THE ENSIGN OF LIBERTY,
OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

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OUR APOLOGY—AND OUR TOURS.

When we commenced the publication of the Ensign of Liberty, we fondly anticipated its edition from month to month; but circumstances which we could not control, have ruled it otherwise. Soon after we had published the second No., our duty required us to visit Pittsburgh, Pa. From there we returned, so as to attend our June Conference; during the sittings of which it was determined that we should immediately make a tour through the western States. On the 6th of July, we left our home for the far off west, and did not return until the 3rd of Nov. During our absence, we traveled over three thousand miles; in which we hope that we have passed through scenes and gathered materials which will enable us to enrich the pages of the future Nos. of our paper, so as to compensate our readers for the long delay of this No., consequent upon those journeys.

First, then, our tour to Pittsburgh. On the 23d of May, we left Kirtland, and Saturday, the 29th, reached New Brighton, near Beaver, Pa., and stopped with Elder James M. Greer, a Strangite fully imbued with the spirit of his position. Greene had made him presiding high priest over all that part of Pa. Of course, accepting so great an office, from so great a man, in so great a cause, we should look for great things. We asked him how many members there were in that region? and if we are not mistaken, he said about thirty.—Sunday morning was pleasant, and we accompanied the Elder to the place appointed for their worship. It was at a private house, the gentleman and lady of which, with two others and myself, composed the entire congregation. Instead of great things there, we assure you we felt slight enough. And when we come to inquire of the two who formed the collected congregation, one was rather inclined to Twelvetriety, if not fully so; and the other by no means a Strangite. How do you suppose we felt? We will leave you to imagine. Here we found that Strangism was deistism. On the next Lord's Day, June 6th, we had the privilege of addressing a very respectable portion of our old friends in Pittsburgh, both in the forenoon and afternoon. We found no one in that city whom we considered strong in Strangism, except Elder James Smith. The minds of the most seemed to be in uncertainty relative to the leading or presiding authorities of the "work of the last days." We spent our time very pleasantly, visiting and freely conversing among our friends, and obtained a number of subscribers for our paper. On Sunday, before the conference, we heard Elder Benjamin Winchester relate his collection of the circumstances attending the appointment and ordination of David by Joseph. He was present and witnessed the occurrence, and gave to us by request, a lucid and clear statement of the facts.

Our June Conference was characterized by a general state of good feeling, great unanimity among the Ministry, and a number of additions to the Church, by baptism, and confirmation.
OF LIBERTY.

THE SUCCESSION OF JOSEPH.

Upon no subject do these interested think more widely, nor act more at variance than they do upon this. Thousands of gifted minds, and some of those too, of a higher order of genius, have labored upon it. Some with interested views, and a few solely in order to know the truth. And when thousands, through the influence of interested bigots, had once determined wrong upon the great principles of the government of the church; they then ran with greediness into folly, until now has been pronounced upon them—and a few only have remained. Ah! a mere remnant have risen up in Kirtland, where the principles and scenes thus transpired which broke down the Church of Christ, and have decreed in their hearts that they will act upon correct principles in all matters, and “follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever he goeth!” and thus re-establish the Church of Christ again, on earth.

Having in a preceding article, pointed out the office and duties of “a Seer of the Lord,” and having shown that when the Church of Christ was first organized in 1830, Joseph Smith stood in that most responsible of all offices—we shall, in this treatise, speak particularly of his successor, and show the precise rule and manner of the appointment and ordination, in order to fill the pattern which the Lord has given on this important point in his revelations, in order to make such appointment legal.

We have taken much pains to gain intelligence upon this important subject; because since the transgressions and death of Joseph Smith, the subject of the Leader “in his stead,” has broken the church of the Latter Day Saints, into factions and parties; the leaders of which, all claim that the important responsibilities of the kingdom rest upon their shoulders—and each claims that “I—yes, I,” have been legally appointed to carry out that great and glorious work commenced of God, through that illiterate young man. And now, the hardest of the conflict seems to be, to know who shall be greatest among that distracted people.

Our object is not to enter into contention, but to present a body of facts, in a clear and tangible light. In the revelation given to J. Smith and C. Cowdery, on the 6th of April, 1830, in which they were told that a record should be kept in the church, in which Joseph was to be called Prophet, Seer, &c., we are told how he was ordained to these offices. “Wherefore it behooveth me, that he should be ordained by you, Oliver, mine Apostle, this being an ordinance..."
unto you." While I was on a visit with till the time of my coming, if he abide in me, O. Cowdery, during the past summer, I and if not, another will I plant in his stead." asked him, to what did you ordain Joseph on Again, in order to make the matter of a suc- the 6th of April, 1830? He answered, I or- cessor, both in his appointment and duties, dained him to be a Prophet, Seer, &c., just perfectly plain, in Feb. 1831, the Lord ad- as the revelation says. This settled one dresses himself to the Elders of his church, important point in my mind. Although Jo- thus—"And this shall ye know assuredly, seph may have had the gifts and callings that there is none other appointed unto you, from God to his important station, yet he to receive commandments and revelations, could not act in them, in & for the church, until he be taken, if he abide in me. But notwithstanding the angels too, had visited verily, verily I say unto you, that none else him, until he was publicly acknowledged by the church in his station as Seer, and or- dained thereto under the hands of a man by the express commandment and specifications of the Lord.

After the work had begun to spread, and may know they are not of me. For verily branches of the church were established in I say unto you, he that is ordained of me different places, and concerted action seemed shall come in at the gate, and be ordained as to be necessary, a revelation was given to I have told you before. Now the question Oliver Cowdery, in Sept. 1830, touching is, how had the Lord told before that a suc- this subject—"Verily, verily I say unto you, cessor to a Seer should be ordained? We no one shall be appointed to receive command, that in the law of the church, which commandments and revelations for the church, was given immediately preceding the above, excepting my servant Joseph, for he receiv- the principle upon which ordinations should e them even as Moses: and thou shalt be take place thereafter, is forever settled. _obedient unto the things which I shall give "Again, I, the Lord, say unto you, that it unto him, even as Aaron, to declare faith- shall not be given to any one to go forth to fully the commandments and revelations, preach my gospel, or build up my church, with power and authority unto the church, except he be ordained by some one who has * * And thou shalt not command him who authority, and is known to the church is at thy head, and at the head of the church, that he has authority, and has been regu- for I have given him the keys of the myste- riously ordered by the heads of the church," rics and the revelations which are sealed, But more on this point hereafter.

until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead. * * Thou shalt not leave this been appointed of God, a Seer, and had in place until after the conference, and my serv- his possession the Interpreters. He had vant Joseph shall be appointed to rule the translated the ancient record of the prophets conference by the voice of it."

We hold this as a correct principle, that of our American land, viz: the book of Mor- mon. He had organized a church on the 6th word of the Lord, to a man, gives him, of April, 1830, with this characteristic name, authority to do whatever it directs. Hence, The Church of Christ. The members the word of the Lord to Oliver to ordain Jo- seph a Seer, &c. was valid, although Oliver- icer of the book he had found and translate- ver had not himself been ordained to those beds. They also believed in his call to the offices. And when conference assembled Seer's office, and acknowledged him in that they had a right to acknowledge that ordi- nance, which gave him a legal right to pre- had been given, plainly intimating that he side over them. Here we will notice that would some day have a successor, or anxiety he was to hold the keys of that authority pervaded the minds of many of the Elders, to until God should appoint unto them "another know who the favored individual would be, in his stead."

In December following, &c. Joseph and his keys or gift, until the time of his coming. Sidney Rigdon, the Lord said, "I have sent "If he abide in me, but if not, another will forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of I plant in his stead." But when he should my servant Joseph; and in weakness have I transgress, so as to lose his gift, then he blessed him, and I have given unto him the only retained one privilege by virtue of his keys of the mysteries of the things which office, and that was, that the Lord would have been sealed, even things which were point out and ordain the man, through him, from the foundation of the world, and the to stand in his room. things which shall come from this time un-

The center of gathering, called Zion, was pointed out, by church, it summer c eral people in consecr in July, the shape and level members an indirect on any county, divideal. When poured it upon th could not bore up and few blow to Cowder sent to do as thy creasect loved b old frie in Aug which manda cleave every month faithf and I and w for in ut emc mem saith thing nant, word emaen fore, seek dron father hear Prop smit Ran sil six of po war Eld thir lam
pointed out through Joseph Smith, and dedicated, by all the highest authorities in the church, in Jackson county, Mo., during the summer of 1831, and great numbers of eastern people, soon removed and settled there, in consequence of their peculiar faith. But in July, 1833, a mob of some 500 beings, in the shape of men, rose up in phrenzied fury, and levied all their members on the unoffending members of the church, against whom not an indictment or suit at law could be found on any legal docket in the extent of the county. No, not even me, against any individual member of the whole society.

When their mobocratic wrath began to be poured out, the members of the church acted upon the non-resistance principle. If they could not keep out of the way of flight, they bore patiently their whipping, their taring and feathering, &c. They did not return blow for blow, nor serve for insult. Q. Cowdery, as a messenger, was immediately sent to Kirtland, to visit Joseph, in order to do as they did in olden time—"Come let us go to the Seer." The church had then increased to thousands, and Joseph was beloved by all. And when he met again his old friend Oliver, they inquired of the Lord in August, '33, and received his word, from which we extract,—"And I give you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil, and cleave unto all good; that ye shall live by every word that proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God: for he will give unto the faithful, line upon line; precept upon precept: and I will try you, and prove you hereby; and whose labouteth in his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal: therefore be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy: for if you will not abide in my covenant, you are not worthy of me. Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace, and seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children. And again the hearts of the Jews to the Prophets, and the Prophets unto the Jews, lest I come and smite the whole earth with a curse." And:

RENOUNCE WAR!

Who would have supposed that, men, enlightened as these were, would, in less than six months after receiving the above, instead of proclaiming peace, rise up and proclaim war; and send swift messengers, even the Elders of the church to all parts of the same, throughout her entire ranks, with a proclamation of war! war!! And thus in their own names, without being directed of the Lord—"May, in open violation of some of the plainest sayings in all the word of God—and that, too, while the Lord was telling them that he meant to "prove them in all things." Yet when they were tempted, their voice was to the young men and to the middle-aged, "Arise, and let us go and redeem Zion, and maintain it by the sword."

But alas! alas! Of fatal day, for the Seer, and for The Church or Church, over which he presided, The 4th of May, 1834, was the day on which this army of veterans were to leave this state of Zion, with the Seer at their head, as Leader; having forged to themselves swords and spears for the purpose of spilling human blood. Notwithstanding the Lord had said in a former commandment, "You are forbidden to shed blood." A decree was passed in the heavens that this warrior band should not go thus armed and equipped, bearing the name of Christ. Consequently, from some impulse, a council of the first authorities of this Stake, assembled on the third, and officially threwed aside the only true, significant, characteristic name of the church, the Lord had given; and inasmuch as they had imbued a false spirit, and were acting upon false principles, they also took to themselves for the church the false name of "The Church of the Latter Day Saints."

But when they had reached Mo., and had given up all ideas for the time being, of the redemption or conquest of Zion by the sword; then Joseph assembled a general conference of all the authorities in the west, who had not as yet taken upon them for the church any false name, and being as he said, directed so to do from the Lord, he then and there fulfilled all those revelations which had spoken of "another's being planted in his stead," as the following will show:

TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES.

We cheerfully certify, to all whom it may concern, that we attended a general conference, called at the instance of Joseph Smith, in Clay county, Mo., on the 8th day of July, 1834, at the residence of Elder Lyman Wright. And while the conference was in session, Joseph Smith presiding, he arose and said that the time had come when he must appoint his Successor in office. Some have supposed that it would be Oliver Cowdery; but, said he, Oliver has lost that privilege in consequence of transgression. The Lord has made it known to me that David Whitmer is the man. David was then called forward, and Joseph and his counselors laid hands upon him, and ordained him to his station, to succeed him. Joseph then
THE ENSIGN.

gave David a charge, in the hearing of the whole assembly. Joseph then seemed to rejoice that that work was done, and said, now brethren, if any thing should befall me, the work of God will roll on with more power than it has hitherto done. Then, brethren, you will have a man who can lead you as well as I can. He will be Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Translator before God.

MARTIN HARRIS,
LEONARD RICH,
CALVIN BEEBE.

At the same conference, on the same day, the High Council of Zion was organized, and David Whitmer was ordained to be its first President; and John Whitmer and—

were ordained to be his two counsellors. Some have doubted whether these things were so, and now we will make a quotation from the history of Joseph, as published in the Times and Seasons, in Nauvoo, Feb. 4, 1840, page 1109. Hear Joseph speak for himself, on this all-important subject: “I told the council that if I should now be taken away, I had accomplished the great work which the Lord had laid before me, and that which I had desired of the Lord; and that I had done my duty in organizing the High Council, through which council, the will of the Lord might be known on all important occasions, in the building up of Zion and establishing truth in the earth.”

If Joseph Smith was to have no power, after transgression, in the office of Seer, except to appoint another—which means one other, in his stead, and that one has been appointed through him, and then been "regularly ordained by the heads of the church," according to the law of the Lord; and then that appointment and ordination sanctioned by a general assembly of fifteen High Priests, eight Elders, four Priests, eight Teachers, three Deacons, and members. And then in the hearing of all, David receives a solemn charge to be faithful, and magnify his high calling, from Joseph, his Predecessor—we ask, is not this matter sealed?

And we say boldly, that this transaction took place as stated above; for we were present on the occasion, and we were within a few feet of both men, having been chosen one of the High Councillors, when the whole matter passed before us. And these facts are now presented before all those who feel disposed to investigate this subject, that they may see that so far as all those revelations are concerned, which have spoken of another's being planted in Joseph's stead, that David Whitmer's appointment, ordination, and charge, fulfils the whole. David came in at the gate, and was ordained as the Lord had told before."

In no government in heaven or on earth, can there exist but one highest tribunal. In all governments there must be a highest court from which there can be no appeal: just so in the government of the Church of Christ. If God organized the church by revelations from himself we must expect to see consummate wisdom and harmony displayed in the organization of her councils or church courts. And so it is. The high council of the church of Christ, which consists of twelve high priests, with the Seer and his two councillors at their head, comprising a court of fifteen members; is the highest council of the church of God.

And when a matter is tried, and a decision had before this council, "it is final upon controversies in spiritual matters."—Cov. Sec. 3: p. 36. "The President of the church, viz. the Seer of the church, who is also the President of the council, is appointed by revelation, and acknowledged in his administration, by the voice of the church; and it is according to the dignity of his office, that he should preside over the council of the church."—Cov. Sec. 5: p. 6.

Hence the propriety of the following, "In cases of difficulty respecting doctrine, or principle, (if there is not a sufficiency written to make the case clear to the minds of the council,) the President may enquire and obtain the mind of the Lord by revelation."—Cov. Sec. 3: p. 10. The above taken in connection with the following, settles the point that—we are at; speaking of the Seer and first President the word says, "And ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you [the Elders of the church] to receive commandments and revelations, until he be taken, if he (Joseph) abide in me."—Cov. Sec. 14: p. 2.

When Joseph Smith organized the high council of Zion, and set apart David Whitmer as its first President, he by that act conferred the power upon David, which he had held himself. And hence his saying in his history relative to this council over which David presided, "Through which council the will of the Lord might be known on all important occasions, in the building up of Zion, and establishing truth in the earth." Joseph had organized a high council in Kirtland in Feb., preceding, but he could not return from Zion and preside in and over that council, and inquire and receive revelations of the will of God for the salvation of men. Consequently when he had returned to Kirtland, the first important case that
and was ordained an or on earth, on a tribunal, to be a highest can be no appeal: the church of the church by must expect to see harmony dist in her councils it is. The high priest, which con- tains, with the Seer their head, com- mune members; church of God; and a decision, it is final upon matters. —Cop. res. of the c. church, who is uncir, is appointed to be acknowledged in his name of the church; a dignity of his own over the country. Sec. 5; p. 6. —following. "In ing doctrine, or sufficiency written to the minds of we may inquire: Lord by revela- tion. The above is following, extant; speaking of the word says, assuredly, that ed unto you the command he be taken, if. —Cop. Sec. 14; organized the high art David Whit- by, that act David, which he be his saying in council over which i which council might be known on the building up of the earth," high council in g, but he could reside in and over d receive revelations for the salvation of he had returned a great case that

came up before the council in this Stake, he himself was the accuser of one of his brethren; and the decision passed proved the ruin of the accused, and in its results entirely broke up the council. Thus proving that Joseph had lost his power to act in wisdom in the office which he had held, but which the Lord had commanded him to confer upon his brother David.

But we ask again, how had the Lord said before that a Successor to a Prophet should be appointed and set apart? Has not the Lord in all his dealings with man, as recorded in the holy books, furnished us a pattern in this very important matter? And we answer that the books are plain upon this subject. Please to follow us with patience through this article, and we think the minds of all the honest in heart, who desire truth for the sake of truth will be settled.

In the appointment of a Successor in the prophetic office, one thing we observe through the word of God, viz. the successor was always brought into the immediate presence of his Predecessor, and there received his appointment, his ordination, or his anointing, and his charge. First, we will instance the case of Moses and Joshua. "And Moses spake unto the Lord saying, let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out and fight before them, and who may lead them out and bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd. And the Lord said unto Moses, take thee Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him: and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight." And Moses did as the Lord commanded him. —Num. 27: 15. Secondly, when the Lord called the child Samuel, it was where he was under the immediate eye, care, and tuition of Eli, who preceded him. —1st Sam. 3. Thirdly, Elijah appointed Elisha prophet in his room. —1st Kings, 19: 16. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." —2d Cor. 13: 1.

In the book of Mormon, there was a regular series of succession from one to another, among the prophets and rulers. "Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon die; wherefore, he appointed a man to be a king and ruler over his people." —2 Tim. 1: 17. "King Benjamin had his son Mosiah brought before him, and he spake to him, make a proclamation throughout all this land, that the people may be gathered together; and on the morrow I shall proclaim unto my people, that thou art a king and a ruler over them." —Mosiah, chap. 1. Mormon writing to his son Moroni, who was to be his successor as prophet, and also to hold the sacred records says, "But I trust that I may see thee soon; for I have sacred records that I would deliver up unto thee. —My son be faithful in Christ." —Moroni, c. 9.

If God in olden times, on every occasion, both in the bible and book of Mormon, required that the prophets, Seers and rulers, should always not only appoint their successors, but also ordain or anoint them, and then before multitudes give them charge, and sometimes make public proclamation of the fact, so that all might understand it: need we be surprised that Joseph Smith should collect a general assembly — a kind of mass meeting of the inhabitants of Zion, and those who had traveled in the camp with him, and in the midst of the whole, David should receive his appointment, his ordination and his charge. Had it not been so the Lord would have acted differently in the appointment of Joseph's Successor, from what he has done in any former period.

We are aware that President Wm. Law rose up in Nauvoo in 1844, ten years after David's appointment and ordination, and claimed to be the first president of the whole church of L. D. Saints. Having previously acted with Joseph as one of his counsellors, he organized by choosing Austin Cowles and James Blakelee counsellors with him, in his first presidency; and Charles Irvine, bishop with his two counsellors. He and his friends also started a paper called the Nauvoo Expositor, in order to expose the enormous crimes said to be committed in the fated city, under the sanction of him whom, they then called the fallen Prophet. But Law'sism was a short-lived thing. It never spread beyond its first movers. It is only now remembered as an ism which in its operations and results proved the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

Shortly after the death of the Smith's, Sidney Rigdon made his way from Pittsburgh to Nauvoo, and presented himself before that great body of L. D. Saints, claiming to be the legal successor to the martyred one. His aim was not so easy death. A remnant of it lived with him at its head, about two years. But his organization of "Daniel's kingdom," which he reared up for himself to worship, has been cast "to the medlar and to the bat." And those who first favored his pretensions to the Successorship in the Seer's office, when they found that he was not possessed of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, were power with the Heavens to
sustain himself, have left him and each honest one among them is standing and watching the signs of the times.

About the same time of the rise of Rigdonism, arose also Twelvetism. This was a queer kind ofism. The leaders of that party claimed that God never intended that there should be a successor in the Seer's office. That Joseph had only stepped behind the veil, and that the government of the whole church devolved upon the quorum which stood next in power to the first presidency. Notwithstanding the duty of the twelve Apostles was to travel into all nations and preach and minister under the authority and direction of the Seer, with his two counsellors, yet they claimed that the death of the Seer changed the whole order of the government of the church. The twelve, by that incident, viz. the death of the Seer, are immediately changed from "a traveling presiding high council," to a local first presidency over the whole church. They grasped the reins of power, and hurled defiance at all other claimants. The great mass of Latter Day Saints were willing dupes, and lent themselves to carry out their illegal measures. But soon the hovel and determined fury of mobocrats resounds in their ears, and no hope appears to them but to flee to the waste, wild deserts of the west; where they say they can carry out their nefarious measures. But millions of misery mark their footsteps, and wo! seems to be stamped upon all their calculations. Their end will be destruction by awful calamities. Another very small party has risen up in Wisconsin, who claim that a little lawyer by the name of James J. Strang, is the legal successor. We refer our readers to an article in the second No., relative to his claims. We would merely add, that since writing that article we have visited Vorce, the seat of his operations, and from actual observations we conclude that Ichabod is written on all his hopes of future success. While in Vorce we organized a branch of the church there which numbers over fifty members, who acknowledge the presidency of David, the Lord's Seer. About the 20th of Oct. last, we were told by good authority while in Vorce, that not more than twenty families adhered to the little lawyer prophet in that place. Hence, although false prophets rise, they cannot bind the honest in heart in bundles—they will only prepare the tares to be burned.

Now we say that after Joseph Smith had transgressed by imbuing and encouraging the spirit and practice of war by the church, after he had taken for it the false name of Latter Day Saints, after he had taken to himself and to his heirs a deed of the church property in Kirtland; instead of having it given to the Bishop according to the law of the Lord—thus grasping like the Popes of Rome, both the temporal and spiritual power of the church; and after he had done these things officially by the sanction of a council, and then set out at the head of the army and traveled one thousand miles, with all the difficulties and transgressions of such a tour, which was conducted and carried out by the influence of a wrong spirit; we say if these things were not transgressions in a Seer, then we do not know what would be. The Lord thought they were and therefore called upon him when he had reached Mo. to appoint and set apart David to stand in his place. And now we ask, when that was done, and done officially, and done according to what the Lord "had told before," yes, done according to all the patterns in the word of God in past ages, we ask whether Joseph was not precluded forever from the power of the privilege of ordaining Sidney Rigdon, of countenancing William Law's ism, of rolling the burdens of the kingdom upon the shoulders of the Twelve, or of appointing J. J. Strang by letter; and then either the appointment or ordination of those individuals have one particle of validity in it in the sight of God? All the unbiased and unprejudiced will say no. This we assign as one reason why those men have had no power with God to sustain themselves. Why when honorable, honest men had at their call gathered around them, would soon leave them again. If we have any one thing in our possession and give it to another, we cannot give the same gift to a second or a third person. "For if it be taken from Joseph, he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead."—Coc. 14: 2.

As a proof that Joseph had not power with God after he ordained David to be his successor, we adduce his worldly-mindedness. Soon thereafter he seemed to let go his former zeal and spiritual-mindedness, and engaged largely into merchandising, into Kirtland banking, city building, secret-society-Danite-making; and finally to cap the climax of his ambition and folly, to unite spiritual and temporal power, he sought to become President of the United States of America—and thus combine his priestly power with one of the civil powers of the world.

And his complete and entire failure in all those schemes prove definitely that he had lost his power with God to forebear. For
consummate folly instead of wisdom was at the planning of all those wild speculations, which in their train, being recommended by him in the name of the Lord, brought ruin upon thousands. But be it remembered that he recommended and engaged in all those plans of folly, after he had set apart his successor, and therefore had no power as “the Servant of the Lord,” only to use what knowledge and influence he had gained to do evil with it. We are sorry to be under the painful necessity of writing thus plainly upon this subject, and if imperative duty did not demand it, we would gladly drop our pen and cease to record the follies and sins of men, whom we once so dearly loved, and with whom the heavens delighted to commune.

(Of to be continued.)

SIGN OF THE TIMES.

It has been more than sixteen years since The Church of Christ organized, consequent upon the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and believing in that holy record, as well as the Bible, has been declaring to both small and great, that this is the last age of men, who will live on this earth until it is cleansed by fire; to prepare it for millennial glory. That in this generation all the signs spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began, which are to precede the second advent of Christ, must be shown forth. “Sings in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, in the sun, moon, and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.”

Within our own age, “distresses of nations,” seem to follow each other in rapid succession. The Cholera, that fearful and awful scourge of man, has, as it were, once ravaged the world, and is now again wending its way from the east, to quickly, and with the torments peculiar to itself, lay in death’s cold embrace, the high and noble as well as the poor—the beggar. Plagues and pestilences, follow each other in quick succession. It seems as though the very furies were themselves broke loose, to spread their rage upon man. Fires, notwithstanding all the inventions and improvements of men to prevent, have, within a few years, laid millions of property waste, in various towns and cities in different parts of the world. The lean, grim, hungry monster of famine, is at the present moment, biting and gnawing at the vitals of thousands upon thousands of the human race, in different nations of the old world. Millions of cries from the poor and the destitute, are to day rising into the ears of Heaven, because of their oppressions and their poverty, their wretchedness and their squalid misery, brought upon them by the various orders of things, which now exist among the nations: over which the poor can have no control. —Yes, famine and pestilence lay waste the poor in the very same districts where the rich are wallowing in wealth, in plenty, and even revelling in pleasures. All this is because the second great commandment of the Benefactor of the world is not observed—“Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

War, with all its black, horrid, and damning consequences, is now raging in our world, and even in our own loved North America; and is sending thousands of human beings to the worlds of disembodied spirits. “The sea and the waves roaring.” Ah! who is there that does not know that the Lord has said, “Behold I, the Lord, in the beginning, blessed the waters, but in the last days, by the mouth of my servant John, I cursed the waters.” At least, the curse of God seems to rest upon the waters. No craft, which is the handy-work of man, has been found sufficiently stout to weather the storms, which within the last few years have rolled up the great and mighty deep into huge mountains, and then again cast them down as it were with one breath, thus sinking thousands into a watery grave.—Who that reads, but has observed, when he catches up his paper, emblazoned at the head of the column, in glaring letters—“Awful calamity! fatal accident! tens, yes, hundreds of lives lost!!!” The small craft, the steamer, or the noble ship, has blown up, or gone to the bottom. We seems to be written on the man who ventures out upon the angry, raging waters.

Indeed, if the wars, the famines, the plagues, the pestilences, the earthquakes, the fires, the storms, and all the fearful sights shown forth among men, in the heavens above, on the earth beneath, and on the rivers, lakes, seas, and great waters, we say, if all these things will not admonish man that “the end is near,” then let him look at man himself, and see if the love of man is not waxing cold towards his fellow man.—See if the very foundations of human society—that is, confidence of man in his fellow man, are not giving way, and all ties which bind individuals, and nations together, are not weakening, serving, and breaking asunder. Then if we can see all the above “signs of the times,” should we not be admonished that the end is near; and be pre-