

# TIMES AND SEASONS.

CITY OF NAUVOO,

FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1842.

## LADIES' RELIEF SOCIETY.

A society has lately been formed by the ladies of Nauvoo for the relief of the poor, the destitute, the widow and the orphan; and for the exercise of all benevolent purposes. The society is known by the name of the "Ladies' Relief Society of the City of Nauvoo;" and was organized on Thursday the 24th of March A. D. 1842.

The society is duly organized with a Presidentess or Chairwoman, and two Councillors, chosen by herself; a Treasurer and Secretary. Mrs. Emma Smith takes the Presidential chair, Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Whitney, and Mrs. Sarah M. Cleveland are her Councillors; Miss Elvira Cole is Treasurers, and our well known and talented poetess, Miss Eliza R. Snow Secretary.

There was a very numerous attendance at the organization of the society and also at their subsequent meetings of some of our most intelligent, humane, philanthropic, and respectable ladies; and we are well assured from a knowledge of those pure principles of benevolence that flow spontaneously from their humane, and philanthropic bosoms, that with the resources they will have at command they will fly to the relief of the stranger, they will pour in oil and wine to the wounded heart of the distressed; they will dry up the tear of the orphan, and make the widow's heart to rejoice.

Our Ladies have always been signalized for their acts of benevolence and kindness; but the cruel usage that they have received from the barbarians of Missouri, has hitherto prevented their extending the hand of charity in a conspicuous manner; yet in the midst of their persecutions, when the bread has been torn from their helpless offsprings by their cruel oppressors, they have always been ready to open their doors to the weary traveller, to divide their scanty pittance with the hungry; and from their robbed and impoverished wardrobes, to divide with the more needy and destitute; and now that they are living in a more genial soil, and among a less barbarous people, and possess facilities that they have not heretofore enjoyed, we feel convinced that with their concentrated efforts the condition of the suffering poor, of the stranger and the fatherless will be ameliorated.

We had the privilege of being present at their organization, and were much pleased with their *modus operandi*, and the good order that prevailed; they are strictly parliamentary in their proceedings; and we believe that they will make pretty good democrats.—Ed.

## "TRY THE SPIRITS."

Recent occurrences that have transpired amongst us render it an imperative duty devolving upon me to say something in relation to the spirits by which men are actuated. It is evident from the apostle's writings that many false spirits existed in their day, and had "gone forth into the world;" and that it needed intelligence which God alone could impart to detect false spirits, and to prove what spirits were of God. The world in general have been grossly ignorant in regard to this one thing, and why should they be otherwise. "For no man knows the things of God, but by the spirit of God." The Egyptians were not able to discover the difference between the miracles of Moses and those of the magicians until they came to be tested together; and if Moses had not appeared in their midst they would unquestionably have thought that the miracles of the magicians were performed through the mighty power of God; for they were great miracles that were performed by them; a supernatural agency was developed; and great power manifested.

The witch of Endor is no less singular a personage; clothed with a powerful agency she raised the prophet Samuel from his grave, and he appeared before the astonished king and revealed unto him his future destiny. Who is to tell whether this woman is of God, and a righteous woman? or whether the power she possessed was of the devil, and her a witch as represented by the bible? it is easy for us to say now; but if we had lived in her day, which of us could have unravelled the mystery?

It would have been equally as difficult for us to tell by what spirit the prophets prophesied, or by what power the apostles spoke, and worked miracles. Who could have told whether the power of Simon, the sorcerer was of God, or of the devil? There always did in every age seem to be a lack of intelligence pertaining to this subject. Spirits of all kinds have been manifested, in every age and almost amongst all people: if we go among the Pagans they have their spirits, the Mahomedans, the Jews, the Christians, the Indians; all have their spirits, all have a supernatural agency; and all contend that their spirits are of God. Who shall solve the mystery? "Try the spirits," says John, but who is to do it? The learned, the eloquent, the philosopher, the sage, the divine, all are ignorant. The Heathens will boast of their Gods, and of the great things that have been unfolded by their oracles. The Mussulman will boast of his Koran and of the divine communications that his progenitors have received, and are receiving. The Jews have had numerous instances both ancient and modern among them of men who have professed to be inspired and sent to bring about great events, and the Christian world has not been slow in making up the number.

"Try the spirits;" but what by? are we to try them by the creeds of men? what preposterous folly, what sheer ignorance, what madness. Try the motions and actions of an eternal being, (for I contend that all spirits are such,) by a thing that was conceived in ignorance, and brought forth in folly.—a cobweb of yesterday. Angels would hide their faces, and devils would be ashamed and insulted and would say, "Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but who are ye." Let each man or society make a creed and try evil spirits by it and the devil would shake his

sides, it is all that he would ask, all that he would desire. Yet many of them do this and hence "many spirits are abroad in the world." One great evil is that men are ignorant of the nature of spirits; their power, laws, government, intelligence &c., and imagine that when there is any thing like power, revelation, or vision manifested that it must be of God:—hence the Methodists, Presbyterians, and others frequently possess a spirit that will cause them to lay down, and during its operation animation is frequently entirely suspended; they consider it to be the power of God, and a glorious manifestation from God,—a manifestation of what?—is there any intelligence communicated? are the curtains of heaven withdrawn, or the purposes of God developed? have they seen and conversed with an angel; or have the glories of futurity burst upon their view? No! but their body has been inanimate, the operation of their spirit suspended, and all the intelligence that can be obtained from them when they arise, is a shout of glory, or hallelujah, or some incoherent expression; but they have had "the power." The Shaker will whirl around on his heel impelled by a supernatural agency, or spirit, and think that he is governed by the spirit of God; and the Jumper will jump, and enter into all kinds of extravagancies, a Primitive Methodist will shout under the influence of that spirit, until he will rend the heavens with his cries; while the Quakers, (or Friends) moved as they think by the spirit of God, will sit still and say nothing. Is God the author of all this? If not of all of it, which does he recognize? surely such a heterogenous mass of confusion never can enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Every one of these professes to be competent to try his neighbour's spirit, but no one can try his own, and what is the reason? because they have not a key to unlock, no rule wherewith to measure, and no criterion wherewith they can test it; could any one tell the length, breadth, or height of a building without a rule? test the quality of metals without a criterion, or point out the movements of the planetary system without a knowledge of astronomy? certainly not: and if such ignorance as this is manifested about a spirit of this kind who can describe an angel of light, if Satan should appear as one in glory? Who can tell his color, his signs, his appearance, his glory? or what is the manner of his manifestation? Who can detect the spirit of the French Prophets, with their revelations, and visions, and power, and manifestations? or who can point out the spirit of the Irvingites with their apostles, and prophets, and visions, and tongues, and interpretations, &c. &c.; or who can drag into day-light and develop the hidden mysteries of the false spirits that so frequently are made manifest among the Latter-Day Saints? We answer that no man can do this without the Priesthood, and having a knowledge of the laws by which spirits are governed; for as, "no man knows the things of God but by the spirit of God," so no man knows the spirit of the devil and his power and influence but by possessing intelligence which is more than human, and having unfolded through the medium of the Priesthood the mysterious operations of his devices: without knowing the angelic form, the sanctified look, and gesture, and the zeal that is frequently manifested by him for the glory of God:—together with the prophetic spirit, the

gracious influence, the godly appearance, and the holy garb which is so characteristic of his proceedings, and his mysterious windings. A man must have the discerning of spirits, before he can drag into daylight this hellish influence and unfold it unto the world in all its soul destroying, diabolical, and horrid colors: for nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit, when they think they have the spirit of God. Thousands have felt the influence of its terrible power, and baneful effects: long pilgrimages have been undertaken, penances endured, and pain, misery, and ruin have followed in their train; nations have been convulsed, kingdoms overthrown, provinces laid waste, and blood, carnage, and desolation are the habitations in which it has been clothed. The Turks, the Hindoos, the Jews, the Christians, the Indians, in fact all nations have been deceived, imposed upon and injured through the mischievous effects of false spirits.

As we have noticed before, the great difficulty lays in the ignorance of the nature of spirits, of the laws by which they are governed, and the signs by which they may be known; if it requires the spirit of God, to know the things of God, and the spirit of the devil can only be unmasked through that medium, then it follows as a natural consequence that unless some person, or persons, have a communication or revelation from God, unfolding to them the operation of spirit, they must eternally remain ignorant of these principles:—for I contend that if one man cannot understand these things but by the spirit of God, ten thousand men cannot; it is alike out of the reach of the wisdom of the learned, the tongue of the eloquent, and the power of the mighty. And we shall at last have to come to this conclusion, whatever we may think of revelation, that without it we can neither know, nor understand any thing of God, or the devil; and however unwilling the world may be to acknowledge this principle, it is evident from the multifarious creeds and notions concerning this matter, that they understand nothing of this principle, and it is equally as plain that without a divine communication they must remain in ignorance. The world always mistook false prophets for true ones, and those that were sent of God they considered to be false prophets; and hence they killed, stoned, punished and imprisoned the true prophets, and they had to hide themselves "in deserts, and dens, and caves of the earth;" and although the most honorable men of the earth, they banished them from their society as vagabonds; whilst they cherished, honored, and supported knaves, vagabonds, hypocrites, imposters and the basest of men.

A man must have the discerning of spirits as we before stated to understand these things, and how is he to obtain this gift if there are no gifts of the spirit? And how can these gifts be obtained without revelation?—"Christ ascended into heaven and gave gifts to men, . . . "and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." And how were apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, and evangelists chosen? by "prophecy (revelation) and by laying on of hands:"—by a divine communication, and a divinely appointed ordinance—through the medium of the priesthood, organized according to

'the order of God, by divine appointment. The apostles in ancient times held the keys of this priesthood—of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and consequently were enabled to unlock, and unravel all things pertaining to the government of the church, the welfare of society, the future destiny of men, and the agency, power, and influence of spirits; for they could control them at pleasure, bid them depart in the name of Jesus, and detect their mischievous and mysterious operations when trying to palm themselves upon the church in a religious garb, and militate against the interest of the church, and the spread of truth—we read that they "cast out devils in the name of Jesus," and when a woman possessing the spirit of divination cried before Paul and Silas "these are the servants of the most high God that shew unto us the way of salvation?" they detected the spirit, and although she spake favorably of them Paul commanded the spirit to come out of her, and saved themselves from the opprobrium that might have been heaped upon their heads, through an affiance with her, in the development of her wicked principles:—which they certainly would have been charged with if they had not rebuked the evil spirit. A power similar to this existed through the medium of the priesthood, in different ages. Moses could detect the magicians' power and shew that he was God's servant, he knew when he was upon the mountain (through revelation,) that Israel was engaged in idolatry; he could develop the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, detect witches and wizards in their proceedings, and point out the true prophets of the Lord. Joshua knew how to detect the man who had stolen the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment, Michaiah could point out the false spirit by which the four hundred prophets were governed; and if his advice had been taken, many lives would have been spared. 2, Chron. xviii, 18. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and many other prophets possessed this power. Our Saviour, the apostles, and even the members of the church were endowed with this gift, for says Paul 1, Cor. xiii, "to one is given the gift of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues, to another the working of miracles, to another prophesy, to another the discerning of spirits," all these proceeded from the same spirit of God, and were the gifts of God. The Ephesian church were enabled by this principle "to try those that said they were apostles, and were not and found them liars." Rev. ii, 2.

In tracing the thing to the foundation, and looking at it philosophically we shall find a very material difference between the body and the spirit:—the body is supposed to be organized matter, and the spirit by many is thought to be immaterial, without substance. With this latter statement we should beg leave to differ—and state that spirit is a substance; that it is material, but that it is more pure, elastic, and refined matter than the body;—that it existed before the body, can exist in the body, and will exist separate from the body, when the body will be mouldering in the dust; and will in the re-creation be again united with it. Without attempting to describe this mysterious connexion and the laws that govern the body and spirit of man; their relationship to each other, and the design of God in relation to the human

body and spirit, I would just remark that the spirits of men are eternal, that they are governed by the same priesthood that Abraham, Melchizedec, and the apostles were; that they are organized according to that priesthood which is everlasting, "without beginning of days or end of years"—that they all move in their respective spheres, and are governed by the law of God;—that when they appear upon earth they are in a probationary state, and are preparing if righteous, for a future and a greater glory:—that the spirits of good men cannot interfere with the wicked beyond their prescribed bounds; for "Michael the archangel dared not bring a railing accusation against the devil, but said the Lord rebuke thee Satan."

It would seem also that wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed or controlled, and know their future destiny; hence those that were in the maniac said to our Saviour, "art thou come to torment us before the time?"—and when Satan presented himself before the Lord among the sons of God, he said that he came "from going to and fro in the earth, and from wandering up and down in it;" and he is emphatically called the prince of the power of the air; and it is very evident that they possess a power that none but those who have the priesthood can control, as we have before adverted to in the case of the sons of Sceva.

Having said so much upon general principles without referring to the peculiar situation, power, and influence of, the magicians of Egypt, the wizards, and witches of the Jews, the oracles of the Heathen; their necromancers, soothsayers, and astrologers; the maniacs or those possessed of devils in the apostles' days, we will notice and try to detect (so far as we have the scriptures for our aid) some few instances of the development of false spirits in more modern times, and in this our day.

The "French Prophets," were possessed of a spirit that deceived; they existed in Vivaris, and Dauphiny in great numbers in the year 1688, there were many boys, and girls from seven to twenty-five; they had strange fits as in tremblings, and faintings, which made them stretch out their legs and arms as in a swoon; they remained awhile in trances and coming out of them uttered all that came into their mouths. [See Buck's Theological Dictionary.] Now God never had any prophets that acted in this way; there was nothing indecorous in the proceeding of the Lord's prophets in any age; neither had the apostles, nor prophets in the apostles' day any thing of this kind. Paul says "ye may all prophesy one by one;—and if any thing be revealed to another let the first hold his peace, for the spirit of the prophets, is subject to the prophets," but here we find that the prophets are subject to the spirit, and falling down have twitchings, tumblings, and faintings, through the influence of that spirit; being entirely under its control. Paul says "let every thing be done decently and in order;" but here we find the greatest disorder and indecency in the conduct of both men, and women, as above described. The same rule would apply to the falling, twitchings swooning, shaking, and trances of many of our modern revivalists.

Joannah Southcot professed to be a prophetess and wrote a book of prophecies in 1804:

she became the founder of a people that are now extant; she was to bring forth in a place appointed a son that was to be the Messiah, which thing nas failed. Independent of this however, where do we read of a woman that was the founder of a church in the word of God? Paul told the women in his day "to keep silence in the church, and that if they wished to know any thing to ask their husbands at home;" he would not suffer a woman "to rule, or to usurp authority in the church;" but here we find a woman the founder of a church, the revelator and guide, the Alpha and Omega, contrary to all acknowledged rule, principle, and order.

Jemimah Wilkinson, was another prophetess that figured largely in America in the last century. She stated that she was taken sick and died, and that her soul went to heaven where it still continues. Soon after her body was re-animated with the spirit and power of Christ, upon which she set up as a public teacher and declared she had an immediate revelation. Now the scriptures positively assert that "Christ is the first fruit, afterwards those that are Christs at his coming; then cometh the end." But Jemimah, according to her testimony died, and rose again before the time mentioned in the scriptures. The idea of her soul being in heaven while her body was on earth is also preposterous; when God breathed into man's nostrils he became a living soul, before that he did not live, and when that was taken away his body died; and so did our Saviour when the spirit left the body; nor did his body live until his spirit returned in the power of his resurrection; but Mrs. Wilkinson's soul, [life] was in heaven and her body without the soul [or life] on earth, living [without the soul, or] without life.

The Irvingites, are a people that have counterfeited the truth perhaps the nearest of any of our modern sectarians; they commenced about ten years ago in the city of London in England. They have churches formed in various parts of England and Scotland and some few in Upper Canada. Mr. Irving their founder was a learned and talented minister of the church of Scotland; he was a great logician, and a powerful orator; but withal wild and enthusiastic in his views. Moving in the higher circles, and possessing talent and zeal, placed him in a situation to become a conspicuous character, and to raise up a society similar to that which is called after his name.

The Irvingites have apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and angels. They profess to have the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues; and in some few instances to the gift of healing.

The first prophetic spirit that was manifested was in some Miss Campbells, that Mr. Irving met with while on a journey in Scotland; they had [what is termed among their sect,] "utterances;"—which were evidently of a supernatural agency. Mr. Irving falling into the common error of considering all supernatural manifestations to be of God; took them to London with him, and introduced them into his church.

They there were honored as the prophetesses of God, and when they spoke Mr. Irving, or any of his ministers had to keep silence; they were peculiarly wrought upon before the congregation, and had strange utterances, uttered

with an unnatural, shrill voice and with thrilling intonations; they frequently made use of a few broken unconnected sentences that were ambiguous, incoherent, and incomprehensible; at other times they were more clearly understood. They would frequently cry out, "There is iniquity! There is iniquity!" And Mr. Irving has been led under the influence of this charge to fall down upon his knees before the public congregation and to confess his sin, not knowing whether he had sinned, nor wherein; nor whether the thing referred to him, or somebody else. During these operations the bodies of the persons speaking were powerfully wrought upon, their countenances were distorted, they had frequent twitchings in their hands, and the whole system was powerfully convulsed at intervals; they sometimes however (it is supposed) spoke in correct tongues, and had true interpretations.

Under the influence of this spirit the church was organized by these women; apostles, prophets, &c., were soon called, and a systematic order of things introduced, as above mentioned. A Mr. Baxter (afterwards one of the principal prophets) upon going into one of their meetings, says, I saw a power manifested and thought that it was the power of God, and asked that it might fall upon me; it did so and I began to prophesy. Eight or nine years ago, they had about sixty preachers going through the streets of London, testifying that London was to be the place where the 'two witnesses,' spoken of by John was to prophesy: that (they) 'the church and the spirit' were the witnesses, and that at the end of three years and a half there was to be an earthquake and great destruction, and our saviour was to come. Their apostles were collected together at the appointed time watching the event; but Jesus did not come, and the prophesy was then ambiguously explained away. They frequently had signs given them by the spirit, to prove to them that what was manifested to them should take place. Mr. Baxter related an impression that he had concerning a child. It was manifested to him that he should visit the child, and lay hands upon it, and that it should be healed:—and to prove to him that this was of God, he should meet his brother in a certain place who should speak unto him certain words; his brother addressed him precisely in the way and manner that the manifestation designated; the sign took place, —but when he laid his hands on the child it did not recover. I cannot vouch for the authority of the last statement as Mr. Baxter at that time had left the Irvingites, but it is in accordance with many of their proceedings, and the thing never has been attempted to be denied. It may be asked where is there any thing in all this that is wrong?

1st. The church was organized by women and 'God placed in the church first apostles, secondarily prophets;' and not first women; but Mr. Irving placed in his church first women; secondarily apostles; and the church was founded and organized by them. A woman has no right to found or organize a church; God never sent them to do it.

2nd. Those women would speak in the midst of a meeting and rebuke Mr. Irving, or any of the church: now the scripture positively says, 'thou shalt not rebuke an elder, but entreat him as a father;' not only this but they frequent-

ly *accused* the brethren, thus placing themselves in the seat of satan who is emphatically called 'the *accuser* of the brethren.'

3rd. Mr. Baxter received the spirit on asking for it without attending to the ordinances, and began to prophesy, whereas the scriptural way of attaining the gift of the Holy Ghost is by baptism, and by laying on of hands.

4th. As we have stated in regard to others the spirit of the prophets, are subject to the prophets; but those prophets were subject to the spirits; the spirit controlling their bodies at pleasure.

But it may be asked how Mr. Baxter could get a sign from a second person! To this we would answer that Mr. Baxter's brother was under the influence of the same spirit as himself; and being subject to that spirit, he could be easily made to speak to Mr. Baxter whatever the spirit should dictate; but there was not power in the spirit to heal the child.

Again: it may be asked how it was that they could speak in tongues if they were of the devil? We would answer that they could be made to speak in another tongue as well as in their own as they were under the control of that spirit, and the devil can tempt the Hattentot, the Turk, the Jew, or any other nation; and if these men were under the influence of his spirit they of course could speak Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Italian, Dutch, or any other Language that the devil knew.

Some will say 'try the spirits' by the word. 'Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.' John iv, 2, 3. One of the Irvingites once quoted this passage whilst under the influence of a spirit, and then said, 'I confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.' And yet those prophecies failed, their Messiah did not come; and the great things spoken of by them have fallen to the ground. What is the matter here? did not the apostle speak the truth? certainly he did—but he spoke to a people who were under the penalty of death, the moment they embraced christianity; and no one without a knowledge of the fact would confess it and expose themselves to death: and this was consequently given as a criterion to the church or churches to which John wrote. But the devil on a certain occasion cried out, 'I know thee who thou art the *'Holy one of God'*. Here was a frank acknowledgement under other circumstances,—that *'Jesus had come in the flesh.'* On another occasion the devil said 'Paul we know, and *Jesus we know;*' of course come in the flesh. No man nor set of men without the regular constituted authorities, the priesthood and discerning of spirits can tell true, from false spirits. This power they possessed in the apostles' day, but it has departed from the world for ages.

The church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have also had their false spirits; and as it is made up of all those different sects professing every variety of opinion, and having been under the influence of so many kinds of spirits, it is not to be wondered at if there should be found amongst us false spirits.

Soon after the gospel was established in Kirtland, and during the absence of the authorities of the church, many false spirits were introduced, many strange visions were seen, and wild

enthusiastic notions were entertained; men run out of doors under the influence of this spirit, and some of them got upon the stumps of trees and shouted, and all kinds of extravagances were entered into by them: one man pursued a ball that he said he saw flying in the air, until he came to a precipice when he jumped into the top of a tree which saved his life, and many ridiculous things were entered into, calculated to bring disgrace upon the church of God; to cause the spirit of God to be withdrawn; and to uproot and destroy those glorious principles which had been developed for the salvation of the human family. But when the authorities returned the spirit was made manifest, those members that were exercised with it were tried for their fellowship; and those that would not repent and forsake it were cut off. At a subsequent period a Shaker spirit was on the point of being introduced, and at another time the Methodist and Presbyterian falling-down power; but the spirit was rebuked, and put down, and those who would not submit to rule and good order, were disfellowshipped. We have also had brethren and sisters who have had the gift of tongues falsely: they would speak in a muttering, unnatural voice and their bodies be distorted like the Irvingites before alluded to; whereas there is nothing unnatural in the spirit of God. A circumstance of this kind took place in Upper Canada, but was rebuked by the presiding elder—another, a woman near the same place professed to have the discerning of spirits, and begun to *accuse* another sister of things that she was not guilty of, which she said she knew was so by the spirit,—but was afterwards proven to be false—she placed herself in the capacity of the *'accuser of the brethren'*—and no person through the discerning of spirits can bring a charge against another, they must be proven guilty by positive evidence, or they stand clear.

There have also been ministering angels in the church which were of satan appearing as an angel of light:—A sister in the State of New York had a vision who said it was told her that if she would go to a certain place in the woods an angel would appear to her,—she went at the appointed time and saw a glorious personage descending arrayed in white, with sandy coloured hair; he commenced and told her to fear God and said that her husband was called to do great things, but that he must not go more than one hundred miles from home or he would not return; whereas God had called him to go to the ends of the earth; and he has since been more than one thousand miles from home, and is yet alive. Many true things were spoken by this personage and many things that were false.—How it may be asked was this known to be a bad angel? by the color of his hair; that is one of the signs that he can be known by, and by his contradicting a former revelation.

We have also had brethren and sisters that have had written revelations, and have started forward to lead this church. Such was a young boy in Kirtland—Isaac Russell of Mo. and Gladdon Bishop, and Oliver Olney of Nauvoo. The boy is now living with his parents, who have submitted to the laws of the church. Mr. Russell stayed in Far West, from whence he was to go to the Rocky mountains, led by three Nephites, but the Nephites never came

and his friends forsook him all but some of his blood relations, who have since been nearly destroyed by the mob. Mr. Bishop was tried by the high council his papers examined, condemned, and burned, and he cut off from the church; he acknowledged the justice of the decision and said "that he now saw his error; for if he had have been governed by the revelations given before he might have known that no man was to write revelations for the church but Joseph Smith," and begged to be prayed for and forgiven by the brethren. Mr. Olney has also been tried by the high council, and disfellowshipped because he would not have his writings tested by the word of God; evidently proving that he loves darkness rather than light because his deeds are evil. Ed.

### VIEWS OF THE LIBERAL.

Gen. Bennett's Mother writes him as follows, under date of Feb. 25, A. D. 1842; to wit:

"I will however remark, that I feel much solicitude for the prosperity of your church, as I trust you are building on the rock *Christ Jesus*, which is a sure foundation, and nothing will be suffered to prevail against it,— I sincerely hope that the days of her persecutions have passed by, and that henceforth she will have peace throughout her borders."

### HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

(Continued.)

"After I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcome me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction, not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world who had such a marvelous power as I had never before felt in any being. Just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun; which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself

delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, (pointing to the other.) "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

My object in going to enquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right? that I might know which to join. No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right, (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong,) and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again I found myself laying on my back, looking up into heaven. Some few days after I had this vision, I happened to be in company with one of the methodist preachers who was very active in the before mentioned religious excitement, and conversing with him on the subject of religion I took occasion to give him an account of the vision which I had had. I was greatly surprised at his behavior, he treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there was no such thing as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there never would be any more of them. I soon found however that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion and was the cause of great persecution which continued to increase, and though I was an obscure boy only between fourteen and fifteen years of age and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world; yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and