

Following is from the April, 1944 Instructor: It is the description by Geo. Q. Cannon of the meeting of the Saints in Nauvoo early in August, 1844, following the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, which established the future leadership of the Church.

" After speaking for a short time (Sidney Rigdon) he sat down and as soon as he did so, Pres. Brigham Young who was in the stands, having come there after Sidney Rigdon had left there to occupy the wagon, rose to address the people. The congregation wheeled around and faced him, turning their backs on Sidney Rigdon. It was the first sound of his voice which the people had heard since he had gone East on his mission and the effect on them was most wonderful. All who were present on that occasion will never forget the impression that was made upon them. If Joseph had risen from the dead and spoken in their hearing the effect could have not been more startling than it was to many present at this meeting. It was the voice of Joseph himself, and not only was it the voice of Joseph which was heard, but it seemed in the eyes of the people as though it was the very person of Joseph which stood before them. In this wonderful miraculous event

The Lord gave his people a testimony that left no room for doubt as to who was the man He had chosen to lead them. They both saw and heard with their natural eyes and ears and then the words which were uttered came accompanied by the convincing power of God to their hearts and they were filled with the spirit of joy. There had been gloom and in some hearts probably doubt and uncertainty but now it was plain to all that here was the man upon whom the Lord had bestowed the necessary authority to act in their midst in Joseph's stead."

From the May, 1944 Juvenile Instructor, the following is a quotation from G.Q.C. in reference to some of the problems which had developed in Nauvoo by early 1845, after Governor Ford of Illinois abolished the charter of Nauvoo, thereby removing all governmental protection for the citizens and opening the door to lawlessness and persecution without recourse to police protection:

" There were many suspicious characters came to the city and presumed upon the people because the city charter was repealed. Some of these were notorious for their crimes and it was well known that they had evil designs in visiting Nauvoo. But how could they be dealt with? There were no police who had the authority to arrest them and for the people to have waited upon them and warned them to leave the city would not have been wise. Such a course would have provided pretext for ~~getting out writs and~~ enemies of the Saints for getting out writs and carrying them off to prison. Yet something had to be done.

It was and still is a common practice among Yankees when engaged in conversation or in making a bargain to take out their pocket knives and commence whittling. Frequently also when engaged in talk they indulge in the same practice accompanying the whittling by whistling. No person could object therefore to the practices of whistling and whittling. Many of the boys in the city had them each a large bowie knife made and when a man came to town who was known to be a villain and there for evil purposes a few of them would get together and go to where the obnoxious person was, and having previously provided themselves with pine shingles would commence whittling. The presence of a number of boys, each whittling a shingle with a large bright bowie knife was not a sight to escape the notice of the stranger especially when those knives came close to his body. His first movement would, of course, be to step back and ask what this meant. The boys would make no reply but with grave faces keep up there whistling and whittling. What could the man do? If he was armed he could shoot but the resolute expression of the boys' faces and the gleaming knives would convince him that ~~his~~ discretion was the better part of valor. The most we ever knew them to do was to stand for a while and curse and threaten, then they would walk off in the direction of their stopping place or to the ferry, followed by the troop of boys vigorously whittling and whistling. The result would be that these people would get out of the city as soon as possible."

From the July, 1945, Juvenile Instructor- "Biography of George Q. Cannon"

by Joseph J. Cannon

Under date of April 8, 1878, GQC writes in his journal:

" For some time I have been talking of letting the Church have my home in the city. Before President Young's death I offered it to him more than once but he said he wanted me to keep it and occupy it. After his death I felt strongly impressed to let the Church have it on some terms. I offered it to them if they would credit me with all I had ever drawn upon any terms they would name. I felt that it was too large and conspicuous a house for me to occupy under the circumstances, especially as President Taylor's houses were all small and insignificant. I built by the direction and approval of the President (Young) and while he lived I did not feel as I have done since his death. All these causes combined prompted me to take the course I did. I felt that President Taylor ought to occupy it but the brethren did not feel to accept it from me, they thinking that I ought to keep it. At one of our concerts President Taylor was authorized to take the house as I offered it free of rent, taking it as a place of residence for himself, the Church paying for the fitting up until some other suitable place could be provided. This he had not done. When I made up my mind to transfer the property of the president (Brigham Young) to meet his accounts I also made up my mind that I could not possibly hold my property while there was still an account of mine on the books. While Brother George A. Smith was trustee-in-trust there was a general seconding of the accounts of the various brethren. I had been devoting my time for several years to the President's work, acting as his secretary, etc. After I ceased to be his secretary I still continued to do a great deal at his office.

On Jan. 30, 1873, my account was balanced at \$27,488.67 on account of services rendered (Editor's note: Elder Cannon in 1873 had been more than 12 years an Apostle, devoting practically all of his time to the Church and the amount drawn was largely in tithing office scrip). This was the first credit I received for services; from that time until the present (1878) I have drawn \$12,676.18 which was to aid me in building. The Twelve have credited me since the President's death on the 6th Of October, 1877, with \$6,375.00 for services rendered, which makes a total of \$33,863.67 that I have been credited for services rendered. I had also paid \$250.00 to my own credit which left a balance against me of ~~which left a balance~~ of \$6,051.00. I have been desirous to find myself in a position where I could restore to the Church all I had ever drawn from it for services so that my labors might be gratuitous. I have paid tolerably heavy tithing and I have felt that if I could square up these credits I should be grateful. Taking the credits and the indebtedness together amounted to \$39,914.85. In settling up the President's account on the evening of the 10th I offered my house to President Taylor and the Twelve, and told them that under no circumstances now could I continue to occupy it. If I were to do so I should expose myself to animadversions on the part of heirs and others who might say that while the President lived I was willing to profit by his goodness and now that he is gone I was equally willing to avail myself the leniency of the Twelve. I could not occupy such a position. I wanted to square up everything I had received so that I could stand in an unassailable position showing I had done as much and more to deal with the Church for myself than I had as executor in President Young's case. The Brethren wanted to know what I ask for my place. I told them I had accounts showing that I had spent upwards of \$45,000 without mentioning money which I had spent besides which was a considerable amount, the great bulk was my account with the Church which was for material for my house. This was paid to me at tithing office prices which were very high. I would be perfectly satisfied with any decision they reached in the matter. They talked it over, Brother Taylor and Brother Erastus Snow particularly, and fixed upon \$60,000. Brother Woodruff had mentioned \$75,000 but I had protested that that was too much. Brother Taylor said they would give me the privilege of using the house and if I saw my way clear to buy it back he would be glad to have me do so. I said that if they would give me that amount I would give \$5,000 to some educational establishment and so the matter was arranged. In that way \$39,914.85 was placed as an offset to the amount I

~~had drawn~~

~~had drawn for services rendered by the balance~~

had drawn which squared my account without any credit for services rendered and the balance was placed to my credit. I feel greatly relieved at having been able to make this disposition of the affair. Ever since the President's death I have seen the steps which were taken in regard to his accounts and I have felt that I could not have my accounts stand as they had. Several of the Twelve have not drawn anything of consequence for years and I desire to occupy as strong and favorable a position in this respect as any man in the Church so that whatever time and labor I have bestowed upon public affairs I could feel that I have done without pay, and I think that all who know my life will concede that I have been second to none in spending my time for the public."

(Further from the July, 1945 Juvenile Instructor, Jos. J. Cannon writes):

This action by Elder Cannon in disposing of his city house had a deep influence on his family life. His children were not to be brought up in city environment. Some years previously he had taken, on a ~~large~~ debt, a large tract of land lying along the east bank of the Jordan River, three miles southwest of the Temple block, and had made some improvements there. He now decided to make his home and build houses to accommodate his growing family. This was about as poor a piece of land as lay in the whole valley. It was marshy, subject to flooding in the Spring, covered generally with salt grass, and bare spots which glistened with alkali. On it was the old bed of the river which was filled with water and was called the "Slough". The lay of the land, low, flat and in some parts traversed by old channels, made irrigation and drainage almost impossible. It was plagued with mosquitoes.

Moreover George Q. Cannon was not a farmer, he was born and brought up in Liverpool, ~~Livingston~~ worked in a printer's shop in Nauvoo, and after coming to the Valley had made his home and had his occupation in the city when not absent on missions. He found no time to tramp across fields to see how crops were growing nor don old clothes and relax with his livestock in corrals or barns, The roads to the city where he traveled every day, including Sunday, were dusty in summer and unbelievably bad in winter, the mud being in spots almost up to the hubs of his buggy.

But this barren land along the river had one great attraction for him—perhaps two. One was isolation. Neighbors were distant and few. It gave him the opportunity to create a special environment for his children. He could arrange for their education according to his own ideas and establish standards of thought and conduct with comparatively small influence from the outside. His work in Washington and in the Church took him away from home a great deal and probably no man ever felt the responsibility of rearing children in faith and good works more than he.

The second attraction may be only imaginary. To this vital man hard undertakings were congenial. He never sought the easy way of living for himself and did not wish it for his children. He loved to turn hopeless situations into desirable ones. Certainly the "Farm" on the river offered plenty of hardship and a sufficient challenge.

(From the Oct. 1945 Juvenile Instructor article by Jos. J. Cannon)

~~Having settled his account he returned to Washington~~

In this winter of 1881-82 it was most trying on George Q. Cannon. He and his people were being attacked and it was necessary to see members of both houses (of Congress) friendly or hostile, to seek some way of avoiding the serious issues. He was besieged by lobbyists who desired, for a fee, to turn the tide for him. Newspapers and other periodicals interviewed him or were more often being solicited to receive and print answers to the infamous articles which were constantly being printed. In the midst of these troubles a personal affliction came to him. His wife, Elizabeth, whose health had been precarious for some time, became fatally ill. He was kept in constant touch with her condition by letter and wire and most earnestly sought the Lord for her recovery, and would certainly ^{have} gone to her if it had been only personal business that kept him in Washington.

(Cont.)

(Cont. from Oct. 1945 Juvenile Instructor, Jos. J. Cannon, "Life of Geo. Q. Cannon)

On Jan. 24, 1882, he received from his brother, Angus, the following message: "Notwithstanding, Elizabeth very bad all day, indications better now. She says, 'Stand to your post. God can raise me up in answer to your prayers there as well as here. All is being done which can be done.'" The following day she died, and Angus telegraphed, "Elizabeth just left us. God comfort you. Any instructions?" In answer the sorrowing husband wired his desires regarding the kind of coffin, the burial place, and included the following, "Keep children constantly in company. Must not yield to grief. Have no gloomy trappings at funeral, no black about coffin."

In his journal he wrote, "I bow to His will, receive with submission and resignation this affliction. I must carry out myself that which I have so often taught others." His journal at this time has many tender references to this saintly woman who had suffered so much affliction with him. Commenting on the gallant message she sent him before she died, he wrote, "Unselfish as ever, every word breathed the sentiment and heroism of the true woman that she is."