

and that though enveloped in fire there was not a single appeared on his person. Whether this was the result of a miracle or of some defect in the fuel, which some maintain might have been wet, one thing is certain—that Polycarp had to be killed with the axe of the executioner. The Jews would not permit his body to be taken away by the Christians. They placed the dead body on the pile a second time so that none of it would be left for the Christians to take away. Thus preached Polycarp, the pupil of St. John the Apostle, the doughty bishops of Smyrna, the connecting link between the days of the Apostles and the fathers of the second century. This was one of the Former-day Saints, and one worthy of imitation by his brethren and successors, the Latter-day Saints.

This is St. Patrick's day, but there is nothing going on here to remind one of the fact. The man who two years ago would predict that St. Patrick was to die in 1890, would be pronounced a fool. I remember reading somewhere that it was predicted more than half a century ago that 1890 was to be a remarkable year. Such in truth it is. In fact, it is the marking point in a social, political and religious evolution or revolution in the world's affairs. In Europe we have the Emperor of Germany and the Pope of Rome forming a political coalition to suppress Socialism. Is this the story of the lion and the lamb, or is it the brotherhood of wolf and tiger for the good of mankind? In our own country do we not see a political party built on a dream? Has not Bellamy's novel become the gospel of political faith? Do we not see, not the public school system, but the language of our Constitution itself assailed? For this is the phase the school issue in Wisconsin and Illinois has now assumed. The German tongue is fast becoming the national language, but it is in this year the first decided attempt has been made politically to make it so. Is it not in this year that natives of this country guilty of no crime, free from stain of any kind but holding religious opinions not endorsed by the rabble, have been disfranchised, reduced to political slavery? Though the city of Rome according to the *Liverpool Catholic Times* is undergoing changes worthy of even Chicago, yet the old harlot is hale and hearty, and like Jupiter devouring Ceres, Rome is absorbing and disintegrating her numerous offspring. Other changes are appearing, and though at present no bigger than a man's hand, will in the near future obscure the horizon; 1890 is certainly and will be a marked year in the world's annals.

According to Andrew Jenson's *Historical Record*, it will be seen that the month of March is more prolific of events in connection with Mormonism than any other month in the year. This is especially so of Revelations.

It was on or about March 17, 1832, that Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon were mobbed in Hiram. It

was on March 17, 1839, that Marsh, Phelps, Williams, Hinkle and others were excommunicated from the Church. This is just 51 years ago, but there is no mention made that their throats were cut from ear to ear.

It was about March 17, 1840, that Wilford Woodruff built up a branch of the Church in Herefordshire, England. It was on March 17, 1841, that the ship *Utesle* sailed from Liverpool with fifty-four Saints aboard. It was on March 17, 1842, that the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo was first organized. It was about March 17, 1847, that David Smith of the Mormon battalion died at San Luis Rey. About March 17, 1849 a Mr. Vauclott sold a peck of potatoes in Salt Lake City for \$5, and they were considered cheap.

It was on March 17, 1851, that W. Burton, a missionary, died in Edinburgh, Scotland. It was on March 17, 1856, that the constitutional convention to take steps for the admission of the State of Deseret into the Union met. It was on March 17, 1875, that Major Blair died at Logan. On March 17, 1878, Colonel Stephen Markham died at Spanish Fork. It was on March 16 or 17, 1882, that the first number of the *Historical Record* was issued in Salt Lake City by Andrew Jenson. This is a literary event worthy of commemoration, because to the student of Latter-day Saint history the *Record* is an invaluable book of reference.

But this date brings to mind another event which the observer of the present cannot overlook. It occurred just 1710 years ago. Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome, died at Vienna, or as some say at Sirmium on March 17, A. D. 180. To the Latter-day Saint there can be no more interesting study than the life of this monarch. To the American statesman it is a study, the omission of which at the present would be criminal. So close is the resemblance between the history of Aurelius and his times, and that of President Harrison and his times, that in the future it will appear more than a repetition of history, it will lead persons to believe that some confusion in historical annals has occurred and that Harrison is confounded with Aurelius and the American republic with the Roman empire.

Aurelius was born in Rome about A. D. 121. He succeeded to the empire of Rome A. D. 161. During the early years of his reign Rome experienced great disasters. Within its walls a pestilence raged. Floods and earthquakes destroyed large portions of the city. Granaries and their contents were entirely lost. Famine and hunger prevailed. The Germans, Britons and others were in revolt. Faustina, his wife, was profligate. She nursed treason against her husband. Noble families experienced troubles. In fact the times were a good deal like our own at present. We have floods, earthquakes, railroad disasters, terrible fires, famine, revolts and personal family troubles. Secretaries Tracy, Blaine and others were visited with disasters. The good

family of Lincoln has received a severe blow. Minister Pendleton was brought home dead, in a ship the officers of which disgraced America by their brutality, drunkenness and license.

Marcus Aurelius had the best grounds for considering himself the most enlightened person of his time. An absolute monarch and a stoic, yet he was acknowledged humane, just and tender. If he had failings they inclined rather to the side of mercy. His writings bespeak the highest ethical product of the ancient mind, and differ but little from the characteristic teachings of Christ. In the dogmatic sense of the word he was a far better Christian than any sovereign, nominally Christian, who has reigned since. Yet this man, Marcus Aurelius, was the bitter enemy of Christianity. Though he was the culmination of the then civilized world's accumulated knowledge and attainments, with an open, unfettered intellect, with a character representing or almost realizing the ideal of Christian morality, yet he failed to see in Christianity anything but evil. He knew existing society to be deplorably depraved. But belief and reverence in the received divinities and theology he held to be his only salvation and protection. As a ruler he deemed it his duty to protect and perpetuate organized society, and with all his philosophical light the paganism of his time he considered the only agent for his mission. The new religion he regarded as disintegrating society, therefore to suppress it was his duty, because he could not conscientiously countenance it. Christianity he could not believe of divine origin. The story of a crucified God was to him an absurdity.

The story of Christ's origin was to him so absolutely incredible, and so far outrivaling the exaggerations of pagan mythology, that he saw in Christianity not a regenerating (which it has proved to be) but a destroying social factor. The fact is, the basis on which Christianity rests, appeared as absurd and ridiculous to Marcus Aurelius, the best man in the pagan world, as does the basis on which Mormonism rests, to President Harrison, who is certainly the most moral and most conscientious of the Christian pagans of our time. John Stuart Mill, whose ideas are here reflected, says of this Christian persecution:

To my mind this is one of the most tragical facts in all history. It is a bitter thought how different a thing the Christianity of the world might have been if adopted as the religion of the empire under Aurelius rather than under Constantine. But it would be unjust and untruthful to say that he adopted any means, or urged any pleas to suppress Christianity which have not been subsequently used to suppress anti-Christianity our Protestantism. No Christian more firmly believes in the destructivity of Atheism than did Aurelius in that of Christ. Unless any one who approves of punishment for the promulgation of opinions, flatters himself that he is a wiser and better man than Marcus Aurelius, more deeply versed in the wisdoms of his time, more elevated in his intellect above it, more earnest in his search for truth, or more single-minded in his devotion to it when found, let him abstain from that assumption of the joint infallibility of himself and the multitude which the great Aurelius made with so unfortunate a result."