

THE TRUE LATTER DAY SAINTS' HERALD.

"WHEN THE RIGHTEOUS ARE IN AUTHORITY, THE PEOPLE REJOICE; BUT WHEN THE WICKED BEARETH RULE, THE PEOPLE MOURN."—*Prov. 29: 2.*

"HEarken TO THE WORD OF THE LORD, FOR THERE SHALL NOT ANY MAN AMONG YOU HAVE SAVE IT BE ONE WIFE; AND CONCUBINES HE SHALL HAVE NONE."—*Book of Mormon.*

Vol. 19.

PLANO, ILL., JANUARY 1, 1872.

No. 1.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ELDER ZENOS H. GURLEY, SEN'R,

BY MARK H. FORSCUTT.

There could not well have fallen to my lot a task at once more pleasing, and yet more painful, than that now assumed in response to the wish of the estimable man whose life-history I purpose here to briefly sketch.

Elder Zenos H. Gurley, Senior, was widely and favorably known as a man; and his name will be honored with a place among the names of the worthies of the ages, even though no pen of earth should trace the outlines of his generous and earnest nature, as that of one who attained to the highest possible dignity,—a witness, an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I cannot add lustre to his character by the exercise of my feeble descriptive powers, as his biographer; I would not detract therefrom, if I could. It is only with the leading features that peculiarly distinguished him through life that I have to do; the general outlines only of his characteristics can be drawn.

Zenos H. Gurley was born in the town of Bridgewater, Oneida Co., New York, on the 29th day of May, A. D., 1801.

His father died before Zenos was born. The birth of our lamented brother was the occasion of added care to a widowed and heart-stricken mother. Providence wisely ordered it well for

him in giving to him for a mother a pious and God-fearing woman, who, as years advanced, sought to instill into his youthful mind the principles of honor and integrity, and the love for Deity which subsequently made of him a suitable subject of those intuitive and spiritual influences without which true spiritual excellence is not attainable.

Under the fostering care and religious instructions given him by his mother, he very early developed a spiritualistic turn of mind which never forsook him to the day of his death. Often has the writer heard him describe, with tearful eyes and a voice tremulant with emotion, the testimonies of the goodness of God to him while he was yet a youth.

In some of these visitations, he was informed in an indirect manner of his future calling, and the purposes of God concerning him. I noted down the particulars of some of these visitations while they were being related by the good old man, and will give them in as plain and ungarnished a manner as the one who received them gave them to me.

At one time, while a boy, he was very seriously afflicted, though his life was not despaired of. As he lay in a suffering condition, a temporary ease was granted him. He fell into a deep slumber and had the following manifestation.

He dreamed that the last time had been ushered in, and that the end of the

existing state of things was at hand. While pondering on this matter, some one told him that John the Baptist was preaching on the approaching end. Being an ardent admirer of the old prophet, he made diligent preparation, and went some six miles to the place where he heard that the prophet was preaching. On arriving there, he met with the old prophet, and held conversation with him. The prophet said to him, "You will now get better."—Br. Gurley responded, "I shall see you again," to which the prophet replied,—"Not here, but hereafter."

During this interview there was presented before the mind of Br. Gurley a strange and ominous vision, and he was made aware that this vision was an unfoldment to him of the fulfillment of the words of the Lord to Jeremiah, as found recorded in his 30th chapter, and from the 2nd to the 8th verses. The words are these:

"Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people, Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

"And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel, and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord; we have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him."

He remained there long enough to hear the word preached by John the Baptist and his companion; but he did not know who the latter was. He was very much blessed and comforted

by what he heard, and received the ministration of the Holy Ghost.

He was raised from his sickness, and lived to tell the writer and many others of the goodness of the Lord then shown to him.

Subsequently to this, he was favored with another dream, which troubled him for some time, but was made very clear to him in after life.

He saw a building that he felt very desirous to enter. He approached to within about eight feet from the door, when it was opened, and he essayed to enter. At this moment, a man attracted his attention who told him that a crazy man was in there, and he must not go in. His anxiety overcame the scruples occasioned by the warning given him, and he entered the building. He there saw a man dark in complexion and well-proportioned, and learned that he was a "fortune-teller."

The education of Br. Gurley had been like that of most of us who have been tutored by teachers of the current theology (!) to believe that there are no prophets upon the earth, and will not be any more; that all who claim to be prophets are but fortune-tellers, or impostors, irresponsible and unreliable persons, unworthy of confidence. Hence he accepted the testimony concerning this man,—that he was a fortune-teller. The thought then occurred to him to ask this man to foretell his future.—The fortune-teller did so, and truthfully too.

The dream troubled him for years. When he first learned of the latter day work, he discovered that the teachings of his earlier life respecting prophets were erroneous, and accepted with joy the message from heaven as presented to him by the elders. Long prior to this he had been "converted" by religious teachings. He had been educated in the Presbyterian faith, but subsequently sat under the Methodist ministry.

He joined the Wesleyan Methodist

Church when he was about twenty-seven years of age, and became an exhorter among that body.

It evidently was not the design of the Lord that Br. Gurley should remain long with this body—a greater calling than that of an exhorter among the Methodists was prepared for him. He, too, by the peculiar manifestations of which those given in this memoir are examples, was prepared for that calling.

Having removed to Williamsburgh, in Upper Canada, he was led to go and hear the theory preached by the Latter Day Saints, and his mind was soon absorbed by the wonderful but glorious news of communication being once more opened between the heavens and the earth; between the dwellers in the high and holy spheres of bliss, and the dwellers in mortality; between God and his prophet, Joseph Smith.

The remembrances of his earlier manifestations were brought vividly before him; and he earnestly sought for a testimony from God in relation to the message he had heard. Nor did he seek in vain. The same God who had revealed to him his will in the past, was not the God to forsake him now. He knew and loved his servant, and made known to him, sufficiently clearly to satisfy that servant, that the message he had heard was one of truth. Satisfied on this point, Br. Gurley applied for baptism, and on the 1st day of April, 1837, was baptized by Elder James Blakeslee; adopted into the family of God. His joy was like that many others have experienced, and with his very intense nature, so superlatively great, that his past religious experiences, good and happyifying though they had been, seemed but as the twilight's glimmer compared with the brilliancy of the noon-day's sun.

His fervor was such that his whole delight seemed to be in declaring the good news to those with whom he associated. His zeal attracted the at-

tention of the church, and in the June following his baptism, he was ordained by Elders John E. Page and H. G. Sherwood,* and commissioned as an elder to preach the sacred truths of the gospel of Christ. He then commenced that active effort for the cause which, with few exceptions, ever afterwards distinguished him.

After a few months of faithful labor in the Master's cause, he removed to Far West, Caldwell county, Missouri, where the headquarters of the church were then established, and was there in 1838, ordained into the Seventys' Quorum.

He shared in the sorrows that came upon the Church in Caldwell county, was expatriated by mob violence for the cause of Christ, with many others, a wanderer from his home traveling to seek a refuge in Illinois. But his faith in the ultimate triumph of right was unshaken; and his spirits were unbroken.

He visited Nauvoo, and became acquainted with the leading men of the church, by whom he was esteemed for his faithfulness and fidelity to the great work of the last days, of which he was a fearless and tolerably able advocate. He settled at La Harpe about twenty-two miles from Nauvoo, where he is still remembered with pleasant feelings by some of the old settlers.

At the time of the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, at Carthage, in 1844, Br. Gurley was still a resident of La Harpe, and would have accompanied them to Carthage, but for a remark of Hyrum, that the presence of too many of the brethren might excite undue apprehension, which induced him to remain. He took dinner with them before they went, and ever afterwards dwelt upon that fact as an episode in

* In the Editorial of *Herald* announcing his death, Br. James Blakeslee is represented as having ordained him—the Church Record so states; but Elder Gurley informed the writer that this is a mistake. Br. Blakeslee baptized and confirmed him; but Elders Page and Sherwood ordained him.

his life; so intense was his love for these men of God.

Soon after the news of the terrible tragedy reached Nauvoo, he was informed of it by elder Jacob Gates, and at once assumed the sorry duty of traveling among the saints, informing them of the murder, in performing which duty he spent the whole night.

The next morning, on returning to his home at La Harpe, there was opened before him

A VISION OF THE THREE GLORIES.

The first of these glories seemed to "circle from sky to sky," using the narrator's own language. The second was above the first; the third above the second; but all were grand beyond the power of mortal expression. Looking earnestly again at the circle of the first glory, he perceived that it was draped in mourning. He noticed two men, one standing above the other, and the one who was above told the other that the inhabitants of the earth had slain the Lord's prophet.

This vision satisfied Br. Gurley that Joseph died in favor with God, and he has stated that in confirmation of the testimony he then received, he has since seen Joseph, in vision, in a glorified state.

When the twelve and a large number of the gathered portion of the church went west, not being satisfied with their movements, and refusing to accompany them, Br. Gurley moved to Joe Davis county, Illinois, where he resided a few years, mourning Zion's desolation.

He was subsequently wrought upon to preach the gospel, but did not know under whose administration he should labor. To go after the twelve, he could not. In this dilemma, he resolved to go to Voree, and investigate Mr. Strang's claims to the prophetic office and leadership of the church. This resolve he executed. He heard Mr. Strang preach on priesthood, and

told the writer that he still thought that sermon was the ablest discourse on that subject he had ever heard.

While with Mr. Strang, he states that he saw, in vision, the spirit of the Evil One upon him; but the arguments and doctrines of Mr. Strang seemed so good, that he condemned the vision as an effort of the Evil One to bias him against the truth. He had been troubled with the query, "How can there be a true living church of Christ on earth, and yet no inspired prophet?" and this query was still in his mind, when he was impressed with the idea of Mr. Strang's claims being correctly founded. That Mr. Strang was possessed of a wrong spirit, he could not submit to the thought of, and yet acknowledge his claims. He remained with the adherents of Mr. Strang for a few months, and accepted a mission to the East, which he filled.

TO BE CONTINUED.

"THE DYING THIEF."

Was he a Baptized Believer of the Gospel?

BY ELDER T. W. SMITH.

The case of the penitent thief, as he is often called, is brought forward very frequently by the opponents of the doctrine of the essentiality of baptism in securing remission of sins, and consequently salvation, as an irrefutable argument against that doctrine.

The opponents say, "The thief could not possibly comply with that ordinance, being then nailed to the cross; and remaining so nailed till he expired; and, further, as Jesus declares that he should be with him in Paradise that day, it is evident that he was forgiven, and accepted by the Savior as an heir of the Celestial Kingdom." To these positions I desire to offer no objection particularly; for I believe that the promise of the Savior was equivalent

ing ages." Is it not made plain by this confession that he might not write accurately, and that no reliance can be placed on any of his assertions concerning the first day, or any other observances in the first century, especially those which are not plainly and unequivocally described in the New Testament?

Mosheim says in the same chapter:

"Those, however, who affirm, that in the times of the apostles, or soon after, the fourth and sixth days of the week were observed as fasts, are not, it must be acknowledged, destitute of specious arguments in favor of their opinion."

Does not this confession also indicate in connection with the preceding, that nothing but conjecture, unreliability, and uncertainty characterizes all ancient histories concerning the apostolic church, excepting the New Testament?

Do not the contradictions in those histories show that many of them contain many willful misrepresentations, so that no reliance can consistently be placed on any of them? Does not Mosheim also contradict many of his own assertions concerning the assertions of the (so called) fathers?

Mosheim says, (as W. W. B. quotes), that the first day "was observed *universally* throughout the Christian churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers." Does not Mosheim contradict this assertion in forthwith saying that "The *seventh* day of the week was also observed as a festival?" Mosheim does not tell us who "the most credible writers" are. Who are they? Are they not the New Testament writers, and have I not shown that they uniformly described the first day by that name alone, and uniformly represented it as the day after the Sabbath, and *not the Sabbath*? Are not these "the united testimonies of the most credible writers," or should we give the preference to Apocryphal writings and contradictory records whose authorship is altogether an un-

certainty, and which were not written by divine authority? Have I not shown by numerous quotations from *one chapter only*, of Mosheim's History, that nearly all his assertions in what I have quoted are diametrically opposed to the faith of the church which contends for the faith once delivered to the saints?

TO BE CONTINUED.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ELDER ZENOS H. GURLEY, SEN'R,

BY MARK H. FORSCUTT.

[Continued from page 4.]

After his return from his mission, he removed to Wisconsin, where he commenced and continued his preaching with such success that he raised up a church, Elder Hiram P. Brown being associated with him. This branch numbered twenty-three members, and was named Zarahemla. The Spirit was manifested in vision to him here, showing him that the Spiritual Gifts would be given to the branch. In his vision he saw and heard Reuben Newkirk speaking in tongues, and as a result of this vision and his faith in its source, he ventured a prophecy that the gifts would be received, and that Br. Reuben Newkirk would be the first elder to receive them, which was subsequently fulfilled.

When these gifts commenced to be manifested, the faith of Br. Gurley in Mr. Strang, which had been somewhat shaken before, began to decline.

In the meantime, Jason W. Briggs, who had been with a number of others a believer in the claims of Wm. Smith to the presidency of the church, had been shown in vision the error of Mr. Smith's claims, and the purpose of the Lord to raise up a prophet from the seed of Joseph the martyr. Elder Briggs had made this known to some

others, among them Br. David Powell, who went to Zarahemla, especially to visit Br. Gurley, and represent what the Lord had revealed to Br. Jason. Br. Gurley, though in a measure dissatisfied with Mr. Strang, defended his claim for some time; but ultimately submitted to the more convincing arguments Br. Powell was enabled to bring to bear on the question.

During the time of the controversy, Br. Gurley made it a subject of prayer, and received help that contributed in no small degree to settle his mind into a conviction favorable to Elder Powell's mission.

Subsequently to this, as he was reading the second chapter of Isaiah, there yet lingering a fear behind that Mr. Strang might have some foundation for his claims, the last verse, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" was very forcibly impressed upon his mind, and the voice of the Spirit to him was, "Arise and preach the gospel, and the Lord will raise up a prophet to finish his work."

At receiving this manifestation, Reuben Newkirk and he counselled together, and agreed to renounce all who then claimed to be prophets, and take the Bible, Book of Mormon, Book of Covenants, and the Holy Spirit for their guide.

The "gifts" were given to the church at Zarahemla, where Br. Gurley continued to preach with all the ardor and energy peculiar to his nature. Among the testimonies received by these gifts, was one that "The Lord in his own due time would raise up and bring forth a son of Joseph the martyr to lead the church."

The heart of our beloved brother was made glad, (and while I write this the image of the dear old man is before me, as I saw the tears roll down his furrowed cheeks, and listened to his broken utterances as he related this circumstance to me), glad beyond his

power to describe, on learning that his daughter Julia was at a neighbor's house, speaking in tongues. He at once started with almost feverish anxiety to arrive at the spot ere she should be through. He reached the house, and there he heard her little tongue uttering the praises of God, and prophesying in an unknown tongue. Can we wonder that his emotions almost overpowered him? Such a circumstance would have created strange sensations in a father's heart less impassional and emotional than his. But while he listened, her speaking ceased; and then came forth from her childish voice the melody of song in such sweetness, that though she sung in a tongue she had not learned, and one that he could not understand, he entered the house with feelings too deep for my humble pen to describe. I sacredly draw the veil, and leave him there, with the pleasing thought that "Verily out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God hath perfected praise."

When the music of inspiration ceased, the worthy servant of the Lord requested that all should bow in reverential prayer to Deity. They did so, and his surcharged heart gave utterance to such richness and fullness of sentiment as such hearts only can express.

Most of the little branch believed this testimony, but a few seemed to doubt it, and thought it improbable, as there seemed to be no indications, from what they had learned, of it being fulfilled; yet even those who doubted the testimony desired to believe it, desired to see it sustained by the fulfillment of its promise, and said that if it came to pass, they would never again doubt the Latter Day work—how faithfully each of these has exemplified an undoubting trust, and unwavering confidence in that work, each alone can tell, or must be judged by him who knoweth all things.

The history of Spiritual manifestations in earlier days of the church was

repeated at Zarahemla. "When the sons of God came together, Satan came also" is written in one of the oldest of books, and whenever the Spirit has manifested its presence by gifts among the saints, to any great degree, the opposite influence has simulated his gifts, and sought to impose false manifestations upon the people. Zarahemla was no exception in this regard. Before however the saints were left to be preyed upon by the deceptive influence of simulated gifts, and pretended revelations, they were warned by the true gifts of the Spirit that false influences would come to deceive them, and if possible lead them astray.

Among the rest came a transmigrator, who claimed to be several of the old prophets. He had been Joseph and the Savior of the nations from famine; he then came as Moses and delivered Israel; he subsequently came in other characters, and finally as Christ. He was now again on earth, as Christ, to lead the church out of trial and darkness into conquest and light. This strange being wore a coat of many colors, and was no doubt a prey to his own hallucinations, as well as to the spirits of darkness. Being forewarned against these manifest errors, the saints were preserved from the snares laid by the enemy of souls to ensnare them. During these manifestations, Br. Gurley was among the most earnest of those who sought to guard the little flock against imposture; whatever he saw to be wrong he opposed with great zeal, and with equal zeal defended and advocated what he saw to be right. If he erred in respect to spiritual manifestations, he erred in judgment, not from design.

Long before the Reorganization was thought of; yes, even while the old organization was existing under the presidency of the "First Joseph," Br. Gurley had a very pertinent intimation of the part he would be required to perform in the preparation of this later work.

In Joseph's day, he filled a mission at La Harpe, in which such success attended his ministry that he went to the water every morning to baptize those who might come to demand baptism at his hands, and during this mission he baptized fifty-two saints in one week. As he was going to the water one morning, he had

A VISION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHING IN THE LAND OF JUDEA.

He saw the old prophet standing addressing the people, and listened to his inspiring address. While enwrapped in vision, and absorbed with what he saw, and with what he heard from the prophet, these words were spoken to him, "Your calling is like his, to prepare the way." Br. Gurley was astonished, and replied, "There is no way to be prepared." The language was repeated to him, until he had heard the message three times, "Your calling is like his to prepare the way;" but it was a mystery to our brother, and remained so for many years.

The vision departed, and he went on to the water, where he baptized seventeen persons.

After the prophet Joseph's death, and during the days of darkness that came upon the church, Br. Gurley was very much exercised in mind; and at one time agreed with Br. M. Higbee and some others, to have a day of fasting and prayer, that they might learn what the mind of the Lord was concerning his work, and their duty in connection therewith. The day appointed came, and was sacredly observed. They met, and earnestly prayed to the Lord to show them their duty; and their hearts were gladdened by the gift of tongues through Sister Moore. In the interpretation given, Br. Gurley was told that he was "Ordained of God to do a special work." This testimony, in connection with the vision he had in La Harpe, was not understood by him until the

commencement of the great work of the Reorganization of the Church of Christ.

After the visit of Elder David Powell, Elder Gurley appointed a day for the Zarahemla branch to meet, and acknowledge the testimony of the Spirit concerning the seed of Joseph the martyr.

To Latter Day Saints, one portion of his prayer, which it had been agreed upon by those present should be offered, was, and still is, and will be of paramount interest; and that was that Deity should be importuned to make known to them satisfactorily, whom he had selected to be the successor of Joseph Smith, the martyr, in the prophetic office and presidency of the church. That he should be selected from the seed of the martyr, they had learned from the revelation to Jason W. Briggs, and from other testimonies; but which of his sons should be the one selected, they knew not.

Their prayer was heard and answered, and the voice of the Spirit declared "*The successor of Joseph Smith is Joseph Smith, the son of Joseph Smith the prophet. It is his right by lineage, saith the Lord your God.*"

Julia, the daughter of our good brother was the first to receive the gift of tongues in the Reorganized Church, and Sister Emma Newkirk, who received the gift the same evening, was the second.

When the day appointed for the Zarahemla branch to meet and acknowledge the seed of the martyr arrived, Joseph Smith was acknowledged the legal heir to the Presidency of the church. James J. Strang, to whose organization the Zarahemla branch had before this belonged, was formally rejected, and with him all living aspirants to the Presidency, except Joseph Smith.

This step was not taken hastily, nor without previous thought and earnest prayer, and the confidence of those who

had met for the purpose of inaugurating it, was very materially strengthened at the very opening of the services. While singing the opening hymn, the Holy Spirit was very sensibly felt, and when they bowed in prayer the very presence of the Holy One of Israel seemed to be with them.

When the opening services were over, the congregation was addressed by Elder Gurley, who called upon all who were willing to renounce J. J. Strang and all other aspirants to the presidency of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and to acknowledge the seed of Joseph Smith to be raised and brought forth in the due time of the Lord to lead Israel, to arise, *and the entire congregation arose.*

Nor was this action unsustained. The gifts of the Spirit were for the first time poured out in that branch in public meeting. The branch had existed nearly a year under Mr. Strang's administration; but no endorsement had been given by the Lord to them by spiritual manifestations. No sooner did they acknowledge the proposed new organization, and reject those existing, than God acknowledged the act. Some sung in tongues, and all were made happy.

Thus under our lamented brother, was established publicly and acknowledged providentially the principles on which the Reorganized Church was founded, and on which it still exists—the inspired records its law, the Holy Spirit its guide, the eldest son of the seed of its first president its earthly head.

The news spread to other parts, and the hearts of Brn. Jason, Powell, and many others, were made glad that God was indeed preparing the way for the redemption of afflicted Zion.

The following June the Brn. met in Conference at Newark, Rock County, Wisconsin, and recognized themselves as a body acknowledging the First Organization, rejecting all subsequent

leaders since the first Joseph, and looking for the Lord to raise up from his seed the future president of the church.

No special organization of the church was effected till April, 1853, at which time a conference was held at Blanchardsville, Wisconsin, at the Zarahemla branch. Seven apostles were then chosen, among whom was Elder Gurley. At this conference, there came to our brother's memory the vision of the two men whom he saw preaching the gospel, before named in

this sketch, one of whom he learned was John the Baptist; but the other he did not then know. But as the vision recurred to him, he recognized as the other man whom he had *then* seen, as the man whom he *now* saw presiding over the conference, and who was destined to represent the legal heir in that capacity, until he should come forth at the bidding of the Lord;—this man was Brother Jason W. Briggs, the present president of the quorum of apostles.

True Latter Day Saints' Herald.

PLANO, ILL., JANUARY 15TH, 1872.

JOSEPH SMITH, EDITOR.

M. H. FORSCUTT, ASSISTANT EDITOR.

THE SITUATION.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21.]

The setting up and running of printing presses, and the issuing of newspapers, periodicals and books. What can we write in reference to these measures, which really form but one, for the setting up of printing presses comprises all the rest; newspapers, periodicals and books being children of the brain and the press.

The church deemed it advisable at a very early day to purchase a press; and it was made a powerful auxiliary to the preaching of the word. It was insisted upon that there should be freedom of the press. Persecution arose, the causes of which we do not care to enquire as we have before stated, and people and press were successively driven from Kirtland, and from Missouri. At Nauvoo the aid of the press was again invoked; the "Times and Seasons," "Nauvoo Neighbor," and "Gospel Reflector" succeeded the "Evening and Morning Star," the "Messenger and Advocate," and the "Elders' Journal." The "Millennial Star" was begun in England, and still continues, we believe. This bringing into the service of the church, the labor and the results of the "types" and "printers' ink," was a correct and judicious measure; and while legitimately employed, these agents were powerful for good. There came a time when these agents were not used for the promulgation of the "gospel of peace;" but for the purposes of a wordy defence against attack from offensive