INTERVIEW WITH JOS. SMITH

Questions Submitted to and Answered by Him.

The Position He Took With Reference to Authority, Succession in the Church Presidency, Etc.

CHICAGO, June 30, 1896.

To the Editor:

By the request of many of our Reorganized friends, and at the suggestion of Elder Joseph Smith of Nauvoo, who has been president over the Northern States mission, I submit in response to a request for a verbatim report of an interview between myself and Joseph Smith, president of the reorganized church, at 8 p.m. 1896, at Independence, Jackson county, Mo., in the home of S. Kelly, one of the Reorganization's apostles.

There were present Elders Wm. E. Critchlow, Eugene S. Hall, Archibald G. Young, of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Isaiah Joseph Hall, Joseph Smith and myself.

The questions and replies made were as follows:

Q—Do you claim to be a Prophet?

A—Yes—I claim the same authority as my father.

Q—Did your father ordain you to be a Prophet and Seer and Revelator?

A—No, he did not. He knew me not and did not ordain me to any office that I know of.

Q—For what reason then did you claim to be the legal successor? Is it not possible that there was [illegible] a succeeding [illegible] instead of from the?

A—I heard a whisper to that effect, whether it could be substantiated or not.

How Joseph endeavored to establish to us that it would be right for us to expect him to say that it "would be possible" for his sister to have taken deceptive, when we were trying upon him for over two years, etc.

Q—Who ordained you unto the apostleship?

A—Moses, Hale and Bailey ordained me about June, 1860.

Q—Did they bind the office of an Apostle?

A—Some was not an Apostle.

Q—If not, how could he give something he never had?

A—I do not consider holding an office in the church a Priesthood.

Q—Have you had any vision?

A—Yes, six; numbers of them.

Q—Have you ever had an angel or heavenly messenger?

A—I have seen angels—one came as a man, and sat by my bed, and gave me instructions about sickness—as to whether it was a doctor or not.

When closely questioned Joseph admitted that the "angel might have been a delusion," and that the angel "Nephite," he did not know—he did not stake hence with the inspirited. He came to at the "open door and went out the same way."

Q—Has your mother ever deny that your father entered polygamy?

A—Yes, on more than once.

Q—Did you ever deny it to that he had the revelation on celestial marriage?

A—I have said that she did not believe that he did; I do not believe that he did, but I do not know.

Mr. Luff here interrupted: "Can't you give us that a little plainer? you remember that revelation you said you had?"

Here Joseph endeavored to satisfy his enquiry by calling to mind an answer of the "Spirit" in reference to this subject, which, essentially, he had declined to answer until after (in a very peculiar way) he did answer.

Q—Do you believe that this principle will be practiced during the Millennial?

A—I do not believe that it will, but I have no objections individually.

Q—If it was, what will to be done with the children now, and that will have to be?

A—I do not know how that will be. I know nothing at all whether he will have a wife or not.

Q—Do you believe that you will ever be so to think or have others to be so to think in these days, in other words, do you claim the right which you present will ever come with the entire Church of God?

A—I have not claimed any right. I am not only willing that the voice of God should [illegible], and if I will put myself in that position.

Q—Can you, however, as a man of honor, and your Prophetic office of God could not bind any people to a principle that was [illegible] to the Church of God, name the time when it will be established?

A—I believe that there are many in the Utah Church who are honest, and try to conform to the light as far as they understand it, and if the people whom they administer unto, I would not be out there if they are not sincere.

Q—Does President Woodruff hold authority?

A—I do not like to pass upon individuals.

Q—Does you say that you have authority to administer the ordinances of the?

A—I do not know that I have authority.

Q—Who would had your authority if you and one of your successors should die?

A—I have a theory that it would be upon the apostles.

Q—Joseph Smith [illegible] Jacob the Seer, that the Urim and Thummim spoken of by Malachi, and in it that there had been such a [illegible] your church—can you [illegible]?

A—I do not know anything about the?

Q—Were not "translations" and "Prophecy" given and published [illegible] the "Seer" in the Prophet Joseph's day?

A—Yes, they were.

Q—Have you ever inherited the Nauvoo house?

A—I have not.

Q—Do you, or your property ever expect to possess it?

A—The building is partly down [illegible] no, we cannot say.

Q—If you [illegible] Joseph Smith, [illegible] he [illegible] to the Lord, is it not [illegible] to the Lord, and [illegible] to the Lord [illegible] Joseph Smith [illegible] Prophet [illegible] Joseph Smith [illegible]?

A—Yes, it [illegible] to the Lord.

Q—[illegible] as Joseph Smith [illegible] having the temple built [illegible] and [illegible] the temple to Joseph Smith [illegible]?

A—Yes, they were his private property.

Q—How many members have [illegible] to your church?

A—About thirty-five thousand.

At the Tuesday session the interview was closed and all left, with the exception of Messrs. Hall, Joseph Smith and the writer, who remained in the two instances [illegible] after the others [illegible] were gone, [illegible] spent the time in [illegible] and prayed that he might [illegible] of God's will [illegible] Scripturally him.

When I arrive I have my [illegible] power, P. 8th of and a [illegible] with it, and I came home to [illegible] the 7th P. when I left [illegible] at Utah. I [illegible] and prayed that he might [illegible] Have we the "true light" [illegible] church?

I will [illegible] [illegible] and we will do all [illegible] power.