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THE
HISTORY OF THE SAINTS;

OR,

AN EXPOSÉ

OF

JOE SMITH AND MORMONISM.

BY

JOHN C. BENNETT.

1842

**AMOURS AND ATTEMPTED SEDUCTIONS.
MRS. SARAH M. PRATT.**

This lady is the wife of Orson Pratt, A. M., Professor of Mathematics in the University of the City of Nauvoo, and is one of the most elegant graceful, amiable, and accomplished women in the place. Mr. S. Francis, editor of the Sangamo Journal, in speaking of her, says, "It will be recollected that Mrs. Schindle, in her affidavit detailing the attempt of Smith upon her, said, 'He then told her that she must never tell of his propositions to her, for he had ALL influence in that place, and if she told, he *would ruin her character, and she would be under the necessity of leaving*'. This same scheme has been carried out in reference to Mrs. Pratt. She 'told' on the Impostor, and was marked by him for destruction. In a public speech in Nauvoo, on the 14th July, Joe spoke of this lady--a woman whose reputation had been as fair as virtue could make it until she came in contact with him--in a manner only befitting the lowest and most degraded vagabond in existence." Yes, her reputation was unsullied, and her Character as pure as the virgin snow; nor was even the Mormon Don Juan able to blight this blooming flower.--This noble and lovely woman was marked out by Joe as a victim. Her husband was sent to Europe

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to convert the heathen, under a solemn promise that his family should be honorably provided for by the Church; but, as Mrs. Pratt was a beautiful and charming woman, Joe's real object was to CONVERT HER in another way--from virtue, unsophisticated virtue, to vice, soul-damning vice,--from the path of innocence and peace, to the polluted way of the libertine,--from the pure teachings of heaven's high King, to the loathsome caresses of the *beast and the false prophet*; but the fowler's snare was broken,

and the intended victim saved. Mrs. Pratt is a Highly educated lady, and had always been used to living well; but no sooner had her husband crossed the ocean, than Joe ordered the Bishops to restrict her in her allowance, and reduce her to a state of absolute want and suffering, in order to make her a more easy prey. The mandate was obeyed, and in the drear of winter, without fuel or food, she found herself in a miserable hovel, with her darling child, exposed to storm and tempest, and dependent upon the tender mercies of a cold and unfeeling fraternity to supply her actual wants! ! ! The sufferings and privations through which she passed are indescribable; the blackest fiends of hell would shudder at the thought of such inhuman treatment; but, alas! she drank the bitter cup, and sipped the dregs. A public contribution was then taken up for her, and *pocketed by the Bishop*; but the venerable prelate Vinson Knight, was willing to see her provided for on one condition, and *that was, the sacrifice of virtue!* But she spurned his proffered mercies, and doffed the mitre from his reverend brow. Joe Smith and Vinson Knight--*par fratrum nobile!* Emma, the *Electa Syria* of the Church, and wife of the Holy Joe, the male Cassandra of the Mormon Hierarchy, (who was very envious of Mrs. Pratt's superior intellectual endowments,) advised her to hire out as a servant to some Mormon nabob; but that base attempt at human degradation of one in every way superior to herself, became abortive; and Mrs. Pratt turned from the delectable Emma, the Lady Abbess of the Seraglio or "Mother of the Maids," as Lord Byron calls it, with loathing and ineffable contempt. Mrs. Pratt, however, by the assistance of a few humane individuals, and her persevering industry, was enabled to support her-

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self and little boy, until the return of her husband from a two years' mission, which was greeted with acclamations of joy. The cup of sorrow was broken, and she rejoiced once more in the society of a *protector*, a husband, and a friend. But she had a dreadful tale to tell.

Joe Smith told me, *confidentially*, during the absence of her husband, that he intended to make Mrs. Pratt one of his *spiritual wives*, one of the *Cloistered Saints*, for the Lord had given her to him as a special favor for his faithfulness and zeal; and, as I had influence with her, he desired me to assist him in the consummation of his hellish purposes; but I refused compliance, and told him that she had been much neglected and abused by the Church, in order to *cloister* her, so far without success, and that, if the Lord had given her to him, he must attend to it himself, for I should never offer her an indignity. "Well," said he, "I shall approach her, for there is no harm in it if she submits to be cloistered, and if her husband should never find it out; and if she should expose me, as she did Bishop Knight, *I will blast her character*; so there is no material risk for so desirable a person." I then called upon Mrs. Pratt, and apprized her of Joe's contemplated attack on her virtue, *in the name of the Lord*, and that she must prepare to repulse him, in so infamous an assault, *by opposing revelation to revelation*. She replied, "Joseph cannot be such a man; I cannot believe it until I know it for myself, or have it from his own lips; he cannot be so corrupt." I told her that she would see, unless he changed his mind, for he was an unprincipled libertine, unequalled [sic] in the history of civilized man. Accordingly, in a few days, Joe proposed to me a visit to Ramus, which I accepted, and we started from his house, in an open carriage, about 4 o'clock, P. M., rode into the prairie a few miles, and returned to the house of Captain John T. Barnett, in Nauvoo, about dusk, where we put up the horse, with Barnett's permission. Joe pretended we were looking for thieves. After perambulating for an hour or two, we proceeded to the residence of Mrs. Pratt, and found her at home, and alone, with the exception of her little boy, who was then asleep in bed. We were hospitably received, and our situation rendered as

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comfortable and agreeable as the tenement would admit of. After considerable desultory conversation, Joe asked her if she would keep a secret for him; to which she assented. "Do you pledge me your honor," said he, "that you will never tell without my permission?" She replied in the affirmative. He then continued, "Sister Pratt, the Lord has given you to me as one of my *Spiritual Wives*. I have the blessings

of Jacob granted me, as God granted holy men of old; and as I have long looked upon you with favor, and an earnest desire of connubial bliss, I hope you will not repulse or deny me." She replied, "And is that the great secret that I am not to utter? Am I called upon to break the marriage covenant, and prove recreant to my lawful husband! *I never will*. My sex shall not be disgraced, nor my honor sullied. I care not for the blessings of Jacob, and I believe no such revelations, neither will I consent, under any circumstances whatever. I have one good husband, and that is enough for me." He then went off to see Miss Louisa Beeman, at the house of Mrs. Sherman, and remained with her about two hours, when we returned to Barnett's, harnessed our horse, started for Ramus, arrived at Carthage early in the morning, and took breakfast at Mr. Hamilton's. We then went to Ramus, transacted some business in relation to real estate, returned to Carthage that night, and put up at the house of Esquire Comer. Next day, we returned to Nauvoo. I then called upon Mrs. Pratt, and asked her if her opinion of Joseph, the Prophet, was the same as heretofore. She replied, "No; he is a bad man, beyond a doubt--'wicked, sensual, devilish;' but it will not do for me to express myself openly, or my life might atone for it. It becomes me to move in this matter with much circumspection; I must be as 'wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove;' for I see plainly that Joseph is determined to transgress the laws, change the ordinance, and break the everlasting covenant of our heavenly Father, and to set at open defiance every principle of true godliness and mortal rectitude. I exceedingly fear and tremble for the weak and uneducated of my sex; for an unprincipled libertine, sensualist, arid debauchee, of such unbounded prophetic influence, in a community like this, may utterly

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ruin hundreds of pious, unsuspecting females, under the *potent dictum* of a 'THUS SAITH THE LORD;' and all the proof they would require would be his simple *ipse dixit*. O, WHAT TOTAL DEPRAVITY!! What ignorance and impudence in a land of Bibles, where *Christians* ought to dwell, and worship the Great Ruler of the Universe in the beauty of Holiness! Surely God will not suffer it long! I remember when you told of his desiring you to procure the engraving of new plates of the Book of Mormon, for the further and more perfect binding of the people--of his gross wickedness and perfidy--of his fraud and corruption--of his spiritual wickedness in high places, and his secret abominations,--and so forth; but I could never *realize it before*. I had a better opinion of human nature; but, alas! I was deceived. The scales however, have fallen from my eyes, and '*whereas I was once blind, NOW I SEE.*' I am in great trouble on another account. My husband is a good and pious, and a *true believer in Mormonism*, DEVOTEDLY attached to Joseph as the spiritual leader of the Church. He believes him to be a pure man, and a Prophet of the Lord. Now, if I should tell the true story of my sufferings, privations, and insults, and Joseph should circumvent or meet it with his *infallable rebuff* of 'VERILY, THUS SAITH THE LORD,' I fear that Orson would believe him in preference to me, *unless his faith can be shaken*. How shall I extricate myself from this fearful dilemma? As a confidential friend, I look to you for advice and protection, until the return of Mr. Pratt." "Be quiet," said I, "Sarah, under these circumstances, until some event transpires by which Orson can have ocular and auricular demonstration of the palpable imposture of the whole scheme of Mormonism, and of the infidelity and brutality of the *Mormon Mountebank*, that *Sui Generis Prophet*, who was constituted *per se*, and *not by the appointment of ALMIGHTY GOD*; and such an event must soon be consummated, unless there should be a manifest change in the Mormon Administration."

Joe afterwards tried to convince Mrs. Pratt of the propriety of his spiritual wife doctrine, and she at last told him peremptorily, "Joseph, if you ever attempt any thing

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of the kind with me again, I will make a full disclosure to Mr. Pratt on his return home. Depend upon it, *I will certainly do it.*" Joe replied, "Sister Pratt, I hope you will not expose me, for if I suffer, all must suffer; so do not expose me. Will you promise me that you will not do it?" "If," said she, "you will never

insult me again, I will not expose you, unless strong circumstances should require it." "If you should tell," said he, "I will ruin your reputation; *remember that*; and as you have repulsed me, it becomes sin, unless *sacrifice* is offered." He then desired that a lamb should be procured and slain, and the door-posts and the gate sprinkled with its blood, and the kidneys and entrails taken and offered upon an altar of twelve stones that had not been touched with a hammer, as a burnt offering, for the purpose of saving him and his priesthood. His desire was complied with, and the lamb procured from Captain Barnett, and slain by Lieutenant Stephen H. Goddard; and the kidneys and entrails were offered in sacrifice, as Joe desired; and he observed, "All is now safe; the Destroying Angel will pass over without harming any of us." About this time, Mrs. Pratt, in a conversation with Mrs. Goddard, observed, "Sister Goddard, Joseph is a corrupt man; I know it, for he made an attempt upon me, *in the name of the Lord*. I now detest *the man*. Time passed on without further molestation, until one day, after Mr. Pratt's return from Europe, Joe called at her new house, and, looking at Mrs. Pratt, thought,--

"And, O! how often in these eyes,
Which melting beamed like azure skies
In dewy vernal weather--
How often have I raptured read
The burning glance, that silent said,
Now, love, *we feel together*,"--

and grossly insulted her again, by stealthily approaching and kissing her. This highly offended her, and she told her husband, Colonel Orson Pratt, who was highly incensed, and gave Joe a SEVERE REBUKE. Joe observed, "I did not desire to kiss her; *Bennett made we do it!*" Joe couldn't come the "*extreme unction*" over that intelligent lady; she was far above his polluted breath, his ribaldry,

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low vituperation, calumny, and detraction. *He lied to her in the name of Israel's God*. Let the base blasphemer remember that, and weep! Let him look at his black catalogue of crimes--his seductions and attempted seductions, *in the name of the Lord*--his thefts--his robberies--and his murders! Why, Satan blushes to behold so corrupt and loathsome a mortal,--one whose daring deeds of crime so far surpass hell's darkest counsels, as to hide the sable Prince of impenetrable darkness forever! If Joe Smith is not destined for the *Devil*, all I can say is, that the duties of a devil have not been clearly understood.

"I've had a dream that bodes no good
Unto the HoLy Brotherhood.
I can't be wrong, and I confess--
As far as it is right or lawful
For one, *no conjurer*, to guess--
It seems to me extremely awful."

Joe lied to Colonel Pratt afterwards, IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. This shook his faith, and he told the Prophet to his face that *he was a liar*, AN INFAMOUS LIAR; and his noble voice has since been heard thundering against that Uncircumcised Philistine, the fell Monster of Iniquity, and that at the very portals of the Temple. Deploy column, Colonel Pratt, and let your heavy ordnance and battering-rams ply upon the ramparts of General Joe's imperial fortifications! Demolish the bastions and curtains of his fortress! Open your artillery upon his concealed recesses, and storm his strong holds! Let loose the dogs of war upon his gathering hosts of Tartarean fugitives and refugees, and secure to yourself an imperishable reputation as a moral victor, and a servant of your God; and Mormonism will soon be numbered with the things that were, the glory of which is now in the sear and yellow leaf.

From Mrs. Emeline White

"Nauvoo, August 3, 1842.

"GENERAL JOHN C. BENNETT:

"Respected friend,--

* * * * *

"Your friends are anxiously awaiting your return to the west. If it is possible, be here by the 1st of September. You can avert

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a great calamity, and add greatly to the amount of human happiness by so doing. I dare not write you to what I allude, but would gladly tell you. I called on Mrs Pratt this morning, in order to learn where to address you; and she and Mr. Pratt dined at father's to-day. We had a long talk with them about the troubled waters, the present attitude in which they are placed, and the ultimate issue or final result of the *exposé*. I was much pleased to see them so happy, and firm in the advocacy of truth. Mr. Pratt has publicly defended her, from the stand, against the foul aspersions attempted to be cast upon her irreproachable reputation by her interested persecutors. She is certainly one of the best of women, above reproach, of noble bearing, and great moral excellence; and Mr. Pratt will ever sustain her in exposing corruption and fraud. They are your unwavering friends, and cannot be driven from the truth by your enemies. Some here have dealt very treacherously with you, and they shall reap their reward hereafter; the curses of Heaven will fall upon their heads, for God will protect you in a virtuous cause. May all your undertakings prosper, and may God bless, and guardian angels watch over and hover around you, in this your time of danger and peril! Your friends here are firm as the adamantine rocks, and will ever sustain you in defending virtue and exposing vice. Father and mother join me in their respects to you. Please to write circumstantially at your earliest convenience

"Respectfully, yours,
"EMELINE WHITE."

The following affidavit of Messrs. Carter, Whiting, and Leland, though unexpected by me, is quite opportune:--

"Boston, September 17, 1842.

"TO THE PUBLIC:

"Without solicitation or the previous knowledge of any one, we would respectfully state that we have seen letter from four individuals, residing in and near Nauvoo, addressed to and received by different gentlemen in the States of New York and Massachusetts, through the post-office department, tending fully and unequivocally to confirm the truth of the disclosures of General Bennett, in relation to Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, and his followers, especially so far as regards the Seraglio and Order Lodge, and the cases of Mrs Sarah M. Pratt, Miss Nancy Rigdon, and Mrs Emeline White. The writers of these letters are persons of great respectability, holding high official stations. They request that their names shall not be made public, for fear of secret murder by the Mormon Destroying Angel, or the Daughter of Zion.

"ROBERT CARTER,
"WILLARD J. WHITING,
"EMERSON LELAND."

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"SUFFOLK, ss. *September 17, 1842.*

"Then personally appeared the above-named Robert Carter, Willard J. Whiting, and Emerson Leland, and made oath that the above affidavit, by them subscribed, is true.

"Before me,

BRADFORD SUMMER,
"*Justice of the Peace.*"

The *Sangamo Journal*, of July 22, 1842, in commenting on the Prophet's amours and secret abominations, says,--

"In this community, we verily believe that there is not a man, disconnected with Mormons, who does not place implicit confidence in the disclosures of General Bennett. These disclosures show that the rulers of this Mormon confederacy are steeped in pollutions of the blackest dye--pollutions and crimes violatory of all laws, human and divine--and for which we can hardly find a parallel, without going back to the ingulfed [sic] 'cities of the plain.'"

It will be seen that the affidavit of Messrs. Carter, Whiting, and Leland, unequivocally sustains various other matters disclosed in this Exposé; and the whole testimony places Mrs. Pratt high on the vantage-ground, and far above reproach. Thus, by assistance of a most powerful intellect, and the great God, has this noble lady signally triumphed over her insidiously persecuting enemies, and placed her foot upon the neck of the Monster of Iniquity, the Beast and the False Prophet; and her noble husband, too, has done himself immortal honor in battering down the bulwarks of prophetic security, behind which the Mormon Pontiff screened himself from merited infamy and disgrace. The course of the Prophet has been very singular in its inception, its prosecution, and its termination.