

nois as a missionary, I remained over night in the vicinity of where ex-Governor Thomas Ford died and was buried. The neighbors in the immediate locality gave me a recital of his death and burial. In the library of the gentleman at whose house I was stopping there was a history of the State of Illinois. In looking over it casually I read that portion of it which alluded to the scenes at Nauvoo, and the martyrdom of the Prophet and Patriarch in Carthage jail. In closing up the chapter the writer made these remarks: "Let no one imagine that Mormonism is dead because of the death of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith. Perchance it may be that those who read this volume will live to see the time when Palmyra, in New York, Kirtland, in Ohio, Far West and Independence, in Missouri, and Nauvoo, in Illinois, shall become holy places, to be yet visited by the thousands of followers of the slain Prophet; and perchance it may be that some future historian will record that I, Thomas Ford, governor of Illinois, was the Pontius Pilate in the history and career of Joseph Smith."

Reading this history published half a century afterwards, I was struck with almost the commencing line in one of the chapters of the history of Joseph Smith, recently published, wherein the writer states that Thomas Ford was the Pontius Pilate in the history and career of Joseph Smith. Here was a man not connected with the Latter-day Saints; here was a man who had in his weakness, in his cowardice, and in his imbecility allowed the spirit of the prophets to flow through him for a moment.

The record of those who have opposed the Saints should be a warning to those who place themselves in a similar position today. It certainly should warn them what the harvest will be; for truly the word of the Lord is fulfilled that the hand that is lifted against Zion shall not prosper, while the hand that is raised in her defense shall grow and increase in all that is good.

Those who are keeping in their hearts the spirit of the Gospel are ready for every good work. They are walking in the light of the truth; while those who are walking in the darkness and shadow have doubts and fears. But to the faithful Saint there is no doubt of the outcome. He knows full well the result of the work which God has set His hand to do.

Difficulties have been met from the outset. But is not that natural?

Could we expect this great work to be accomplished without opposition and persecution, when we consider the suffering and agony that have always been the price of the establishment of a true principle? But for the providence of God the work would indeed have soon passed away. But His hand has been over it, the salvation of our Lord has been manifested, and the Saints have come out of difficulty unscathed. In this connection I am reminded of an incident which I had related to me in regard to one of our young brothers laboring in the State of Iowa as a traveling missionary some years ago. There are a great many people located along the Missouri River, through Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, who once had a name and standing in the midst of the Latter-day Saints. They have stopped by the wayside and are no longer associated with those who are alive in the work. In a neighborhood composed principally of this class of people the young Elder was raising his voice in proclamation of the truth at a meeting convened at one of the district schoolhouses. While so engaged, one man who evidently felt that the Elder was a little forcible rose in his place and, interrupting him, stated to him and to the congregation, "My father was in Nauvoo. He knew the Prophet Joseph and Brigham Young, and the Twelve, and my father heard the Prophet Joseph say that if ever Brigham Young led the Church he would lead it to hell." The young man had not had very much experience, and of course felt a little perplexed by a remark of this kind in public. He hesitated a moment, and then gave his reply in this wise: "I never was in Nauvoo myself; I never met the Prophet Joseph; I do not know whether he ever made such a remark or not; I have heard that he did; but whether or not he did make it, it was all true that Brigham Young led the Church. He led it down into hell and out on the other side, and you people that we find here are the charred bones that could not stand the fire as it went by, and were left by the wayside."

So we find today in the fires of persecution as they rage about the Latter-day Saints. There are those who cannot stand the fire, and as a result we find them stopping by the wayside, all along back in the history of the Church; but I ask you has it paid them to do so? Has it paid them to stop and allow this work to go on without them?

God rules and will continue so to do, and will be justified in all His works. In the commencement of the new year let us see if we are firmly planted on the rock of Truth and are in the narrow way that leads back to our Father's presence, or whether we are neglectful of our duties and are walking in danger. There is safety only in the path of duty. Man-made schemes will not bring salvation. But the principles of the Gospel have been restored with the authority to act in its ordinances, and obedience to those principles will lead men to eternal life.

The peculiar condition in which the human family are should be an evidence to them that the time has come for the establishment of truth and righteousness; or, as I heard a gentleman, not a member of the Church, once say, when he was found fault with for caring for a "Mormon" missionary, "If Joseph Smith was not a Prophet he should have been, for we need one bad enough, the Lord knows." When we reflect on the condition that exists in the world, do we not realize the necessity for something to save those of the human family that will be saved, religiously, socially and politically? Should there not be something done to save the world from its tendency today? I rejoice in being able to testify that principles have been revealed which will accomplish this work of salvation if the world will receive them. May the peace of God be on Zion and in all her abiding places, and the kingdom of God be established.

APOSTLE MOSES THATCHER was the next speaker. He said he had not thought of being called to speak today, as the labors of the past week had been severe, and he did not feel that he had the physical strength to make the congregation hear. The remarks made by the previous speaker, referring to the misapprehension under which we labor, caused a train of thought to pass through my mind that may be of some benefit. God has not had a servant on the earth who has not been in a similar position. At no time was there a people who believed in revelation who were not misunderstood. Abel was not understood by his brother Cain, and therefore lost his life. Noah and Abraham were also misunderstood, as were Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and others. They were not only misunderstood but were falsely accused, as we have been, and had to labor under those difficulties. No person was so little