

**EVENING TRANSCRIPT.**

SATURDAY EVENING, JAN. 20.

**THE MORMON POPULATION OF MONTROSE AND NAUVOO.** [From a private journal of a tour last summer.] Leaving St. Louis, I arrived at Keokuck the foot of the rapids of the Mississippi. The water was so low that only a keel boat could pass, and I therefore took a stage to pass round them to Montrose at the head of the rapids. Keokuck and Montrose are said to be the two worst places on the Mississippi river. At the latter there are a large number of Mormons, Nauvoo being directly opposite. They are a thriving, but glibber set of vagabonds. Mr K—the most respectable man in the place, was a passenger with us, and he said that they had repeatedly stolen his carts and wagon wheels, carried them to the other side, pointed the run over, and made lodges to the other. He stated, that his goods had been stolen in large quantities, and that when he had identified and laid claim to them, he had himself been arrested and fined by Joe and his Council. Weary of such procedure he was about to abandon his land and to seek some other residence. In the spring when I descended the Ohio river, stopping at a variety of places, I was a passenger in many different boats, in all of which there were large numbers of emigrants on their way to the promised land. I was desirous of ascertaining what could be the inducement for them to leave their homes; and upon inquiry, I found them fully impressed with the holiness of the Prophet, and filled with infatuation, mysticism, and credulity, without possessing the capacity of defining their belief. Their leader would answer my inquiries by hurling chapters of the Bible at me, the idea seeming to be to occupy my attention in such a way that my questions might be evaded. Some of his statements were as follows:

That the Mormons were enabled to speak in unknown tongues, to cure the sick by laying hands upon them, and to raise the dead. None were to be saved but through their baptism—not even those who were deceased, but that by a living person being baptized for the dead, the latter might then be saved. Many of the Mormons he said, had been baptized twenty or thirty times for Washington, Lafayette, Napoleon, &c. A profitable belief to Joe as he charges them every time they are baptized! He stated that an ignorant woman, who by baptism had been made a saint, had acquired the gift of prophecy and of speaking unknown tongues. When travelling with her husband on the Mississippi river, she had met two Spaniards whose language she could not name, but she told her lord that she could understand them, and, to corroborate her statements, she talked two hours to them in their own language, and was told by them that she was the most finished Spanish scholar they had ever met. This story is implicitly believed!

We were rowed across the river to Nauvoo, and on landing, inquired the way to Joe's house as he keeps tavern. We found that we were questioning the Prophet himself, who was somewhat shy in conversation, until we told him that we were strangers, who, having heard much of his celebrity, could not pass without paying our respects. He invited us in, but in reply to our interrogation, said, that he "had something else to do besides answering the questions of strangers."

In regard to his religion, he believed it, and didn't care whether any one else did or not, and it we desired to know what his faith was, we could ascertain by buying the book of Mormon, which I did for 10s. He showed us four mummies from which he had unfolded the ceremonies, and said that one was King and so, and another his sister, &c, &c. He also showed us some *hieroglyphics*, which he said formed the record and signature of Joseph when in captivity! He is a man of large stature; his face and actions indicative of extreme, low cunning, and apparently of perfect wonder at his own success. He is ignorant and illiterate—a bankrupt, cheat, sot, and said to be the mere tool of Rigdon and others, who allow him the honors while they reap the emolument. The stories of his temple, his hotel, and the beauty and organization of his city is all *fudge*. The hotel is a large one—by far too much so, for the necessities of the place; is now at its basement story, and I doubt whether it will ever be finished. His temple is also not above its basement, and differing in nothing, as far as I could see, from thousands of churches in our part of the country. It is built of stone, and at the base of the columns something resembling a half moon is cut. His far-famed baptismal font with its painted panels and gilded oxen, is at present a round cistern about four feet deep, with the head, shoulders, fore-legs, and part of the back of some wooden oxen, sawed out of planks glued together, and looking most uncouth at present, however it may be when finished.

Nauvoo itself presents a miserable collection of log houses spread far apart; and that it would be one of the most dangerous communities that ever sprang up in this country, if it were permitted to exist unmolested, no one will deny. The people are a land of thieves, vagabonds and emigrants of the lowest laboring classes from Europe; ignorant and indifferent to our laws, and in their infatuation, being willing to follow whither their prophets may lead. The citizens of Illinois have awakened to their dangerous proximity, and are preparing to stop their career, at least in their state. You may have read an account of these preparations among the resolutions passed within a few months at a meeting of citizens from some five or six counties adjoining Nauvoo. After our interview with Joe, we chartered a lay cart, and for the sum of one shilling, drove all over the town, when returning to our boat, we were soon landed at Burlington, Iowa Territory.