

In passing from this dreadful scene, let us glance for a moment at the personality and attributes of one of the victims of that crime. Joseph Smith, the prophet of the nineteenth century, was the most remarkable man of his age. He was only thirty-eight years old when he was martyred. Yet, inspired of God, he had revealed a sublime system of theology, and had given to the world the most magnificent organization that had been witnessed since the days of the Redeemer. Truths which had been hidden by false traditions and men-made theories of salvation, were brought to light by him with astonishing plainness and simplicity. Men wondered, in hearing them, how they could have been misunderstood—they seemed so simple, in such perfect agreement with Scripture, and appealing so strongly and convincingly to the human mind. He was the incarnation of great qualities. A more self-sacrificing man, with the exception of the Lord Jesus, never lived. Among the earliest communications which he received from the Lord was one which foreshadowed his probable martyrdom. But with unflinching courage he pursued the path which God had marked out. He was undaunted in the deadliest peril and in face of the most formidable opposition. He had entire confidence in the success and future triumph of the system which he was the instrument in the hands of God of founding. He has been credited with having given to the world a new religion. In one sense, this is true. It was a new religion to our age. But it was the old religion restored in primitive purity and power—the old religion which has been taught by the Son of God Himself. A more fitting instrument to accomplish this wonderful work cannot be imagined. The youthful prophet possessed every quality necessary for the accomplishment of the labor assigned him. His character stands out in bold relief as a beautiful example of all that is great and heroic in man, for Latter-day Saints to admire or imitate.

The murder of the leaders of the Church did not satisfy the sanguinary spirit which had already treated an unoffending people so cruelly. The head was gone, but the body survived. "The brood must be killed not scotched." To do full credit to some of the leading men of the State, among them the famous Stephen A. Douglas, it must be said that at this time they came to Nauvoo and held interviews with the chief men of the people, making them many fair promises. Not one of them denied that the Mormon people were suffer-

ing outrageous wrongs; but public opinion was too strong even for influential politicians, and they soon bowed to its mandates.

After the death of Joseph Smith, work was resumed upon the temple, the completion of which was awaited by the people with the greatest anxiety. At the time, the walls were scarcely up to the first story; but the prophet left as a legacy a solemn charge that the work should be continued, and every effort was concentrated to accomplish this end. The activity of the mob kept pace with the zeal of the Saints. Assaults were made upon the outlying settlements, grain fields were destroyed and trampled down, stock were driven off and killed, and the people were compelled to flee into the city. More than once Nauvoo itself was threatened; and it is a literal fact that the workmen on the walls of the temple carried tools in one hand and weapons in the other. Spurred on to new exhibitions of hate by the efforts of the people to complete their sacred edifice, the mob became so violent that in the fall of 1845 the authorities of the State acknowledged their inability to longer protect the city. Officials came to Nauvoo and held interviews with the leaders of the people. An agreement was finally drawn up to the effect that the mob would commit no further acts of violence if the people would consent to remove "as soon as grass grew and water ran." The compact was almost immediately broken and the work of plunder and destruction went on, the Mormons from nearly all the surrounding country being gradually driven into Nauvoo. No power was exerted to protect them, no voice lifted in their behalf. At last the inhospitality of a sovereign State permitted the homeless people to wander forth into the wilderness, there to perish from exposure or the missiles of a stealthy foe.

Early in February, 1846, the first camp under the guidance of Brigham Young left the State. With the mention of this name the events of wonderful history are recalled. Brigham Young has been credited with having contributed greatly to the strength and success of what is called Mormonism. It is true that he was admirably adapted to take up the work where Joseph, through his martyrdom, laid it down. He possessed wonderful powers of organization and government, and executive ability of a superior character—a statesman in the highest sense of the word. But he always asserted that it was Mormonism that made him. Whatever greatness he possessed was due to the

principles which Joseph Smith was the means in the hands of God of revealing. It was the fruit and product of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He embodied in his life and character those principles, and he is but a type—a superior type, it is true, in many respects—of all the people who have embraced and carried out practically in their lives the principles which are taught by the Latter-day Saints. Possessing unbounded influence, he used his power most temperately, and his whole aim was to promote the welfare of the people. The evidences of his superior wisdom and genius are seen in every settlement that has been made throughout these mountains. Salt Lake City, through his prescience, was laid out as a metropolis. He never had any doubts as to its future or the commanding position of the territory which had been settled, and he made preparations in consonance with his expectations. Some of his contemporaries viewed him as, in many respects, the greatest living American. Only those who are ignorant of his true character will deny to him the possession of the highest powers of statesmanship, government and philosophic wisdom. History is dealing more justly with him since he died than during his lifetime. The time is not far distant when Joseph Smith and Brigham Young will be considered the most remarkable men of their age.

The winter of 1845-6 was a severe one. The Mississippi was frozen in February, and a large number of the teams of the first camp crossed on the ice into the then territory of Iowa. In the meantime active preparations were going on in Nauvoo for the emigration of all who were able to furnish themselves with the necessary outfit. The companies pushed out from there during the early spring, leaving behind them only those who were destitute of teams and wagons to transport them. When the exodus was inevitable a covenant had been made by the entire people that they would help each other, and that those who had means of transportation would send back to help those who were destitute. While waiting for this help the city of Nauvoo was beleaguered by mobs, too impatient to wait for the people to be removed. In formidable numbers they attacked the city. Fighting ensued. A number were killed and the rest were driven across the river; not, however, before their wagons had been searched for everything worth plundering, especially weapons of defense. It was at that juncture that Esquire Daniel H. Wells openly