cept one.'—Portland Oregonian.

Not the Man.

Lofer (lauding perfect stranger)—"I remember you, major, when we was in the regiment."

Stranger—"What—in the Ninety-ninth?"

Lofer—"Yas, major."

Stranger—"A Company?"

Lofer—"Yas, major."

Stranger—"Always getting drunk?"

Lofer—"I won't go so far as to deny as I took a drop extra now and then, major."

Stranger—"Discharged with ignominy for cowardice?"

Lofer—"Ardly that, major; for I alius did my duty."

Stranger—"Then you're not the man!"—Punch.

Nation—"Intrinsic value should never figure in considering a Christmas gift."

Phoebe—"It never does with me. What touches me is the thought that anybody should be willing to brave a crowd of holiday shoppers for my sake."—Judge.

First Litterateur—"Have you completed your edition of that early twentieth century fellow, Punkie?"

Second Litterateur—"Almost: the hundredth volume is on the press."

How are you going to wind it up?" "In the usual way—with his 'Life and Postcards.'"

Mrs. Rivers—"The Styles are going to take a flat."

Mr. Rivers—"You don't tell me. What will become of their family skeleton?"—Puck.

"Was that picture you just sold a genuine work of art?" "No," answered the dealer, "but the story I told about it was."—Washington Star.

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