

ders of Israel; I have got to meet Father Adam, in the Kingdom of God in the heavens; and we have all got to give an account to him, as our Great Progenitor and the first man who held the keys of the Priesthood on the earth. When I go there and meet him, I shall have to render an account of what I do here. The Lord has chosen the weak things of the world to do His work. But He is as able to teach me, or any of my brethren, as He ever has been in any age of the world. He has always selected the weak things. Take Moses in leading the children of Israel. Moses said he was slow of speech, and he thought that he could not do anything. But the Lord said he would raise up a spokesman for him. When the Lord wanted a king for Israel, he chose David, the son of Jesse, who was herding sheep. All the sons of Jesse, except David, were brought before the Prophet; but Samuel would not anoint either of them. He asked Jesse if he had any more sons. Jesse said, Yes; there is a little fellow down here taking care of the sheep. The Prophet wanted to see him. When he came, Samuel anointed him king of Israel. So in the days of the Apostles. Who were they? Illiterate fishermen. So it is today. Begin with Joseph Smith and take the whole of us. Who are we? We are poor, weak worms of the dust. But the Lord has chosen us because He thought He could do something with us. I hope He can. I suppose I have held the Apostleship longer than any man that has been on the face of the earth in these last days. Should I boast over this or be proud and exalted because I have held the Priesthood so long? If I did, I should be a very foolish man. We are obliged to honor God; we are obliged to acknowledge the hand of God. The devil has sought to destroy me from the time I was born until the present day. But the Lord has always been on my right hand and saved me. There have been two powers at work—one to destroy me, the other to save me. And I am here today, a weak instrument in the hands of God. But, as God lives, if He will tell me what my duty is, I am going to do it!

I pray God to bless us, and awaken us that we may see our position on the earth. The eyes of all heaven are over us. The Father, the Savior, Father Adam, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and all the Apostles who have lived in our day and generation, are watching over

us, and waiting for us to do our duty; and when we perform that, the judgments of God will be manifest in the earth. I pray God to give us wisdom, and to help us to be humble, faithful, meek and lowly of heart. Look at the purity of the Savior, from the manger to the grave, and where is there a man on the face of the earth that can feel anything like exaltation or glory? I have seen Oliver Cowdery when it seemed as though the earth trembled under his feet. I never heard a man bear a stronger testimony than he did when under the influence of the Spirit. But the moment he left the kingdom of God, that moment his power fell like lightning from heaven. He was shorn of his strength, like Samson in the lap of Delilah. He lost the power and testimony which he had enjoyed, and he never recovered it again in its fulness while in the flesh, although he died in the Church. It does not pay a man to sin or to do wrong. Brother Cannon spoke about difficulties between ourselves. What business have we to go to law because of a little water or anything else on the earth? When we do this we have lost the Spirit of the Gospel. You have had good counsel with regard to this, and if you carry it out the blessings of the Lord will attend you. I hope the people of Provo will look to this. We should be united and stand together in the midst of the opposition that we will have to meet. I hope this power and influence will dwell in this county and throughout these mountains of Israel, which may God grant, for Christ's sake. Amen.

#### UNWITTING WITNESSES.

##### IX.

The Prophet Mormon was the last chief military commander of the Nephite armies. The times in which he lived were the most perilous and devastating in the whole history of that people. He took an active part in their military affairs from the time he was sixteen years old to his death, at the age of over seventy-four, upon the battle field, with a brief intermission, when he stood "as an idle witness," because of their stubborn contumacy, and revengeful fury. See Book of Mormon, Mor. iii: 10; xvi: 5.

During the earthly career of this military commander and prophet of God, covering a period of over 74 years (see note c, page 560), the descendants of Lehi dwindled from

being a cultured and highly civilized race to a condition of demoralization and poverty, scarcely equaled by wild beasts of the jungle.

A brief survey of the life of Mormon, presents an episode of absorbing interest; showing how, in a short time, a great and magnificent social structure, was shattered into ruins; and, at the same time, furnishing a clue to some ethnological problems.

Mormon, the son of Mormon, and a descendant of Nephi (Mor. i: 5), was born about the year 310 A. D. (IV Nep. i: 48; Mor. i: 2.) He is spoken of as being a sober child and quick to observe. When he was ten years old he was visited by Ammaron, a custodian and registrar of the sacred records, who gave him this charge:

"When ye are about twenty and four years old, I would that ye should remember the things that ye have observed concerning this people; and when ye are of that age, go to the land Antum, unto a hill, which shall be called Shim; and there have I deposited unto the Lord, all the sacred engravings concerning this people. And behold, ye shall take the plates of Nephi unto yourself, and the remainder ye shall leave in the place where they are; and ye shall engrave on the plates of Nephi, all the things that ye have observed concerning this people." Mor. i: 3, 4.

When Mormon was eleven years old his father moved to the land of Zarahemla; "the whole face of the land having become covered with buildings, and the people were as numerous almost, as it were the sand of the sea." Verse 7.

Here Mormon was witness to the beginning of those sanguinary conflicts which resulted, eventually, in the total destruction of the Nephites as a nation, and almost as individuals.

"The war began to be among them in the borders of Zarahemla, by the waters of Sidon."

This location has been identified as the present United States of Columbia, South America, and the river Sidon, as the Magdalena. Mor. i: 10; Omni, i: 13, note h; Alma ii: 15, note g. At this time the army of the Nephites numbered 30,000 men. And their arms were very successful, at first, in harrassing and subduing the Lamaites.

When Mormon was sixteen years of age, being "large in stature," he was appointed by the people of Nephi to be the commander of their armies, Mor. ii: 1, 2. The Lamanites were the common and implacable enemies of the Nephites. They had a separate gov-