

# STATEMENT OF MORONI BROWN BEFORE JUDGE POWERS.

WHY THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS PRACTICE PLURAL MARRIAGE—PERSECUTIONS OF THE SAINTS REVIEWED—A SOLEMN TESTIMONY.

When Elder Moroni Brown was arraigned before Judge Powers in the First District Court on Saturday last, to receive his sentence after having been convicted of the dreadful crime of cohabiting with his wives, he was asked if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him, whereupon he addressed the Court as follows:

I am aware, Your Honor, that it becomes your duty, however painful to you, to pass sentence upon me to-day for the violation of a law; but to me it is no crime, only as it has been made such by the enactments of Congress.

It is well known by all the Latter-day Saints that we have not derived all our knowledge concerning God, heaven, angels, this life and the life to come entirely from the books of the Bible, yet we believe that all our religious principles and notions are in accordance with, and sustained by the Bible; consequently though we believe in new revelations, and believe that God has revealed many things pertaining to our religion; we also believe He has revealed none that are inconsistent with the worship of Almighty God, a sacred right guaranteed to all religious denominations by the Constitution of our country.

I wish now to make one statement in relation to the great principle of plural or celestial marriage which has agitated the public mind so much of late. That while there is abundant proof to be found in the Scriptures and elsewhere in support of this doctrine, still it was not because it was practiced four thousand years ago by the servants and people of God, or because it has been practiced by any people or nation in any period of the world's history, that the Latter-day Saints have adopted it, and made it a part of their practice, but it is because God our Eternal Father has revealed it unto us. If there were no record of its practice to be found, and if the Bible, Book of Mormon and Book of Doctrine and Covenants were silent in respect to this doctrine, it would nevertheless be binding upon us as a people; God himself having given a revelation for us to practice it at the present time. It is gratifying to know, however, that we are not the first of God's people unto whom this principle has been revealed. It is gratifying to know that we are only following in the footsteps of those who have preceded us in the work of God, and that we to-day are only carrying out the principle which God's people observed in obedience to revelation from Him thousands of years ago.

Your Honor, it is also gratifying to know that we are suffering persecution, that we are threatened with fines and imprisonment for the practice of precisely the same principle which Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, the Friend of God practiced in his life and taught to his children after him. If all the inhabitants of the earth at the present time were righteous before God, and both males and females were faithful in keeping His commandments, and the numbers of the sexes of a marriageable age were exactly equal, there would be no necessity for any such institution. Every righteous man could have his wife and there would be no surplus of females. But what are the facts in relation to this matter? Since old Pagan Rome and Greece, worshippers of idols, passed a law confining a man to one wife there has been a great surplus of women who have had no possible chance of getting married. You may think this a very strange statement, but it is a fact that those nations were the founders of what is termed monogamy and all other nations, with few exceptions, have followed the Scriptural plan of having a plurality of wives. These Roman and Grecian nations, however, were very powerful, and when Christianity came to them, especially the Roman nation, it had to bow to their mandates and customs. Hence, the Christians gradually adopted the monogamic system, which has laid the foundation for prostitution, and the evils and diseases which are most revolting in their character.

An honest monogamy is the next thing to an impossibility. Wherever it is practiced it is a system of hypocrisy. It is a veil of abstemiousness assumed to conceal a mass of hidden corruption. Its direct tendency is to stimulate the contemptible vices of intrigue and lying, as well as the equally detestable ones of prostitution and adultery. If this Nation would adopt the system of polygamy as practiced by the Latter-day Saints and make death the penalty of sexual cohabitation outside the marriage relation, there would be no houses of ill-fame in the land, no illegitimate children crying in the streets of our cities for bread, having no fathers or mothers to claim and protect them; infanticides would also be less frequent and soon become a thing of the past.

Under this system of monogamy it is impossible for more than half the women to marry; their number being so much greater than that of the men; and then there are tens of thousand

of men who will never marry so long as they can gratify their sexual desires without incurring the responsibility of a wife and family.

We are not unmindful of the fact that American liberty to us is merely nominal in its application. From the day this Church was organized the red hand of the assassin has been upon our path; the blood of Saints and prophets has been shed; five times we have been driven from our homes, and all this, mark you, at a time when the practice of polygamy among us was unknown to the world. But still the hue and cry has gone forth that we were disloyal to the government and should of right be exterminated. But one of the most notable evidences to the contrary lies in the fact that while the Saints, in 1846, were encamped in their wagons and tents on the banks of the Missouri River, near where the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs now stand, five hundred of our best men, in response to a call by the government, volunteered and went to assist in the war with Mexico, leaving their families on the open prairie in an almost helpless and starving condition. My father, two brothers, an uncle and one cousin were among the number that volunteered to thus serve their country.

In the spring of 1847 President Brigham Young at the head of 147 men and children, pioneered the road from the Missouri River to this valley in search of a place where his people could enjoy the privileges of worshiping God according to the dictates of their own conscience, a right guaranteed to us by virtue of the Constitution of our country. But since we have redeemed the soil and made the desert blossom as the rose, Congress, urged by political demagogues and hireling priests, has passed proscriptive laws in contravention of the Constitution; the direct tendency of which is to separate us from our wives and bastardize our children, which are more dear to us than life itself. Wherein, I would like to know, consists the justice of such a law, that will drag innocent men before the courts and compel their wives and children to give testimony that will consign them behind the bolts and bars of a prison wall? There is none. It is only a repetition of the tyrannical yoke once placed upon the necks of our colonial fathers by a British sovereign.

In conclusion, in obeying the law of celestial marriage, as far as I am concerned, I have entered into the most sacred covenants with my wives and with my God, which covenants are not only binding for time but for all eternity, and I have done this with a knowledge of what I was doing. With me it has been no guess work, God himself having revealed it to me for my own benefit, and, Your Honor, it is my firm belief that no man, although God revealed this through the Prophet Joseph Smith, should enter into this law until he receives a knowledge for himself of the truth of the same. Therefore I have been sincere in the matter, and in practicing it I did not consider I was breaking any constitutional law, but have broken a law specially prepared for the people of this Territory.

Allow me to thank you for the liberty you have given me at this time and I now submit to any sentence you may feel it your duty to pass upon me.

## THE FULL PENALTY INFLICTED.

OGDEN CITY, Utah,  
July 11, 1885.

Editor Deseret News:

The court room was crowded this morning with persons who desired to hear from the Court the sentence pronounced on the defendants, F. A. Brown and Moroni Brown, convicted of the "crime" of unlawful cohabitation with their wives.

In response to the inquiry of Hon. F. S. Richards, of the defense, His Honor said he would be pleased to hear anything counsel had to say in favor of the character of the defendants. He said F. A. Brown was a man highly respected in this community, and had held many positions of

## HONOR AND TRUST.

He has filled them with dignity, honor and integrity, and counsel desired the Court to be lenient, and that His Honor would remember the recommendation to mercy by the jury. He also entered a similar plea for Moroni Brown.

The Court said it gave him no pleasure whatever to sentence them or even any man for breaking the law. But while he gave the defendants credit for being conscientious in the practice of plural marriage they must give him credit for being conscientious in the discharge of his duty as an officer of the Government in administering the law. He said he was grieved to be compelled to pass so severe a sentence upon them, but the majesty of the law must be upheld. Francis A. Brown then received

## THE FULL PENALTY

of the law, namely, to be imprisoned for six months in the Penitentiary, pay a fine of \$300, and that he stand committed until it is paid.

Moroni Brown then stood up and read a statement (the full text of which is published elsewhere), which was listened to with respectful attention by the Court and with seemingly almost breathless interest by the immense audience in the court room.

At the conclusion of his speaking

His Honor said notwithstanding the defendant had entered into polygamous marriage in good faith, nevertheless it was a breach of the law, and he regretted that he could not suspend the sentence altogether. He could not, however, and, painful as it was, he would do the same if defendant was His Honor's own father.

Moroni Brown was then sentenced to be imprisoned in the Utah Penitentiary for six months and to pay a fine of three hundred dollars, and stand committed until paid.

It is putting it mildly to say that nearly every person, both in and out of the court room was

## ASTOUNDED AT THE SENTENCES.

When the Court was expressing so much grief and sorrow at the unenviable condition in which the prisoners are placed, and possessing, as he does, discretionary power, it was thought, believed and hoped that His Honor would be mild, and especially so when Judge Powers said that the defendants had behaved so honorably during the trial. They pleaded guilty, and had the witnesses on hand who might be required to testify against them. They gave the Court no unnecessary trouble, nor did they put the government to any unnecessary expense. Hence, when the sentence was pronounced by the Court, it

## FELL LIKE A THUNDER-CLAP

upon the ears of all who heard it; their countenances fell, and disappointment and grief were depicted upon the physique of each.

The prisoners were remanded to the custody of the Marshal, and to-night will be taken to the Penitentiary.

I reserve my comments for a future time. WEBER.

## "MANUSCRIPT FOUND."

THE SPAULDING ROMANCE NOW IN POSSESSION OF MR. RICE, SANDWICH ISLANDS—EXAMINED AND FOUND TO BEAR NO RESEMBLANCE TO THE BOOK OF MORMON—THREAD OF THE NARRATIVE.

HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands,  
May 11, 1885.

Editor Deseret News:

On the morning of the 16th of April my companion and I made our way to Punahou, about two miles from Honolulu, to the residence of Mr. J. M. Whitney, son-in-law of Mr. L. L. Rice, with whom the latter is at present living.

On going to the house we met a very aged, but intelligent looking man at the rear of the dwelling, whom we found to be Mr. Rice. After introducing ourselves, I informed him that I had seen an article, published in the papers by Mr. James H. Fairchild, relative to

## MR. SPAULDING'S ROMANCE,

from which it was alleged the Book of Mormon was derived, and that interest and curiosity had led us to call on him, in hopes of seeing it, and of having some conversation with him on the subject.

He invited us into the parlor, and when we were seated he asked, "Are you Mormons?" Of course to this we had but one unequivocal answer. He then enquired how long we had been in the country, our business, etc., etc., to all of which we gave appropriate answers, so that he seemed satisfied that we had come no great distance for the special object of our visit. He then began to talk about as follows (to the best of my recollection).

"I have no objection to show you the manuscript; you shall see it; but it is of no value to anybody. I have, with others, compared it with the Book of Mormon, and I undertook to copy it, but ran out of paper before I got it finished and so discontinued it. There is not one word nor sentence in it in common with the Book of Mormon."

## THE ONLY POSSIBLE RESEMBLANCE

is: they both purport to give an account of American Indians. This manuscript is nothing but a simple story about the tribes of Indians supposed to have inhabited the country in the vicinity of Conneaut, Ohio, where some ancient mounds existed, and it is a very poor story at that.

"It came into my possession in 183—, when Mr. — and I bought out the printing establishment formerly owned by Mr. E. D. Howe in Painesville, Ohio, in connection with a large amount of old papers found in the place and turned over to us with it. I have had it ever since in my possession. I have looked at it scores of times, and often thought I would look into it to see what it was, but never did until a year ago, on the occasion of President Fairchild's visit. Since then I have often wondered that I did not long ago destroy it with other worthless papers. I have recently had letters from several parties making inquiries about this manuscript, and all desiring to obtain possession of it."

Mr. Howe thinks he has a claim upon it, but I have told them all they cannot have it. When I get through with it, I shall most likely deposit it in the Oberlin College Library, as I have promised President Fairchild."

I remarked: "There is no use disguising the fact that we would like to obtain it or a copy of it," to which he very emphatically replied: "Well, sir, you can't have it."

He went into another part of the house and soon returned with a parcel

wrapped in a piece of old brown wrapping paper and fastened with an old tow string. I judge

## THE MANUSCRIPT

to be 6½ inches wide, and 8 inches long and about an inch in thickness. Holding the parcel before my eyes, he said: "This is just as I received it, and as it has been in my possession for over forty years, tied with that same string. You see that pencil writing? That was written there before it came into my hands."

This writing in pencil, quite legible, was—"Manuscript Story"

"But," continued he, "this writing in ink I foolishly wrote there myself very recently; I suppose I ought not to have done it, but with that exception it is just as it came into my hands and as it has remained for over forty years."

This writing in ink was as follows:—"Writings of Solomon Spaulding," and was inscribed partly over the "Manuscript Story" written in pencil. Mr. Rice then untied the tow string and took off the wrapper, when we saw a time-worn, dingy, somewhat dilapidated old manuscript. I glanced over a portion of

## THE PREFACE.

Which set forth that in consequence of the existence of large mounds in the vicinity of Conneaut, indicating the former occupation of the country by a numerous people, etc., the author had been induced to write, etc., etc. I do not pretend to give the text, but merely the sense as I gathered it from a hasty glance.

Mr. Rice called our attention to the certificate on the last page, which was referred to by Mr. Fairchild in his article published in the New York Observer of Feb. 6th, 1885. This certificate gave the names of several persons, known to the writer and signer of the same, who had made affidavits, which the certificate says were "on file in this office," to the effect that they "personally know this manuscript to be the writing of Solomon Spaulding." The certificate and the signature are in the same handwriting, and are that of

## "DOCTOR PHILASTUS HURLBURT,"

or rather the signature is plain "D. P. Hurlbut."

Mr. Rice is now about 84 years of age, but he is in good mental and physical condition. He chatted freely relative to his early recollections and acquaintances, not forgetting to give us his mind respecting plural marriage. He said: "I was well acquainted with Sidney Rigdon, both before and after he became a Mormon," and I have heard him preach as a Campbellite and as a "Mormon." He was a very smart man, but I never knew the cause of his leaving your Church, or whether he ever denounced "Mormonism" and the Book of Mormon or not."

I said: "One cause of his leaving the Church was that he assumed to be the guardian and leader of the Church after the death of the Prophet Joseph, while that authority had been conferred through Joseph Smith upon the Twelve Apostles, and that to my knowledge Mr. Rigdon had never at any time denied or denounced either "Mormonism" or the Book of Mormon."

He said: "I was very well acquainted with Joseph Smith in Kirtland, and I saw him once in Nauvoo." He was also quite well acquainted with Sister E. R. S. Smith; said she used to write poetry for his paper, and he always thought her "a very nice, intelligent young lady," and wanted to know if she was still living.

As he had refused so emphatically to part with the manuscript or allow it to be copied, I asked him if he would part with the copy he had made, so far as he had gone, for a reasonable compensation for his time and labor. At first he refused, but after some talk on the subject he promised to write Mr. Fairchild by the next mail, and if he made no objection he would perhaps do so.

There is no doubt in my mind that this is the identical, much-talked-of, long-lost, much-bellied, but very innocent

## "MANUSCRIPT FOUND."

The facts already demonstrated beyond contradiction stamp its identity with unmistakable certainty. In 1834 it was obtained by Hurlbut from Jerome Clarke at Hardwicks, New York, upon an order of Mrs. Davidson, the widow of Solomon Spaulding, certified to as being the writing of Solomon Spaulding by several persons personally knowing the fact, and subscribed to by D. P. Hurlbut himself, by whom it was taken to the printing establishment of Mr. E. D. Howe, the reputed author of "Mormonism Unveiled," and transferred to Mr. L. L. Rice on his purchasing the printing establishment, and by Mr. Rice preserved until now, without even knowing what it was for some forty years. It seems that

## THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE

is plainly visible, for some wise purpose, in the whole affair. And now it has been carefully examined and compared with the Book of Mormon by Mr. L. L. Rice, Mr. James H. Fairchild, President of the Oberlin College Library, Ohio, and by others, and by them declared without similarity in name, incident, purpose or fact with the Book of Mormon.

Mr. L. L. Rice declared to Brother Farr and myself that he believed it to be the only romance of the kind ever written by Mr. Spaulding," and, said he, "somehow I feel that this is a fact." From his remarks we inferred that it was his belief that

THE REASON IT WAS NOT PUBLISHED by Spaulding himself was because it was not worth publishing. "For," said he, "it is only a very simple story, and a very poor one at that."

Taking this statement as the unserved judgment of an old editor and newspaper man, who has not only carefully read it and compared it with the Book of Mormon, but with his own hand copied about two-thirds of its opinion must be accepted as of great weight; and it corresponds with the alleged message sent by Mr. Patterson with the Mss., when it is said to have been returned to Spaulding, "declining to print it," and said, "Polish it up, and it will make money out of it. It no doubt needed and still needs a good deal of 'polish'."

On the 1st instant, Brother Farr called again on Mr. Rice, who allowed us to examine the Mss., "Manuscript Found." We read the preface and two chapters of the which we found to be what I have called rather

## A FAR-FETCHED STORY

about the discovery of some "sheets of parchment" in an "artificial cave" about "8 feet deep," situated on a mound on the "west side of the Conneaut River." With this paragraph which was "plainly written upon Roman letters in the Latin language," was a "roll of parchment" containing the biography of the writer."

The first two chapters which were purport to be a translation of biography, which sets forth that the writer's name was Fabias, that he "born in Rome and received his education under the tuition of a learned master, at the time that stantine entered Rome, and was seated as Emperor," to whom he was introduced and was appointed him one of his secretaries."

Soon after this Fabias was Constantine "with an important message to a certain General in England. On the voyage the heavens grew blackness, obscuring sun and a terrific storm arose, which lashed unabated for five days, lulled, but the darkness continued. They were lost at sea. They pray "with great lamentations, when a voice came telling them to be afraid, and they would be taken "safe harbor." For five more they were swiftly before the wind and themselves in the mouth of a "large river" up which they "for many days," when they came to a village and cast anchor. The were alarmed, held a council, and ally extended towards them the of friendship, made a great feast, sold them a large tract of for fifty pieces of scarlet cloth, fifty knives," and established them a covenant of perpetual

Not daring to venture the and uncertainties of the deep over which they had been so terribly driven, they concluded was better to remain than to return to Rome, etc., etc. ship's company consisted of seven of whom were young who had embarked at Rome their relatives in England. Lucian was the name of the vessel and Trojenous was of his 1st Mate, one of the called Droll Tom, another were three ladies of rank and women. On motion of one or the women chose their Lucian, Fabias and Trojenous course selected by the three rank, but six poor fellows without wives, or marry the etc.

This is about the thread of so far as we have read.

BY TELEGRAPH  
FOR WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH  
AMERICAN.

WASHINGTON, 16.—A fire broke to-night in the building occupied by the Daily Post National Republic, Washington Critic, Sunday Evening Star, and several other tenants. The building was owned by Hutchings, and was valued at \$15,000. The Post and Republic used the same press, valued at \$15,000. The Critic valued at \$15,000, is insured. The basement was a \$25,000 press owned by ex-Secretary Chandler. The 5,000 copies of Stetson's new book, "Washington, Past and Present," are a total loss. The loss is not heavy. The total loss reach about \$150,000, about two-thirds of which is covered by insurance. The Evening Star at once tendered of its office to the Post and Republic, and these papers will be issued without interruption.

DENVER, 16.—This forenoon passenger train was being made the Denver & Rio Grande yard empty chair car was run over by a great force, wrecking the car and juring the switchman. It is believed the dynamite was intended for the passenger train, due to leave a few minutes. The Denver & Rio Grande officials say they believe the work of strikers.

Pieces of iron from the wreck blown three blocks, but fortunate