

progress or improvement in them since. As far as regards gathering and organizing the elements, and making the earth beautiful, these old "Mormons" have no taste for it, and they see nothing, hear nothing, and know nothing, only they knew Joseph. Say they, "Oh, I was acquainted with Joseph, I knew brother Joseph." Ask them, "Are you going to build a house?" "Well, I don't know; I don't know as I care anything about having any better house." "Well but your house is full of bed bugs." "I know it is pretty bad, but still it is as good as I am, and I don't think I shall try to build." They died when Joseph died.

I heard it mentioned here, I think, this morning, that we all knew the character of the Latter-day Saints, and the difficulties and persecutions they have passed through. It came into my mind at that moment to ask this congregation how many of them knew Joseph Smith, the Prophet, just to show what "Mormonism" has accomplished in twenty-eight years. I believe I will do myself the favor, and gratify myself so far as to ask those of my brethren and sisters now present, who were personally acquainted with Joseph Smith, to raise their right hands. (A very few hands up.) There is a few, but very few, not above one to twenty, and perhaps not more than one to fifty in this congregation who ever saw Joseph Smith. Now if I were to ask the boys and girls, and all the young folks present, although your Sunday schools are not here, who were born in these valleys, to raise their right hands, I will venture to say that we should find that more than half this congregation have been born in these mountains. What do they know about what we passed through in Illinois, Missouri, Kirtland, or New York State? I will

give you one item. I lived close by where these plates were found. I knew that Joseph found them, from outward circumstances that transpired at the time. I shall not take time to relate but a little of the delicate, kind, benevolent, Christianlike, I will say anti-Godlike feelings of the priests and of the people who professed Christianity at the time that Joseph organized this Church. The very first thing that was circulated was this—"Did you hear that Joe Smith and his followers got together last night, blew out the light, stripped themselves stark naked, and there they had the holy roll?" This was the story started by the priests in the neighborhood where the plates were found. In the Branch where I lived, we had not met together three times before our beloved, kind, anti-Godlike Baptist priests and people declared that we made a practice of meeting together, stripping stark naked, and there having the "holy roll." A great many of you do not understand this term. It came from the shaking Quakers. I shall not attempt to relate here the conduct attributed to them, but from that sprang the peculiar phrase I have mentioned in your hearing this afternoon. In a very short time we were all thieves in the estimation of our so-called Christian neighbors. Said the priest to a beloved sister—"Sister, did you hear of such a man, he was a member of our church a few days since, but he has joined old Joe Smith?" Joseph was then twenty-one or twenty-two years of age, but it was "old Joe Smith." "Sister, did you hear that such a brother stole a lot of chickens last night?" Says the sister, "No, can it be possible?" "Well, they say so," says the priest, and he himself had fabricated the entire story. This sister would tell it to another, and it would go all