

of these things; and although he taught this social system to the Latter-day Saints; and to the more devout, wise and prudent of the women of Israel, as hundreds can testify, have testified, and are able to testify today, yet it was necessary in introducing it and facing the opposition and the prejudices of the age, to proceed wisely in these instructions. And while his name was before the people of the United States as a candidate for the Presidency, and national questions were being discussed pro and con by the Latter-day Saints and throughout the nation by all the political societies of the time, Joseph Smith took occasion to issue a pamphlet containing his views of the powers and policy of the Government of the United States; he also preached some sermons upon the subject in Nauvoo; and in this the Prophet counseled the people of the United States in relation to the manner of disposing of the vexed question of slavery, which he recognized as an evil—that is, the form in which it existed in the United States, which should be abolished; but rather than proceed to its abolishment by waging war against the institution, as the anti-slavery men were trying to do, counseled that this desired change, the modification of this system of labor in the south, be effected on a principle of honor, equity and peace; that a fund should be created, a sinking fund of the nation, for the abolishment of slavery; and to negotiate with the States in behalf of the slave-owners, for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, their owners to be reasonably compensated for the freedom of their servants, and in process of years to change the status of the negro, make his labor free, and place him in a condition to be educated and

elevated; and still maintain the faith of the nation and the faith of the northern states with the southern states. Thus it was that the true policy and counsel of heaven to our nation was manifested and spurned. The extremists of the north, the anti-slavery agitators heeded it not; and neither party approached the subject with any earnest determination to effect an honorable settlement of this question. The few statesmen that made propositions in the Congress of the United States looking to this result, to the accomplishment of the liberation of the slaves, settling this question on the basis proposed by the Prophet Joseph Smith; but whether they were influenced by his advice, or whether the same spirit that moved upon Joseph, moved also upon these statesmen—there were some that made advances looking to the accomplishment of the object in this way—but it was not generally received or favored, or it was deemed impracticable. At all events the sequel proved that the opposing elements warred against each other, culminating in that great fratricidal war which resulted in the shedding of so much blood, and the impoverishing of one-half of the nation.

Prior to this, however, the union and fraternal feeling that formerly existed had been gradually weakening in the various religious organizations of the nation. All the leading churches of the nation had divided at what was known as the Mason and Dixon line—the line separating the free from the slave states. We had the humiliating spectacle throughout the land, of the Methodist church of the North, and the Methodist church of the South; the Presbyterian church of the north and the Presbyterian church