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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PAGE 209.—History of Joseph Smith—Minor Morals.
PAGE 210.—Daguerreotype Art—Vegetable Poisons—
Plant Trees—To Preserve Women.
PAGE 211.—Humorous Impressions of Ireland—Tres-
pass in Law—True—Swearing—Hatred—Discourse by
Pres. B. Young, Aug. 17, 1856.
PAGE 212.—Discourse, continued.
PAGE 213.—Discourse, concluded—Editorial: California
News—Elders and Missions—Miscellaneous—Large Ap-
ple—Weather—General Orders, No. 2.
PAGE 214.—Poetry: As ye Sow, so shall ye Reap.—How
to Build a House—British Sovereigns—The Yankee Wo-
man—Recipes—Items.
PAGE 215.—Praying to the Point—Advertisements.
PAGE 216.—Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing
Society—Celebration of July 24 at Parowan—Constitution
of the San Francisco Vigilance Committee—Hon. T. B.
Herbert—Tin and its various uses—Died—New Advertis-
ments.

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HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

MAY, 1843.

I have translated a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham, through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the ruler of heaven and earth.

I extract the following from the Times and Seasons:—

"When the Book of Mormon first made its appearance among men, it was looked upon by many as a wild speculation, and that it was dangerous to the interest and happiness of the religious world; but when it was found to teach virtue, honesty, integrity and pure religion, this objection was laid aside, as being untenable.

We were then told that the inhabitants of this continent were, and always had been, a rude, barbarous race, uncouth, unlettered, and without civilization. But when they were told of the various relics that have been found indicative of civilization, intelligence and learning, when they were told of the wealth, architecture and splendor of ancient Mexico; when recent developments proved beyond a doubt, that there are ancient ruins in Central America, which, in point of magnificence, beauty, strength, and architectural design, vie with any of the most splendid ruins on the Asiatic Continent; when they could trace the fine delineations of the sculptor's chisel on the beautiful statue, the mysterious hieroglyphic, and the unknown character, they began to believe that a wise, powerful, intelligent and scientific race had inhabited this continent; but still it was improbable, nay almost impossible, notwithstanding the testimony of history to the contrary, that anything like plates could have been used anciently, particularly among this people.

The following letter and certificate, will, perhaps, have a tendency to convince the sceptical that such things have been used, and that even the obnoxious Book of Mormon may be true; and as the people in Columbus' day were obliged to believe that there was such a place as America, so will the people in this day be obliged to believe, however reluctantly, that there may have been such plates as those from which the Book of Mormon was translated.

It will be seen by the annexed statement of the Quincy Whig, that there are more dreamers and money diggers than Joseph Smith in the world, and the worthy editor is obliged to acknowledge that this circumstance will go a good way to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. He further states, that 'if Joseph Smith can decipher the hieroglyphics on the plates, he will do more towards throwing light on the early history of this continent than any man living.' We think that he has done that already in translating and publishing the Book of Mormon, and would advise the gentleman, and all interested, to read for themselves, and understand."

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES AND SEASONS.

On the 16th of April last, a respectable merchant, by the name of Robert Wiley, commenced digging in a large mound near this place; he excavated to the depth of ten feet and came to rock; about that time the rain began to fall, and he abandoned the work.

On the 23rd he, and quite a number of the citizens, with myself, repaired to the mound, and after making ample opening, we found plenty of rock, the most of which appeared as though it had been strongly burned; and after removing full two feet of said rock, we found plenty of charcoal and ashes; also human bones that appeared as though they had been burned; and near the cephalon, a bundle was found that consisted of six plates of brass of a bell shape, each having a hole near the small end, and a ring through them all, and clasped with two clasps; the rings and clasps appeared to be iron very much oxidated; the plates appeared first to be copper, and had the appearance of being covered with characters.

It was agreed by the company that I should cleanse the plates: accordingly I took them to my house, washed them with soap and water, and a woollen cloth; but finding them not yet cleansed, I treated them with dilute sulphuric acid, which made them perfectly clean, on

which it appeared that they were completely covered with hieroglyphics that none as yet have been able to read.

Wishing that the world might know the hidden things as fast as they come to light, I was induced to state the facts, hoping that you would give it an insertion in your excellent paper, for we all feel anxious to know the true meaning of the plates, and publishing the facts might lead to the true translation.

They were found, I judged, more than twelve feet below the surface of the top of the mound.

I am, most respectfully,

A citizen of Kinderhook,
W. P. HARRIS, M.D."

"We, the citizens of Kinderhook, whose names are annexed, do certify and declare that, on the 23rd of April, 1843, while excavating a large mound in this vicinity, Mr. R. Wiley took from said mound six brass plates of a bell shape, covered with ancient characters. Said plates were very much oxidated—the bands and rings on said plates moldered into dust on a slight pressure.

"ROBERT WILEY, W. P. HARRIS,
G. W. F. WARD, W. LONGNECKER,
FAYETTE GRUBB, IRA S. CURTIS,
GEO. DECKENSON, W. FUGATE,"
J. R. SHARP,

[From the Quincy Whig.]

"SINGULAR DISCOVERY—MATERIAL FOR ANOTHER MORMON BOOK.

A young man by the name of Wiley, a resident in Kinderhook, Pike county, went by himself, and labored diligently one day in pursuit of a supposed treasure, by sinking a hole in the centre of a mound.

Finding it quite laborious, he invited others to assist him. A company of ten or twelve repaired to the mound and assisted in digging out the shaft commenced by Wiley. After penetrating the mound about eleven feet, they came to a bed of limestone, that had been subjected to the action of fire; they removed the stones, which were small and easy to handle, to the depth of two feet more, when they found SIX BRASS PLATES, secured and fastened together by two iron wires, but which were so decayed that they readily crumbled to dust upon being handled.

The plates were so completely covered with rust as almost to obliterate the characters inscribed upon them; but after undergoing a chemical process, the inscriptions were brought out plain and distinct.

There were six plates—four inches in length, one inch and three quarters wide at the top, and two inches and three quarters wide at the bottom, flaring out to points. There are four lines of characters or hieroglyphics on each; on one side of the plates are parallel lines running lengthways.

By whom these plates were deposited there must ever remain a secret, unless some one skilled in deciphering hieroglyphics may be found to unravel the mystery. Some pretend to say that Smith, the Mormon leader, has the ability to read them. If he has, he will confer a great favor on the public by removing the mystery which hangs over them. A person present when the plates were found, remarked that it would go to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon—which it undoubtedly will.

In the place where these plates were deposited, were also found human bones in the last stage of decomposition. There were but few bones found, and it is believed that it was but the burial place of a person or family of distinction, in ages long gone by, and that these plates contain the history of the times, or of a people, that existed far, far beyond the memory of the present race. But we will not conjecture anything about this wonderful discovery, as it is one which the plates alone can reveal.

The plates above alluded to, were exhibited in this city last week, and are now, we understand, in Nauvoo, subject to the inspection of the Mormon Prophet. The public curiosity is greatly excited, and if Smith can decipher the hieroglyphics on the plates, he will do more towards throwing light on the early history of this continent than any man now living."

Slavery was this day abolished in every part of the British dominions in India, under the administration of Lord Ellenborough.

Tuesday 2.—Rode out in the forenoon. About 3 p.m., the "Maid of Iowa" arrived from St. Louis. I was on the bank of the river, awaiting the arrival of my wife, who returned with Lorin Walker.

Elders B. Young, H. C. Kimball, W. Woodruff, Geo. A. Smith and Joseph Young returned from Augusta.

John E. Page wrote me a letter, wanting to dispose of church property, and establish a printing press in Pittsburgh, on which I directed the Twelve to send him to Liberia, or some other place in order to save him.

About 1 p.m., the mate of the ship "Yorkshire" opened the Testament at the 27th chapter of Acts, and asked the passengers how they would feel to be shipwrecked like Paul? Elder Thomas Bullock replied instantly, "It is very likely we shall be shipwrecked, but the hull of this old vessel has got to carry us safe into New Orleans." The mate was then called away to hoist the fore-top-royal sail.

Between 1 and 2 next morning, when off

Cape St. Antonio, Cuba, there was much vivid lightning, when a white squall caught the fore-top-royal sail; which careened the vessel, when the foremast, mainmast, and mizenmast, snapped asunder with an awful crash; the whole of the masts above, with the jib and spanker, and sixteen sails and studding poles were carried overboard with a tremendous splash and surge, when the vessel righted; at daybreak found the deck all in confusion, and a complete wreck. During the day hoisted a sail from the stump of the mainmast, to the bow of the vessel—thus leaving nothing but the hull of the vessel to carry the Saints into New Orleans.

Wednesday, 3.—Called at the office and drank a glass of wine with sister Jenetta Richards, made by her mother in England; and reviewed a portion of the conference minutes.

Two p.m., Mayor's court, "City vs. A. Gay," on complaint of William Law, for unbecoming language, and refusing to leave the store when told to. Fined \$5 and costs.

Directed a letter to be written to Gen. James Adams, of Springfield, to have him meet the "Maid of Iowa" on her return from St. Louis, and arrange with the proprietors to turn her into a Nauvoo ferry boat; which was done the same hour.

This day the first number of the "Nauvoo Neighbor" was issued by Taylor and Woodruff, in place of the "Wasp" which ceased, and I here insert their first editorial:—

"We now, according to promise, present our young friend before the world, in his new dress, and with his new name. As the last week has been one of the warm weeks in the spring, when vegetation springs forth, and life and animation is given to the vegetable world; so our efforts to cultivate the plant of intelligence, having been watered by industry, enlivened by perseverance, and warmed by the genial rays of patronage, have not been unsuccessful, for the young gentleman has grown in one short week to double his former size.

Relative to his dress, we have to apologize a little; as we did not live near a store, we could not get all the trimmings which we could have desired, to have made him pass so well with the elite in the fashionable world. However, among plain folks he will now pass very well, and we soon expect to see him in a form that will suit the taste of the most fastidious.

Relative to the course that we shall pursue, we shall endeavor to cultivate a friendly feeling towards all, and not interfere with the rights of others, either politically or religiously. We shall advocate the cause of the innocent and oppressed, uphold the cause of right, sustain the principles of republicanism, and fly to the succor of the helpless and forlorn, pouring in oil and wine to their wounds, and acting in every way to all the human family in the capacity that our name imports, viz., that of a neighbor.

We have had, and may have to defend ourselves against the oppressions, persecutions, and innovations of men; and if this should be the case, we shall not shrink from the task; but shall fearlessly and unflinchingly defend our rights, sustaining that liberty which our glorious Constitution guarantees to every American citizen, for which our fathers jeopardized their liberty, their lives, and their sacred honor.

Amidst the warring elements that are disturbing the world, we are glad to find so amiable and friendly spirit manifested to us at the present time by the press, and we can assure them that so long as they let us alone we shall not interfere with them.

It has been our study to avoid contention, and we have never interfered with others until they have thrown down the gauntlet; and as we have not been to the present, so we are determined for the future not to be the aggressors.

We have always endeavored to cultivate a spirit of friendship, amity and peace with mankind; if we have not succeeded, the fault has not been with us. Rumor, with her ten thousand tongues, has always been busy circulating falsehood and misrepresentation concerning us, and men have frequently, in the absence of correct information, entertained unfavorable opinions concerning us, and have spoken as they thought; but when they have been better informed, they have regretted their course, and have seen that calumny has been like a viper in our path, and has stung like an adder.

In regard to our political rights, our religion has frequently been made use of by political demagogues as a bugbear to deprive us of the free untrammelled rights of American citizens. This is a thing that we have always protested against, and we always shall, so long as that blood that fired the bosoms of our ancestors who fought, bled and died, in defence of equal rights, flows through our veins.

Concerning religion, we consider that all men have a right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences; and while we allow all men freely to enjoy this privilege untrammelled by us, we look upon all men that would abridge us, or others in their religious rights, as enemies to the Constitution, recreant to the principles of republicanism, and whilst they render themselves despicable, they are striking a secret, but deadly blow at the freedom of this great republic; and their withering influence, though unseen and unobserved by the many, is like a

worm gnawing the very vitals of the tree of liberty. We shall always contend for our religious rights. In short, the liberty of the press, liberty of conscience and of worship, free discussion, sailors' rights, we shall always sustain.

Thursday, 4.—At 4 p.m., heard read a letter from James Arlington Bennett, showing that he was sick, and could not attend the inspection of the Nauvoo Legion, according to his appointment.

Having received a letter from Geo. W. Robinson, in relation to his land difficulties, I went to Sidney Rigdon and procured a deed for Carlos Granger's farm, and settled that business.

Friday, 5.—Told the Temple Committee that I had a right to take away any property I chose from the Temple office or store, and they had no right to stand in the way. It is the people that are to dictate me, and not the committee. All the property I have belongs to the Temple, and what I do is for the benefit of the Temple, and you have no authority, only as you receive it from me.

Received the following:—
"New York, 7th April, 1843.

JOSEPH SMITH, Esq.:
Dear Sir:—I received on Saturday last, a letter from Mr. Catlin, notifying me that the equity of redemption in my Nauvoo property would be sold on the 12th instant, and asking me whether I wished it to be purchased for me—I suppose it is quite immaterial whether I or you hold the right of redeeming, for if it should again come into my possession, I wish it understood distinctly by them who have built upon it, that I shall not attempt to take their buildings from them, but shall be ready at any time to give them a lease of their lots for a very long period, at a reasonable rent. My wish, as well as my interest, leads me to conciliate and make them my friends, instead of making them my enemies.

Your obedient servant,
H. R. HOTCHKISS."

Which I recorded in the City Record of Deeds:—

"Recorder's Office, May 5, 1843.
State of Illinois, }
City of Nauvoo, } ss.

I, Joseph Smith, recorder in and for the said city of Nauvoo, Hancock county, and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that the within letter was duly recorded in Book A., page 140, and numbered 131.

JOSEPH SMITH, Recorder,
By William Clayton, Clerk."

Saturday, 6.—In the morning had an interview with a lecturer on Mesmerism and Phrenology. Objected to his performing in the city. Also an interview with a Methodist preacher, and conversed about his God without body or parts.

At 9½ a.m., I mounted with my staff, and with the band and about a dozen ladies led by Emma, and proceeded to the general parade ground of the Nauvoo Legion, east of my farm on the prairie. The Legion looked well, better than on any former occasion, and they performed their evolutions in admirable style.

The officers did honor to the Legion; many of them were equipped and armed *cap-a-pie*. The men were in good spirits: they had made great improvements both in uniform and discipline, and we felt proud to be associated with a body of men which in point of discipline, uniform, appearance and a knowledge of military tactics, are the pride of Illinois, one of its strongest defences, and a great bulwark of the western country.

In the course of my remarks on the prairie, I told the Legion, that when we have petitioned those in power for assistance, they have always told us they had no power to help us, *damn such traitors*.—When they give me the power to protect the innocent, I will never say I can do nothing for their good; I will exercise that power, so help me God. At the close of the address the Legion marched to the city and disbanded in Main street, about 2 p.m.; the day being windy and very cold.

There were two United States officers, and General Swazey of Iowa, present, who expressed great satisfaction at our appearance and evolutions.

In the evening attended Mr. Vicker's performance of wire dancing, legerdemain, magic, &c., &c.

A conference was held at Toulon, Shark county, Illinois; 5 branches, 17 elders, 3 priests, 4 teachers, 2 deacons, and 129 members were represented.

A branch has been recently organized at Lyons, Wayne county, New York, consisting of 2 elders, 1 priest, 1 teacher, and 22 members.

MINOR MORALS FOR MARRIED PEOPLE.—Married people should study each others' weak points, as skaters look out the weak parts of the ice, in order to keep off them.

Ladies who marry for love should remember that the union of angels with woman has been forbidden since the flood.

The wife is the sun of the social system.—Unless she attracts, there is nothing to keep heavy bodies, like husbands, from flying off into space.

That wife who would properly discharge her duty must never have a soul 'where buttons.'