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A good book is like a good name—better than riches.

IMPROVEMENT ERA

ORGAN OF

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CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

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"What you young people want, is a magazine that will make a book to be bound and kept, with something in it worth keeping."—*President John Taylor.*

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VOYAGE OF THE SHIP "BROOKLYN."

BY HON. JOHN M. HORNER.

[When Elder A. Milton Musser, at whose request this account is written, acknowledged that he had received the letter containing these incidents in the voyage of the ship *Brooklyn*, the author, a veteran not unfamiliar to readers of the ERA, wrote to Elder Musser, May 21, as follows. His words will serve as an introduction to the narrative: 'Before finishing this letter, yours in answer to mine of March and April was put in my hand, and I am pleased with, even grateful for, its contents. It fully answers the questions requested. I feel to thank you sincerely for your worthy thought of urging me to write up the incidents of the ship *Brooklyn* voyage, etc., etc. The importance of that voyage to the world was growing in my mind all the time, and I was honestly of the opinion that it had been carefully and ably written until receiving your letter. There were certainly able penmen on board. I was a youngster, more accustomed to handling farm tools than the pen, and never dreamed of trying to write it up until receiving your letter. You certainly are responsible for it. The incidents written are as bright in my mind now, as though they had happened last week. I am pleased to know you are satisfied with it. It is to be regretted that the important subject has not been treated by an abler pen.'—EDITORS.]

I.

I am requested to name the moving cause that sent the ship *Brooklyn*, loaded with "Mormons," from New York to California, by way of Cape Horn, in 1846; what were the incidents by the way, and what has been the result. In answer: The "Mormons" had been persecuted for their religion before their Church was organized in 1830; and after that date, they were persecuted unto death by the sword and by affliction and suffering, brought upon them by being forced from their comfortable homes, into the frost and snow, without shelter and other comforts and protection. Men, women and children, the old and the afflicted, were all driven out.

Their prophet, Joseph Smith, had told them they would be driven west and would "become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains."

After the prophet was massacred, and his mantle of leadership fell on the twelve apostles, with Brigham Young at their head, the outlook for peace being gloomy, the people decided to emigrate and seek peace in the West. With that idea in view, the Twelve counseled the eastern Saints to charter a ship, get on board, and go around Cape Horn to upper California, find a place to settle, farm and raise crops, so that when the Church pioneers should arrive there the following year they would find sustenance.

This counsel was obeyed by the few eastern Saints taking the voyage, to the best of their ability. They chartered the ship *Brooklyn*, and 235 Saints—men, women and children,—and two other passengers—educated gentlemen—the captain, mates, sailors, stewards and cooks, altogether 252 souls, got on board, and in due time arrived in California. The Saints did the work assigned them before they left New York.

The following year, 1847, the company sowed and harvested forty acres of wheat, and, in another place, sowed small lots of wheat, barley, peas etc., and started a garden with several classes of garden seeds; but, being late in the season, and the grasshoppers numerous, we got only experience from this venture. During the later part of the year, the company had made a selection for a permanent settlement, and commenced work upon it, on the low, rich land near the river, intending to farm and build extensively upon it the coming year, 1848. Unfortunately, the rains and melting snows from the mountains during the following winter and early spring sent a flood of water over the land and obliterated all their labor. The gold mines being discovered about this time, by the "Mormon" battalion boys, threw the ship *Brooklyn* company into confusion. It was disorganized, the settlement was abandoned, and every member thereafter followed the counsel of his own will.

We left New York, as above stated, with the promise of a prosperous voyage and the blessing of God to attend us. We received both with thanks.

Our captain proved himself an able navigator. He hit every

thing he aimed at, and nothing which he did not want to hit. He was a Baptist in religious profession; held religious services on deck weekly, which the Saints attended. His mates and sailors, in morals appeared above the average. Unbecoming language was seldom heard on board. For the character of our company we copy from the *Friend*, the report of Captain Richardson to that paper, after his five months' acquaintance with us, during our long voyage from New York to this place, which report we copy and endorse.

The *Friend* announced our arrival at Honolulu on June 20, 1846, one hundred and thirty-six days from New York, which city we left on February 4, 1846. The paper further contains a six-column editorial on the history and doctrine of the Latter-day Saints, and continues:

Before closing our remarks, we feel ourselves in duty bound to give publicity to the testimony of Captain Richardson, master of the ship *Brooklyn*, in regard to the general character of the emigrants, as it has been developed during a long voyage around Cape Horn. Of their general behavior and character he speaks in the most favorable manner. He says: "They have lived in peace together and uniformly appeared to be quiet and orderly. They are going with a full determination of making a settlement, and have brought plows, carts, scythes, and all kinds of husbandry implements and tools for ship and house building. Many of the emigrants coming from New England and the Middle States are inclined to transplant some of the noble institutions of their native region. During most of the passage, they have maintained orderly and well conducted daily religious exercises which still continue while lying in port." During the passage there occurred ten deaths, four adults and six children, and two births; a male child born before doubling Cape Horn was called "Atlantic," and a female born this side was called "Pacific."

Our religious exercises were kept up until we anchored in front of Yerba Buena,—now San Francisco. There has been no time since then when a "Mormon" Church did not exist in San Francisco. Now, active "Mormon" Churches are scattered over the state. Several of our company were elders. We were working men and working women, school teachers, preachers, carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, printers, etc. The first paper ever published in San Francisco—The *Alta California*, was printed by the ship *Brooklyn* company. War was raging in California when we arrived there, between Mexico and the United States, and some of our company enlisted and went down to the lower part of the

territory with Colonel J. C. Fremont and helped finish up the war there.

We left New York as above stated. Let me mention an incident. As we approached the Gulf Stream, a severe storm burst upon us. It was so severe that the sails were all taken in, except a small one that rested against the shrouds of the main mast; no one was safe on deck. The hatches were fastened down, except the one opening at the top of the steps leading down from the captain's cabin. The captain fearing his cabin would be swept off by the waves came down with a troubled countenance and announced to the passengers: "I have done all I can to save the ship. If any of you have not made your peace with God, you would better do it now, as the ship may go down any minute." Through faith in their promise of a "prosperous voyage," or through ignorance of their danger, none seemed alarmed but the captain. The storm passed without danger. Fortunately, it drove us on our journey. The captain, who was an old seafarer, was heard to say after the storm ceased, that it was the worst he had ever encountered.

We had a school on board for the children; and an ex-soldier, a brother who had spent years in the army, was required to drill the men of our company in the art of war during the fair weather, more for the benefit received from the exercise, than from any good we expected from learning the arts of war.

It was fine weather when we doubled Cape Horn. The women were making bread, pies, cakes, frying doughnuts, etc., and the children were playing and romping about the deck.

We were too far south to see the cape when we passed around it, in fact, we saw no land after leaving New York until we sighted the island of Juan Fernandez, where we stopped a few days replenishing our wood and water, catching, eating and salting fish. While coming up the coast of South America, a hint was given that the captain did not know where he was. The captain, hearing of this, immediately pointed his ship toward the mainland and stated: "If I am right, I will show you the highest points of the Andes, if this wind keeps up." Sure enough, we soon saw a small, black cloud arising out of the eastern horizon, which rapidly increased in height and length, and which, to us landmen, looked like a thun-

dercloud. By gazing through strong glasses, we saw the captain was right. He then again pointed his ship for the Hawaiian Islands, where we arrived as above stated.

Soon after leaving Honolulu, on the 4th of July we had a spirited celebration of that day. Flags were hoisted, guns fired, patriotic songs were sung, etc.

We encountered another storm coming up from the Horn, but it was not as severe as the one we had in the Atlantic. We had a three-days' calm as we approached California—one hundred miles or so out. Then a strong trade wind struck us and wafted us speedily and safely through the "Golden Gate," without a pilot, or halting, with all sails set, until we dropped anchor in front of Yerba Buena—now San Francisco—in the bay of San Francisco. We were all well, thankful and happy. We had truly a prosperous voyage, as we were promised before leaving New York.

When I look back and contemplate the voyage of the ship *Brooklyn Saints*, the distance traveled, time consumed, and purpose of the journey, and the incidents thereof, I now feel to rank it creditably with that of the Jaredites and Nephites in their voyage across the Pacific to America, and with the voyage of the *Mayflower* pilgrims crossing the Atlantic from Europe to America. I am impressed further with the thought, that we were sent and protected by the Great Father, as were the pilgrims above mentioned, and to help forward a great work as did they. We performed the mission assigned, as we then understood it, not comprehending its importance, as it now more clearly appears. We had no prophets with us to guide and direct us, as did the Jaredites and Nephites, but we felt thankful upon being able to congratulate ourselves that we were blessed with a more complete and continued unity in our company during the entire voyage than the Nephite emigrants enjoyed. Neither were we chastised by the Great Father, as was the Brother of Jared because he had ceased calling upon him.

Although some of the *Brooklyn Saints* may have departed from the faith, yet I feel that the purpose for which they were sent was accomplished.

Paulo, Hawaii.

(TO BE CONCLUDED IN SEPTEMBER NUMBER.)

VOYAGE OF THE SHIP "BROOKLYN."

BY HON. JOHN M. HORNER.

II.

I have stated the object for which the ship *Brooklyn* Saints sailed from New York, so far as now and then we understood it; and briefly some of the incidents of the voyage, and as far as my memory serves me, after a lapse of nearly sixty years. We come now to the question, "What has been some of the results?" We claim that the ship *Brooklyn* Saints were the first to introduce civilized agriculture into California. They were the first to introduce and use the modern mould-board plow; the first cradle for cutting grain; the first mowing machine, and the first reaping and thrashing machines ever used in California. Although we did not share the pleasure of feeding the Church pioneers who remained at Salt Lake, we did feed scores and thousands of gold hunters—who flocked to California by sea and land from all countries, in 1849, and in after years—with potatoes, cabbages, tomatoes, onions, beets, turnips, and other vegetables, which were not within their reach, for love or money, only from the *Brooklyn* passengers, during the four years following 1848. There were no others in the farming business to effect anything, until after those dates.

It may also be claimed that the *Brooklyn* Saints proved to be in the van of the Pacific missionaries, and they did for a time slightly assist them in going and returning.

Of course, we claim also that their coming to California had something to do with the discovery of gold, and with starting up the settlement of the territory of California to be the noted state it now is. Only for the discovery of gold, there is no assurance that California would be now more than a territory.

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 was without a doubt work directed of the Great Father, and he used so many instruments to effect it that no one person can claim to be the whole cause.

Even the "Mormon" Church can scarcely claim it; since, if the Church had not been driven out of civilization, a long time must have slipped away before it could have reached Utah. No ship *Brooklyn* emigrants would have been sent to farm in California, then a Mexican territory, and it is doubtful if the "Mormon" Battalion would have been enlisted. These are only the fruits of my fertile imagination. The facts are, the Church *was driven out*. The Battalion boys were *enlisted*. The *Brooklyn* emigrants were sent to California to farm, gold was discovered, California was raised to a prosperous state by agriculture, and mine production, from various discoveries in its territory.

Surely the people of the Church were chosen and made the honored instruments by the Great I Am to discover gold in California and to commence the greater blessing to man that came by reclaiming the deserts and making them fruitful and habitable. President Brigham Young and his counselors were the principal instruments chosen by the Great One to council, guide and lead his Church. Brigham began by sending the *Brooklyn* Saints to California. He counseled, encouraged, and assisted in the enlisting of the "Mormon" Battalion boys, who were sent to California, where they arrived in good time.

Brigham gave direction to Mr. Samuel Brannan, the leader of the *Brooklyn* Saints, before he left New York, to go east from California, in the spring of 1847, on the overland trail, until he should meet the Church pioneers. He did so, and met them near Salt Lake, with Brigham Young at their head. Brannan reported that he had filled the mission given him by President Young in New York. He had taken the *Brooklyn* emigrants to California, and came overland and met the Church pioneers as directed, with President Young leading. The President gave him a message to deliver to the Battalion boys, when he should meet them on his return to California, to the effect that none must come to headquarters if he did not have enough provisions to last a certain number of months, or words to that effect. The message was delivered.

The boys halted. A part went on, and a part returned to recruit their larders. This obedience to the President's direction led to the first discovery of gold in California, and to promptly advancing its territory to the great state we now behold it.

President Young, leading the Church into the wilderness, as he was guided and directed by the Great One, proved to be the first Church leader of any sect who ever led or taught the people to redeem the desert and make it blossom as the rose, and to yield wealth for sustaining both man and beast.

Truth points to the fact that the "Mormon" Church, with Brigham Young at its head, was the instrument used by the Great One to discover gold to the world in California in 1848. This led to others; in fact, the whole world has awakened to a hunt for gold, silver, and other metals, and much has been discovered.

President Young sent out the "Mormon" emigrants around Cape Horn, and the Battalion boys across the country to California, in 1846, and gave them directions what to do after their arrival. It was the obeying of those directions that caused discovery of gold in 1848.

President Young led the Church pioneers to eastern California—now Utah—in 1847. He led and directed it many years, as he was guided by the Great Father, and succeeded in convincing the people of our country and their government that the great American desert could be reclaimed and made a suitable country for man to dwell in, and the government has now enacted the irrigation law to assist in its redemption.

President Roosevelt, while speaking upon the subject in the "Mormon" Tabernacle, in Salt Lake City, said, "But for you, the irrigation law could not have been enacted."

This no doubt referred to the "Mormon" people, as it was well known they had built the dams, dug the ditches, done the irrigating; planted, cultivated, gathered the crops, made improvements, and made the country prosperous for years, without assistance or sympathy from the outside. So it seems that the people of these states should thank the Great Father for sending the "Mormons" to discover the gold, and to redeem the deserts, which has made this country so much more prosperous than was possible without these discoveries and improvements; and for these great blessings

the diligent "Mormons" should be commended and encouraged to go ahead—as Canada and Mexico have encouraged them—and build up the waste places, make the desert fruitful, improve the country, make other valuable discoveries, etc., that peace on earth and good will to man may prevail.

Paulo, Hawaii

(THE END.)

THE POET'S MISSION.

(*For the Improvement Era.*)

"What shall I write?" I asked the Muse.

She answered low and sweetly:

"From ev'ry inspiration choose,
Interpret it discreetly.

"So let thy words attune the heart,

That from them it may borrow

Some joy of life, to ease the smart
Of some one's deepest sorrow.

"The song birds ev'ry year return

To sing again their chorus;

Though oft we hear, we cannot spurn
The music floating o'er us.

"So let thy faith bring happy things

That faith is ever bearing;

And let thy hope bring offerings
Of hope to the despairing.

"If thou canst, sing a low, sweet song

Like one the finch is singing;

Though but a voice within the throng
It swells the chorus ringing.

"So let thy charity assuage

The failings of a brother.

And let thy love bring heritage
Of love for one another.

" 'Tis not the loudest singing bird

That has the greatest mission,

The low, sweet song, less often heard,
Yet makes one pause and listen.

"The thoughts that live in after years,

The sentiment that lingers,

The songs that move the heart to tears,
Were sung by humble singers."

Payson, Utah.

J. L. TOWNSEND.