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AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF THE MASSACRE  
OF JOSEPH SMITH.

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AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
MASSACRE OF JOSEPH SMITH,  
THE MORMON PROPHET,  
AND  
HYRUM SMITH, HIS BROTHER,  
TOGETHER  
WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RISE  
AND PROGRESS  
OF  
MORMONISM,  
AND ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED  
TO THEIR DEATH,

BY  
*Wm. C. Russell*  
*Wm. C. Russell*  
GEO. T. M. DAVIS,  
*Of Alton, Ills.*

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The general excitement prevailing throughout the community—the innumerable unfounded and exaggerated statements given to the public of the circumstances that surrounded, and the causes that led to the death of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, as well as of his brother Hyrum Smith, added to the fact that an impartial account could not be reasonably expected, either from the one side or the other of those interested in the tragedy, has induced the author to undertake the task of detailing the facts as far as they were witnessed or could be obtained by him from an authentic source.— Nothing more will be aimed at, than a simple and unvarnished detail of what actually exists and is susceptible of proof. From those facts every reader must draw his own conclusions. Previous, however, to entering upon the development of the scenes that surrounded the death of the two Smiths; a brief account of the “*rise and progress*” of the Mormon sect is rendered indispensable to a correct understanding of the whole matter, and may not be without its interest to the reader.

The founders of the Mormon faith, consisting of Joe Smith, his father and brothers, admitted on all hands to be of all absurdities the most absurd, were originally citizens of the State of New York, and there first commenced imposing their delusions, and practising their impositions upon the credulous and unsuspecting. While in that State they did not acquire much strength in numbers, or notoriety as a sect. From thence they removed to Kirtland, in the State of Ohio, commenced building up their Zion, and finding more favor among the masses in the West than they had done in New York, their leader and the chief of imposters, JOE SMITH THE PROPHET, acquired a fame for either evil or good, which extended throughout all portions of the Union. Of their conduct while in the State of Ohio, and the causes which immediately led to their again removing and seeking another place of resort, it is no part of my design to speak. It is sufficient for me to state, that *public opinion* rendered it absolutely necessary for “Joe” to remove.

About this time, the Prophet, as he asserted, was favored with a revelation from the Almighty, in which the western part of the State of Missouri was designated as the promised land for the chosen people of God, upon which Zion was to be built, and they to await the second advent. Selecting a location upon unentered lands in one of the most fertile and desirable portions of that State, there JOE SMITH and his deluded followers took up their abode, and a *second time* commenced erecting their Zion. Here they increased for a season with almost unexampled rapidity, and as their strength increased, the *signs* of their Prophet became more and more apparent. Emboldened by success, depredations were committed by them, through the injunctions of their Prophet, upon the liberty, the property, and the lives of many of the citizens of Missouri. There,

as the sequel will disclose, is the case in our own State—they were so fortified as to be beyond the reach of the law. And the only alternative on the part of the citizens was submission or extermination. The history of the country shows that the latter alternative was resorted to, and that under the authority of the then Governor of Missouri, the Mormons were compelled to flee that State and seek a refuge in some other land. All the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of the Mormons from Missouri, and the reasons offered in justification of their course, has by the Legislature of that State, been long since spread before the public in the shape of a report, its repetition here would consequently be alike uninteresting and superfluous. It may not, however, be improper to mention that the PROPHET was subsequently indicted in that State for the crimes of theft, arson, murder and treason. And that although requisition upon requisition was made by the Executive of Missouri upon the Executive of Illinois for the delivery of JOE SMITH for trial, by the aid of his *political* as well as *monied* influence, he was always successful in escaping, and evading the ends of justice. Of this, however, more hereafter.

The flight of the Mormons from Missouri occurred in the month of November, 1838. Unfortunately for the peace, quietness, credit and honor of the State, they made Illinois the next theatre of their stupendous frauds and total violations of every thing like the principles of justice and law. They arrived at Quincy, where they were well received by the citizens, and every thing done, compatible with the feelings of charity and humanity, to administer to their wants, and afford them a protection from what was regarded at that time as the unmitigated persecution of their enemies. Their tale of sufferings and woe, was pictured in the most exaggerated characters that the fertility and cunning of Joe Smith's imagination could give birth to. The prejudices of the people of Illinois were excited against their neighbors of their sister State, and sympathy, pity and commiseration was bestowed upon the Mormons with an unsparing hand, by all sects and classes in community. How they have reciprocated the kindness with which they were treated, and appreciated the favors extended to them, the sequel will disclose. They were made as comfortable as it was in the power of the citizens of Quincy to make them, and at that place and in its vicinity they remained, until the PROPHET purchased the present site of their city, NANTUVOO, then known by the name of Commerce. Hither he repaired with all his forces, and aided by *another revelation* from God, (as the impious wretch asserted,) proclaimed, not only to his people that surrounded him, but to those in every portion of the land, that the place where he was then located had been designated by the Most High as the very spot whereon the Temple of the Lord was to be erected.

When they arrived in the State of Illinois their numbers could not have exceeded two thousand. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that in August 1840, they polled what was asserted by them to be their full strength—and which was generally believed to be such—four hundred and twenty votes. There were, however, some families remaining in Adams County who never removed to Nau-



voos. The story of the "*persecutions of the Latter Day Saints*" by the Missourians, went forth upon the wings of the wind, and was industriously circulated wherever Joe or either of his followers could obtain a hearing. Disciples were ordained and sent abroad by him to proselyte, and their victims, as fast as they were ensnared directed, to remove forthwith to the "*City of the chosen people of God.*"—In all these addresses, the burden of their song was their sufferings and persecutions in Missouri; and the visitations of an indignant and outraged community upon them, was portrayed in the most gorgeous colors, as the strongest proof that they were peculiarly the favored children of God, and that for his sake they were required to submit to these trials. The "story of their wrongs," aided by the "cunningly devised fable" of the manner in which Joe found the golden plates, to say nothing of the novelty of the religion, or rather blasphemy, he taught; the simplicity of the requisitions made by him as evidences of their conversion and fitness to be admitted into the Church; the *prevailing epidemic* of the human mind to grasp at the marvellous, and seize hold of every new absurdity upon the subject of religion, propagated by either the vicious and designing, or the ignorant, were well calculated to ensnare the credulous or fanatic, and to facilitate the designs of the PROPHET in building up a sect which he hoped would finally overrun the Union and give him its control. It is not, therefore, at all to be wondered at, that in the brief period of four years, from a handful of followers numbering not to exceed two thousand, he has succeeded in drawing together, at Nauvoo, a community of over fifteen thousand human beings, not only from every section of the Union but from almost all quarters of the globe. Nor is it to be concealed, that his doctrine was increasing with alarming rapidity in many sections of our country, as well as throughout the lower and more ignorant classes in Europe.

Shortly after the settlement of the Mormons at Nauvoo, in consequence of the principle inculcated by the Prophet, that they were to be *one* in all things, in the disposition of all their suffrages, as well as every thing else, their numbers daily augmenting, and holding the balance of power in Hancock county, they became the *special favorites* of politicians of both sides in their vicinity. Joe seeing the advantage of his position, and correctly judging that great importance was attached by political aspirants of both parties, to the favor or prejudice with which he regarded the one side or the other, applied to the Legislature of Illinois, for various incorporations. Among them, was a charter incorporating Nauvoo into a city, with the privilege of organizing its inhabitants into a military corps, to be designated the Nauvoo Legion, who were to be exclusively under the control of the authorities of the city of Nauvoo, and in no way subject to the Militia Laws of the State, save in case of a war or rebellion. They also had the power of establishing a court of record, to be denominated the Municipal Court of the City of Nauvoo, the presiding officers of which, were to be the Mayor and Aldermen of said city. This court had also the power given to it, to issue the writ of habeas corpus, and to determine, under its exercise, all cases that might arise under the

ordinances of the city. There were many other powers granted by this charter, which were extraordinary in their character; oppressive in their operations, and in direct conflict with the spirit and letter of the Constitution. But such was the desire of both parties in the Legislature to secure the political co-operation of this unprincipled despot and knave, as well as his followers, that all their charters were passed *sub silentio*, and without undergoing even the form of a reading before either House. It is true, the charters were regularly referred to the appropriate standing committees, and that those committees reported favorably to their passage. Yet that furnishes *no excuse* for the action of the two Houses, in granting to a religious sect, powers and privileges, which no other denomination of christians would dare to ask, and which, if they did ask, would most assuredly have had their application neglected. The culpability of those bestowing these charters, is rendered more inexcusable, from the fact that during that session, other religious denominations could scarcely procure a single charter, at the hands of the majority, merely incorporating them into a body capable of holding the real estate upon which their buildings were erected, through the *morbid sensibility* that it favored too much, at this *democratic* period, of a union of Church and State; but Joe Smith, as the founder and Prophet of the Latter Day Saints, could ask and receive any legislative boon he pleased. From the hour that the inhabitants of Nauvoo organized under their charter, established their court, marshalled their Legion into a separate and distinct military corps, from the residue of the militia of the State, and commenced promulgating through the public press at that place, the ordinances which their Common Council passed, under the real or *assumed* powers contained in their charter, the jealousy and well founded fears of the citizens, or at least many of them, were aroused. They feared that, sooner or later, disasters the most lamentable, would result from the importance that had been attached to Joe Smith, and the exercise, as well as abuse, of the powers which the Legislature had clothed him with. The late fatal termination of his, as well as his brother's life, and the consequences leading to it, show, that those fears were not without reasonable foundation.

The contemplated limits of this work will not admit of my going into detail, and exposing as minutely as I deem the importance of the subject demands, the unheard of character of the ordinances passed by the Common Council of Nauvoo, the powers exercised by the Prophet under them, and the length to which he went in obtaining unlimited control over the actions, and I may say *the minds* of his followers. The greatest difficulty I apprehend is, that even in what I shall develop, and which I have obtained from the most reputable and intelligent of those heretofore connected with the "*Saints*," as well as others who know, the reflecting and intelligent portion of the world will look upon these developments with distrust. And when I reflect that it is in the nineteenth century, that the revolting and extraordinary scenes have been enacted, which has marked the progress of Joe Smith since his settlement in Illinois, I ought not to wonder that the *statement of the truth* would be received by those unacquainted with the facts, and beyond the

limits of personal observation, with distrust, if not with entire disbelief.

The great aim of Joseph Smith was evidently to clothe himself with the most unlimited power, civil, military and ecclesiastical, over all who became members of his society. And to that end his whole efforts were put in requisition, from the day of their organization under their charters, down to the hour of his death. The first step taken by him, was to satisfy his people that he had received a revelation from God, disclosing his origin as well as that of his wife, and detailing the events that were to occur, as well as the part he and his descendants were to take, in their consummation. This he succeeded in, and gave the following as the substance of his revelation. He stated that Emma his wife, was of Indian descent, in a line from one of the tribes of Israel. That he (Joseph) was a descendant from Joseph of old through the blood of Ephraim. And that God had appointed and ordained that he, with his descendants, should rule over all Israel, meaning the Latter Day Saints or Mormons, the Indian tribes and ultimately the Jews and Gentiles. That the authority with which God had clothed him, being "*Jure Divino*," extended over all mankind, and was paramount and superior to any Human authority. Joe further stated, that God had revealed to him, that the Indians and Latter Day Saints, under Joe as their King and Ruler, were to conquer the Gentiles, and that their subjection to this authority was to be obtained *by the sword!* From this revelation, he enforced upon them that it was necessary he should be crowned King, and they, believing in the gross imposition, yielded to his edict. Joe was accordingly CROWNED KING under God, over the immediate house of Israel. This ceremony was performed in 1842, by a council of fifty in number, denominated the "ANCIENT OF DAYS." And thenceforward his authority as such was recognized and obeyed by the church and its authority in all respects and under all circumstances. The peculiar attributes of his power, Joe insisted, were—that he could direct the actions of the entire House of Israel—that they were bound to obey his commands, *whatever they might be*—and that finally the whole earth was to become under subjection to him. He further impressed upon the council crowning him, that God's desire was, as revealed to him, (Joe,) that, for the time being, this was to remain a *perfect secret* until God should reveal to the contrary. And accordingly Joe swore them all to present secrecy, *under the penalty of death!* It is also a fact, ascertained beyond controversy, that the Indian tribes of Sacs and Foxes, Siouxs and Potowattamies, were consulted, and their assent obtained previous to the *mock* crowning of this unmitigated Impostor, and that delegations were sent to Nauvoo from each of the above tribes about the time of the ceremony being performed, by the council of fifty. These delegations of Indians were seen by hundreds and hundreds at Nauvoo, but the object of their visitation never was ascertained without the pale of the church, until secessions commenced taking place from the Mormons.

The reader may naturally inquire, how these facts have been ascertained. I state, from the only source possible to derive informa-



tion; that is, from those who aided in the ceremony, but who have since returned to their reason and come out from among this den of wicked and perverse men. It is stated upon the authority of one who was a member of the High Council of the Church, and first council to the Presidency of the Church, a man in whom all (in no way connected with Mormonism,) who have conversed with him, have much confidence. I state unhesitatingly, upon the best authority, that the above facts in regard to the crowning of Joe, the revelation he professed to have received, and his swearing those entrusted with taking part, to secrecy, *under penalty of death*, would all have been proved upon their trial for treason, by at least two witnesses, unless—as I do not believe—they had sworn entirely contrary to what their statements had been, not only to the Council but to the Governor of the State.

All will concede that the power and influence which Joe wielded over the minds, and actions of his followers, must have been unlimited in the extreme, if, as has been shown, he was able to secure his coronation as King, in this land of liberty and equal rights, whose citizens acknowledge no other King than He, in whose hands are the destinies of all nations. Neither can it be denied, such must have been the confidence reposed in him, that no matter what the requisition made of them, if done under his *kingly authority*, and as the Prophet of the Lord, that requisition would be faithfully obeyed. All his actions and conduct since, prove such to be the case. In addition to the power conferred upon him by this coronation, he occupied the highest military station, that of Lieutenant General of the Nauvoo Legion. He was also Mayor of the city, (with the exception of one year that H. Bennett filled that office,) from its organization to the day of his death. He and his Common Council composed the bench that presided in their Municipal Court, and as Mayor he became the chief presiding officer of that court. He was the trustee of the Church of Latter Day Saints, and held in his name the title to their real estate, and was the depository of the funds belonging to the church. In addition to all this, he held the funds of many of his followers, (especially the foreigners,) who came to Nauvoo with money. This fact I ascertained from a source that admits of no cavil or doubt. Under our revenue laws, every person, in surrendering to the assessor a list of his or her property, has to state under oath, if required by the assessor, the amount of cash on hand or the sums loaned out by them. The assessor, for a previous year, informed me that between thirty and forty thousand dollars were listed by different persons in Nauvoo, as being by them deposited with Joseph Smith; and that the sums thus reported, were assessed and taxes collected upon the same. He further stated as his opinion, that not *one half* the sums put in the hands of Joe Smith, by the inhabitants of Nauvoo, were ever reported by them to him. Thus it will be seen, that the church, the military, and the judiciary, as well as the Common Council of Nauvoo, were solely and entirely under his unlimited control. And the first great step towards making him a DESPOT, had been acquired by him, the union of the purse and the sword, and the mingling of the civil and ecclesiasti-



cal governments. Nauvoo was, to all intents and purposes, a separate and distinct Government, acknowledging no superior power to their own, and assuming to themselves the power to make their own laws and administer them in their own way. The character of their ordinances show this beyond controversy.

They have defined by ordinance what shall constitute slander and what shall be the mode of redress and extent of the punishment. They have abridged the freedom of speech, by declaring by ordinance, that if any person *shall speak disrespectfully* of any of the Latter Day Saints, that person shall be liable to prosecution, and upon conviction, shall be fined in a sum not exceeding five hundred dollars, and *imprisoned* for a time not exceeding six months. They have provided by ordinance, that no man should be taken without the limits of the City of Nauvoo, upon any charge or process issuing from any court, either State or Federal, until that person had first been brought before the Municipal Court, by writ of habeas corpus, and his guilt or innocence determined there; and that if the judgment of the court was in favor of the accused, he should be *discharged*. Under this ordinance Joe Smith, when arrested upon process issuing from the Courts of this State, as also upon requisitions from the Governor of Missouri, has caused himself to be taken before the Municipal Court of which *he was the presiding officer*, and **DISCHARGED FROM ARREST!** So also, when a process issuing from the Judge of the United States District Court, for the District of Illinois, against Jeremiah Smith, was served, and said Smith taken into custody, "Joe" had his Mormon namesake taken from the custody of the deputy Marshal, by "habeas corpus," and *discharged* by the Municipal Court. They, also, under a clause in their charter giving them the usual power granted to all city incorporations, "*to define and abate nuisances*," passed an ordinance declaring a public newspaper called the Nauvoo Expositor, a nuisance, and ordered its abatement. Under this ordinance, the civil authorities, aided by a posse of two hundred strong, repaired to the building, where said press and materials was, and destroyed the same in the public streets. This press had issued but one number of the Expositor, and its destruction led to the excitement pervading a portion of our State for the last three weeks, and which resulted in the death of the authors of this high handed outrage upon THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS. They also prepared a criminal code of their own, in which the mode of punishment by death was altered from hanging to *beheading*. This criminal code was submitted to counsel in no way connected with the Mormons, for their inspection and opinions as to its validity; and from one of those counsel, in whose possession it had been, I derived the knowledge of its existence. Other ordinances, equally as obnoxious, and repugnant to the genius and spirit of our republican institutions, have been passed and put in force by the Prophet and his hirelings; but the limits prescribed for this publication will not admit of my going further into detail. I regret my inability to procure a copy of those ordinances, to attach them to this publication. But they cannot be procured, and for reasons best known to the Mormons themselves. I was informed by Gov. Ford, that he had *twice* made application to

the Common Council of the City of Nauvoo, as the Executive of the State of Illinois, for true copies of all their ordinances, but that his applications had proven unsuccessful, and his request was not complied with. That they (the Mormons,) grossly violated the constitution of the State and trampled upon the rights of those who differed from them, whose persons or property were within the limits of Nauvoo, can admit of no doubt. The following extract from the second communication made by Gov. Ford to Joe Smith and his Common Council, previous to their surrender, and dated June 23d, 1844, places this matter beyond controversy. The Governor says:

"I now express to you my opinion, that your conduct in destroying the press, was a very gross outrage upon the laws and liberties of the people. It may have been full of libels, but this did not authorize you to destroy it. There are many newspapers in this State which have been wrongfully abusing me for more than a year; and yet such is my regard for the liberties of the press, and the rights of a free people, in a republican government, that I would shed the last drop of my blood to protect those presses from any illegal violence. You have violated the constitution in at least four particulars. You have violated that part of it which declares that the printing presses shall be free, being responsible for the abuse thereof, and that the truth may be given in evidence. This article of the constitution contemplates, that the proprietors of a libellous press, may be sued for private damage, or may be indicted criminally, and that upon trial, they should have a right to give the truth in evidence. In this case the proprietors have had no notice of the proceeding. The constitution also provides that the people shall be protected against unreasonable searches, and seizure of their property; and "that no man shall be deprived of life, liberty or property, except by the judgment of his peers," (which means a jury trial,) "and the law of the land," which means due process of law, and notice to the accused. You have also violated the constitution, and your own charter, in this: your Council, which has no judicial power, and can only pass ordinances of a general nature, have undertaken to pass judgment as a court, and convict, without jury, a press of being libellous, and a nuisance to the city. The Council at most, could only define a nuisance by general ordinance, and leave it to the courts to determine whether individuals, or particulars accused, come within such definition. The constitution abhors, and will not tolerate the union of legislative and judicial power in the same bodies of magistracy, because, as in this case, they will first make a tyrannical law, and then execute it in a tyrannical manner.

You have also assumed to yourselves more power than you are entitled to, in relation to writs of habeas corpus, under your charter. I know that you have been told by lawyers, for the purpose of gaining your favor, that you have this power to any extent. In this they have deceived you, for their own base purposes. Your charter supposes that you may pass ordinances, a breach of which, will result in the imprisonment of the offender. For the purpose of ensuring more speedy relief to such persons, authority was given

to the Municipal court, to issue writs of habeas corpus in all cases arising under the ordinances of the city. It was never supposed by the legislature, nor can the language of your charter be tortured to mean, that a jurisdiction was intended to be conferred, which would apply to all cases of imprisonment, under the general laws of the State or of the United States, as well as the city ordinances.

It has also been reserved to you to make the discovery, that a newspaper charged to be scurrilous or libellous, may be legally abated or removed, as a nuisance. In no other State, County, City, Town or Territory, in the United States, has ever such a thing been thought of before. Such an act, at this day, would not be tolerated even in England. Just such another act in 1830, hurled the King of France from his throne and caused the imprisonment of four of his principal ministers for life. No civilized country can tolerate such conduct, much less can it be tolerated in this free country of the United States."

I have thus far detailed, in as brief a manner as possible, the progress of the Mormons, and their course generally, with a view to give the reader some idea of the character and conduct of the people of Nauvoo, who had become a terror and a scourge to the old citizens of Hancock. I have not spoken of their legion of armed men numbering from three to four thousand, and who were ready, at a moment's warning, to put any command of the PROPHET into immediate execution. Other publications have made the public acquainted with their strength and organization. I have not spoken of the repeated acts of violence committed by them for the last eighteen months upon the citizens of Hancock, as well as their property, and of the utter impotency to bring them to justice by means of the ordinary process of the law. In another place I will speak of their grievances as in my candid opinion they deserve. I have now arrived at the *immediate cause* of the outbreak which has resulted in stigmatizing Illinois a *third time* with a resort to popular violence for the redress of private grievances.

As before stated, the office of the Nauvoo Expositor was entered on the tenth day of June, 1844, under an ordinance of the Common Council, and the press and materials burnt and destroyed.—The excuse offered for this outrage, was, that it was "*a nuisance*," and that the Legislature had vested the Common Council with the power "to define and abate, by ordinance," nuisances within their incorporated limits. The press and the materials were the property of Wilson and William Law, the two Higbee's, Dr. Foster, and probably one or two others. The proprietors of this press had all been connected with the Mormon Church, and many of them had occupied, under the Prophet, the most exalted and important stations in the church, as well as in the civil and military departments of their city government. From motives which, *they insisted*, were of the purest character, they seceded from the Mormons, and organized themselves into a new and distinct sect. This course, on their part, naturally created a most deadly feud between them and the Prophet. They denounced him for every thing vile; and charged him with nefarious designs, upon the property as well as lives of many of our citizens. Their paper was to be the organ through



which the evils of Mormonism were to be exposed; and the depravity of the Prophet as well as most of his principal men, held up to the public gaze. The Expositor was also an advocate for the unconditional repeal of the Nauvoo charters, insisting that this was absolutely necessary, to guard against a repetition of outrages upon the old citizens of the county, which had been previously committed by the Mormons, under a semblance of *legal authority* conferred upon them by their city charter. The only number which they had issued, was filled with expositions of the conduct of "Joe," and many of his followers, and which showed him to be a debauchee of the most abandoned character, the instigator of the attempt to assassinate Gov. Boggs, and an adept in the commission of almost every crime of magnitude known to our laws. Such was the character of the press and the objects it had in view, which prompted the Common Council of Nauvoo to declare, by ordinance, that it was a nuisance, and to direct its destruction by the City Marshal.

Of the extent of credibility to be attached to the statements and testimony of the seceders, each person must be his own judge. Candor requires of me the exposition, that in many of the grossest outrages perpetrated by the Prophet, they were "*particeps criminis*." Of the benefits resulting from "Joe's" power over the inhabitants of Nauvoo, they were large recipients. In them, great confidence had been reposed by the mass of the Mormons, as well as the Prophet himself, as the different high positions which they occupied fully establishes. And that they joined the Smiths in their crusade against Bennett's exposition of Mormonism, and denunciations of *its falsity*, admits of no doubt. They, however, *now affirm*, that to a great extent, Bennett's statements are entitled to the fullest credence; and that through apprehensions of *their own personal safety*, they were forced to testify against Bennett and in favor of the Prophet. One thing is very evident: in their hatred to those from whom they have seceded, they are implacable. And no unprejudiced mind can escape the conclusion, that they would leave no means unresorted to, within their power, to visit vengeance upon the leaders and principal men among the Mormons.

Many of the charges made against the "Latter Day Saints," have been preferred by seceders, and their testimony alone relied upon to sustain them. A great deal of allowance, therefore, should be made in the weight of their testimony, although I entertain no earthly doubt of the implicit truth of much that they assert concerning those with whom they have formerly been associated. It is too often the case, that the testimony of those implicated in the commission of crime, is forced to be resorted to, in order to insure the punishment of the accomplices of the witnesses. Hence it is not an unfrequent occurrence in our courts of justice, that a pardon is extended to a culprit upon the condition that he turns State's evidence, and upon *his testimony*, though probably the most guilty of all who are accused, the residue are convicted and suffer the penalty of the law. True it is, that this *doubtful expedient* is only resorted to, where other testimony cannot be procured. But when it is re-

sorted to, the public in nine cases out of ten, as well as the courts of justice, repose sufficient confidence in the credibility of such testimony, as to convict and punish. In the case of the Mormons' designs, conduct, and outrages, as well as the extent to which they carry their blasphemy, the public are similarly situated, as in the cases put by me. To a great extent, we have *no means* of acquiring information, save by the testimony of those, who turn States' evidence, or in other words, *secede* from the church and develop what has transpired in their midst, and in the execution of which, the witnesses themselves, may have acted a prominent part. Unless, therefore, credibility to a certain extent *is given* to the testimony of seceders, the public will forever remain in ignorance of the conduct and iniquities of Joe Smith, and his principal men. It is due to the seceders here, to remark, that so far as their statements have come to my knowledge, there is no discrepancy among them. And all seceders with whom I have conversed, from the year 1842, down to the present day, *agree* in their account of the enormities and wickedness of Mormonism as carried out at Nauvoo. These individuals, after the destruction of their press, from threats publicly made in Nauvoo, by the Mormons, against their lives as well as the residue of their property, were compelled with their families to seek a refuge in other places. They consequently removed, generally into different portions of Iowa Territory. The press was destroyed on the tenth day of June, A. D. 1844, and a return was made by the Marshal of Nauvoo, upon the process, by virtue of which its destruction was consummated as follows: "*The within press and type is destroyed and piled according to order, on this tenth day of June, 1844, at about six o'clock, P. M. J. P. Green, C. M.*" I copy this return as evidence furnished by the Mormons themselves, *of their obedience to law, and peaceable disposition!* A few days subsequent to its destruction, the above named individuals proceeded to Carthage, the county scat of Hancock county, entered a complaint and procured a process in the name of the people, from a Justice of the Peace, against the two Smiths and all others interested in the destruction of the press for a riot. This process the Constable served upon a portion of those named in the writ, who immediately procured *the panacea* for all *legal complaints* against any member of this exclusive community—the writ of habeas corpus!! By virtue of it, they were taken before the Municipal Court of Nauvoo, went through a mock trial, and the *worthy impartial disinterested* Judges, rendered the following judgment—"HONORABLY DISCHARGED!!!" Upon the return of the officer to Carthage, and his public declaration that he was unable to serve it in consequence of the resistance of Joe Smith and his forces, a posse of the citizens was ordered in accordance with the provisions of the statute, to aid the officer in the discharge of his duty. Two messengers were also dispatched to the Governor by the citizens of Hancock, informing him of the state of things that existed in Nauvoo, and calling upon him, as the Executive of Illinois, to interpose his authority in aid of the execution of the civil process of the State. The Governor immediately repaired

to Carthage, and on his arrival, found a number of citizens assembled and under arms, but awaiting his orders as commander-in-chief.

The whole of the citizens found under arms, on the arrival of the Governor at Carthage, had been called out by the constables to act as a posse in securing the arrest of the individuals charged with a riot in the destruction of the press, and by General Deming, the commanding officer of the 4th Brigade of Militia, in that section of the county. The order of General Deming was given on the 20th of June, at the request of the civil authorities, in consequence of its having been satisfactorily ascertained, that threats of a most serious nature, had been made by the Smiths, the Mormon leaders, against the towns of Carthage and Warsaw; and a well grounded apprehension, that the force previously obtained by the constables, was wholly inadequate to secure the arrest of the accused, against the forces of the Nauvoo Legion, then marshalled and under arms, to resist the execution of the law. It has been currently reported, and to a great extent credited, that the citizens of Hancock county armed themselves, in the first instance, *as a mob*, and with the design of attacking the Mormons at all hazards. This is not true. No citizen of Hancock armed himself and joined any company or posse, until having first been required so to do by the civil authorities of the county; and it was occupying this position, that they were found by the Executive of Illinois, on the 21st of June, on his arrival at Carthage; and which induced him to sanction what General Deming had done, and express himself in terms of approbation, to many of the citizens, at the readiness with which they obeyed the requisitions of the officers in the vindication of the laws. The number of men thus assembled at Carthage and Warsaw, did not exceed eight hundred, and at no time, was there to exceed seventeen hundred men on the ground. The largest number reported by General Deming, was about fifteen hundred; there were a number, however, who were evidently there "*on their own hook*," and which would, in my opinion, swell the number to at least 1700.

In the mean time the Mormons were far from being idle or inactive. Their city was at once placed in a perfect state of defence. The legion were ordered out and kept under arms. The followers of Joe in the Territories, and other portions of the State, were required to repair to Nauvoo, with all possible despatch. Ammunition and provisions were procured from St. Louis and other places, in large quantities. The city was put under martial law, and persons, as well as property, were forcibly detained, and illegally imprisoned. A strict patrol was kept up throughout the entire city, and all persons upon whose *fidelity to Joe* the slightest suspicion rested, were required to take an oath to obey his commands, and fight in his ranks, and not disclose what had been seen or heard. Orders were also issued to the Legion, to resist to the last, the arrest of any of the persons named in the process issued by the Justice at Carthage. Thus making an open and undisguised resistance to the legal process of the country.

After two or three communications passing from the Governor to the authorities at Nauvoo, he finally succeeded, under a pledge that



the accused should receive his protection as the Executive of the State, in prevailing upon Joe, as well as the residue charged in the writ, to surrender and undergo an examination upon the charge of riot. On their arrival at Carthage, the two Smiths, and the residue, accused of the destruction of the press, waived the examination of witnesses against them, and entered into recognizances in the sum of five hundred dollars each for their appearance at the next term of the Circuit Court of Hancock county. By this act they virtually admitted *their guilt* of the charge preferred against them. Before, however, they had completed their recognizances, a writ was served upon Joseph and Hyrum Smith, upon a charge of TREASON, and they were remanded to jail to await their trial on the next day, when the witnesses would all, as was supposed, be in attendance.

On the 25th of June, and after the arrest of the Smiths, Gov. Ford, with a view of maintaining peace at Nauvoo, and preventing an outbreak on the part of the Mormons, or an attack from the citizens upon them, directed Capt. J. W. Singleton, of Brown county, with his company of sixty men, to repair to Nauvoo, and there remain until further orders. The following is a copy of the order issued to Capt. Singleton :

*Head Quarters, June 25, 1844.*

Special Brigade, Order No. 15.

To CAPTAIN SINGLETON—

You are ordered forthwith to repair with a force of        men under your command to Nauvoo, and there station your forces in an eligible position, there to remain until further ordered. And that you, by such means as your command may afford, maintain order in said city; and perform such other duties as the circumstances may require. And that you take command of the police and forces of said city.

By command of the Governor, Thomas Ford,

M. R. DEMING, Gen. 4th Brigade,

5th Division of the Illinois Militia.

O. C. SKINNER, Aid-de-Camp.

This order is approved by me, June 25, 1844.

THOS. FORD, Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

Captain Singleton with his company, immediately repaired to Nauvoo, and remained there until the very evening upon which the jail at Carthage was attacked and the Smiths killed. During his stay at Nauvoo, Capt. Singleton maintained the utmost peace and order, and by his decision of character, promptness in action, and the strict impartiality with which he discharged his duty, won the confidence and respect of all parties interested.

The examination of the two Smiths and others, upon the charge of riot, occurred on the 25th of June. On the 26th, about the middle of the afternoon, the two Smiths were brought out of jail to answer to the charge of treason against the State of Illinois. The examination was to have taken place at the court house, before two justices of the peace. Before, however, "Joe" would consent to leave the jail, he procured a promise from two of his friends, to walk with him, one on each side of him. In this way he was conducted to the court house, under a guard composed of the Carthage

Greys, who formed a hollow square, with Joe and Hyrum in the middle. The appearance of Joe during his progress to the place of trial, as well as while he was at the court house, was that of a guilty, cowardly culprit. All the bombast, overbearing conduct, and haughty demeanor, that marked his course while in the midst of his followers, had entirely left him. His cheeks were blanched with fear; his eyes were constantly fixed upon the multitude that surrounded him, with a wild vacant stare, as though expecting every moment to be his last; and to me he acted and appeared as one who regarded his doom as sealed. Hyrum Smith was evidently a man of far more moral and physical courage than "Joe;" and his bearing throughout, so far as his conduct came under my observation, during his sojourn at Carthage, warrants this conclusion. The court house was crowded to suffocation, and but a small portion of those collected, could gain admittance. A few moments after the prisoners were brought in, and order could be restored, the justices inquired of the prosecution if they were ready to proceed with the investigation, who replied in the affirmative. The prosecution was conducted by O. C. Skinner, Esq., and Judge Emmons, of Carthage, and Mr. Sharpe, of Warsaw. The defence of the two Smiths, by H. T. Reid, Esq., of Fort Madison, and James W. Wood, of Burlington, both of Iowa Territory. Upon the counsel for the prosecution manifesting their readiness to proceed with the investigation, the attorneys of the Smiths remarked that they were not prepared, and made an application for a continuance, which was granted by the court. The hearing of the investigation was consequently deferred until the 27th, (next day at 12 o'clock,) and subpoenas for some thirty or forty witnesses obtained by the counsel of the accused. The Smiths were then remanded to jail under the same armed force, and in the same manner as they had been brought into court. At the time the investigation was postponed until noon the next day, it was the design of Gov. Ford to have marched the next morning, by eight o'clock, to Nauvoo, with all the forces encamped either at Carthage or Warsaw. One of the justices before whom the investigation was to have taken place, and the one who issued the original process upon the complaint against the Smiths for treason, was R. F. Smith, Esq., of Carthage. This gentleman was the captain of the Carthage Greys, and after the continuance of the cause, receiving orders from the Governor, as the commander-in-chief, to march to Nauvoo in the morning of the day set for the examination, he further postponed the day of investigation from Thursday, the 27th, until Saturday, the 29th inst. This has been made a cause of complaint on the part of one of the counsel for the deceased. An intelligent public, however, will perceive, that under the circumstances, Captain Smith could not have done otherwise. And it is worthy of remark and susceptible of the most *indubitable proof*, that the further postponement of the cause, was not at the time, as is known, complained of by either of the counsel or the accused. But, on the contrary, the two Smiths, so far as they gave any expression in regard to the conduct of the justice, was that of approbation. It gave them further time to consummate an escape, which



I will satisfactorily show before I conclude, they and their friends had in contemplation.

During the whole of the day, (the 26th,) as well as the night, previous to the killing of the Smiths, the greatest excitement prevailed at Carthage. No one could close his ears against the murmurs that ran throughout the entire community. Little squads could be seen at the taverns, at the tents of the soldiers, and in every part of the town, evidently holding confidential communications the one with the other, while a spirit of discontent manifestly pervaded many of these little collections. No one, nor no squad came out and boldly proclaimed their intentions, the one way or the other. But expressions falling from the lips of numbers, there assembled, could leave no other impression upon any sane mind, than that they were determined the Smiths should not escape summary punishment. There were, at Carthage, during this day, but very few of the citizens of Warsaw. The wing of the forces under arms, numbering about five hundred, and comprising the citizens of Warsaw and its vicinity, were encamped at Warsaw; and by the orders of the commanding officer, the nearest they were to approximate Carthage, was at Golden's Point, about midway of the two places. This place they were required to reach by noon, on the 27th, (the day the Smiths were killed,) in order to join the forces from Carthage, on their contemplated march to Nauvoo.

The impression left on my mind, as well as on most others there, with whom I conversed, was, that violence was contemplated towards the Smiths. In a letter I wrote to the Alton Telegraph, dated the 26th, the following passages occur: "Notwithstanding the accumulated wrongs and injuries inflicted upon the citizens by the Mormons, there is a commendable spirit on the part of the former, only to hold the leaders responsible; and the convictions of my mind are, that before they disband, a desperate effort will be made to visit summary punishment upon the two Smiths, and possibly one or two others at Nauvoo." \* \* \* \* "YOU NEED NOT BE AT ALL SURPRISED, TO HEAR AT ANY TIME, OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TWO SMITHS BY THE POPULACE." This letter, it will be remembered, was written at Carthage twenty-eight hours previous to the attack upon the jail. Let us now examine what were the apprehensions of others. In the Nauvoo Neighbor Extra, of July 2d, 1844, giving an account of the death of the two Smiths, three statements are to be found: one signed Willard Richards, John Taylor, Samuel H. Smith; another, H. T. Reid, and a third James W. Woods. In the first statement, the following passage will be found: "In the morning, (the 25th;) we saw the Governor, and he pledged the faith of the State, that we should be protected. Gen. Smith and his brother Hyrum, were arrested by a warrant founded upon the oaths of H. O. Norton and Augustine Spencer, for treason. KNOWING THE THREATS FROM SEVERAL PERSONS, THAT THE TWO SMITHS SHOULD NEVER LEAVE CARTHAGE ALIVE, WE ALL BEGAN TO BE ALARMED for their personal safety." Here, then, is conclusive proof from the Mormons themselves, that on the 25th, they knew of threats being made against the Smiths, and that they were "alarmed for their personal safety." Mr. Reid, one of the counsel for Smiths, in his

statement, says: "On Wednesday afternoon, (26th,) the Governor, in company with one of his friends, visited the prisoners at the jail, and again assured them that they should be protected from violence; and told them that if the troops marched the next morning to Nauvoo, as his Excellency then expected, **THEY SHOULD BE TAKEN ALONG, IN ORDER TO INSURE THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY!!**" This extract speaks for itself. But, to my mind, it appears conclusive, that if no threats from a source entitled to credit, had been made against the Smiths, previous to the afternoon of the 26th, it was wholly superfluous, that the Governor should take them with the main body of the forces to Nauvoo, "*in order to insure their personal safety.*" Mr. Wood, in his statement, uses nearly the same language as his colleague.

Gov. Ford, in his address to the citizens of Illinois, after the death of the Smiths, does not intimate that he had any knowledge of the design of any person or persons to attack the Smiths; but he states *unequivocally*, that he was *satisfied* of a design on the part of some of the troops, if an opportunity offered, to attack Nauvoo. The following is the passage in the Governor's address, to which I allude: "On the morning of the day the deed was committed, we had proposed to march the army, under my command, into Nauvoo; I, however, discovered, on the evening before, that nothing but utter destruction of the city, would satisfy a portion of the troops; and that if we marched into the city, pretexts would not be wanting for commencing hostilities."

The above extracts are given simply for the purpose of showing the state of feeling that existed in the community at large, at Carthage, and to maintain the position assumed by me, that if the "*vox populi*" was any criterion to judge by, an attack upon the Smiths was an inevitable consequence. Less than this, I could not say, in redeeming the pledge made in the commencement of this publication, to give a full and fair exposition of all the facts attending the death of the two Imposters.

On the morning of the 27th, (Thursday,) Gov. Ford called a council of the officers of the companies encamped at Carthage, and which *did not include* any of the Warsaw soldiers, and submitted to them whether, under the circumstances that then existed—the more than probable attack upon Nauvoo if they went there—it would be prudent to proceed in the contemplated march. After a good deal of discussion among the officers, a small majority decided to proceed to Nauvoo. But notwithstanding this result on the part of the majority, Gov. Ford assumed the responsibility of countermanding his previous order to march to that city, and of disbanding all the troops except two companies, selected by him to guard the jail, and a company of horse, sixty in number, that was to act as an escort to him in visiting Nauvoo, for the purpose of addressing the citizens of that place. The troops were accordingly disbanded, and by noon of that day, most of them were on their return to their respective homes, especially those from other counties. This step on the part of the Governor, has been deeply censured on all sides. The troops who were anxious to visit Nauvoo, were displeased in consequence of the disappointment. The Mormons murmured,

because they relied upon these forces (especially the McDonough and Schuyler troops) as their protection. And many of these not present or knowing the circumstances that surrounded the Governor, have denounced the measure as an impolitic one; while others less charitable, and from the basest motives, attribute his course to *design*. I maintain here, as I have through the medium of the press and in several public speeches, that Gov. Ford was justified in the course he took. Facts heretofore detailed in this work, show conclusively, that the highest state of excitement, if not exasperation, pervaded the community assembled at Carthage. Men called out by the authority of law to aid in quelling outbreaks and securing the service of legal process against persons charged with the highest, most revolting crimes, and upon whom the Governor had relied, in maintaining peace, had to some extent become discontented and determined to avenge, by force, the wrongs they or their fellow-citizens had suffered. The seceders from the Mormons, were mostly assembled at Carthage, and several of them acting from the belief, that they were to be murdered by the Mormons, left no opportunity unimproved to influence the public mind to the highest pitch against them. Information in which the most implicit confidence could be placed, was conveyed to the Governor, that an outbreak among the troops was contemplated by a portion of them, and that if they were marched to Nauvoo, an attack upon the inhabitants of that place, was rendered certain. Gen. Deming, the officer in command of the Brigade, gave his opinion to the Governor, that it would be unsafe to march the forces to Nauvoo, and that if it was done, he should be unable to control or manage them. Under such circumstances, can it be doubted, that Gov. Ford pursued the prudent proper course? Had he, in the face of all the warning he had received, not only from the Brigadier General, but from others, that a portion of the troops would attack Nauvoo, if marched there, persevered in his order to visit Nauvoo, and a collision between the troops, or a portion of them, and the Mormons, taken place, in which the lives of hundreds would have been sacrificed, and the destruction of much property ensued, would not the whole people have condemned him for thus blindly leading his forces into danger? Could it not have been said, with the strictest propriety, that Gov. Ford was properly chargeable with the life of every citizen lost, inasmuch as he had, in the face of the deliberate opinion of the Brigadier General, as well as the information of several reputable persons, that an outbreak between the Mormons and the troops was inevitable, persisted in carrying out an order which would have brought the belligerent parties into immediate conflict? Nay, more, could it not have been reasonably inferred, that he desired the destruction of the Mormons and their property, having gone there with a full knowledge that the troops could not be controlled, and that a portion were inflexible in their determination to visit summary punishment upon this modern Sodom? To my mind, it appears most manifest, that the public safety, and the prevention of a disgraceful riot, imperiously called for the countermanding of his previous order. The marching them, under the circumstances, to Nauvoo, would have been just



as politic, as to have sent a child into a powder magazine with a lighted torch.

As soon as Governor Ford disbanded the forces at Carthage, he despatched a messenger to Golden's Point, with an order countermanding his previous order to the Warsaw troops, and directing their return home. Many of them, it is said, returned, while the greater portion took up their line of march in another direction.— This, however, is not stated from personal observation, but given for what it is worth as the current rumor of the day. About noon, on Thursday, the 27th, Gov. Ford left Carthage for Nauvoo, and arrived there between four and five o'clock with the escort of horse before mentioned, and some eight or ten others. The Marshal of the city gave notice, that as soon as the people could be collected together, they would be addressed by the Governor; and in a space of time not exceeding thirty minutes at most, FIVE THOUSAND PERSONS were congregated.

On the opposite corner of the street from the Nauvoo Mansion, (the public house where the Governor and suite was stopping,) stood a small one story frame building, not covered in, and with but few of the rafters up. On the top of this frame, a platform was made of a few rough boards, and from this eminence Gov. Ford addressed the assembled thousands of Mormons. His speech was evidently every thing else than what they had expected from him, and its effect upon them, was by no means satisfactory. They had been led to believe (and not without good cause,) that the Governor was friendly in the extreme to them, and that so far as his Executive interference could go, it would be exerted in their behalf.— This impression, JOE sought to keep up, until within twenty-four hours of his surrender to the authorities of the law. I make this assertion upon the authority of the Rev. Mr. Dodge, formerly of Upper Alton, but now a resident of Burlington. He arrived about midnight at Nauvoo, and passed uninterrupted to the hotel where JOE and his family resided. At the time he went into Nauvoo, he was not aware that the city was under martial law. The next morning at the table, where were assembled the Prophet and many of his prominent men and followers, JOE professed to read a letter he had just received from Gov. Ford, directed to him, (JOE,) in which the Governor gave him renewed assurances of his being his friend, and determination to sustain him. I am satisfied, Gov. Ford never wrote the impostor that letter; and that his object in making the statement he did, in the presence of Mr. Dodge, was, to inspire his people with confidence, and give to himself an apparent influence with the Governor in this melee, which subsequent events show, he did not possess. The Mormons, however, believed that such a letter was in the hands of their Prophet, and that the Governor would favor them in their nefarious designs upon the seceders, as well as the other citizens. They were, therefore, but little prepared for a speech of the character made to them by Gov. Ford. It was firm, decided, unequivocal. He stated to them that they were the aggressors, and the cause of all the excitement then pervading the community: that their destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor, the passage of many of their ordinances, the abuse of the exercise of the Habeas

Corpus Act, and their resisting the service of process, for violations of law, were all illegal, arbitrary, and unjustifiable acts. That their leaders had deceived them in all these things, and warned them against their repetition. He told them plainly and emphatically, of the excitement and prejudice that existed against them in all sections of the country, and again warned them against committing any new act of aggression, which would inevitably result in their extermination, and the probable conflagration of their entire city.— They were admonished by the Governor, that such was the prejudice and excitement against them, that if a conflict was provoked between them, and the citizens, he would be unable to render them as the Executive of Illinois, any protection; and that candor compelled him to make this statement to them, that they might know precisely the ground they occupied and must necessarily occupy, if a collision ensued between them and the citizens. The existence of the DANITE BAND among them, was also alluded to by Gov. Ford, and the purposes for which it was created, descanted upon in terms of merited severity. He also read the names of some seven or eight individuals who were seceders from the Mormons, and who had called upon the Governor for protection from the designs of this murderous band. They were informed that these seceders had stated, that the destruction of their lives had been determined upon by the Prophet, and this Danite Band selected as the persons by whom the requisitions of the Prophet were to be put into execution. Gov. Ford, remarked, that it was not for him to say then, whether he believed these representations or not. But his object in calling the attention of the Mormons to it, was, to tell them, that if either of these persons were assassinated privately or publicly, or the property of either of them destroyed, THE PEOPLE would hold them accountable for the act, and that nothing could prevent, not a thousand but TEN THOUSAND citizens marching down upon them, and driving the whole of them from the borders of the State. It was the reiteration of *undeniable truths*, such as the above, to the Mormons, that Mr. Reid, the counsel of the impostors, denominates in his "*statement of facts*," (?) "*haranguing the peaceful citizens of Nauvoo*." Had the same spirit of candor been dealt out to the Mormons, *years ago*, by those who have been in the habit of "*haranguing*" them for political, as well as sinister purposes, all this excitement would not have existed, and peace and tranquility would have reigned throughout the county of Hancock. After Gov. Ford had concluded his speech to the Mormons, on the evening of the 27th, at Nauvoo, he immediately, together with his escort, took up their march on their return to Carthage; and here, for a season, I must leave the Governor, while the attention of the public is directed to the scene that was enacted at Carthage.

Previous to returning to the attack upon the jail, and the events resulting from that attack, it is important to a correct understanding of the matter, that the reader should be put in possession of the location of the jail, and the situation of the prisoners within it. The jail is a large two story stone building, situated on the outskirts of the town of Carthage, about a quarter of a mile distant from the court house, and in the direction of Warsaw, so that a

person or body of persons, coming from the direction of Warsaw, could approach the jail without entering the densely populated portion of the town, or without being discovered by the citizens in general. A portion of this building was occupied by the jailor and his family, as their residence; and the residue was finished off into cells for the security and safe keeping of those committed for crime, within its walls. After the prisoners had a short time been confined within one of these places of safety, complaint was made to the Governor, by their counsel, that they were treated with unnecessary rigor; and an application was made by the counsel, to the Governor, that their clients might be permitted to occupy a more comfortable, though far less secure portion of the building. The Executive accordingly addressed a note to the officer in charge of the prisoners, *advising* that they be treated with all the leniency, and be made as comfortable as the security of their persons would warrant. They were consequently permitted to occupy a room in the second story of the building, attached to the apartments occupied by and intended for the family of the jailor. The windows to this apartment were not *barred*, but, on the contrary, entirely open, like the windows of any other dwelling.— Within this room the prisoners were confined, their safety being regarded as amply provided for, by the guard which was constantly kept upon duty in and about the jail. Two of the windows to this room, were up at the time of the attack, and a curtain hung before each of them.

A short time previous to the *denouement*, as I am credibly informed, the prisoners, as well as the guard, had been regaling themselves over a bottle of wine furnished by the Prophet, or at his request. But none of them, so far as my information extended, had partaken to excess. Two companies had been left by Gov. Ford, previous to his departure in the morning for Nauvoo, as a guard to secure the safe custody of the prisoners, as well as to protect them in the event of an attempt being made to commit personal violence upon them. One of these companies were the Carthage Greys, and both were under the immediate command of Gen. Deming, accused (whether justly or not, I cannot say,) of being a Jack Mormon, and interested directly in their behalf. From these companies, eight men were alternately detached and stationed as immediate guards at the jail, while the main body were encamped on the public square, a distance of about eighty or one hundred rods.

At about six o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th of June, a body of men numbering from one hundred to one hundred and fifty, disguised by having their faces painted different colors, approached the jail from the direction of Warsaw, and surrounded it. They were armed, and the object of their mission not to be misunderstood. A demand was immediately made upon the guard of eight on duty at the jail, for the delivery of the Smiths, which was promptly refused. A rush was made for the stair case, by a portion of the populace, and the muskets of the guard were instantaneously discharged at them: that they did not take effect, I entertain no reasonable doubt, and, whether intentionally or not, the fair presump-



tion is, from the best information I can obtain, that the guns were fired over the heads of the assailants. The guards in attendance were secured, and the stair case easily gained by those seeking the Smiths, and on reaching the door of the room where the prisoners were confined, an indiscriminate firing took place between the assailed and the assailants. With the confusion and dismay that inevitably existed at the time, it is unreasonable to expect that the fact, of which party fired first, can with any certainty be ascertained. Five minutes to the very extent, did not transpire from the first demand upon the guards for the prisoners, until the deed was committed and the assailants had retreated from the ground. Upon the first discharge of musketry, from those without the room, Hyrum Smith was instantly killed, and Taylor, the editor of the Nauvoo Neighbor, wounded with at least four bullets. Joseph Smith, the Prophet, fired his six barrel revolving pistol three times, and one of the balls took effect in the wrist of a man by the name of Wills, and who was among the assailants, as is generally acknowledged. The Prophet, immediately after discharging his pistol at those within the jail, retreated to the window and sprung upon the sill, with the design, as is believed, of jumping to the ground and attempting an escape. Upon reaching the window and throwing aside the curtain, and perceiving unexpectedly, a large armed force in disguise at that end of the building, upon the ground, he exclaimed, "Oh! my God," when a number of muskets were, with the rapidity of thought, discharged at the unfortunate wretch, five or six of which took effect. He fell head forward to the earth, and was dead, as I am informed by one who examined him immediately on falling, when he struck the ground. He was wounded in the breast by five or six different shots, either of which would, in all human probability, have proved fatal. Hyrum Smith was wounded in the head, one of the balls passing immediately under the eye-ball, another through the neck, and the residue through his body. Dr. Richards, who was also in the same room with the deceased, escaped uninjured, by retreating at the first onset behind the door, and against the wall. There were, in addition to those disguised, as I have been informed, and which information I believe to be correct, about three hundred others who were not disguised, and who remained a short distance from the jail in ambush, as a reserved corps, should further assistance prove necessary. It was at first stoutly denied, and by some is persisted in to this day, that the prisoners were not armed at all. This, however, is a fact reduced to too absolute a certainty to admit of any controversy. It is admitted by the Mormons themselves, that Joe and Hyrum Smith were both armed with revolving pistols. Joe had discharged but three of the barrels of his pistol, as was discovered upon examination after his death. Hyrum's was found upon his person, the barrels all loaded, and of course unused by him. Whether Taylor and Richards were armed is not known, and probably never will be. If they were armed, they would not admit it; but from the fact that their two associates were prepared for an attack with pistols, leaves the inference irresistible, that they also, had adopted the same precautionary measures. How they obtained the arms is of course unexplained. Inasmuch, however,

as their friends had free admission to them during the whole of the time they were in confinement, the legitimate conclusion is, that they were furnished with weapons of defence by those visiting them. On the next day after the attack, I met with a man in Warsaw, by the name of Wills, and heretofore referred to, who informed me he was shot by Joe Smith, in the jail. The wound was not a dangerous one, and my object in alluding to it at all, is only in corroboration of the statement, that the prisoners *were armed* and used them either in defence or in making an attack. This Mr. Wills had formerly been a Mormon preacher, was a seceder from Joe and his impositions, and felt no very friendly disposition towards the sect, much less to those charged with treason and confined in the jail. That there was no doubt of his having been wounded by the discharge of a pistol, fired by the Prophet; he gave me the most unqualified assurance. Two other of the citizens of Hancock, were wounded in the conflict, by the firing from the prisoners, as they maintain, but neither of them dangerously.

So soon as the death of JOSEPH SMITH was ascertained, the assailants withdrew, and returned, as is supposed, to their respective places of abode. The consternation that pervaded the entire community at Carthage, can better be imagined than described. When the attack was first made upon the jail, and the quick successive reports of the rifles heard, the bells of the taverns were rung, and an alarm was raised throughout the town, that the Mormons had surrounded the jail, and were rescuing the prisoners from the custody of its keeper. Many, crediting the report, supposed the vengeance of the followers of JOE would, as soon as he was released, be turned upon the citizens, and that indiscriminate massacre of life, and conflagration of property, would ensue. A few moments, however, only transpired, before the knowledge of the death of the Smith's disabused the public mind, as to the rumor that the Mormons had attacked the jail, though it by no means lessened the consternation and fear of the inhabitants in general. They supposed that as soon as information could be conveyed to Nauvoo, of the death of their two principal men, and the dangerous wounding of the third, the inhabitants of that city would rush, in a spirit of revenge, with the malignity of fiends, upon the towns of Carthage and Warsaw, and that, ere the rising of the morning sun, the "blackness of ashes" would alone mark where they stood, and all of their inhabitants, who should fall within their grasp, would meet the same fate which had been visited upon the Smiths. A messenger was immediately despatched to Gov. Ford, to inform him of what had transpired, and to enable him to escape, while the citizens, with but very few exceptions, were fleeing in every direction, from what they regarded as inevitable destruction, if they remained. The messenger despatched to the Governor, met him about three miles out of the city, on his way back to Carthage, who was requested to return with the escort, and the whole made all convenient haste for the scene of consternation. A despatch, however, was sent to Capt. Singleton, and his company, who were supposed to have remained in Nauvoo, to inform them of what had occurred, with instructions to march without delay to Carthage. He was



met a short distance out of Nauvoo, and increasing the march of his men, arrived the next morning at Carthage. The Mormons did not that evening, hear of the catastrophe that had befallen their leaders, nor was the information imparted to them, until about daylight the next morning. The Governor and his escort, reached Carthage, between ten and eleven o'clock that evening. What he did, on his arrival, I prefer giving in his own language, as taken from his address "*To the people of the State of Illinois,*" under date of June 29th, 1844. In it he says: "*Many of the inhabitants of Carthage had fled with their families; others were prepared to go. I apprehended danger to the settlements, from the sudden fury and passions of the Mormons, and sanctioned their movements in this respect. Gen. Deming volunteered to remain with a few troops, to observe the progress of events, to defend property against small numbers, and with orders to retreat if menaced by a superior force. I decided to proceed immediately to Quincy, to prepare a force sufficient to suppress disorder, in case it should ensue, for the foregoing transactions, or from any other cause.*" The result was a total abandonment of the town of Carthage, during that night, by men, women, and children, saving the handful of persons remaining with Gen. Deming, as sentinels. The public records of the county, were all removed to the neighboring town of Augusta, whither the Governor, as well as most of the citizens, repaired that evening. In the rapid flight that ensued, the cannon, arms, and ammunition of the citizens, were all left at Carthage, and the property of those escaping from imaginary danger, left to chance for its preservation.

Upon the arrival of Captain Singleton's company, at the county seat, their apprehensions were greatly increased by Gen. Deming's information imparted to them; and they, too, conceiving that "*distance lent enchantment to the view,*" proceeded with all convenient haste for their homes in Schuyler county. The captain concluded to repair at his ease to Quincy, whither he directed his steps, and reported himself to the commander-in-chief.

At Warsaw, a somewhat different state of things existed. I reached there about midnight of the same day upon which the killing of the Smiths took place. Col. March, of Alton, and myself, left Nauvoo immediately after the Governor had concluded his speech to the Mormons, and started for Keokuk, by wagon, on the opposite side of the river, in hopes of reaching the packet Boreas, previous to her departure from that place. The roads being bad, we did not reach Keokuk until half-past ten o'clock at night, and found the boat gone. We had been there but a few moments, when I heard the report of a cannon in the direction of Warsaw, and at once supposed it was intended as a signal of triumph, and that the event had occurred, which I felt convinced, would take place twenty-eight hours previous to its occurrence. Anxious to learn the facts, and somewhat in hopes that the Boreas might not have left Warsaw, we procured a skiff and hired a couple of men to row us down the river to that place, a distance of about five miles. We reached our place of destination about midnight, not without, however, being required to "*stand*" several times and report who we were and what was our business, by sentinels placed

upon the outskirts of the town, as well as the most commanding point on the banks of the river. Here, too, I found consternation and alarm pervading, to some extent, the entire community. The events of the tragic scene at Carthage, were soon imparted to me. The troops who had marched from Golden's Point, to Carthage, and back again, that day, had but a short time previous, returned, were very much fatigued, and were partaking of some refreshments which had been prepared for them by a portion of the citizens. Those having families, were congregating the women and children together, on the banks of the Mississippi, with a view of removing them to the little town of Alexandria, on the opposite side of the river. The Boreas lay on the opposite side, and was crowded with families destined for Quincy, as a place of refuge, and determined there to remain, until the result should be known whether Warsaw would be the scene of renewed acts of violence, and their homes laid waste by the torch of an infuriated and unrelenting adversary. The ferry boat was soon crowded with women and children, with what scattering articles of wearing apparel they could collect together in the hurry and excitement of the moment, accompanied by a few of the male citizens, who were sent along to provide them with such accommodations as the place of their refuge would afford. Most of the men remained at their posts at Warsaw, and at once commenced placing their town in as formidable a state of defence, as their numbers, and the quantity of their fire-arms, would admit of. The streets were patrolled by a vigilant guard: sentinels were placed at every point of ingress, on the outskirts of the town: the few pieces of cannon, they had, were stationed at those points, where, it was believed, they would do the most signal service in case of an attack. Several of the merchants had their goods in wagons, ready for a retreat, in the event of the Mormons attacking them with an overpowering force. And all that remained there, were kept constantly under arms, anticipating every moment, a visitation from the Mormons.

I crossed the Mississippi on the ferry boat, containing the families of the citizens, and, at the request of Mr. Rockwell, of Warsaw, addressed them for a few moments, and endeavored, by detailing to them what transpired at Nauvoo, the character of the Governor's address to the citizens of that place, the deportment of the Mormons, and their dejected appearance, to calm their excitement, and impress upon them the convictions of my own mind, that no attack would be made upon them by the Mormons, but that they would remain as a body in their own city, and act only on the defensive. On reaching the opposite shore, I embarked on board the Boreas, and arrived at Quincy the next morning at day light.

When we left Warsaw, great apprehensions were entertained by the citizens there, that Gov. Ford and suite, who were supposed to have encamped, for the night, within a few miles of Nauvoo, as well as Capt. Singleton and his little band of sixty men, known to be stationed in the city of Nauvoo, were in imminent danger of personal violence from the Mormons. It was insisted, on the part of the citizens, that as soon as the news reached the "*Holy City*," of the fall of their two great leaders, their followers, led on by

some unprincipled and daring desperado, in their midst, would at once take vengeance by massacring Gov. Ford and his escort, as also Captain Singleton and his company. A committee, consisting of two of their citizens, Messrs. Roosevelt and Matthews, were accordingly despatched to Quincy, with instructions to seek the assistance of the citizens of that place, to rescue the Governor and others, from what was supposed, by some, to be their danger. Immediately after the boat reached Quincy, the bells of the different churches were at once rang, and in the course of a few minutes, an immense gathering of the people had convened at the court house. Dr. Ralston was appointed chairman of the meeting, when Wm. H. Roosevelt, Esq., one of the committee from Warsaw, was called upon to give a statement of facts to those assembled. Not having heard him, I of course cannot state the substance of his remarks. It was, however, admitted on all hands, that he was very much excited, and the effect of his effort, was evidently such as to impress those whom he addressed, with the belief that danger threatened those of our citizens who were supposed to have encamped either at Nauvoo or in its vicinity. Acting under such impressions, about three hundred of the citizens of Quincy, with commendable alacrity, at once prepared to march to Warsaw, and by eight o'clock that morning, embarked on board the *Borcas*, and proceeded to Warsaw, where they took up their encampment and remained until the Sunday evening following, when, by the advice of the Governor, they returned to Adams county. The officers of the three independent companies of Quincy, proved themselves worthy of the positions they occupied. They had called out their respective companies to maintain, not violate the laws of the land; and resolved that not a blow should be struck by one of them, save under orders from the commander-in-chief, or from those under him. Upon arriving at Warsaw, it was ascertained beyond much doubt, that the Governor, his escort, as well as Captain Singleton's company, were safe, as an express had reached Warsaw from the Governor, about 2 o'clock the night previous, instructing General Knox to march to Carthage with all convenient despatch, with all the forces he could raise. Their greatest solicitude was, therefore, removed. While they were encamped at Carthage, some attempts were made to excite the prejudices of a portion of the Quincy forces, and prevail upon them to aid in the extermination of the Mormons, at any rate. Those efforts, however, were wholly unavailing, as they were all determined to do nothing, save under the authority of the law.

The expectations of the public, may possibly, anticipate a disclosure of the names of the persons connected with the destruction of the Smiths, and the extent to which the citizens, generally, were privy to the affair. To say that I do not know *any* who participated in the attack, would not be true. But the circumstances under which I came in possession of that knowledge, were of that nature, that no inducement on earth, could prompt, or *coerce* me, to divulge their names. Nor can I assert, with any degree of certainty, how far the citizens, generally, are implicated. My individual opinion is, from information derived from the best sources, that the entire communi-



ty of the whole county, with probably not twenty exceptions, were privy to a determination, on the part of some of their number, that the Smiths never should leave the Carthage jail alive. As my great object in this publication is, to impart correct information to the public, I feel constrained from an imperative sense of duty, to give the substance of a statement, in writing, made to Gov. Ford, by one who was an eye-witness, and marched to Warsaw; and the the perusal of which, the Governor has favored me with. The informant of the Governor showed, by his assertions, that there was a calm, deliberate and fixed determination, upon the part of those who were smarting under the injuries inflicted upon them by Joe Smith, to put him and his brother Hyrum out of existence. He states the plan to have been this: (I shall omit names.) On the morning of the 27th, when the forces were on their march to Golden's Point, in the expectation of proceeding to Nauvoo in company with the Carthage wing of the army, it was agreed that twenty men were to be picked from the companies, named in the statement, whose duty it was to have been, to have proceeded to Carthage and assassinate the Smiths, while the residue of the army, under Gov. Ford, were at Nauvoo. The informant of the Governor states, that the arrival of the messenger from his Excellency, countermanding the order of the previous day to march to Nauvoo, and disbanding the forces then at Golden's Point, or on their way thither, destroyed the original design of the manner in which their wishes were to be accomplished. The officers formally disbanded their troops, but requested them to remain for a few moments. They were called to order, when a citizen, (not connected with the troops,) who believed he would be murdered, if the Smiths were allowed to escape addressed them for a short period, in a manner, at least, not calculated to allay their prejudices. After he had concluded, a contrariety of opinion existed as to the course that should be pursued, a portion strenuously insisting that they should return to Warsaw, while the residue as pertinaciously adhered to the views of the first speaker, and insisted upon prompt action. One speaker declared, (as the Governor's informant states,) that they had nothing to expect from the Executive, and that they must either take the matter into their own hands, and avenge their wrongs, or their most implacable enemies would escape. The result of the deliberations was, that a large proportion of those assembled, advanced on their march, while the smaller portion directed their steps "homeward bound." When within five miles or thereabouts, of Carthage, a messenger from that place met the forces, and delivered to one of their number, a letter signed "CARTHAGE GREYS." It stated that now was a beautiful time to do the work—that Gov. Ford and his escort had left for Nauvoo, and that the guard understood the matter perfectly: that their guns would be loaded with blank cartridges, and would be fired over the heads of the assailants of the jail. It also described the manner in which a portion of the guard at the jail, should be seized and held by some of the assailants. This informant further says, that when they arrived on the outskirts of the town, they were met by one of the officers of the Carthage Greys, who, very smilingly, shook hands

with some one or two of the forces, and passed into the rear of them, when an attack was immediately made on the jail, and the deed accomplished. I give this statement for what it is worth, without pretending to vouch in any way for its accuracy. The knowledge of its existence was imparted to me unsolicited; and the respectability of the individual making it to the Executive, vouched for by him to me. If he has stated the facts as they occurred, he has nothing to fear, and the public have a right to be put in possession of them. If he has concocted the story in whole, or in part, and thus sought to blast the reputations of some of the most estimable, wealthy, and intelligent citizens of Hancock county, he deserves, and will, without doubt, receive the execrations of all honorable men. Whether it be true or false, the public will shortly know, from a judicial investigation which I am informed will take place, and in which this individual will doubtless be introduced as a witness.

I have hitherto said but little in regard to Gen. Deming. My reason for this is, I had no confidence whatever in him; from the attempts which I knew he was constantly making while I remained in Carthage, to give this unfortunate affair a political turn, and to impress upon the minds of his superiors, that *the Whigs* were the prime movers throughout the whole of it. And as he had not succeeded in making any body believe his silly, foolish story, he failed in what I regarded a dishonorable scheme for selfish purposes. Still, I feel no other than a desire to place him fairly before the public. At the time the attack was made upon the jail, the General was at his dwelling, and knew nothing of it until all was over. On the arrival of Gov. Ford at Carthage, that night, he consented to remain with a small force as a guard to the property, and to prevent its destruction by small numbers, that might possibly visit the place for that purpose. On the morning of the 28th June, the day subsequent to the affray, the General issued the following order, which was scattered throughout the county:

HEAD QUARTERS, JUNE 28th, 1844.

*To the Citizens of Carthage and Hancock County:*

In pursuance of the order from Gov. Ford, instructing me to the exercise of such discretionary powers, as I may deem necessary for the preservation of the public safety, and the lives and property of our citizens, I hereby invite all citizens to remain at their several homes, in Hancock county, and co-operate with me in establishing tranquility and safety throughout the country. The most efficient means have been put in requisition for concentrating the military forces of the neighboring counties at Carthage, and in twelve hours there will be a sufficient force for the protection of every citizen in the county. I confidently believe, there is no just apprehension of an attack upon any place, by the Mormon citizens of our county. And I hereby strictly command all citizens of Hancock county, to abstain from violence towards the Mormon population, under penalty of the severest inflictions of military law; and in no case, only on the defence.

"The corpses of the murdered men, will be forthwith removed to Nauvoo, with an escort from Head Quarters. Given under my hand, this 28th day of June, 1844, 4 o'clock, A. M."

M. R. DEMING,

Brig. Gen. 4th Brigade and 5th Division.

"It is hoped, the Governor will be at head quarters in a few hours."

After the appearance of the above *proclamation*, a number assembled at Carthage, and in its vicinity, but were within a short period disbanded, by direction of the Governor, as the most efficient means to restore confidence and tranquility throughout the community. In another part of this work, I shall have occasion to recur again to Gen. Deming.

Gov. Ford reached Quincy on Saturday morning, the 29th of June, and made it his head quarters, where he has ever since principally remained. He was much exhausted on his arrival, and apparently was suffering greatly from chagrin, mortification, and regret, at what had occurred. He immediately issued the following address to the people of Illinois, and accompanying order to the militia of the State:

#### TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

I desire to make a brief but true statement of the recent disgraceful affair at Carthage, in regard to the Smiths, so far as circumstances have come to my knowledge. The Smiths, Joseph and Hyrum, have been assassinated in jail, by whom is not known, but will be ascertained. I pledged myself for their safety, and upon the assurance of that pledge, they surrendered as prisoners. The Mormons surrendered the public arms in their possession, and the Nauvoo Legion submitted to the command of Capt. Singleton, of Brown county, deputed for that purpose by me. All these things were required to satisfy the old citizens of Hancock, that the Mormons were peaceably disposed; and to allay jealousy and excitement in their minds. It appears, however, that the compliance of the Mormons with every requisition made upon them, failed of that purpose. The pledge of security to the Smiths, was not given upon my individual responsibility. Before I gave it, I obtained a pledge of honor by an unanimous vote from the officers and men under my command, to sustain me in performing it. If the assassination of the Smiths was committed by any portion of these, they have added treachery to murder, and have done all they could do to disgrace the State, and sully the public honor.

On the morning of the day the deed was committed, we had proposed to march the army, under my command, into Nauvoo. I, however, discovered, on the evening before, that nothing but utter destruction of the city, would satisfy a portion of the troops; and that if we marched into the city, prettexts would not be wanting for commencing hostilities. The Mormons had done every thing required or which ought to have been required of them. Offensive operations on our part would have been as unjust and disgraceful as they would have been impolitic, in the present critical season of the year, the harvest and the crops. For these reasons I decided, in a council of officers, to disband the army, except three companies,



two of which were retained as a guard for the jail. With the other company I marched into Nauvoo, to address the inhabitants there; and tell them what they might expect, in case they designedly or imprudently provoked a war. I performed this duty, as I think plainly and emphatically, and then set out to return to Carthage. When I had marched about three miles, a messenger informed me of the occurrences at Carthage. I hastened on to that place. The guard, it is said, did their duty but were overpowered. Many of the inhabitants of Carthage had fled with their families. Others were prepared to go. I apprehended danger to the settlements from the sudden fury and passion of the Mormons, and sanctioned their movements in this respect.

General Deming volunteered to remain with a few troops, to observe the progress of events, to defend property against small numbers, and with orders to retreat if menaced by a superior force. I decided to proceed immediately to Quincy, to prepare a force, sufficient to suppress disorders, in case it should ensue for the foregoing transactions or from any other cause. I have hopes that the Mormons will make no further difficulties. In this I may be mistaken. The other party may not be satisfied. They may recommence aggression. I am determined to preserve the peace against all breakers of the same, at all hazards. I think, present circumstances warrant the precaution, of having competent force at my disposal, in readiness to march at a moment's warning. My position at Quincy, will enable me to get the earliest intelligence, and to communicate orders with greater celerity.

I have decided to issue the following general orders:

HEAD QUARTERS,  
Quincy, June 29th, 1844. }

It is ordered that the commandants of regiments in the counties of Adams, Marquette, Pike, Brown, Schuyler, Morgan, Scott, Cass, Fulton, and McDonough, and the Regiments composing General Stapp's Brigade, will call their respective Regiments and Battalions together immediately upon the receipt of this order, and proceed by voluntary enlistment to enrol as many men, as can be armed in their respective regiments. They will make arrangements for a campaign of twelve days, and will provide themselves with arms, ammunition, and provisions accordingly, and hold themselves in readiness, immediately to march upon the receipt of further orders.

The independent companies of Riflemen, Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery, in the above named counties, and in the county of Sangamon, will hold themselves in readiness in like manner.

THOMAS. FORD,  
Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

On the 30th, he despatched Captains Hart Fellows and A. Jonas, Esq., to Nauvoo and Warsaw, to ascertain public sentiment, as far as practicable, as to the probability of an attack from the Mormons, or the citizens, with power to disband all forces, if necessary, and to have arrested any persons at either place, who, by language or otherwise, were attempting to excite the people to acts

of violence. They returned on the 3d of July, and made a report to the Governor, which was subsequently read at a public meeting of the citizens of Quincy, wherein they reported every thing quiet at Nauvoo, but a different feeling existing at Warsaw. Previous to their arrival at Nauvoo, the bodies of Joe and Hyrum Smith had been brought in, and consigned to the final resting place of all mankind. The burial took place on Saturday evening, the 29th inst., at about 6 o'clock—the religious ceremonies being performed at their public stand, while the bodies were deposited by a few confidential persons, in some unknown spot. Previous to the death of the Smiths, two tombs had been erected by the direction of Joe, about one mile from the Temple, and in which their bodies were respectively to be deposited after their decease. But this was not done, and the reason assigned for it, was, that the Missourians had offered a reward of a thousand dollars for the head of Joe, and they had concealed his burying place, with a view of preventing his enemies from getting his head. This shallow excuse, doubtless, answered the end that it was intended for, among the superstitious and ignorant of their own sect. The more reasonable supposition, however, is, that the concealing of the place where the bodies rest, is for the purpose of hereafter practising some new scheme of imposition upon the credulity, ignorance and fanaticism of the mass comprising their numbers. The leaders may also be enabled to make capital out of the following coincidence: The press was destroyed by the mob in Nauvoo, as is shown by the return of the officer, at 6 o'clock, P. M.: the Smiths were killed at the same hour: Gov. Ford addressed them at the same hour, and the burial took place at the same time in the evening. But whether they do or not, subsequent events show that the hour selected by Joe for destroying the press, was a most fatal one.

I have now put the public in possession of all the material facts connected with the riot at Nauvoo, the death of its authors, and the subsequent occurrences up to the 3d of July. I now propose to notice one or two objections made to the course of the Executive of Illinois, giving his own reasons for that course; also, to recapitulate hastily, the circumstances relied upon by the citizens of Hancock, in mitigation of the offence they have committed against the laws of their country, and then relieve the patience of the reader.

The serious causes of complaint made by the public, against Gov. Ford, are, first: having pledged to the Smiths and others, his faith, as well as that of the State of Illinois, that they should be protected from personal violence, if they would surrender themselves to be dealt with according to law, that protection should have been extended to them at all hazards; and secondly, his sending the McDonough and Schuyler troops home, and retaining the Carthage Greys as a guard over the prisoners, when had already revolted.

In regard to the first proposition, considered in an abstract point of view, its correctness cannot be questioned. But the facts fairly in regard to this pledge, are not understood, and have not been laid before the public. Joe Smith and his brother, it will be re-



collected, from the 13th day of June, until the night of the 24th of the same month, had been openly resisting the execution of the laws of the land, backed by a military force of from three to four thousand, and avowing a determination not to submit, as all other citizens of the State were required to do, to its process. The charge, and the only charge, preferred against him and his associates, (some fifteen in number,) was for a riot in destroying the press. And the process, the execution of which he was resisting, was the one issued upon this complaint. To aid in its execution, the citizens were first called out as a posse, by the constable, the 4th Brigade, by Gen. Deming, and the aid of the Executive solicited. And not until several communications had been directed by the Governor to the Mormons, in which they were given to understand, that unless submission was made, the forces of the State should be marched down upon them, did they yield. In none of these communications, was any pledge given by the Governor, that they should be protected from personal violence. It was not, so far as I can ascertain, the excuse made by Joe for not surrendering, but he occupied a higher ground, that he was beyond the reach of the law, save as administered by the Municipal Court of the city of Nauvoo, of which he and his associates in guilt, were the presiding officers; consequently it cannot, in truth, be urged that this pledge of personal protection, made by the Governor, was the cause of the surrender. Had Joe Smith and his associates, charged with crime, resisted, upon the ground, that they would be subjected to personal violence, if they went to Carthage, and expressed a perfect willingness to submit to the execution of process, provided their personal safety was guaranteed by the Governor, the case would have been an entirely different one. But, as before asserted, they assumed no such position, and they made a virtue of necessity, and yielded only, when satisfied that an overpowering force would drive them to submission. Much, therefore, of the sympathy bestowed upon them, at their death, under the sanction of this pledge of the Governor, is, in my opinion, undeserved. It was a gratuitous verbal pledge given to the Mormon committee who visited Carthage, and subsequently repeated to the Smiths, after they reached that place, and not made by them previously, a condition of such surrender. At the time the pledge was given, it will also be borne in mind, that it extended only, to the charge preferred against them, that of riot, as no other process was out against them, neither was any other contemplated, so far as the Governor knew. Upon that charge, they underwent a hearing, and were peaceably released, and securely delivered out of the hands of the law, by entering into the required recognizance, to appear at the next term of the court. The pledge extended to the whole fifteen arrested for the riot, and all of them returned safely to Nauvoo, after giving bail, except the two Smiths, arrested for treason; and but for that arrest, they might also have reached their homes in safety. I maintain, therefore, that the pledge did not extend to their personal safety, upon their surrender, on any other charge, than the one preferred against them for riot, and to aid in the execution of, the process, for which the whole forces in attendance were called out.

By some, it has been gravely urged; that the Governor, when he found he could not protect them, should have opened the prison doors, and allowed them to escape. Had he done this, nothing could have prevented his impeachment and conviction. These men were committed by due course of law, to jail, upon a charge of the most serious character known to our laws—TREASON. The punishment, upon conviction, being death, the accused *could not be bailed*. And I should like to know, upon what principle of law, or by what process of reasoning, Gov. Ford, as the Executive of Illinois, could have justified a release of the prisoners. The blow which such a step would have aimed at the judicial tribunals of the country, would have been fraught with far more danger and degradation, than the killing of the Smiths, have inflicted disgrace, either upon the Governor or the State. It would have been an interference of the Executive with the Judicial departments of our State Government, which would have been a far more flagrant violation of the Constitution, than any of which the Smiths had been guilty, and for the perpetration of which, they have forfeited their unprofitable lives. The great error, which Gov. Ford committed, was, in giving this voluntary pledge. The redemption of it, by him, after the arrest for treason, was a contingency placed entirely beyond his power, although, at the time of giving it, he did not know it.

The second, and more serious objection made against him, is the placing the Carthage Greys as a guard over the prisoners, and sending the McDonough and Schuyler troops home, who were supposed to be free from the disaffection and bitterness towards the Mormons, that all the citizens of Hancock undisguisedly entertained. It has openly been asserted, by some, and insinuated by others, both Mormon and Anti-Mormon, that Gov. Ford knew the feelings of the Carthage Greys, towards the Smiths; and as an evidence of this position, the revolt of that company on Tuesday morning, the 25th inst., when the two Smiths were being introduced, by Gen. Deming, to the populace, is relied upon. It has been maintained, that the rebellious spirit, exhibited by this company, *was towards the Smiths*. But such is not the case. It was directed towards Gen. Deming, as the following facts will fully disclose. A great anxiety had been evinced, by the forces collected at Carthage, to see JOE SMITH, and to gratify that curiosity a general rush was made at the tavern, and for the room where he was kept. To dispel the crowd and satisfy all, the Governor remarked, that during the day they should all see him. In obedience to this promise, the troops were drawn up into a line, and Gen. Deming instructed to pass the Smiths along the line under a guard, so that all could see him. Gen. Deming ordered the Carthage Greys to occupy such a position, as made them *an escort*, not a guard, to the two prisoners *charged with treason against their country*, and marching down the line, introduced the Smiths, as "*General Joseph Smith on my right, and General Hyrum Smith on my left.*" This, the Carthage Greys regarded as a direct insult, first, in *introducing two felons* to those who had been called upon to arrest them, and secondly, in their being made *an escort* to the felons thus being introduced. They accordingly, upon the command of their officer, left the

position Gen. Deming placed them in. And for this, they were ordered under arrest. As soon as Gen. Deming gave the order for arrest, Capt. Smith stepped out in front of his men, and enquired "boys, will you stand this?" to which a united "NO," was responded; then, remarked the Captain, "*load with ball cartridges.*" By this time, the Governor, ascertaining the *fracas*, came forward and explained to the Greys, that it was *without his orders* that any introduction had taken place of the Smiths to the soldiers, and that they were regarded as a guard, not as an escort. He further remarked, that the order for their arrest should be countermanded, which was done. After this, on Gen. Deming's passing up and down the line, he was hissed at by the Greys. This is the simple statement of facts in regard to the "*rebellion*" of the Carthage Greys, which clearly shows that all the demonstrations made by them of violence, was towards Gen. Deming, and not towards the Smiths. The conduct of Gen. Deming in *introducing* the Smiths, and *killing* them at that, was reprehensible in the extreme; and showed, on his part, a species of sycophancy to the Mormons, which is every thing else than creditable to him.

I am free to admit, if the "statement of an eye witness," made to Gov. Ford, be true, (and the substance of which I have before given,) that the "Carthage Greys" were most improper and unfit persons to be stationed at the jail as a guard over the Smiths. For that statement shows, that in the killing of the Smiths; the Greys were as deep in the mud as the assailants were in the mire. But the question for every man to determine is, whether Gov. Ford *knew* that they entertained these feelings of hostility. Some other evidence should be introduced to show, on his part, a "*scieuter*," than the revolt of the Greys towards Gen. Deming: that of itself does not, in my opinion, warrant a conclusion against Gov. Ford. With the exception, then, of this outbreak between the *Greys* and Gen. Deming, and the general impression, *that all the citizens* of Hancock county, of which the Greys were a portion, were of one mind towards the Mormons, there is nothing that has been disclosed which would have led Gov. Ford to suppose, that the guard he placed at the jail would prove recreant to their trust, and become accomplices in the destruction of the prisoners.

The reason given by the Governor, for disbanding the McDonough and Schuyler troops, and sending them home, is this: They had for several days been upon duty, with but a short supply of provision, and most of them being farmers, their services were very much required at home. They had grown uneasy, and were anxious to return. And not having the means (our State Treasury being as empty as a contribution box) to procure provisions for the men, if detained any longer, and not apprehending an outbreak, if the troops were kept away from Nauvoo, he concluded to disband them. Thus far they had been provisioned principally by contributions of the citizens. These are the reasons assigned by the Executive, for not retaining troops from the counties of McDonough and Schuyler, as a guard to the jail, instead of the Carthage Greys. And from them each reader must draw his own conclusions.

I now propose to explain the situation of the citizens of Hancock



county, with the Mormons; to enumerate the trials they have suffered from them, and to place fairly before the public, the reasons assigned by themselves, for their resort to violence, which has brought upon them the anathemas of the united press, and the denunciations of the entire public. The death of the two Smiths, has been alleged, to be a deliberate, cold blood murder, without cause or provocation, and rendered doubly odious from the fact that they were under the protection of the law. Many have gone still further, and stigmatized it as the foulest of all mobs we have ever had in the Union. Far, very far is it from my design to approve in the remotest degree of a resort, under any circumstances, to mob violence, for the redress of public or private grievances. I am of the number, who maintain that there is *no such thing* as a justification for a resort to popular violence. My convictions are, that a man, or a community, had better, far better smart under the most oppressive grievances, if the law furnishes to him no redress, than resort to popular outbreak to correct the evil complained of. And I frankly admit that the greatest danger of a civil war, and the destruction of our Republican institutions, is to be apprehended from the mob spirit that, for the last twelve or fifteen years, has swept over this entire Union; and the *indirect* approbation it has met with from many in the communities where it has raged. Yet, with these convictions firmly established in my own mind, I shall not be deterred from doing justice to the citizens of Hancock, though, by so doing, I may subject myself to the unjust imputation of favoring what has been done. I insist, then, from the facts within my knowledge, that the killing of the Smiths at Carthage, was not fraught with half the odium, of the late riot in Philadelphia; the killing of Lovejoy at Alton, or the burning of the negro at St. Louis. My time will not admit of it, or I could demonstrate this proposition beyond successful controversy. The statement of the situation of the people of Hancock, will bring nearly every unprejudiced mind to the same conclusion.

Since the foundation of the Mormon sect in Western New York, in the year 1830, down to the present time, all experience has shown that the members of this sect could not, *in peace*, reside with other citizens. Why this is so, is a matter easily explained. The founders of the sect, comprising the Prophet, his brothers, and parents, were unprincipled, depraved and shiftless. Instead of resorting to habits of industry, for their maintenance, they relied upon *imposition* as the means of acquiring their daily bread. They consequently professed to be "money finders," or "money diggers;" and Joe was the *Magician* who, by the aid of a charmed stone, he professed to be in possession of, that the hidden treasures of the earth were to be found. The following certificates of character, made by many of the most reputable citizens in Palmyra, and Manchester, New York, sustain most fully, my assertions concerning Joe Smith, as well as his parents:

PALMYRA, December 4, 1833.

"We, the undersigned, have been acquainted with the Smith family for a number of years, while they resided near this place, and we have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them DESTI-



TUTE OF THAT MORAL CHARACTER, which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in *digging for hidden treasures*. Joseph Smith, Sr., and his son Joseph, were in particular, considered ENTIRELY DESTITUTE OF MORAL CHARACTER, AND ADDICTED TO VICIOUS HABITS. And in reference to all, with whom we were acquainted, that have embraced Mormonism, from this neighborhood, we are compelled to say, were very visionary, and MOST OF THEM DESTITUTE OF MORAL CHARACTER, and without influence in this community; and this may account why they were permitted to go on with their impositions undisturbed. \* \*

Geo. N. Williams,	Clark Robinson,	Lemuel Durfee,
E. S. Townsend,	Henry P. Alger,	C. E. Thayer,
G. W. Anderson,	L. Williams,	Geo. W. Crosby,
H. P. Thayer,	Levi Thayer,	R. S. Williams,
P. Sexton,	M. Butterfield,	S. P. Seymour,
D. S. Jackways,	John Hurburt,	H. Linnell,
Jas. Quener,	S. Ackley,	Josiah Rice,
Jesse Townsend,	Richard D. Clark,	Th. P. Baldwin,
John Sothington,	Durfey Chase,	Wells Anderson,
Philo Durfee,	Giles S. Ely,	R. W. Smith,
Pelatah West,	Henry Jessup,	Linus North,
Thos. Rogers, Jr.,	Wm. Parke,	Josiah Francis,
Amos Hollister,	G. A. Hathaway,	David G. Ely,
H. K. Jerome,	G. Beckwith,	Lewis Foster,
Hiram Payne,	P. Grandin,	L. Hurd,
Joel Thayer,	C. D. Robinson,	Asabel Millard.
A. Ensworth,	Israel F. Chilson,	

MANCHESTER, N. Y., November 3, 1838.

We, the undersigned, being personally acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sr., with whom the celebrated Gold Bible, so called, originated, state: That they were not only A LAZY, INDOLENT SET OF MEN, BUT ALSO INTEMPERATE; AND THEIR WORD WAS NOT TO BE DEPENDED UPON.

Pardon Butts,	Warden A. Reed,	Hiram Smith,
James Gee,	Abel Chase,	A. H. Wentworth,
Joseph Fish,	Horace N. Barnes,	Silvester Worden.
Alfred Stafford,	Moses C. Smith,	

The above certificates were procured after the Mormons removed to the State of Ohio, from New York, and with a view of placing the people on their guard, against men who were known to be of abandoned and dangerous characters. The reputation of the two Smiths did not improve any in Ohio; and after swindling the public out of a large amount of money, (as Joe's bankrupt schedule, filed in this State, shows,) they left by the force of public opinion, and sought a home in the western portion of Missouri. Their conduct here, was even worse than it had been in New York or Ohio. And as Joe increased in strength, his vicious and depraved habits became more manifest. I have already

spoken of his conduct in Missouri, and of his standing indicted, in that State, for the crimes of theft, arson, burglary, murder and treason. These facts *must satisfy* any reflecting mind, *why* he has, for the last twenty years, been unable to reside long, in any one place, at peace with the residue of the community. Since their residence in Illinois, and the disgraceful, humiliating conduct of politicians towards them, they have grown still more overbearing in their conduct towards those not of their sect, and far more unblushing in their depredations upon society. It is a fact as notorious as that Joe Smith once lived, that many of the most hardened felons, desperate horse thieves, and dangerous men, known in this State, have fled to Nauvoo, become members of the sect of Mormons, and been received in full fellowship, with a church *professing to be christian*. It is also known that fugitives from justice from other portions of the Union, have fled to Nauvoo, been received by JOE into the church, and screened from arrest, when the officers of the law sought them. Witness the case of Jeremiah Smith, indicted in the District of Columbia, for swindling the Government out of three thousand dollars, who, after diligent search, was traced to Nauvoo, and when arrested by the Deputy Marshal of this District, was taken from him by JOE, and discharged. Innumerable other instances might be named, were it deemed necessary. All that is designed by me, is, to show the public the character of the leaders, as well as many of the members of the church of "Latter Day Saints," that they may form their own opinion what security *an honest community* has, when surrounded by a sect of the description of Joe Smith. This of itself, ought to satisfy an unprejudiced mind, that the situation of the old citizens of Hancock is every thing else but desirable, or even to be tolerated. It is no part of my design to charge the whole community of Mormons, with possessing hearts as vicious and depraved, as those the two Smiths are shown to have had. From personal observation, I am convinced that there are many poor, unfortunate, deluded beings there, who are naturally honest, and who, under the influence of good example and upright leaders, would "act well their part" in society. That class, however, are, generally speaking, of weak intellect, to a great extent uneducated, and easily made the dupes of the vicious. Their implicit obedience to JOE, in all the requisitions he makes of them, whether legal or illegal, honest or dishonest, exemplifies, in a striking manner, the truth of the axiom, that "evil communication corrupts good manners." On the other hand, there are a large number of the most hardened and abandoned men in the community, who have gone there, assumed the garb of religion, become the confidential friends of the Prophet, and all for the purpose of acquiring an easy livelihood by dishonest means. Is it not a self-evident proposition, that any sect, or body of men, confiding in such leaders, and following implicitly their directions, cannot be otherwise than a scourge to any community, whose daily walk in life is honest and upright?

I have shown, in a previous portion of this work, the character of the ordinances passed by the City Council of Nauvoo, in which they assumed to themselves legislative, as well as judicial powers.

Those ordinances have abridged the "freedom of speech," destroyed the "liberty of the press;" deprived man of his "liberty and property," without a resort "to the judgment of his peers and the law of the land," and have provided that no member of their sect, shall undergo a trial for the commission of crime, before any Court, State or Federal, except the Municipal Court of the city of Nauvoo. So far, then, from any old citizen of Hancock county, having legal redress against any Mormon, for the commission of any depredation upon his property, or person, that inestimable, constitutional remedy was taken from them. To resort to the Municipal Court of Nauvoo, for legal redress, would be a perfect farce, for the experience of their whole administration of justice, shows that the judges of that august body, were governed by one fixed undeviating rule, to release a Mormon, charged with crime by any other court, no matter how evident the guilt of the accused. These things the old citizens have borne long and patiently, and might have done so still longer, but for the recent outrages visited upon them, by this band of evil minded persons. Within the last eighteen months, their property has been stolen, time and time again, and the depredators, through the influence of these bad men, have gone "unwhipped of justice." They have felt safe in the possession of nothing, unless it was under guards, or lock and key. They have seen a stab made at the reputation and life of one of their most estimable citizens, by JOE SMITH, and which if it had proved successful, would have incarcerated the citizen for a few months, in the walls of the building where JOE met his death, and ultimately made him suffer an ignominious death upon the gallows. The facts are these: A gentleman by the name of Simpson, from the State of Kentucky, owned a large body of land in Hancock county, which he was anxious to dispose of, and for that purpose removed to that county. The only emigration to Hancock was Mormons, and to them alone, could he sell, if he sold at all. This brought him in contact with JOE, who assumed to himself the right to sell exclusively, to those of his faith, who should migrate to Nauvoo. The person in question underselling JOE, however, had succeeded in disposing of some tracts of land to Mormons. Joe determined to rid himself of so troublesome a rival, and adopted this plan: A most atrocious murder was committed, by whom no one knew, and, until the secrets of that worse than Spanish Inquisition, "THE DANITE BAND," are revealed, no one in all human probability ever will know. JOE SMITH, however, entered a complaint before a Mormon Justice of the Peace, against the person who had been selling lands, to the detriment of Joe's interests, and in his affidavit swore that this person was guilty of the murder, as he, Joe, had good reason to believe. The individual was arrested, and most fortunately, was able to show by a combination of circumstances, that with any honest jury would far have outweighed the testimony of all the Mormons in Nauvoo, that he could not be the murderer. Joe seeing the position he was in, took his own affidavit from the Justice and destroyed it, and then unsolicited, but with the design of giving himself the appearance of much honesty, swore before the justice that he believed the very man he himself had accused of being the murderer,



WAS INNOCENT, AND THAT HE HAD NEVER BELIEVED HIM GUILTY. Here, then, to rid himself of a person whose reputation was without blemish, and whose only offending to his *Kingship*, was, that he had disposed of his own property to individuals to whom Joe desired to sell, he had committed the crime of perjury, and unjustly sought to deprive an innocent man of his life. Where is the safety and protection, for either life or property, when surrounded by men of the vile and totally depraved characters of these Mormon leaders? And is there no mitigation for those who, when they appeal but in vain to the laws of their country for redress, fall back upon that first law of nature, "*self-preservation*?"

JOE SMITH, at the last term of the Hancock Circuit Court, was indicted for the perjury referred to in the above case; and in any other county than a Mormon one, or before any jury but one selected from the body of his own followers, would have been convicted.

Another grievance of the old citizens, and which, to some extent, led to the killing of the two Smiths, was this: There was, in the town of Warsaw, a newspaper published called the "*Warsaw Signal*." It was published and edited by Thos. C. Sharpe, Esq., of that place, who had invariably, since his connection with the press, exposed the iniquities of the prominent Mormons, and warred against their arbitrary exercise, and flagrant abuse of the powers conferred upon them by the Legislature of Illinois. After the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor, by Joe and Hyrum Smith, the latter publicly threatened the life of Mr. Sharpe, and offered to any body of men, AS A REWARD, his best farm, if they would attack and destroy the office and materials of Mr. Sharpe in Warsaw. This was done in the most public manner, and the reward offered by Hyrum Smith, for the commission of crime, was unrebuked by the entire community in which he lived. The citizens of Carthage and Warsaw, having ascertained beyond possibility of doubt, that these threats had been made against both the life and the property of one of their most estimable citizens; and knowing, from sad experience, *the will* of the Mormon populace to carry into execution the designs of their leaders, very properly entertained the most serious apprehensions for their safety. They accordingly, as one of the initiatory steps of defence, first called a public meeting at Warsaw, and adopted a preamble and resolutions expressive of their feelings and of the course they intended to pursue for their protection. Subsequently, a mass meeting was convened at Carthage on the 13th of June, 1844, at which the body of the most intelligent, influential, substantial citizens of the county, gave their attendance. At this mass meeting, the preamble and resolutions adopted at the Warsaw meeting, were read and unanimously adopted. From them we select the following, embracing all that is material to inform the reader of the threats made against the life and property of Sharpe:

"And WHEREAS, Hyrum Smith did, in presence of the City Council, and the citizens of Nauvoo, offer a reward for the destruction of the printing press and the materials of the *Warsaw Signal*—a newspaper also opposed to his interest,



And WHEREAS, the liberty of the press is one of the cardinal principles of our government, firmly guaranteed by the several constitutions of the States, as well as the United States.

And WHEREAS, Hyrum Smith has, within the last week, publicly threatened the life of one of our valuable citizens—Thos. C. Sharpe, the editor of the Signal; therefore, be it solemnly

*Resolved*, By the citizens of Warsaw, in public meeting assembled, that we view the recent ordinance of the city of Nauvoo, and the proceedings thereunder, as an outrage of an alarming character, revolutionary and tyrannical in its tendency, and, being under color of law, as calculated to subvert and destroy, in the minds of the community, all reliance on law.

*Resolved*, That as a community, we feel anxious, when possible, to redress our grievances by legal remedies; but the time has now arrived, when the law has ceased to be a protection to our lives and property: a mob at Nauvoo, under a city ordinance, has violated the highest privilege in our government, and to seek redress in the ordinary mode, would be utterly ineffectual.

*Resolved*, That the public threat made in the Council of the city, not only to destroy our printing press, but to take the life of its editor, is sufficient, in connection with the recent outrage, to command the efforts and the services of every good citizen, to put an immediate stop to the career of the mad Prophet and his demoniac ooadjutors. We must not only defend ourselves from danger; but we must resolutely carry the war into the enemy's camp. We do, therefore, declare, that we will sustain our press and the editor, at all hazards: that we will take full vengeance—terrible vengeance, should the lives of any of our citizens be lost in the effort: that we hold ourselves, at all times, in readiness to co-operate with our fellow-citizens in this State, Missouri and Iowa, to exterminate, utterly exterminate, the wicked and abominable Mormon leaders, the authors of our troubles."

It was under the state of feeling exhibited in the foregoing proceedings, and which had been published to the world, that the arrest of the persons took place, connected with the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor. The apprehension of personal safety, was not confined to Mr. Sharpe, but to many others of the best citizens of the county. And in the sad event, which subsequently occurred, many who participated in it, acted from the firm conviction, that if the two Smiths escaped, and returned to Nauvoo, many of the old citizens would have to forfeit their lives. They consequently acted upon the hypothesis, that either the Smiths would escape, and all who had taken a prominent part against them, be murdered by the Mormons, or the two Smiths must be put to death. These, *I know*, are the impulses under which many acted, who were concerned in the massacre at the jail; and that they further believed, if these two leaders were out of the way, no other man or set of men, could spring up in the community at Nauvoo, who would have control sufficiently over the will of the populace, as to direct them in the perpetration of outrages against others, as Joe and Hyrum Smith had done. By many it has been supposed, that the Smiths were secured, and if found

guilty, would ultimately be put to death, as that is the punishment for treason. I have no idea myself, that the charge of treason could have been sustained against them. This, the citizens, on the day of the death of the impostors, began also to fear. They further ascertained, that on that night, an escape of the prisoners was to be consummated; and to my mind, it appears perfectly plain, they had determined to prevent it. The evidence, relied upon by them, to show that an escape was intended, is this: During the day, (27th,) Col. Markham, a leading Mormon in Nauvoo, and a man, which subsequent events have shown to be of the most desperate character, called upon O. C. Skinner, Esq., of Carthage, the aid-de-camp of Gen. Deming, and requested a permit from him to pass the guard at the jail, and carry a bundle of clothing to the Smiths. Mr. Skinner instructed the guard to examine the bundle, and if it contained nothing but clothing, to pass it up to the prisoners.— Col. Markham went to the jail, and after subjecting the bundle to inspection, wished to take it up in person to the Messrs. Smiths. This was refused by the guard, upon the ground, that the order from the “aid-de-camp,” was only to pass the bundle to the prisoners, not to permit Col. Markham to see them. Upon this, Colonel Markham returned to Mr. Skinner, in a violent passion, and insisted upon taking the bundle in person to the Smiths. Mr. Skinner persisted in his refusal to allow Markham entrance into the jail; and the bundle, upon examination, proved to be *English short clothes*, &c. Both of the Smiths were clad as Americans, with the best of garments. And the question naturally presents itself to every candid mind, what could the prisoners have wanted with old fashioned English clothing, such as is worn by the peasantry, but for the purpose of disguise, in effecting an escape? The above facts I had personally from Mr. Skinner. Another fact, which places the matter beyond dispute, is, that Dr. Taylor, as well as an other Mormon, who conducted the bodies of the Smiths to Nauvoo, informed several persons, and among them, a man by the name of Goodrich, now residing in Quincy, that they had made arrangements for their escape on the next night following the death of Joe and Hyrum Smith. This is vouched for to me, in a letter from a gentleman of the highest character and responsibility, and who could have no motive in deceiving me.

Another proposition here naturally presents itself to the mind, and which I deem worthy of note; that is, what good reason was there for the persons engaged in, or privy to, the death of the Smiths, for believing if they (the prisoners) escaped, any of the citizens would be put to death for the part they had taken in causing the arrest of the Prophet and his brother? The answer to the proposition is furnished by the Mormons themselves, and out of their own mouths must they stand condemned before an intelligent public. Sidney Rigdon, their candidate for the Vice Presidency, and one of the most prominent men in their midst, delivered, before the community of Mormons, a **FOURTH OF JULY ADDRESS**. In it, he recurred to what he termed the persecutions of the Saints; and as a warning for the future, to all those who might array themselves in a hostile attitude towards the Mormons, used the follow-

ing emphatic and significant language: "We take God and all the holy angels to witness this day, that we warn all men in the name of Jesus Christ, to come on us no more forever. *The man, or the set of men, who attempts it, does it at the expense of their lives.* And that mob that comes on us to disturb us, it shall be between us and them, a war of extermination; for we will *follow them till the last drop of their blood is spilled, or else they will have to exterminate us; for we will carry the seal of war to their own houses, and their own families, and one party or the other, shall be utterly destroyed.* ¶ No man shall be at liberty to come into our streets to threaten us with mobs, for if he does, he shall atone for it before he leaves the place: neither shall he be at liberty to villify and slander us, for suffer it we will not in this place. We, therefore, take all men to record this day, as did our fathers. And we pledge this day, to one another, our fortunes, our lives, and our sacred honors, to be delivered from the persecutions which we have had to endure, for ages past. *Neither will we indulge any man or set of men, in instituting law suits against us, to cheat us out of our just rights; if they attempt it, we say woe be unto them.*" ¶

The above declarations, made in sincerity, and propagated by the Mormons throughout the community, as their rule of action, clearly indicate what would have been their course in the event of the Smiths getting back among the Mormons. The proceedings commenced against them, for riot, treason, perjury, adultery, fornication, &c. &c., at Carthage, would have been proclaimed by the accused, in the language of Sidney Rigdon, "*vexatious law suits;*" and the "**WOE BE UNTO THEM,**" would have been visited upon the citizens, by the destruction of life, and the conflagration of their property. There was no safety to the citizens, if the Smiths escaped, and there is but little safety to them now. Not that I apprehend a united outbreak at present, on the part of the Mormons, but from their threats since the death of the Smiths, the revengeful disposition of such men as O. P. Rockwell and Col. Markham, their recklessness of character, and the well known participation of the former, in the attempted assassination of Gov. Boggs, by the direction of Joe Smith, leaves a well grounded assurance, that private assassination, and concealed destruction of property, will most assuredly ensue, whenever the opportunity presents itself to any of the "**Danite Band.**"

I cannot better describe the characters of Rockwell and Markham, than by detailing the course they pursued after the bodies of the Smiths were brought into Nauvoo. I derived this information from a Mr. Jackson, of New Orleans, who spent four or five days at Nauvoo, after the death of the Smiths, simply to gratify his curiosity. He has no interest whatever in Illinois, and was here on a journey of recreation. Rockwell took the ground openly, that the murder of the two Smiths was a well digested, and systematically arranged plan; that Gov. Ford knew all about it, and promoted it. He furnished as a reason, that the Governor professed to come to Nauvoo to hunt for counterfeiters and bogus money; but he came there, spent an hour in abusing them on the stump, and left without making any examination. That the whole



object of this visit was to be at Nauvoo, out of the way, while the murder was perpetrated at Carthage. And that if the best General in the Union, had desired to take the lives of the two Smiths, and at the same time conceal his action or participation in it, he could not have done it more successfully. Mr. Jackson further informed me, that if the advice and conduct of Rockwell had been listened to and followed, both Warsaw and Carthage would have been laid waste, in less than twenty-four hours after the killing was known at Nauvoo. Col. Markham aids and abets Rockwell, in his incendiary design of impressing upon the Mormons the idea, that Gov. Ford was privy to the murder, by making the following statement, which Gov. Ford has assured me is an unqualified falsehood. Markham asserts, that on the morning of the day upon which the two Smiths were shot, he went into the jail to see them, and on his coming out, he was accosted by the citizens around the jail, and in the town, with very abusive language, and that several told him before midnight of that day, they meant to have his life, as well as that of the Smiths. That he went to the quarters of Gov. Ford and reported to him the threats that had been made against his own life, as well as that of the Smiths, and that the only reply the Governor made to him was, "*it was the whiskey that spoke and not the men.*" The design of Rockwell and Markham cannot be misapprehended. They are determined, if possible, so to work upon the minds of some of their populace, as to cause the assassination of Gov. Ford. This was not only the opinion of Mr. Jackson of New Orleans, but it is that of other gentlemen who have been there, and watched the workings of these two evil spirits. Another fact which warrants this conclusion, is the following affidavit, which was made and transmitted to Gov. Ford, and which is similar in import, to threats that have been made by a number of other Mormons. Taken in connexion with the course and language of O. P. Rockwell and Col. Markham towards Gov. Ford, it leaves but little doubt as to *their wishes*, if they can muster the courage to carry their designs into execution.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
Hancock county. } ss.

William Waddell, being duly sworn, says: that he has just returned from Knox county: that on his road to Knox county, he met with a man, who said to him that he was a Mormon and was not ashamed to own it: that Gov. Ford had acted wrong, and that he was determined on killing him: that they were strong enough to conquer the State, and that they were determined to do it: that they would burn Carthage, and kill all those who had joined Ford in the mob. Another man beyond this place, endeavored to get this affiant to join a mob. That on returning, he met two men armed with pistols and dirks, who stopped this affiant and searched him, by examining his pockets, and asked him whether he had any intelligence verbal or written, and demanded it: that they would not communicate what their business was: that afterwards, he met three men on the prairie, who stopped him, and asked him many questions. They were well armed, and stated that OLD FORD had caused the Smiths



and Taylor to be killed, and they were determined to kill him, (Ford.) That these things took place in places where there was no inhabitants, and further this deponent saith not.

WILLIAM WADDLE.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 29th day of June, A. D. 1844.  
O. C. SKINNER, Master in Chancery.

Such is a faint history of the character and designs of the Mormon leaders.

There is one other reason assigned by the press, as well as the public, for stigmatising the death of the Smiths as a "*cowardly, cold blooded murder*," that deserves a passing notice. It is that the deceased could have been reached and punished by law. Were this supposition correct, the conclusion to be drawn from it would be self-evident. But it is unfortunately not the case. Every branch of the civil government of Hancock county was under the control of the Mormons, and a conviction rendered impossible. The only way that indictments were found against Joe Smith at the last term of the Hancock Circuit Court, for perjury, adultery and fornication, was this: The County Commissioner's Court, which selects the grand and petit jury, and which is composed of three members, consisted of one Mormon, a Jack Mormon, and an anti-Mormon, or old citizen. The Jack Mormon growing alarmed at the increasing outrages committed by the Mormons against all the laws of society, at the term of the County Commissioner's Court immediately preceding the term of the Circuit Court at which the indictments were found, joined the County Commissioner who was one of the old citizens, and selected a grand and petit jury, the majority of whom were from the body of the old citizens. The result was, that the grand jury, according to the testimony before them, found the bills of indictment against "Joe." Under the practice of the State of Illinois, process would issue during vacation, returnable *to the next term of the Court*, or if there was any danger of escape, a *capias* would issue instanter. But the defendant would have a right, unless confined in jail, to continue his case until the next term of the Court. This secured Smith against a trial until this fall. In the meantime the August election comes off, at which there is to be elected a County Commissioner for Hancock, in the place of the member of the court who is an anti-Mormon. The Mormons hold a large majority in that county, and the result would be the selection of another strong Mormon, which would make the Court stand two Mormon and one Jack Mormon. At the September term of the County Commissioner's Court, the panel of grand and petit jurors would be selected to serve at the fall term of the Circuit Court. And the result would show, that both the grand and petit jurors would be nine-tenths Mormons. Before this grand jury of Mormons, the complaints against the two Smiths, for riot in the destruction of the press, treason, &c., would go. And no man in his senses can shut his eyes to the fact, that no bills of indictment would be found against them upon any charge. In this way they were placed entirely beyond the reach of law, as they must be indicted in the county where the offence was committed, or not at all. This

the counsel of the Smiths, as well as the prisoners themselves, well knew, and it accounts satisfactorily for the readiness with which they waived the examination, and entered into recognizance for their appearance at court. The whole of them *knew* it was the last of it, and that by Joe having his minions in office as County Commissioners, Sheriff, Clerk of the Circuit Court, &c. &c., they *could* and *would* successfully defeat the ends of justice. The advantage which all his principal men had, in this respect, will appear most manifest from the following fact: An individual owed a large amount in the city of St. Louis and failed. Previous to his failing he transferred a large amount of property to his father, or some other near connexion, and then turned Mormon. The fraud was so palpable, that the creditors filed a bill in chancery to set aside the conveyances. Testimony was taken in the cause, and on its hearing, the fraud was made to appear so manifest, that the counsel of the defendants *refused to address the jury*. One of the defendants, nothing daunted at the course of his counsel, remarked to him, "*you need have no fears, the jury will stand ten for me, to two against me.*" The jury retired and after a long absence came into court and stated their inability to agree, when they were discharged, and upon inquiry, as the defendant had anticipated, they stood ten for finding a verdict for the defendants, and two for the complainants. This was stated to me by one of the most prominent members of the bar in the city of Quincy, who was engaged in the cause. The reason why the defendants were able to judge so accurately of what would be their decision, even before retiring from the jury box, was, THAT TEN OF THE JURY WERE MORMONS and two of them old citizens. With a state of things like this, every reasonable man must see and acknowledge, that there was no such thing in Hancock county as *legal redress* for any citizen of that county when his opponent was a Mormon. The records of the court of Hancock show that in any contested case between a Mormon and an anti-Mormon, there is scarcely a solitary exception, but what the Mormon succeeded. O. C. Skinner, Esq., of Carthage, who has done a great deal of business for the Mormons, asserts publicly, that it was only necessary to inform a Mormon what he must prove, to succeed, and the testimony was always forthcoming.

The idea of such a state of things existing in *any country*, is revolting in the extreme; much more so, however, when a portion of our own Republican Government is shown to be the theatre of so unjust and oppressive a state of society. That it does exist, admits of no more doubt than that there is a sect called Mormons. And that the old citizens of Hancock have, for months and months, been the victims of such oppression, is equally true. Yet, I repeat, even under such a state of things, it was no justification for the killing of the Smiths; although I do insist, it goes far in mitigation, and removes a great deal of the odium which, under a different state of things, would have attached to it.

The public are now in possession of all the material facts leading to, and surrounding the unlawful killing of two as wickedly depraved men, as ever disgraced the human family. I have endeavored to do justice to all parties, and to place their situations fairly

before the public. The task has been an unpleasant one, assumed with reluctance, and from the pressure of other engagements having paramount claims upon my time, but imperfectly, and to myself unsatisfactorily discharged. Knowing, however, the deep solicitude that would be felt on all hands, to obtain the facts in the case, and judging from the experience of the past, that greatly exaggerated accounts would go forth as to the unfortunate affair, I felt a disposition to contribute my feeble aid in correcting the errors into which many had, and still more would fall, by placing, in as succinct a form as possible, all the facts before the people. This I have done honestly and fearlessly.

Illinois, it is true, has had another foul stain indelibly fastened upon her escutcheon, by this second outbreak of popular violence. But knowing the facts as I do, of the causes that led to the murder of Lovejoy, as well as that of the Smiths, candor constrains me to say, that the former was as far more atrocious than the latter, as it is possible for one species of crime to be greater than another. Would to God, for the honor, the credit, the prosperity of the State, neither had disgraced its annals.

By some, it may be considered, that I have spoken unnecessarily harsh of the two Smiths, and especially of Joe. I do not think that I have. The most obnoxious and licentious traits in his character, I have studiously refrained from alluding to, with a view of excluding from these pages every thing like obscenity; but which, if I had attempted to speak of, in candor, I should have been compelled to have introduced. My only regret is, that duty has driven me to speak as plainly as I have. A desire to avoid wounding the feelings of his wife, if no other consideration, has had its influence upon me in letting him off as easy as possible. Though he has outraged every feeling of decency and humanity, in the gratification of his beastly propensities, which has caused his wife three different times to separate from him, (as I am informed;) yet, from a forgiving disposition and the hope of reformation, she was induced to return to his polluted embrace, and remain steadfast to him unto the end; verifying, by so doing, the truth of the beautiful expression of the poet, that—

“ Like ivy, woman’s love will cling,  
Too often, round a worthless thing.”

His sins, however, should not be visited upon her. She is a female of intelligence, and can do much towards dispelling the delusion that heretofore has so densely beclouded the minds of the Mormons. In accomplishing this, she will confer an inestimable blessing upon the community in which she lives, and may prove the means of preventing an immense deal of bloodshed, and destruction of property. A different course, will attach much of the odium of her late husband’s character to her own.

In conclusion, I have only to add, that every sentence I have penned, has been under a deep sense of the responsibility I have assumed to the public. And that whatever may be the judgment they shall pass upon these pages, there is upon them

“ No line which dying, I would wish to blot.”











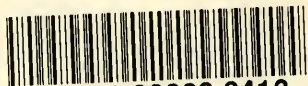
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