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A NOTE ON STATISTICS

This study has been concerned primarily with relationships and attitudes rather than mission growth and development. Nevertheless, it has been thought appropriate to include some statistics for comparative purposes. The problems of ascertaining with real accuracy mission membership are well known to students of mission history, indeed to all historians of the Pacific Islands. Figures provided by the missions are almost invariably exaggerated, as a comparison with available official census figures will show, yet often the missions are the only source of this kind of statistical information. Consequently, the value of any compilation that relies solely on mission statistics is doubtful.

The accompanying table shows the membership of the major missions in Central Polynesia by decades since 1890. A number of features of the table require comment. Because of inadequate information from official sources, it has been necessary to include figures provided by missions and estimates based on both official and mission figures in order to fill many gaps. The demographer may well regard this as anomalous, and I can offer little defence. Despite the overall attempt at grouping by decades, the fact that census years rarely coincide with the beginning of a decade and the further fact that census years in the three groups have rarely coincided results in a lack of uniformity. Moreover, available mission figures do not always coincide with either the beginning of a decade or the official census year. Where necessary, therefore, I have shown the actual date to which the figures refer. Unless another date is shown beneath this, the date refers also to the figures beneath for that particular island group.

Figures not prefixed by 'c' or in parenthesis are figures from official sources. Those prefixed by 'c' are my estimates, while those in parenthesis are mission figures. For the sake of comparison, both official and mission figures for the same year have been occasionally provided. The discrepancies have already been noted (Thesis p.359) and require no further comment, except to say that some religious groups seem less inclined toward exaggeration than others. The Tanito mission in French Polynesia, short staffed and poorly organised in the early years of this century, returned the same membership total for fourteen years from 1906 to 1919. The Free

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Wesleyan Church in Tonga did not come into existence until 1924, which fact explains both the absence of Free Wesleyan statistics before that year and the sharp decline in Free Church membership immediately after. The groupings for 1926 and 1945 in Samoa are estimates based on the New Zealand census returns for Western Samoa. Religious affairs in Tonga in the early 1890s were still in such a state of confusion following the "reformation" of 1885 that I have not attempted to provide estimates. Arguably, however, the King's church accounted for about 90% of the population. The transfer of power from the LMS to French Missionary Societies which was still affecting French Polynesian Protestantism in the 1890s also makes an estimate here difficult.

Information contained in the table was obtained from missions in the field, from published sources or by extrapolation. Where several figures for the same year have been obtained from a particular mission, I have included the most credible rather than the most impressive. Their credibility, however, is somewhat reduced when these figures are compared with census returns.

Published sources used in this compilation include: Norma McArthur, Island Populations of the Pacific (Canberra 1967); H. Robson (ed) Pacific Islands Year Book (Sydney various editions); Tonga Government Gazettes; Methodist Church of Australasia, Department of Overseas Missions, Annual Reports; London Missionary Society, Minutes of Annual Conferences; New Zealand Department of Statistics, Population Census (Appendices) and Bulletin des Etudes Oceaniennes, Vol. 9 No. 102 (1953).

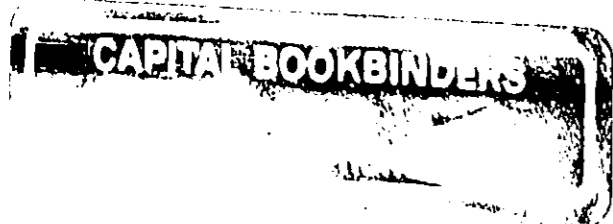
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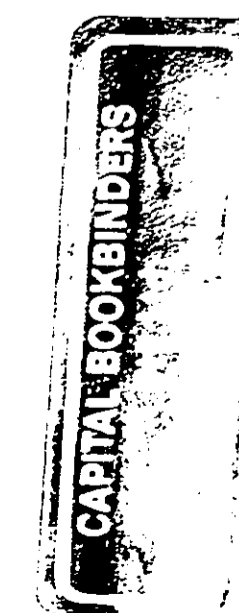


		1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1956
FRENCH POLYNESIA	Total Pop'n	¹⁸⁹² 24,014	¹⁹⁰² 28,710	¹⁹¹¹ 31,477	¹⁹²¹ 29,605	¹⁹³¹ 40,391	¹⁹⁴¹ 51,221	¹⁹⁵¹ 62,828	76,327
	Catholic		c7,000	c8,000	c7,000	c10,000	c12,500	15,096	c19,200
	Protestant		c15,000	c17,000	c16,000	c21,500	c27,000	34,441	c40,000
	Mormon	Mission Closed	(307)	(886)	(1,541)	¹⁹²⁸ (1,109)	(1,412)	1,218 (1,753)	(2,180)
	Tanito	(1,176)	(1,957)	(1,785)	¹⁹¹⁹ (1,785)	(1,170)	(1,617)	2,073 (1,999)	(2,253)
SAMOA	Total Pop'n	c34,000	40,094	45,335	44,399	53,656	73,337	103,846	117,481
	LMS		c33,000	¹⁹⁰⁹ (37,245)	¹⁹²⁶ c28,000	¹⁹⁴⁵ c45,800			c57,500
	Methodist	¹⁸⁹² (3,343)	(2,583)	(2,798)	c8,000		c13,200		c15,900
	Catholic		c2,500	c3,000	c8,200		c16,500		c21,000
	Mormon	(124)	(1,044)	(1,765)	(2,647) c1,200	¹⁹³⁰ (4,491)	¹⁹⁵² (5,613)(6,472) c3,400		(7,500)
TONGA	Total Pop'n	¹⁸⁹¹ 19,196	¹⁹⁰⁰ 20,019	¹⁹¹¹ 23,017	¹⁹²¹ 24,937	¹⁹³² 29,454	¹⁹³⁹ 34,130	48,258	56,838
	Free Wesleyan	-	-	-	-	16,900 (16,828)	18,403 (19,595)	(23,447)	28,177 (27,723)
	Free Church		¹⁹⁰³ (15,292)	¹⁹¹² (16,384)	¹⁹²² (17,095)	7,642	5,837	c8,000	9,942
	Catholic		c1,900	c2,200	c2,600	3,476	4,642	c6,000	8,364
	Mormon	¹⁸⁹⁴ (13)	MISSION CLOSED		(739)	749 (1,232)	991 (1,777)	(2,975)	2,925 (4,260)

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LATTER-DAY SAINTS MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES

IN POLYNESIA, 1844--1960

by

Norman Douglas

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in the
Australian National University

October 1974

Except where otherwise indicated,
this thesis is based on original research

Norman Douglas

Norman Douglas

1 October 1974

SYNOPSIS

BECAUSE the Latter-day Saints Church was born in America, this study necessarily begins by examining the social and doctrinal bases of the church in its American context. Chapter One, therefore, shows the relationship of the Latter-day Saints to other American revivalists, and places Latter-day Saints doctrine in its appropriate historical setting. The growth of the church's missionary work is examined in Chapter Two. The Latter-day Saints missionary effort in the Pacific islands was both encouraged and limited by certain racial doctrines; these are discussed in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, an outline of Latter-day Saints contact with various Polynesian islands is given, and various themes, to be discussed in depth later, are touched on. Chapter Five presents an examination of the qualities and abilities of Latter-day Saints missionaries in Polynesia, and gives an indication of the problems faced by the missionaries, and the methods employed by them. In Chapter Six the focus is on the missions as institutions, rather than the missionaries as individuals. Mission attitudes to land acquisition and financial matters are especially examined in this chapter. An outstanding feature of Latter-day Saints history in the Pacific was the missionaries' rivalry with other mission organizations. This is discussed in some detail in Chapter Seven. The difficulties encountered by the missionaries in their contact with government officials and administrators in the islands is the subject of Chapter Eight. Chapter Nine presents aspects of the Latter-day Saints missionaries attitude to, and involvement with, the Polynesian islanders,

and shows some of the effects of the missionaries' teaching on the islanders. A conclusion assesses the success of Latter-day Saints missions in the Pacific, and suggests some of the reasons for the church's acceptance by Polynesians.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN TEXT

<u>B.M.</u>	<u>Book of Mormon</u>
<u>D & C</u>	<u>Doctrine and Covenants</u>
L.D.S.	Latter-day Saints
L.M.S.	London Missionary Society
S.S.L.	L.M.S., South Sea Letters
R.L.D.S.	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

GLOSSARY OF POLYNESIAN WORDS USED IN TEXT

Fa'a Mamona (Samoan)	The Mormon way
Fa'a Samoa (Samoan)	The Samoan way
Faife'au (Samoan)	Missionary or pastor
Faipule (Samoan)	Representatives
Fono (Samoan and Tongan)	Council
Haole (Hawaiian)	White person
Malaga (Samoan)	Visit or tour, often ceremonial
Matai (Samoan)	Heads of families
Orometua (Tahitian)	Teacher or missionary
Poi (General)	A food made from breadfruit or tapioca, occasionally flavoured or sweetened
Siva (Samoan)	Dance
Ta'amilosaga (Samoan)	Visit or tour
Taupou (Samoan)	Virgin of rank

NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

So as to maintain the character of the originals, quotations from documents have been given as far as possible without the intrusion of the pedantic [sic] or the addition of letters or punctuation.

INTRODUCTION

SINCE 5 March 1797, when the Duff sailed into Matavai Bay, Tahiti, heralding the permanent establishment of Christian missions in the Pacific islands, the islanders have had to confront Christianity in several of its multifarious forms. Once the first contacts had been made, missionary societies and organizations followed each other with some frequency, some building on the achievements of their predecessors, some attempting to discredit them, often to the bewilderment and frustration of the islanders, for most of whom the theological subtleties distinguishing one Christian faith from another had little meaning.

By the middle of the nineteenth century Protestant and Catholic missionary bodies, complementary or rival, had succeeded in having Christianity's message accepted in most of Polynesia, and had to their own satisfaction delineated areas of influence. The second half of the century, however, saw the appearance of additional missionary organizations which paid no heed to existing spheres of influence; one such body, in fact, made it a practice to go to previously Christianized fields, rather than pioneer new areas. Beginning with Tahiti in 1844, by the end of the century the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had sent missionaries to all the major Polynesian groups and had established missions in several of them. After their tentative beginnings, Latter-day Saints missionaries came to Polynesia in their hundreds. Most were young, inexperienced men; few chose to go to the islands, and very few served there for longer than three years.

Unlike the mission churches which preceded them the Latter-day Saints produced no missionary politicians. There is no counterpart in Mormonism in the islands to a George Pritchard, a Shirley Baker or a Honoré Laval. The one possible exception, Walter Murray Gibson, though his name is associated with both Mormonism and Hawaiian politics of the nineteenth century, was not a product of the Mormon establishment. L.D.S. missionaries in Polynesia, while understandably affected by islands politics at times, had no direct effect upon them, generally lacking the time, the interest, and the talent for political activity.

Similarly, though their numbers were great, L.D.S. missionaries produced no great educationalist within the islands context, nor any significant works of scholarship devoted to islands life and custom. Again, lack of talent precluded them from the first, lack of curiosity from the second. The scholar will search L.D.S. missionary journals and papers in vain for any really valuable ethnological information concerning the islanders. In many cases men of little education, the missionaries were often also men of little curiosity, who knew their tenure in the islands was brief. For the most part they were serving their time rather than seeking a vocation.

Perhaps partly for these reasons, the activities of the Latter-day Saints missionaries have been ignored or dismissed very briefly in most published writings on the Pacific islands. Reference is made occasionally to their presence, to one or another unusual feature of their teaching,¹ or to their representing an aspect of American

1 e.g., L.B. Wright and M.I. Fry, Puritans in the South Seas, 197.

influence in the islands.² On occasion they have been referred to critically, or humorously, and sometimes incorrectly, but their presence has rarely been taken seriously.

To some extent this oversight in published works had been redressed by scholars in unpublished theses. Latter-day Saints affairs in Hawaii and New Zealand, at least, have been investigated in the historical³ or sociological⁴ context. But the scope of the sociology has been limited by its area, and the value of the history by its restricted documentation. In the latter case, scholars have been obliged to rely almost entirely on published sources since access to primary or manuscript material was denied them. Moreover, even among research scholars, the central Polynesian islands, French Oceania, Samoa and Tonga, have been ignored.

It seemed appropriate, therefore, to attempt a study of Latter-day Saints missionary activity in Polynesia which concentrates largely on the central islands, and is based on unpublished primary material which has been hitherto inaccessible. Not surprisingly, a different

2 e.g., C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the Southwest Pacific, 106.

3 e.g., C.M. Bock, 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands'. I.R. Barker, 'The Connexion: the Mormon Church and the Maori people'.

4 e.g., E.G. Schwimmer, 'Mormonism in a Maori Village; a study of social change.' B.F. Pierce, 'Acculturation of Samoans in the Mormon village of Laie, Territory of Hawaii'.

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picture emerges from those drawn by researchers whose documentary evidence was limited. Unlike the history of the church in Hawaii, which presents a picture of almost continual achievement;⁵ or that of the church in New Zealand, which finds a definite policy in the church's relations with the Maori,⁶ this study finds little evidence of constant success, and less evidence of any deliberate policy. In central Polynesia both these features are absent for the greater part of the period of study.

If any single major theme emerges, it is one of persistence in the face of obstacles, obstacles provided by many of the missionaries' own ineptitude, by the opposition of islands officials and rival missionaries, and by the indifference of the islanders. Thus, the organization of this work is determined by this theme and these features, and is presented largely as a study in relationships and attitudes, in which strict chronology is of far less importance than the comparisons and contrasts between these relationships and attitudes.

RESEARCH for this study was undertaken in Australia, the U.S.A. and the Pacific islands, in libraries, archives, mission offices, and through personal surveys and interviews. With only a few unfortunate exceptions, I obtained valuable assistance, and was received kindly, almost indulgently. Particular thanks are due to Mr Richard Howard and Mr Carl Mesle of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day

5 Bock, op.cit.

6 Barker, op.cit.

Saints in Independence, Missouri; to Mr Lauritz Peterson and Mr Derek Metcalfe of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah, and to Mr Allen Breckenridge of the Tanito mission in Tahiti. Mr H.E. Maude, lately Professorial Fellow at the Australian National University, provided much of the original incentive for the study, while comments and criticisms were regularly provided by the late Professor J.W. Davidson, Dr Peter Corris and my supervisor Dr W.N. Gunson. My wife Nora patiently transcribed hours of tape-recorded interviews and other material. Preliminary drafts were typed by Mrs Rosamund Walsh, Mrs Rita Matthews, Mrs Robyn Walker and Miss Deirdre Burke; the final draft by Mrs Anvida Lamberts. The maps were drawn by Mr Imants Lamberts. All these and others whose numbers defy individual acknowledgement, but whose assistance is fondly remembered, made a valuable contribution to the study. The responsibility for the final product is mine.

CHAPTER ONE

'AN UNUSUAL EXCITEMENT'

AMERICAN historians have characterized the first half of the nineteenth century as an 'Age of Ferment'; an age of political and economic optimism, of social and religious experiment and innovation; an age which gave vocal and active expression to doctrines of spiritual and material progress and placed almost unlimited faith in the perfectibility of the individual and the worth of the common man. The dominant thought of the period - 'the infinitude of the private man'¹ - found its political outlet in the triumph of Jacksonian democracy and its philosophical expression in Transcendentalism. Visionaries channelled their social and economic energies into the Utopian communities of Oneida, Brook Farm, Fruitlands and Hopedale. Emotional intensity and zeal - much of it ingenuous - affected virtually every aspect of human endeavour. In all things social, economic and political, experiment was a keynote and optimism a guiding principle. The Bill of Rights had guaranteed free exercise of religious beliefs, and a society receptive to all ideas could guarantee a hearing for almost any form of religious expression no matter how seemingly novel or bizarre.

The country had witnessed one religious revival in the second quarter of the eighteenth century; the first

1 The phrase is Emerson's.

four decades of the nineteenth century saw another.² In many ways the second was the antithesis of the first. The 'Great Awakening' of the eighteenth century had been produced by the stirrings of more or less orthodox Calvinist preachers, legalistic in their background and pessimistic in their outlook. The 'Second Awakening', reflecting the prevailing social mood, placed its emphases on optimistic goals and substituted a homocentric for a theocentric concept. In the theology of most 'Second Awakening' preachers, man held the keys to his own salvation. Its leading spokesman, Charles Grandison Finney, though an ordained Presbyterian minister, showed more admiration for the directness of Methodist preachers than for the learning of his fellow Presbyterians.

We must have exciting, powerful preaching, [declared Finney in 1835] or the devil will have the people, except what the Methodists can save! Many ministers are finding it out already, that a Methodist preacher, without the advantages of a liberal education, will draw a congregation around him which a Presbyterian minister, with perhaps ten times as much learning, cannot equal, because he has not the earnest manner of the other, and does not pour out fire upon his hearers when he preaches.³

In no other part of the country were the fires of revivalist preaching poured out so effectively as in western

2 American revivalism has been a popular subject with historians. For a detailed, fairly recent study see William G. McLaughlin Jr, Modern Revivalism. A briefer account with slightly different emphasis may be found in William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America.

3 Charles G. Finney, Lectures on Revivals of Religion, 310-11.

New York State. It was here that the 'Finney revival' began in the mid-1820s, and it was here that the temperature of evangelistic fervour was so persistently high that contemporaries and later historians gave to the area the name 'Burned-over district'.⁴ Within this locality 'congregated a people extraordinarily given to unusual religious beliefs, peculiarly devoted to crusades aimed at the perfection of mankind and the attainment of millennial happiness. Few of the enthusiasms or eccentricities of this generation of Americans failed to find support here.... Several originated in the region.'⁵ In the 1820s the flames of the spirit flared particularly brightly, illuminating the presence of several odd prophets and strange sects. Within this remarkably prolific decade there came through or to western New York, Isaac Bullard's 'Pilgrims', Mother Ann Lee's 'Shakers' and Jemima Wilkinson's 'Community of the Publick Universal Friend'.⁶ In 1828 William Miller, a farmer from Low Hampton, New York, received his first warning of the second coming of Christ, though the anticipated event lay fifteen years in the future.⁷ For Charles G. Finney western New York was an extremely fertile ground. Further east he could not find '...anything

4 See especially, Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District. The term is also used by Sweet, op.cit., Fawn M. Brodie, No Man Knows my History, McLaughlin, op.cit., Winthrop S. Hudson, Religion in America, and many others.

5 Cross, op.cit., 3.

6 See Brodie, op.cit., 12-15 for a brief description of these sects.

7 Hudson, op.cit., 194-6. Miller's followers later split into two major groups, The Advent Christian Church and the Seventh Day Adventists.

like the spirit of prayer that had prevailed in the revivals at the West....'⁸

Social and economic factors had here combined to create an atmosphere favourable to the reception of religious innovations. The rapid economic growth that followed the opening of the Erie Canal was not matched by any noticeable increase in intellectual awareness or sophistication. Indeed, the very rapidity may have increased the naive optimism that typified much of local thinking. Progress had doubtless been gained by diligence and effort, but its pace had been almost miraculous. Thus, while economic and population growth hardly justify the application of the term 'frontier' to the region, prevailing social conduct and attitudes were more characteristic of civilization's fringe than its core.

Perhaps no better illustration of the area's optimism and credulity can be found than the widespread belief that buried treasure existed and could be located by certain ritualistic exercises or by the use of magical apparatus. The persistent failure of the seekers after riches did little to curb their enthusiasm. Indeed, the practice received constant stimulus from the presence in the area of burial mounds and palisades that were generally supposed to have been the work of an extinct race, superior to the Indians in the refinements of civilization.⁹ Local lore and recent history, therefore, had helped to create

8 Quoted Cross, op.cit., 51.

9 For comments on the prevalence of this practice see Brodie, op.cit., 16-49; Cross, op.cit., 80-81; Thomas O'Dea, The Mormons, 5-6, 24-5.

mental attitudes that would foster religious divisions and accept uncritically religious novelties, bolstering them with local myth.

Arising out of such conditions, Mormonism¹⁰ seems no more than symptomatic and its founder, Joseph Smith,¹¹ no more than typical. Smith, although not a New Yorker by birth, had moved to the town of Palmyra, New York, from Sharon in the adjoining state of Vermont, in his tenth year. He was one of nine children, the family

-
- 10 The official title of the church, 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' was not adopted until April 1838. The original name, taken in April 1830, had been 'Church of Christ'. In 1834 it was altered to 'Church of the Latter-Day Saints'. The terms Mormon and Mormonism, derived from the Latter-day Saints chief scriptural work the Book of Mormon, were applied critically, even abusively, at first by the opponents of Joseph Smith and his followers. Before long, however, they were adopted by the Latter-day Saints and fell into common usage. They no longer have any derogatory association, and will be used frequently in this study simply as alternative names for 'Latter-day Saints' and 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints'.
- 11 There is an overwhelming amount of published material on Joseph Smith and the Mormons, most of it virtually valueless to an objective study. The most penetrating biography of Smith is Brodie, op.cit., and the most reliable general account of the church is O'Dea, op.cit., both previously cited. The official church history is B.H. Roberts (ed.), History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereinafter referred to as History of the Church...). A briefer official account is Joseph F. Smith, Essentials in Church History. Extracts from Smith's own account of his early career, written eight years after the establishment of the church, are contained in one of the Mormons' doctrinal works, the Pearl of Great Price and in a widely distributed Latter-day Saints pamphlet Joseph Smith's Testimony.

of a New England farmer, whose declining fortunes, contributed to by poor harvests, debt and domestic illnesses, had prompted the removal. Four years later the family moved again, this time to the nearby town of Manchester, where Joseph Smith first became aware of what he described as 'an unusual excitement on the subject of religion'.¹²

Although by Smith's own account the excitement began among Methodists, it 'soon became general among all the sects in that region of the country'.¹³ While in their earlier New England environment Smith's family apparently paid no particular heed to religious matters, at least not to the extent of giving allegiance to any one of the established churches, in the religiously heated atmosphere of western New York it must have been difficult to maintain detachment. As a result, four of the Smith family, Joseph's mother, two brothers and a sister were 'proselyted to the Presbyterian faith' and he found himself becoming 'somewhat partial to the Methodist sect...' though 'the confusion and strife among the different denominations' was so great that he found it impossible 'to come to any certain conclusion who was right and who was wrong'.¹⁴ Despite his indecisiveness there can be no doubt that Joseph Smith was influenced by the air of religious argument for the contention was indeed infectious.

Almost equally infectious was a passion which the Smiths, and particularly Joseph, shared with many other inhabitants of the region - for treasure hunting. In 1833,

12 History of the Church..., vol.1,2.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid, 3-4.

three years after the founding of the Mormon Church, at least fifty-one people who claimed to have known the Smiths signed a statement to the effect that

they were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time digging for money which they pretended was hid in the earth.... Joseph Smith, Senior, and his son Joseph, were, in particular, considered entirely destitute of moral character, and addicted to vicious habits'.¹⁵

Not too much need be made of the latter part of this extract, but there is ample evidence, including his own admission, that Joseph Smith was, at least as early as 1826, given to digging for treasure.¹⁶ The practice was widespread throughout New England, western New York and Ohio.

It was in 1827 that Joseph Smith's two chief preoccupations seem to have coalesced. In that year he made it known, albeit not widely, that he had been given by an

15 In Daniel P. Kidder, Mormonism and the Mormons: A Historical view of the Rise and Progress of the sect self-styled Latter-day Saints, quoted in Edwin Duane Follick, 'The Cultural Influence of Mormonism in Early Nineteenth Century America', 31. Although the statement is here said to have had sixty-two signatories, Smith's biographer Fawn M. Brodie states that there were fifty-one. Brodie, op.cit., 18, 416.

16 See Brodie, 16-33 and Appendix A for an excellently documented account of Joseph Smith's career as treasure-hunter. It hardly needs to be said that the official church histories make no mention of this fact, save Smith's own mild admission that he 'frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth...', and that in 1825 he was employed by one Josiah Stool to dig for silver. History of the Church..., vol.3, 29.

angelic messenger temporary custody of a set of gold plates upon which was inscribed 'an account of the former inhabitants of this country, and the source from whence they sprang'. Also contained in the plates was 'the fulness of the everlasting Gospel...as delivered by the Saviour to the ancient inhabitants'. It was not Smith's first encounter with the angel, who introduced himself as Moroni. He had, he wrote later, been receiving visions since 1820 when, in answer to his prayers concerning which of the contending denominations he should join, God the Father and God the Son had appeared to him and advised him against joining any for 'all their creeds were an abomination'.¹⁷ Subsequently he received regular visits from and conducted lengthy interviews with the angel Moroni, obtaining at each one 'instruction and intelligence...respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner his kingdom was to be conducted in the last days'.¹⁸

Following what appears to have been a probationary period of four years from the time he was first informed of the gold plates, Joseph Smith was permitted to take possession of them and with the aid of an amanuensis set about translating the scriptures contained thereon from their original 'Reformed Egyptian' into quasi-biblical English prose. The resulting work was the Book of Mormon, first published in Palmyra, New York, in 1830 and so called after one of its leading characters.¹⁹

17 History of the Church..., vol.1, 5-6.

18 Ibid., 222, 270.

19 Subsequent quotations are from the 1920 edition, often reprinted with the same format. Hereinafter cited as B.M.

The appearance in print of the Book of Mormon at once distinguished Joseph Smith from the other prophets of his generation, despite their more or less common background. For Smith claimed for himself and his church an authority which few other innovators dared. Bullard's Pilgrims, Ann Lee's Shakers, Jemima Wilkinson's followers and other short-lived religious novelties disappeared with the era that spawned them, their despatch hastened by rumours of esoteric rites and unnatural practices. The haranguing revivalist preachers stirred emotions and provoked excesses. But the Mormon prophet, eschewing the Messianic claims of the eccentrics and the methods of the camp meeting and the tent show, used as the foundation for his new faith the apparent reasonableness of the written word. No other religious novelty of the period could produce a single, seemingly definitive text to justify and explain its appearance. Here was evidence - documentary evidence no less - of the truth of Joseph Smith's claims and the mission of his church. The Book of Mormon became one of the strongest pillars of the new faith, and assertion of its veracity became part of the stock testimony of every Latter-day Saint.

The steps that led Joseph Smith to compose the work and the real reasons for its production will forever remain matters for conjecture and dispute. Calculated imposture, confidence trickery, visionary qualities, a

20 The standard Latter-day Saints testimony is as follows:
'The gospel is true. The Book of Mormon is true.
Jesus is the Christ, and Joseph Smith is his prophet.'
There are occasional, non-essential variations.

genuine desire for religious reformation, a simple desire to make money, unbridled ambition, paranoid delusions; all have been suggested singly or in combination; most are plausible, none can be indisputably proven.²¹ In a less credulous and more critical environment Smith may have been universally denounced as a charlatan and his 'golden bible' as the product of an imaginative but irrational mind. The response would have been probably one of either amused scepticism or cynical contempt; the Book of Mormon may have remained no more than a literary absurdity and Mormonism's founder and his followers no more than another outlandish sect on the lunatic fringe of established religion. Accusations that Smith was a liar and a fraud and that the Book of Mormon was pure fabrication were, of course, forthcoming. But, notwithstanding his opponents, neither the contents of the book nor its alleged origin must have seemed too far removed from possibility's province to a society for which myth and legend had become part of the stuff of life and among which speculation - often fanciful - on religious subjects was commonplace. Moreover, within the book could be found seemingly conclusive answers to the most pressing religious, social and political issues of the day. One early reviewer wrote that Smith in his book apparently decided all the great controversies:

infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general

21. See, for example, Brodie, op.cit.; I. Woodbridge Riley, The Founder of Mormonism, a psychological study of Joseph Smith; Smith, Essentials..., etc.

resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of free masonry, republican government, and the rights of man.²²

The Book of Mormon, then, was a reflection of both the imagination of its author and the intellectual preoccupations of the society in which he lived.

The larger framework which contained the book's doctrinal messages was, as Smith had previously announced, a history of the original inhabitants of the American continent. This one thousand year epic (c.600 B.C. to c. A.D. 400) of migration and settlement, warfare and intrigue, good and evil, sin and redemption concerned chiefly the fortunes of two rival nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites, descendants of two members of a Hebrew family who had arrived in the Americas six centuries before the birth of Christ. Although they shared a common origin, growing differences of belief, custom and outlook aggravated relations between the two peoples, leading to outbreaks of violence which culminated in a ferocious battle in which the entire Nephite race was obliterated. The bulk of the work, that dealing with the Nephites and Lamanites, is divided, biblical fashion, into books: 1 and 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jaron, Omni, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi and Mormon. Between the books of Omni and Mosiah occur the 'Words of Mormon'. At the end of the main narrative there are two more books: Ether, whose contents describe an earlier migration, (c.2,250 B.C.), that of the

22 Alexander Campbell (1831) quoted Brodie, op.cit., 69-70. Cross, op.cit., 145.

Jaredites, a relatively short-lived folk who perished more as the result of their own iniquity and folly than through external forces; and finally the Book of Moroni, son of Mormon, which serves as a kind of epilogue and contains instructions on ordination, baptism and the administering of the sacrament. Christ's coming is frequently foretold, by both Nephite and Lamanite prophets, the earliest occasion being about 600 B.C.; and the Messiah's appearance on the American continent, following his resurrection, is described in 3 Nephi, where, as a measure of the authenticity of his presence, Jesus quotes extensively from Isaiah and repeats the Sermon on the Mount.²³

Doctrinally, the Book of Mormon has been described as 'wholeheartedly and completely Arminian',²⁴ and as such it echoed the sentiments of the 'Second Awakening' revivalists reacting against the predominant Calvinism of an earlier generation. Predestination is rejected in favour of free exercise of the will: '...the Lord God', declares the patriarch Lehi, 'gave unto man that he should act for himself'.²⁵ 'God', says Alma, '...granteth unto men according to their desire...I know that he alloteth unto men according to their wills....'²⁶ 'Ye are free;' insists Helaman, 'ye are permitted to act for yourselves'.²⁷ Similarly, in a projection of the humanitarian social

23 B.M. 3 Nephi 12-14, 3 Nephi 20,22.

24 O'Dea, op.cit., 28.

25 B.M. 2 Nephi 2:16.

26 B.M. Alma 29:4.

27 B.M. Helaman 14:30.

aspirations of the day, the final judgement is to be on the basis of works, 'according to the deeds which have been done in the mortal body',²⁸ 'for behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead and stand before God, and be judged according to their works'.²⁹ This is not to say that faith is unnecessary, but rather that only through 'good works' is faith manifested, for if 'ye have faith, hope and charity...then ye will always abound in good works'.³⁰ The possibility that salvation is obtainable through faith alone, however, is completely rejected. In a final slap to the face of hyper-Calvinism, men are said to be 'that they might have joy'.³¹

If the book was anti-Calvinistic it was also vigorously -indeed viciously - anti-Catholic, but once again the basis for such thinking probably lay in the prevalent suspicion and distrust of ritual, formalization, ostentation and priestcraft. Certainly the references are obvious and the message clear. The Roman Catholic Church becomes 'the church of the devil'; 'the great and abominable church of all the earth'; 'the mother of abominations'; 'the mother of harlots'; and the 'whore of all the earth'.³² Practically all the anti-Catholic invective occurs within the first two books, 1 and 2 Nephi, suggesting that at the time of his writing these Joseph Smith may have been

28 B.M. Alma 5:15.

29 B.M. Alma 11:41.

30 B.M. Alma 8:24.

31 B.M. 2 Nephi 2:25.

32 B.M. 1 Nephi 14:10, 17, 16: 22:13.

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especially influenced by some current attitudes or perhaps even by a particular incident. Whatever motivated these feelings initially, rabid anti-Catholicism remained a part of Mormon thinking for generations and vestiges of it may be found in recent times.³³

In another sense the reaction against Calvinism and Catholicism was not simply a dissatisfaction with institutionalization and orthodoxy, but part of the necessity of shifting the focus of religious enthusiasm away from Europe and on to America. For formal Protestantism and Catholicism were, even in their American setting, at best transplants from Europe; Mormonism on the other hand was a native growth, its fruit the hopes and aspirations of a new society. The action of the Book of Mormon takes place in America; the characters of its plot are the first Americans. It is America, not Europe, that Christ favours with a post-resurrection appearance; to America must the 'scattered seed of Israel' be gathered, and on the American continent will Zion be built in the last days. America is the land 'choice above all others'.

The concept of America as the promised land finds frequent expression in the Book of Mormon, as early as the first book, 1 Nephi, wherein God addresses Nephi thus: 'And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall

33 Bruce McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, an encyclopedic arrangement of Mormon beliefs, directs the reader who consults the entry 'Roman Catholic Church' to another entry 'Church of the Devil'. The latter drew such a protest from the small but significant Catholic population in Salt Lake City, that in a subsequent edition the offensive heading was removed.

prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you....'³⁴ 'The Lord hath covenanted this land unto me', announces Nephi's father Lehi on the eve of his death, 'and to my children forever, and also to those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord',³⁵ thereby anticipating by more than two thousand years the great migrations from the old world to the new. Caution, however, dictates that 'this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations; for behold, many nations would overrun the land, that there would be no place for an inheritance'.³⁶ Presaging the political hopes of the architects of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution it is revealed that 'this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity and from all other nations under heaven....'³⁷

Entirely appropriate to such sentiments which celebrate the almost hallowed nature of the new continent are the many pronouncements on the importance of political and religious liberty. Threatened by the cunning and wicked Amalickiah who seeks to 'destroy the church of God, and to destroy the foundation of liberty....', Moroni, leader of the God-fearing Nephites, defiantly displays a banner (which he terms the 'title of liberty') on which appears the device, 'In memory of our God, our religion,

34 B.M. 1 Nephi 2:20.

35 B.M. 2 Nephi 1:5.

36 B.M. 2 Nephi 1:8.

37 B.M. Ether 2:12.

and freedom, and our peace....'³⁸ Such is the effectiveness of this declaration that it is shortly afterward 'hoisted upon every tower which was in all the land....'³⁹ and plays a symbolic part in the subjugation by Moroni's armies of the supporters of monarchy, the so-called 'king-men', putting 'an end to the stubbornness and the pride of those people who professed the blood of nobility....'⁴⁰ much as the armies of the American revolution forced the withdrawal of the 'king-men' of George III. Political liberty was synonymous with anti-monarchical feeling, republicanism, and with the almost blind faith in the correctness of democratic decision-making that characterized American political thinking at the time of Joseph Smith's writing. 'Now it is not common', King Mosiah tells his people, 'that the voice of the people desireth anything contrary to that which is right...therefore this shall ye observe and make it your law - to do your business by the voice of the people'.⁴¹ Mosiah, it should be stated, is a 'good' king, inasmuch as he invites his subjects to elect his successor, though he doubts the merits of the office: 'Now I say unto you that because all men are not just it is not expedient that ye should have a king or kings to rule over you.'⁴² His is, in fact, one of the strongest arguments presented in favour of republican government, so convincing that his

38 B.M. Alma 46:10-13.

39 B.M. Alma 46:36.

40 B.M. Alma 51:21

41 B.M. Mosiah 29:26.

42 B.M. Mosiah 29:16.

people 'relinquished their desires for a king, and... assembled themselves together in bodies throughout the land, to cast in their voices concerning who should be their judges....' having become 'exceedingly anxious that every man should have an equal chance....'⁴³

In its politics as in its religious doctrine, then, the Book of Mormon was thoroughly representative of the climate of its time. It was ideally suited to be, and intended to become, the scriptures of an American church.⁴⁴ Yet if its construction gave some evidence of imagination and daring, its content required no intellectual wizardry, for in almost all respects, Smith simply fastened on to the most discussed questions of the day, provided the most direct and acceptable answers to them, and clothed the whole in the raiment of fresh revelation.

However offensive Joseph Smith's assumption of prophethood may have been to many, and however presumptuous his book, much of its theology was still in the centre stream of Christian thinking. Many of Mormonism's most distinctive beliefs do not occur in the Book of Mormon, which is conservative in its treatment of such matters as the Trinity, the nature of God, marriage, and the after-life, and mentions not at all the practice of vicarious baptism. The Mormon Church, however, has two other scriptural works of its

43 B.M. Mosiah 29:37-8.

44 O'Dea, op.cit., 40.

own manufacture. These are the Doctrine and Covenants,⁴⁵ a series of revelations allegedly received by Joseph Smith and dealing with church practice and government, the greater number of which post-date the founding of the church in April 1830; and the Pearl of Great Price, a slim and varied literary assortment, which contains Smith's two attempts to rewrite Genesis - the Book of Moses and the Book of Abraham - extracts from Smith's rewriting of Matthew and from his own autobiography, and the thirteen Articles of Faith, which represent in summary the major beliefs of the Latter-day Saints.

Although, as is the case with the Book of Mormon, the contents of both these works are regarded by Mormons as sacred and literally true, by far the more important, from the points of view of doctrine and history is the Doctrine and Covenants. While many of the pronouncements contained in the Doctrine and Covenants deal with such trivia as hardly seem to merit divine authorization, a number of the most provocative (from the viewpoint of orthodox Christianity) Latter-day Saints beliefs are strongly hinted at while others are given explicit treatment. On the subject of the Trinity, the Book of Mormon and an early section of the Doctrine and Covenants, dated April 1830, are in apparent agreement. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are said to be

45 Hereinafter cited as D & C. Subsequent quotations are from the 1921 edition, often reprinted with the same format and issued by the Utah-based Mormon Church. It differs in some respects from that published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints based in Independence, Missouri.

'one God', 'infinite', 'eternal' and 'without end'.⁴⁶

In a later revelation of March 1839, however, Smith is obviously toying with polytheism, and speaks of: 'A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.'

In the same revelation, God has become 'the Eternal God of all other gods....'⁴⁷

In a sermon delivered in 1844, the logical conclusion of this trend can be found. Taking as his text Revelations 1:6, Smith declared that '... in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods...' Scorning what he described as the 'sectarian' view of the one-ness of God, Smith continued: 'I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.'⁴⁸

This view, rather than the earlier, conventional definitions of the Trinity became the basis of Mormon concepts of God,⁴⁹ and Smith had laid additional groundwork for the belief by announcing in April 1843 an anthropomorphic concept of Deity

46 D & C 20:28. Cf. B.M. 2 Nephi 32:31, 3 Nephi 11:27, Alma 11:44, Mormon 7:7.

47 D & C 121:28, 32.

48 Quoted in Joseph Fielding Smith (ed.) Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 370.

49 See, for instance, James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith, a standard exposition of Mormon doctrines. In this work, Talmage cites passages from the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants which clearly affirm the unity of the God-head as evidence of the plurality of Gods! 51.

which has no counterpart in the Book of Mormon: 'The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones but it is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.'⁵⁰ Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it was said, because they had done as they were commanded 'have entered into their exaltation...and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods'.⁵¹ Father and Son, then, are both material beings, and 'When the Savior shall appear.... We shall see that he is a man like ourselves.'⁵² From this it is but a short step to another belief, that men contain within themselves the seeds of Godhood. Once again, the ground is prepared in the Doctrine and Covenants: 'Man was also in the beginning with God.'⁵³ And if this is true, then it follows that its converse must also be true. By April 1844 Joseph Smith had formulated the belief more fully. 'God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!... He was once a man like us.... and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves...the same as all Gods have done before you, namely by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one....'⁵⁴ Lorenzo Snow, fifth president of the Mormon Church (1898-1901), later reduced the formula to an

50 D & C 130:22.

51 D & C 132:37.

52 D & C 130:1.

53 D & C 93:29.

54 Joseph Fielding Smith, op.cit., 345-7.

oft-quoted epigram: 'As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.'

More than mere salvation is available to man, therefore. He may, by works and progressive development, achieve God-like status. In Joseph Smith's view, however, such a profusion of Gods would create problems of congestion in heaven, if heaven consisted solely of a single realm. Indeed, to Smith, it 'appeared self-evident...that if God rewarded every one according to the deeds done in the body, the term Heaven, as intended for the Saints eternal home, must include more kingdoms than one'.⁵⁵ Accordingly, revelation dictated that there were, in fact, three kingdoms. In descending order of glory, these were the celestial whose glory is that of the sun; the terrestrial whose glory is that of the moon; and the telestial whose glory is that of the stars. The occupants of the celestial kingdom will be those 'who are of the church of the Firstborn...unto whose hands the Father has given all things...[for] as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God.... These are they who are just men made perfect....' To the terrestrial will be admitted those 'who died without the law.... Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it. These are they who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men'. The telestial kingdom, lowest of the three, will be the province of those who 'received not the gospel of Christ, neither the testimony of Jesus'. 'These are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers'. This will be the most

55 D & C 76, Introduction.

densely populated kingdom of the three, the inhabitants 'as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore'. They will have the longest time to wait for their redemption, having bided in hell 'until the last resurrection, until the Lord...shall have finished his work'. Their situation is not hopeless, for within their teeming kingdom there is provision for mobility: 'For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his own works, his own dominion....' Yet they may not aspire to any greater glory, for they shall ever be 'servants of the Most High; [and] where God and Christ dwell they cannot come....' This is an expansive and generous-seeming plan that would appear to account for every individual of whatever moral stripe he may be. But there is yet a fourth category, although it is not dignified by the title of 'kingdom' or, for that matter, any other title. This is reserved for those who are completely beyond redemption, 'having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father....' They are relatively few in number and seem to comprise mainly renegade Latter-day Saints and persecutors of the church; clearly, in Joseph Smith's eyes, the most damnable of creatures, for whom 'it had been better...never to have been born...[and] Concerning whom...there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come'. They are the 'sons of perdition' and their fate is 'everlasting punishment, which is endless punishment, which is eternal punishment....'⁵⁶

56 All quotations are from D & C 76. On the question of 'eternal punishment', however, cf. Talmage. 'The false doctrine that the punishment to be visited upon erring souls is endless, that every sentence for sin is of interminable duration, must be regarded as one of the most pernicious results of misapprehension of scripture. It is but a dogma of unauthorized and erring sectaries....' op.cit., 61.

Thus, from the faithful saint to the infidel to the apostate, all are seemingly catered for. But as comprehensive as this seems, there is still one other class of people, consisting of those who died before the bringing forth of the Latter-day gospel, and their condition was of some concern to the Mormon prophet, 'For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation...they without us cannot be made perfect - neither can we without our dead be made perfect.'⁵⁷ To accommodate the departed, the practice of vicarious baptism was instituted, and to lend it biblical support, Joseph Smith quoted ambiguous passages from Revelation, Matthew and I Corinthians. The ordinance, first announced and practised at Nauvoo, Illinois, enabled the enthusiastic convert to secure salvation for his ancestors by first carefully recording his pedigree and then acting in proxy for each individual listed upon it. From the first, the rite could be carried out only in a Mormon temple, and only in a specially prepared baptismal font, constructed 'as a similitude of the grave', since 'to be immersed in the water and come forth out of the water is in the likeness of the resurrection of the dead in coming forth out of their graves....'⁵⁸

It was in Nauvoo, his 'Kingdom on the Mississippi', that the Mormon prophet also claimed divine direction for the practice by which the Mormons are perhaps best known and as a result of which they were to achieve a large measure of notoriety. The views on marriage expressed in the Book of Mormon had been unequivocally monogamous, and early

57 D & C 128:15.

58 D & C 128:12-13.

revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants reiterated the doctrine of monogamy, declaring that '...it is lawful that he [man] should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh....'⁵⁹ In a revelation dated 12 July 1843, however, a 'new and an everlasting covenant' was announced, and damnation was threatened against those who failed to abide by it, 'for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter my glory'.⁶⁰ This new covenant was the doctrine of 'plurality of wives', 'celestial marriage' or 'spiritual wifery', the most controversial and probably least understood of all Mormon beliefs.

The real reasons for this innovation, which represented a complete volte-face from Smith's earlier pronouncements on the subject of marriage, are unclear. Perhaps, as some writers have suggested, it was straightforward prurience on the part of Mormon leaders, and certainly those sections of the revelation which speak of the desirability of espousing several virgins lend some weight to this theory, as do those which threaten Joseph Smith's first wife Emma with destruction if she 'abide not in my law'.⁶¹ Perhaps it was the Mormon leaders' desire for even further exclusivity from their gentile neighbours.⁶² Perhaps there were social and economic justifications for the practice,⁶³ and apologists

59 D & C 49:16, 42:22 cf. B.M. Jacob 1:15, 2:24, 3:5. Ether 10:5.

60 D & C 132:4-5.

61 D & C 132:61-3, 51-4.

62 O'Dea, op.cit., 60.

63 Brodie, Ch.21. Brodie suggests both this and the previous possibility.

have pointed especially to conditions in Utah under Joseph Smith's successor Brigham Young as evidence of economic justification, though none have satisfactorily shown that there was an embarrassing abundance of women at any time in early Mormon history. Whatever its original motivation may have been, the sixty-six verses of the revelation demonstrate an extraordinary attempt to sanction polygamy in scriptural terms, declaring it to be divinely appointed and quoting Old Testament precedents. More importantly, from the doctrinal aspect, it guaranteed places in the celestial kingdom to the Latter-day Saints who followed its teaching, and promised, in the most extravagant terms, everlasting glory, the inheritance of 'thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths...', and the positive assurance of godhood.⁶⁴ It was to be the Mormon prophet's last recorded revelation, and, with an irony that he could not have foreseen, the very doctrine that ensured his people celestial glory in their spiritual kingdom eventually came close to being their political bane in their temporal dominion. In later years statehood was withheld from Utah territory and Mormon polygamists were disfranchised and imprisoned for 'unlawful cohabitation', until a 'manifesto' of 1890 advised Latter-day Saints to 'refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land'.⁶⁵

The Doctrine and Covenants, a manual of Latter-day Saints belief and practice, was also a handbook of church structure and government. Revelation dictated the offices

64 D & C 132:19-20.

65 D & C 'Official Declaration'.

and the duties of the priesthood. Believing itself to be a restoration of pristine Christianity after an eighteen-hundred years apostasy, the Mormon Church adopted the same organization which, it claimed, existed in the primitive Christian church, an organization which conferred on every male member from the age of twelve a priesthood title and specific duties. The priesthood was divided into two orders, the Melchizedek, or greater, which included the offices of high priest, seventy and elder; and the Aaronic, or lesser, which included the offices of priest, teacher and deacon. The duties and powers of all were prescribed, from the lowest office, that of the deacon, whose chief task was to assist senior members of the priesthood, although he and the teacher were also to 'warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ';⁶⁶ to the highest, that of the high priest who was given the right to officiate in his own office and all the lesser offices also.⁶⁷ A priest could ordain members of the lesser priesthood, baptize, administer the sacrament and take the lead in meetings, but must defer in some of these duties to a higher officer if one were present. Members of the Melchizedek priesthood were in possession of charismatic gifts also, and were empowered to 'lay on hands' for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the curing of illness or infirmity, and for the casting out of evil spirits.⁶⁸

66 D & C 20:57-9.

67 D & C 107:10, 17.

68 D & C 20:41, 42:43-51.

At the apex of the pyramidal organization sat the president of the church, 'a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet, having all the gifts of God...',⁶⁹ assisted by two councillors. The three constituted the First Presidency, and were in turn assisted by the council of Twelve Apostles in whose hands were held the keys of authority 'upon the four corners of the earth',⁷⁰ and who could ordain evangelical ministers (or patriarchs) and 'ordain and set in order all the other officers of the church' as designated by revelation.⁷¹ Initiative for the dissemination of the gospel and the sending out of missionaries to 'all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people' lay with the Twelve, who were 'special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world'.⁷² While their authority was considerable, the Apostles' priesthood status appeared to be somewhat ambiguous, and they were referred to variously as 'elders' and 'high priests', although the extent of their administrative powers seemed to suggest the latter office.⁷³ At least one other office - that of bishop - also combined temporal and spiritual powers, although in actual function it was almost purely administrative, dealing with financial and judicial matters, for it was the duty of a bishop 'to do the business of the church [and] to sit in judgement upon transgressors....'⁷⁴

69 D & C 108:42.

70 D & C 124:28.

71 D & C 107:39, 58.

72 D & C 107:23.

73 D & C 107:23 cf. 20:38, 84:63.

74 D & C 107:72.

Of particular importance was the first of these tasks, for Joseph Smith had, as early as 1831, elevated obligatory money contributions to the status of moral law and issued instructions that his people were to be tithed as insurance against the wrath of God and protection on the day of 'burning'.⁷⁵ In answer to later supplication, the prophet announced that his followers were to put 'all their surplus property...into the hands of the bishop.... For the building of mine house, and for the laying of the foundations of Zion...and for the debts of the Presidency of my Church'. This was simply the beginning. Thereafter, the saints were to pay 'one-tenth of all their interest annually', in compliance with a revelation that 'shall be a standing law unto them forever....'⁷⁶ The direction, which has remained a persistently advocated and practised principle, made tithing the test of a Latter-day Saint's worthiness and the extent of his contribution a measure of his faith.

A further criterion of a church member's fidelity was provided in a dietary code issued in February 1833 and known as the Word of Wisdom. It declared a prohibition on the taking of 'strong drinks', tobacco and 'hot drinks', deeming that these were 'not for the belly', insisted on the use of wholesome herbs, fruits and grains, and counselled moderation in, if not total abstinence from, the eating of meat, suggesting that the flesh of birds and beasts might be eaten 'only in times of famine and excess of hunger'. In return for their adherence to these principles, the

75 D & C 64:23-4.

76 D & C 119.

prophet promised his followers health, strength, wisdom, knowledge and longevity.⁷⁷

It is a long way from the spontaneity of the revivals in western New York to the detailed structure and direction of Joseph Smith's church in 1843, the year of his last recorded revelation. There is a wealth of difference in mental attitudes and abilities between the often improvised sermon of the tent preacher with its vague promises of salvation and vaguer instructions on how to achieve it, and the recorded doctrine of the Mormon 'prophet, seer and revelator' which systematized spiritual self-improvement, and exercised strict control over temporal matters even to the mundanities of eating and drinking. A mere fourteen years of time but an amplitude of ambition distinguishes the parochialism of Mormonism's beginnings from the universality of its aspirations at the time of Joseph Smith's death. Yet despite his emphases on order, planning and systematic salvation, and the grandness of his design, the Mormon prophet never fully escaped the mentality of revivalism which was part of his own heritage and which he bequeathed to his church and his successors. With its literalness of scriptural interpretation, and its upholding of belief in the gift and interpretation of tongues, the actuality of miracles and faith healing, and other trappings of revivalism, the Mormon church inherited from its founder not only his organizational genius but also his intellectual liabilities.

77 D & C 89.

Joseph Smith died in June 1844, violently, at the hands of a mob who stormed the gaol at Carthage, Illinois, wherein Joseph, his brother Hyrum and two of Joseph's apostles awaited trial on charges of riot and treason, charges Smith had himself precipitated by ordering the destruction of the press of the Nauvoo Expositor, a newspaper which had published an article rejecting 'the vicious principles of Joseph Smith' and condemning the prophet's teaching on the plurality of Gods and wives.⁷⁸

The death of Joseph Smith was the signal for the outbreak of factions among the Latter-day Saints, most previous tendencies toward which had been checked by the strength of the prophet's leadership. Many of his nearest associates were among those who led small breakaway groups. When most of the dust of dissent settled, however, only two groups of significance remained. The first, and by far the most important, was that which Brigham Young, the leading figure in Joseph's Twelve Apostles, led westward to build a new Jerusalem in the Rocky Mountains. The second was that which formed around the son of the prophet and returned eventually to the area which Joseph Smith had originally designated Zion - Independence, Missouri. Brigham Young's adherents retained the title of the church - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - and the appellation 'Mormon', while the followers of the prophet's son, with a gesture that contained 'more exactness than poetry',⁷⁹ called themselves the Reorganized Church of Jesus

78 Brodie, op.cit., 367-95; O'Dea, op.cit., 65-6. An official Mormon account is given in Smith, Essentials..., 364-84.

79 Brodie, op.cit., 309.

Christ of Latter Day Saints and were frequently identified by the less unwieldy terms 'Josephite' or 'Reorganite'. In 1880 the Reorganized Church, after some months of litigation, won for itself legal recognition as the 'true and lawful continuation of and Successor to' the church that Joseph Smith founded, basing its claim on the argument that its teachings were closer to those of Smith's church and that the Mormon Church had 'materially and largely departed from the faith, doctrines, laws, ordinances and usages' of the original.⁸⁰

While there can be little real doubt that the doctrines to which the Reorganized Church objected most strongly - those concerning polytheism and plural marriage - were part of Joseph Smith's teachings, albeit not of 1830, the Reorganized Church vigorously denounced them, claiming that they were aberrations of Brigham Young, and subsequently issued its own edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, from which the 'false doctrines' were removed. It repudiated also the third of Joseph Smith's doctrinal works - the Pearl of Great Price - which also taught polytheism and contained a passage with strong racist implications,⁸¹ insisting that Smith had never maintained that the work was 'divinely inspired'. The Reorganized Church also gave a slightly different interpretation to Smith's revelation concerning tithing, and came to regard the Word of Wisdom more as a

80 Aleah G. Koury, The Truth and the Evidence: a comparison between doctrines of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 104-10.

81 The racial content of the Pearl of Great Price and the Book of Mormon, and their implications for the Pacific missions are examined in Ch.3 below.

collection of practical pointers than as a divine commandment.

These differences between the two major branches of the Latter-day Saints Church have remained irreconcilable, yet on most other matters of doctrine, structure and conduct the two churches are identical. In particular they both remained faithful to the core of Joseph Smith's teaching and the scope of his ambition. Their founder and prophet, if limited in his learning and inconsistent in his teaching, was daring in his imagination and boundless in his vision. The ideal of Joseph Smith was not simply a tidy township on the Mississippi or even an empire in the Rocky Mountains, but a universal church.

CHAPTER TWO

'MESSENGERS OF GLORY'

IF the original appeal of the Latter-day Saints church was in the seemingly conclusive answers it provided to contemporary problems, its ultimate strength lay in its vigorous missionary programme. As Joseph Smith's revelations had dictated the structure of the church and the conduct of its members, so they dictated the nature of missionary activity and the direction this was to take. The missionary effort, both domestic and foreign, of American churches in the nineteenth century was to a great extent a result of the 'Second Awakening', and the Latter-day Saints shared with other American churches the missionizing drive; the itinerant Mormon preacher of the period bears more than a passing resemblance to the Methodist circuit rider in his lack of (and frequent disdain for) formal theological training and his enthusiastic and often extempore sermonizing. But the aspect of Mormon missionary work that most strongly characterized it and distinguished it from the missionary efforts of other churches was its exceptional urgency; an urgency that resulted from the presence of a living prophet and a body of what purported to be recently revealed

scripture, indigenous in origin and topical in content.¹ It was not uncommon in Mormonism's early history, as one scholar has pointed out, for a Mormon convert to be on successive days baptized, confirmed, ordained to the priesthood, and sent out to preach the Latter-day Saints gospel.²

Within three months of the official establishment of the 'Church of Christ' in April 1830, Joseph Smith sent his brother Samuel on tour to try and raise interest in and sell copies of the Book of Mormon, promoting it as 'a history of the Indians'. Although Samuel's task was to publicize rather than proselytize, this is considered by official Mormon historians to have been 'the first missionary journey in the church'.³ The new church

1 Doubtless, the millennial aspect of Latter-day Saints belief also contributed to this urgency. But millennialism never took the hysterical turn among Latter-day Saints that it did among other adventist inclined faiths. Mormon leaders have tended to avoid prophesying a specific date for the commencement of the millennium. Although Joseph Smith's revelations contain frequent references to the millennium and the second coming, only once did he allow himself a prediction of the latter event, and that a deliberately vague one. 'I was once praying very earnestly to know the time of the coming of the Son of Man, when I heard a voice repeat the following: Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man; therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter. I was left thus, without being able to decide whether this coming referred to the beginning of the millennium or to some previous appearing, or whether I should die and thus see his face.' (D. & C 130:14-16).

2 S.G. Ellsworth, 'A History of Mormon Missions in the United States and Canada 1830-1860', 38-9.

3 Smith, Essentials..., 103-04.

was barely four months into its infancy when Joseph began to receive revelations that have determined to a large degree the conduct and attitudes of Latter-day Saints missionaries ever since. A revelation of July 1830, while supposedly directed specifically to Smith and his scribe Oliver Cowdery, became the basis of later instruction to all missionaries. 'Magnify thine office;' it commanded, 'and after thou hast sowed thy fields and secured them, go speedily unto the church...and they shall support thee.'⁴ The duties of the office were essentially in administering to things spiritual for 'in temporal labors thou shalt not have strength, for this is not thy calling'.⁵ Lest magnification of the spiritual office get out of hand, however, the same revelation, vaguely echoing verses in Matthew and John, warned against expecting extravagant spiritual gifts except where absolutely necessary.

Require not miracles, except I shall command you, except casting out devils, healing the sick, and against poisonous serpents, and against deadly poisons; and these things ye shall not do, except it be required of you by them who desire it, that the scriptures might be fulfilled....⁶

In the manner of Christ's instructions to his apostles, the missionaries' economic status was also circumscribed: 'And thou shalt take no purse nor scrip, neither staves, neither two coats, for the church shall give unto thee in the very hour what thou needest for food and for raiment, and for shoes and for money....'⁷ Reception of the message

4 D & C 24:3.

5 D & C 24:9.

6 D & C 24:13-14.

7 D & C 24:18 (cf. Matthew 10:10).

preached by the missionaries brought a guarantee of both spiritual and temporal blessings, but rejection of it would bring instead 'a cursing...by casting off the dust of your feet against them....'⁸ In the light of subsequent experience, the prophet suggested to missionaries that this show of contempt 'against those who receive thee not', should be carried out 'not in their presence, lest thou provoke them, but in secret....'⁹

Joseph Smith had early emphasized the priesthood of all male believers in his church; in December 1830 the potential missionary status of all was made clear: 'And this commandment shall be given unto the elders of my church, that every man which will embrace it with singleness of heart may be ordained and sent forth....'¹⁰ Despite the wide-ranging implications of this statement, proselytizing was not to be simply a matter of a member's personal enterprise and initiative, for 'it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority....'¹¹ Once ordained and appointed, however, the missionary was under an obligation to use his resources to their fullest extent, and Joseph had strong words for those whom he suspected of laziness or timidity: 'Wo unto

8 D & C 24:15.

9 D & C 60:15.

10 D & C 36:7.

11 D & C 42:11.

such, for mine anger is kindled against them.'¹² Couching his displeasure in the terms of a commandment, the prophet declared: 'Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent that it may not be known.'¹³ For those who exercised their talent with diligence and zeal advancement in the hierarchy of the church was rapid, and when Joseph chose his first twelve apostles early in 1835, nine of the men selected had already been instrumental in securing converts to Mormonism.¹⁴ Appointment to the apostleship brought with it further responsibilities toward missionary service, for not only were the 'twelve' empowered to send out ministers, but were themselves to 'travel among all nations',¹⁵ having been given 'the keys to open up the authority of my kingdom upon the four corners of the earth....'¹⁶ The Latter-day Saints missionary effort, therefore, was not merely an additional interest of the church, but an integral part of its organization, not only compatible with but almost inseparable from the priesthood

12 D & C 60:2.

13 D & C 60:13.

14 In order of their selection they were: Lyman E. Johnson, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, William E. McLellin, Orson Pratt, Thomas B. Marsh and Parley P. Pratt. Of the remaining three, nepotism seems to have been the reason for the selection of Joseph's younger brother William, while David W. Patten and John F. Boynton were apparently personal favourites of the prophet. Six of Joseph Smith's original apostles were later excommunicated.

15 D & C 107:98.

16 D & C 124:128.

structure as a whole; essential to both the growth of the church and the personal future of the ambitious church member. For throughout the church's history it has been extremely unlikely that advancement beyond the rank of elder (the lowest office in the Melchizedek priesthood) would come to any member who had not a period of successful and honourable missionary service behind him.

Both the ministry and the missionary system of the Latter-day Saints, then, rested on the broadest possible foundation, a sharing of responsibility and obligation by all; and the incentive of church preferment, added to the initial urgency of the movement, more than compensated, in the eyes of members, for the lack of payment for pastoral or missionary service. The Mormon evangelist had no need to remind his flock that the labourer was worthy of his hire, for the extension of the church's influence and his own prestige were held to be reward enough. Moreover, the sheer size of the potential missionary force effectively precluded the feasibility of financial remuneration.

It precluded also the practicability of vocational training for missionaries. As long as any church member could be summoned at virtually a moment's notice and 'set apart' for a mission, and as long as missionary work remained in the hands of zealous amateurs, there was hardly either time or need for extensive theological grounding. Certainly, to Joseph Smith it was far from imperative, for inspiration would come spontaneously and be of the spirit rather than of letters. 'Speak the thoughts that I shall put into your heart', said the prophet, 'and you shall not be confounded before men; For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye

shall say.'¹⁷ And while it is probable that Joseph's pronouncements on the subject of missionary service in his church were dictated as much by expediency as by deliberate design, the idea of the unpaid, untrained missionary for whom enthusiasm and willingness were considered both necessary and sufficient qualifications became an essential part of the Latter-day Saints tradition, and was perpetuated by successive church leaders. 'The qualifications...that are sought after, and that should recommend a minister of the Gospel', declared Erastus Snow, an apostle under Brigham Young's leadership, 'should be an earnest desire to do good, a willingness to serve, a desire to know what the Lord has for him to do, and a readiness to at once engage in the undertaking'.¹⁸

From the time of Samuel Smith's first missionary journey, the Book of Mormon became the most potent tool in the hands of Latter-day Saints missionaries. It was the volume of 'newly revealed' scriptures rather than the human representatives of the new faith that succeeded in winning for Joseph Smith's cause some of the men whose later influence was to be so significant in determining the future of the church. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, both among Joseph's first apostles, were introduced to the book through the efforts of Samuel Smith. Parley Pratt, once a missionary for Alexander Campbell's 'Disciples of Christ', upon reading the book renounced his allegiance to the Disciples and promptly went in search of the Mormon prophet. In his turn Pratt introduced the Book of Mormon

17 D & C 100:5-6.

18 Journal of Discourses: Vol.25, 36.

to the influential Sidney Rigdon, a foundation member of Campbell's sect. Though Rigdon at first expressed 'considerable doubt of its divinity', he was soon convinced. 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto me', he announced two weeks later, 'but my Father, which is in heaven.' Rigdon brought with him into the Mormon fold his wife and several of his congregation.¹⁹ Parley Pratt succeeded also in convincing his younger brother Orson of the truth of Mormonism. The younger Pratt, one of the few of the early Mormons with any scholarly pretensions,²⁰ swallowed whole the story of Joseph Smith's heavenly visitors and the claim that the Book of Mormon was an authentic documentary account of pre-Columbian America.

The talents of the Pratt brothers were turned to good effect for the growing Mormon cause. Parley, a proselytizer even before his conversion to Mormonism, proved to be also a polemicist and a hymnodist of some ability. But his great contribution to the Latter-day Saints missionary effort was his Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People first published in 1837 'to give the public correct information' about the new faith and to answer charges that Mormonism was 'Delusion, Imposture, Fanaticism etc'.²¹ A protracted prototype of later Mormon pamphlets, the Voice of Warning... was for many years one of the introductions for prospective converts to the 'new

19 Smith, Essentials..., 116.

20 W.W. Phelps, Mormon journalist and editor, dubbed Orson Pratt 'The Gauge of Philosophy' because of his studious habits. Brodie, op.cit., 162.

21 Preface to first American edition.

dispensation' and remained a staple of the Mormon missionary's literary diet. Its teachings on the fulfilment of prophecy, the holy kingdom, the authenticity of the Book of Mormon, the 'fake doctrines' of the established churches and the restoration of the 'true' church were those employed by successive generations of Mormon missionaries; its specious logic was that which characterized Mormon argument. Referring to the alleged discovery in Massachusetts in 1815 of some pieces of parchment on which were written in Hebrew extracts from the Old Testament, Pratt concludes: 'If a few characters in Hebrew have been found in the earth in America, written on parchment, then it is just as easy to admit that a whole volume has been found in the earth in America, written on plates in Egyptian characters.'²²

But the urgent sincerity of the work's message and call to repentance evidently overcame whatever syllogistic deficiencies it may have possessed. The first edition of three thousand copies was sold within two years. By 1846, when Pratt published an expanded version, he was able to claim that there were 'thirteen thousand copies now disposed of'.²³ A historian of the early Mormon missionary effort described Voice of Warning... as 'without a peer in non-revealed missionary literature'.²⁴ Three years after the first appearance of Voice of Warning... Orson Pratt followed the example set by his brother and published

22 P.P. Pratt, Voice of Warning..., 84. The discovery was reported in Josiah Priest's American Antiquities.

23 Preface to second European edition.

24 Ellsworth, op.cit., 46.

An Interesting Account of several remarkable visions and of the late discovery of Ancient American Records in which he applied himself to a description of the apparitions seen by the prophet and of the manner in which the gold plates containing the Book of Mormon were unearthed, even describing in some detail the hole in which the plates were located and suggesting the extent of erosion of the earth which covered them.²⁵ Although the younger Pratt's publication was almost as successful a piece of missionary literature as his brother's, its chief significance lay in the fact that it was the first account to be printed of Joseph Smith's visions, preceding even the prophet's own published version. The sober treatment of its wondrous subject contrasted effectively with the occasionally hysterical tone of Parley's writing.

The Mormon missionary cause was further assisted by the publication and distribution of church sponsored newspapers and journals. With a deep-seated conviction in the power of the printed word, the Latter-day Saints have, throughout their history, been prolific publishers. Barely two years after the founding of the church there came the first of a long series of newspapers, and by the time of Joseph Smith's death no fewer than ten such publications had appeared.²⁶ Some had a life of only a few months, others of a few years; one has continued to

25 Orson Pratt, Remarkable Visions....

26 For the names of these publications and the months or years of their issue, see Brodie, op.cit., 476. A more comprehensive list of Mormon publications is found in Smith, Essentials...., Appendix.

the present day. All more than adequately served the chief purposes for which they were intended; as means of informing a growing church membership of church policy and apostolic decisions; as ways of disseminating doctrine, and promoting faith by frequent articles and individual testimonies on the 'great and glorious work of these Latter days'. Though intended primarily for church members, these periodicals filled also the important secondary function of introducing many outside the church to the faith of the Latter-day Saints. For those whose interest was sufficiently aroused to want to learn more of Mormonism but who had neither the time nor perhaps the inclination to read the Book of Mormon or the wordy apologetics of the Pratt brothers, the Mormon newspapers served as a brief introduction to aspects of Latter-day Saints belief, and while the gentile cynic might sneer at the ingenuousness and monotony of some of the testimony, to both the devout member and the interested investigator the frequency of the sentiment was impressive enough. Within the pages of the Latter-day Saints journals could be found the sermons of church leaders, many of Joseph Smith's revelations, aids to faith and guides to conduct, and letters, in whole or part, from missionaries, telling of successes as well as misuse and hardship in the field. For the saints had learnt early the value of publicity and fully appreciated the fact that the ends of a religious cause are served equally well by stories of both progress and persecution.

That one of the most successful of the Mormon periodicals, and that which has had the longest publishing history, first appeared in 1840 in England is a good indication of the geographical spread of Mormon missions

within the church's first ten years. The Mormon prophet's early revelations that any church member might be called to render missionary service merely hinted at the later scope of Latter-day Saints missionary activity. Later pronouncements made it clear that the church was seeking to shake off the parochialism of its birth by voicing universal aspirations. 'Send forth the elders of my church', commanded the prophet, 'unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations....'²⁷ Within the decade, proclamation was becoming practice: missions were commenced in Canada in 1833 and in Great Britain in 1837, the latter, according to a church historian, an outgrowth of the former, as some of the Canadian converts wrote to friends and relatives in England informing them 'of the rise and progress of the Church, thus preparing them for events to come'.²⁸ Having thus prepared them, a number also volunteered for missionary service, and the Latter-day Saints gospel was first preached in England by both experienced apostles and Mormon neophytes.²⁹ Similarly, the vanguard of the later mission to the Scandinavian countries included a Swedish and a Danish convert as well as an American apostle.³⁰

27 D & C 133:8.

28 Smith, Essentials..., 201-02. Ellsworth, op.cit., 67-8, observes that the Mormon gospel was frequently carried from relative to relative and from friend to friend.

29 P.A.M. Taylor, Expectations Westward, 19. Smith, op.cit., 202.

30 William Mulder, Homeward to Zion, 29.

The missions to Britain and Scandinavia were the most successful of the church's early overseas missionary enterprises, supplying converts in their tens of thousands for Mormonism and immigrants in like number for America but especially for a growing Mormon empire in the Salt Lake valley. One of the strongest features of Mormon missionary teaching and the one which had probably the greatest appeal for non-American converts was the concept of the 'gathering to Zion', a call to build a new and sanctified life in the promised land so often spoken of in Mormon scripture.³¹ It was a doctrine at once peculiarly Mormon and yet part of a broader nation-wide belief in America as a haven for the religiously persecuted, the economically overburdened or the socially dispossessed; just as the Mormon immigrants were themselves part of a greater migratory stream across the Atlantic in the nineteenth century and yet had a unique purpose that distinguished their motives from the generally economic justifications of other immigrant groups. The 'gathering', which has been described as 'Mormonism's oldest and most influential'³² doctrine, was a concept which occurred frequently in the revelations of Joseph Smith. As early as September 1830, the prophet spoke of bringing to pass 'the gathering of mine elect...wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be

31 The migrations and their effect are discussed in both Taylor, op.cit., and Mulder, op.cit.

32 Mulder, op.cit., 18. See also his 'Mormonism's "Gathering": An American Doctrine with a Difference', Church History, Vol.XXIII, No.3 (Sept. 1954) for an examination of the 'gathering' in an American setting.

prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked'.³³ The saints were to retreat into a community of the godly, where they might encourage each other in their faith and support the prophet by their solidarity, away from the corrupting influence and the inevitable fate of secular society. To the proselytizing elders of his church, Joseph's instructions were that 'this shall be their cry, and the voice of the Lord unto all people: Go ye forth unto the land of Zion, that the borders of my people may be enlarged, and that her stakes may be strengthened, and that Zion may go forth unto the regions round about.'³⁴ Thus, at least for part of its history, Mormonism was simultaneously an inward turning and an outward searching movement. Yet the prophet would have seen no paradox here, for only by strengthening Zion's core could Zion's boundaries be effectively enlarged.

The full impact of the gathering on Latter-day Saints was not felt until the passing of the troubled years that saw the death of the Mormon prophet and the relocation of the main body of saints in the intermontane desert that became Utah, when multitudes of European converts helped to swell the ranks of the faithful, drawn by missionary preaching and the promise of the new Jerusalem. Under Brigham Young the gathering became even more strongly emphasized in missionary teaching. Young is reported as having said that he wanted all the British saints to gather

33 D & C 29:7-8.

34 D & C 133:9.

to Zion,³⁵ and his second counsellor, Jedediah M. Grant, strongly criticized what he felt was timidity on the part of missionaries in advocating the principle. 'This piecemeal business of gathering Saints!' remarked Grant. 'We want it on the wholesale principle. That's the doctrine. I tell you a few more boys breaking the crust of nations...by driving their little wedges, will bring them over by nations....'³⁶ Mormon hymnodists dressed the concept with lyrics and music, some emphasizing Zion's charms:

Come, go with me, beyond the sea, Where happiness
is true,
Where Joseph's land, blest by God's hand, Inviting
waits for you.
With joyful hearts you'll understand The blessings
that await you there.
I know it is the promised land, My home, my home,
is there.³⁷

some stressing Zion's challenge:

Think not when you gather to Zion,
Your troubles and trials are through -
That nothing but comfort and pleasure
Are waiting in Zion for you;
No, no; 'tis designed as a furnace,
All substance, all texture to try -
To consume all the 'wood, hay and stubble',
And the gold from the dross purify.³⁸

35 Taylor, op.cit., 29.

36 Journal of Discourses, Vol.2, 74.

37 Hymns: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,
Hymn No.15.

38 Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Hymn No.327.

Fully in keeping with his own nature, Brigham Young's instructions to missionaries were couched in prosaic terms. There is little or none of the semi-mysticism which characterized Joseph Smith's directions. Young's one recorded revelation had dealt with the mundanities of organization and regimentation for the great trek westward. His advice and instructions to missionaries carried the same direct, authoritative tone. In frequent sermons and addresses delivered at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City Young made clear what he expected of his missionary force, drawing on his own experience as exemplary. Persecution and hardship were already part of the Mormon tradition, they were yet to become part of the myth. But to Young, hardship while on a mission was not simply likely, it was mandatory.

I am ashamed of our Elders that go our on missions [he stated in November 1856],... they do not start from here with handcarts, or with knapsacks on their backs.... Some ride so much they do not know how to preach, whereas if they would walk, they would be in far better condition to labor in the Gospel.³⁹

A few months earlier Young had complained that '...many of them now live on cream and short cake, butter, honey, light biscuit and sweet meats, while we had to take the buttermilk and potatoes'.⁴⁰ 'For me to travel and preach without purse or scrip, was never hard', he recalled. 'I never saw the day...when I was alone, or when I would take the lead and do the talking, but what I could get all I wanted.'⁴¹

39 Journal of Discourses, Vol.4, 92.

40 Ibid., 37.

41 Ibid., 34.

Brigham's apostle Orson Pratt advised departing missionaries to leave whatever cash they had behind them, reminding them of Christ's words to his servants: 'Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.'⁴² Thomas Stenhouse, an English convert, who was an elder and missionary for some twenty-five years before his disillusionment with Mormonism, later observed that in missionary appointments 'no personal conveniences are ever consulted'. Merchant, mechanic, farmer or ploughboy must straightaway answer the call, leaving their business in other hands. 'If poor, and the family is dependent upon the outgoing missionary, that must be no hinderance - the mission is given, he has to go, and the family "trusts in the Lord", and in the tender mercies of the bishop!'⁴³ Indeed, Stenhouse was inclined to attribute Mormonism's success, up to the time of his writing, to the missionaries' lack of learning and finance. 'Had its advocacy been entrusted to men of education and wealth', he wrote sardonically, 'Mormonism never would have troubled the world.'⁴⁴

But to Brigham Young the difficulty a missionary would encounter as a result of his lack of purse or scrip was a necessary part of character development, and he dwelt often on the vital importance of a missionary's maintaining an unblemished record, since even one lapse might morally scar a man for life and make him unfit for the company of his fellow saints. 'If we get a blight upon our characters before the Lord, or in other words, lose ground and backslide

42 Ibid., Vol.6, 271-2.

43 Thomas B. Stenhouse, The Rocky Mountain Saints, 568.

44 Ibid., 570.

by transgression, or in any other way, so that we are not up even with the brethren as we are now, we never can come up with them again.'⁴⁵ And of all the evils which might confront the Lord's messengers in Babylon, none was greater or more requiring of a missionary's watchfulness than sexual temptation. 'You will have to guard more strictly against that than against any other evil that may beset you.... Rather suffer your heads to be taken from your shoulders than to sacrifice your honour, violate your covenants and forfeit the sacred trust reposed in you.'⁴⁶ Plural marriage may have been divinely ordained, but it neither included nor excused promiscuity, which was both unscriptural and character-destroying.

The possibility that the untrained missionaries might find themselves embarrassed by gentile taunts or contention with the opponents of the faith disturbed Brigham Young not at all - they should shy clear of such situations: 'Be guided by the Spirit', he advised, 'avoid debate and argument...[notwithstanding Joseph Smith's direction to 'confound your enemies; call upon them to meet you both in public and in private....'] An elder skilled in logic is not so inclined to lean on the spirit of the Lord.'⁴⁷ Nor was Young especially concerned that his emissaries might be shaky even on aspects of their own doctrine: 'Let alone that which you do not know or most assuredly believe to be true.... If you do not understand

45 Journal of Discourses, Vol.6, 273.

46 Ibid., Vol.8, 55.

47 Quoted in Mulder, op.cit., 60. cf. D & C 71:7.

a doctrine or a portion of Scripture, when information is asked of you, say that the Lord has not revealed that to you....'⁴⁸

But Brigham Young also made it clear that the sending out of missionaries could be used as a corrective measure. Laggards and delinquents might from time to time appear among the saints, notwithstanding the joys of labouring to build up Zion, and the self-discipline demanded by mission work could be a salutary, even a reformatory, treatment for such individuals as well as an effective purge for the body of diligent saints. 'We have at times sent men on missions to get rid of them....' admitted Young in April 1860. 'We have tried to turn the filthy ones out of the flock....' He was obliged to add, however, 'but they have generally come back...they will not always stay out'.⁴⁹ The extent to which the 'missionary call' was used as a punitive measure is not known, but at least one mission president in the Pacific later had occasion to remark that some of the missionaries in his charge appeared to be there for the purpose of reform.⁵⁰

With an understatement not really typical of him, Thomas Stenhouse wrote that the missionary who objected to his call was accused of questioning the Lord and bore 'ever after the brand of "weak in the faith"'.⁵¹ By the

48 Journal of Discourses, Vol.8, 56.

49 Ibid., Vol.7, 228-9.

50 See below, 161.

51 Stenhouse, op.cit., 568.

time of Brigham Young's leadership of the church, however, it was obvious that missionary service was becoming more and more a moral obligation, failure to comply with which made a man subject not merely to jibes or accusations but to possible excommunication. Brigham's first counsellor, Heber C. Kimball, whose no-nonsense manner rivalled that of his leader, was inclined to employ just such a threat:

...when a man is appointed to take a mission, unless he has a just and honorable reason for not going, if he does not go he will be severed from the Church. Why? Because you said, you were willing to be passive, and if you are not passive, that lump of clay must be cut off from the wheel and laid aside, and a lump put on that will be passive.⁵²

It is difficult to know what would have constituted a 'just and honorable reason' in the opinion of the Mormon leaders. Certainly, personal economic hardship was never a consideration, nor necessarily was domestic; missionaries often left behind them recent brides and dependent families. Illness and infirmity may at times have affected appointment, but one of the first missionaries to the Pacific was a consumptive, and known to be so at the time of his appointment; a later one was a semi-cripple. Want of learning or even of literacy would hardly excuse a man from missionary service, nor, as stated above, would the vagaries of personal character, for the devout and the delinquent were often called simultaneously. In any case the latter reason could scarcely be regarded as 'just and honorable'. Missionary selection, then, was likely to be as wide and

just as indiscriminate as missionary conversions sometimes were.⁵³

But despite its occasional deficiencies, such a comprehensive scheme would assure success for Mormonism in the mission field and guarantee wide dissemination of the Latter-day Saints gospel within relatively few years of the origin of the faith. 'Go, ye messengers of glory...' lyricized John Taylor, third president of the Mormon church, 'Go to every tribe and nation; Visit every land and clime....'⁵⁴ Taylor merely paraphrased in verse Joseph Smith's oft-repeated echo of Revelations 14:6 calling for the gospel to be taken to 'every nation and kindred and tongue and people'.⁵⁵ Well before Taylor's presidency, however, the Latter-day Saints message had been carried far beyond the country of Mormonism's birth. By the time of Brigham Young's death in 1877, missions had been commenced in more than twenty overseas countries.⁵⁶

53 Heber C. Kimball was inclined to object strongly to anything that smacked of selectivity in missionary conversions. 'You are sent out as shepherds to gather the sheep together; and remember that they are not your sheep; they belong to Him that sends you. Then don't make a choice of any of those sheep; don't make selections before they are brought home and put into the fold.' Quoted Mulder, op.cit., 63.

54 Hymns: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Hymn No.247.

55 D & C 133:37.

56 They included: Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, France, Germany, Australia, South America, India, South Africa, China, Palestine, Iceland, Siam, Gibraltar, Malta, the West Indies, Holland, Austria, Finland and Mexico.

Some of these were short-lived, others have persisted to the present day, several have flourished.

Even before the saints had found their permanent home in Utah, Mormon missionaries had been sent into the Pacific, and although the establishment of the first Latter-day Saints Pacific mission had an almost accidental quality about it, the missions to Polynesia were to be among the most successful of the church's enterprises, and the Polynesian was to occupy a special place in Mormon thinking. For at the core of the main work of Mormon scripture lay a racial fable which was held to be of major significance for the Polynesian islander.

CHAPTER THREE

'THE SONS OF LEHI AND THE SEED OF CAIN'

THE main thread woven through the patchwork fabric of the Book of Mormon was the story of the warring progeny of two Hebrew brothers, Nephi and Laman, who, with their father Lehi, were said to have fled Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian Captivity and settled on the American continent. As the book had attempted a final solution to the religious and social questions of the day, so it claimed to provide conclusive evidence for a widely held belief that the American aborigine was of Hebraic descent.

The origin of the American Indian had long been a subject for investigation and speculation: by the time Joseph Smith composed the Book of Mormon the discussion was already centuries old. Lacking the substantial techniques of modern science, serious theorists and amateur dabblers alike had tended to grasp at the straws of coincidence and analogy. The red man was said variously to have originated in Africa, Atlantis, China, Ophir, Spain and Wales. He was held at different times to have been originally Egyptian, Ethiopian, Moorish and Tartar. But the most persistent theories credited the American Indian with Hebrew ancestry, and, more particularly, with descent from the Lost Tribes of Israel. Beginning in published form as early as 1567, the belief in the Indian's Israelite origins gained much popular acceptance, receiving added impetus in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

centuries from the publication of several more books on the subject.¹ Its popularity caused the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft to observe in 1875: 'The theory that the Americans are of Jewish origin has been discussed more minutely and at greater length than any other.'²

At least two reliable writers on Mormonism have suggested that Joseph Smith's acquaintance with the theory was largely through one particular book published in 1823,³ but there seems no real need to narrow Smith's field of influence to this extent, since the belief was common enough and especially popular with the religiously inclined, for despite its use of circumstantial and coincidental evidence, the theory relied on the Bible as the ultimate source of authority. Before Smith's time it had been subscribed to by a number of influential churchmen in America, among them Roger Williams, John Eliot, William Penn and the Mathers. In western New York - the scene of Mormonism's birthplace - and Ohio, additional weight for the belief was provided by the existence of the burial mounds, which, besides giving incentive to treasure hunters, seemed to

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- 1 For recent discussions of the many theories of American Indian origins see: Robert Wauchope, Lost Tribes and Sunken Continents: Myth and Method in the study of American Indians, and Lee Eldridge Huddleston, Origins of the American Indians: European Concepts 1492-1729. Brodie, op.cit., 45n lists several books published in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which propound the 'Lost Tribes' theory.
 - 2 H.H. Bancroft, The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America, Vol.5, 77.
 - 3 The book suggested is Ethan Smith, View of the Hebrews; or the Ten Tribes of Israel in America.

many evidence that a race of people superior to the Indians had once occupied the area.

Smith did not attempt, as had other writers, to account for the Ten Lost Tribes,⁴ but he did make the story of Hebrew migration and settlement in the Americas the main theme of his book. It was no large scale exodus, however, but a migration on a fairly modest scale, concerning a single family led by the patriarch Lehi, whose sons Nephi and Laman were to become the progenitors of the two great races which populated the American continent. It was made to appear that the Indians were the descendants of Laman - or Lamanites - who, because of their waywardness and treachery, incurred the wrath of God and were cursed with 'a skin of blackness'.⁵ The curse, however, did little to reduce the Lamanites' proclivity to warfare and intrigue; for over nine hundred years they continued to fight against their diligent and God-fearing brethren the Nephites, finally exterminating the entire race.⁶ Thus the migration of Lehi's family from Jerusalem explained the red man's origins; the divine curse his outstanding physical characteristic; the final struggle the existence of the burial mounds throughout New York and Ohio, for like the Indian's Hebrew origin, the story that the mounds contained the remains of the victims of some dreadful slaughter was also popularly accepted.

4 Although he later stated that they were in the ice-bound 'land of the north'. D & C 110:11, 133:26.

5 B.M. 2 Nephi 5:22.

6 B.M. Mormon 6:passim, 8:2, 7.

Yet, if the Lamanites were cursed they were also blessed, and their depraved condition was not to be permanent. Through transgression they had become 'dark and loathsome', through repentance they might again become 'white and delightsome', even as the Nephites had been,⁸ for as 'a remnant of the house of Israel' they were 'numbered among the people of the first covenant'.⁹ To the Lamanites, the Book of Mormon was as much a dedication¹⁰ as a damnation; as much a promise as a warning. From the mouth of a Lamanite prophet, Samuel, comes one of the most urgent predictions of Christ's coming and a dire and graphic warning of the fate which will befall the unrepentant. Samuel, however, sounds an optimistic note for his own people, for notwithstanding '...their deeds have been evil continually...because of the iniquity of the tradition of their fathers', it is 'according to prophecy, that they shall be brought to the true knowledge, which is the knowledge of their Redeemer....'¹¹

In accordance with the promise of salvation contained in the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith began, as early as September 1830, to receive revelations concerning missionary work among the Lamanites. Beginning the following month, four of his closest associates visited in turn the Catteraugus, the Wyandots and the Delawares, announcing

7 B.M. 1 Nephi 12:23.

8 B.M. 3 Nephi 2:15.

9 B.M. Mormon 7:1-2, 10.

10 See, for example, the title page of the book.

11 B.M. Helaman 15:4, 13.

to each of the Indian tribes that they had brought with them a book containing the story of the Indians' forefathers. The mission was ill-timed and short-lived. One of its members, Parley Pratt, blamed its failure on the jealousies of sectarian priests and the suspicion of Indian agents.¹²

For the next few years, the peregrinations of the Latter-day Saints and their efforts to build the New Jerusalem variously in Missouri, Ohio and Illinois allowed them little time for any but accidental contact with, and proselytizing among, the Indians, although the belief that as descendants of the scattered tribes of Israel the Lamanites were destined to occupy a special place in God's kingdom persisted. In a sound if somewhat uncritical study of Mormonism, Thomas O'Dea wrote that ever since the church conceived part of its task to be the reconversion of the Lamanites, Mormon attitudes to the Indians have been generally favourable,¹³ and in 1861 the astute Sir Richard Burton commented on 'the humanity of the Prophet's followers to the Lamanites...'.¹⁴ Yet in the speeches of Joseph Smith's powerful successor, Brigham Young, the 'humanity' is sometimes qualified by touches of distrust and cynicism. Young seemed to forget occasionally that promises had been vouchsafed to the Indians and would momentarily lapse into outbursts more typical of the frontiersman who regarded the red man as a menace than of the representative of God on

12 Smith, Essentials..., 117-18.

13 O'Dea, The Mormons, 25.

14 Richard F. Burton, The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California, 299.

earth charged with fulfilling the spiritual destiny of the Lamanite. 'I shall live a long while', declared Young in 1853, 'before I can believe that an Indian is my friend, when it would be to his advantage to be my enemy....'¹⁵ Latter-day Saints missionaries in Polynesia were later to express similar opinions on the 'Lamanites' of the Pacific islands. 'I am converted', wrote Abinadi Olsen, of his Samoan charges, 'that these Lamonites are as treachous as their bro. Blackhalk ever dare to be.'¹⁶

If one particular Latter-day Saint was responsible for first suggesting that the Lamanites of the Book of Mormon also populated the Polynesian islands, his identity remains a mystery. Latter-day Saints have credited Addison Pratt, the first Mormon missionary to serve in the Pacific, with being the initiator among them of the belief that an ethnic connection existed between the Polynesian and the American Indian.¹⁷ Before his conversion to

15 Journal of Discourses, Vol.1:106. He hastily confirmed, however, that 'These Indians are the seed of Israel... were it not so, you would never have seen them with dark, red skins.' Ibid. Young considered that although the Lamanites were cursed, the curse was not as extensive or as damaging as that suffered by the 'seed of Cain' or the 'children of Judah'. Well before these unfortunates could expect deliverance the Lamanites would become 'a white and delightsome people'. Ibid., Vol.2:143.

16 Abinadi Olsen, Journal, 2 Mar. 1897.

17 See, for example, Ellsworth, 'A History of Mormon Missions...', 253; Doyle L. Green, Mission to Polynesia: The Story of Addison Pratt and the Society Islands Mission, Part IV; Improvement Era, July 1949, 435.

Mormonism, Pratt had been a seaman serving on whaling vessels in the Pacific and had jumped ship in Honolulu where he spent some time in various jobs. While working on the Mormon temple in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1843, Pratt is said to have told Joseph Smith of his experiences and of his belief that the native of Hawaii was brother to the American Indian, and, allegedly as a result of this conversation, was appointed on a mission to the Pacific islands. The story, while it provides an easily acceptable reason for the first Mormon mission to Polynesia, may, like many others accepted by Latter-day Saints as historical fact, be apocryphal. The only existing evidence for it is in an undated biographical sketch of Pratt written by his grand-daughter.¹⁸ Pratt's journals, which take in periods of his life prior to his conversion as well as most of his missionary experiences, do not record this period or the episode. Moreover, neither the published nor the few unpublished letters of Pratt extant suggest that he was influenced by, or even acknowledged, the belief that was to play such a significant part in Latter-day Saints missionary relations with the Polynesians. The journal of Louisa Barnes Pratt, Addison's wife, recalls the Nauvoo period and her husband's employment on the construction of the temple,¹⁹ but nowhere suggests that the main reason for Pratt's mission was his conviction that the Polynesians were Lamanites or of the 'house of Israel'. Indeed, there is some evidence that Pratt himself did not conceive his

18 Nettie Hunt Rencher, *The First Pacific Island Missionary*: Pratt papers.

19 Louisa Barnes Pratt, 'Journal', Heart Throbs of the West, Vol. 8, 189-400.

mission as being necessarily to the Polynesians at all. Shortly after his two companions and he had sighted the islands of New Zealand, he wrote:

There are large settlements of English on all of them; and had the weather been good, our Captain talked of going in there, and we intended stopping here to commence our mission, instead of continuing on to Tahiti. There is a great and delightful field for our Elders to occupy: some hundred thousands of English emigrants to preach to.²⁰

Pratt, in common with other missionaries, may have been inclined to illustrate his attitude to the Polynesian by referring to the Israelites of scripture, for in 1845 he remarked of the Tubuaians to whom he had been preaching: 'They are so established in their old sinful practices, that like the children of Israel that went out of the land of Egypt, they that were twenty years old and upwards never reached the promised land....'²¹ Such a statement, however, is clearly a simple analogy, and does not indicate that he thought the natives of Tubuai were akin to the Hebrews and hence to the Book of Mormon's Lamanites. Nor do the journals of Noah Rogers and Benjamin Grouard, Pratt's fellow labourers on his first mission, give any indication that they saw a resemblance between the Polynesian islander and either Israelites or Red Indians.

When the first Mormon missionaries entered the Pacific in 1844, neither the observation that the customs

20 Times and Seasons, Vol.5, 21, 15 Nov. 1844.

21 Millennial Star, Vol. 7, 2, 15 Jan. 1846.

or appearance of the Polynesians were similar to those of the Hebrews nor the proposition that the Polynesian may have had American ancestry was novel. George Robertson of the Dolphin thought that the Tahitians had 'a great resemblance to the Jews',²² and the English missionary writer William Ellis in his Polynesian Researches commented on what he felt to be similarities between Polynesian traditions and scriptural accounts of such events as the creation and the deluge.²³ Hiram Bingham, one of the earliest American missionaries to Hawaii, observed likenesses between Polynesian and Hebrew custom, but rejected the possibility that the Polynesians were 'the descendants of Israel, or a part of the lost tribes of that wonderful nation'.²⁴ In an earlier work, William Ellis had written that 'various points of resemblance might be shown between the aborigines of America and the natives of the eastern Pacific'.²⁵ Ellis did not attempt to elaborate the subject, but in 1834 John Dunmore Lang advanced the theory based on evidence of island voyages, that the Polynesians had settled America.²⁶ There is no indication, however, that writings or theories such as these were familiar to Latter-day Saints, or, indeed, that any Mormon apart from Pratt had experience or knowledge of the Pacific islands at the time of the first mission. While

22 George Robertson, The Discovery of Tahiti, London, 1948, 228.

23 William Ellis, Polynesian Researches, vol.1, 110. 386.

24 Hiram Bingham, A Residence of Twenty One Years in the Sandwich Islands, 27.

25 William Ellis, Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, 441.

26 John Dunmore Lang, View of the Origin and Migrations of the Polynesian Nation, London, 1834.

it is likely, therefore, that Pratt's pre-Mormon island experience provided the incentive for the beginning of Latter-day Saints missionary work in the Pacific, it is no more than conjectural that the mission's chief motivation was his belief that the Polynesians 'were related to the American Indians as they resembled them so much'.²⁷ The three years that Pratt spent largely in Tubuai on his first mission may have helped convince him of a racial connection between the Polynesian and the Indian, but if he did feel this to be so he seemingly made little of it after his arrival in Salt Lake City in 1848 to report on his labours and seek reinforcements for the mission, although for a short time he 'engaged a school in the Tahitian language',²⁸ presumably for the benefit of future missionaries to the islands.

The first example of an attempt to relate the racial theories of Mormon scripture to the Pacific islander is recorded by Louisa Pratt, who joined her husband on his second mission in 1850. In October 1851 Louisa delivered an address to a group of females on Tubuai in which she informed her audience that 'the Nephites were the ancient

27 Rencher, op.cit.

28 Louisa Barnes Pratt, 'Journal', 247. The identity and number of the students is not known. Although Mrs Pratt identifies one of them as James S. Brown, a future missionary to Tahiti, Brown's autobiography recalls that on his arrival in Tahiti he was 'deaf and dumb, so far as the spoken language was concerned...', Giant of the Lord, 168.

fathers of the Tahitians', at which 'they appeared greatly interested'.²⁹ Earlier that year nine Mormon missionaries had arrived in the Hawaiian islands from California and commenced preaching on the assumption that their message was to be aimed at the whites of Hawaii. Only after this approach had proved unsuccessful and three frustrated elders had returned to the mainland did the remainder begin to direct their attention to the Hawaiians.³⁰ By the following year it was becoming common for them to refer to and even address their Hawaiian proselytes as descendants of Israel and remind them of the 'promises of the Lord to their fathers'.³¹ At a mission conference in April 1852, George Q. Cannon, the most able and ambitious of the missionaries, assured Hawaiian members that if they would 'seek after truth and...observe all the words of the Lord, and be guided by the spirit at all times, they would progress...and even outstrip their white brethren, for they were of the House of Israel God's chosen people',³² a guarantee of an ideal exactly like that realized by repentant Lamanites of the Book of Mormon.³³

29 Louisa Barnes Pratt, 'Journal', 273. 'No organ of their cranium', continues Mrs Pratt, 'is more prominent than marvelousness.'

30 Accounts of the Hawaiian mission may be found in George Q. Cannon, My First Mission; Bock, 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands'.

31 William Farrar, Journal, 7 Mar. 1852.

32 Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, Apr. 1852.

33 See B.M. Helaman 6:1, 3 Nephi 2:14-15.

Since there appears to have been little communication up to this time between the missionaries in Hawaii and those in the South Pacific, it would seem that they arrived at this manner of thinking independently. Certainly it had not yet become part of official church attitudes to the Polynesians, as apostle Parley Pratt's 'Proclamation' of 1852 shows.³⁴ This document announced Pratt's appointment as 'President of the Pacific Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' and was addressed 'To the people of the Coasts and Islands of the Pacific (Ocean), of every Nation, Kindred, and Tongue.' As the proclamation was published in a widely circulated Mormon journal, and was intended for subsequent translation and publication 'by especial messenger...in every language and tongue included within the bounds of the Mission', it would have presented an excellent opportunity for its author to acquaint Polynesian converts with their relationship to the people of Mormon scripture. By this time the Society islands mission was eight years old and the Hawaiian mission two, but apart from the document's title, Pratt does not even acknowledge the existence of the Pacific islanders, although he addresses a section of the proclamation 'To the Red Men of America', in which he assures them of their descent from 'the House of Israel' and of their fathers' migration from Jerusalem under the prophet Lehi.

Parley Pratt was never able to obtain first hand knowledge of the island people within his extensive mission, for he came no closer to the Pacific islands than California.

34 Millennial Star, vol.14, 30-31, 18, 25 Sept. 1852.

In 1858, however, with the Society islands mission temporarily closed and Latter-day Saints missionaries in Hawaii about to be recalled to face a domestic crisis in Utah, the Mormon leader Brigham Young could comment publicly on the church's Polynesian missions with the conviction that 'Those islanders, and the natives of this country are of the House of Israel, of the seed of Abraham....'³⁵ Seven years later, when Young was seeking readmittance to the Hawaiian kingdom for a group of missionaries, he assured Kamehameha V that the main reason for the Mormon's interest in the Hawaiians was the church's belief that they were related to the aborigines of America:

We have not a doubt in our minds but that your Majesty and the people of your Majesty's nation ...are a Branch of this same great family... the Book of Mormon is your Book; for the promises and covenants of the Almighty which it contains, are as applicable to your Majesty's nation as to the nations of this Continent.³⁶

The return of missionaries from the Pacific islands and the publication of many of their letters in church periodicals contributed to a growing awareness of the church's island missions, and the belief that the Polynesians were as much the natural heirs to the divine kingdom as were the Indians gained broad acceptance among Latter-day Saints. Reception of the belief in a racial association between the two peoples was an act of faith, a simple extension of literal acceptance of Mormon scripture itself, requiring no scientific proof or external evidence.

35 Journal History, 7 Feb. 1858.

36 Young to Kamehameha V, 24 Mar. 1865, Miscellaneous Foreign File.

It was not until much later that Latter-day Saints began to quote the observations of scientists and mythologists in support of their assumptions, and then only to provide further illustrations of what were already held to be self-evident truths.

Initially, however, Latter-day Saints were inclined to be openly contemptuous of more sober and reasoned efforts to establish the ancestry of the Pacific islander. In 1868 the popular Mormon journal Juvenile Instructor³⁷ sought to dismiss any remaining doubts on the subject by announcing that speculation on Polynesian origins was no longer necessary, and spelling out in some detail what had hitherto been taken for granted. 'It is well understood by us', it asserted, 'that these people are of the same stock as the Lamanites.' The journal dismissed the theory of Polynesian migration from South East Asia as the work of 'uninspired men', claiming that 'In beauty of face, and form, in strength of body, in their aptitude to learn the ways and literature of more civilized people, they far exceed the Asiatic people with whom they are numbered.' As evidence that the Sandwich islanders, and, by implication, all other Polynesians were 'of the house of Israel', the journal pointed to 'the success the Elders have had in preaching the gospel in their midst'. The apparent similarity of certain Polynesian customs to ancient Hebrew practices was regarded as further proof of the Polynesians' 'Israelitish descent', since it would otherwise

37 Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 3, 19, 1 Oct. 1868. Despite its name, the journal was not directed specifically at young people.

be 'very difficult to understand how they obtained these ideas...'. The problem of accounting for the presence in the Pacific of Israel's wandering sons was one to which Mormons had previously given little attention, for while the Book of Mormon was regarded as specific on the history of the Indians its relationship to the Pacific islander was at best tenuous. It did contain, however, an obscure reference to one Hagoth, a Nephite shipbuilder, who, about 54 B.C., had failed in an attempt to transport a party of Nephites from South to North America. 'And it came to pass', recorded the Book of Mormon, 'that they were never heard of more. And we suppose that they were drowned in the depths of the sea.'³⁸ A more satisfactory explanation of the migrants' fate, thought the Juvenile Instructor, was that they 'at last drifted on to one of these [Sandwich] islands' and thence 'either by intent or accident they reached some of the other groups of islands, some of which are not so far from the Sandwich Islands as these islands are distant from the mainland from whence they started'. Further proof of the Polynesians' 'kindred origin' was their 'fairness of complexion' which clearly showed that 'The people of the Sandwich, Friendly, Society, Navigators and Marquesas Islands, with those of neighboring small groups...have never mixed with other darker races but are the pure original stock.' On the other hand, 'the Figi... Islanders, the New Zealanders, the inhabitants of New Caledonia and the New Hebrides appear to have greatly mixed with the Australian race or with the Negroes of New Guinea and the Philippine Islands'.

38 B.M. Alma 63:8.

This last curious piece of ethnography would have been accepted without dispute by a people as yet not generally acquainted with writings on the Pacific outside of reports from their own missionaries, and whose most studious leader would later tell them that the populations of the islands of the Pacific, the Indian Ocean and Japan alike were Book of Mormon Israelites: 'Do they not resemble each other?'³⁹ Nor would the removal of the New Zealand Maoris from the rest of the Polynesian family have aroused much comment, for although Mormon missionaries had been in New Zealand since 1854, it was not until twenty-seven years later that they began to preach extensively to the Maoris, believing, as their counterparts in Hawaii had also done at first, that their message was meant for the European population.

It seems likely then, that rather than being led to the islands originally because of a deep-seated conviction that 'the Polynesians were descendants of Lehi',⁴⁰ the Mormon's attempt to allocate to the Polynesian a place in Mormon scripture and to view themselves as custodians of the keys to the islanders' spiritual kingdom was a rationalization of, and a compensation for, their initial lack of success with the whites of various island groups and their failure to make much impression on the American Indian, at least in the nineteenth century. But whatever the foundation for the belief, and whatever

39 Orson Pratt, Journal of Discourses, Vol.14, 333.

40 William A. Cole and Elwin W. Jensen, Israel in the Pacific, 388. See also Chap. 47, passim.

inconsistencies in reasoning it displays, it became and remained fundamental to the thinking of Latter-day Saints missionaries, providing them with a reason for instances of success and an excuse for instances of failure or inability to understand the ways of the Polynesian; providing church leaders and returned missionaries with a consistently popular topic at church conferences, and inspiring a body of colourable literature.⁴¹ Moreover, there is evidence that the same approach used by the first Mormon missionaries to the Indians came to be used in dealing with the Polynesians. 'We would go to them', said Francis W. Kirkham, speaking of his experiences with the Maoris in the 1890s, 'hold up a copy of the Book of Mormon and tell them that we had a book that told the history of their ancestors'.⁴² And Kirkham's presentation was undoubtedly common, for by the late nineteenth century, the belief that the Book of Mormon had as much to say about the Polynesians as about the Indians had become part of every Pacific missionary's doctrinal baggage, even if he occasionally carried short weight on other aspects, and it was customary for a missionary's blessing or certificate of appointment to contain the information that the bearer had been chosen to labour among 'the House of Israel'.⁴³

The racialism of the Book of Mormon, while couched explicitly in terms of colour, equating a white

41. See Appendix B.

42. Interview, Salt Lake City, Aug. 1970.

43. See, for example, the Journal and papers of Heber J. Sheffield.

skin with moral purity and a dark one with moral degradation, nevertheless had a positive influence, providing the Latter-day Saints with a continual incentive for work among the people whom they regarded as the beneficiaries of the book's promise of salvation. But the contents of the Book of Mormon were not Joseph Smith's only pronouncements on the subjects of race and colour. As the prophet had accepted and elaborated upon the theory that the Indian was of Hebraic origin, so he took also the biblical stories of the mark upon Cain and the curse upon Ham's son Canaan and added flourishes of his own. The end result of his re-creations was a totally negative attitude by Mormons towards people of 'negroid blood'.

Southern preachers had long used the stories to explain the Negro's appearance and justify his subjection to white masters, although the book of Genesis is far from explicit on the nature of Cain's mark or the actual colour of Ham's progeny. The Mormon prophet effectively despatched any vagueness or ambiguity on these matters by rehashing Genesis and inserting a prophecy delivered by Enoch which clearly stated that 'a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan, that they were despised among all people' and that 'the seed of Cain were black',⁴⁴ and, indeed, made it appear that the two were the same, notwithstanding that Canaan was of the lineage of Adam's third son Seth and not of his first son, the fratricidal Cain.

Smith's personal views on the status of the Negro are less easy to determine than his official, doctrinal

44 P.G.P., Moses 7:8, 22.

position. The first Mormons were almost exclusively Northerners, from the non-slave-holding states, although it does not follow that they were necessarily abolitionist in sentiment. But the first important Mormon settlement, in Jackson County, Missouri, teetered precariously on the slave line, and had come to grief when older, slave-holding Missourians reacted violently against an article in the local Mormon newspaper 'respecting free people of color'.⁴⁵ The prophet's expressed opinions, however, tended to vacillate between sympathy for slave holders, abolitionism and separate equality. In 1836 he strongly criticized the abolitionist cause,⁴⁶ and in 1844 he recommended freeing the slaves and hiring them to wage labour.⁴⁷ The previous year he had argued with an apostle, Orson Hyde, on the question of the black man and denounced Hyde's views, insisting that Negroes would quickly achieve the same qualities as whites, given the opportunity. 'Had I anything to do with the negro', he informed Hyde, 'I would confine them by strict laws to their own species, and put them on a national equalization.'⁴⁸

But by this time the Mormons' doctrinal position on the place of the Negro had already become clear. In 1835 the prophet had acquired a small collection of Egyptian papyri from an itinerant showman, and with a confidence born of the success of the Book of Mormon set about

45 Evening and Morning Star, July 1833.

46 Latter-Day Saints Messenger and Advocate, Apr. 1836.

47 Times and Seasons, Vol.5, 15 May 1844.

48 History of the Church, Vol.5, 217-18.

translating their hieroglyphics, having identified one as the work of Abraham. The fruit of this labour was the Book of Abraham, which appeared in published form in 1842 and besides containing yet another revision of part of Genesis which referred to a plurality of creators, included a piece of extra-biblical fiction which laid the permanent doctrinal foundation for the church's view of the Negro. Pharoah of Egypt, said Smith, was a son of Ham's wife Egyptus, after whom his land was named. And although Pharoah was 'a righteous man', he belonged to an accursed lineage, which had not only been afflicted with a black skin, but had also been deprived of 'the right of Priesthood'.⁴⁹ In factual language it meant that while a Negro might become a Mormon he would remain a lifelong lay member in a church which emphasized progress in the priesthood as an essential prerequisite for higher level salvation, and denied the celestial benefits of temple ritual to anyone deemed unworthy. In practical missionary terms it meant that proselytizing among Negroes and people of 'negroid blood' could be dispensed with, and possible embarrassment spared, for should a black man become a convert, he might justifiably wonder why he could not hold even the lowest priesthood station; an office that could be held by a twelve-year-old non-Negro. Mormon apologists, faced with their own seemingly contradictory doctrines which repudiated original sin and stressed free agency, later used an additional justification, claiming that the blacks had already exercised freedom of choice by

49 P.G.P., Abraham 1: 21-7.

selecting their future skin colour while in their pre-earthly spirit form.⁵⁰

But no such metaphysical conjuring appears in the published speeches of Brigham Young, with whom the subject of 'the seed of Cain' was a favourite one in sermons and addresses. There is no suggestion in Young's discourses that the Negro's characteristics had anything to do with pre-mortal selection; rather they resulted from the simple transmission of the curse upon his forefathers, which alone was sufficient to explain why

...some classes of the human family...are black, uncouth, uncomely, disagreeable and low in their habits, wild, and seemingly deprived of nearly all the blessings of the intelligence that is generally bestowed upon mankind.⁵¹

Furthermore, the efforts of the abolitionists would not have the slightest effect on the status of the Negro, for the 'children of Ham were to be the servant of servants', and no power under heaven could hinder it, 'so long as the Lord should permit them to welter under the curse....'⁵²

And in any case, as far as Young was concerned, slavers and abolitionists were but two sides of the one coin: 'The Southerners make the negroes, and the Northerners worship

50 See, for example, the letter from David D. McKay (Ninth President of the Mormon Church), 3 Nov. 1947, quoted in full in William E. Berrett, The Church and the Negroid People, supplement to John J. Stewart, Mormonism and the Negro, 18-23; also Letter from First Presidency Improvement Era, Feb. 1970, 70-1.

51 Journal of Discourses, Vol.7, 290.

52 Ibid., Vol.2, 172.

them; this is all the difference between slaveholders and abolitionists.'⁵³

But, notwithstanding his social views towards them, Joseph Smith had said of the Negroes: 'They have souls, and are subjects of salvation.'⁵⁴ In Brigham Young's view, salvation would be a long time coming; the Negro would have at least to the millennium to wait.

When all the other children of Adam have had the privilege of receiving the Priesthood, and of coming into the kingdom of God, and of being redeemed from the four quarters of the earth, and have received their resurrection from the dead, then it will be time enough to remove the curse from Cain and his posterity.⁵⁵

Nor was there any prospect of the Negro improving his chances by becoming 'white and delightsome' through intermarriage, as some fortunate Lamanites had become. The 'least particle of Negro blood' was sufficient to prevent a man from holding the priesthood, and, in any event, the Mormons prescribed capital punishment for those guilty of miscegenation with blacks, a fact evident even to such an impartial observer as Sir Richard Burton.⁵⁶ 'Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race?' inquired Brigham Young of his congregation. 'If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty...is death on the spot.'

53 Ibid., Vol.10, 110.

54 History of the Church, Vol.5, 217.

55 Journal of Discourses, Vol.2, 143.

56 Burton, op.cit., 299.

This will always be so.⁵⁷

Fortunately it has not been, although the strictures upon inter-racial marriage and especially upon the union of black and white have remained otherwise unchanged in official Mormon policy. Mormon missionaries have upheld their church's injunctions concerning the social and spiritual status of the Negro largely by ignoring his existence. The dissident Reorganized Latter Day Saints church, in denying the allegedly divine nature of the Book of Abraham chiefly because of its polytheistic teachings, also repudiated its racial implications, and in 1865, with the memory of the Civil War still vivid, issued its own statement on the subject of Negro baptisms and ordinations, declaring it expedient that men of every race be ordained but advising against haste 'in ordaining men of the Negro race'. Acknowledged as revelation and later included in the Reorganized Church's Doctrine and Covenants,⁵⁸ the statement's cautious wording implies a compromise between the views of members of this church's hierarchy, and wisely avoids the hysterical overtones of Brigham Young's contemporaneous pronouncements. Later it was to receive liberal interpretation, resulting in missionary work and ordinations among American Negroes and the establishment of successful missions in Haiti and Nigeria, which came to rely on a local priesthood, in the light of the belief that 'there are some who are chosen to be ministers to their own

57 Journal of Discourses, Vol.10, 110.

58 Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Doctrine and Covenants, Section 116.

race.'⁵⁹ Like its much larger and more powerful parent church, however, the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints maintained a constant aloofness from the black Pacific islands, while holding similar, though less frequently stated, convictions about its role in fulfilling the spiritual destiny of the Polynesian.

While other mission churches in the Pacific took little heed of racial boundaries and ethnic distinctions, the inseparability of doctrines of race from other aspects of Latter-day Saints dogma was to be of major importance to the geographical spread of Latter-day Saints missions in the Pacific islands, affecting especially the larger Mormon faction. Just as the belief in the destiny of the Lamanites, and by extension their Pacific brethren, was to provide Latter-day Saints missionaries with a rationale and an incentive to magnify their offices in Polynesia, so the extension of the Mormon belief in the spiritual inferiority of the black man was to keep the missionaries away, throughout over a century of contact with the Pacific, from the islands of Melanesia.⁶⁰

59 Ibid.

60 For a recent and apparent exception, see Appendix A.

CHAPTER FOUR

'ON THE ISLANDS OF THE SEA'

THE first Latter-day Saints mission to Polynesia had about it the fortuitous quality that was to characterize much of their activity in the Pacific. Mormon missionary contact with Polynesians began in May 1844 on Tubuai in the Austral group, where the ship carrying the missionaries to the Society islands stopped to take on supplies. Neither the beginning on Tubuai nor the Society islands as the missionaries' destination was intended originally.

On 23 May 1843, at Nauvoo, Illinois, four men were '...set apart to a mission to the Sandwich Islands....'¹ Evidently unable to find passage to their directed destination, the four, on the initiative of Addison Pratt, took passage instead on the whaler Timoleon, bound for the Society islands. Only three - Pratt, Benjamin Grouard and Noah Rogers - survived the voyage. The fourth, the consumptive Knowlton Hanks, died at sea, less than a month out of New Bedford.²

Seven months after its departure, the Timoleon put in at Tubuai. Pratt, who had some knowledge of Hawaiian, was able to conduct a rudimentary conversation with the islanders who greeted the ship. Learning that Pratt and his companions were missionaries, and perhaps assuming that they were representatives of the same Protestant faith to which they had been already introduced, the Tubuaians requested that

1 Directive by Brigham Young, typescript copy: Pratt papers.

2 Pratt Journal.

at least one of them remain. Pratt, at first reluctant to leave his companions, soon acceded. The humility and reverence of a native missionary with whom he and Grouard stayed overnight, convinced Pratt that to do otherwise would be 'running away from duty'.³ Pratt's decision provided him with a ready-made opening. Although the Tubuaiians had had twenty years of contact with the teachings of the London Missionary Society,⁴ the experience was probably not profound enough to enable them to distinguish readily between L.M.S. and Mormon teachings, certainly not to the extent of opposing the introduction of Mormonism. By the end of July 1844 Pratt had baptized and confirmed four Tubuaiians. He had also baptized, confirmed and conferred positions in the priesthood on six of the seven white men on the island.⁵ By February 1845 he could claim fifty-seven baptisms on Tubuai. 'The Lord', he wrote, 'has greatly blessed my feeble efforts to spread the gospel.'⁶

The immediate situation of Rogers and Grouard was far less fortunate. On Tahiti they found their progress impeded by civil disturbance and their inability to communicate with the Tahitians. 'It placed us in a very critical situation indeed', wrote Grouard, '& had we means we should have kept on to the Sandwich Islands.'⁷ Five months labour in Tahiti

3 Ibid.

4 See W.N. Gunson, 'Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860'.

5 Times and Seasons, 1 Nov. 1845.

6 Ibid.

7 Grouard Journal, 14 May 1844.

produced only five converts - all foreigners. In contrast with the settled conditions on Tubuai, Rogers found Tahiti to be '...one of the worst sinks of iniquity that I ever saw... full of abominations of every kind'.⁸ Frustrated by the circumstances, Rogers left for Huahine. He could hardly have chosen a less favourable location, for the island was one of the strongest L.M.S. stations in the South Seas, and under the virtual control of one of the most powerful of the English missionaries - Charles Barff. On 10 November Rogers held a well attended meeting on Huahine; a month and five meetings later he had no audience at all.⁹

The following January Rogers returned to Tahiti where he and Grouard discussed the prospect of returning to America, a consideration motivated by their lack of success, and the recent knowledge that the Mormon prophet had been murdered, and the church at Nauvoo threatened with expulsion. They decided against immediate return. 'We now have concluded', Rogers wrote, 'to stay here a little longer and go to other islands as soon as possible to try our luck, there appears no chance for us where there is a mission established. Because they have the language the Best.'¹⁰ Accordingly, Grouard departed for Anaa in the Tuamotus, an island of which he 'had heard considerable',¹¹ while Rogers visited in turn Moorea, Huahine, Manuae (Hervey Islands), Mangaia and Rurutu. Wherever he attempted to preach, he found that the English

8 Rogers Journal.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Grouard Journal, 9 Feb. 1845.

missionaries had left instructions forbidding 'any white man to tarry' unless he had brought with him a letter of introduction.¹² Less than one month after the conclusion of his abortive tour, Rogers returned to America.

On Anaa Grouard received a welcome and encountered a situation not unlike that which had greeted Addison Pratt on Tubuai. As a visiting missionary he was treated civilly, almost indulgently, by chiefs and people alike. Asked to state his country and the nature of his teaching, Grouard replied that he was American and assured his questioners that his preaching was unlike that of the English missionaries, the 'pope (cartholicks, or any thing els you have ever heard)'. The chiefs were apparently impressed. 'Americans', said one, 'are good people; we know this because a great many of them have been here and they all treated us well.'¹³ On 4 May 1845 Grouard preached in Anaa for the first time, taking as his text Mark 16:15-17. Three weeks later he performed his first baptisms. By September, after a month's tour of the island, he claimed 620 members in five villages, including the 'king', several chiefs and one of the erstwhile L.M.S. teachers. His brief labours had been fruitful; his mood was self-congratulatory:

It afforded me great pleasure & satisfaction to witness the great change wich had taken place among thease people since I had been among them. When I arrived among them the utmost confusion and disorder prevailed. Sin in the most horrid form walked abroad in open daylight...but now it was very different indeed - the gospel was what now occupied

12 Rogers Journal.

13 Grouard Journal.

their attention.... I have baptized three generations, namely father son & grandson, who have together set down to...feasts of human flesh, who are now faithfull members of the church of christ.¹⁴

So successful was Grouard that he began to feel the responsibility was too great for him, notwithstanding he had ordained seventeen office holders in four months. Determined to obtain assistance, he made his way to Tahiti and by letter persuaded Pratt to return with him to Anaa, using a psychological threat for the purpose.¹⁵ Pratt, who was of the opinion that the people of Tubuai 'had received as much Scripture teaching as they knew what to do with' joined Grouard on Tahiti, where they spent enough time to baptize their first Tahitian converts and incur the displeasure of L.M.S. missionaries John Barff and Robert Thomson, who lodged protests with the French governor accusing the Mormons of 'preaching erroneous doctrine' and making unpermitted use on Anaa of the L.M.S. meeting houses.¹⁶

On Anaa the Mormons were assured by their native converts that the meeting houses were theirs to do with as they pleased and that the English missionaries' attendance there had not been frequent enough to justify their claims of having introduced Christianity to the islanders. Excepting the efforts of one or two Tahitian teachers, they insisted, they had taught themselves what they knew of Christianity.¹⁷

14 Ibid.

15 Pratt Journal.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

Encouraged by this dubious testimony, Pratt and Grouard apportioned supervision of Anaa's five major villages between them, and by June 1846 had increased the number of baptisms by 200.¹⁸ Grouard, ever impatient to add more converts, considered briefly returning to Tahiti, but, in the face of news of fresh conflict there, gathered a crew and set out instead for the north-eastern Tuamotus, leaving Pratt in charge of Mormon affairs on Anaa. 'You have a better faculty to preside...' he told his protesting colleague, 'and I like to pioneer better than you do.'¹⁹ During his tour of three and a half months, Grouard visited Faaite, Fakarava, Toau, Kaukura, Makatea, Tikahau, Rangiroa, Arutua and Apataki, stopping on some only a few days, on one (Makatea) a month. On some he found news of his coming had preceded him favourably; on Makatea he found 'great prejudice', the cause of which, he wrote, 'was that I had been represented to the people as being like the French and that my doctrines were like the Roman Catholics'. It was easily allayed; within four weeks on Makatea he had baptized eighty-four.²⁰

A week after Grouard's return to Anaa, Pratt and he held their first mission conference at Putuahara. In view of the rapid extension of the mission, it was decided that Pratt should return to America to report to the church authorities and request that more missionaries be sent to the islands. He left from Tahiti in March 1847. It was May 1850

18 Ibid.

19 Millennial Star, 15 Aug. 1849.

20 Grouard Journal.

when he returned.²¹ Of Mormon affairs in the South Seas in the intervening three years almost nothing is known. The only extant journal of Benjamin Grouard ends abruptly in 1846, but such sparse sources as have survived suggest that in the interim Grouard spent at least as much time in trading activities as in missionary work, and that missionary duties, especially in the Tuamotus, were conducted in part by one John Hawkins, an English trader who was an early convert.²²

Pratt returned with James Brown, a young ex-member of the Mormon Battalion in the war with Mexico, and was followed six months later by a group of twenty-one, including Pratt's wife and young family and seven proselytizing missionaries, four of whom brought wives and children.²³ The events of the next two years suggest that their efforts might as well have been spared. Within seven months of their arrival, three of the missionaries had returned to America. Wrote Pratt, evidently scornful of his colleagues' timidity:

It seems to me foolishness that Elders should come so far, and then turn round and go back, because they had not got Ann to cook for them.... It wants healthy, ambitious men, to stand the hardships of these islands, young men who are neither sugar nor salt, as they are sometimes exposed to the wet.²⁴

21 Pratt Journal.

22 Society Islands Mission Manuscript History. Information (probably oral) was obtained by church chronicler Andrew Jenson during his visit in 1896. See also F. Edward Butterworth, The Adventures of John Hawkins; Restoration Pioneer, a work that invites some scepticism.

23 Pratt Journal.

24 Millennial Star, 15 May 1851.

In April 1851 another missionary arrived unauthorized from Hawaii, and within a few days of his arrival began to take such 'unbecoming liberties with the native females' that he was disfellowshipped and advised to return to Salt Lake City.²⁵ Of those who remained, three were all but ineffectual - one was in the islands for over a year before he 'preached for the first time in the native tongue';²⁶ a fourth saw some service in the Tuamotus and was later cast away on Tongareva (Penrhyn island) where, according to an English missionary, he had been 'regularly starved out being glad to make his escape in a Shelling vessel'.²⁷ Pratt's earlier companion, Grouard, was beginning to take less part in active missionizing and more in trading. On at least two occasions when missionary duties were being assigned, Grouard was given none.²⁸ Indeed, he was showing signs of restlessness and disillusionment. On one occasion he had written to Brigham Young threatening that 'unless he received assistance he would not only leave the mission but also the church';²⁹ on another he declared his intention of seeking his fortune on the California gold-fields.³⁰ Apart from Pratt, therefore, there was only one potentially useful missionary - James Brown. But Brown's military experience proved to be a mixed blessing.

25 Pratt Journal; Caroline Crosby Journal.

26 Crosby Journal, 2 Nov. 1851.

27 Aaron Buzacott to L.M.S., 9 Feb. 1858, S.S.L.

28 Pratt Journal.

29 Nettie Hunt Rencher, 'The First Pacific Islands Missionary': Pratt papers.

30 Pratt Journal.

He was vigorous, forceful, and used to a rugged life. But he was also blunt and tactless to the point of stupidity. Lacking any education but that in the techniques of the frontier, Brown also lacked even the most rudimentary diplomacy. He was obliged to leave Tahiti after an encounter with English missionaries; within a few days of his arrival on Anaa he offended two Catholic priests and two months later was arrested on charges of inciting rebellion and attempting to subvert the laws of the French Protectorate;³¹ on Raivavae, where he was advised by his colleagues to remain, he was threatened with physical violence and expulsion by the natives;³² and on Rapa he affronted natives by an adamant refusal to observe custom when eating.³³

While Brown was on Raivavae, his brethren were making plans to abandon the mission and return to America. Pratt's family on Tubuai were becoming dissatisfied and anxious to leave. On Tubuai and Anaa many of the native saints had grown weary of the social restrictions imposed by Mormonism and reverted to their previous habits. Of the several white converts made on the islands many had left, while others had tired of the novelty of their new faith and the responsibilities of their new offices. Brown's behaviour and subsequent expulsion from the islands of the Protectorate had thrown suspicion on the rest of the missionaries, who had now to contend with Catholic opposition in addition to Protestant. Observed Pratt: '...everything seemed to be working against

31. Brown, Giant of the Lord, 238-45.

32. Ibid., 259-65.

33. Ibid., 272.

the prosperity of the mission'. In Papeete he had an opportunity to

look around & see the state of morals that the French influence had wrought upon them. They were swarming about the streets male & female & all drunk almost without an exception, fighting, hooting, dancing, indulging in every licentious conduct that can be imagined.³⁴

He heard reports of the prevalence of venereal disease in Tahiti and commented pessimistically: 'In such a state of affairs what can missionaries do?'³⁵

On 16 May 1852 Pratt and his family, Grouard, his Tuamotuan wife and four children and a teenage boy who had accompanied the Pratts left Tahiti, Grouard having sold his interest in the trading-cum-mission boat to raise money for their passages.³⁶ In September the other American missionary family, the Crosbys, and three white converts departed also, followed in November by the hapless James Brown.³⁷ Of the Americans, only Sidney Hanks, somewhere in the Tuamotus, remained. His brethren apparently had not bothered to inform him of the mission's closure, and he was sufficiently far from the seat of administration not to be regarded as a problem by the French. By the end of 1852 the first phase of Mormon missionary work in the South Seas was over.

34 Pratt Journal.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Brown, op.cit., 283.

WHILE the Mormons were abandoning French Oceania as a mission field, Mormon missionaries were making rapid headway in the Hawaiian islands. Mormon contact with Hawaii had occurred as early as 1846 when a party of would-be colonizers under the leadership of Samuel Brannan touched at Honolulu, en route to California to investigate the prospects of establishing a new Jerusalem on America's west coast. Brannan held meetings in Honolulu, but no converts were made, and the venture cannot be regarded as essentially a missionary enterprise.³⁸ On 12 December 1850 a group of ten missionaries arrived in Honolulu from the gold-fields of California, where they had been sent to raise money for their passages. The next day they drew lots for choice of partner and island, two intending to go to each of the major islands in the Hawaiian group; Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, Kauai and Molokai, although, for reasons not entirely clear, the decision to establish a station on Molokai was almost immediately revoked.³⁹

On Maui George Q. Cannon, the most articulate and able of the missionaries, sought and obtained permission from the Reverend Mr Taylor of the American Board of Missions to use his chapel at Lahaina in order to preach to the white residents. When he first arrived in Honolulu Cannon had thought the native Hawaiians 'a strange people' and doubted that he would ever 'learn their language, or become...familiar with their customs' even if it were necessary to do so. On Maui he was obliged to make a more practical appraisal of the

38 Bock, 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Hawaiian Islands',

39 George Q. Cannon, 'My First Mission' in Preston Nibley (comp.) Three Mormon Classics, 128-30.

situation, and became satisfied 'that if we confined our labors to the whites, our mission to the islands would be a short one'. His colleagues on the other islands were less easily convinced of the wisdom of the alternative. Wrote Cannon: '...it was a point upon which a difference of opinion arose, some of the Elders being of the opinion that our mission was to the whites, and that when we had warned them we were at liberty to return.'⁴⁰ By the beginning of March 1851 four had suited action to opinion and left the islands, one pleading that, as he was an old bachelor, his time would be more appropriately spent in searching for a wife. By the end of March a fifth, the appointed president of the mission, had left also, having been convinced by one of his two converts that the Marquesas would be a more fruitful field than Hawaii.⁴¹

With only five missionaries left in the field, Maui became temporarily the centre of Mormon activity in the Hawaiian islands. By chance, three of the five who chose to remain (and those the most enthusiastic) were located there; soon they were joined by another from Kauai. Later the fifth also saw service on Maui. Much of their success came as a result of Cannon's energy and initiative. He quickly acquired some facility in the language and undertook solo excursions to various parts of the island, preaching and baptizing. By the time more missionaries arrived from America in August 1851, those on Maui could claim 196 converts out of a total in the Hawaiian islands of 220. By July 1855 twenty-five Mormon

40 Ibid., 133.

41 Ibid., 140.

missionaries were serving in the Hawaiian kingdom and a membership of 4,220 was claimed, with branches of the church on all the main islands.⁴²

To a great extent the missionaries' progress in the early stages was aided by a tolerant Hawaiian Government, and a sympathetic U.S. Consul who took an active part in assuring that the Mormons were granted the same rights as those enjoyed by other denominations. The opposition of other mission churches also tended to be less severe than in French Oceania though, not surprisingly, it existed. But despite Cannon's complaints that Catholics and Protestants alike were zealously engaged in endeavouring to retard the progress of truth,⁴³ he himself was given the opportunity to use 'Presbyterian' meeting houses on Maui, an opportunity he seized to denounce the teachings of the incumbent.⁴⁴

A different and more accurate assessment was provided by one of Cannon's co-workers. Wrote Francis Hammond: '...after the first blast of the missionary indignation was over the cause began to flourish and has been prospering ever since.'⁴⁵ Certainly the Mormons' activities could hardly go unobserved and comments on the 'false religion', the 'system of error' and the 'fatal delusion' were frequent at meetings of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association.⁴⁶ More often, however,

42 Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, July 1855.

43 Deseret News, 24 July 1852.

44 Cannon, op.cit., 155-6.

45 Deseret News, 24 July 1852.

46 See Bock, op.cit., 15, 23.

opposition took the form of criticism of the missionaries' poor educational qualifications and the assumption that they were unable to perform adequately their appointed task. 'The principle cry in these lands', wrote John R. Young to his father, 'is that the Mormons are ignorant.... The cry is, "They have never been to high schools, nor to colleges, and therefore they are not fit to preach the Gospel".'⁴⁷ Young did not bother to refute the criticism, preferring instead to liken the Mormon missionaries to the apostles of the primitive Christian Church, an oblique admission that the charge had some validity. Notwithstanding their own educational shortcomings, the Mormons established schools in their key centres, demanding for them the same recognition awarded to other mission schools. Their demands were frustrated by the kingdom's Minister for Public Instruction, Richard Armstrong, on whose decision schools were organized after 1853 on a territorial rather than sectarian basis.⁴⁸

But the most significant early development was the establishment of a Mormon colony on Lanai; a 'gathering place' where Hawaiian saints would labour for the greater glory of God and the prosperity of the mission. The doctrine of 'gathering' was preached by all Mormon missionaries, whether in Scandinavia or the South Seas, and was intended to mean the gathering of the converted to Zion in America. In Polynesia this concept underwent some modification. Missionaries made frequent attempts to encourage their charges to gather to Zion, and were persistent in their suggestions and requests

47 Deseret News, 11 July 1855.

48 R.S. Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854, 359.

to church authorities. Should a mass gathering to the Salt Lake valley be considered inappropriate, San Bernardino in Southern California was regarded as an alternative. 'I am of the opinion', wrote Reddin Allred, 'that one hundred of them at that place would be of more service to themselves and the kingdom of God than one thousand on these islands.'⁴⁹ Earlier, Henry Bigler, one of the original group on Maui, had inquired: 'Do you think these Saints will ever be gathered to California or in the Valley of the Mountains? or will they gather on these Islands, and have Temples built &c.'⁵⁰ The reply to Bigler's query - from apostle George A. Smith - hinted strongly that the Mormon leaders were not over anxious to promote a large-scale immigration of Polynesians. 'The Saints will gather to the Continent when opportunity presents - but there is no particular haste, from the Sandwich Islands, till the work is fully established.'⁵¹

Even if the church leaders had shown more enthusiasm, the problem of getting large numbers of Hawaiian saints to America would have been insurmountable, since the gathering was not financially sponsored by the church, merely advocated; and most Hawaiian Mormons lived at subsistence level. '... some of them [the Hawaiians] are wealthy' Bigler had observed. '[But] Those that have obeyed the Gospel are mostly poor, and of the lower class....'⁵² Moreover, emigration was restricted by an act of 1850 which prohibited Hawaiians from leaving the

49 Deseret News, 27 Apr. 1854.

50 Ibid., 2 Apr. 1853.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

kingdom except for certain specified reasons.⁵³ Various factors, therefore, made the prospect of gathering to Zion impracticable. The alternative, since much had already been made of the subject, was to gather in the islands, and perhaps prepare for the day when the emigration laws would be lifted and the church in America would make its welcome less ambiguous.

Accordingly, a committee of missionaries began to seek out possible locations; and late in 1853 mission president Philip Lewis, after visiting Lanai, wrote to the church authorities that he had 'never seen a place better calculated for the colonization of the saints than this'. It was central to the markets of Honolulu and Lahaina for the sale of produce which the saints would raise, yet it was 'sufficiently isolated to be comparatively free from the surrounding evil influence'.⁵⁴ The particular spot which appealed so much to Lewis was the Palawai valley, part of which was owned by the chief Haalelea. Haalelea was cooperative and agreed to allow the Mormons free use of the land for a four year period and a lease thereafter at \$175 per annum. Within a short time plans were drawn for a town (the 'City of Joseph') which included a school 'to teach the natives the English language, and also to teach them how to till the earth'.⁵⁵ Crops, including wheat, corn, potatoes, onions and beans, were planted, and saints, livestock and implements transported from other islands. Within a year

53 Kuykendall, op.cit., 329.

54 Deseret News, 30 Mar. 1854.

55 Deseret News, 14 Nov. 1855.

100 had responded to the call to gather.⁵⁶ But the greater number of these were from Lanai anyway, and it became obvious within a few years that however anxious many Hawaiian saints may have been to emigrate to America, they regarded Lanai as a poor substitute and intensive farming as an unpleasant occupation. Elder Ephraim Green, who spent from August 1854 to August 1855 in the City of Joseph, chiefly in the capacity of overseer of agriculture, frequently despaired of teaching the colonists the Mormon virtues of industry and diligence.

I have a time tring to lurn them to work and live more like civilized being but this is a hard mater I have not bin able to make twenty of them due work more than while man [d]ue in a day this is slo giting along....⁵⁷

Three months later he was having no better luck in encouraging the saints to live 'like civilized beings'.

...there is many of them that would go half starved and naked before they can be prevaild upon to work...if they cant ackomplish thare object to day thay think thay will to morrow if not to morrow sum uther time is just as well.⁵⁸

By October 1857 it was evident that Lanai was not the success that had been hoped for. The mission then had a reported total of 3,325 members, but the number of saints at the gathering place was only 139, and had never been more than 160. At the October mission conference it was decided that

56 Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, Oct. 1856.

57 Green Journal, 27 Jan. 1855.

58 Ibid., 6 Apr. 1855.

'one or more other places' on other islands should be selected.⁵⁹ But there was barely time to make the decision operable, for by the spring of 1858 all the American missionaries had been recalled to Utah, to lend support to the home church in its confrontation with government troops.

By the end of that year there were no Mormon missionaries working among Polynesians; Mormon missionaries had entered New Zealand from Australia in 1854 but made no attempt to proselytize Maoris until 1881. In the islands of Hawaii and French Oceania white converts had been very few; those willing to accept the responsibilities of supervision fewer still. Polynesians had been appointed to church offices ranging from deacon to elder, but the extent to which they actively promoted the faith is conjectural, since no records of the native church are extant. It seems certain, however, that, lacking the constant supervision of an American missionary, many islanders returned to their former faith or succumbed to the advances of a new one. On Anaa, the dual encroachment of French administration and French Catholic priests resulted, in 1852, in a minor rebellion in which a gendarme was killed and two priests severely beaten; later, in the island's almost complete acceptance of Catholicism. By 1871, Father Germain Fierens could write: 'Here on Ana, mormonism is going; it is no longer in any but some old hardened homes in which it is close to death.'⁶⁰

59 Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, Oct. 1857.

60 Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, Tome 44, 1872, 124.

Of the Tubuaiians in 1857, Alexander Chisholm of the L.M.S. commented: 'They have got tired of Mormonism and have all returned to the old fold.'⁶¹ The observation may, however, have been made with more optimism than accuracy, for twelve years later Captain James Fowler of the John Williams wrote of Tubuai: '...Mormonism is very prevalent here in fact the strongest party....'⁶²

In other parts of the protectorate, especially in the outer Tuamotus, Mormon islanders posed problems for the spread of Catholicism. The peripatetic Father Albert Montiton of the Society of Picpus found the threat to the Catholic mission in the eastern Tuamotus to come not from the islanders' possible reversion to anarchy, 'acts of cruelty...or savagery' but from a 'more certain and less remote danger' - Mormonism. The chief of Takume, he wrote, 'a bold Mormon intriguer... has already tried to introduce libertinage and heresy into the two islands of Fangatau and Fakahina.'⁶³ While the comment illustrates the spread of Mormonism to the outer islands of the archipelago, the suggestion that the chief was attempting to establish some kind of Mormon hegemony is of questionable validity, for, perhaps as a result of his experience with Mormons on Anaa, Montiton was inclined to attribute a variety of evils to Mormonism and even to see its influence where that influence was doubtful; for example, in the continued practice of polygamy among a few Vahitahians.⁶⁴

⁶¹ R. Lovett, History of the London Missionary Society, vol.1, 347.

⁶² Log of the 'John Williams', 18 Oct. 1869.

⁶³ Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, Tome 45, 1873, 384.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 372.

The degree of familiarity with Mormon doctrine which Polynesian defenders of the faith had obtained from the teachings of the American missionaries is also debatable. Certainly it was not profound enough to enable them to oppose the claims of Walter Murray Gibson in Hawaii or the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Tahiti. Gibson, a remarkable rogue with a background of sea-faring, sedition, imprisonment and confidence trickery, and aspirations of empire building,⁶⁵ succeeded in ingratiating himself with Brigham Young in 1860 and persuaded the Mormon leader that he had absorbed Mormonism and believed it sufficiently to be ordained and sent on a mission. After a brief excursion to the eastern states he returned to Salt Lake City and informed Young that his 'mind led him west', whereupon he was given an appointment almost as extraordinary as his own career, to the 'Chinese, Japanese, East Indians and Malasian Islands'. Gibson was also given a letter of recommendation from the church's First Presidency to the 'illustrious Princes and People of the Royal Malay Race, Kindred, and Tongues', which invited them to 'open their ears unto the words of the beloved Walter Murray Gibson, whose heart is clean and pure, as a true Ambassador of God and His Prophet in these last days....'; and another to the 'Illustrious and Renowned Potentate His Imperial Majesty the Tycoon of Nephon, Matswai, Kinsaa, Likoke, and other islands of Japan'. The latter document assured the Tycoon that its bearer was a 'well informed honored and trusty citizen of

⁶⁵ Gibson's exploits have been examined by a number of writers. See, for example, James Michener and A. Grove Day, Rascals in Paradise, Ch.4, for a popular account, and Frank McGhie, 'The Life and Intrigues of Walter Murray Gibson', for a more serious account.

Deseret...well deserving the confidence of the First Presidency who commission him....' Armed with these guarantees of acceptance and his priesthood certificate, Gibson departed the Salt Lake Valley in December 1860.⁶⁶

But he came no closer to his appointed destination than the Hawaiian islands, sojourning briefly in Honolulu and then on Maui where, in company with two travelling companions who were trying to sell copies of a work entitled Dr. Warren's Household Physician, he spent some time, choosing to keep his association with Mormonism to himself. It is doubtful if Gibson knew much about the Mormons in Hawaii before he landed, but the fact of their existence did not elude him for long, nor did knowledge of the colony on Lanai. By November 1861 he was settled in the Palawai valley, having introduced himself to the colonists as 'Priest of Melchisedek and Chief President of the Islands of the Sea'. On Lanai Gibson's dreams of empire were necessarily moderated. Soon after his arrival there he confided to his diary:

...the people are poor; in pocket, in brain, in everything. They are material for a very little Kingdom.... They are not material for a Caesar, nor a cotton Lord, nor a railroad contractor...and surely will seem but small material for me, after all the hope and grasp of my heart....⁶⁷

But he was nothing if not imaginative and optimistic. He hoped to influence the Hawaiian government to let him have

⁶⁶ Brigham Young papers, Nov. 1860. Typescript copies of the sections dealing with Gibson's appointment were given to me by Mr Don Moorman of Ogden, Utah. I was not allowed access to Young's papers.

⁶⁷ Gibson Journal, 5 Nov. 1861.

the entire valley and most of the island to develop and considered an irrigation scheme for the valley. 'I could make it fit', he wrote, 'for the re-visit of Christ....'⁶⁸

Gibson controlled the affairs of the 'City of Joseph' for two and a half years, during which time he displayed a flair for labour organization characteristic of a southern planter and a talent for simony reminiscent of a medieval pope. When the colony's crops were threatened by drought and pestilence, Gibson had 'eight or ten' Hawaiians harnessed and driven, sometimes with the encouragement of a whip, to plough fresh ground.⁶⁹ When the heavy assessments he placed on his colonists failed to bring the expected returns, he hit upon the idea of selling church offices at prices ranging from fifty cents to \$150.⁷⁰ In the meantime he was steadily buying, allegedly on behalf of the church, but actually in his own name, much of the island's land. In May 1864 four Mormon elders arrived from Utah in response to complaints addressed to Brigham Young by disgruntled members of Gibson's congregation. Gibson was promptly excommunicated and withdrew from the Mormon cause, taking with him title to almost half the island.⁷¹

With the removal of Gibson and the re-establishment of regular missionary work, the Mormon mission in Hawaii enters a period of development which requires separate and

68 Ibid., 12 Jan. 1862.

69 Pacific Commercial Advertiser, 20 Mar, 3 Apr. 1862.

70 Eliza R.S. Smith, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, 272.

71 Ibid., 281-7.

detailed study, so different is it from Latter-day Saints activity elsewhere in Polynesia. A new and ultimately more successful gathering place was established at Laie on Oahu, with the purchase in 1865 of a plantation of 6,000 acres.⁷² To a great extent thereafter, the history of Laie is that of the mission. After an initial period of trial, during which Hawaiian colonists were assured that their right to gather and labour for Zion did not include any rights to the land itself,⁷³ the Laie plantation became an extremely successful commercial investment for the church. For fifty-four years, mission headquarters were at Laie, and the mission president also acted as manager of the plantation. It was at Laie that the first Mormon temple 'on an island of the sea' was built in 1919; and at Laie that the Church College of Hawaii, the only Mormon tertiary educational institution outside mainland America, grew out of an L.D.S. secondary school.

Understandably, Mormon writers have been hostile to Walter Murray Gibson, yet unwittingly he influenced the direction of Mormon missions in Polynesia. Had it not been for the need to investigate his activities on Lanai, it is extremely unlikely that Mormon missionaries would have re-entered Hawaii when they did, for there is no indication from church sources that the re-opening of the mission was being considered at that stage. Gibson was also responsible for introducing Mormonism into Samoa although his reason for sending two Hawaiian Mormons there in December 1862 was undoubtedly less

72 Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, Oct. 1865.

73 Ibid.,

to extend the cause of Mormonism than to further his own plans for an 'Oceanic Empire'. Gibson's agents were Kimo Belio and Samuela Manoa; the first, one of Gibson's twelve apostles, the second, a seventy, both presumably having paid for the privilege to hold their high offices. The Hawaiians reached Aunu'u off eastern Tutuila in January 1863, and during the next eight years performed baptisms on that island, at Tula and Alao on Tutuila and in Apia on Upolu. By 1871 they claimed to have raised up churches, built meeting houses and numbered more than 200 church members,⁷⁴ an impressive enough beginning, considering that much of their Mormonism had been learned from Gibson, who, according to an American Protestant missionary who visited Lanai in 1863, seemed to be engaged not in proselytizing the people to Mormonism but 'mostly in agriculture, raising poultry and sheep and trafficking with the natives'.⁷⁵

ALTHOUGH the activities of the Hawaiian missionaries came to the church's notice in 1871, no move was made to consolidate or extend Mormon gains in Samoa by sending an American missionary there until seventeen years later, by which time Belio was dead, Manoa had suffered an injury while fishing and retired from active missionary work, and their converts had returned to previous affiliations.⁷⁶ On 20 June 1888 the

⁷⁴ Deseret News, 15 Apr. 1871.

⁷⁵ Dwight Baldwin, quoted in Kenneth P. Emory, The Island of Lanai; a survey of native culture, 9.

⁷⁶ Andrew Jenson, Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 765.

piecemeal introduction of American missionaries began, with the arrival of Joseph Dean, his wife and infant child. Dean had already seen service in Hawaii, had some knowledge of that language, and was energetic and ambitious. The fourth day after landing he held his first meeting on Aunuu, assisted by Manoa who had been brought out of retirement by Dean's arrival; on the fifth he baptized his first convert. 'I am satisfied', he wrote a few hours later, 'that this nation is fully ripe for the Gospel.'⁷⁷

On 10 October Dean was joined on Aunuu by three more missionaries from America and the following month the party made a tour of Tutuila, visiting and holding meetings in most of the villages on the island. By the middle of 1889 the mission's progress and the extension of missionary labours to Upolu had made Aunuu inconvenient as a permanent base and a more central location desirable. Accordingly, in May a ten-year lease was taken on land at Vatia on the north coast of Tutuila.⁷⁸ Vatia was only briefly mission headquarters, for two months later a more favourable spot was found at Fagali'i, on the northern side of Upolu, where a half-acre was bought for \$128.50 from H.J. Moors, an American businessman and resident of Samoa who had, besides a national affinity with the missionaries, admiration for some aspects of Mormon endeavour. In August work commenced on a mission home and chapel at Fagali'i,⁷⁹ which was to remain the main station until 1902 when Pesega on Upolu became mission headquarters.

⁷⁷ Samoan Mission Historical Record, 1888-1903, 25 June 1888.

⁷⁸ Dean Journal, 26 May 1889.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 14 Aug. 1889.

The building at Fagali'i and regular conversions on Tutuila and Upolu increased Dean's already firm confidence in the mission's future. In September 1889 he wrote to the church's First Presidency:

We have more invitations from Chiefs and Villages to come and hold meetings than we can fulfill. What we need is good elders with the language, but of course it takes time to get that. I believe that when it gets a little more fashionable to join the church, and when we get a force of missionaries that can teach them they will flock to the fold like sheep....⁸⁰

In June 1889 Dean made the first of what was to be a series of abortive attempts to introduce Mormonism into the L.M.S. dominated Manu'a islands. The following year he was considerably more successful in extending the mission to Savai'i, the largest of Samoa's islands, where small branches were established at Palauli and later at Saleaula.

Dean's original appointment had been wide: to the 'Sandwich, Navigator and Society Islands'. The inclusion of the latter within the mission's orbit may have been a belated acknowledgement of early Mormon successes in a field that had been ignored by the missionaries for forty years and all but forgotten by the church. It was brought to the attention of the church authorities in 1886 by one of the early missionaries, James Brown, in an error-filled account of the mission's beginning, and drew from apostle F.D. Richards the observation: 'It is quite a singular affair that a branch of the Church, numbering 3,000 members, should be left unobserved and uncared for.'⁸¹ Yet when Dean reminded

⁸⁰ Dean to First Presidency, 8 Sept. 1889, Dean Papers.

⁸¹ Richards to John Taylor, 26 Jan. 1887, Tahitian Mission Letters.

the church leaders of his extensive appointment and requested more specific instructions concerning the Society islands he received only a vague reply advising him to follow his 'own judgement and the promptings of the Spirit'.⁸² His judgement led him to spend the remainder of his term in Samoa. It was left to his successor William Lee, apparently on his own initiative, to renew operations in French Oceania, and also to extend them to Tonga, which had not been hitherto considered as a mission field by the Mormons.

In July 1891 the first two Mormon missionaries to Tonga arrived at Nuku'alofa on Tongatapu. Over the next six years missionaries were appointed regularly to Tonga and visited most parts of the kingdom, including Eua, the northern groups of Ha'apai and Vava'u, the outliers of Niuatoputapu and Niuafu'ou, and even the nearby French possessions of Uvea and Futuna. By 1897 nineteen, including two missionary wives, had served in the kingdom. But compared with the relatively rapid advance of Mormonism soon after its introduction elsewhere in Polynesia, the missionaries' efforts in Tonga were attended by a notable lack of success. In April 1897 the last two missionaries left the kingdom and returned to Samoa claiming that the Tongans were 'not yet ready to receive the Gospel' although they had done 'all in their power...to establish the cause of truth in that as yet unfaithful branch of the house of Israel'.⁸³ In six years only sixteen Tongans had

82 Dean to First Presidency, 27 Nov. 1889, Dean Papers.

83 Samoan Mission Historical Record, 1888-1903, 21 Apr. 1897. Accounts of the missionaries in Tonga are contained in the records for Samoa. There was no separate Tongan mission until 1916.

been baptized; three on Tongatapu, two of whom soon apostatized, and thirteen on Ha'apai. To some extent the failure of the mission was due to the fast turnover of missionaries, their lack of direction, and their inability to learn the language. But to a greater extent it was due to the fact that the mission was ill-timed. In 1891 Tonga was still recovering from the political and religious upheaval that marked the closing years of the first Tupou's reign. Although the missionaries had been granted permission to preach by both Tupou I and his successor, most Tongans owed their political fealty to the king and their religious loyalty to the king's church. Even had the missionaries spoken their message with more ability and conviction, few Tongans would have been anxious to listen. It is perhaps significant that of the few conversions made most were in the scattered Ha'apai group, over 100 miles from the seat of Tongan government. A decade was to elapse before Mormon missionaries were again sent to Tonga - entering cautiously by the northern Vava'u islands - by which time a British Protectorate had been established over the kingdom; though it was not until 1916 that the Tongan mission was considered sufficiently strong to be separated from its parent mission in Samoa.

In January 1892, six months after the first Mormon missionaries had entered Tonga, two were despatched to Tahiti, having been given two months in Samoa to prepare for the mission by a study of Tahitian. The two - Joseph Damon and William Seegmiller - were little prepared when they arrived; it was October before Seegmiller 'said a few words for the first time in the native tongue'.⁸⁴ But they

84 Seegmiller Journal.

were less prepared for what they found, for most of Tahiti's Mormons had become members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, following a brief visit by two missionaries of that church in 1873.

Like the first Mormon mission to the South Pacific, the Reorganized Church's mission was a chance affair, for the two missionaries were on their way to Australia when the ship carrying them made an unscheduled stop at Tahiti to make repairs. On inquiry they learned of a Mormon settlement at Tiona (Zion) five miles west of Papeete, and hastened there. The elders were quick to emphasize to the Tahitian Mormons the providential nature of their visit:

'We showed them how singularly God had ordered events to bring us to Tahiti, and for a purpose, too, which all could see; and advised them to at once recognize the Reorganization....'⁸⁵

Later that day, and with the assistance of one David Brown, an 'East Indian' who spoke 'good sailor English', the missionaries entertained their hearers 'with a discourse upon the history of the Church; in which we averred that polygamy was a device of the Devil to corrupt the Saints and overcome them.'⁸⁶ Evidently impressed, the majority presented themselves for baptism. The following day fifty-one were immersed and came forth as followers of Joseph Smith III rather than Brigham Young, later calling themselves Tanito (Saint).⁸⁷

It was five years before the Reorganized Church sent another

85 The True Latter Day Saints Herald, 15 Apr. 1874. The two missionaries were Glaud Rodgers and Charles Wandell.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

missionary to Tahiti; eleven before they sent an effective one - Thomas W. Smith, an apostle of the church - who reached Tahiti in July 1884. Smith was active in extending his mission to the Tuamotus, where, drawing largely on Mormon members, he organized branches on many of the western islands of the archipelago. In April 1886 Smith reported 1,300 members in the Reorganized Church's Society islands mission, the greater part of which had been won from Mormonism.⁸⁸ Thus, when Mormon missionaries returned in 1892 they had good cause to regret their neglect of French Oceania as a mission field.

To further the claim that they represented the original L.D.S. movement, the Mormons re-enlisted the assistance of James Brown, by this time an old man and a semi-cripple.⁸⁹ With Brown's help several aberrant Mormons were retrieved from the Reorganized Church, but much subsequent L.D.S. activity in French Oceania was characterized by rivalry and antagonism between Mormon and Tanito and by French officialdom's suspicion of both factions.⁹⁰

Tahiti provided a jumping-off place for a number of attempts to introduce Mormonism into the furthest flung islands of French Oceania - the Marquesas and the Gambiers - and also into the British Cook islands. All were futile. Three missionaries served in the Cooks between 1899 and 1901; five in the Marquesas between 1899 and 1904, and at least

88 Reports of the Annual Conferences of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Apr. 1886.

89 Brown, op.cit., 496-7.

90 See Ch.8.

two in the Gambiers between 1902 and 1904. The years of labour failed to produce a single convert on any of these groups.⁹¹ Nor, at least at this stage, were Mormon missionaries any more successful in the Leeward Group of the Society islands. Early in 1901, on the eve of his departure from Aitutaki in the Cooks, elder Mervyn Davis expressed himself despondently in terms which may well have been echoed by several of his colleagues. 'The natives', he wrote, 'show little interest and avoid Gospel subjects.'⁹²

By the early 1900s, then, the only Polynesian group of any significance which had not been visited by Latter Day Saints missionaries was the Ellice islands. Yet L.D.S. missionary expansion in Polynesia was sporadic, in some cases accidental; while for several decades in the second half of the nineteenth century Latter Day Saints virtually ignored the greater part of the area, including their first Pacific mission field. These are facts which sit curiously in the light of the church's universal aims, the size of the potential missionary force, and the oft-repeated claim that the Polynesians were an especially favoured people in the L.D.S. scheme of things.

Despite the erratic nature of their progress, Latter Day Saints missions throughout the Pacific had many common features, and the seeds of later development are contained within the foundation years of each mission. The themes which emerge most forcibly are those concerned with human relations: with L.D.S. missionaries vis-à-vis each other and their tasks; with the missionaries' attitudes to,

91 Tahitian Mission Manuscript History.

92 Davis report Jan.-Apr. 1901, Tahitian Mission Letters.

and encounters with, missionaries of other persuasions - marked by mutual hostility and opposition; with the missionaries' relations with officialdom in the islands - marked, especially in the early stages, by distrust and suspicion on the part of officials; and with the missionaries' attitudes to, and relations with, the islanders among whom they were sent to labour. In many instances these themes are interwoven yet, to a great extent, they are also susceptible of separate examination. Each of them has been touched on briefly in the previous pages; each will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

SAINTS IN PARADISE: i. Men and Methods

BETWEEN 1844 and the late 1950s a veritable army of Latter-day Saints missionaries served in Polynesia. Up to 1934 French Oceania saw over 200; nearly 500 served in Samoa between 1888 and 1945. The overwhelming majority of them were faceless men, who stayed but briefly in the islands and singly made no lasting impression. For although the missionary drive was strong, missionary service was not a vocation among Latter-day Saints. It was expected that every member would be prepared to render missionary service at a moment's notice; it was not expected that he would have to devote a lifetime to it. For this reason, very few individual missionaries became identified with their places of labour in the way that missionaries of the Protestant and Catholic churches did, and very few outstanding figures emerge from the mass. Some were more vigorous and capable than others; some were slow to adapt to their new and exotic surroundings; some adapted all too readily; some maintained the 'spirit' of their mission throughout their term of service; some lost it easily or perhaps never had it; some were motivated by devotion and idealism; for some the main motivation was self-interest. For some their mission could not end soon enough, and some wept at the prospect of its end. Ignoramuses and illiterates; college students and a few graduates; farmers and sailors; shop assistants and sheepmen; clerks and cowboys, and many with no particular skills or abilities save those acquired of necessity while on their missions - between 1844 and 1960 the Pacific islands saw them all. Yet if

there were differences in abilities and backgrounds, there were also marked similarities in the problems faced by the missionaries and their attitudes and responses to them, and these problems, attitudes and responses changed but little throughout the period of study, despite the great changes in the missions themselves which were brought about by geographical expansion, more efficient organization and material progress.

The first Mormon missionaries to Polynesia were sent from Nauvoo, Illinois. But after 1846 and the immigration of the main body of Latter-day Saints to the Salt Lake Valley the great majority of missionaries who served in the Pacific came from Utah. However, with the gradual spread of Mormon communities into the neighbouring states, the missionaries may occasionally have come from Idaho, Arizona, Colorado, California, Nevada or Wyoming. The distribution of home states of the missionaries who served in French Oceania between 1892 and 1930 serves to illustrate this point. During this period 126 came from Utah, twenty-one from Idaho, four from Arizona, three from each of Nevada and Wyoming, and one from Colorado. The small town of Kimball in Canada provided two. Indeed, the names of small towns are more common than those of large as missionaries' home addresses: Richfield, Lewiston, Lehi and American Fork in Utah; Rexburg and Preston in Idaho; Bunkerville in Nevada; Big Horn in Wyoming.¹ The missionaries, therefore, were almost entirely from the western states; their backgrounds predominantly rural, their social environment unsophisticated. And although

¹ Tahitian Mission Manuscript History. List probably compiled by church chronicler Andrew Jenson.

many of the Utahns were from Salt Lake City, Zion itself was also for decades a largely rural community, its population quite small by the standards of North American cities. A further indication of the missionaries' overwhelmingly rural background is provided by the regular occupations of those who served in Tonga between 1913 and 1934. Of fifty, forty-two were farmers and one a 'sheep man'.²

While most of the missionaries responded to the call to serve on a mission to the islands with the docility expected of them, there were some for whom the prospect was somewhat less than appealing, and reactions could vary from outright reluctance and revulsion to ambivalence and resignation. On hearing of his appointment to the Society Islands in 1897, Israel Willey attempted 'to have his call changed to some other mission on the ground that his time would be wasted in going to the islands.'³ His attempt was unsuccessful. George Spillsbury, called to Samoa in the same year, voiced no objection, but confided to his journal: 'The thought to go among such a benighted people for three or four years was truly sickening.'⁴ Spillsbury's attitude changed during his mission, however, and later that year he decided that 'a life devoted to a barbarous race for their civilization is truly noble...'⁵

2 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36.

3 Cutler to D.T. Miller, 28 Jan. 1897, Tahitian Mission Letters.

4 Spillsbury Journal.

5 Ibid., 2 Nov. 1897.

an easy enough decision perhaps for someone who did not have to make such a sacrifice. 'I often feel to rejoice that I was sent to a heathen country', wrote Thomas Jones to his parents, '(though I often feel otherwise too)';⁶ and Thomas Woodbury admitted: 'When I first received my call [to Tahiti] I felt rather discouraged, but realizing that I had been chosen by those possessing the highest authority under the Almighty upon the earth, I heartily responded....'⁷ But the generally compliant spirit of most is probably best expressed by James Knudsen, who, on being informed of his appointment to Samoa, wrote: 'I can only say that I feel as most young men do rather timid. But otherwise I feel to except [sic] the call.'⁸

Reluctance and resignation on the part of appointed missionaries was one aspect of the attitude to missions to the islands; another was the feeling which frequently prevailed at home that, however favoured the Polynesian may have been in the Mormon scheme of salvation, the Pacific islands were not the most desirable of places for Zion's sons to serve. Doubtless contributed to by discontented returned missionaries and stories of hardship and deprivation - real or imaginary - it was a feeling that mission presidents, always eager to encourage more missionaries to their particular fields, were anxious to squash. In 1903 Joseph Merrill, late president of the Samoan mission, addressed the annual church conference thus:

⁶ Tahitian Mission Manuscript History, 9 Oct. 1894.

⁷ Ibid., 29 June 1893.

⁸ Knudsen to Wilford Woodruff, 31 Dec. 1893, Knudsen Papers.

The report has gone out among the Saints at home, I believe, that the Samoan Mission is a hard mission; and when young people have been called to go to those islands I have heard some of the Saints remark that any place on earth would be preferable to the Samoan Mission. I wish to dispel that notion from your minds.... The Samoan Mission is as healthy and favourable a mission as an Elder can go to.⁹

Merrill spoke for Samoa but his comments were relevant to the attitudes to the islands generally. Twenty-three years later little had changed: Mark Coombs, lately of the Tongan mission, addressed a similar gathering in like terms, and criticized as much as he dared the self-interest of many missionaries' families:

...it seems to me there is a certain feeling among the parents in Zion which causes them to discriminate against our island missions, particularly Tahiti, Samoa, and Tonga.... These dear sons have to make so many sacrifices that they do not want them to go there. They would prefer possibly that they go to Great Britain, to some of our American missions, or to Australia, and possibly, while they are doing missionary work, hunt up a little genealogy. That is all well and good, but it appears to me to be just a little bit selfish.... The souls of those Tongan people are just as valuable as the souls of our ancestors who have gone before us....¹⁰

⁹ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Report of 73rd Annual Conference, Apr. 1903, 15.

¹⁰ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Report of 97th Semi-Annual Conference, Oct. 1926, 147.

The attraction of genealogical source material aside, part of the preference for domestic missions would certainly have been due to the expense, borne by the missionary, his family, friends, or well wishers, of sending a missionary to the South Seas. The first Mormon missionaries to French Oceania had had to rely on the generosity of a well-to-do Boston saint;¹¹ the first missionaries to Hawaii worked for a time in the gold-fields of California.¹² Later missionaries to the islands would mortgage homes and land and sell livestock if they were fortunate enough to be property owners, or depend on the good will of friends and fellow ward members. Economic hardship was no bar to service. Wrote Thomas Hilton on receiving his appointment to Samoa: 'My circumstances (financially) at the present time are a little embarrassing. On account of the sickness of both Myself and my Wife (some time ago) I was compelled to mortgage my home....'¹³ But of course he accepted the call. When Joseph Merrill received his call to preside over the Samoan mission he was \$800 in debt, but by the time of his departure he had managed to pay off his debts and, with the aid of his ward and priesthood quorum, left his family in 'comfortable circumstances.'¹⁴ In his autobiography William Moody recalled that when he left his home in Thatcher, Arizona,

11 Pratt Journal.

12 See above, 89.

13 Hilton to Wilford Woodruff, 6 Nov. 1891, Hilton Papers.

14 Merrill Journal, 14 Apr. 1901.

he was still some \$30 short of the fares to Samoa for his wife and himself. 'The providence of God touched the financial aspects' of his mission, however, and he encountered friends and relatives on his way to the coast who made good the deficit. By the time he left San Francisco he was penniless again but received a gift of \$10 on board ship and arrived at his place of labour with nine of them.¹⁵ He was no better off on his second mission in 1908, when his wife and he 'barely had sufficient means to take us to our destination.'¹⁶ William H. Chamberlin, called on a mission to Tahiti in 1897, had to supplement his income from college teaching with part time farm work in order to raise the means to reach the islands. At the end of the four months preparation time allowed him, Chamberlin 'had \$70 on hand, received \$42 for labor on the farm and \$38 from friends'. After paying for fares and 'an outfit' he was able to land with \$23.25.¹⁷ For his mission to Tahiti, Heber J. Sheffield was able to raise \$110 from the sale of sheep and received a donation of \$125 from the Kaysville, Utah Amusement Committee, a church sponsored group of which he was secretary.¹⁸ Donations from various church groups also contributed to the fare to Samoa of William Sears in 1897. From his priesthood quorum, the local Mutual Improvement Association, 'Friends and Relatives (Misscel)', and his workmates at the City Recorder's Office

15 W. Moody, Years in the Sheaf, 52-4.

16 Moody to Joseph F. Smith, 1 May 1908, Samoan Mission Letters.

17 Chamberlin Journal.

18 Sheffield Journal.

he received sums ranging from \$10.50 to \$12.50; and from an 'Entertainment' organized by his ward \$35.90. But significantly he obtained the largest amount, \$54.75, from an association comprised of returned Samoan missionaries, who doubtless remembered well their own financial problems.¹⁹

Often the missionary had managed to raise only enough to get him to his field of labour. Thereafter he would depend on the charity of local saints, on money from home, or, when neither of these was regularly forthcoming, on the benevolence of his better off co-workers. Wrote Abinadi Olsen four days after his arrival in Samoa:

'...not one cent in my pocket and already I had been forced to borrow money to see me through.'²⁰ Sent from Hawaii to 'open the way' in Samoa, Joseph Dean, within a short time of his arrival had to borrow \$20 from a native assistant, before applying to the Hawaiian mission for funds to buy such essentials as soap, sugar and flour.²¹ Dean later 'speculated' in trade store calico.²² When the Tahitian mission president informed William Chamberlin a few months after his arrival that several of his colleagues were borrowing money to maintain themselves and that at least one had mortgaged his house, Chamberlin's pride was offended. 'I only bluntly answered', he wrote, 'that I didn't do things in that way.' But he was obliged to

¹⁹ Sears Journal.

²⁰ Olsen Journal, 30 Jan. 1895.

²¹ Dean Journal, 16 Aug. 1888.

²² Ibid., 20, 30 May 1889.

borrow a dollar from a companion when his own funds ran out. He did it with extreme reluctance, however, and only 'to pay food expenses', so that he might complete his share of the work on a meeting house. 'If it were not for that', he wrote, 'I would now be out preaching the gospel without purse or scrip.... If I had money the personal blessings I expect to get during my labors here would be lost....'²³

At least some others were concerned about the effect of money on their spiritual prospects. Joseph Merrill, although he had been receiving regular, albeit small, financial support from home, was sufficiently impressed by a reading of Joseph Smith's revelation concerning 'purse and scrip' to write immediately to his family telling them not to send any more money. 'I am going to preach as commanded', he insisted, 'that I may have claim on the blessings promised', and proceeded to request divine forgiveness for his past negligence.²⁴ But the ideal was finally subordinated to the hard reality of life in the field, and on a later mission Merrill was recording, if not with glee certainly without complaint, amounts of money received from Zion, the South Sea Islands Reunion Society, and various saints and non-members.²⁵ Thereafter he received frequent gifts of money without comment.

Despite the fact that most received cash gifts from family and friends, gifts recorded diligently in the back pages of journals, the problem of the missionaries'

23 Chamberlin Journal, 20 Nov. 1897.

24 Merrill Journal, 7 Jan. 1893.

25 Ibid., 10 Jan. 1903.

personal finances was a perennial one. In 1923 Mark Coombs, president of the Tongan mission, invited the elders in his charge to inform him of their financial condition and found that

Only two were comfortably [off]; all but two were being supported by relatives and friends; two were using means they had layed away prior to their calls, one had no parents; while the mother of one actually worked in the beet fields of Utah to assist her missionary son.²⁶

In truth, Coombs' group was probably better off than many, for none of them was reported as being in debt. Ever eager to assure inquirers and missionaries of other denominations that he 'received the gospel without price and gave it the same',²⁷ the L.D.S. missionary often found he could give no more than lip service to injunctions against debt and borrowing. Joseph Dean had hoped to divert cash obtained from the tithing of Samoan saints to the personal use of the missionaries.²⁸ In 1907 Frank Cutler, newly arrived president of the Tahitian mission, found that over \$900 - half of the tithes paid for the previous year - had been 'loaned out to elders and others...without any security whatever.' On further inquiry he was informed by the missionaries that his predecessor had 'suggested that they borrow from the mission instead of paying interest at home.'²⁹ A statement of mission finances for

26 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 8 Mar. 1923.

27 Olsen Journal, 16 Mar. 1896.

28 Dean to First Presidency, 7 Aug. 1888, Dean Papers.

29 Cutler to First Presidency, 7 Dec. 1907, Tahitian Mission Letters.

Samoa in 1927 showed that ten missionaries were overdrawn on mission funds for amounts ranging from \$28.41 to \$187.94.³⁰ At a conference on Vava'u in 1934 Reuben Wiberg of the Tongan mission had to insist 'that all missionaries called must meet all their obligations financially before they enter their missionary labors.' He had found that 'some of the missionaries laboring at present have long standing debts in the stores & to private parties as well.'³¹

To say that the missionary's attitude to his tasks generally was seriously affected by his impoverishment would probably be to exaggerate, but there can be no doubt that it influenced his outlook to a certain extent. The missionaries in the islands seem to have been inordinately preoccupied with food, many recording in tedious detail the contents of every meal, the manner in which it was obtained and the amounts eaten, and displaying various degrees of despondency or anger if but briefly they went without. Gifts from home of fruit cake and candy are also recorded in detail, as is the reaction to them and their consumption. The examples of the missionaries' preoccupation with food are far too numerous to be examined - often a whole day's journalizing is devoted to it - but its effect on their attitudes to work and native life should not escape notice. Of the Samoan custom of holding a post-funeral feast, one wrote: 'When a person dies in the district where we are, we are almost sure of a piece of pig and as we get very hungry for meat once in a while, we do not

30 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 31 Dec. 1927.

31 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 29 July 1934.

grieve much when a person dies if it is not one of our little flock.'³² The attitude of William Seegmiller towards the people of Raivavae in 1893, and indeed his teaching of them, was certainly qualified by his reliance on them for food and favours, as these extracts from his journal indicate:

20 April: Had quite a lively time with a crowd of natives
I give them religion every chance I can. But I cant be too severe on them as I am dependent on them for my grub etc.

(Later that day Seegmiller took dinner with the local gendarme: he offers a detailed description of the four-course meal, at which he also took tea and coffee.)

21 April: Grub quite scarce. Oh! the dirty people I will be glad when I get away.... Got a fish for supper. They are satisfyed with green bananas and they think every body else should be.

26 April: I have been hungry all day. But natives, oh! Israel! I am completely disgusted some times with theme. Some of their filthy habits are sickening. Yet they have some good qualities. And Can do a persons shirt up in pretty good shape.

28 April: I have hungryer here on Laivavae than any time on my mission. Yet I am thankful for what I have as I am dependent on unbelievers for my grub as there is not a saint here.³³

32 Merrill Journal, 30 Nov. 1891.

33 Seegmiller Journal.

Some years later when Secgmiller returned as mission president, he could afford to adopt a more independent air, and after having been approached by a native saint for money to buy food he commented: 'Oh! such a lazy gang it makes a person feel like kicking them.'³⁴

The missionary, then, raised his own means to get to his field and maintained himself as best he could while there. As the missions were consolidated he would be fortunate while he was employed mainly around mission headquarters, for then the standard of his lodging and the regularity of his meals would be assured; when his proselytizing duties took him further afield, however, he would have to shift for himself. He brought with him from Zion basic clothing, his temple garments, items of bedding, church works to suit himself, and relied upon the power of his priesthood and his expectations of hospitality to provide the rest. He was the recipient of a blessing, sometimes from a church patriarch, sometimes from another church leader, in which he was 'set apart' for his mission and perhaps assured that he would have great joy in his ministry; that he would be the means of bringing many to a knowledge of the truth; that he would go in peace and return in safety. He was given a missionary certificate attesting that he was in 'full faith and fellowship' with his church and was empowered to 'Preach the Gospel and Administer in all the Ordinances thereof pertaining to his office.' All were invited to 'give heed to his Teachings and Counsels as a man of God, sent to open to them the doors of Life and Salvation, and assist him

³⁴ Ibid., 10 June 1909.

in his travels, in whatsoever things he may need.'³⁵

He received also fundamental instructions in the duties of his office and the standard of conduct expected of him; instructions which had their basis in Joseph Smith's revelations and later in Brigham Young's tabernacle sermons, but which were susceptible of variation, depending on the giver, the recipient and the particular field of labour concerned. Here are those given to Abinadi Olsen, missionary to Samoa, as Olsen recorded them:

Keep the word of wisdom, do not ridicule other denominations, do not baptize a wife without the consent of husband or child without parents consent. Teach and not be taught - teach faith repentance & baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost - teach by example - learn to make scriptures plain; speak loud so all can here. We are not to teach gathering at present, better the saints to remain in their own country untill the Lord shall open up the way in his own do time. Avoid debating as nothing good follows offer preach the gospel to the world in its simplissity and grandier and let them axcept it or reject it. do not make any great promises to the Saints do not allow the fairer sect to come your hair nor make your bed do not let them tutch you in any manner be pure in thot word and deed. Shun the very apperence of evil.³⁶

Without doubt the last direction was considered to be of such importance, especially to missionaries going to the islands, that it was given over and over, often in considerably more detail, and sometimes to the near exclusion of other instructions. In the form in which it

35 See for example H.L. Bassett, Adventures in Samoa, 11-13.

36 Olsen Journal.

was given to William Moody, about to leave for Samoa in October 1894, it appears to have taken on paramount significance - for Moody records little else that was told him - and mere observance of this instruction is the only requirement for a mission to be pronounced successful.

'Remember young men', Moody and companions were told,

you are sent to preach the gospel and not to get a wife, for you will be looked up to as more than natural men and when your faces are radiated by the Holy Spirit you will be handsome and girls will try to make love to you and you will be tempted so be careful and keep every woman at arm's length, do not allow yourselves to be tempted in the least degree remember, young men, that you are only mortals, and you married men you are more apt to fall and in greater danger than the unmarried, because you have tasted of the sweets of the marriage bed. Go! and preach the gospel and if you don't convert a soul and come back with your garments unstained you will have done a good labor.³⁷

It was an injunction which Moody remembered well, and one to which he would return frequently in his later capacity as mission president, directing the young men in his charge to 'keep pure thoughts and not take any liberties with the women';³⁸ advising them to be 'very discreet in all their actions with the ladies and hold themselves aloof and positively avoid hugging and kissing, For one should keep all the kisses for home consumption';³⁹ condemning in 'positive terms' the conduct that he had 'witnessed by

³⁷ Moody Journal, 12 Oct. 1894.

³⁸ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 13 Apr. 1908.

³⁹ Ibid., 22 May 1908.

the Elders in relation to their familiarity with the girls.'⁴⁰

Other mission leaders were only slightly less concerned with this aspect of their missionaries' behaviour, for in the field, with the combination of the youthfulness of most missionaries and the outwardgoing nature of the Polynesian, the problem would assume even greater dimensions than appeared from the remoteness of Zion. Circumspection was considered a watchword and discretion a keynote: avoid the 'slightest sign of familiarity towards the weaker sex',⁴¹ and 'undo affection';⁴² touch them not[,] only to shake hands...or to administer to them in that case place your hands upon their heads';⁴³ 'be careful about going out for evening prayers with the women folks, as the natives suspicioned people who were out with women and girls after dark';⁴⁴ 'sharply rebuke the female who attempts to become the least familiar as they are wont to do with the majority of foreigners...';⁴⁵ '...the greatest calamity...and the saddest news we could possibly hear would be the fall of an Elder through fornication.'⁴⁶ The instructions were often conveyed in strongly emotional

40 Moody Journal, 1 June 1908.

41 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 4 Feb. 1892.

42 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 25 Oct. 1904.

43 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 28 May 1917.

44 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 16 Apr. 1904.

45 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 4 Feb. 1892.

46 Ibid.

terms and could bring about an equally emotional response, here recorded somewhat ambiguously by George Spillsbury at a priesthood meeting at Malaela on Upolu:

Pres. Wood's instructions to us savored more on discretion than any thing else. He close 'In the name of Jesus, I say keep three feet away from every woman.' A flood of tears came bursting from everyone present.⁴⁷

The effect of temporary separation from girl friends in Zion could lead, it was felt, to situations almost equally destructive of morale. In 1922 the president of the Tongan mission insisted that one of the most essential requirements a missionary could bring to the islands was 'A DIVORCE FROM SUPPOSED SWEETHEARTS TO AVOID NEEDLESS MUSHY LETTER WRITING.'⁴⁸

Instructions such as these were given at the frequently held priesthood and testimony meetings, intended as much as boosters of flagging enthusiasm and depressed spirits as opportunities to give and exchange advice, report on recent activities and outline new tasks and responsibilities. To a certain extent the functions of these meetings were different: the testimony meeting was concerned more with outpourings of the spirit, the priesthood meeting with practical advice and directions from the mission, district or branch leader. At the former, in addition to the expected bearing of testimonies to the truth of the prophethood of Joseph Smith and his successors, the veracity of L.D.S. scripture, and the glory of the missionary endeavour, there would be an exchange of spiritual advice and the retailing

47 Spillsbury Journal, 15 Oct. 1897.

48 Coombs to H.G. Reynolds, 31 Oct. 1922, Tongan Mission Letters, emphasis in original.

of faith-promoting incidents and experiences, mutual criticism and self-searching as well as mutual and self-congratulation, occasional admissions of spiritual weakness and resolutions to do better in the work. It would be a sad missionary who could not produce at these sessions an example of the manifestation of the strength of the priesthood, an illustration of the power of prayer, a miraculous healing, or an instance of the overcoming of prejudice or persecution by the glorious truth of the Latter-day Saints gospel.

Instructions at priesthood meetings were practical, concerned with past or present behaviour and present or future duties. The emphasis would vary, of course, according to the personality of the mission leader and the quality of the missionaries of the time, but most directions recurred from meeting to meeting, from month to month and year to year. They were often of a negative or prohibitory kind, and in this form revealed as much about the backgrounds and personalities of the missionaries as about the way in which they should conduct themselves while on their missions. Besides the abovementioned prohibitions against borrowing and familiarity with females, there were those against sending home 'immodest', 'dangerous and pernicious' photographs of islanders;⁴⁹ against swearing or using slang - 'Holy men of God do not use slang phrases because it is not becoming to the spirit of God and the spirit of our calling';⁵⁰ against telling colleagues or charges of

49 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 4 Feb. 1892.

50 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18,
20 Jan. 1916.

'passed experiences about wine & women';⁵¹ against indulging in unnecessarily long prayers;⁵² against quarrelling with each other;⁵³ against giving 'wrong impressions' of the work in letters home;⁵⁴ against certain games and recreational activities;⁵⁵ against nakedness before each other and native saints;⁵⁶ against casual exhibition of temple garments;⁵⁷ against disrespect for or over-familiarity with fellow missionaries, who should never be referred to by their given name or its island transliteration but always as 'elder' or 'brother';⁵⁸ against slovenliness in dress and physical laziness,⁵⁹ and against admissions of doctrinal ignorance - 'Do not tell the natives you dont know any thing have vigor and vim in your preaching.'⁶⁰

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- 51 Salelavalu Branch Record 1909-16, 7 Dec. 1911.
- 52 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 31 Mar. 1905.
- 53 Ibid., 25 Jan. 1905.
- 54 Ibid., 11 Aug. 1904.
- 55 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 24 Mar. 1916; Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Aug. 1940.
- 56 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 24 Mar. 1916.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18, 8 Jan. 1916; Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Aug. 1940.
- 59 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Dec. 1948.
- 60 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 28 May 1917.

On the positive side, missionaries were urged to strive for excellence in energy, wisdom and a knowledge of the people and their language; to be persistent in their efforts and 'not give up laboring with the people where they turn a cold shoulder';⁶¹ to assert their superiority and leadership over the islanders and not allow themselves to 'sit by and be led',⁶² and to keep accurate and detailed records of every activity. Some mission leaders would stress aggressiveness in missionary labours, others humility. At the priesthood meeting, pivot of missionary life, appointments to new areas within the mission would be assigned, promotions to branch or district supervision made, temporal tasks allocated and doctrinal duties outlined.

Like the problems faced and the nature of the instructions given, the proselytizing missionary's methods of approach changed little during the entire period. The chief means employed by the missionary to convey his message to the unconverted were, and still are, the public meeting, the 'gospel conversation', and the 'cottage meeting'. The first is self-explanatory, the second and third perhaps require some explanation and were more often employed in districts or villages where whole-sale allegiance to another denomination and consequent village rules made the public meeting difficult or, at times, impossible.

The gospel conversation was used at every opportunity, at every encounter with a stranger, no matter

61 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 17 Mar. 1904.

62 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18,
24 Dec. 1915.

how casual or accidental. In its simplest form it was an attempt by the missionary to arouse interest in Latter-day Saints doctrine by broaching the subject through any means possible. Casual greetings or exchanges would be quickly turned to a doctrinal topic, usually a very fundamental and uncontroversial one, for missionaries were supposed to give their hearers the 'milk' before feeding them the 'meat'.⁶³ The success of this practice depended, of course, very much on the ability of the missionary to overcome the frequent indifference or occasional reluctance of his hearer, and then to maintain his interest. Whether or not the attempt proved futile, the missionary could use the opportunity in most cases to deliver his own testimony. The hospitality of islanders generally allowed for easy access to village homes and was taken advantage of.

Reported a missionary from Ha'apai, Tonga, in 1893: 'We do not as a rule hold many [public] meetings, but we enter their houses to rest a while, where a crowd gathers about us and we then have the privilege of explaining the principles of the Gospel to them.'⁶⁴ Fortuitous opportunities were quickly grasped. On a walking tour of Tahiti, two used the occasion of a sudden storm to rush into a villager's hut, sit down uninvited and launch into a gospel talk.⁶⁵ An invitation from villagers to passing missionaries to take food would also be turned to the same account, and, hardly surprisingly, bring about a sometimes hostile reaction. If no such invitations were forthcoming, missionaries would

63 e.g., Tuasivi Branch Record 1903-09, 8 July 1906.

64 Tongan Mission Manuscript History, 14 Nov. 1893.

65 Chamberlin Journal, 29 Oct. 1897.

use the pretext of asking for directions or refreshment to open the conversation, or perhaps dispense with such circuitous preliminaries entirely. Missionaries recorded the number of gospel conversations held during a given period and these were often included in the annual mission reports. An indication of their frequency as a proselytizing method is given in the statistical report of the Samoan mission for 1897, when 1,847 were reported. The same report also suggests that the missionary did not always wait for an invitation from a villager to convey his message. The number of 'strangers houses visited' was 1,142, but 'by invitations' only 151.⁶⁶

While the subject matter of the gospel conversation was essentially uncontroversial, it might easily take a provocative turn, depending on the religious affiliation of the hearer and his willingness to attempt a defence of his own doctrinal position. Thus an encounter with a Catholic or Protestant could turn almost immediately to a subject such as the Latter-day Saints method of baptism by immersion, the 'great apostasy' of the established Christian churches, the 'truth' of the Book of Mormon, or the 'inaccuracy' of sections of the authorized version of the Bible; while Mormon missionary and Tanito might soon be debating their respective stands on polygamy, or succession to the church presidency and prophethood. In all cases the missionary would prove - at least to his own satisfaction - the correctness of his position from Bible or L.D.S. scripture.

66 In Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896-1900.

Although it continued to be used throughout the history of the missions, the informality and spontaneity of the gospel conversation gave way to a great extent to the more systematic house-to-house canvass in which the missionary was usually armed with tracts. The practice of 'tracting' was always regarded as a necessary part of L.D.S. proselytizing and was widely employed in missions in English-speaking and European countries. Until relatively late in the history of the Polynesian missions, however, tracts in islands languages were not always readily obtainable. Few missionaries remained long enough in the islands to acquire the degree of fluency in language necessary for accurate translation of doctrinal literature, and at least in the initial stages, dissemination of L.D.S. doctrine was hampered also by the lack of printing or copying facilities in the islands missions. If a missionary did show any aptitude for translation, his talents would be used in this direction and often largely as a result of his own initiative rather than as a result of church policy or mission direction. Brigham Smoot, one of the first appointees to Tonga in 1891, produced the manuscript of a tract entitled the Kingdom of Heaven in September the following year and took it back to Salt Lake City soon after for printing.⁶⁷ In 1893 missionaries in Tonga were also said to have had Tongan tracts,⁶⁸ but their subject matter and means of production is not known.

Of the South Seas missions, however, the mission in French Oceania seems to have been best served with tracts

⁶⁷ Ermel J. Morton, Brief History of the Tongan Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 5.

and missionary literature for many years; probably as an outcome of the historical importance of the mission together with the fact that Mormon and Tanito rivalry was strongest here. In 1894 Joseph Damron translated into Tahitian the thirteen Articles of Faith, the basic statement of L.D.S. doctrine, and the first attempt at rendering L.D.S. doctrine into Tahitian.⁶⁹ Three years later, the Society Islands Mission Association was formed with returned missionaries Frank Cutler and Thomas L. Woodbury as president and secretary/treasurer respectively. Two of its three main objectives were 'the translating, writing and printing in the Tahitian language of tracts and books explaining the principles of the Gospel', and the raising of means to assist in the printing of the same and defraying the expenses of the association.⁷⁰ In 1903 the association provided the mission in Tahiti with a small printing press for the production of tracts.⁷¹ In Tahiti, also, both Mormon and Tanito had mission newspapers, called respectively Te Heheuraa Api (The New Revelation) and Te Orometua (The Teacher or Missionary), which contained scriptural lessons as well as items of mission and sometimes general interest. Like the tracts these were regarded as proselytizing tools and were widely circulated and popular throughout the mission, providing Tahitians with an addition to the limited amount of literature in their own language, though unlike tracts they were sold on a subscription

69 Damron Journal, 18 Sept. 1894.

70 Tahitian Mission Manuscript History, 1 June 1897.

71 Cutler to Edward S. Hall, 22 Nov. 1903, Society Islands Mission Letters.

and not given gratis.

When a missionary did write a tract or translate an existing one, the choice of subject matter generally depended either on the point of doctrine with which he was most familiar or on what he regarded as appropriate to a particular circumstance. L.M.S. domination of the Cook islands caused elders Mervyn Davis and Osborne Widstoe to produce a tract on 'Apostasy and Restoration of the Gospel',⁷² and Eli Cropper attempted one on that subject in Marquesan as a result of Catholic predominance in those islands.⁷³ To enliven the testimonies of Tahitian office holders a brief history of Joseph Smith was rendered into Tahitian in 1925,⁷⁴ while Bible Answers to Modern Questions by Mormon apostle and apologist John Widstoe was translated into Samoan in 1933 since it was thought to be a 'very suitable tract for the natives as they find easily the evidence from the bible to prove the statements in the tract'.⁷⁵ Mormon and Tanito in Tahiti both produced versions of the foundation of the Latter-day Saints church and its history after Joseph Smith's death, each with its own distinct emphasis. With the growth of the South Seas missions the use of tracts as proselytizing tools became more frequent, although the widespread and systematic rendering into Polynesian languages of every tract of any

72 Davis, Report Aug.1898-Apr.1900, in Tahitian Mission Letters.

73 Tahitian Mission Historical Record 1900-30, 16 May 1900.

74 Tahitian Mission Quarterly Reports, May 1925.

75 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, June 1933.

value whatever had to await the aggressive L.D.S. missionary drive of the years following World War II, and was greatly assisted by the formation of 'translation units' and committees of Polynesian saints which relieved the missionary of the onerous task of translation.

The gospel conversation and the house-to-house canvass, then, were used by the missionary to introduce his wares and secure his 'contacts'. The analogy with sales techniques is both obvious and appropriate. Indeed the idea of the church as a corporation in which the missionaries were salesmen of the gospel is one which L.D.S. missionaries were and are happy to admit. They were reminded of this association in the field. Thus Sister Smith, wife of Samoan mission president Willard Smith, addressed a group on Upolu on the subject 'Comparing the church to a company with Jesus Christ as the President'.⁷⁶ This aspect of the missionary effort was stressed even more strongly during the post-war missionary drive. A widely read and influential manual for missionaries was entitled Some Suggestions for Latter-day Saint Missionaries From the Field of Successful Commercial Salesmanship. Published initially mainly for the benefit of missionaries 'in the foreign service', it had, by 1963, run into six editions. Apart from an introduction by its publisher, it contains no doctrinal or scriptural references, but devotes its pages to the cultivation of attributes associated with sales techniques; sincerity, influence, persistence and opportunism, for 'The salesman's job is to produce in the customer CONFIDENCE, DESIRE, and the ENTHUSIASTIC FEELING

⁷⁶ Upolu District Record 1930-39, 17 July 1933.

of ownership of the thing you are offering. The effect is produced at the will of the salesman and CONTROLLED by his EMOTIONAL FEELING.'⁷⁷ The handbook received the ready endorsement of Mormon apostle Le Grand Richards, 'The suggestions...', wrote Richards in a foreword, 'are certainly based on the fundamentals of good salesmanship and no one needs that qualification more than a Mormon Elder.'⁷⁸

Having secured a contact, prospect or 'investigator', the gospel salesman would attempt to stimulate further interest by means of a cottage meeting in which the prospect would learn more of the product and, it was hoped, encourage others curious to hear to attend. A cottage meeting, therefore, might be held with a single individual or family, but preferably with a group. The nature of material presented would depend on the degree of interest and curiosity shown by those in attendance. Missionaries were encouraged to use any means to obtain the attention of their hearers; by the exhibition of diagrams or charts, pictures or lantern slides, later by motion pictures where they could be used. Scriptural material would of course take precedence, but such meetings need not be devoted exclusively to it. In Samoa in 1899 William Sears used a newly acquired 'Graphophone' to gain the attention of 'twenty five or thirty big chiefs' and wrote that its reception augured well for the mission: 'Thus the Lord opens up the way for us to do some good among the kings & lawmakers.'⁷⁹

77 M. Robertson, Some Suggestions..., 60, emphasis in original

78 Ibid. Richards' foreword appears on the dust-jacket.

79 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896-1900, 23 May 1899.

Views of Utah and church buildings and monuments in Salt Lake City would often be exhibited by Mormon missionaries; their equivalent in Independence, Missouri by missionaries of the Reorganized Church. Pictures of American Indians were frequently displayed by both factions. The use of Mormon relics is also recorded. Andrew Jenson, who combined the duties of church chronicler with those of proselytizing missionary, had quite a collection. Wrote a fellow missionary in Samoa:

He has a stone from the immediate vicinity of Adam's altar, a stone from the hill Cumorah, a rock of the same quality as in the Salt Lake Temple, another from the Nauvoo Temple, and also a piece of wood from the house in which the Church was organized April 6, 1830. These he exhibits...wherever meeting is held.⁸⁰

As in the gospel conversation, little doctrinal material that was profound or provocative would be introduced at a cottage meeting. Subjects such as the plurality of gods or wives, vicarious baptism and salvation for the dead, the three-tiered structure of heaven, and the obligatory tithe of church members would be avoided as far as possible. Charts or diagrams might accompany an explanation of the structure of the church and the way in which it resembled the primitive church of Christ, thereby differing from other Christian churches. Lantern slides might illustrate an incident from the Book of Mormon, or the visions of Joseph Smith and the miraculous 'coming forth' of the book. The presentation would be informal and, at times, even impromptu.

⁸⁰ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 22 Sept. 1895.

Though not as often used as the foregoing methods because of its comparatively unwieldy nature, a fourth type of proselytizing technique also deserves mention. This was the tour of a district or island by a group of missionaries and saints, primarily to arouse interest in areas which had not been over-exposed to the L.D.S. message. Called malaga or taamilosaga in Samoa where it was most frequently used,⁸¹ its practice there began at least as early as 1900. The Mormon malaga might continue for a few days or a few weeks, depending on the extent of the area to be visited and the reception accorded the group. Besides missionaries and adult saints, the party included children from L.D.S. mission schools and a contingent from the mission or school band. The emphasis was essentially on winning favour and dispelling preconceptions about Mormon missionary work through a programme devoted largely to entertainment and social activity. Commented one elder after a successful malaga around Savai'i island early in 1904:

Much prejudice is driven away - Our efforts are brought before the people.... They tell us their houses are open to receive us in the future, and this all comes thru thir seeing our desire to help the children, and make good men and women out of them.⁸²

For the benefit of later missionaries he advised strict planning for the tour, which should be led by a 'good strong

81 The malaga was a Samoan custom, rather than a Mormon innovation. But it was turned to good effect by the Mormons.

82 Tuasivi Branch Record 1903-09, 13 Feb. 1904.

minded, determined fatherly Elder.... One who will see that everything and everybody is kept perfectly in order', and insisted on a good programme of entertainment with 'everything short and spicy.'⁸³ The mission malaga was most popular in the 1930s, when its purpose and presentation were the same as they had been at the beginning of the century. The method used on a tour of Upolu in 1932, the object of which was 'to preach the Gospel and cause a feeling of good Fellowship & Brotherly Love toward all men', was described in some detail by the missionary in charge of proceedings:

The program of the malaga was as follows: Arrive in the village where we expected to stay overnight, just as early as possible, not later than 10 A.M. unless a messenger had been sent ahead.... The boys played ball while the girls made preparation for the fia-fia [entertainment] at night, as soon as the evening meal was over we would call the village together by a selection from the band and then a meeting was held for usually one hour. We carried with us a diagram which showed the spirit world in the beginning, this life, and Life after Death. A good explanation of the diagram was given following which tracts were distributed 'O le Olataga' or 'The Plan of Salvation'. It was something new for the people generally and was received gladly by a large majority...in every village we visited. Following the meeting we presented an hour and a half to two hour program, 'Fia fia', which was presented by students of the Sauniatu school and was a very good means of drawing large crowds.⁸⁴

The programme on other nights might include also a brief play or pageant depicting an incident from Mormon

83 Ibid., emphasis in original.

84 Upolu District Record 1930-39, 30 May 1932.

scripture or history, and in the latter case usually dwelling on the persecution suffered by the faithful in the U.S.A. or by missionaries in the islands, and the way in which it was overcome by the light of truth and the spread of good fellowship. The malaga was a successful friend and fund raising technique, even allowing access to several villages whose regulations normally prohibited the presence of Mormon missionaries, and a musical aggregation was always a good draw card; indeed, was regarded in some mission districts as the major one. Tongan mission president Mark Coombs described the mission's band in the Vava'u district as 'the main attraction that the Church offered to the young men of Tonga.'⁸⁵

The L.D.S. missionary, then, was primarily an itinerant evangelist, and whether seeking gospel conversations, engaging in a house-to-house canvass, or leading or accompanying an island tour of entertainment he was at all times seeking to arouse interest in his gospel, leading to 'investigation', conversion and baptism. For the greater part of the period under study, missionaries required little more evidence of conversion than a subject's request for baptism and his testimony to the truth of the L.D.S. gospel. It was hoped that he would also observe the tenets of the Word of Wisdom and forgo the use of tobacco, alcohol and narcotic beverages (tea and coffee), but baptism was not conditional on total abstention, although priesthood office might be withheld from the habitual smoker or drinker. Certainly a depth of understanding of, or familiarity with, L.D.S. doctrine was

⁸⁵ Morton, op.cit., 17.

not a prerequisite for baptism. The subject was usually taught the 'first principles', faith, repentance and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost; the apostasy of the Christian church and its restoration through the prophet Joseph Smith, and the 'coming forth' of the Book of Mormon. But a methodical teaching plan consisting of a number of illustrated lessons which might also include the Mormon concept of the Godhead and the 'three degrees of [spiritual] glory' did not come into universal use by missionaries until the 1950s.

Though the missionary was essentially peripatetic, in villages where his message succeeded and converts were gained, a branch of the church would be formed and he would take up duties as resident preacher, presiding at services, meetings and the Sunday schools which were held for both adults and children. The topics selected for preaching to the converted depended largely on the missionary's facility with the language and the extent of his grasp on his own doctrine, but certain subjects recurred regularly. Apart from the basic subjects chosen for introductory lessons, and reiterated at church meetings, those most often employed were: the tripartite Godhead; the anthropomorphism of the deity ('God a man of body, parts and passions');⁸⁶ the second coming of Christ, which sometimes included reference to the saviour's post-resurrection appearance on the American continent; the pre-existence of spirits; the similarity between L.D.S. church organization and the

⁸⁶ A particular favourite of some missionaries. See, for example, Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 1 Aug. 1920.

structure of the primitive church; salvation for the dead; the importance of temple-building; the 'Gospel without price' or 'preaching without hire'; the significance of celestial marriage (or marriage for 'time and eternity'); the 'scattering and gathering of Israel', including reference to the Polynesians' relationship to Book of Mormon peoples; and the law of tithing.

The last topic was frequently given precedence at church meetings and mission conferences, for the Mormon prophet's revelations had given obligatory financial contributions the status of moral law, and a member's failure to give to the church a regular 'tenth of his increase' was considered an indication of the shallowness of his faith. 'The law of tithing', stated an L.D.S. tract, 'is the epitome of the Gospel.... It is a measurement of true religion. By the extent of its observance every man may determine for himself the vitality of his own faith and love of God.'⁸⁷ From the time of their arrival in the islands, missionaries stressed repeatedly to members the significance of tithe-paying, though some at least were aware of the difficulties of enforcing the law in countries without a cash economy. Wrote Joseph Dean a few weeks after his arrival in Samoa in 1888: 'While I anticipate a rich harvest of souls, the money harvest will be infinitesimal for some time to come at least. The natives have little or no money, and very little use for it if they had it.'⁸⁸ Eleven years later, one of Dean's

⁸⁷ S.L. Richards, The Law of Tithing.

⁸⁸ Dean to First Presidency, 7 Aug. 1888, Dean Papers.

successors to the mission presidency was equally concerned about the problem but somewhat more optimistic about its solution:

Our Saints here labor under disadvantages that other countries do not. Money is almost out of the question...but they are willing to give any kind of produce that they raise, the trouble here is, however, that we can not convert these kinds of produce into cash.... This branch of the tree of Israel thoroughly believe in the law of tithing and are willing to pay what they have, and when a market is created to cash their produce we will make a good showing.⁸⁹

In those areas where local products were readily convertible to cash, good showings were indeed made. In 1900 it took Israel Willey but a brief time on Hikueru in the Tuamotus - an atoll rich in pearl shell - to collect \$(Chile)1,275 in contributions, over and above a substantial but unspecified amount of tithing.⁹⁰ Yet even such usually productive areas were subject to seasonal influences and periods of hardship which made observance of the tithing law difficult for local saints. 'Their earthly possessions were swept from them', wrote William Seegmiller, belatedly reporting the effect of a hurricane in the Tuamotus which almost completely destroyed Hikueru, 'so it is very little we can expect financially from our people.'⁹¹

89 Wood to Presiding Bishopric, 18 Jan. 1899, Samoan Mission Letters.

90 Tahitian Mission Historical Record 1900-30, 30 Mar. 1900.

91 Seegmiller to Joseph F. Smith, 30 Apr. 1909, Tahitian Mission Letters.

Doubtless the difficulty of enforcing the law among Polynesian saints contributed to the subject's perennial importance. But if missionaries expounded it at village church meetings, it was even more vigorously expressed at mission and district conferences, where the same theme might be taken up by several missionaries on the same or successive days. At a Samoan mission conference in October 1902, elders Merrill and Magleby both addressed the congregation on the necessity of preaching the law of tithing 'with force', the latter declaring that missionaries should set the example by tithing their own funds.⁹² The point was well taken: the following day a Samoan elder preached on tithing as an 'important factor in the Kingdom of God', and the day after two more repeated the theme with little variation.⁹³ Tithing 'drives' in the wake of the enthusiasm generated by preaching at mission conferences were not uncommon. Following a 'waking-up meeting' for missionaries held in July 1923, Samoan mission president John Q. Adams reported that both baptisms and tithes 'took a big jump'.⁹⁴ At a conference in Pago Pago in May 1927 Willard Smith announced: 'This is a day of Tithing and Samoa needs the blessings from the same', though he admitted a recent 'marked improvement' in payments.⁹⁵ A tithing 'drive' followed soon after, and by July Smith could report that it had been effective on both Tutuila and Upolu: 'The fruits of the labors of

92 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 4 Oct. 1902.

93 Ibid., 5, 6 Oct. 1902.

94 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 20 July 1923.

95 Ibid., 13 May 1927.

those who went around...are evident.'⁹⁶ The greater the contribution, the greater the likelihood of redemption and glory. Thus Mark Coombs advised the Tongan saints at a conference in Nuku'alofa in September 1923 'that they should acquire means and wealth for it will take much wealth to save themselves and redeem Zion.'⁹⁷ The blessings which would accrue from obedience to the law were constantly restated by the missionaries, for it was above all a matter of scripture, hallowed by biblical tradition and reinforced by Mormon revelation; the most persistently taught of all L.D.S. doctrines.

Apart from his itinerant proselytizing and his temporary service as village pastor, the missionary had other opportunities to exercise the authority of his priesthood: there were children to bless, marriages to solemnize, funerals to conduct, the ill and infirm to cure by the laying on of hands. Instances of the application of simple medicines or purgatives, notably castor oil or epsom salts, are recorded, but very few missionaries actually carried supplies of even these basic remedies. Venus Rossiter described her husband Ernest as carrying a 'small sized drug store' around Hikueru in 1917, while every few days he would lance swollen gums and boils and extract teeth,⁹⁸ but Rossiter was evidently a very rare exception, and by the 1940s, when he returned to serve as mission president he had seemingly forgotten his early experiences or chosen to ignore them, for he later reported to a

⁹⁶ Ibid., 15 July 1927.

⁹⁷ Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 9 Sept. 1923.

⁹⁸ Deseret News, 7 May 1917.

church conference in Salt Lake City: 'They [the islanders] have no need for doctors. They have the missionaries and the priesthood. If any of them become ill their faith is so strong that through the power of the Lord many of them are healed from various and divers illnesses.'⁹⁹

'Administration', consisting of anointing with consecrated olive oil, followed by the laying on of hands, was an essential part of the missionary's stock-in-trade and the usual way of dealing with illness, injury or infirmity, regardless of its nature: smallpox, dysentery, filariasis, influenza, menstrual disorders and venereal disease were all treated in the same manner, very often with regrettable results. Missionaries in Hawaii administered to victims of the smallpox epidemic in 1853 only to have several die.¹⁰⁰ One of the missionaries wrote that it was a measure of the faith of Hawaiian Mormons that after receiving their compulsory vaccination they would 'pick thare arm and then suck it with thare mouth to git the mater out', preferring to rely on the missionary's administration.¹⁰¹ Heber Sheffield on Takaroa attempted to cure by administration a baby haemorrhaging from its navel; the child died that night.¹⁰² Some missionaries at least were less than fully convinced of their powers in this regard. Wrote one from

⁹⁹ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Report of 119th Annual Conference, Apr. 1949, 113-14.

¹⁰⁰ Farrar Journal, 1 July 1853.

¹⁰¹ Green Journal, 13 June 1853.

¹⁰² Sheffield Journal, 16 July 1901.

Bora-Bora in 1900:

I have taught them in several cases the laying on of hands but in no instances have they asked for the ordinance.... I confess my faith in the ordinance is not very great. Bro. Hatch and I tried it once with one of Tea's children but the child died. The other elders before did the same the child dying in every instance.... So you see it is hard for us to impress the natives that signs are following the believer in these days.¹⁰³

But an example of the fortunate position of the faith-healer, who can always expect the result of his efforts to be commensurate to the faith of his subject, is given by Abinadi Olsen who recorded an encounter near Safotu on Savai'i in 1896.

...one place we were asked to come in and see a very sick child to us it seemed she was very near death they asked us for medison we infromed them we had none. But that we were blessed with the Holy Priesthood as was the Savior in his day and if they had faith we would preform the Ordinance. I then red to them from James 5 Ch ver 14-15 and then preceeded. As soon as we were through we again faced the west feeling shure that the little sufferer would be relived eather in death or life.¹⁰⁴

Olsen's reponse to the frequent requests by islanders for medicinal aid was the common one. 'I told them we never kept medicine',¹⁰⁵ wrote William Moody, after two chiefs of Savai'i had requested it, and William Sears

103 Hanson and Earl to J.Y. Haight, 10 Jan. 1900, Tahitian Mission Letters.

104 Olsen Journal, 18 Mar. 1896.

105 Moody Journal, 7 Apr. 1896.

responded similarly to a request from the parents of a sick child at Vaialele, offering an explanation of the Mormons' belief in consecrated oil and a prayer if they required it. 'They are Catholics and gave us an evasive answer', he later wrote.¹⁰⁶ Sears himself, on an earlier occasion, had to obtain an eye lotion for his own use from the Seventh Day Adventists, who evidently had a more realistic approach to the treatment of ailments,¹⁰⁷ as did the Catholics, from whom William Seegmiller on Tahiti had to obtain dressing for a Tahitian saint's injured finger.¹⁰⁸

Unable to provide medical aid themselves, missionaries sometimes also actively dissuaded native saints from seeking it elsewhere, upbraiding them for lack of faith and shaming them into believing they had done wrong by even considering such an alternative. Although earlier in his mission George Spillsbury was given to doubting his success at administration,¹⁰⁹ he later performed several, recording only one failure - a Samoan infant who died soon after.¹¹⁰ By his third year in Samoa he was more confident of his powers and refused to allow the parents of a sick child to seek medical assistance.¹¹¹

106 Sears Journal, 13 Mar. 1900.

107 Ibid., 13 Aug. 1899.

108 Seegmiller Journal, 27 Nov. 1909.

109 Spillsbury Journal, 6, 26 Dec. 1897.

110 Ibid., 3 Sept. 1900.

111 Ibid., 2 Dec. 1900.

At Lalovi on Upolu, one missionary roundly scolded a couple for sending one of their children who was suffering from 'diarea' to a doctor, while expecting him to administer to another who had nothing more serious than 'a sore or stiff neck'. 'They showed that they had no faith by sending the baby, who is very sick, to the doctor, while the girl who is only a little sick they wanted the Elder to administer to it.' His point was made. The rebuked couple 'agreed that they had done wrong...[but] said that it was hard to get the Elders nowadays to administer to them, while years ago the Elders would administer...for every little thing.'¹¹²

Missionaries also administered to each other and to the children and wives of missionaries, for both physical illnesses and mental disorders, often displaying great reluctance to seek qualified medical help even when it was conveniently available. The wife of William Moody was almost continually ill from the time of their arrival in Samoa in November 1894 with various ailments, including dengue, dysentery and complications arising from pregnancy, but it was not until the following May that Moody began to feel 'a little weak in the faith' after constant administrations had failed and, having consulted his fellow missionaries, concluded to get a doctor, for he knew that 'something must be done'.¹¹³ His belated decision may have cost him the life of his young wife - she died a fortnight later.¹¹⁴

112 Manono-Lalovi Branch Record 1898-1903, 22 July 1903.

113 Moody Journal, 10 May 1895.

114 Ibid., 24 May 1895.

Thomas L. Woodbury, president of the Tahitian mission in 1938, suffered an attack of embolism and was administered to by 'about fourteen of the Brethren'. Three weeks later he 'was not improved any', but there is no mention of medical assistance being sought in the interim.¹¹⁵ Examples of exorcism by the power of the priesthood were reported, though not as frequently as administration for illness. In 1957 on Aitutaki in the Cook islands, three missionaries made repeated attempts to exorcise a fourth who was suffering, in the wake of recent sickness, hallucinations which ranged from 'fantasy pictures like Walt Disney produces' to 'stomach turning sufferings of people and animals'. Their efforts were unsuccessful, and the afflicted missionary was finally obliged to perform the administration upon himself, writing later that, 'although delirious, he was aware that he had been temporarily possessed by evil spirits.'¹¹⁶

Success in administration was attributed to the power of the priesthood; failure to the will of the Lord, but reported examples of failure were far exceeded by reports of success, many of them extravagant. Matthew Cowley, 'Apostle of the Pacific', claimed that administrations and blessings which he had personally conferred were responsible for; the birth of children to hitherto childless couples in Tonga and Samoa; the curing of elephantiasis, and the giving of sight to a child born blind.¹¹⁷

115 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52, 6-26 Jan. 1938.

116 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, June 1957.

117 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Report of 119th Semi-Annual Conference, Oct. 1948, 157-8.

Always a major part of L.D.S. missionary endeavour, administrations were recorded, at the request of the First Presidency, under the head 'Manifestations of the Power of the Lord'.

The greater majority of L.D.S. missionaries in Polynesia performed their tasks as diligently and efficiently as their talents allowed. The limited education and abilities of many missionaries, however, especially in the early decades of the missions, was often a source of concern and sometimes despair to mission presidents whose ambitions to see the work succeed frequently exceeded the resources at their disposal. The energetic Joseph Dean hoped to obtain the services of missionaries 'full of faith' and 'exceptionally intelligent' while acknowledging that missionary service was sometimes used as a reformatory method for Zion's recalcitrant children. 'I know our rough, wild don't-know-any-thing-but-develtry boys often make our brightest men', he wrote in 1889, 'but we would rather take our chances with boys from the other crowd.'¹¹⁸ He received little joy from the arrival of three who came to Samoa soon after. 'I am somewhat disappointed in the new missionaries', he confided to his journal. 'They have little or no education. Have never read the scriptures and know next to nothing of the Gospel.' One in particular he found to be 'a stupid ignorant fellow'.¹¹⁹ The uncouth appearance of some all too easily betrayed their background and was perhaps a silent commentary on their reasons for

¹¹⁸ Dean to First Presidency, 29 Dec. 1889, Dean Papers.

¹¹⁹ Dean Journal, 26 Apr., 17 June 1890.

being in the mission field at all. Commented William Sears, after meeting in Samoa a contingent of six bound for New Zealand: 'They were a "seedy" looking lot.... No wonder the world think we are degraded, most of these six from Utah presented a dirty appearance - they must be rough diamonds, if indeed they shine.'¹²⁰

The church authorities' apparent lack of concern with the quality of the missionaries sent to the islands was a source of frustration for mission leaders. In 1911 Tahitian mission president William Seegmiller was faced with a request for release from a missionary who had been in the field only one month. 'He is 37', wrote a dismayed Seegmiller,

and in about the 3rd grade. He told me he knew positively he could not stay...I can't understand how they at headquarters can't grasp our situation a little better. This kind of business knocks us all out.¹²¹

Joseph Dean's complaint that his missionaries knew regrettably little of their church's doctrine was one echoed by successive mission leaders during the early years of the missions, especially in Samoa, which seemed to receive rather more than its share of inept recruits. 'Please allow me to say', wrote William Sears apprehensively, 'that we are getting a number of inexperienced young men who only begun to study the Gospel on their arrival here...'¹²² and William Moody felt that the elders in his charge 'do not have the spirit of teaching the gospel'. He would

¹²⁰ Sears Journal, 19 Sept. 1900.

¹²¹ Seegmiller Journal, 19 Mar. 1911.

¹²² Sears to H.G. Reynolds, 14 June 1900, Sears Papers.

often 'almost boil over with desire to see [them] wake up from their lethargy and do the work with a vim....'¹²³ Problems such as this were created by the presence of missionaries who, by their own admission, found it 'very hard to get interested in religious matters' as did Parley Allred;¹²⁴ or who seemed to have absolutely no taste for any duty assigned them, like Thomas Ogden, who performed most of his tasks only with great reluctance, writing after he had managed to avoid delivering a funeral sermon: '...so i got out of that and them was just the kind of snaps I was hunting those days.'¹²⁵ Yet both Ogden and Allred served three year terms, and were considered to have performed successful missions, as were others who, if not quite as diffident, were no more efficient.

The years 1916-17 were especially unfortunate for the South Seas missions and during this period missionaries were often accused by mission leaders of indolence or dereliction. It was Ernest Rossiter's frequent complaint that the elders of the Tahitian mission headquarters were 'idleing away their time' by rising late, sleeping during the day, lounging about after meals and assembling in each others rooms to talk. He found it embarrassing to have to remind them continually not to waste time.¹²⁶ From Tonga Willard Smith reported: 'The mission is in a bad shape as

123 Moody Journal, 9 Feb. 1909.

124 Allred to J.Y. Haight, 3 Oct. 1899, Tahitian Mission Letters.

125 Ogden Journal, 17 Feb. 1899.

126 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18, 25 Jan. 1916.

the elders are quarreling among themselves and none are doing much'.¹²⁷ In Samoa newly appointed mission president Ernest Wright found little to please him on his arrival, and over the next two years was obliged to reprimand several elders and release others for various offences, including 'loafing in Pago Pago', incurring debts;¹²⁸ making trouble among the elders and the saints; associating too freely with women, and general neglect of duties.¹²⁹ Of one he wrote: 'He has been here 14 months and has never done a thing, but in some cases his actions done harm, so he may as well be home as he wont do any thing here.'¹³⁰ Of another, who had filled the position of mission secretary prior to having being sent 'for his own good' to Savai'i, Wright complained that he 'had done nothing and...had made a wreck of the books.'¹³¹

While such incidents were a revealing commentary on the quality of many missionaries who served in Polynesia they also revealed something of the inadequacies of the L.D.S. missionary system itself. The zealous amateurism that characterized Jacksonian social and political thinking at the time of Mormonism's birth, and assumed that any man could accept the responsibilities and develop the talents for any task thrust upon him, influenced the thinking of

127 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 28 Feb. 1916.

128 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 24 Mar. 1916.

129 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 22 Feb. 1917.

130 Ibid., 1 Aug. 1916.

131 Ibid., 18 July 1916.

early Mormon leaders and permanently affected the church's most outstanding feature - its world-wide mission programme. The concept was strengthened by the evidence from Mormonism's own frontier and pioneering experience. Zion had been carved from the wilderness by men who in most cases had nothing more than their zeal and their faith, and what was good for Zion would be good for all - Zion's sons would show the way. As a result, the early preparation for mission service came from the missionary's attendance at church meetings and Sunday schools and the familiarity he was assumed to have with the doctrinal works and other publications of his church. Nor had he need of more, for the simple truths of the Mormon position and the inherent logic of its argument were bound to win converts.

But if the missionary was without training before his arrival in the field, he was often also without direction during his term of service. Despite the frequent priesthood meetings and mission conferences, many elders simply did not know what to do with themselves or how best to use their time, a situation which reflected upon the initiative of mission presidents as well as that of the missionaries. Especially as the missions grew, acquired property and added secular education to their activities, did the inadequacy of their human resources become a problem. By the 1910s the new missionary might find that, in addition to his proselytizing duties, he was called upon to teach in a village school, oversee a mission plantation and care for its livestock, and perform a variety of other tasks including carpentry and manual labour. Since the young missionary's term of service was regarded in part as a preparation for manhood, the more optimistic mission leaders refused to admit that anything but beneficial results could

come from the diversity of tasks. As early as 1908 William Moody had observed that the variety of duties which awaited him made the islands 'one of the best places for an Elder to go on a mission',¹³² and John Q. Adams claimed in 1921 that the combination of manual labour, itinerant evangelizing and plantation work made the islands a proving ground for young Mormons: '...it all rounds out a MAN, and equips him head, heart and hand for life. We do not fear as to our island Elders when they return, as they are SOLID.'¹³³ Ernest Rossiter impressed upon his elders in Tahiti the opportunity they had of 'developing themselves to be leaders in spiritual political and business affairs' as a result of the responsibilities placed upon them in that mission.¹³⁴

But the actualities of the situation frequently obliged mission leaders to request the appointment of elders (and sometimes missionary sisters) with specific talents, those that could be applied to aspects of mission school teaching or the mundanities of chapel and house construction and plantation management, since the latter duties especially infringed on the missionary's real function as a minister of the gospel. Missionary sisters were occasionally required to teach music, singing or needlework in the mission schools but it was essential that they be

132 Mapusanga Branch Record 1907-10, 31 Aug. 1908.

133 Adams to J.F. Wells, 25 Sept. 1921, Samoan Mission Letters, emphasis in original.

134 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18, 5 June 1915.

married. 'Unmarried sisters', wrote Mark Coombs from Tonga, 'would never do here.'¹³⁵ Too often, however, the church's attitudes to missionary appointments were at odds with the real needs of the missions. When Coombs, himself a school teacher, showed a concern for the quality of teaching in the Tongan mission schools and requested the appointment of trained teachers, he received little encouragement from church authorities who replied: 'We find it difficult to get brethren who have had normal training - or school teachers, as we advise our Bishops not to recommend those who are teaching school to go on missions.'¹³⁶ They promised, however, to secure the services of 'two brethren with a good education'. The response to Coombs' request for a carpenter was no more encouraging: '...our brethren usually resent being called on missions to do manual work. They feel that when they receive a call...they should preach the Gospel and not go as a carpenter.'¹³⁷ But the pressing needs of the missions continued to be inconsistent with church policy, and as late as 1952 construction and labouring were still being carried on by missionaries on the direction of mission presidents and against the wishes of church authorities.¹³⁸ Soon after, the church implemented a 'labour missionary'

135 Coombs to H.G. Reynolds, 31 May 1921, Tongan Mission Letters.

136 First Presidency to Coombs, 4 Jan. 1921, Tongan Mission Letters.

137 Ibid.

138 First Presidency to D'Monte Coombs, 7 Nov. 1952, Tongan Mission Letters.

scheme that enlisted the services of qualified tradesmen, aided by contingents of local saints, on mission building and development projects, thereby relieving regularly ordained missionaries of their more onerous temporal duties. But it was not until 1957 that the church acknowledged the inadequacies of the mission schools by removing the responsibility of teaching from the missionaries and giving it to qualified, professional staff under the direction of the newly created Pacific Board of Education.

Although the choice of mission president was not usually dictated by quite the same uncritical process of selection as that applied to missionaries - mission leaders were generally older men with more church experience and, desirably, mission experience in the area of their appointment - it was occasionally dictated by expediency. Retiring mission presidents might have to appoint their own successor - or temporary successor - from among missionaries in the field if no suitable successor from Zion was available; and on such an occasion even the few desirable qualifications might be sacrificed to haste. Thus the First Presidency invited William Moody to choose his successor in 1910: 'Your decision need not be influenced entirely by age, length of missionary service, or ability to speak the language, or all these qualities combined....'¹³⁹ The choice sometimes resulted in antagonisms and conflict between the missionaries as personal ambitions and jealousies became more evident than a common desire to see the work succeed. In 1904 Martin Sanders of the Samoan mission complained to the First Presidency of the 'unworthy things'

¹³⁹ First Presidency to Moody, 6 May 1910, Moody Papers.

said about him by his missionaries, though he had always discussed matters of 'importance and consequence' before the more competent ones.¹⁴⁰ In September 1906 five elders of the Tahitian mission requested the release of mission president Edward S. Hall, 'and the appointment of an older, a humble, an experienced man to preside over the local affairs, one who understands missionary work and can give us instructions.'¹⁴¹

The following month another letter again accused Hall of incompetence, creating confusion among the missionaries by his inability to give adequate guidance, and inhibiting the mission's progress. 'We are making no converts', wrote the same signatories, 'President Hall has not the confidence of the elders.'¹⁴² In November Hall responded by accusing his critics:

I thot it was a right down dirty thing for them to do, as I know the reason they did it, and that is out of jealous, as two or three of them have been aspiring to become president of the mission for the past two years or more, and when my brother came down and said that I might have to remain another year or two, it was too much for them....¹⁴³

He was, he explained, well liked by the people generally for having built new mission headquarters and for doing

140 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 3 Sept. 1904, Sanders Papers.

141 Clawson, Fullmer et al to Joseph F. Smith, 27 Sept. 1906, Hall Papers.

142 Clawson, Fullmer et al to Joseph F. Smith, 16 Oct. 1906, Hall Papers.

143 Hall to First Presidency, 2 Nov. 1906, Hall Papers.

his best 'to colonize the people if I remain here', but suggested that part of the reason for his unpopularity with the missionaries was due to his having made them labour on the mission buildings so as to save expense.

...some of them did not like it and at times we have had some little troubles among our selves, but you can realize that where I have a dozen young men working hard and no pay, and some of them having been sent on a mission to reform them, that trouble is bound to crop in at times....¹⁴⁴

Although his letters indicate that Hall was far from being the most articulate or literate of mission leaders, he appears to have been conscientious and energetic, making frequent appeals to church authorities for funds to obtain property and build suitable premises in Papeete, attempting to promote 'colonization' schemes for Tahitian saints, and showing himself eager to improve the mission's public image and establish good relations with officials in Tahiti.¹⁴⁵

His claim, therefore, that criticism of his leadership was motivated by personal animosity and jealousy seems reasonable enough. Hall evidently vindicated himself, for he remained in the post until August 1907, and secured an honourable release from his labours.

On another occasion, however, an expedient appointment to the mission presidency had a far more unfortunate result. In 1932 the illness of his wife forced the withdrawal from Tonga of mission president

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Hall to First Presidency, 4 May 1905, 18 July 1906, Hall Papers.

Newell Cutler. With few outstanding elders to choose from, Cutler selected to act in his stead a young missionary who had been two years in the field and had presided for part of the time over the Vava'u district. The result of his choice was almost disastrous for the mission's future, as the acting president ignored many of his official duties in favour of nude swimming excursions with other missionaries and female saints, and thought nothing of using the mission home for parties which included smoking, drinking and fornication. When Cutler's official replacement arrived from Zion he found, in addition, that the acting president had neglected the mission records, freely lent mission funds to Tongan saints, and had contracted venereal disease, for which he had sought treatment from European doctors in Ha'apai, Vava'u and Nuku'alofa. The repercussions of the affair almost resulted in the closure of the Tongan mission, as all but one of the five American missionaries were found to have been implicated.¹⁴⁶

As the missions progressed there were fewer reasons for hasty appointments (except in cases of sudden illness) and of course a greater number of men with islands experience from which to choose. But the basic requirements for service as mission president in the islands changed very little. In 1901 Thomas Hilton of the Samoan mission suggested that qualifications for the post were:

¹⁴⁶ Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 1 Jan.-
25 Feb. 1934, passim.

A good knowledge of the language; a thorough understanding of the Gospel; sufficient pride to keep him neat in his person and dress; and the faculty to ¹⁴⁷preside in a dignified business manner.

Since the 1950s there have been but three basic requirements for a mission president: previous experience in the field of his appointment; a happy and successful family life, and a successful business career.¹⁴⁸

The first L.D.S. missionaries to Polynesia had been appointed for indefinite periods, with the result that Benjamin Grouard, for example, was in the field for eight years. But such length of service was extremely unusual. In 1900 missionaries were told that they must prepare to stay from one to five years - 'those who go to the islands of the sea'¹⁴⁹ - but very few remained for the suggested maximum. Until the late 1930s the average length of service was no more than three years; after World War II it became no more than two and a half. The shortness of the missionary's term raised concern among mission leaders about the lasting effects of their work among the islanders. One wrote that he considered the missionaries' coming and going so often to be a draw-back to the work.

The people look upon us as not being stable enough to build their faith upon, they see us come and they build their hopes and desires

147 Hilton to First Presidency, 4 Apr. 1901, Hilton Papers.

148 Tongan Mission president James Christensen, personal interview, Nuku'alofa, Sept. 1971.

149 See, for example, Olsen Journal.

upon us, and then when we are just able to do good we leave them and the spark that has been started dies out.

He proposed a term of service of five years or longer.¹⁵⁰

His complaint was echoed by William Seegmiller, who observed: 'About the time an Elder gets the language he goes home', and added that he felt the reason for the success of other missions was the willingness of their missionaries to remain permanently if necessary.¹⁵¹ But a rapid turnover of mission personnel was the rule in L.D.S. missions, where, if not stated, it was apparently assumed that force of numbers would achieve the same ends as permanency of service. Even at the level of mission presidency fast turnovers sometimes occurred; between 1934 and 1940 the Samoan mission had five different leaders.

At the end of his term of service, the missionary was given a release and returned home. Unless he was recalled subsequently as mission president it was extremely unlikely that he would return. The overwhelming majority of missionaries who served in Polynesia were considered to have performed successful missions, and obtained 'honourable' releases; although, as we have seen, this may have meant no more than that they kept out of trouble during their missions. Transgressions were relatively few, and in any case need not have resulted in immediate release if discovered, for if the offender were sufficiently penitent

¹⁵⁰ Haight to Lorenzo Snow, 26 July 1900, Haight Papers.

¹⁵¹ Seegmiller to Joseph F. Smith, 30 Apr. 1909, Tahitian Mission Letters.

he would be allowed to continue, as much out of concern for the reputation of the elder's family (and the mission) that disclosure of the offence would bring as out of humanitarian concern for the missionary himself. The habitual offender, however, or those who were guilty of more than one type of offence - drunkenness and fornication, for example - would probably receive a 'dishonourable' release, although some habitual offenders were allowed to continue if engaged in tasks that required their particular abilities. Early releases were also given in cases of ill health, mental disorder, instances of extreme financial hardship affecting the missionary or his family, and sometimes by request of the missionary if he found himself unable to adjust to local conditions. Missionaries who made no headway with the local language after a reasonable effort and period of application were transferred to English-speaking missions.

'THERE is something peculiar about a Mormon Elder', wrote Joseph Merrill from Samoa in 1901, 'you can tell him almost as far as you can see him.'¹⁵² Merrill described frequently the disorderly appearance of the L.D.S. missionary of his day, whose clothing was often dirty, torn and patched, and who was called a tramp by L.M.S. missionaries and islanders alike, though he did so not without a certain amount of defiant pride.¹⁵³ As late as 1940 Emile Dunn of the Tongan

¹⁵² Merrill Journal, 26 Dec. 1901.

¹⁵³ Ibid., e.g. 7 July 1892.

mission complained that the appearance of some of his missionaries did little to reflect the dignity of their calling, for they were termed 'cowboys' by the Tongans.¹⁵⁴ After World War II, the islands saw a new missionary, whose obligatorily clean-shaven face and neat, uniform standard of dress distinguished him markedly from the unkempt, often bearded missionary of Merrill's time or the 'cowboy' of Dunn's day, but probably reinforced his anonymity. Yet the difference was one of superficialities only. In his outlook, his abilities, the problems he faced and the methods which he applied to their solution, he had hardly changed at all.

¹⁵⁴ Dunn to Mission Secretary, 26 May 1940; Dunn to Franklin Murdoch, 16 Oct. 1940.

CHAPTER SIX

SAINTS IN PARADISE: ii. Missions and Means

IF there was little change in the quality of the missionaries throughout the period of study, there was a remarkable change in the missions, brought about by temporal growth, acquisition of property, and the projection of the church's self-image in the island communities. Just as the post-war missionaries took on an appearance of greater respectability compared with their counterparts of an earlier generation, so the missions in their outward manifestations took on the appearance of stability, permanence, even ostentation - perhaps as compensation for the impermanence of mission personnel. Although a detailed examination of every acquisition of property or extension to the missions would be pointless, something needs to be said of the concepts underlying moves to acquire property as well as the more immediate reasons which affected some schemes. Mission attitudes to property holding fall roughly into three periods: 1900-1930, when the concept of 'colonization' of islands saints was paramount and lands for this purpose were acquired; 1930-1940, when large scale colonization was seen to be unsuccessful and efforts were concentrated on simply making the lands viable; and 1945-1960, when the concept of colonization and plantation interests were completely overshadowed by a widespread and vigorous programme of building activity.

Behind all L.D.S. colonization schemes was the concept of the gathering - the call to Zion - although by the time the South Seas missions were firmly established the concept had already changed. The universality of the early call had

given way in Hawaii to parochial gathering places, first on Lanai then at Laie on Oahu. Missionaries in the South Seas, however, continued to preach the doctrine, though with increasing unsureness about its feasibility. Wrote Joseph Dean from Samoa with uncharacteristic diffidence:

I should like to be instructed...as to what policy to persue with regard to this people's gathering to Zion. Is it policy that they should do so in large numbers? Some have already expressed a desire to accompany us home when we go, and I hardly know whether to encourage them in it or not. In the United States and Europe the cry of the servants of the Lord is 'Come out of her Oh! ye my people'. Shall we raise the same cry here?

He was uncertain 'as to the expediency' of the Samoan saints gathering to Zion unless 'they can be cared for and put in the way of earning a livelihood when they get there.'¹

Dean expressed his doubts in August 1888. Early the following year Lorenzo Snow, president of the Mormon Church, received an extraordinary letter from H.J. Moors, a wealthy American trader and businessman in Samoa. Moors wrote that he had visited Salt Lake City in 1888, conversed with some prominent Mormons, and felt that he had impressed some of them with the idea 'that Samoa might become an excellent refuge for those who were being persecuted on charges of unlawful cohabitation [i.e. polygamous marriage]'. He proposed that the church buy in their entirety the German estates in Samoa, subdivide the lands and sell them to Mormons who desired to settle there. 'Of course', he assured Snow, 'an influx of well to do people would benefit every person in Samoa.' But the last part of Moors' proposal was the

¹ Dean to First Presidency, 7 Aug. 1888, Dean Papers.

most remarkable, for he envisaged not simply a number of Mormon settlers in Samoa, but a complete economic and political take-over of the country by the church. He continued:

By force of numbers by preponderance of property interests and the well known ability of your people to deal with aboriginal races you would soon obtain control of the Native Government of the Islands and could enact such laws, and regulations as would be acceptable.

Moors informed Snow that the German firm Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gessellschaft was 'in great difficulties' and would gladly sell out their interests at much less than their value. A 'very large profit could be made by the transaction', Moors claimed. He suggested that Snow visit Apia to discuss the matter further and 'study the political situation.'² In this he was to be disappointed, for the Mormon South Seas missions were not favoured by the visit of an apostle until 1921.

Moreover, nothing else seems to have come of Moors' grand design. If Snow or any other Mormon leader replied to his proposal, the reply is no longer extant. The scheme was known to Joseph Dean, for an annotation by him referring to the German firm appears on Moors' letter;³ and some months later Dean purchased land from Moors at Fagali'i near Apia.⁴ But there is no indication in Dean's correspondence with the church authorities that he supported Moors' plan. It may well be that Dean and the Mormon leaders considered the plan too rash to even acknowledge, the possible

² Moors to Lorenzo Snow, 1 Feb. 1889, Samoan Mission Letters.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dean to First Presidency, 8 Sept. 1899, Dean Papers.

expense too great, and the Samoan mission too insecure at that stage to warrant such a step. But if Moors was frustrated in his plans to turn Samoa into a Mormon colony, he does not appear to have held it against the missionaries, for he continued to court them for some years, entertaining them at his home and granting them commercial favours he would probably have denied others.⁵ Coincidentally, Joseph Dean himself had served a prison sentence for 'unlawful cohabitation' and had evidently been sent on his first mission (to Hawaii) to escape further prosecution for having voted illegally (i.e. while polygamously married),⁶ although this was apparently unknown to Moors at the time of the letter.

It was not until the early 1900s that the missions began to make determined attempts to acquire property. By this time the idea of a gathering to Zion had given way completely to that of 'colonizing' Polynesian saints on lands upon their home islands or nearby ones. In Samoa the suggestion that the mission obtain lands on which to gather the local saints was first made in 1901 by William Sears who felt that the time was ripe for such a move, and requested 'the presence of an apostle to direct the location, purchase of land, etc.'⁷ No apostle was forthcoming, but in

⁵ e.g., Spillsbury Journal, 12 Jan. 1900; Sears Journal, 18 June 1901.

⁶ Dean Journal. In Hawaii Dean's identity was kept secret for a while, and letters for him were addressed to 'William Knott'.

⁷ Sears to George Reynolds, 25 Mar. 1901, Samoan Mission Letters.

March the following year twenty-two acres were leased at Faleniu on Tutuila, the stated object of which was 'to start a plantation for the Church with the hope of gathering the saints to one place.'⁸

By 1903 the gathering of the Samoan saints had become not simply a desirable aspect of the mission but, in the view of the new president, Martin Sanders, one necessary for the mission's survival. Sanders made colonization and the acquisition of lands on which to promote it the chief features of his term of office, and his urgency resulted as much from what he described as 'secular conditions' as from any need to attempt the realization of a doctrinal ideal. The mission, he felt, had lost ground in the two years preceding his leadership and would never again be in a 'thriving prosperous condition' unless colonization was practised. But, he insisted, a gathering on Tutuila (in American Samoa) alone would be impracticable and, more importantly, would give offence to the German administration of the Western Samoa islands. This was a risk the mission could ill-afford to take, said Sanders, as already 'all manner of falsehood' had been carried to Governor Solf about the conduct of the mission.⁹ 'The German Government', Sanders explained, 'especially desire to see us substantially located, and self-supporting. They say that we live too much off the natives (which of course is not true)....'¹⁰

⁸ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 14 Mar. 1902.

⁹ Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 7 Mar. 1903, Sanders Papers.

¹⁰ Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 20 June 1903, Sanders Papers.

Subsequently he wrote that he had been advised by both German businessmen and plantation agents in Apia that the mission should act without delay in acquiring large tracts of land or they would lose the best selection. There were further considerations: the Seventh Day Adventist mission, said Sanders, 'were negotiating to secure land on our system, with the theme of getting people on it, thus making them their followers....'¹¹

Sanders' plans for land acquisition were indeed ambitious, considering the mission's supposed impoverishment. He hoped to secure tracts on all three of Samoa's main islands - Tutuila, Savai'i and Upolu - and in parcels ranging from 200 to 1,000 acres. In addition to the staple coconuts he contemplated planting cocoa and rubber once the lands were secured. He contemplated a 'neat profit' from the coconuts after a few years bearing, 'beside the sustaining of the people', and a 'splendid profit' from cocoa,¹² though he assured Self that the sole object of the mission's desire to obtain lands was 'for the betterment of the natives themselves' and that speculation was not the mission's purpose.¹³

The locations of the lands favoured by Sanders were Malaela on the western tip of Upolu; Tuasivi at the eastern end of Savai'i; and Faleniu on Tutuila. At each

11 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 26 Dec. 1903, Sanders Papers.

12 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 20 June 1903, Sanders Papers.

13 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 12 Sept. 1903, Sanders Papers.

of these Sanders hoped to acquire minimum areas of 200 acres, with the hope that the holding at Faleniu would be extended to 1,000 acres in time. These were lease-hold lands, but he hoped that within the decade they might be bought outright. In addition, he had inspected large areas of purchasable land at Falefa, a coastal village some twelve miles from Apia, and at an unspecified location twenty miles from Apia.¹⁴

Church authorities supported Sanders' plan in outline, especially his suggestion that colonies be established in both German and American Samoa.

It...seems quite consistent [they wrote], that when such a colony is established either in German or American Samoa that the native saints of the other protectorate will urge a duplicate for them also. It will be very necessary to avoid giving offence to either government....

They considered that the colony at Laie was a suitable precedent: what had been found necessary and desirable there would 'in many respects be found equally desirable in Samoa.'¹⁵ Sanders was directed to ensure that each tract for colonization contained about 400 acres, as less than that amount was undesirable. He was advised to select from the available lands 'such as can be best used for [the Samoans'] material advancement and in the development among them of a true & stable civilization.'¹⁶

14 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 12 Sept., 1 Oct. 1903, Sanders Papers.

15 First Presidency to Sanders, 31 Mar. 1903, Samoan Mission Letters.

16 First Presidency to Sanders, 13 July 1903, Samoan Mission Letters.

The belief that Laie should serve as a model for future experiments in the colonization of Polynesian Mormons resulted in 1904 in the appointment of Samuel Woolley as temporary adviser to the Samoan mission on purchase and procedure. Woolley, who has the distinction of having served the longest term of any Mormon missionary in the Pacific, was appointed president of the Hawaiian mission and manager of the Laie plantation in 1895. He served in this dual capacity until 1919. His arrival in Samoa was preceded by a bank draft from the church authorities to Sanders for \$6,500, the instructions that Woolley's advice on purchases was to be regarded as conclusive, and that his coming to Samoa be kept 'strictly private...as to give publicity to it may be the means of making it more difficult to purchase what you and he may eventually agree to buy.'¹⁷ Woolley arrived in late September; by the end of October, after 'various researches and investigations', the mission had acquired 855 acres by purchase near Manunu, an inland village on Upolu, and had extended its leasehold land at Faleniu on Tutuila from twenty-two to 360 acres.¹⁸ The two embryo colonies were given names appropriate to their purpose: the Faleniu land had already been called Mapusanga (a place of rest); the land near Manunu was soon called Sauniatu (a place of preparation). Other extensive freehold lands on Upolu and leasehold lands on Upolu and Savai'i which Sanders had recommended were evidently not considered further, though the reasons are

17 First Presidency to Sanders, 5 Aug. 1904, Samoan Mission Letters.

18 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 31 Oct. 1904.

not clear. It is possible, however, that Woolley advised against the purchase of more land until the colonization scheme advanced beyond the experimental stage. In addition, a 1903 recommendation to the German administration of Western Samoa had made it impossible for foreigners to obtain leases on land in excess of fifty acres without approval from Berlin.¹⁹ Governor Wilhelm Solf had expressed surprise when Sanders requested that the mission be permitted 400 acre leases and intimated that his home government would not grant such extensive tracts.²⁰

Sanders was not present to see the establishment of the Sauniatu colony, for he was released in October 1904. His successor Thomas Court, however, was equally ambitious for the temporal progress of the Samoan mission, and, like Sanders, considered the mission's purpose to be 'a colonizing labor among these people'. His proposals for improvements to Sauniatu included a wagon and team, cattle, ploughs and barrows, and a sawmill powered by waterfalls on the property, the cost of which Court estimated at \$2,500. The mill would provide lumber for the mission buildings 'and also some to sell which would probably more than pay for [its cost]....' Court was convinced that nothing 'would be of greater help and benefit to the people in general, and give a variety of employment on the land and such a labor saving device.'²¹ He was also much concerned with the

19 The recommendation followed an inspection of the German islands by Dr F. Wohltmann.

20 Sanders to Joseph F. Smith, 12 Sept. 1903, Sanders Papers.

21 Court to Joseph F. Smith, 25 Feb. 1907, Samoan Mission Letters.

appearance that the mission presented, especially to visitors to Samoa who might be inclined to equate the missionaries' standard of living with the quality of their teaching, and in May 1905 he wrote to the church authorities thus:

We are badly in need of a new Elders house in Pago Pago...as the one we have is an old bamboo hut which is almost to fall to pieces.... We had hoped that when we build a new house, it might be one that would be a credit to the mission. So that when tourists or any one else calls or goes by (they come by the dozens nearly every mail) and takes a picture of the Mormon house they would not have so much of a curio to scatter all over the world.... If the church can let us have \$1200 or some other amt. more or less, we will build accordingly. We feel that some of the houses we have should have enough of the esthetic to develop within the Elders and Saints more than a sheep camp pride. Most of them (all of them but one) in the Mission are only huts with little or no furniture in them.²²

Court's letter was the first indication that the Samoan mission was developing a kind of self-consciousness about its place in the island community; a self-consciousness which took fifteen years to emerge.

IT took only slightly less time for the Tahitian mission also to reach the conclusion that the image it presented was important both to the mission's reputation with outsiders and its acceptance by converts. In October 1904, Frank Cutler and Thomas Woodbury, both of whom had served in Tahiti, wrote to the church authorities:

²² Court to Joseph F. Smith, 10 May 1905, Samoan Mission Letters, emphasis in original.

It is the united opinion of the returned elders from the Society Is. Mission that the mission is in great need of a meeting house and headquarters in the city of Papeete. Under present conditions elders are ashamed to invite friends to call upon them, and native saints visiting Tahiti, from other islands make frequent complaints that they are the objects of ridicule because of their connection with a church that exhibits no material evidence of excellence.²³

The new premises were erected during Edward Hall's term as mission president. Hall was also the first to propose a colonization scheme for the saints of the Tahitian mission. Unlike the sequence of events in Samoa, however, the decision to colonize came after the mission's attempts at self-improvement and was precipitated by a single incident, a cyclone in the Tuamotus in March 1905.

The privations suffered by church members in the Tuamotus, wrote Hall, had resulted in many requests that he contact the church in Zion and ask for money contributions to assist those in need of food. 'But such a thing I do not approve of at all', he continued, 'for it would amount to very little when it came to be divided...and after it was gone they would be worse than ever.' A more acceptable alternative, Hall felt, was 'to buy a tract of land here on Tahiti: and then colonize our people'. The reasons he gave for favouring such a course, however, had little to do with the Tuamotuans' immediate needs, but reflected the basic L.D.S. concept of the gathering, with slight variations appropriate to local circumstances. Hall's reasons were as follows: the saints 'in their scattered

²³ Cutler and Woodbury to First Presidency, 12 Oct. 1904, Society Islands Mission Letters.

and roaming condition' were impossible for the mission to control:

we can not teach them as we should, they are mixed among others that are not of our faith, and the results are their children are led away into other churches where they are given greater indulgence, and we are loosing ground every year. Which thing we could put a stop to if we had them in one place.

They could then be made to pay tithing, Hall continued, 'while as they are now it is impossible to do so'. The mission could also look after the saints' 'earthly well-fare and see that they are not made slaves of as they now are'. It was Hall's opinion that, 'If those people are allowed to remain as the[y] are, they will soon become a thing of the past.' As he conceived it, therefore, Hall's plan would not simply curb membership losses and guarantee the mission a consistent income, but prevent the possible extinction of the islanders.

It was an ambitious plan, and one which he explained in some detail. The colony would begin in a small way with 200 acres of land, which, Hall estimated, would cost up to \$15,000. Each able-bodied man would receive two acres to live on and farm 'as long as he was faithfull to the Church'. The remaining land would be cared for by all the colonists, and they would receive one third of the income derived from it; the rest of the income would be used 'to carry on the work, make improvements and buy more land which would be needed for the growing children and new converts'. On their two acre plots, the colonists would raise pigs, chickens, potatoes and cotton; on the remaining land, coconuts and cattle would be raised. The project would be supervised by 'a white man, who understood the work and the people', who would work for

wages and perhaps 'a small percentage of the general income', and who would have to be prepared to spend from five to ten years. 'It would not do', Hall observed, 'to be changing men to[ol] often.' Nor would it do to simply buy the land 'and give it to the natives...for they are lazy, and will not work if they do not have some one over them....' In addition to teaching the colonists how to work, the supervisor would operate a trade store, where they could 'get all they need' and sell their produce. One-third of the profits from the store would belong to the colony and two-thirds to the general fund. The Tuamotuan divers would be taken back to the pearl-shell grounds for three months of every year, in which time, Hall estimated, they would each gather \$1,000 worth of shell, which would be handled by the colony's store 'and a good profit made.'

How would funds to initiate the project be raised? Hall expressed his reluctance to ask church authorities for the necessary amount. As the alternative he proposed that 'a sensational letter might be written... and published in the Utah papers, telling of the suffering of the people here in the islands.' Letters might also be written to various L.D.S. bishops, requesting that they invite subscriptions from ward members 'for the benefit of their suffering brethren and sisters....'²⁴

In a subsequent letter, Hall announced that his plan had the approval of Tahiti's governor, who had expressed regret at the government's inability to itself

²⁴ Hall to First Presidency, 4 May 1905, Hall Papers.

provide the land for the mission's use. Tithes had already increased, he said - the first nine months of 1906 had brought \$1,276.89, over three times the combined amounts of the three previous years - and would increase still further 'if we were only able to handle our people, as we should in case we can gather them to one place'. He now spoke of a 900 acre tract on Tahiti, the asking price of which was \$16,000, and suggested that if an outright purchase was inadvisable the mission should rent the land and secure an option to buy at a later date. He concluded: '...there are so many of our people just waiting to know what is going to be done'.²⁵

They had long to wait. In 1907 Hall was still urging colonization and receiving little encouragement from church headquarters. He had evidently taken it upon himself to write to all the branches of the mission soliciting donations for the scheme, but thought this would bring unsatisfactory results: '...it will be a hard matter to handle, now that the natives are going to pay for it, as they will want some say as to how it is managed, while if the church was only buying it we could have full control....'²⁶ Hall was released in September 1907. His success in fund-raising is not known. Certainly, donations must not have come near to meeting the required amount. In 1911 the matter was raised again, this time by Franklin J. Fullmer, who, as a missionary during Hall's term, had criticized the latter's conduct of mission affairs and was himself now mission president. Fullmer had received

²⁵ Hall to First Presidency, 26 Sept. 1906, Hall Papers.

²⁶ Hall to First Presidency, 25 Mar. 1907, Hall Papers.

a letter from a group of Tuamotuan office-holders styling themselves 'The Priesthood assembled at Takume' and requesting that a section of land at Taravao (the isthmus connecting Tahiti with the Tairapu peninsula) or some similar place be purchased as a gathering place for the church. Upon purchase, they said, 'we would all move upon it and make it our home'. Fullmer, however, was not in favour of Tahiti as a location for the gathering. He also considered the whole task of colonization to be 'of such magnitude and responsibility that we shrink from it.'²⁷

Others who had been associated with the mission, though not as hesitant, were beginning to doubt the feasibility - at least on a large scale - of the scheme. In April 1912 a committee of returned missionaries including Frank Cutler and Edward Hall presented to the First Presidency a number of reasons for, and possible objections to, colonization. The reasons combined concern for the material welfare of the Tuamotuans with concern for their moral welfare as church members. The islands were said to be very dangerous to life especially in the light of recent violent storms. Their natural resources failed to furnish the necessary means of sustenance, as a result of storm damage, soil erosion and coconut blight. Conditions in the archipelago afforded Tuamotuan saints no opportunities of community development, little opportunity of marriage in the faith, and no chance of social or educational advancement. They were 'destructive of proper home relations, and of moral living'. More compact supervision and better regulations of community

²⁷ Fullmer to First Presidency, 1 Nov. 1911, Tahitian Mission Letters.

life were therefore imperative.

But there were obstacles which could not be over-looked. First, Tahiti, which had been the choice of location hitherto, would result in the Tuamotuans being 'even more exposed to temptation and immorality of life than they are now'. Secondly, as far as the committee knew, no suitable piece of land could be obtained, and clear title to any land in the French colony was impossible to secure. Thirdly, there was the possibility that the scheme would be opposed by the government in the islands - though Hall had earlier claimed that the governor had given his approval. In the light of these considerations the committee submitted the following resolutions. The principle of gathering applied to Pacific islanders 'as well as to all others who accept the gosple'; but saints of the Tahitian mission 'should not be colonized outside of the Tahitian mission until such time as the prophet of the Lord may designate a gathering place for all of the Pacific Islanders....' They should therefore be colonized on an island within the mission. But, as had been pointed out, natural conditions in the Tuamotus were dangerous to life, while social conditions on Tahiti were destructive to morals. The acceptable alternative was Tubuai in the Austral islands. In spite of what they considered to be 'many good, valid reasons' for colonization, including the fact that Tuamotuan saints had themselves requested it, the committee was pessimistic about the results of any such scheme. 'We feel to report', they concluded, 'that, in our opinion, colonization within the Tahitian mission itself

will not prove practicable.'²⁸

The report of the returned elders, coupled with the apparent reluctance of the church authorities to approve any previous scheme put to them, virtually ended the possibility of any large-scale gathering in French Oceania. Tubuai was not considered further. By November 1913, when Fullmer 'had courage enough to mention the subject again', the earlier ambitious schemes had dwindled to the idea of gathering 'a dozen or so families to one place'. The place favoured by Fullmer was on Moorea, where, he reported, he had found land suitable for a small colony, and planted with oranges, vanilla and plantains, which could be obtained for about \$5,000.²⁹ Subsequent investigation, however, revealed that there were complicated problems of inheritance affecting ownership, and that Tahitians had an aversion to Moorea because of the prevalence there of elephantiasis, though Fullmer considered their objection more fancied than real. Far more promising, he thought, was a tract of over 900 acres in the Haapape district of Tahiti; it was partly developed and had water frontage with a good anchorage. A plantation on the property produced copra worth \$2,700 annually. Several missionaries 'all of them being farmer boys' and several leading native brethren had given the land their unanimous approval, but Fullmer had objections: much of it was 'pretty well over run with tobacco', and the price - \$16,000 - also caused him some concern.³⁰

28 Committee to First Presidency, 7 Apr. 1912, Tahitian Mission Letters.

29 Fullmer to First Presidency, 15 Nov. 1913, Tahitian Mission Letters.

30 Fullmer to First Presidency, 2 Apr. 1914, Tahitian Mission Letters.

His concern was justified. On hearing of the proposal, Frank Cutler advised church authorities not to offer more than \$8,000 'as land in Tahiti has really no commercial value',³¹ an extraordinary claim in view of the annual returns from copra alone at this time. Church president Joseph F. Smith was willing to go to \$10,000,³² but the figure was obviously far below the owner's requirements and the land was never purchased. It was the last word of any consequence said on the subject of colonization on Tahiti. Thereafter, the gathering of Tahitians and Tuamotuans assumed a purely theoretical aspect.

Like the Mormons, the missionaries of the Reorganized church in Tahiti also preached the gathering concept; as early as 1886 apostle Thomas W. Smith had hoped that church members might be assembled in 'some genial part of the United States', perhaps Southern California.³³ But the mission came no nearer to practising colonization than to purchase a small property in 1897, which they decided to call Tarona (Sharon), at the eastern end of Papeete where, it was hoped, dwellings might be erected to house the Tuamotuans who came to Tahiti to attend church conferences. It was a modest acquisition, which the mission paid for originally by borrowing \$1,000 in 'French money' from each of two wealthy church members.³⁴

31 Tahitian Mission Manuscript History, 18 June 1914.

32 Ibid.

33 Saints Herald, 8 May 1886.

34 Joseph Burton to E.L. Kelley, 25 Sept. 1906, Burton Papers, R.L.D.S.

If colonization was a dead issue in Tahiti, however, the idea was still pursued throughout the 1920s in the Samoan mission but with gradually decreasing hopes for its success. Initial response by Samoan saints to the call to gather at Sauniatu or Mapusanga had been disappointing, and even before 1920 church authorities were inclined to declare Sauniatu a potential failure, on the basis of gloomy reports by returning missionaries. In January of that year, however, mission president John Q. Adams was still optimistic about the colony's future. His investigation revealed only minor problems of coconut cultivation and no problems of cattle raising. 'Sauniatu will pay big -' he insisted, 'as a community of Saints away from Babylon, as a leading South Sea school centre, and as a cattle ranch.'³⁵ In 1922 he was able to add further to mission holdings by securing a long term lease at Tuana'i on Savai'i from a local chief,³⁶ and arranging for the purchase of additional property at Pesega near Apia.³⁷

Attitudes to the temporal expansion of the mission depended largely on the personality of the incumbent president. Adams' successor Ernest L. Butler, while of necessity maintaining an interest in the mission's property, tended to regard the duties of plantation management and livestock supervision as an imposition on his missionaries' time; and although he personally favoured an increase in livestock on the plantations, feeling that cattle were

35 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 30 Jan. 1920.

36 Ibid., 18 July 1922.

37 Ibid., 16 Sept. 1922.

the mission's most reliable commercial asset, he was also anxious that the mission should absolve itself from any further direct connection with the plantations.³⁸ After his return to the U.S.A. he strongly advised disposing of both the Sauniatu and Mapusanga properties. The first, which was owned by the church, could, he suggested, be divided among the saints already there or others who might care to join them, and the mission 'assume no responsibility in the matter.' Such an arrangement would be to the advantage of all: saints, elders and mission president. Sauniatu, he said, had never paid. As to Mapusanga, while it had paid some revenue in recent years, it had also been a 'great source of concern and [had] caused some difference of opinion and dissatisfaction on the part of the natives.' Since much had been spent on livestock and improvements, however, he felt that the lease on Mapusanga should be renewed, but also that it should be sub-leased to some 'reliable party or parties.'³⁹

Even before Butler expressed these views, however, his place as mission president had been taken by Willard Smith, whose expressed aim was '...that the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S. might be the most progressive institution in Samoa.'⁴⁰ To this end, Smith devoted the major part of his energies to building up the mission's material assets. During Butler's term church members in Savai'i had requested

38 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Feb. 1927.

39 Butler's views on Sauniatu and Mapusanga are contained in an unsigned copy of a report to the First Presidency dated 3 Nov. 1930. Samoan Mission Letters.

40 Upolu District Record 1929-37, 20 Feb. 1930.

that the mission establish a school on their island, and the saints of Tapu'ele'ele - a small village which had come over en masse to the Mormons - had offered 100 acres of land for the purpose.⁴¹ During Smith's term the land was surveyed, and the 100 acre gift became the Vaiola branch of the mission, with a village, school, and plantation which, after a brief experiment with copra production, was turned to cocoa.⁴² Other parts of Savai'i also claimed Smith's attention. 'We have been able to acquire considerable property in Savai'i the last year', he wrote in May 1929. In addition to this unspecified amount of property, he secured leases on land at Samata, Palauli, Vaiafai and Vaisalu. He also purchased land from Burns, Philp and Co. at Fagamalo for £764.14.-., giving the firm first option if the mission decided to re-sell later.⁴³ Under Smith's presidency mission headquarters at Pesega were rebuilt in 1932 at a cost of \$7,875.⁴⁴

But Smith's main effort was spent in ensuring that the plantations became consistent revenue producers for the church. He regarded the church villages and plantations - Mapusanga, Sauniatu and now Vaiola - as the 'barometers of the work' on Samoa. As a young missionary to Samoa in 1914, Smith's first appointment had been to oversee the

41 W. Smith, 'A brief summary of events in the Samoan Mission' in Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports.

42 Ibid.

43 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, May 1929.

44 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1931-39, 30 Nov. 1932.

Mapusanga plantation.⁴⁵ Now as mission president he used the experience gained thirteen years earlier to improve efficiency and increase revenue. At Mapusanga he reduced the cost of copra cutting from seventy-five cents to fifty cents per 100 lbs, and hoped to make a further reduction to thirty cents,⁴⁶ a decision which understandably caused 'some unrest among the saints.'⁴⁷ A new copra drying shed was installed, and Smith arranged to have the product handled directly by an American shipping firm, rather than sell to the government weigh-shed at Leone. The method, he wrote, 'netted us more money [4¹/₂c per lb] than we could net locally.'⁴⁸ Large sections of land on which the saints had been allowed to cut and sell copra in exchange for keeping the land cleared were entirely resumed by the mission. 'Our best land is in the natives' hands', Smith complained, 'and we are getting nothing back for the labors of the past.' At a meeting of the Samoan priesthood in Mapusanga in May 1927, he announced that, in future, the property would be 'handled as it should be, by the church.'⁴⁹ His attitude to the plantations was in striking contrast to Butler's altruistic, laissez-faire proposal and, in fact, a complete denial of the ostensible purpose for which the gathering places had been acquired. 'There is too much of a feeling at present', he wrote, 'that the

45 Mapusanga Branch Record 1910-15, 1 Apr. 1914.

46 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 13 May 1927.

47 Ibid., 9 May 1929.

48 Smith, 'A brief summary of events....'

49 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 13 May 1927.

church owes them a living.'⁵⁰ A new truck was obtained to reduce the labour of missionaries assigned to the plantation, and driven on roads the construction of which Smith initiated.⁵¹ A paid overseer, trained in tropical agriculture, was employed in February 1929, but dismissed in October, after he had requested higher wages and sole managership, and replaced by a more tractable individual.⁵²

At Sauniatu, which Smith later claimed was 'only be[ing] cared for in order to keep same in good condition',⁵³ he arranged for new copra storing and cutting sheds to be built, and instituted a programme of share-cropping, after having tried 'various methods with a desire to produce a revenue for the church.' A previous plan to have saints plant their own nuts with the view of selling them to the mission was frustrated by the insistence of many that they had never been paid for their produce.⁵⁴ In November 1933 Smith entered into a verbal agreement with the manager of the New Zealand Reparation Estates which allowed the mission 2,000 acres of land at Solaua near Sauniatu, in return for keeping cleared a twenty-five acre patch of new cocoa. He briefly considered encouraging the church to buy or rent the extra acreage but decided later it was too large an area. It was used instead as pasture for the cattle

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 23 Mar. 1928.

52 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1929.

53 Smith, 'A brief summary of events....'

54 Ibid.

which Smith had overstocked at Sauniatu in anticipation of a ready market for beef.⁵⁵ In eight months ending in May 1930, cattle from Sauniatu had returned \$1,200 for the mission;⁵⁶ but in a similar period ending in March 1933 only \$650 had been returned,⁵⁷ as a result of the economic depression. Copra was also badly affected by the fall in prices, netting the mission only one cent per pound in 1932.⁵⁸

Despite the fall in mission revenue towards the end of his term, Smith considered his efforts to bring about improvements largely successful. The report submitted on his return, of events he regarded as important during his mission, leaves no doubt as to where his true interests lay - it is devoted almost entirely to matters concerning the plantations. However, as part of his plan to improve efficiency in their management, he commenced keeping detailed plantation records separately from mission records.⁵⁹

It is clear, however, that by the end of his term Smith was not thinking of Sauniatu, Mapusanga and Vaiola as colonies for the common good of the saints, if, indeed, he ever thought of them as such. At a conference on Tutuila he strongly advised the older families at

55 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Dec. 1933.

56 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 21 May 1930.

57 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Mar. 1933.

58 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1931-39, Dec. 1932.

59 Doubtless doing the church a favour but doing the researcher a disservice, for the records, presuming them to be extant, are inaccessible.

Mapusanga to return to their own homes and islands. 'Remaining longer in Mapusanga', he informed them, 'will not make you richer nor any happier.' When some protested that they had been encouraged to gather at Sauniatu and Mapusanga in preparation for a greater gathering at Laie, and that they regarded the separation from their home villages and families as permanent, Smith's reaction was: 'How foolish!'⁶⁰

Smith was released in 1934, to be replaced by William Sears, who was serving a second term as mission president - his first had been in 1899-1901. Sears was far less interested in temporal affairs than his predecessor and involved himself little with the plantations save for an occasional inspection. He was followed in 1936 by William Waddoups whose main activity consisted in compiling genealogical information for subsequent use in the Laie temple. Waddoups had for years been in charge of the temple, and expressed it his dream to see all the Polynesian missions unified in genealogical work, advising Samoan saints of their responsibility in 'seeking out their dead' and compiling their records.⁶¹ Like Sears, he was little interested in the mundanities of plantation management. Waddoups' successor in 1937 was Gilbert Tingey, who spent some time trying to obtain assurance from the naval governor of Tutuila that the mission would be able to extend the lease of the Mapusanga property for a further forty years.⁶²

⁶⁰ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1931-39, 22 Sept. 1933.

⁶¹ Ibid., 13 June 1936.

⁶² Ibid., 9 July, 23 July 1937.

The lease was not due to expire until 1942, but Tingey wanted to make certain that the appropriation of \$10,000, recently granted the mission for school construction at Mapusanga, would be well spent. Although the owner of the land had agreed to re-lease at the end of the original period, both Governor Milne and the Attorney-General were reluctant to agree to the arrangement so far in advance, and made it clear to Tingey that they were generally opposed to the presence of missionaries in Samoa.⁶³ When Tingey left Samoa in 1940 the lease had not been renewed.

THE Tongan mission's counterpart of the Samoan 'colonies' was Makeke, in the Veitongo district of Tongatapu. Before 1920 Willard Smith, who had served as mission president in Tonga before his Samoan mission presidency, had hoped to establish the mission's main school at Kolomotua near Nuku'alofa and had hoped also to obtain land so that the students might support themselves and the school from it. Smith was unable to lease land, and his successor Mark Coombs was opposed to Kolomotua as a location, because of its proximity to the capital.⁶⁴ In 1920 Coombs thought of securing a lease on fifty acres at Houma on the southern side of Tongatapu,⁶⁵ but he decided some considerable time later that the £350 involved in the transfer of the lease was excessive, and in August 1924 paid £250 for the lease

63 Ibid., 9 July 1937.

64 Coombs to First Presidency, 22 Dec. 1920, Tongan Mission Letters.

65 Ibid.

of a seventy-five acre site at Veitongo, having been advanced the money by Burns, Philp and Co.⁶⁶ A little less than one year later, an additional lease was taken on an adjacent 100 acres for a fifty year period.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, part of Makeke had been planted with coconuts and sweet potatoes with the assistance of the saints of Tongatapu, each male giving one day's labour per week to the project.⁶⁸ By the end of 1925 Coombs could report that a school house at Makeke was nearing completion.⁶⁹

Significantly, however, at no time - even in the initial stages - was Makeke referred to as a gathering place. It was to be a school, with a plantation that would assist both school and mission. There was no suggestion that saints throughout the kingdom would be expected to leave their homes and form a colony at Makeke. Indeed, Makeke was acquired when the fortunes of the Tongan mission were particularly low; only four months earlier the First Presidency had begun to consider seriously the closure of the mission and had expressed doubts about the advisability of acquiring any large amount of land.⁷⁰ The reason for

66 Coombs to First Presidency, 23 Aug. 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

67 Coombs to First Presidency, 10 June 1925, Tongan Mission Letters.

68 Ibid.

69 Coombs to First Presidency, 14 Dec. 1925, Tongan Mission Letters.

70 First Presidency to Coombs, 19 Apr., 26 July 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

their pessimism about the mission's future was Coombs' remarkable claim in July 1923 that, of nearly 1,000 saints in the mission, only thirty had an abiding faith, as he expressed it, to the First Presidency, '...of the kind that brought your parents and my grandparents across the plains.'⁷¹ Other more immediate problems contributed to Coombs' despondency: two of his missionaries had recently died of typhoid fever in Ha'apai, and trouble had broken out among the saints of that group.⁷² But when the church authorities suggested complete withdrawal from Tonga 'until the people are more prepared to receive and comprehend and appreciate the message that we have to bear',⁷³ Coombs was greatly disturbed and returned an emotional plea that the mission be allowed to continue:

...I would rather lay down my life for them than to run off and leave them leaderless. They are my people, I have made my greatest sacrifices for them and have used my God given talents in their behalf.... I have rejoiced when they have rejoiced and have gone down in sorrow with them.⁷⁴

It was the withdrawal of missionaries after the initial approach to Tonga had been made in the 1890s, he said, that had led to some of the problems the mission now faced; potential converts feared that they would be abandoned by

71 Coombs to First Presidency, 14 July 1923, Tongan Mission Letters.

72 Ibid.

73 First Presidency to Coombs, 26 July 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

74 Coombs to First Presidency, 26 Oct. 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

the missionaries soon after baptism. The opportunity given the saints of the Samoan mission, with its 'lovely central villages...little united Zions [which] can not help but shine conspicuously' should not be denied Tongan saints. Yet in spite of the 'inferior physical equipment' in the Tongan mission, Coombs claimed, membership proportionate to population was higher than in Samoa. He urged that the Tongan mission be given the same opportunity and was confident that 'a change in the atmosphere' would result.⁷⁵

But Coombs' letter was as close as he ever came to proposing a central 'gathering place' for Tongan saints, and it is very doubtful that he seriously considered emulating the Samoan examples. It is more likely that he thought the acquisition of Makeke would represent a show of permanence on the part of the mission, an indication to members that the missionaries would not 'run off and leave them leaderless.'⁷⁶ His decision was vindicated, for Makeke undoubtedly saved the mission, the school in particular becoming one of the Tongan mission's greatest 'drawing cards'.⁷⁷ The plantation, however, probably because of its relatively small size does not seem to have claimed the interest of many mission leaders after Coombs, and its progress during the 1930s is for the most part unrecorded. Presumably it gave adequate support to the school, which had been Coombs' main concern.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid.

77 Jay A. Cahoon, 'A History of Liahona High School'.

If by the 1930s large scale gatherings of saints in the islands were already becoming less and less feasible, the disorientation suffered by the missions during World War II dealt the final blow to the concept of colonization. L.D.S. church authorities did not wait for the war in the Pacific to commence before ordering the withdrawal of missionaries from the central Polynesian missions. In October 1940 a telegram received by mission presidents read in part:

...having in mind possible developments, please make necessary boat reservations and return all elders to United States soon as possible in American ships where available.... Install local officers to take charge of branches. Send elders in as large groups as possible properly organized and officered. We urge the strictest possible conduct and caution against political controversies. The President of the Mission will remain for the present...give honorable release to all who have been in mission field two years and over...we will assign others to United States missions for balance of term....⁷⁸

The following January, perhaps after considering the results that complete withdrawal had brought in the past, and possibly reluctant to entrust mission affairs entirely to local leadership, the First Presidency decided that it was advisable for mission presidents to remain at their posts for the duration of war.⁷⁹ Only in Tonga, however, did the mission's pre-war leader, Emile Dunn, continue for the duration; in French Oceania mission president Eugene M. Cannon was replaced in 1941 by Ernest Rossiter after

⁷⁸ Copy in Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 14 Oct. 1940.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 31 Jan. 1941.

serving only four months in the post; in Samoa John Q. Adams replaced Wilford Emery in 1943, after the latter had served three years. The Reorganized Church's mission in French Oceania was presided over by J. Charles May, who had served in those islands in the 1920s.

Mission records for the war period, especially for the early years, are extremely sparse. Branch and district record keeping was left in the hands of local officers who obviously had not been imbued with their mentors' fondness for the task. Complained Emile Dunn:

Dates and full names have never mattered much to the Tongan people, so they more or less take things most anyway they can get them, or leave them undone if it happens to be very hard to get.⁸⁰

And mission leaders in Samoa and French Oceania might well have agreed.

Such records as were kept by Dunn himself in Tonga and by Emery and Adams in Samoa show that there were similar effects from the war in both areas. In both Samoa and Tonga U.S. forces took over part of the mission's facilities.⁸¹ Makeke in Tonga, however, continued to function as a school, and Dunn spent much of his time there in the capacity of teacher of English.⁸² The Samoan mission was far less fortunate. U.S. marines began to take over many mission facilities in 1942, including the Mapusanga school and the Pago-Pago mission home, with

80 Annual Report 1941, in Tongan Mission Manuscript History.

81 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 1942 passim.

82 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Feb. 1943.

results that were hardly surprising. When Adams arrived to replace Emery, and was eventually permitted to visit Tutuila after twelve months of applications, he found that the 'once little Zion' of Mapusanga had been the scene of 'gambling, drunkenness, excessive dancing and frequent ribald so-called amusements (especially with the U.S. troops) adultery, disobedience [and] insincerity....'⁸³ To add to his woes his predecessor had allowed other mission facilities to deteriorate, accounts to fall into arrears, and incorrect property valuations and membership figures to remain on the books. Adams also found a spirit of rebellion among the girls of the Sauniatu school⁸⁴ and 'a general mission tendency...to unjustifiably slacken.'⁸⁵

But these problems were of little moment compared with the fact that the lease on Mapusanga had expired during Emery's term and had not been renewed. The fault was not entirely Emery's, for the chiefs of the Faleniu district had decided to sell the original twenty-two acre site instead of re-leasing - their asking price was \$5,000, a figure to which Emery refused to agree.⁸⁶ In July 1944 the garrulous and persuasive Adams managed to convince fourteen of the sixteen chiefs involved that they should allow him to set the price and suggested \$1,000, a figure which by his own admission was 'ridiculously low'. The two absent chiefs proved temporarily recalcitrant - one insisting on a minimum of \$3,000 - but were persuaded

⁸³ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 16 July 1944.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 22 Mar. 1944.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 28 Nov. 1943.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 17 July 1944.

after two months of intermittent negotiations to accept Adams' offer.⁸⁷

It was the first of what Adams termed 'three big deals', all of which he arranged in 1944. In August, employing a combination of cajolery and threat, he secured a re-lease of forty years on the larger part of the total Mapusanga property - over 300 acres - from the owner's widow and her brother, a chief of Nu'uuli. When the latter at first showed an inclination to disagree, Adams resorted to the standard Mormon imprecation:

I scathingly promised them...the land, trees, cattle, they themselves, would never prosper if the will of the Lord were thwarted. It took weeks of hard praying and talking - but [it was] the malediction as per above that did the convincing.

He succeeded in obtaining favourable terms - \$30 per month and two head of cattle per year. 'We can clear a few thousand per year in copra and cattle', he wrote, 'thus ensuring the Mapusaga to be of an income.'⁸⁸

The third of Adams' deals was the renewal of the lease on land on which stood the mission home and chapel at Pago-Pago. Again Adams had to negotiate with what he termed an 'obdurate' lessor, the ageing chief Te'o, once a church member but now an apostate. Te'o had hoped for a monthly payment of \$35; Adams persuaded him to accept \$2 monthly and two head of cattle per year for the remainder of his life. 'He's nearly 70 and in ill health', wrote Adams, 'so I speculated upon a life expectancy of three

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid., 4 Aug. 1944.

to five more years!' The arrangement was blocked by the chief's nephew, whom Adams described as 'ignorant, uncouth, disrespectful, [and] stubborn', but only temporarily; long enough, however, for the impatient Adams to express what he considered a topically appropriate analogy: 'Fa'a-Samoa [the Samoan way] and Hitlerism are similar in many respects.'⁸⁹

Throughout his term as mission president, Adams continued to refer to the church villages in Samoa, as though they were still dynamic gathering places, still fulfilling their original function. Clothed in his rhetoric, Mapusanga was still the 'little Mormon secluded Zion',⁹⁰ while Vaiola was 'an Eden'.⁹¹ For the name of the latter village Adams preferred Nifae - a transliteration of the Book of Mormon name Nephi - and consistently referred to it as such,⁹² a decision that has had no effect on cartographers of modern Samoa. For all his optimism, the principle of large scale gathering in the church villages had faded beyond recall. Mapusanga especially, the first of the gathering places, underwent complete transformation. The village was first moved from its original location by the marines, then abandoned by its residents. In August 1944 Adams made an inspection of the original site to find little trace of the elders' home and no trace at all of the saints' dwellings; he found instead 14,000 square feet of concrete which had been laid by the marines for

89 Ibid., 19 Aug. 1944.

90 Ibid., 11 Aug. 1944.

91 Ibid., 11 June 1943.

92 Ibid., 1944-48 passim.

building foundations.⁹³

The disruption suffered by Mapusanga was symptomatic of the effect of war upon the missions as a whole. Social dislocation and change which resulted from the presence of large numbers of servicemen and the sudden introduction of new values and attitudes affected every level of islands society, no matter how much mission leaders might hope that their members were immune from these influences. The problems that Adams encountered in Mapusanga in July 1944 he found rife throughout the Samoan mission six months later, and interpreted them as fulfilment of prophecy:

These are the 'perilous times' predicted of old - and in full sweep in Samoa is adultery, tobacco and liquor using, gambling, fighting and quarrelling, lying, stealing, laziness, disobedience, undependability and dereliction to duty - all this is getting general in our church too. Samoa is no more like it once was than white is black. We get pretty discouraged often, and feel it's all no use.⁹⁴

'The Pacific missions', recalled one missionary who served in the islands shortly after World War II, 'were in real bad shape.'⁹⁵

MORMON missionaries began to return in numbers to the Pacific in 1946. The absence of any save mission leaders during the war years had also contributed to the decline of the missions. One of the chief reasons for Mormon

93 Ibid., 11 Aug. 1944.

94 Ibid., 12 Dec. 1944.

95 Personal interview, Salt Lake City, Oct. 1970.

success before the war had been that there were always large numbers of missionaries in the field at any one time. Despite their transience, and whatever many may have lacked in individual talents, there were always sufficient to ensure that new baptisms were fairly frequent and that converts did not become easily estranged from Mormon teaching. Indeed, there was on occasion a super-abundance of mission personnel. But their removal in 1940 obliged the missions to rely entirely on a local priesthood and a local missionary force, many of whom were as casual about this aspect of their work as about record keeping.

Additional baptisms were recorded during this period, but generally the rate of increase was considerably lower than for preceding or succeeding years. In Tonga, for example, only fifty-one were recorded for the years 1942-43, compared with eighty-nine for 1939-40 and 194 for 1946-47.⁹⁶

In Samoa, while John Q. Adams reported 275 baptisms for 1944,⁹⁷ he had other more serious problems arising from the conduct of his Samoan elders; much of the tithing paid by members to local office-holders never reached mission headquarters.⁹⁸ 'The Samoans', grumbled Adams in January 1946,

being erratic Lamanites, are first up then down - just now they are down, all over here and there - some rebellious, some sinning, some quitting their posts, etc. But better days are ahead!⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Figures from Tongan Mission Office, Nuku'alofa.

⁹⁷ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 19 Dec. 1944.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 12 Dec. 1944, 31 Jan. 1945.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 16 Jan. 1946, emphasis in original.

They were indeed, and far better for both missions and saints than Adams or his contemporaries could have foreseen. The post-war years ushered in a remarkable period of missionary and building activity in Polynesia, of which the missionaries who arrived in 1946 were merely the vanguard. June of that year saw the appearance in Tahiti of Alma Burton and Franklin Fullmer, both former mission presidents in the area. Their purpose was twofold: to negotiate for the purchase of properties for the mission, and 'to help formulate an entirely new policy for the Mission' which was expected to 'affect the history of the Mission for many years to come.'¹⁰⁰ The policy was one devoted largely to the acquisition of land for the construction of new mission facilities. By August the purchase of a valuable property some miles from Papeete had been made at a cost of 825,000 francs. The purchase, enthused mission president Edgar B. Mitchell, 'marks the beginning of a new era in the Tahitian Mission.'¹⁰¹

A new era was beginning also in the other South Seas missions. In Tonga, within four days of the arrival of Burton and Fullmer in Tahiti, Evon Huntsman replaced Emile Dunn as mission president. Huntsman soon made a brief inspection of the Makeke school and decided immediately that it was inadequate, both as a school and a mission showplace.¹⁰² In February 1947 the mission was presented

100 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52,
3 June 1946.

101 Ibid., 27 Aug. 1946.

102 Norton, Brief History of the Tongan Mission...,
44.

with the opportunity to purchase the lease on a 276 acre property in central Tongatapu for £10,000. Over half the acreage was planted in coconuts, and livestock included both cattle and horses. Huntsman wasted little time requesting permission from the First Presidency to purchase, and on 14 April received their authorization.¹⁰³ Two months later apostle Matthew Cowley, who had general jurisdiction over all the church's Pacific missions, arrived in Tonga to finalize arrangements. At a mission conference in late June Cowley made it quite clear to the assembled saints that the new property was no mere philanthropic gesture by the church:

Here we're buying a new plantation from the tithing of our people...And God will expect you to pay more tithing than you've ever paid before because you're receiving more tithing in this land; and if you don't pay your tithing, the time will come when this will not be a blessing to you but will be a curse. The day will come, if you obey this principle of the Gospel, that even the government of this land will look to this people for leadership.¹⁰⁴

His directions did not fall on deaf ears, as a comparison of pre-war and post-war tithing figures for the Tongan mission shows. In 1939 tithes received amounted to a mere \$1,319.¹⁰⁵ In 1949, two years after Cowley's address, the mission recorded \$10,320 in tithes and an additional \$1,676 in offerings and general donations.¹⁰⁶ Emile Dunn

103 Ibid., 44-5.

104 Ibid., 45-6.

105 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Nov. 1939.

106 Ibid., Nov. 1949.

was recalled to Tonga in November 1947 to supervise with Huntsman the building of a new education complex which would be called Liahona,¹⁰⁷ a Book of Mormon term for a direction-finder which had a conveniently euphonious Polynesian sound to it.

The programme for Liahona anticipated a decade of intense building activity in the Pacific missions, much of it in the Tongan mission. The Mormon Church's post-war missionary drive was initiated by church leader George Albert Smith in 1946, and continued even more vigorously by his successor David O. McKay in 1951. Under McKay's presidency there were two notable thrusts; an increase in missionary activity and a high-powered building programme.¹⁰⁸ Both were on an international scale, but the results in Polynesia were probably more spectacular than elsewhere, and those in Tonga especially so. Tonga had long been the problem child of the Mormon's Pacific missions; a relatively late starter in the history of the Polynesian missions, its progress had been inconsistent and unrewarding. A tentative beginning in 1891 had been followed by the complete withdrawal of missionaries in 1897.¹⁰⁹ The mission was re-opened in 1907, only to face a threat of complete expulsion by a hostile government in 1922.¹¹⁰ In 1933 the appointment of an unsuitable mission leader

107 Morton, op.cit., 46.

108 Robert Mullen, The Mormons, 221-4.

109 See above, 105.

110 See below, 294-303.

had resulted in a scandal which almost ruined the mission's reputation.¹¹¹ In the 1940s stringent restrictions had been placed on the entry of foreign missionaries,¹¹² restrictions which affected the Mormon mission most of all, because of Mormon reliance on the quantity rather than the quality of its mission force. It was no accident, then, that Tonga became in the post-war years the scene of an especially vigorous and costly building programme; for the main purpose of the church's building activity was to impress - to create a new and ostentatious image for itself in the Pacific.

In Tonga the policy succeeded admirably. The plans for Liahona's construction were shown soon after their completion in December 1947 to Crown Prince Tungi, then Minister for Education and later to become King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, who, in the words of the mission's chronicler, 'expressed pleasure and a little surprise that the Church planned to spend so much money to build a large school in Tonga.'¹¹³ Other high-ranking officials including Premier Ata. and members of Parliament from Vava'u and Ha'apai inspected various stages of the construction and were all suitably impressed.¹¹⁴ When Liahona was officially opened on 1 December 1953, the opening was attended by members of the Royal family, cabinet ministers and nobles. The opening ceremony was performed by Queen Salote Tupou, who had hitherto shown little interest in the Mormon mission,

111 See above, 162.

112 See below, 305.

113 Morton, op.cit., 46.

114 Ibid., 49.

but took the occasion to commend the church 'for building a school which she felt would make an important contribution to the building up and encouragement of a Christian civilization among the Tongan people.'¹¹⁵

Further contributions were in store. In January 1955 the Polynesian missions were favoured for the first time in their history with a visit from a Mormon prophet - David O. McKay. The church leader authorized extensions to Liahona during his brief stay in Tonga, and soon after his departure the mission received authorization for the building of twenty-one brick chapels throughout the kingdom. The additions to Liahona were to cost \$117,242;¹¹⁶ the chapels, seventeen of which would also have recreational facilities, from \$6,518 for the smallest ones to \$48,776 for one at Nuku'alofa.¹¹⁷ The saints of each branch in which a chapel was to be constructed were to contribute at least £500 (approximately \$1,250) before building would commence and also to provide most of the labour and food for both local and visiting workers.¹¹⁸ Since recreational facilities had not been included in the initial estimates for the chapels, further appropriations totalling \$125,958 were requested by the mission for this purpose. The new mission president, D'Monte Coombs, explained the reason for the additional amount as follows:

115 Ibid., 51.

116 First Presidency to Coombs, 30 Mar. 1955, Tongan Mission Letters.

117 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Mar. 1955.

118 Ibid.

The recreational facilities are sorely needed because the largest group within the Church by far is the young people so that recreation halls will be a great help in keeping them in the Church and will also be quite an attraction and aid in our missionary efforts.¹¹⁹

Coombs was also successful in obtaining a lease on land in what he described as 'the finest residential area in Nuku'alofa' for the site of the Nuku'alofa chapel, the mission offices and missionary living quarters. The sixteen-year lease was arranged on terms which he considered extremely favourable: a down payment of a new American made Ford or Chevrolet truck and a yearly rental not exceeding \$47.¹²⁰ Although land in the kingdom was inalienable and was held by the mission by lease only, unlike Samoa and French Polynesia where the missions had been able to acquire valuable property by outright purchase, Coombs had received an assurance in November 1954 from Crown Prince Tungi, then premier of Tonga, that the likelihood of the government's refusal to allow renewal was very remote.¹²¹

In Samoa the main achievements of the building programme were the mission high schools at Mapusanga on Tutuila and Pesega on Upolu - the latter to be called later the Church College of Western Samoa. Construction on the schools, interspersed with chapel building, extended over the decade of the 1950s. The Pesega school was commenced

119 Coombs to First Presidency, 6 Mar. 1955, Tongan Mission Letters.

120 Coombs to First Presidency, 27 May 1955, Tongan Mission Letters.

121 Coombs to First Presidency, 22 Nov. 1954, Tongan Mission Letters.

in August 1950, its opening ceremony held in December 1953; Mapusanga school was begun early in 1957 and completed in 1960. In the intervening time, a labour force recruited for the Pesega project was kept active with the construction of chapels and additions to the Pesega school.¹²² In 1958 a further five and a half acres adjacent to the Pesega school was purchased at a cost of \$12,000 and used as a residential site for the school's American staff.¹²³ Under the auspices of the Samoan mission, chapels were also built between 1955 and 1958 in Fiji, Rarotonga and Aitutaki, new mission fields in which the acceptance of Mormonism was aided strikingly by the appearance of the new buildings which characteristically combined facilities for worship and religious teaching with those for recreational activity. As in Tonga, construction in the Samoan mission depended largely on the efforts of local saints, whose unpaid service was supervised by 'building missionaries' from Zion. Some of the Samoan labourers were also recruited for service on the Fiji and Cook islands projects.¹²⁴

The French Polynesian mission, historically the most significant, had far fewer of the blessings of the building programme conferred upon it than either Tonga or Samoa. Here the mission had never been able to acquire land in the same quantities as in other parts of Polynesia, and the mission's scattered nature inhibited the intense

122 An account of the building programme in Samoa is given in David W. Cummings, Mighty Missionary of the Pacific, 189-214.

123 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, June 1958.

124 Cummings, op.cit.

activity that had been so obvious elsewhere. Despite the mission's early start in the post-war building scheme, during the remainder of the decade only three more chapels were projected - at Paea on Tahiti, Uturoa on Raiatea and on Hikueru in the Tuamotus. By 1960 only those at Paea and Uturoa had been constructed.¹²⁵ Schools, which were an important aspect of the building programme in other islands, were not built in French Polynesia during the 1950s, because of government insistence that they be staffed by French nationals, a demand that the church was unable to meet until 1964. Although building activity was on a relatively modest scale in this mission, its rationale here was the same as elsewhere, and was expressed by mission president Ellis V. Christensen when he applied to church headquarters in September 1956 for building funds. The new buildings, said Christensen, would help the mission maintain an air of permanence, as hitherto 'some have hesitated to affiliate themselves with what they have almost considered to be a temporary organization.' Moreover, young people both within and without the church would be greatly attracted by the mission's new recreational and social facilities.¹²⁶

By 1960 the main period of building activity in the South Pacific had come to a close, though sporadic building continued for the next decade. Apart from the transformation in the appearance of the missions, the most remarkable feature of this period is growth in membership,

¹²⁵ Ibid., 241-7.

¹²⁶ Christensen to First Presidency, 21 Sept. 1956, Tahitian Mission Letters.

a positive indication that the major appeal of Mormonism for Polynesians was its material display. The Tongan mission shows the most rapid growth. According to church figures, between 1950 and 1960 membership rose from 2,975 to 5,665; by 1969 it had risen to 15,490.¹²⁷ By the end of the 1950s, the building programme had become as closely identified with the Mormon cause in the minds of islanders as the transient missionaries or the missions as institutions; and the new symbol of Mormonism in the Pacific was as much the new white-walled chapel with its recreation hall and adjacent basketball court as the young white-shirted missionary. To at least one L.D.S. commentator the building programme itself was the 'Mighty Missionary of the Pacific'.¹²⁸ To islanders it was an indication that the missions were at last displaying appealing evidence of material excellence. The 'infant Zions' - the gathering places such as Sauniatu and Vaiola - had barely survived their infancy, but it was no longer of real consequence; for by 1960 many of Zion's most tangible benefits had been brought to Polynesia.

127 Figures from Tongan Mission Office, Nuku'alofa.

128 Cummings, op.cit.

CHAPTER SEVEN

'OTHERS CAME WHO SAID THEY PREACHED THE TRUTH'

For generations past this land had lain
 Enthralled in sin and error's blighting chain.
 Tho' others came who said they preached the truth,
 'Twas but delusion in another way
 And many hearts were there-by led astray -
 The power of God was not with them forsooth.¹

L.D.S. missionaries entered Polynesia to find a people who had been, for the most part, at least nominally Christianized. The process of large scale conversion of the Polynesians to Christianity began rather unevenly in 1797 with the arrival at Tahiti of eighteen representatives of the interdenominational Protestant body, the London Missionary Society.² Civil disturbance forced the majority of the L.M.S. missionaries to abandon Tahiti in 1808, but they returned in 1811 and thereafter made rapid headway. Stations were established in the major islands of the Society group, the Australs and the western Tuamotus. Protestant evangelists were first in Hawaii also, where seven missionaries representing the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions began their pioneering labours in 1820. The L.M.S. are

1 Sister Myra Longhurst, quoted in Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 18 June 1901.

2 See R. Lovett, History of the London Missionary Society; W.N. Gunson, 'Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas'. For a popular account of Protestant missionaries in the Pacific, see L.B. Wright and M.I. Fry, Puritans in the South Seas. The social and political influence of early missionaries is examined in A. Koskinen, Missionary Influence as a Political Factor in the Pacific Islands.

recognized as the pioneers of Christianity in Samoa too, with the arrival in 1830 of the indomitable John Williams, Charles Barff and a small group of Tahitian assistants. In Tonga, as a result of an agreement between the L.M.S. and the Wesleyans, evangelization was left to the latter and, after a tentative beginning in 1822, Wesleyan missionaries re-entered the Tonga islands in 1826, enjoying remarkable success over the next three decades.

As part of their task of evangelization the Protestant missionaries applied themselves to the translation and publication in the vernacular of catechisms, portions of the Bible and hymnals, as well as secular teaching aids, vocabulary and spelling guides, grammars and dictionaries; work which involved the standardization if not the actual devising of orthography and usage. In Tahiti many of these published contributions to literacy among the Polynesians were the work of a single individual - the L.M.S. missionary John Davies.³ Davies published the first spelling book in Tahitian as early as 1810, and his first Tahitian grammar in 1823. In 1838 the combined efforts of Davies, Henry Nott and others resulted in the publication of the first complete edition of the Bible in Tahitian. Protestant missionaries in Hawaii, later to start, were not slow to follow: their first language guide appeared in 1822, the Hawaiian Bible in 1839. Before long Samoans and Tongans also had the Word in their own languages and were acquiring gradually the universal ability to read it.

³ See John Davies, The History of the Tahitian Mission (ed.) C.W. Newbury.

In addition to their output of religious and secular teaching material, Protestant missionaries were, in many islands, the architects of new social and political codes which were encouraged by the missionaries' royal patrons in Tahiti, Hawaii and Tonga, and were little more than the application - with minor variations and extensions - of Mosaic law; the decalogue according to Calvin and lower middle-class Anglo-Saxons. They followed an already apparent breakdown of traditional values and customs and contributed to the further disintegration of these while assuring the political paramountcy of certain native rulers and the social pre-eminence of the missionaries. Well before the arrival of rival religious organizations, therefore, the transformation of Polynesian society to conform with Protestant religious and social standards was under way. But the hope of the early missionaries - that the islanders would remain Protestant in perpetuity - was destined for frustration; before 1850 Roman Catholic missions had been established in Hawaii, the Society islands, Tonga and Samoa against the vigorous protests and vituperative propaganda of the Protestants.⁴ By mid-century religious affairs in Polynesia were characterized less by the struggle to win souls from heathenism than by hostilities between Protestant and Catholic; later arrivals would face the hostility of both.

Unwittingly, however, the Protestants, by their pioneer work in conversion, translation and education, made

⁴ There is no comprehensive work on Catholic missions in the Pacific. Letters from Catholic missionaries are contained in Annales de la Propagation de la Foi and Annales des Sacrés-Coeurs.

the task of those who followed easier in some respects, since many of the more demanding problems of the Christianization process had been met and were being steadily overcome. Especially was the task made easier for missionaries of new faiths whose doctrines bore some resemblance to Protestantism, for the seeds of Christianity which were planted by the early missionaries had in many instances broken only superficial ground. This in part explains the ready acceptance of Addison Pratt on Tubuai and Benjamin Grouard on Anaa; islanders on both had received basic instruction from Tahitian teachers, and only infrequent and brief visits from the English L.M.S. missionaries. There is little doubt that when Pratt and Grouard arrived the islanders were unable to distinguish readily between Mormonism and superficial Protestantism, especially since some of Mormonism's more unusual aspects had not yet become part of the Pacific missionaries' doctrinal armoury. E.W. Krause of the L.M.S., encountering Pratt on Tubuai in September 1845, tested him and found that 'on the essential doctrines of the Gospel he was not far from the truth' and, furthermore, was teaching 'all from our books'.⁵ Two weeks later on Anaa, George Platt found that a similar state of affairs existed, though Grouard was not on hand to be interviewed personally.⁶ Although Krause felt that Pratt had a few doctrinal vagaries which only his lack of fluency in the language prevented him from communicating, neither he nor George Platt seemed

5 Krause and Platt to L.M.S., 29 Sept. 1845, L.M.S. South Sea Letters (hereinafter S.S.L.).

6 Ibid.

unduly disturbed by the presence of Pratt and Grouard despite the fact that the Mormons had been busily rebaptizing L.M.S. converts. Platt, indeed, was impressed by what he described as a 'great reformation' on both islands and especially on Anaa, ascribing it to the diligence of the Mormon missionaries and the fact that their teachings were substantially the same.⁷

Not all the L.M.S. missionaries regarded the appearance of the Mormons with such equanimity. In June 1844 William Howe had acknowledged their arrival with the comment: 'Satan has sent forth another class of his agents to these seas in the shape of Mormonites to divert the minds of the people from the truth as it is in Jesus.'⁸ And David Darling was convinced that 'they are equally as bad as Catholics if not worse.'⁹ Howe observed accurately that the main reason for Addison Pratt's reception was that the Tubuaiians' frequent requests for a resident white missionary had been largely ignored by the L.M.S. 'What use are brief visits', he asked, 'for the instruction of a people?'.¹⁰

The initial response of Howe and Darling proved to be far more typical of L.M.S. attitudes to Mormonism than that of Krause and Platt, for the L.M.S. missionaries, already appalled at the arrival of Catholic priests, were not to be cheered by the appearance of another potential

7 Ibid.

8 Howe to L.M.S., 19 June 1844, S.S.L.

9 Darling to L.M.S., 20 June 1844, S.S.L.

10 Howe, op.cit.

obstacle to their pre-eminence; while the attitude of the Mormons to representatives of other faiths was hardly conducive to good relations, since Mormon scriptures damned Calvinism and Catholicism alike. Pratt's version of his encounter with Krause on Tubuai stresses his own humility and tact in the face of Krause's alleged attempts to antagonize and embarrass him,¹¹ and it is likely that his worldly experience had imbued him with a sense of diplomacy which many of his contemporaries and successors lacked completely. Privately, however, he resented Krause's attitude, while both he and Grouard were envious of the L.M.S. missionaries' social privileges. Grouard, especially, commented with more than a trace of bitterness on the idea of the 'devoted missionary' who underwent a few inconveniences but had many compensations; whose expenses were borne by his society; who was greeted warmly by the natives and given a 'splendid mansion' to live in: who

sets himself down in the center of his parish to rule as monarch, living on the fat of the land... writes two or three sermons duering the week... and if he does not get so drunk sunday morning that he cant get to the chappel he generally goes and reads them.

'I think', he concluded, 'it is a pretty low call....'¹²

It was not long before hostilities were flaring openly. In June 1846 L.M.S. missionary John Barff journeyed to Anaa to find that Benjamin Grouard had recently taken a woman of that island as wife. He had, reported Barff, 'thro the remonstrances of some of the people married the partner

¹¹ Pratt Journal, 16 Sept. 1845.

¹² Grouard Journal, emphasis in original.

of his crimes altho he is reported to have a wife and children in America. He justified the latter crime by a special commission to take a second.' Grouard's action, Barff felt, had 'loosened the reins of immorality throughout the island....'¹³ It also provided evidence for a growing assumption among the L.M.S. missionaries that the Mormons were teaching polygamy, and had now begun to suit the deed to the word. In December 1845 L.M.S. missionaries on Tahiti, including Barff, had complained to the French administration that the Mormons were preaching 'erroneous doctrine' and that they had books 'that taught the plurality of wives system', submitting as evidence the Book of Mormon and an exposé of Joseph Smith and Mormonism by John C. Bennett, once a friend and confidant of the Mormon prophet.¹⁴

The Book of Mormon was anti-polygamous in its teaching, but Bennett's work, which originally appeared as a series of newspaper articles in America and was published in book form in 1842, had a great deal to make of Joseph Smith's plural wife system - more, indeed, than truth would permit. It provided a very insecure foundation for L.M.S. accusations, not simply because the director of European affairs on Tahiti refused to accept it as evidence since its author was so obviously antagonistic to the Mormons,¹⁵ but because there was nothing in the teaching or conduct of Pratt and Grouard to substantiate the claim. True, the latter took a Tuamotuan wife, although he attempted to justify

13 Barff, 'Account of a journey to the Australs and Anaa', 2 July 1846, S.S.L.

14 Pratt Journal, 15 Dec. 1845.

15 Ibid.

his action not on doctrinal grounds or on the precedent set by Mormon leaders, but on the simple basis that he had received no news of his first wife in the three years since leaving America, and assumed her death or desertion.¹⁶

Moreover, the earliest Mormon missionaries to Polynesia were in all probability unaware of the doctrine of polygamy, since, although Joseph Smith had revealed it as early as 1843, it was not announced publicly until 1852, the practice having been confined before then to a few leaders in the church. Mormon missionaries in Polynesia would later preach the doctrine of celestial marriage while claiming that they were not encouraging the practice of polygamy among the islanders, and many would be obliged to attempt a defence of the doctrine on scriptural grounds, but before 1853 (when the doctrine was announced by missionaries in Hawaii) there is no evidence of its having been preached in Polynesia. However, Aaron Buzacott of the L.M.S. reported, after a brief visit to Penrhyn island in 1857, that an American Mormon (Sidney Hanks) had been among the islanders, and had attempted to show by biblical example that polygamy was not sinful.¹⁷ Hanks was in the second contingent of missionaries to reach the islands, having arrived in October 1850, and it is possible that he, and others of the second group, knew of polygamous practices among church leaders, even if they had not been introduced officially to the revelation on the subject. It is unlikely

16 Ibid.

17 Buzacott to L.M.S., 9 Feb. 1858, S.S.L.

that Hanks had learned of the new doctrine while in the islands, as he appears to have had no contact with the church authorities or his fellow missionaries after his appointment to the north-eastern Tuamotus in August 1851. Whether Hanks was actually encouraging polygamy or was merely attempting a defence of it is not known. For his part, Buzacott was inclined to treat this aspect of Hanks' teaching rather lightly, showing more concern at his other doctrinal vagaries, among them the concept of an anthropomorphic deity, which Buzacott described as 'gross and blasphemous'.¹⁸

Though early accusations that the Mormon missionaries taught polygamy may have been ill-founded, by the late 1840s many of the more distinctive aspects of Mormon teaching were becoming obvious to both native converts and rival missionaries. George Platt of the L.M.S., who in 1845 had found little to criticize in the teaching of Pratt and Grouard, had by 1849 found a good deal to disturb him.

It grieved me much...[he wrote after visiting several islands] to see that while the brethren have had their attention directed to the state of affairs on Tahiti and their own stations the Mormons have set a machinery to work, that will soon take away all the Paumotus.¹⁹

He was assured by one convert that the Zion spoken of in scripture was in America and that the faithful would soon be going there. From another, formerly an L.M.S. catechumen but now a Mormon missionary, he learned more of the Mormon practice of baptism by immersion and the frequent rebaptism

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Platt to L.M.S., 16 Jan. 1849, S.S.L.

of repentant sinners; some, his informant told him, had been baptized three or four times. 'They were very ignorant', Platt was convinced, 'of the way of salvation by Christ. Trusting to their baptisms and their prayers.'²⁰ On Tahiti Alexander Chisholm was annoyed at the 'absurd assumptions' of recent arrival Simeon Dunn, especially at Dunn's claim that the Mormons were not wholly dependent on the Bible but had a more sure word of prophecy.²¹ Chisholm, Barff, Howe and Davies were the Mormon's chief antagonists on Tahiti, Howe accusing James Brown in January 1851 of having endangered the life of a female convert by subjecting her to baptism by total immersion.²²

Also by the late 1840s Catholic missionaries had begun making inroads into the Tuamotus, commencing at Fakarava in 1849 and extending their efforts in 1850 to Anaa, by this time something of a Mormon stronghold. The arrival of the priests added to existing tensions and helped to confound further the islanders. 'We are quite perplexed by the different statements made to us.' A young Anaan told William Howe of the L.M.S. 'The Mormons condemn the Priests, and the Priests them, but they both condemn you.'²³ The opposition of Mormon and Catholic on Anaa was to result in bloodshed.

The sequence of events leading up to the actual outbreak of violence on Anaa is difficult to ascertain with

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Chisholm to L.M.S., 3 Feb. 1851, S.S.L.

²² Brown, Giant of the Lord, 204-05.

²³ Howe to L.M.S., 11 Dec. 1850, S.S.L.

accuracy; Mormon and Catholic accounts are contradictory, and both allege provocation and even intimidation by the other. A solution to the problem is not assisted by the fact that the only accounts available concerning the incident of violence are second-hand contemporary or secondary; those most directly involved in the affair left no accounts of it. From the conflicting evidence, however, certain details emerge.

The Catholic priests on Anaa had no direct contact with any of the Mormon missionaries save James Brown, who arrived on Anaa after visiting Tubuai and Tahiti in July 1851 to find that they were constructing stone chapels with the assistance of several Anaans, and had apparently converted about thirty. According to Brown's account disagreement arose in August between him and one of the priests - identified only as Tavana, the Anaan transliteration of his name - over two matters; the organization of schools on Anaa and the attributes of the deity.²⁴ The dispute continued the following month, with Brown and the priest each claiming possession of the school building, and was settled temporarily by the intervention of Telita, governor of the district Temarie, and a popular vote in Brown's favour.²⁵

In October, however, the dispute over school matters was revived. This time Telita decided against Brown, Brown later alleging that the governor had been bribed by

24 Brown, op.cit., 221. The priest may have been Honoré Laval.

25 Ibid., 225-6.

the priest. On 28 October the island was visited by the French frigate Durance, and the following day Brown was confronted by a gendarme and a native officer who presented him with a warrant for his arrest on charges entered by the priest, and demanded his presence before the governor's aide. 'They being armed with swords and pistols,' wrote Brown later, 'I thought it wisest to go willingly, especially as there was no chance to do otherwise.'²⁶

The charges against Brown included attempted subversion of the laws of the French Protectorate and interference with government schools. He was accused of hoisting the American flag, arming and equipping 3,000 men, and encouraging Anaans to demolish their villages and build fortifications. It was claimed that his bearing revealed a background of military training and strong militaristic tendencies. In addition there were, according to Brown, 'many other charges of a frivolous nature'.²⁷ Following detention on Anaa and aboard the Durance, he was taken to Tahiti to answer the charges. They were all 'without the slightest foundation in fact,' wrote Brown, 'except that I had much influence with the people.'²⁸

It is likely, however, that many of the charges, though exaggerated, were inspired by Brown's behaviour. He admitted to having drawn up, shortly after his arrival on Anaa in July 1851, a map of the Californian gold-fields and their proximity to Salt Lake City, in answer to the

26 Ibid., 239.

27 Ibid., 240.

28 Ibid.

questions of a group of Anaans. He had also spoken to them of his military experience and his service with the Mormon battalion during the Mexican war.²⁹ While Brown admitted only to speaking of the American flag, it seems certain that he actually displayed it,³⁰ although it is probable that the act was simply a tactless blunder rather than a deliberate gesture of defiance. The likelihood of his equipping 3,000 men (virtually the entire population of Anaa) is too ludicrous to deserve serious consideration but the charge may have had some flimsy basis in Brown's stories of his military exploits as may the claim that he suggested raising fortifications. There is little doubt that Brown's manner was bombastic and at times deliberately provocative; on one occasion he had attempted to make a Catholic priest appear foolish before a school class, an episode he described as 'mischievous'.³¹

Following his hearing in Papeete, described by him as 'a military court martial', Brown was ordered to quit the islands of the protectorate, leaving the labours of the Catholic priests on Anaa undisturbed.³² No first hand account adequately covers the period between Brown's departure and the outbreak of violence. According to

29 Ibid., 219.

30 An account of his arrest was given by Brown to church chronicler Andrew Jenson, in which he mentions speaking of the flag. Brown's own work, Giant of the Lord, omits this fact. See A. Jenson, 'The Society Islands Mission', Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, vol.7, 1916, 180.

31 Brown, op.cit., 225.

32 Ibid., 247-9.

William Howe of the L.M.S. - a relatively impartial reporter, since he disliked both Mormons and Catholics - the Anaan Mormons were subjected to various annoyances by the priests until their worship was forbidden. Subsequently, the priests insisted that the only proof of renunciation acceptable to them was baptism into the Catholic fold. 'Many', wrote Howe, 'not only of the Mormons, but others seeing the storm coming submitted, and were baptized, but others stood firm....'³³ Among those standing firm was one family whose head repeatedly refused to accept Catholicism on the grounds that English and American missionaries had satisfactorily shown the error of worshipping images. He is alleged to have said:

...but behold now you Priests come, and shew us your brass [?] Gods and tell us we must bow to them, and if not we must be punished. If I must worship an image I will return to my Father's Gods of wood and stone, which are quite as good as that you bring.³⁴

Despite the persistent demands of the chief of his district (a Catholic), the man stood firm, arguing, when confronted by a native constable, that he had committed no crime and refusing to be baptized a Catholic. The constable was soon replaced by a French officer, who, in attempting to enter the man's home, was struck down and speared to death by the family, who then turned their attention to a priest who had accompanied the gendarme, attacking him and leaving him for dead.

33 Howe to L.M.S., 1 Feb. 1853, S.S.L.

34 Ibid.

Following the attack, a number of sympathizers joined the family. A rude fort was constructed and the group took refuge within. Others, their tempers aroused, threatened the lives of the other priests, keeping them, in the words of Father Albert Montiton, one of the priests, 'between life and death for a long month...under siege in a wretched camp....'³⁵ The siege was eventually relieved by the arrival from Tahiti of a French warship on 4 December 1852, and the arrest of forty-five Anaans, five of whom were hanged following what Howe described as a 'very summary trial of the case'.³⁶

Howe's account names neither the gendarme nor the injured priest, but Catholic sources identify them respectively as Viry and Father Clair Fouqué.³⁷ Montiton, the only near participant in the affair to have left an account of it, is remarkably vague about the details, failing to identify either, and writing as though the incident was not provoked by religious differences.³⁸ For Howe, however, there was no doubt that religious antagonism was the basic cause. 'The body of the French people here,' he wrote from Papeete, 'and the Governor among them, know it to have arisen purely out of the zeal of the Priests, but they either cannot or dare not interfere.'³⁹

35 Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, Tome 27, 1855, 439.

36 Howe to L.M.S., 1 Feb. 1853, S.S.L.

37 P. O'Reilly and R. Teissier, Tahitiens: Répertoire bio-bibliographique de la Polynésie Française.

38 Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, Tome 27, 1855, 439-40.

39 Howe to L.M.S., 1 Feb. 1853, S.S.L.

The fact that the violence occurred a year after James Brown's departure, however, hardly absolves him completely from responsibility, for his influence among the Anaans was considerable and his attitude aggressive and defiant. On his removal from Anaa he is said to have told a group of his followers:

Don't be afraid, the French have no ships of their own; the two which are allowed them for their use were rented to them by the English; so they can't do you any harm. Since in the whole universe catholics exist only among the French, you need only kill all the French and that's the end of catholicism. ⁴⁰

It was this utterance which, according to Father Vincent de Paul Terlyn, a later arrival in the Tuamotus, encouraged the Anaans to raise fortifications in an attempt to defy both Catholic priests and French authorities. ⁴¹ Their actions may have given an air of civil disturbance to what was basically a religious conflict. Brown, however, suffered least from the affair. Those of his followers who were not executed were sentenced to hard labour on Tahiti, the outcome of what William Howe described as 'a painful case'. ⁴²

Antagonism remained the keynote of the relations between Mormons and other missionaries, though hostilities and tensions never again resulted in the same degree of violence. By the time the Mormons established missions

40 V. Terlyn, 'La Mission des Tuamotu ou Archipel Dangereux', Annales des Sacrés-Coeurs, No.5, 1900, 189.

41 Ibid.

42 Howe to L.M.S., 1 Feb. 1853, S.S.L.

throughout Polynesia other missions had virtually ceased active proselytizing and had settled down to programmes of consolidation rather than vigorous conversion. Thus amicable relations were never possible, since Mormon advances naturally meant losses in membership for other mission churches. Mormon missionaries gained converts more readily from Protestant churches than from Catholic, a fact which reflected both the similarity between fundamentalist Protestant and Mormon doctrine and the deeper indoctrination of Catholic converts. 'I find it much harder', wrote William Moody, 'to convert a Catholic than any other denomination, they seem to be kept in ignorance on many points in their own church and will not accept the light from any other church.'⁴³ In the 1870s, however, twenty years after the departure of the first Mormon missionaries from French Oceania, Catholic priests were inclined to regard the vestiges of Mormonism in the Tuamotus as the greatest obstacle to the progress of Catholicism, chiefly because of its 'heathenish' aspects and the ease with which transgressors could be absolved by constant rebaptism.⁴⁴

The Mormon view of conversion carried with it the often explicit assumption that the prior appearance of other missionaries and pre-Mormon conversions from heathenism were simply to prepare the way for Mormon missionaries and make their task easier. Some were apt to register disappointment if they felt the ground-work had been done

43 Moody Journal, 19 Nov. 1897.

44 Annales de la Propagation de la Foi, Tome 45, 1873, 372-3.

inadequately. Wrote elder E. Lafayette Cropper from the Marquesas in 1900: 'This is, indeed, a peculiar people, and...we must do the primitive act of Christening. The Catholics have not done a great deal to prepare the way for us.'⁴⁵ In addition, it was almost invariably assumed that the itinerant missionary on his tour through the villages should be welcomed and well treated by both members and officers of other churches, despite the fact that he was invading others preserves and frequently creating social friction in villages wholly or largely given to another faith. Refused food by the villagers of Asu on Tutuila in November 1888, Joseph Dean complained: 'The Catholics always treat us shabbily and that settlement was no exception.'⁴⁶ A year later, the reception accorded him by Catholic villagers had worsened, and after an unsuccessful meeting at Fagali'i he commented angrily:

I am more convinced than ever that we will make very few converts from the 'Mother of Harlots'.... The insolence of those Catholics ...and the way they would sneer at points I would bring up was very exasperating.... It is painful to see what a hold the Catholic dogmas have on them.⁴⁷

Incidents such as these rankled Dean greatly, and when he returned briefly to Samoa many years later he preached at Pago Pago 'on the Reformation and through the "Dark Ages", dealing on the many crimes committed by the Pope.'⁴⁸

45 Cropper to W.H. Chamberlin, 10 Feb. 1900, Tahitian Mission Letters.

46 Dean Journal, 21 Nov. 1888.

47 Ibid., 30 Dec. 1889.

48 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 8 Nov. 1916.

The next day there was standing room only at Dean's meeting, and in addition to delivering a discourse on the Reformation he 'showed by reading from the Bible that it was not translated correctly'.⁴⁹ Dean's revelations, recorded the mission diarist with evident excitement, 'caused much disturbance among the Catholics', many of whom responded at a meeting a week later by ridiculing the Mormon elders and calling them 'many bad names.'⁵⁰

Mormon missionaries, however, did not necessarily require the incentives of disappointment or frustration in order to act provocatively or create friction. Having invited himself and his companion into a chief's house in Safotu on Savai'i Joseph Merrill proceeded to abuse the chief's hospitality by embarrassing a Catholic friend of the chief and then refusing the chief's request to cease arguing about religion; instead, Merrill threatened the chief with 'condemnation in the day of judgement.'⁵¹ Few Mormons overlooked the opportunity to criticize sarcastically the appearance and practices of representatives of rival faiths, although extremes of sarcasm were usually confined to their journals. Thomas Ogden's account of the death of a Samoan Catholic indicates the combination of curiosity and cynicism with which many Mormon missionaries regarded Catholics, although the expression is peculiarly Ogden's:

In the afternoon an old lady living in the next door passed away to the other sphere....

49 Ibid., 9 Nov. 1916.

50 Ibid., 15 Nov. 1916.

51 Merrill Journal, 26 Jan. 1894.

She being a Cathloc it aroused our Curoosity
 Soon after she died The pope came as soon as
 he entered into the house he droped upon his
 knees I dont know what he said he dident stay
 long but soon after there came two teachers
 and a number of Cathlocs and they dident do
 anything but repeat the Lords Prayer and a
 little fatafua [fatufua? fictitious story]
 and sing until dark and then came a nother
 Cathloic and went through the same performance
 untill nearly bed time.... This morning the
 first thing the funeral servises was held....
 Cathlocs conducting the servises and you can
 bet it was a cir[clus The Cathloc preist and
 school came down all dressed in unefarm three
 of the Children carrying torches and a nother
 a bucket of holy water and another a cross
 with lesu [Jesus] on it and other fangle
 dangles.... First was singing then prayer in
 latten then a sermon in Samoan language then
 prayer again in latten. And then the corps
 was taken to the grave....⁵²

Somewhat more bitter, if more articulately expressed, were
 the views of Grant Lee Benson, labouring on Tubuai in 1919,
 at a time when much of the strong early influence of
 Mormonism on that island had waned.

It is well to not[el] the peculiar system of our
 neighbor churches here the Catholics or rather
 false teachers, as the older people will not
 listen to their flattery words and crooked lying
 schemes so they must look else where for
 converts, so they go about trying hard to gain
 the little children and deceive them when they
 are young and then when a child is once a
 Catholic no one can change them as they are
 so taken over by the Devils Control. They
 have a school system and by all coaxing and
 charming ways obtain children to teach, then
 they force the child to attend all their
 church services and keep him in their
 clutches.... Then again they tell the older
 ones not to go to the stores or traders for

things but to come to them as they give them clothes etc treat them to wine and tobacco finally winning their man then tables change they are forced to be a Catholic to pay for the material they gained...as we meet the Catholic popie here...we are sickened by the smoke of an old dirty pipe, sour clothes and an old greasy robe. Did Jesus smoke a pipe or wear one single robe for life?⁵³

Direct encounters between Mormon and Catholic produced results ranging from furious to farcical when points of doctrine were the subjects of discussion. At Taenga in the Tuamotus, Heber Sheffield antagonised the Catholic governor of the district by 'proving' that God, Jesus and the Holy Ghost were three distinct persons and also by suggesting that God had parents.⁵⁴ The Mormon doctrine of an anthropomorphic deity could hardly fail to be provocative to non-Mormons but the response was not always predictable. Joseph Damron reported that such a discussion between him and a Catholic priest had been cut short when the latter insisted '...it is impossible for God to have a body for if he did he would have to p___ and sh___[sic].'⁵⁵

If Catholic and Mormon missionaries regarded each other with varying degrees of cynicism and contempt, their church members in French Oceania displayed far fewer signs of hostility. To the observer in these islands there were at least superficial similarities between Mormon

53 Benson Journal, 18 Feb. 1919.

54 Sheffield Journal, 7 Mar. 1902.

55 Damron Journal, 18 May 1895.

and Catholic islanders. Wrote Robert Louis Stevenson from the Tuamotus in 1888:

They front each other proudly with a false air of permanence; yet they are but shapes, their membership in a perpetual flux. The Mormon attends mass with devotion: the Catholic sits attentive at a Mormon sermon, and tomorrow each may have transferred allegiance.⁵⁶

He quoted with approval the view of a Tuamotuan 'well informed in the history of the American Mormons....'

'Pour moi...les Mormons ici un petit Catholiques.'⁵⁷

The more cynical observer could comment on other likenesses.

'At Moumou...', wrote R.G. Fletcher from Tahiti in 1920,

half the village is Mormon, the other half Catholics. So you can imagine that promiscuity is regarded as at worst a form of super erogation. And there are not many who do not indulge in that form of religious overtime. I believe the Mormons do indulge in worship about once a month, when they have no other way of killing time. The Romans...do their job only once a year.⁵⁸

MORMON encounters with Protestants occurred more frequently than those with Catholics, because of the wider spread and greater influence of Protestantism in Polynesia. In Samoa the regular adversaries of the Mormons were their first antagonists in the Pacific - the London Missionary Society; though by the time the Mormons got to Samoa,

56 R.L. Stevenson, In the South Seas, 172.

57 Ibid., 173.

58 B. Lynch (ed.), Isles of Illusion; Letters from the South Seas, 298.

Methodists had also claimed some Samoan souls, as had Catholics. It was the L.M.S., however, larger yet more vulnerable than the others, which had most to lose to the Mormons and which reacted most strongly to their presence. Within a short time of the arrival of Mormon missionaries on Aunu'u in 1888, they were visited by W.E. Clarke of the L.M.S. who admitted freely - albeit civilly - that he intended using his influence to inhibit their progress.⁵⁹ The characteristic brashness of many of the Mormon missionaries was an affront to ministers of other faiths. A.E. Hunt reported that two at Matautu had attempted to convert him, lending him their literature, including works of Orson Pratt, that he might be led into the right path. The gesture hardly had the desired effect. 'That any man of education,' wrote Hunt, 'can receive such utter rubbish as vital truths amazes me. It certainly speaks much for the credulity of human nature.'⁶⁰ It may have, but it was common for rival religionists to underestimate both the credulity of the islanders and the persistence of the Mormons.

In an early attempt to combat Mormon influence in Samoa, A.W. Murray and George Pratt of the L.M.S. published in 1889 a pamphlet which summarized much of the anti-Mormon argument of the day. Titled O le tala i le lotu Mamona (The Story of the Mormon Church), the tract said nothing about Mormonism in Samoa or in any part of the Pacific; instead it concentrated largely on the

59 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, 18, 19 Nov. 1888.

60 Hunt to L.M.S., 18 Apr. 1891, S.S.L.

vagaries of Joseph Smith's early life and Mormonism's more obvious doctrinal aberrations - polygamy and polytheism. Mormon reaction to the pamphlet, the prototype in the South Seas of many anti-Mormon publications, was mixed. Joseph Merrill denounced its authors as 'the devine Revs of Hell';⁶¹ Joseph Dean, normally quick to react to criticism, dismissed it as 'a very tame and poorly gotten up affair, [which] will do us no harm....'⁶² Yet the pamphlet aroused much discussion among both saints and gentiles and ran into at least two editions. Dean, himself a polygamist, was often obliged to defend the doctrine of spiritual wifery as a result of discussion engendered by 'O le tala...'.⁶³ When it reappeared in 1905, the mission diarist, recording that it was a regular topic of debate, had to admit:

It is not without value to those who wrote it, containing false hoods and incorrect principles as it does. If the natives would only listen to reason and the word of the Lord, it would be an eaisy matter to show up the untruthfulness of the tract, but this they will not [do]....⁶⁴

As on Catholics, many of the Mormons more sarcastic observations on the L.M.S. were confined to their journals. William Sears frequently attended L.M.S. services in Apia, following his excursions with critical comments on the form of the service, the appearance of the congregation

61 Merrill Journal, 6 Mar. 1892.

62 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, 12 Dec. 1889.

63 e.g., *ibid.*, 20 June 1890.

64 Tuasivi Branch Record 1903-09, 11 June 1905.

or the value of their donations.⁶⁵ The 'shallowness' or 'lifelessness' of the Protestant form of worship drew frequent comment in journals, as did the regularity of L.M.S. collections.⁶⁶ Generally, however, criticisms of the L.M.S. were far less vehement than criticisms of Catholic priests and, especially in the early period, often seemed motivated by envy for the life-style of the L.M.S. missionaries.

Despite church instruction to missionaries not to engage in contention or dispute, the deliberate provocation of native ministers in an attempt to embarrass them on both doctrinal and social grounds was standard Mormon tactics. The orometua or faife'au made to appear inadequate and perhaps foolish in front of his own congregation or the chief of his village was not likely to react kindly; small wonder that many resorted to abuse in the face of what seemed at times intolerable smugness from Mormon missionaries. The fact that onlookers, given the Samoan fondness for speeches and argument, would frequently support the Mormons in debate - whatever their own religious commitments - added further to the discomfort of native ministers. The garrulous Joseph Dean would quickly take advantage of such situations, one of which, involving twenty-five or thirty native ministers, he here describes:

Bro. Lee stood them off pretty well for a time, but soon began to get somewhat excited at their

65 Sears Journal, 2, 19, 26 Jan. 1896.

66 e.g., Merrill Journal, 22 Sept. 1892; Sears Journal, 27 May 1896; Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 30 Jan. 1921.

aggravating questions. So I got up and released him. We had it hot and heavy for several hours, when finally I got them well wound up upon Luther's want of authority. They avoided any questions and began abusing us...in fine shape, calling us anti-Christ, murderers, adulterers etc. when suddenly the chief here Taimalie and several others backed up by the expressions of approval of nearly the whole crowd, told them to stop short or they would throw them out of the house.... We soon had more advocates than could get a chance to speak and the young ministers were completely crushed. Taimalie told them to leave, church and all, he wanted no more to do with them. They began begging for pardon for their nasty names and words, and begging the chiefs not to be angry with them. Their mortification was pitiable to behold. I gave them a last parting shot by getting up and shaking hands with them telling them I could forgive them all their unkindness, and exhorting them to be more worthy followers of the meek and lowly Savior in the future.... We are the heroes of the occasion and the natives seem to truly love us.⁶⁷

Three weeks later, in the presence of several high chiefs, Dean demonstrated to three native ministers 'that there were many of the ordinances of the Gospel that they knew nothing about etc. etc. etc.'⁶⁸ Church authorities' repeated cautioning to missionaries against dispute was of little avail. Indeed, argument and ill-feeling were natural outcomes of the Mormons' assumptions of authority and exclusivity; rivalries and jealousies corollaries of Mormon proselytizing methods. The gospel conversation by its nature produced contentions as well as potential converts.

67 Dean Journal, 28 May 1890.

68 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, 20 June 1890.

Refusals to allow the Mormons to hold meetings in villages on the grounds that 'they either had salvation or that they were afraid of divisions and strifes' were frequently met with.⁶⁹ The first justification was unacceptable and resulted invariably in more persistent efforts. The second, though most missionaries pretended ignorance of its ramifications, was a genuine problem in areas where the influence of a dominant church and social polity were inextricably associated. Social friction could quite easily be created by the presence of even a few religious dissidents and their exploitation by a rival religious organization. In 1909 William Moody outlined the methods used in Samoa to bar Mormons from certain villages or inhibit their influence:

Making laws in the village forbidding us holding meetings. Forbidding the people talking to us on gospel subjects. fining their members 50c for each absence from church. If parents put their children in our school and insist on their stopping with us it is sufficient cause for disfellowshipping them....⁷⁰

The theme was a perennial one with minor variations. In 1932 the Samoan mission secretary reported that L.M.S. and Methodist alike had forbidden their members to even entertain Mormon missionaries who were out distributing tracts or on a malaga. 'Their efforts are almost in vain', he continued, 'as the people resent this

69 e.g., Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 15 Mar. 1896.

70 Moody Journal, 7 May 1909.

movement on their part.'⁷¹ Such directives were inclined to cause resentment since they ran counter to the traditions of Samoan hospitality and deference to visitors, features which Mormon missionaries often mistakenly interpreted as indications of interest in, or enthusiasm for, Mormon teaching. They did not so easily misinterpret expressions of opposition or hostility. In 1952 when a Methodist minister on Upolu ordered Mormon elders to stop proselytizing his people, and proceeded to fine them if they allowed entry to the elders, the latter responded with an attempt at moral intimidation. Two, one the mission president, took the occasion of the minister's illness to visit him and remind him

how the Gospel had been restored and that when he forbid his people from receiving the Elders that he was forbidding Christ's servants from entering their homes and that in doing so in the future that the responsible would be on him.⁷²

In a few instances opposition to the Mormons manifested itself in minor violence. In January 1905 the German Samoan newspaper Samoanische Zeitung reported, in a tone which attempted to be simultaneously humorous and outraged, that a Mormon 'Apostle and his acolyte' had been assaulted, 'in the very midst of their solemnities and the mysteries of the Mormon rites', by 'a party of young men from an adjoining village headed by their regularly constituted, smug faced missionary.' The Mormon missionary's assistant, it was said, had been beaten within his own church,

71 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1932.

72 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Sept. 1952.

the missionary himself dragged from it by the heels over rough ground and deposited in the shallow waters of the nearby reef. 'It would seem', continued the writer, stating the obvious, '...that the competition for souls in Samoa, had risen until a strong tincture of bitterness was in danger of quite obliterating the grain of common sense which every man who is allowed to preach is supposed to be possessed of.'⁷³ This and subsequent accounts of the incident in the Samoanische Zeitung brought a rejoinder from the president of the Mormon mission, Thomas Court, who claimed that previous versions had been coloured by rumour and 'the Samoan Method of Telling the Truth'. Court submitted, as the Mormon version, a statement by the abused missionary, elder C.L. Smart, which differed in some details from the first account and identified the leader of his assailants as Fau, an L.M.S. faiife'au. Fau, Smart claimed, though both violent and abusive at the outset, relented almost immediately afterwards and tearfully begged forgiveness, pleading that 'he had fulfilled the Scripture wherein it speaks of the church being persecuted for righteousness etc.' and requesting immediate baptism by the hands of the Mormon elder. Because of the faiife'au's obvious contrition, and because he would not hold the L.M.S. responsible for the conduct of its native pastors, wrote Court, the Mormons had not laid formal charges.⁷⁴ The hapless faiife'au, however, was dismissed the following month.⁷⁵

73 Samoanische Zeitung, 28 Jan. 1905.

74 Ibid., 25 Feb. 1905.

75 Ibid., 18 Mar. 1905.

At the village of Satupaitea on Savai'i the minister of the predominantly Methodist population had strenuously opposed Mormon attempts to gain a foothold as early as 1931.⁷⁶ In 1944 John Q. Adams claimed that the prolonged 'Satupaitea persecutions [had] eventuated into open rebellion' as a result of which several villagers were fined or imprisoned.⁷⁷ The action evidently failed to have a salutary effect. Nine years later native saints in Satupaitea were driven from the village and their houses and meeting house burned, an act which the Mormons claimed was the direct responsibility of the head of the Methodist mission.⁷⁸

Methodists, however vigorous their opposition to the Mormons, were a minority in Samoa. In Tonga they were pre-eminent in both the religious and political spheres. The close relationship of church and state had led to Mormon withdrawal from Tonga in the 1890s. Their re-entry in 1907 was attended with minor success until 1922, when the Tongan government passed an extraordinary act designed to exclude American Mormon missionaries, but which was so worded as to suggest the exclusion of non-office holding church members also. The unconstitutional nature of the act and the public support which the Mormons succeeded in rallying condemned the act to a short life - it was repealed in 1924.⁷⁹ Two years later, following the rift in Tongan

76 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 27 Jan. 1931.

77 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 3 Mar. 1944; 22 Mar., 8 May 1944.

78 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1954.

79 See below

Methodism between the Wesleyan Church and the Free Church of Tonga, the Mormon mission president, Mark Coombs, wrote that he had received an offer to serve as 'President of the Free Church'. He offered to accept on conditions which would have made every Free Church member a Mormon - a proposal as quaint as the alleged offer.⁸⁰

In most of Polynesia, opposition to the Mormons came mainly from the established Protestant and Catholic mission churches. However, in French Oceania after 1892 islanders were treated to the spectacle of two mutually hostile Latter-day Saints sects, each claiming exclusive representation of the church founded by Joseph Smith. When Mormon missionaries returned after an absence of forty years they found that the crop from seeds they had sown was being harvested by their Reorganite cousins. To add insult to what the Mormons felt was severe injustice, John Hawkins, an early convert who had assisted with the work of further conversion in the Tuamotus, had since chosen the Reorganite path to salvation and was now vehement in his opposition to the Mormons. He was denounced as an apostate by James Brown, during Brown's brief return to French Oceania.⁸¹ Characteristically, Brown, invited to address a Tanito meeting, used the opportunity to inform the congregation of its error in not accepting the 'true' church. 'I tendered my services to preach in their meeting house', he wrote later, 'but my offer was not accepted'.⁸² Other

80 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 23 May 1926.

81 Brown, op.cit., 528.

82 Ibid., 505.

Mormon missionaries, no less ill-disposed than Brown towards the Reorganized Church were not loth to accept favours from Tanito members. Joseph Damron and William Seegmiller both recorded frequent gifts of food and money from Tanito office-holders and lay members alike.⁸³

On a later occasion Venus Rossiter, wife of Mormon mission president Ernest Rossiter, remarked upon 'the kindly feeling the native Josephites displayed to us.'⁸⁴

If on a social level relations between missionaries of the rival L.D.S. churches were occasionally amicable, on matters of doctrine they could never be other than hostile. At certain times, however, the inadequate supply of doctrinal material led to curious situations, illustrated by these comments of Clyde F. Ellis, a missionary of the Reorganized Church, in 1938.

The Mormon people there [Tahiti] use our native Doctrine and Covenants. This has been to our advantage as we have not had the arguments to meet which must be met when both books are used. We use the Utah edition of the Tahitian Book of Mormon.⁸⁵

Such situations were born of necessity rather than any desire for cooperation between the two factions. The Mormons, not always stronger in membership numbers, but invariably with a much larger missionary personnel, always

83 Damron Journal, Seegmiller Journal.

84 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1915-18, 29 May 1915.

85 Ellis to F.M. Smith, 20 Jan. 1938. The Mormon Doctrine and Covenants contains the revelation on polygamy. There is virtually no difference between the Mormons' and the Reorganized Church's Book of Mormon.

regarded the Mission Tanito, with its nominal missionary force, as 'one great thorn in the side of the Church',⁸⁶ although its presence was clearly a major obstacle rather than a mere annoyance. Edgar B. Mitchell, Mormon mission president in 1946 and author of the foregoing comment, summed up the Mormon attitude more accurately on another occasion: 'It would be the most glorious event in the history of the Mission if the Kanitos were eliminated for they have been a most important factor in hindering the progress of the Church in these Islands.'⁸⁷

At least part of the Tanito success in French Oceania was due to the relative persistence of their always sparse missionary force. They frequently fielded only one overseas missionary in a particular district, sometimes only one in the whole mission, relying to a great extent on local officers for support. This was no less true of the earlier period than of the later and occasionally drew comment from the peripatetic Mormon missionary, who was more accustomed to changing location frequently, rarely spending more than a few months in the same spot. In 1897 David Neff reported that he had found the population of Hao (about 500) divided almost equally between Mormon, Catholic and Tanito. He was convinced that the latter had the brightest and most active members, while he found the Mormons very backward and exhibiting a spirit of indifference. He felt that this was not to be wondered at, 'when we take

86 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52, 16 Apr. 1946.

87 Ibid., 26 Apr. 1946.

into consideration the amount of labor that has been done by the Josephite missionaries. One of their missionaries was here continuously for one year and a half.⁸⁸ Though their instructions also exhorted them to travel 'two by two', the Tanito missionaries did so as often with a native as with a white companion, a practice which sometimes drew a derisive observation from their Mormon counterparts, who felt more comfortable in the company of a fellow American, preferably a fellow Utahn. From Tubuai Grant Lee Benson commented that the Josephite minister had his 'lack which he is training to be a falsefying missionary some day.'⁸⁹ Reciprocal animosity was raised from the personal to the doctrinal level at the priesthood meetings of both factions and in the pages of the mission papers Te Heheuraa Api and Te Orometua, published by Mormon and Tanito respectively.

The Mormons, then, encountered opposition in varying degrees from every other mission and provoked further hostility by both their attitudes and their methods, a fact which did not go unnoticed by some missionaries. 'Do our actions', asked elder J.J. Blake rhetorically, 'bring persecutions on ourselves and also upon the church?'.⁹⁰ And it is no exaggeration to claim that to a great extent they delighted in the opposition, deriving from it further opportunity to promote the Mormon legend of a persecuted people, a legend which had been born in the expulsion from

88 Neff to D.T. Miller, 14 June 1897, Tahitian Mission Letters.

89 Benson Journal, 10 July 1918.

90 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1911-16, 26 Apr. 1912.

Nauvoo, Illinois, had grown to sturdy infancy in the trek westward, and had been assisted to maturity in every church publication and missionary chronicle ever since. Where the stimulus of 'persecution' seemed temporarily dormant there was always hope that it might soon revive. On reading of trouble in Utah in 1900, William Sears wrote: 'I almost wish we had more persecution out here, I believe we would prosper more.'⁹¹ Sears' contemporary, Joseph Merrill, was convinced that opposition was the life-blood of the missionary's trade;⁹² and though the tendency to view every temporary set-back or minor misfortune as evidence of persecution or discrimination bordered at times on paranoia, there was reasonable foundation for many of the assumptions.

The Mormons first antagonists, the London Missionary Society, remained the most formidable. In the 1950s L.M.S. opposition to the Mormons' strenuous proselytizing campaigns and building programme manifested itself vigorously in various parts of the Pacific, including Niue, the Cook Islands and Samoa. In Niue the L.M.S. aimed at excluding Mormon missionaries completely; in Samoa and the Cook Islands at severely restricting their numbers according to a quota system. Mormon missionaries arrived unheralded in Niue - for over a century an almost exclusively L.M.S. preserve - in 1952. The islanders' response was to subscribe 2,000 names to a petition addressed to the New Zealand Minister for Territories, T. Clifton Webb, asking for the

91 Sears Journal, 9 Mar. 1900.

92 Merrill Journal, 1 Nov. 1892.

Mormons' removal.⁹³ The incident inspired much correspondence in the New Zealand press but ultimately failed to have the desired effect - the Mormons remained. In the Cook islands in 1958, encouraged by the successful attempt in Samoa earlier that year at limiting Mormon missionary numbers, the L.M.S. pressed for a quota system for overseas missionaries, evidently failing to achieve it.⁹⁴ The Samoan attempt received not only the support of the other established missions - Catholic and Methodist - but the eventual endorsement of Western Samoa's Legislative Assembly. That the decision to impose a quota system on overseas missionaries was L.M.S. inspired there can be little doubt; but since it was finally made at the official level it will be discussed from that aspect in the next chapter. Some aspects, however, should be commented upon here.

The L.M.S. viewed with apprehension the increased pace of Mormon missionary activity after World War II and especially the rapid influx of American missionaries in the 1950s. In 1951 the Mormons had sixteen non-Samoan missionaries in Western Samoa to cater for a membership of less than 3,000.⁹⁵ By 1957 membership was less than 5,000 but the number of overseas missionaries had increased to 120.⁹⁶ As had been the case for decades, Mormon gains were mainly L.M.S. losses. 'The London Missionary Society is very much opposed to our church', observed the Mormon mission president in March

93 Pacific Islands Monthly, Sept. 1952, 89.

94 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1958.

95 Territory of Western Samoa Legislative Assembly Debates, 4th Assembly, 2nd Session, commencing Feb. 1958.

96 Ibid.

1957, 'because we are converting so many of their people to our faith.' He reported also that Mormon missionaries passing through L.M.S. villages had been subjected to abuse and stone-throwing, presumably at the instigation of the resident L.M.S. faife'au.⁹⁷

By March the following year, the opposition was presenting a common front. On 13 March Mormon mission president Charles Sampson received a call from the New Zealand High Commissioner in Western Samoa - G.R. Powles - requesting that they meet to discuss the matter of overseas personnel in the Mormon mission.⁹⁸ During the meeting a few days later the High Commissioner presented to Sampson the findings and opinions of Western Samoa's three largest churches; the L.M.S., the Methodist and the Roman Catholic. On 19 March Powles submitted written confirmation to Sampson of the three churches' views.⁹⁹

The leaders of the L.M.S. and Methodist churches had presented a joint complaint to Western Samoa's Executive Council, of which Powles was president, drawing attention to a recent annual report of the Trust Territory which stated that 'the Samoan people are content with their present religious options'. There had been, they insisted, a long-standing custom, observed by the three largest churches, that missionaries and pastors of one church did not proselytize among members of the others. Moreover, all

97 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1957.

98 Ibid., 31 Mar. 1958.

99 Ibid. A copy of Powles' letter and other relevant correspondence is contained in this report.

three were pursuing a long established policy of training Samoan church leaders for positions of responsibility and gradually withdrawing their overseas missionaries. This policy of developing local leadership had entered a time of transition and was already fraught with problems which were being aggravated by the vigorous proselytizing campaign of the Mormons. 'They are entering the houses of the people regardless of their existing church affiliations and the traditional courtesy of the Samoans towards visitors from overseas makes it very difficult to refuse them entry.'

There were four major difficulties, said the signatories, which would intensify unless the government acted quickly: the good foundations laid by 125 years of Christian missionary work in Samoa would be undermined; disturbances and splits in villages, already partly in evidence, would become greater; a prejudice against black people and especially Melanesians, based on Mormon doctrine, would develop, and other missions would be forced, out of self-defence, to reverse their policy of withdrawing overseas missionaries and re-introduce them in larger numbers, a tendency which would run counter to government policy as Western Samoa moved towards independence. None of these difficulties, it was claimed, could possibly be off-set by any temporary advantage to the country that might come from either Mormon capital or the alleviation of the educational problem. Pointing out that, even within the provisions of Article Nine of the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement, the number of Mormon missionaries in Western Samoa was out of proportion to the mission's needs, the L.M.S. and Methodist leaders showed that if their missionaries were admitted in the same proportion as

the Mormons they would have over 1,500 overseas missionaries in the country. They therefore requested a ratio of overseas missionaries to adherents, applicable to all missions, which would be 'liberal, fair and equitable'. The ratio suggested was 1:200; the existing Mormon ratio was about 1:40.¹⁰⁰

Endorsement of the criticisms and proposals by the L.M.S. and the Methodists was given by the Roman Catholic bishop of Samoa, who also took the opportunity to express himself in less diplomatic terms than those employed by his Protestant counterparts. There was every indication, he said, that the Mormons were attempting to impose themselves on the people through sheer weight of numbers. 'Our own people', he wrote,

are constantly complaining of the incessant importunings of the Mormon missionaries. Indeed, their type of unremitting proselytizing, smothered in kindness and politeness, is beginning to constitute a type of persecution which might be called brainwashing. I do therefore believe that the Mormon missionaries are using religious liberty and freedom of activity to such a point that they are beginning to deprive others of that same liberty.

If the points raised by the L.M.S. and Methodists erred in any respect, he added, it was by understatement.¹⁰¹

Sampson's response to the criticisms combined excerpts from Mormon doctrine, extracts from the mission's financial reports, and explanations of Mormon missionary

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid.

practice. The thirteen Articles of Faith, and the Word of Wisdom, as well as Article Nine of the Trusteeship Agreement and Article Eighteen of the United Nations Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man were invoked in support of Mormon activity in Samoa. Sampson pointed out the spiritual, educational, social and economic benefits to Samoa of the Mormon mission's presence. His counter to the accusations of the other churches followed. They were, he said, 'based on poor information or in some cases complete lack of it.' In addition, their indictments were so imprecise as to be meaningless. What were the 'good foundations' which were being undermined; were they moral or political? There was concrete evidence for neither. On the other hand, Sampson was happy to admit that the Mormon's progress may have weakened the foundations of other religious denominations in Samoa. What splits were the villages suffering? The fact that many villagers had broken with their established churches simply meant that they were exercising the privilege accorded them under the United Nations Declaration of Rights. In those villages where Mormons were predominant there was complete harmony between matai; it was only in those where Mormons were in a minority that friction was evident, since certain matai forbade Mormons from holding religious services in their homes, and others threatened villagers who accepted Mormon doctrine with exile, fines and other punishments. Furthermore, there was evidence that this type of persecution was being fostered rather than discouraged by the other churches.¹⁰²

102 Ibid.

On the subject of the Mormons' apparent colour prejudice, Sampson was guarded. He supposed that the Christian gentlemen referred to the Mormon practice of withholding priesthood status from the African Negro. However, the Samoans themselves were highly esteemed by the Mormons, who held them to be 'literal descendants of Israel and a chosen people of the Lord' and assisted them in every possible way regardless of their church affiliation, admitting them to Mormon schools 'on the basis of first come first served.'¹⁰³

While agreeing that the ratio of missionaries to members was higher among the Mormons than any other religious denomination, Sampson insisted that 'in our contacting of people of other faiths we try to be extremely careful not to offend.' The Catholic bishop's use of the term 'brainwashing', therefore, bordered on slander, and the thought was too absurd to warrant further comment. He requested that the Mormon mission be allowed to continue without restriction as provided in Article Nine of the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement.¹⁰⁴

Sampson's protests had little effect on the decision of the Executive Council to restrict the numbers of non-Samoan missionaries of any church to one for every 200 adherents, a decision made unanimously, and prior to his interview with Powles. Though evidently taken in March 1958, the decision was not made public until May, when, in Powles' absence, the Acting High Commissioner, L.M. Cook, issued

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

a statement to the Apia press. All missions had been requested to reduce their numbers if necessary, and had been given until 1 January 1960 to comply.¹⁰⁵

Although the new regulations applied to all churches in Western Samoa, the fact that the Mormons would be most affected by them was readily understood by most observers. The publication of Cook's statement provoked correspondence which ran for over two months in the Samoa Bulletin¹⁰⁶ and raised constitutional, moral and emotional issues. Participants in the debate wrote for the most part under pseudonyms, resorted occasionally to invective, and quoted, in support of their various points of view, Omar Khyam, Robert Louis Stevenson, Jean Cocteau and Lawrence of Arabia. Discussion was concerned essentially with the fairness of the government's decision and achieved a rough balance between opponents and supporters of the Mormon cause. Evidence produced by both sides was equally insubstantial. The effect of the protracted debate on uncommitted readers of the Samoa Bulletin was illustrated by one correspondent who dismissed it as 'juvenile rubbish' and pleaded for discussion on a more serious topic 'such as the recent sad droughts at the Customs Bond and the dreadful suffering thereby caused....'¹⁰⁷

There can be no doubt that the Mormons did intend to 'flood' Western Samoa with overseas missionaries, with a view to making 'an all out onslaught on the other

105 Samoa Bulletin, 30 May 1958.

106 Ibid., June, July 1958, passim.

107 Ibid., 4 July 1958.

missions....'¹⁰⁸ Nor can there be any doubt that, however advisable the government felt its decision to be, L.M.S. agitation was at the root of it; as the numerically strongest mission in Samoa the L.M.S. stood to lose most from the Mormon onslaught. The strong implication by non-Mormon forces that every overseas addition to Mormon personnel represented an addition to the missionary numbers was fundamentally correct, since Mormon principles made little distinction between the lay member and the ordained missionary; although the latter's approach was somewhat more systematized, both were theoretically dedicated to the task of conversion. 'Every member a missionary' was a common Mormon catch-cry.

Why was Samoa chosen for the 'onslaught'? Various factors may have determined the choice. The most obvious explanation is that within their South Pacific field Samoa presented, for a brief period, the most open situation for an approach en masse. Restrictions had already been imposed on the entry of foreign missionaries into such areas as French Oceania, Tonga, Fiji and some smaller Polynesian islands. In the 1950s, however, restrictions on the entry of Mormon missionaries into Western Samoa had been lifted by High Commissioner Powles himself, following assurances from Mormon leaders 'that there would be nothing in the nature of a flood of missionaries into Western Samoa.' Nor had there been until 1957-58.

What was significant about 1957-58? In order

108 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1958.

to provide an answer, oral opinion must take the place of documentary evidence. 1958-62 has been described as the period of first preparation for and then commitment to independence in Western Samoa.¹⁰⁹ Regrettably, there are no reports or correspondence available to corroborate the view that with independence near the Mormons' decision was motivated by political considerations. Aspects of these can be examined more fully below. At this point, however, it can be said that they resulted in a serious miscalculation which provoked additional hostility from the dominant churches, the influence of which was remarkably underestimated by the Mormons.

FROM the late 1840s until 1960, and beyond, relations between the Mormons and other missions in Polynesia were characterized by antipathy - at worst manifesting itself in open hostility and occasional physical violence, at best in an uneasy truce. Restrictions placed on the entry of Mormon missionaries were not likely to propitiate the other churches for long, since what the Mormon missions lacked in imported manpower they made up for in material display and an ever-growing force of islanders enlisted into missionary service with the main purpose of demonstrating a mission's dynamism or establishing its viability by ever-increasing conversion rates; rates which were augmented necessarily at the expense of the larger missions.

Where the longer-established missions moved towards a reluctant and tentative ecumenicism - born in

¹⁰⁹ J.W. Davidson, Samoa Mo Samoa, Ch.11-12.

part of their joint hostility to the late-coming sects - the Mormons remained steadfastly aloof, save where political protocol or social etiquette gave them no choice, from any cooperative venture or appearance of mutual respect. Claiming to hold a monopoly of religious truth, the Mormons were always secure in the belief that all other Christian churches were but part of the 'great apostasy', just as the others were always adamant that Mormonism was an insidious heresy, subversive of religious, social and political order in the islands. Eclectic in its origins and universal in its ambitions, Mormonism was prevented by its very nature from being ecumenical in its attitude to the religious life of the Polynesian.

CHAPTER EIGHT

'SUBJECT TO KINGS, PRESIDENTS, RULERS
AND MAGISTRATES'

THEIR experience in Polynesia gave L.D.S. missionaries the opportunity to test to the letter the twelfth of their thirteen Articles of Faith.¹ The political systems under which they commenced their activities were diverse, and were to undergo change during the period of contact. The status of the island groups varied from independent kingdoms to colonies under the control of European powers; from territories of the United States to Mandated Territories of the League of Nations and Trust Territories of the United Nations; and from British Protectorates to independent republics. An outline of the various political systems immediately prior to and following L.D.S. arrival, will assist in giving perspective to the problems faced by the missionaries.

The Society islands and adjacent groups - the Australs and the Tuamotus - were already coming under French control when the first Mormon missionaries arrived in 1844. Friction between British Protestant and French Catholic missionaries, which began in 1835 with the appearance of the first Catholic emissary to Tahiti, led seven years later to the establishment of a French Protectorate over Tahiti,

¹ 'We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.' The Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

the Tuamotus and part of the Australs. By the 1880s other islands had been brought under the sway of France and protectorate status had given way to outright annexation, marking the formal conclusion of the Pomare dynasty.²

The first Mormon missionaries to the Hawaiian islands found there a monarchy far more secure than that existing in the Societies. Hawaii in 1851 was ruled by the third of the Kamehamehas, the first of whom had been responsible for the unification of the islands by a dramatic series of wars of conquest. A constitution, drafted by missionary advisers, and conferring the privilege of freedom of worship, had been in force since 1840; a bicameral legislature was established in 1852. Although less affected by great power interference, Hawaiian royalty was to be as ill-fated ultimately as Tahitian. The last of the Kamehameha line died in 1872; thereafter the fortunes of the Hawaiian monarchs rapidly dwindled. With the death of Kamehameha V without issue, election and heredity both became criteria of kingship, and Hawaiian royalty entered its final phase. The subsequent monarchs reigned briefly, bedevilled during their reigns by the mismanagement of governmental affairs, by inept or unscrupulous advisers, and by a growing hostility from wealthy haole who practised economic self-aggrandisement

2 There is no adequate comprehensive history of French Oceania. For a study of the introduction of colonial rule here, see C.W. Newbury, 'The Administration of French Oceania 1842-1906'. For a popular account of Tahiti's development, see Robert Langdon, Tahiti: Island of Love.

and preached annexation by the U.S.A.

The last Hawaiian ruler, Queen Liliuokalani, ascended the throne in 1891. Barely two years later she was deposed. A provisional government, though vociferous in its annexationist demands, had to await a change of U.S. presidents before those demands were met. On 12 August 1898 the American flag was raised over Hawaii, and in June 1900 the islands became a territory of the Union. The fortunes of Hawaii were now inextricably tied to those of the U.S., auguring well for American commercial interests and American nationals.³

By comparison with the political history of Hawaii, that of Samoa seems remarkably tortuous. The last two decades of the nineteenth century, especially, were notable for political confusion, factional quarrels and contested kingship. Samoan affairs, already complicated by almost incessant civil strife, were further complicated by the rivalry and mutual suspicion of three great powers; U.S.A., Britain and Germany - the latter two already with considerable influence in the Pacific islands.

The 1880s began with rival claimants to Samoan paramountcy installed as king and vice-king respectively. This solution to rivalries, a tenuous compromise at best, lasted only four years. In 1885 Vice-King Tupua Tamasese, encouraged by the Germans, withdrew from the government of

³ The standard works on Hawaiian history are R. Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom 1778-1854: Foundation and Transformation, and The Hawaiian Kingdom 1854-1874: Twenty Critical Years.

King Malietoa Laupepa and two years later installed himself at Mulinu'u, the administrative centre, following Malietoa's expulsion by the Germans. The schism was an appropriate curtain-raiser to the events of the next fourteen years, during which Malietoa Laupepa was variously fighting to regain his supremacy or striving to maintain it against the claims of Tamasese and a third contender - Mata'afa Iosefa.

The contributions of the three powers to this period of strife and contention, and the extent of their interest in Samoa were of great significance to the country's political future. German commercial activity preceded political involvement in Samoa as it did elsewhere in the Pacific; first in the form of the Godeffroy company, later in that of the Deutsche Handels- und Plantagen- Gesellschaft. The first German consular appointment was made in 1861, the appointee, Theodor Weber, also becoming manager of Godeffroys in 1864. British and American representatives, their appointments pre-dating German by several years, also combined consular duties with commercial activity, adding to the ranks of an increasingly familiar figure in the Pacific, the businessman-consul. Already exercising a degree of power beyond the responsibilities of their office, the consuls had their authority increased by 1879 by their presence on the Apia Municipal Council, a governing body for the port established by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. Ten years later, during which time consular intrigues and German provocation of Samoan factionalism helped to exacerbate the uneasy political situation, and while the Mormons were taking their first tentative steps in the country, a conference of the powers met in Berlin to discuss joint supervision of the islands. The condominium set up by the conference had a life of barely one decade. In 1898

the death of Malietoa Laupepa relieved him of his troubles and the protracted kingship drama of its principal actor. The drama itself ran into the following year, stage-managed to some extent by the Germans.

Its finale was written in 1899 by a three power commission which ultimately agreed that the solution to Samoa's problems lay in partition. Britain, originally to receive part of the western islands, agreed to renounce her claims to Samoa in return for the renunciation of German rights elsewhere in the Pacific. When the new century began the flag of Imperial Germany flew over the western Samoa islands (Upolu and Savai'i), that of the U.S.A. over the eastern (Tutuila and Manu'a).⁴

One of the areas in which Germany had surrendered rights to Britain was Tonga, the only Polynesian kingdom which had managed to retain its independence throughout the nineteenth century - though not without difficulty. In 1891, when Mormon missionaries arrived, the country was still ruled by King George Tupou I, who had unified Tonga politically in 1845 and religiously in 1885; in Tonga state and church were coincident as they were nowhere else in the Pacific. That they were so, and that Tongan independence was preserved, was due largely to the personality and ability of Tupou himself, but also to the King's chief minister, the Wesleyan

4 Samoan traditional polity and international rivalries of the nineteenth century are examined in R.P. Gilson, Samoa 1830-1900: The politics of a multi-cultural community. Western Samoa's modern political development is discussed in J.W. Davidson, Samoa Mo Samoa: The Emergence of the Independent State of Western Samoa. For an account of Eastern Samoa under American control, see J.A.C. Gray, Amerika Samoa and its Naval Administration.

missionary Shirley Baker - a man for whom religion and politics were but two sides of the same coin. Tupou provided united Tonga with its first code of laws in 1850; subsequently the code became a constitution, over various editions of which the shadow of Baker's hand could be seen. The combined achievements of Tupou and Baker also included the negotiation of treaties with Germany, Britain and the U.S.A., changes in the system of land tenure, the setting up of a public education system, and the establishment of the Free Church of Tonga which seceded, under Baker's guidance and royal sponsorship, from the Sydney Conference of the Wesleyan Church in 1885.

Baker's contribution to these grand works was not untouched by chicanery, and for his pains he was deported from Tonga by the British High Commissioner in 1890. His adopted monarch died three years later. Strength of purpose and a degree of subterfuge had helped Baker maintain his position and Tonga its autonomy. With the deportation of Baker and the demise of his strong-willed king Tonga entered a less fortunate period. In 1900, as a result of its sorry financial condition, the kingdom was obliged to compromise its cherished independence and enter into a treaty of Friendship and Protection with Britain. Such a treaty was often the prelude to an extended colonial movement, but Tonga was not reduced to the level of total dependence on Britain, although a hint of annexation was heard in the early years of the century.⁵

5 For a study of Tonga's political and social development in the nineteenth century, see Noel Rutherford, Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga. An earlier, less detailed account of the kingdom is A. Wood, History and Geography of Tonga.

THE Mormons, then, were present in the islands during a period of much political change. Unlike several of the early Protestant and Catholic missionaries they were not the agents of change; indeed, they made in most cases strenuous efforts to avoid being directly involved in the tide of politics - they could not easily escape being caught in the backwash. However undesired contact with administrators and officials may have been it was unavoidable; and by some of these the Mormons were harassed, by others they were humoured, and by at least a few they were hated. In most areas officialdom's initial attitude of suspicion about the Mormons gave way to toleration and then to a grudging acceptance.

In their first area of contact with the Pacific - French Oceania - the Mormons' arrival could hardly have been more ill-timed. For although in Tahiti in 1844 the French were too preoccupied with native opposition to their encroachment to take much notice of the first Mormons, by 1850, with their numbers augmented by reinforcements from the U.S., the missionaries were beginning to arouse official attention. By November 1850 earlier indifference to their presence had given way to circumspection. The large number of individuals now attached to the Mormon mission was tending, it was felt, 'to create a sort of church government embracing all the lands of the protectorate of France, to create...a new existence to the population of the islands....'⁶ The fear, though exaggerated, was significant. It anticipated a similarly expressed fear regarding Hawaii in 1858⁷ and

⁶ Pratt Journal, Nov. 1850, James Brown, Giant of the Lord, 184.

⁷ See below, 268.

Samoa in 1893.⁸

The better to alleviate French concern about the missionaries, Governor Bonard of Tahiti presented to Pratt, Dunn and Brown a list of questions to be answered and conditions to be observed. Many of them were no more demanding than those which would have been faced by any missionary body in a like situation, but several reflected suspicions about Mormon conduct and activity that were to become perennial; suspicions of immorality, vagrancy and subversion. Bonard demanded to know by what means the Mormons obtained their living, what morals they preached and what standard of morality they expected from members, and what were their organization's forms of government and discipline. He forbade them to interfere in any way or under any pretext with matters civil or political, to speak from the pulpit against the established religion of the protectorate, and to extract from their local members any tax in cash, kind or labour.⁹

Bonard was less than satisfied with the answers provided. He objected particularly to those concerned with the means of missionary support and the forms of church government. To the former the missionaries had replied that 'they that preach the gospel shall live off the gospel', and that they went forth with expectations that the flock would minister to the shepherd in the necessities of life and health. Bonard wished that men would obtain a living in

⁸ Merrill Journal, May 1893.

⁹ Pratt, op.cit.; Brown, op.cit., 184-6.

more honourable ways. To the latter question the missionaries replied that their forms of government were those set forth by Christ and his apostles, a response too vague for the governor. 'He seemed to dislike scripture references', observed James Brown.¹⁰ For all his objections Bonard allowed the Mormons permits to preach in the French Protectorate.

But the time left to them for preaching was short. By October 1851 James Brown was a prisoner under threat of expulsion and the others were under a heavy cloud of suspicion. Grouard later claimed that the missionaries found themselves subjected to a vigilant espionage and every little annoyance that could be induced against them.¹¹ Brown's expulsion, as we have seen, was due to his influence and provocative behaviour on Anaa, and the exaggerated belief that he was both highly educated and skilled in the arts of war. He was informed by U.S. Consul W.H. Kelly that he had so excited the French that they would think little about shooting him if they could do it undetected.¹²

The Mormons' first direct encounter with officialdom in the islands, therefore, made the prospect of eventual success seem remote. It also provided a foretaste of the problems successive generations of missionaries would experience. Yet if any lessons were rapidly learned they were as rapidly forgotten, and certainly not transmitted to missionary posterity. The Mormons would continue to provoke

10 Brown, op.cit., 188.

11 Tahitian Mission Manuscript History, July 1852.

12 Brown, op.cit., 250.

suspicion by their behaviour, continue to arouse antagonism by their doctrine, and face more than once the threat of expulsion. To some extent this was due to simple prejudice against their religion and, at times, their nationality. It was due also to a complete lack of even rudimentary diplomacy on the part of many missionaries. As the divinely elect from the land choice above all others, many regarded it as ignominious to acknowledge official fiat in diminutive countries. The prophecy that scourge and pestilence would befall those who inhibited God's messengers, and that disaster would devour their countries was uttered more than once in the Pacific islands.¹³

In Hawaii, at least for two years after their arrival, the Mormons faced little harassment from officialdom. The kingdom's constitution, largely a creation of Protestant missionaries, guaranteed freedom of worship, and in 1851 mission president Philip B. Lewis requested and received protection of the elders' rights 'in common with all other Christian denominations' having given assurance that the Mormons 'intend to preach nothing but what is contained in the Christian Bible as set forth in the published Laws of this Government....'¹⁴ Early in 1853, however, the missionaries obtained a copy of the recently published revelation on celestial marriage and announced it to Hawaiian saints.¹⁵ The effect of its announcement was evidently unforeseen.

13 See below, 285, 299.

14 Lewis to Minister of Interior, 6 Oct. 1851, Interior Department Letters.

15 See above, 219.

In 1854 the elders were refused permission by the Minister of the Interior to solemnize marriages on the grounds that they believed and also taught the doctrine of polygamy.¹⁶ They responded characteristically to the refusal. 'We would ask', wrote elders Lewis and Johnson, 'what clause of statute or constitutional provision is violated through the believing or even teaching the doctrine of Polygamy.' They admitted belief in polygamy,

for we believe in the Christian bible....
But if your words are designed to imply that we teach its practice to Hawaiian subjects, or within this kingdom, then your words become false as no such precepts or examples have emanated from us.¹⁷

A month earlier elder Francis Hammond had responded in even stronger terms. He demanded that the discrimination against Mormons be made public,

so that the name of Hawaii may be lauded because of its being kind to all religions but, that in the performance within itself, it is crooked, such as is being done in this instance.

Both letters blamed missionary influence on the Hawaiian government for the decision, Hammond inveighing against both 'Calvanistic Ministers and Popish Priests.'¹⁸ Further

16 Minister to P.B. Lewis etc., 15 Nov. 1854, Interior Department Letters, emphasis in original.

17 Lewis and Johnson to Minister, 2 Dec. 1854, Interior Department Letters, emphasis in original.

18 Hammond to Premier, 1 Nov. 1854, Interior Department Letters, emphasis in original.

opportunities failed to reverse the government's decision, though Hammond subsequently adopted a less aggressive tone.¹⁹ Not until 1877 did the Mormons obtain official approval to conduct marriage ceremonies.

In 1858 the elders were obliged to answer a need for their presence stronger than that of the Hawaiian saints. Because of domestic difficulties with the U.S. government, Brigham Young bade them return to Utah. The nature of the trouble was such that much speculation took place about the Mormons' future home, some of it occurring in Hawaii. In an atmosphere only a short time previously charged with talk of U.S. annexation of the islands, U.S. Commissioner David L. Gregg wondered if Hawaii might not be the Mormons' ultimate destination. To his diary he confided:

Many of the 'Saints' have resided here for a time...and doubtless have suggested the Hawaiian group as a safe point of settlement. Their leaders are shrewd and by this time comprehend the necessity of establishing an empire of their own, and perhaps they consider themselves strong enough to come in and take possession. This is mere conjecture, but it is not utterly improbable.²⁰

Nine days and several additional newspaper accounts later, Gregg was turning conjecture into near certainty and sharing his suspicions with Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Crichton Wyllie.

In my estimation [he wrote] it is quite probable that the Mormons have their eyes turned towards these islands. If they could once get a foothold

19 Caine and Hammond to Minister, 24 Aug. 1855, Interior Department Letters.

20 Gregg Diary, 6 Jan. 1858.

they would soon overthrow the present government and have one suited to their own peculiar notions.²¹

But until 1864 the only vaguely Mormon foothold implanted in Hawaii was that of Walter Murray Gibson, whose concept of empire and methods of achieving it differed markedly from the Mormons.²² If the Mormons ever conceived of a political empire in the Pacific islands they evidently did not commit their plans to paper, despite their domestic problems and the proposals of men such as H.J. Moors.²³

The Mormon missionaries returned to Hawaii in 1865, but with far more modest expectations that Gregg had feared. Their immediate territorial aims were concerned with no more than the purchase of 6,000 acres of plantation land at Laie on Oahu.²⁴ Giving notice of their impending arrival, Brigham Young informed Kamehameha V that because the Mormon religion so intimately blended the spiritual with the temporal, the missionaries would be teaching not only religion but also the arts of industry and self-preservation, and, in effect, be promoting 'practical salvation.'²⁵

Kamehameha's reply suggested that the advance guard had not been entirely honest about their motives in acquiring the property. Elder Hammond, said the King, had

21 Ibid., 15 Jan. 1858. Wyllie later announced the 'semi-official warning' to the Legislature. Report to the Legislature by the Secretary for War, 1858.

22 See above, 98-100.

23 See above, 168-70.

24 Pacific Commercial Advertiser, 4 Feb. 1865.

25 Young to Kamehameha V, 24 Mar. 1865, Miscellaneous Foreign File.

given indication that the land was to be used to grow cotton for Utahns and had especially disdained any intention 'of preaching the Doctrines of your Religious Persuasion.' But Kamehameha had heard that the church held many tenets which were opposed to good government and some which were in violation of the laws of the kingdom. The King wrote that he

would view as a great misfortune the permanent introduction as a Body of Religious Teachers, men who look to a foreign head, for political as well as religious teaching, whose presence in other and stronger states, where the people are more advanced and opinion is free, has been productive of discord even wars, and who teaching the doctrine of direct and immediate revelation from God, may at any time justify any act, by pleading that it is the command of the Almighty to themselves revealed.

He considered the existing Christian faiths ample for the salvation of his people and all men, though he would permit the Mormons to carry out their agricultural and mechanical operations, guaranteeing protection of their property rights.²⁶

A Privy Council meeting of 11 July 1865 upheld the King's decision, considering the admission and toleration of the Mormons in a 'religious character' to be eminently dangerous and impolitic.²⁷

By that time, however, the arrival of the missionaries was a fait accompli. They had actually landed on 7 July. Despite the fears of king and council, no attempt seems to

26 Kamehameha V to Young, 2 May 1865, Miscellaneous Foreign File.

27 Privy Council Records, vol.11, 233-7, 11 July 1865.

have been made to prevent their landing or to interfere with their activities, most of which were centred, for a while, on the Laie plantation, where industry, thrift and practical salvation were regularly practised and a minor share in the islands' sugar boom was enjoyed. In Hawaii after 1865 the Mormons were little troubled by officialdom.

They were not so fortunate elsewhere. Samoa and Tonga both provided frequent instances of friction between missionaries and officials; and in French Oceania both Mormons and Tanito incurred suspicion and hostility from French administrators, based as much on national jealousies as on religious prejudice and a desire to maintain harmony between church and state. In Samoa the Mormons' situation was confused by the changes in colonial administration, and everywhere by the necessity of paying lip service loyalty to one regime while maintaining true political allegiance to another, more distant, one. Even where American officialdom was present in the islands, in the form of naval governors, as in American Samoa, or consuls, the Mormons did not always receive the sympathy and support they may have hoped for.

Within six months following their reappearance in Tahiti in 1892 the missionaries received conflicting information from two U.S. consuls. J. Lamb Doty, their first informant, had assured them that there were no restrictions on their preaching.²⁸ From Doty's replacement, Dorence Atwater, they learned that they could not obtain a licence to preach as their religion was unrecognized in France.²⁹ Atwater's

28 Seegmiller Journal, 29 Jan. 1892.

29 Ibid., 17 June 1892.

information, correct as it was, went unheeded. The missionaries remained and continued to preach, concentrating their activities to a large extent, however, on the Tuamotus, in an effort to regain members lost to the Tanito.

They continued untroubled for almost three years, during which time they succeeded in re-establishing their influence on some islands in the Tuamotus. In March 1895, following a change in resident governors in that group, their activities were suddenly threatened. The new appointee, E.A. Martin, with a zeal seemingly born of his recent appointment, ordered elders Cannon and Larsen on Fakarava and elders Jones and Despain on Takaroa, to cease public preaching and teaching immediately, giving them three months to procure a licence for their activities or face fines, imprisonment and banishment. Later Martin spoke at length to Jones and Despain, couching the interview in terms that were not so much inquiring as accusatory. He was especially interested in the missionaries' financial condition, demanding to know if they received a salary, and, if not, how they obtained support. Was money sent from America? Who sent it? How was it sent? What was done with it? How could he be sure that it was sent? 'You are vagabonds', he declared, 'and come to sponge from the natives.' Why, he asked, did they not call on him when he first arrived? Did they not believe in being subject to governments?³⁰ Martin later made Larsen, Cannon and Jones pay taxes for the past three years, in the latter's case amounting to \$(Chili)38.50.³¹

30 Damron Journal.

31 Seegmiller Journal, 17 Apr. 1895.

At the end of March Martin wrote to Jones and Despain informing them that he would not sanction the holding of a proposed conference on Takaroa, and that if the conference were to take place he would lay charges against the missionaries and all who spoke at it.³²

On Tahiti mission president Frank Cutler attempted to seek redress from the governor of the colony, Papinaud. On 29 April he presented Papinaud with a supplication which retailed some of the indignities allegedly suffered by his missionaries and requested official recognition of the church in French Oceania. The church's teachings, he assured the governor,

will tend to produce a public sentiment that will greatly aid your Excellency and aids in governing the people of this colony, tend to increase its stability, and ensure domestic peace....

The words echoed those of Brigham Young to Kamehameha V and were followed by a statement of the twelfth article of faith.³³ Papinaud's response combined nonchalance with firmness. He refused to grant Cutler's request for a licence, saying that such a decision must be made by the president of the republic, and expressed wonderment that his predecessors had tolerated the Mormons for so long. On the other hand, he informed Cutler's deputation that they might continue to preach secretly among their members, accompanying the information with 'a peculiar flinch of his shoulders, peculiar to a French man....'³⁴

32 Martin to Jones and Despain, 30 Mar. 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

33 Cutler to Governor, 22 Apr. 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

34 Seegmiller Journal, 29 Apr. 1895.

Having been frustrated in his meeting with Papinaud, Cutler took his troubles to Consul Doty. Doty's interview with the governor was no more successful. Indeed, he was told by Papinaud's secretary that should the missionaries conduct services even within their own dwellings they would suffer the consequences threatened by Martin. Doty was puzzled at what he felt was a change in the attitude of the administration but optimistic about the outcome, believing that no action would be taken against the missionaries. He therefore entered no official protest. He had learned, however, that it was the desire of both the Catholic and Protestant churches in the colony to have the American missionaries removed, as they were considered objectionable 'not only from a religious standpoint, but also for business reasons.'³⁵ It was an opinion later corroborated by both the Papeete Chamber of Commerce, which accused the Mormons of having no purpose on the Tuamotus other than speculation and exploitation,³⁶ and Tanito missionary Joseph Burton, who admitted that much of the hostility directed against his group came as a result of his advising his followers to patronize American rather than French merchants.³⁷

The consul realized that the last word on the subject had not been spoken, and advised Cutler and Joseph

35 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 11 May 1895, U.S. Consular Despatches.

36 Journal Officiel Des Etablissements Français De L'Océanie, 16 Mar. 1899.

37 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 5 Nov. 1904, U.S. Consular Despatches.

Damron to have the church's First Presidency contact the U.S. State Department on the matter.³⁸ He also suggested that on Damron's return to the U.S. he might give a few points to news reporters for circulation.³⁹ In the meantime some missionaries in the Tuamotus wondered if they should ignore the injunction and continue to preach,⁴⁰ while others considered installing a Tuamotuan as a 'figurehead' in order to circumvent the problem, since native elders were permitted to continue their work.⁴¹

With Damron back in Salt Lake City swearing affidavits and delivering accounts of Mormon misfortune to the local press,⁴² the First Presidency lost no time in presenting the missionaries' case to the State Department. Meanwhile they advised Cutler to act with circumspection, working only within the limits of wisdom. 'Do not give the enemy', they warned Cutler, 'an opportunity to make capital.'⁴³ But the enemy was soon appearing on another front. On Tubuai the gendarme informed local missionary Frank Goff that under Papinaud's instructions the people had been enlightened concerning the American Mormons. It was not right for the islanders to be commanded to feed and shelter

38 Damron Journal, 8 May 1895.

39 Ibid., 10 May 1895.

40 Cannon to Cutler, 21 May 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

41 Woodbury to Cutler, 16 May 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

42 Salt Lake Herald, 16 June 1895.

43 First Presidency to Cutler, 27 June 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

the missionaries, and they were justified in resisting such commands. 'They tried to persuade us to go to work', wrote Goff '...but we told them we did not come here...to cultivate these swamps but to teach them the gospel...and there for it was useless for them to talk to us in that way.'⁴⁴

By September Doty had received instructions from the State Department that if the Mormon missionaries in the colony observed the civil law of marriage and neither preached nor practised any doctrine violating law or morality they should have the same impartial protection given all other American citizens.⁴⁵ The consul now confronted Papinaud more confidently, obtaining from him the admission that Martin had been entirely too zealous. After a lengthy argument the governor also consented to allow the American missionaries to resume their work, pending a reply from Paris to the question of their legal status. Despite the concession Doty was less hopeful than he had been in April. He anticipated further trouble and inconvenience to the missionaries.⁴⁶

No trouble was immediately forthcoming, though the possibility of it was ever present. In May 1898 William Chamberlin learned that the French were once again considering the prohibition of American missionaries; Mormons, Tanito and Seventh Day Adventists: 'The first on account of polygamy,

44 Goff to Cutler, 19 Nov. 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

45 Whitehouse to Uhl, encl. in U.S. Consular Despatches, 10 Sept. 1895.

46 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 10 Sept. 1895, U.S. Consular Despatches.

the second for collecting too much money, and the third for the two Sabbaths.⁴⁷ The Tanito mission, led by Joseph Burton, was becoming a regular target for the attack of French officialdom. In November 1902 Burton complained to Acting U.S. Consul W.F. Doty that the Tanito had been regularly silenced and otherwise harassed since 1873. On one occasion, said Burton, the governor of the Tuamotus had charged missionary A.H. Smith with inciting rebellion, robbing the natives of 1,500 francs, and charging two dollars for the privilege of kissing his hand.⁴⁸ Early in 1903 both Mormon and Tanito found favour with French officialdom when missionaries rendered invaluable aid to hurricane victims on Hikueru,⁴⁹ but their efforts did not guarantee them immunity from further criticism and occasional insult. While their assistance was being applauded on Tahiti, Governor Eduard Petit was addressing the missionaries on Tubuai as follows: 'You Mormon Elders, I would have you know that you must reverence me, the Governor of this entire Colony. You are not now on American soil, but on French territory.'⁵⁰

Throughout 1904 Burton complained that Tanito mission conferences were being prohibited, while those of Protestant and Catholic churches were allowed. The

47 Chamberlin Journal, 29 May 1898.

48 Burton to Doty, 7 Nov. 1902, U.S. Consular Despatches.

49 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 4 Mar. 1903 (and encl.), U.S. Consular Despatches.

50 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 6 Mar. 1903, U.S. Consular Despatches.

conferences, he argued, provided important and necessary social services for the islanders, by helping to reunite families and relatives and instilling principles of morality and patriotism.⁵¹ W.F. Doty, himself a Presbyterian missionary, was pleased to present Burton's case. The conferences, he claimed, were no drain on the resources of the native members, and their conduct was not offensive to Christian standards of chastity. Moreover, the denomination represented by Burton was in no way identified with polygamy.⁵² For his part, Burton continued to protest about the 'unjust and entirely uncalled for discrimination against this American incorporated society.'⁵³

Burton was obviously aware that much of the opposition to Mormon and Tanito missionaries had a nationalist rather than religious basis. What made the L.D.S. denominations and the Seventh Day Adventists suspect in the eyes of French officialdom was not simply their doctrinal vagaries, but the political allegiance and potential political influence of their missionaries. W.F. Doty was equally aware of the nature of French opposition. In 1902 he had reported an anti-American feeling existing in the colony and was himself denied permission to conduct services in his missionary capacity.⁵⁴ He need not have been surprised.

51 Burton to Doty, 10 Aug. 1904, U.S. Consular Despatches.

52 Doty to Governor, 27 July 1904, U.S. Consular Despatches.

53 Burton to Doty, 4 Nov. 1904, U.S. Consular Despatches.

54 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 17 Oct. 1902, U.S. Consular Despatches.

France, jealous of its newly acquired colonies, had for some time been watching with apprehension the United States' increasing involvement in the Pacific area. By 1902 the U.S. had acquired Hawaii, Guam and the Philippines and had naval administrators in Eastern Samoa. American control over the construction of the Panama Canal was soon to be won, following French mismanagement of the project.⁵⁵ The French had every reason to believe that under the aggressive Roosevelt administration the U.S. would continue to expand its influence in the Pacific. In 1902 Doty had commented on a rumoured American seizure of Tahiti for use as a naval base,⁵⁶ and he was not beyond recommending a take-over. In May 1903 he wrote to the U.S. State Department:

...the natives are most friendly inclined toward the United States. They consider the acquisition of the English tongue as of more value than that of the French. It is safe to state that they would eagerly welcome the Americanization of the Colony.⁵⁷

If the natives would have welcomed it, it is not surprising that the French would have feared it, nor that their attitude to Americans in the colony should have been one of circumspection, especially to those whose status as missionaries guaranteed them additional prestige and influence among the islanders. The waning of the fear

55 For a brief account of U.S. expansion in the Pacific, see C. Hartley Grattan, The United States and the South-West Pacific, especially Pt II.

56 Doty to Assistant Secretary of State, 17 Oct. 1902, U.S. Consular Despatches.

57 Ibid., 13 May 1903.

of a U.S. takeover, however, did not result immediately in a marked change of attitude to American missionaries. The Mormons, especially, being the most ubiquitous and most demanding on their members, continued to be regarded with suspicion, and were occasionally obliged to resort to subterfuge.⁵⁸

Not all the suspicion drawn by the Mormons in Tahiti can be explained in terms of an over-sensitive French administration. Political paranoia on the part of the French accounts for some; political tactlessness on the part of the missionaries themselves for the rest. Lessons of caution and wariness learned by one group were rarely transmitted to its successors in the field, with the result that political blundering became almost perennial, and lack of foresight created frequent embarrassment.

World War I had little effect on French possessions in Oceania, but the sensibilities of French officialdom were affected from the outset. As American nationals the missionaries were initially indifferent to the war's progress, as Mormon elders they were ignorant of French emotions. Within a few months of the outbreak of hostilities in Europe the Mormons were publishing in their mission paper news of German advances. In addition, they attempted to circulate

58 Especially in the matter of land acquisition. Since the church was not a legally recognized entity, title to land was sometimes made out in the name of an individual missionary or a local member. Reporting one such instance in 1904, Daniel Miller wrote: 'I had the deed made out to me...and swore out power of attorney to...Timi a Timo.... The native was not informed of my action and I suppose never will be....' Miller to First Presidency, 5 July 1904, Tahitian Mission Letters.

copies without first submitting them for official inspection, despite a warning from friends on Moorea that trouble would arise.

It did: copies of Te Heheuraa Api were seized by police officers, and the head of the mission, Ira Hyer, threatened with court action if the paper persisted in reporting news unfavourable to France.⁵⁹ The threats evidently went unheeded. Four months later copies of the paper were again seized 'because of several articles in favour of the Germans.' This time the mission president, Ernest Rossiter, was informed that publication of the paper would be prohibited for the war's duration.⁶⁰ A plea from Rossiter to the governor resulted in the lifting of the ban,⁶¹ but the paper appeared only sporadically until the war's end. A few months before the armistice, however, and with French tempers running high, the Mormons committed another gaffe. Toae, a Tuamotuan elder, announced at a public meeting that in its perfect organization the Mormon priesthood could be compared with the German army.⁶² Presumably the illustration was given to Toae by an American

59 Tahitian Mission Historical Record 1900-30, 23 Dec. 1914.

60 Ibid., 17 Apr. 1915.

61 Ibid., 19 Apr. 1915.

62 Benson Journal, 17 June 1918; Tahitian Mission Historical Record 1900-30, 3 Oct. 1918. The analogy was not an original one. In 1903 the American economist Richard Ely had made the same comparison. R.T. Ely, 'Economic Aspects of Mormonism', Harper's Magazine, Apr. 1903, 668.

elder. Its significance lies in the fact that so little was thought of the effect of conveying and publicizing such an ill-timed analogy. Charges of pro-German sympathies brought an investigation into the Hikuera branch of the church, with which Toae was associated. After some weeks, however, the issue was dropped, but not before the Mormons had again been embarrassed by their own lack of subtlety.⁶³ Incidents such as this were constant and necessary reminders to the Mormons that their relations with French officialdom were slender to the point of fragility. They would also be reminded often that official recognition had never been granted them, and that their presence in French Oceania was tolerated rather than approved.⁶⁴

IN a U.S. administered territory the missionaries might well have expected less critical treatment, especially since their church's fortunes in Hawaii had improved markedly after American annexation. But if they hoped for favoured treatment from U.S. naval commanders in Eastern Samoa they were to be disappointed initially. The raising of the U.S. flag on Tutuila on 17 April 1900 was accompanied by religious exercises involving all the missions in Eastern Samoa - except the Mormons. When night fell Thomas Ogden rhapsodized:

This ends the biggest day in the history of
Tutuila and night comes on with Old Glory
waving...and I again go to bed in America
for the first time for over two years.

63 Tahitian Mission Historical Record 1900-30, 3 Oct. 1918.

64 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52,
25 Dec. 1931, 24 Oct. 1932, 14 Apr. 1939.

Earlier that day he had been less than happy. 'We elders received pretty shabby treatment', he wrote, 'not hardly being acknowledged as American Citizens.' It was, he thought, more of an English affair, with representatives of the L.M.S. predominating.⁶⁵

The shabby treatment received at the ceremony was a foretaste of things to come during the term of office of American Samoa's first naval governor, B.F. Tilley. Tilley's tenure was brief - it lasted only until December 1901 - but during that time he was constantly critical of the Mormons, reserving his approbation for the L.M.S.⁶⁶ While on leave in the U.S. he made his views on the Mormons public in an article which was reproduced in the Samoanische Zeitung.

...we have a number of Mormon apostles whom I would be heartily glad to get rid of, not because of their peculiar religious views, but because of the injurious effect they have on the native mind. These so-called apostles come to the islands without any money and perforce must exist on native hospitality.... In consequence they do far more harm than good.... A missionary should not be dependent upon the people he is trying to convert.⁶⁷

The mutual antipathy of Tilley and the Mormons must have been common knowledge in Samoa, for when the commander was charged subsequently with misconduct and dereliction of duty, the Samoanische Zeitung suggested that the Mormons may have initiated the charges, as Tilley 'had occasion to

65 Ogden Journal, 17 Apr. 1900.

66 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896-1900, 15 Aug. 1900.

67 Samoanische Zeitung, 28 Sept. 1901.

take exception to, and speak rather strongly about [them] in Tutuila.'⁶⁸

There is no real evidence for this, but certainly Tilley's departure must have been applauded by the Mormons. No other U.S. naval governor proved to be as openly hostile, although some were critical of Mormon importunities regarding land acquisition, while others seem to have been over-cautious about creating the impression that they were favouring fellow Americans.⁶⁹ Mission president Willard Smith expressed disappointment that many American officials 'are just as strict with us as with other outside organizations, and in some instances, they are prejudiced.'⁷⁰

A biased attitude from German administrators in Western Samoa may also have been anticipated, since Mormonism was no more popular in Germany than in France, and especially since the missionaries came no closer to participating in the installation ceremony at Mulinu'u than they did at Pago Pago.⁷¹ The first governor of German Samoa, Wilhelm Solf, was, in fact, far more conciliatory at first towards the Mormons than they may have expected. William Sears gladly reported that he had found favour in Solf's eyes, and wondered if the church might not present

68 Ibid., 23 Nov. 1901.

69 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Feb. 1930, June 1933, Sept. 1937.

70 Ibid., June 1933.

71 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896--900, 1 Mar. 1900.

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69 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Feb. 1930, June 1933, Sept. 1937.

70 Ibid., June 1933.

71 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896--900, 1 Mar. 1900.

the governor with a nice set of its standard works.⁷² Earlier Sears had described Solf's appointment as 'a happy choice, as well as a deserving one.'⁷³ By the time Sears was able to make the desired presentation of handsomely bound church works, Solf had learned more about the Mormon mission. He had been informed, he told Sears, that the missionaries came to Samoa without money and obtained material support from the natives; that one of their articles of faith justified this practice and that they were securing the natives' money. Sears hastened to explain the true nature of the Mormons' belief in this respect and followed by detailing the sacrificing work actually performed by his missionaries. Solf expressed surprise.⁷⁴

But he was not so surprised as to forgo a more watchful stance from then on. By June 1901 the elders were reminding each other that in German Samoa they needed to obey all legitimate orders and pay especial attention to their twelfth article of faith.⁷⁵ At a priesthood meeting elder George A. Coates, overcome by the spirit of prophecy, declared that if the German government persecuted the Mormons it would come to grief in Samoa.⁷⁶ The prophecy escaped the attention of Wilhelm Solf, who, while hardly persecuting the missionaries for the remainder of his term,

72 Sears to First Presidency, 19 Mar. 1900, Samoan Mission Letters.

73 Sears Journal, 23 Feb. 1900.

74 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896-1900, 28 Aug. 1900.

75 Sears Journal, 18 June 1901.

76 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 18 June 1901.

did pursue an increasingly critical line. He raised often the matter of the missionaries' reliance on the hospitality of their charges, objecting particularly to their method of rostering families at Pesega in order to obtain food in that village.⁷⁷ He suspected that they still encouraged polygamy,⁷⁸ and that most of them were too young to withstand Samoa's temptations.⁷⁹ 'Your Church is not popular', he informed Martin Sanders, 'not at all popular at home in Germany.'⁸⁰ By May 1904 Sanders was evincing a completely different view of the German administration from that shown earlier by Sears. 'Here, on German Samoa', he wrote ruefully, 'we are despised and hated. There are two reasons...we are Americans, and the Gospel which we preach is the most unpopular.'⁸¹

The Mormons' unpopularity with the German administration, however, had less to do with their gospel than with their school organization. Self and his successor were much concerned with the quality of education in the colony and with its conformity to imperial standards. Self attempted to be as fair as possible in allowing the Mormons to maintain their schools, realizing, as did other administrators the overall usefulness of mission education. Despite a ruling of July 1901 prohibiting the teaching of English at

77 Ibid., 18 Feb. 1903.

78 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 15 June 1903.

79 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 18 Feb. 1903.

80 Ibid.

81 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 20 May 1904.

schools in the colony, Solf permitted the Mormons to continue teaching the language at Malaela on Upolu, providing the school was brought up to standard in other respects.⁸²

During a leave of absence in 1902, however, his replacement Schnee received a letter from Joseph Merrill requesting that English be also taught elsewhere. Merrill's letter was replete with mis-spelt words and syntactical errors, drawing the not undeserved response: 'This man asking for the privilege to teach, he needs to be taught himself.'⁸³

At Solf's insistence, the Mormons obtained four German-speaking elders for the mission schools, though the governor proved to be less than delighted with their linguistic abilities.⁸⁴ He was also becoming impatient with the standards of the schools generally, disapproving of the methods of teaching and of the lack of teaching aids in the schools at Tuasivi and Pesega.⁸⁵ But it was the Malaela school, which he had given special consideration, that he criticized most strongly in a letter to Martin Sanders on 5 May 1904:

...the results of that school throughout are also insufficient. Also in that school, the teacher who instructs the German is deficient in the German language, and he has, like the rest of his colleagues, of the simplest principles

82 Samoan Mission Historical Record. 1900-03, 10 July, 3 Aug. 1901.

83 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 15 June 1903.

84 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 9 Mar. 1903.

85 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 8 Apr. 1903.

of pedagogism no knowledge.⁸⁶

The Mormons were given until 1 January 1905 to improve their teaching standards or face the closure of their schools.⁸⁷ Sanders, aware of the value of the schools as aids to conversion, conveyed his distress to the church authorities:

My soul has travailed and my mind has been deeply taxed with anxiety, with concern to our Mission schools in German Samoa. Without doubt, this is the most serious step that has ever confronted us...with respect to Government interference. If we continue our schools they must be good, taught by efficient teachers of pedegogy... teachers with diplomas, which I fear may be a difficult requirement for the Church to keep fulfilled. Should our schools have to close, it would be a terrible crash and blow to our work.⁸⁸

In September no qualified teachers had arrived to relieve Sanders' distress, and he was beginning to regard the mission's prospects as 'hard and humiliating.'⁸⁹ Self evidently chose not to enforce his ultimatum, for the schools were still functioning in May 1905, though Thomas Court, Sanders' successor, was then suggesting that it was 'more profitable to teach the children to Read and Write and etc. properally in their own language and discontinue teaching the German language.'⁹⁰

86 Self to Sanders, 5 May 1904, Sanders Papers.

87 Ibid.

88 Sanders to J.F. Smith, 21 May 1904, Sanders Papers.

89 Ibid., 24 Sept. 1904.

90 Court to J.F. Smith, 10 May 1905, Samoan Mission Letters.

Solf seems to have cared little more about the Mormon schools, but he remained critical of the mission for the rest of his term, informing Court in February 1907 that he could easily win popularity in Germany by kicking all the Mormon missionaries out of Samoa.⁹¹ By that year he apparently felt that their future in the colony was to be brief, for in an official report he referred to them as 'decreasing every year...harmless and insignificant.'⁹²

He had underestimated their persistence. It manifested itself frequently on matters concerning their land rights,⁹³ and their right to conduct services in villages dominated by another mission. In the latter case Solf displayed some inconsistency. In April 1910 he upheld a decision by the matai at Lalomalava, an L.M.S. village, to ban the conducting of Mormon services.⁹⁴ But the following month he acceded to a request by William Moody that the services be allowed to continue.⁹⁵ Moody, however, later claimed that Solf had not honoured his promise but, in fact, had publicly condemned the Mormons on more than one occasion.⁹⁶ By the time of the last alleged condemnation

91 Ibid., 22 Feb. 1907.

92 Report of the First German Governor of Samoa, W.H. Solf to Imperial Colonial Office, Berlin, File 6 No.1A (English Translation by E.W. Johnson).

93 German Administration Papers XVII, B1, District Administration, Atua, Vol.5, Nos 4, 26, 28, 42, 92.

94 Vaiafai Branch Record, 1909-16, 29 Apr. 1910.

95 Moody Journal, 9 May 1910.

96 Ibid., June 1910.

Solf was at the end of his term. He may also have been at the end of his patience with the constant bickering between missions in Samoa, and especially with the Mormons' frequent demands to have their rights and privileges acknowledged. In his last recorded comment on them Solf 'gave expression to the fact that the least he could have to do with the Mormon church the better he would feel....'⁹⁷

Under Solf's successor, Erich Schultz, the Mormons made a more determined effort to improve the standards of their schools, securing in March 1913 the services of Mormon educationalist Richard Haag as superintendent of mission schools in Samoa, but by the time Haag prepared his first report in April several had closed and others had only two, four or five pupils enrolled.⁹⁸ Haag stayed in the mission for almost a year, during which time much was done to create improvement and uniformity in the schools, many visits were made to L.M.S. and Catholic schools to obtain ideas, and frequent audiences were held with government officials to solicit approval.⁹⁹ In Haag's detailed instructions concerning the mission education system it was decided that the German language should receive urgent attention by all teaching missionaries on Upolu and Savai'i and that the motto for all schools should be 'onward and upward in German.'¹⁰⁰ But by the time Haag departed the need for German-speaking teachers and German devices

97 Salelavalu Branch Record 1909-16, 4 Aug. 1910.

98 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1911-16, 6 Apr. 1913.

99 Ibid., Mar. 1913-Feb. 1914 passim.

100 Ibid., 13 Feb. 1914.

had almost come to an end. On 29 August 1914 a New Zealand expeditionary force took the colony, bringing to a close fourteen years of German administration. After 1920, and until 1946, Western Samoa would be administered by New Zealand under a mandate from the League of Nations; from 1946 until 1962 as a Trust Territory of the United Nations.

During these years only one issue of real significance confronted the Mormons in their relations with the New Zealand administration - the matter of missionary numbers. It was first raised in December 1923, eight months after Brigadier-General George Spafford Richardson had become administrator. The immediate occasion concerned the issuing of visas to Mormon missionaries landing in Western Samoa. Since visas had not been required previously, as the missionaries had landed usually at Pago Pago before coming to Apia, mission president Ernest Butler inquired 'whether the British Consul [in San Francisco] should vise pass-ports for all Elders of our Church who applied or not.'¹⁰¹ The curious question brought, after being referred to New Zealand, a direct answer: that a limit be placed on the number of Mormon missionaries allowed at any one time in the Mandated Territory.¹⁰²

The number was set at fifteen - the number actually in Western Samoa at the beginning of 1923. Butler admitted that Richardson 'seems to be inclined to treat us fairly', but that did not stop his complaining to U.S. Vice-Consul Roberts about 'unjust discrimination against American

101 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 3 Mar. 1924.

102 Ibid.

missionaries.¹⁰³ Roberts, evidently in agreement, doubted that the terms of the mandate permitted the restriction, and proposed that the Mormons enter a protest with the U.S. State Department in Washington.¹⁰⁴ Butler, however, was prevented from taking further action by the judicious advice of the Mormon church authorities, who counselled tact, diplomacy and adherence to the restriction. They warned against taking any steps 'which in any way would provoke antagonism on the part of the British authorities,'¹⁰⁵ Characteristically, Butler had blamed L.M.S. influence upon the Western Samoan faipule for the decision. He pointed out that the Secretary of Native Affairs, H.S. Griffin, himself had L.M.S. connections,¹⁰⁶ and claimed that Griffin had mis-represented the terms of the restriction in an official circular to the faipule.¹⁰⁷ The church authorities, however, drew Butler's attention to the fact that the decision was in line with practice throughout the British Commonwealth.¹⁰⁸

103 Butler to H.G. Reynolds, 7 May 1924, Samoan Mission Letters.

104 Ibid.

105 First Presidency to Butler, 12 June 1924, Samoan Mission Letters.

106 Butler to H.G. Reynolds, 7 May 1924, Samoan Mission Letters.

107 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 18 Apr. 1924. Butler claimed the Samoan translation had suggested a restriction on church members, rather than missionary numbers.

108 First Presidency to Butler, 12 June 1924, Samoan Mission Letters.

It was a decision which seemingly had little effect on the progress of Mormonism in Samoa, though Butler's successors made several attempts to have the quota raised, while admitting that no real inconvenience resulted from it.¹⁰⁹ In any event, administrators adopted a fairly casual attitude to the enforcement of the restriction. In 1935, after applying unsuccessfully to Acting Administrator A.C. Turnbull to have the numbers increased, William Sears admitted that there were seventeen elders working in Western Samoa instead of the stipulated fifteen.¹¹⁰ In February 1940 Gilbert Tingey wrote: 'Most of the Government officials here on seeing the type of work we are engaged in made no effort to enforce the law, with the result that we had nearly twice the quota.'¹¹¹ When Americans were obliged to register as aliens at the outbreak of hostilities in World War II, Turnbull gave the Mormons a generous six months to meet the quota.¹¹²

Apart from the misunderstanding concerning Griffin's circular to the faipule, there had been no suggestion that Mormon missionaries would be excluded from Western Samoa, let alone that church members would be. But early in 1924, while Butler was contemplating an official protest, the mission in Tonga was encountering governmental

109 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Sept. 1903, Dec. 1933, Dec. 1935.

110 Sears to Reynolds, 2 Dec. 1935, Samoan Mission Letters.

111 Tingey to First Presidency, 23 Feb. 1940, Samoan Mission Letters.

112 Ibid.

opposition, the letter of which was directed at excluding all Mormons from the kingdom. The particular manifestation of this opposition was An Act Relating to Passports, passed by the Legislative Assembly in 1922, Section Seven of which stated:

Every person who is a member or adherent of the sect styled the Church of the Latter Day Saints of Jesus Christ commonly called Mormons is hereby forbidden to land in the Kingdom. Any person contravening the provisions of this section shall be liable on conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds and in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding six months.¹¹³

Sections Eight and Nine made the provisions retrospective for two years and added deportation to the prescribed penalty.¹¹⁴

The restrictions were severe and, as was later pointed out, both inconsistent and unconstitutional. They were not, however, completely arbitrary. In 1922 Mormonism had again been an active force in Tonga for fifteen years, though a separate Tongan mission was not established until 1916. Until 1921 average progress was made and only occasional opposition encountered. But that year represented something of a turning-point. In October, at the height of an influenza epidemic, the Mormons were refused permission to hold a conference at Lifuka in the Ha'apai group, because of the numbers involved. Mission president Coombs claimed, however, that Wesleyan Church and Tongan Free Church

113 Tongan Government Gazette, No.21, 18 July 1922.

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meetings suffered no similar ban.¹¹⁵ The following month a fono in the same area decided against allowing Tongan elders to make house-to-house visits.¹¹⁶

While the Mormons were becoming increasingly discomfited in Ha'apai, Coombs' application for leases of land there was also being disapproved. An earlier request to lease land at Houma on Tongatapu had suffered the same fate, as had an application for land in Vava'u.¹¹⁷ In December Coombs wrote to the Minister of Lands asking reasons for the refusal, and was informed that the government had under its consideration the question of preventing Mormons from coming to Tonga and regarded it as undesirable to grant further leases.¹¹⁸ Undaunted for the time being, Coombs resubmitted his application for land in Ha'apai, claiming that it was being done, not on behalf of the church, but in his own interest as a private, and a British, citizen.¹¹⁹ The immediate result was not the granting of a lease from the Department of Lands but a reprimand from the church authorities:

We regret that you attempted to change your application...and tried to get them to grant it on the ground that you were a British

115 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 14 Oct. 1921.

116 Ibid., 17 Nov. 1921.

117 Coombs to Heber J. Grant, 16 Mar. 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

118 Ibid., 24 Jan. 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

119 Coombs to First Presidency, 3 Apr. 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

citizen and that it was not the Church making the application. No doubt the cabinet has interpreted this as a subterfuge. We think the best thing for you to do now is to let the matter rest awhile.

In seeking favours from governments, they found it necessary to remind Coombs, deception should never be practised.¹²⁰

The matter of land leases was obliged to rest, and for considerably longer than the Mormons had expected. On 30 June 1922 the Legislative Assembly of the kingdom met to consider the adoption of the Passport Act, the sole purpose of which was to prevent Mormon missionaries from coming to Tonga, though of eleven sections only the seventh actually named the church. Discussion centred on the claim by the Minister of Lands that some Mormon doctrine was unsuitable for Tonga, since it clashed with that of the other churches. When a People's Representative, Fiji'ihoi, requested a more specific charge, the Minister drew his attention to the 'doctrine relating to Matrimony.' 'It is not a thing', he said, 'that is useful.' Furthermore, he continued, disturbances were caused by Mormons. The Honourable Ata, a senior noble, was even more specific and more critical. Over Fiji'ihoi's mild protest that the Act did not accord with the constitution, Ata characterized a Mormon in Tonga as someone displaying 'over weening insolence, impudence and disrespect.' Mormons, he said, had eaten, drank and smoked in Tongan churches; and as for their doctrine of marriage, it was better described as fornication.' 'Let this Law stand', he appealed, 'for it is the most beautiful Law

120 First Presidency to Coombs, 18 May 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

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120 First Presidency to Coombs, 18 May 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

here.' Ata's views were endorsed by another People's Representative, Taukolo, who claimed also that Mormon teaching was inconsistent, varying from missionary to missionary. The law, he said, was good and comprehensive; it would be better still if it prevented any more religions coming to Tonga. The Act was passed with little more comment.¹²¹

Like most charges against the Mormons in the Pacific, these, while exaggerated, had a basis in fact. In April 1923 Coombs learned from Chief Justice Stronge that the Mormons had also been accused in the Privy Council of claiming to be the Church of Christ, of claiming to be saints, and of holding dances in their places of worship. It was also Stronge's view that the typical Tongan Mormon was audacious and ill-bred.¹²² For these charges, the Mormons had no one but themselves to blame. Their lack of tact was as evident in Tonga as elsewhere in Polynesia. In 1917, when the mission was going through its second birth pangs, Willard Smith concluded an administration to Tupou II - made at the ailing monarch's request - by telling him that if he 'hindered the work of the Lord... his sickness would return again to him.'¹²³

Coombs himself had probably been largely responsible for some of the charges. On 28 May 1922 he had directed a Tongan elder to ignore an order given to him by Tuivakano,

121 Legislative Assembly of Tonga, Minutes, 30 June 1922 (A.J. Gaffney, Official Translator).

122 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, 16 Apr. 1923.

123 Ibid., 22 Oct. 1917.

a noble of Nukunuku, to quit that district.¹²⁴ On 28 April 1923 he informed a meeting on Tongatapu that if church members would support the L.D.S. schools 'we would soon... show the local officials that we are a superior people.... The Tongan "Mormon" should be a superior Tongan for "Superiority" "Excellence" and "Mormonism" are synonymus.'¹²⁵ A fortnight later he told a gathering in Ha'apai: 'There is only one Church of Christ, so, when you leave this church where will you go....'¹²⁶ Coombs was antagonistic towards the Minister of Lands and Prince Consort, Tungi, as well as Ata, describing the first as evil and the second as adulterous.¹²⁷ Some of these comments were recorded after the passing of the Passport Act, but they fairly indicate Coombs' attitudes, and there is no reason to assume that he was thinking and acting any differently before July 1922.

The Mormons did encourage social and recreational activities in their churches, a practice that many influential Tongans, with their background of Methodism, would have found grossly offensive, though it is hardly likely that smoking and drinking would have been approved. The charges of polygamy were, of course, perennial; and if no evidence for it could be found in actual practice, it was always present in church doctrine. The charge that the Mormons claimed to be saints hardly requires further comment.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 28 May 1922.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 28 Apr. 1923.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 13 May 1923.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 4 Aug., 12 Aug. 1923.

Mormon teaching was filled with claims of exclusivity and divine choice, calculated to appeal to the disaffected of other faiths, but bound by its very nature to seem audacious and offensive to legislators in a country where church and state were almost indistinguishable. Additionally, the doctrine of exclusivity carried with it uncomfortable political overtones, in its assumption that opposition to the church from any source was ill-advised, and could lead only to disaster for the opponent. Often the assumption was given vocal expression which had all the flavour of a threat. In June 1921 David O. McKay, then an apostle in the church, visited Tonga. Perhaps piqued at the fact that a reception in his honour on 25 June had not attracted a number of prominent whites and government officials, McKay expressed himself as follows:

Some day the Tongan Government will appreciate the efforts of the missionaries...but when they do awake it may be too late, for they may call and call in vain. They had better embrace the opportunity while it is offered them.¹²⁸

On 27 June he addressed a meeting of American missionaries and Tongan elders in even more declamatory terms:

No government and no man can raise its or his hand against the Church of Christ without bringing punishment, disintegration and separation upon itself. And I say this in the authority of my apostleship. No weapon that is raised against Zion shall prosper.... If this government takes an unfavourable attitude to you brethren, I tremble for its future, for pestilence and scourges shall be poured out upon them until the leaders repent.¹²⁹

128 Ibid., 26 June 1921.

129 Ibid., 27 June 1921.

The following July, a few days after the Legislative Assembly's decision, Coombs asked the First Presidency if he might publish McKay's 'prophetic utterances' to saints and non-members alike, 'that they may have a fair warning of the events to come.'¹³⁰ The church leaders tendered sympathy, but warned Coombs against acting too hastily. 'It might', they observed, 'be considered as a threat, by officialdom in your country.'¹³¹ It is possible, however, that rumour of McKay's address may have reached the ears of Tongan officialdom. At least one Tongan noble was a Mormon, holding the office of teacher in the priesthood, and he had told Coombs that one of the Premier's objections to the missionaries was that they 'teach the people to be disrespectful and rude to the King, Queen, Nobility and Gentry.'¹³²

Perhaps none of these facts justifies the action taken by the Legislative Assembly, but they help to make it understandable. Over the following two years, however, no American missionaries were deported, and no attempt was made to prevent other Polynesian Mormons from coming to Tonga, belying the actual wording of the Act.¹³³ During that time Coombs reported that the Mormons were facing great

130 Coombs to First Presidency, 3 July 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

131 First Presidency to Coombs, 28 Sept. 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

132 Coombs to First Presidency, 3 July 1922, Tongan Mission Letters.

133 Ibid., 13 Feb. 1924.

hostility: 'It was a case of all the dogs in the country jumping on the lower dog.... Even a number of the saints turned away and even members of the Priesthood.' He also found it significant that the Premier was seriously ill, and that the country was being threatened with epidemic disease and crop failure - a testimony to McKay's prophecy.¹³⁴ Its fulfilment may have given Coombs some satisfaction, but there was little joy to be had from the discovery that two Tongan elders had been guilty of sexual misconduct; one with the Tongan wife of the British Deputy Consul, the other with the wife of a Vava'u noble. 'Now', he wrote, 'we're in it up to our necks.'¹³⁵ The First Presidency briefly considered releasing Coombs and abandoning the mission.¹³⁶

Coombs, however, was determined to continue. In the first half of 1924 he spent much time soliciting support for the Mormon cause, and between April and June was able to obtain signatures to four petitions, including those of over 500 Europeans and Tongans who were not church members.¹³⁷ One of these he presented to the Chief Justice, the remaining three to the Legislative Assembly, together with a wordy address which attempted to answer all the charges, and made much of Mormonism's virtues, quoting extensively from

134 Coombs to Heber J. Grant, 4 Aug. 1923, Tongan Mission Letters.

135 Coombs to First Presidency, 26 Jan. 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

136 First Presidency to Coombs, 15 Nov. 1923, Tongan Mission Letters.

137 Copies of petitions in Tongan Mission Letters.

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the recorded speeches of U.S. senators.¹³⁸ On 10 July Coombs received word that the offending sections of the Act would be repealed,¹³⁹ the decision to do so having been carried by a majority of three in the Assembly.

The decision to enforce the Act had been unanimous. In the space of two years, what had contributed to the change in mood? Clearly the support obtained by Coombs among the European and non-Mormon population of Tonga had some effect, as had his display of evidence that the practice of polygamy was no longer sanctioned by the church. But more important is the fact that during these years Tonga was undergoing a religious upheaval that saw Queen Salote attempting, in the interests of Tongan unity, but with only partial success, to heal the schism that had existed since the 1880s between the Wesleyan Church and the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga. The upheaval had significance for the Mormons in Tonga. First, it drew attention away from the Mormons, directing it towards what were, for Tongan politics, more important matters, and allowing the Mormons more breathing space than they may have otherwise received. Second, it resulted, when the Mormon petitions were drawn and presented, in their obtaining a sympathetic hearing from Tongan politicians who were without a vested interest in the state church and were perhaps even eager to oppose a restrictive government measure. It is significant that the repeal was won largely as a result of

138 Coombs to Legislative Assembly, 12 June 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

139 J.F.U. Ulukalala to Coombs, 8 July 1924, Tongan Mission Letters.

the vote of the People's Representatives, all seven of whom voted for repeal.¹⁴⁰

ONE of the few charges not laid in 1922 against the Mormons in Tonga was that they were imposing on the finances of their converts. It was a frequent criticism elsewhere in Polynesia, but nowhere did it arouse the anger of officialdom more than in French Oceania, where the missionaries were perennially accused of vagrancy and appropriation of islanders' money. In 1895 five missionaries signed declarations solemnly denying charges of having collected money from islanders on Tubuai and Anaa, though three qualified their denials by admitting the receipt of amounts ranging from fifty cents to \$3.¹⁴¹ Further charges were frequent, however, and denials equally so. The Mormons were aware at least as early as 1906 that they were forbidden by French law to extract obligatory contributions from church members,¹⁴² but often chose to allow the sacred law to over-rule the secular. In 1940 they had the temerity to publish the 'Law of the Tithe' in Te Heheuraa Api, seeming to suggest that rendering to God should be done at the expense of Caesar. Once again their timing was clumsy, its result provocative. French officials were in no mood to allow the diverting of their colony's resources.

140 Tongan Government Gazette, No.14, 20 Aug. 1924.

141 Copies of the declarations in Tahitian Mission Letters, 13 July, 8 Oct. 1895.

142 Edward S. Hall to Joseph F. Smith, 14 Jan. 1906, Tahitian Mission Letters.

Governor Chastenet de Gery made it plain that the French regarded the doctrine as intolerable:

Now the result of what you call a Law means in short to persuade your worshippers, who are above all simple natives, credulous and disarmed in the presence of certain constraints, to abandon for the benefit of the Church which you represent, a share of the profit derived from their earnings.

...those very same worshippers are citizens, [and] as such they have fiscal duties to fulfill towards the Government which protects them, and you should realize that every new expense which is imposed upon them, even seemingly voluntary, because it is in pursuance of a spiritual law, constitutes a preferential tax which they pay uncomplainingly in consequence of the moral influence which is exerted on them, to the prejudice of their own obligations towards the State.

French laws, de Gery reminded the Mormons, were the only ones to consider, and permitted no pecuniary benefit to any creed, save in the shape of a voluntary contribution. Any other method tended toward the imposition of a tax which could not be tolerated. He demanded that energetic restraints be applied to the collecting of such so-called voluntary contributions.¹⁴³

Mission president Stevens attempted an appeal to the U.S. Consul and the Mormon's attorney but received little sympathy from either. They reminded Stevens that his mission was in the colony by sufferance and not by right, and could be ordered to leave at any time. They

¹⁴³ de Gery to Stevens, 23 Feb. 1940 (English translation by L. Drollet), Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52.

wisely advised observance of the civil law rather than the spiritual.¹⁴⁴ Thereafter the Mormons in French Oceania tended to play down the 'Law of the Tithe'.

But they invariably seemed to have some way of being a thorn in the side of officialdom. Their aggressive post-World War II missionary drive in Polynesia resulted in a number of uncomfortable incidents which provoked islands governments and obliged the Mormons to modify their approach. Over-frequent solicitations concerning the size of the American missionary force were one source of irritation; suspected political interference was another. In Tonga between July 1946 and February 1947 the Mormons made monthly applications to double the size of their American contingent, addressing them to a variety of dignitaries and officials, including the Prime Minister's secretary, the Premier himself, the Crown Prince, the Minister of Lands and the British Consul, plying some of them with Tongan editions of the Book of Mormon.¹⁴⁵ They succeeded only in creating impatience. 'The Tongan people are Christianized', Premier Ata informed them, 'and therefore need no more European missionaries.'¹⁴⁶ It was an observation to which there was really no satisfactory rejoinder. Subsequently the Mormons had to content themselves with only five American proselytizing missionaries, and rely increasingly on Tongan elders to carry most of the burden of evangelizing.

144 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52, 23 Feb. 1940.

145 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, July 1946-Apr. 1947.

146 Ibid., Sept. 1946.

Restrictions on the numbers of American missionaries were also applied in French Oceania, but here officialdom was both more generous with and more inconsistent with the quota. Between 1946 and 1956 the number permitted in the colony varied between sixteen and eight. 'We find', wrote Ellis V. Christensen, 'that everything depends on personal whim.'¹⁴⁷ That was true only in part. A good deal depended on the official attitude to the islanders, to Americans, and to the behaviour of the missionaries themselves. Since the dismissal of James Brown, the French colonial government had often suspected political interference by the Mormons.¹⁴⁸ By 1946 it had become necessary for the mission president to instruct new arrivals as follows:

Never say anything which may be interpreted as propaganda favourable to the United States....
Never say anything about political questions or candidates. Remember always that you are Ministers of the Gospel of our Master, and American citizens, and as such it is not proper to mix in politics in any way.¹⁴⁹

Missionaries on tours of duty throughout the islands of French Oceania were occasionally kept under close observation.¹⁵⁰

For all the recommended caution, missionaries evidently took it upon themselves to interfere in political

147 Christensen to First Presidency, 3 Nov. 1956, Tahitian Mission Letters.

148 Tahitian Mission Quarterly Reports, Aug. 1928; Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52, 24 Oct. 1932, 20 May 1933.

149 Society Islands Mission Historical Record 1931-52, 14 Oct. 1946.

150 Ibid., 14 Dec. 1947.

matters where they felt the end result might benefit the mission. On 27 September 1958 a referendum was held in French colonies to determine their future political status. For almost three weeks beforehand, the Mormons were regularly accused of encouraging their members to cast a 'no' vote - the one that would give French Polynesia independence. Throughout those weeks denials were issued almost daily by Christensen and elder Lynn Stone to officials and politicians, including both Governor Henri Bailly and Pouvanaa a Oopa.¹⁵¹ On 23 September Christensen and Stone prepared for publication a declaration which emphatically denied the charges of interference, affirmed the Mormons' neutrality, and quoted the twelfth article of faith and the Doctrine and Covenants. 'Were we to take a position in the current referendum', they wrote, '...it is hardly credible that we would counteract the presently announced policy of the United States which...favours an affirmative vote.' They admitted, however, having lent a mimeograph machine to persons who used it for political purposes, but added that the machine was recalled as soon as this use was discovered.¹⁵²

Christensen was released from the mission presidency the following month and replaced by Joseph Reeder. For the next few months little more was heard about the Mormons' direct interference in politics. But between November 1958 and June 1959 the Mormons suffered a series of accusations and set-backs. In November they were said by

151 Tahitian Mission Quarterly Reports, Sept. 1958.

152 Ibid.

protestant missionaries to be preaching Americanism instead of the gospel.¹⁵³ In January 1959 they were refused exchange of a cheque for \$4,300 sent to assist the building programme. In the same month Governor Sicaud refused to accept their donation of \$5,000 towards the Filariasis Foundation, insisting that France could look after its own. Sicaud also requested that the Mormons count family members in their missionary quota. In March permission was refused on two occasions for the holding of fund-raising social activities.¹⁵⁴ In April Sicaud refused to allow the construction of a new chapel at Avera. The Mormons' attorney warned Reeder that the French authorities would not hesitate to tamper with their mail, and suggested they code all their telegrams.¹⁵⁵ On 23 July Ernest Rossiter, a veteran mission president, arrived to spend a 'few weeks in the Mission on a special assignment from the First Presidency.' He had been sent out to attempt to improve relations with the government.

Reeder commented that since coming to Tahiti he had been greatly concerned with the constant criticism of the government, by both members and missionaries, though he had done his utmost to advise against it. For three weeks he and Rossiter worked together to try to establish the reason for the strained relationship, meeting and speaking with the governor and various officials, merchants, other churchmen, and their attorney. The results of their

153 Ibid., Dec. 1958.

154 Ibid., Mar. 1959.

155 Ibid., June 1959.

interviews were expressed by Reeder with a regrettable touch of vagueness:

I was sick with the results of our findings and conditions were worse than I had suspected, and it was no wonder we were not in good standing with the French Government. Incidents and accusations had been piling up for many years, and after the referendum in October 1948.... The cork blew off the bottle so to speak, and we the church, were in mighty serious circumstances.¹⁵⁶

Rossiter and Reeder visited members explaining the seriousness of the matter and enjoining them to uphold the civil Law, in accordance with the twelfth article of faith, or be deprived of the Lord's blessings. They had assured Sicaud of the mission's loyal support, and to illustrate the point Rossiter ordered five large coloured portraits of Charles de Gaulle for prominent display in the mission home and various meeting houses. Sicaud responded by making a few concessions.¹⁵⁷

To what extent were the charges of political interference, especially concerning the referendum, justified? Reeder's report, lacking as it is in detail, hints strongly that the missionaries were guilty of it. Unfortunately, no other documentary evidence is available, and this is hardly conclusive. But some missionaries may well have felt that an independent Tahiti would be more comfortable to work in than one under French control, despite Christensen's protestations that the Mormons would not have counteracted official U.S. policy. Under an independent government the Mormons' impressive building

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., Sept. 1959.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

programme would probably have proceeded far more rapidly - this had been the case in Tonga - resulting in great advances in membership numbers. The French, on the other hand, were inclined to be suspicious of the Mormons' plans to import building materials and construction workers.¹⁵⁸ The number of imported missionaries would probably not have increased - restrictions on European missionaries were the rule all over the islands - but the mission's material progress would not have been so frequently hampered. It is quite conceivable, therefore, that some missionaries, ambitious for their mission's advancement, had attempted to influence the vote of church members.

In the post-war period, the Mormons were faced with restrictions on the numbers of their imported missionaries in Tonga and French Oceania, two of their three key areas in central Polynesia. But, as we have seen, the restrictions which had hitherto obtained in Western Samoa were removed in the 1950s, resulting in a flood of Mormon proselytizers, teachers and building specialists into that country, basically because they could not enter the other territories. This in turn resulted in the government's application of a quota system to the Mormons, as it was applied to other missions. The part of the other missions in bringing this about has already been examined.¹⁵⁹

The government's decision did not go unchallenged; it was debated vigorously on the floor of Western Samoa's

158 Ibid., Mar. 1956, Mar. 1957; Christensen to First Presidency, 29 Dec. 1956, Tahitian Mission Letters.

159 See above, 248-50.

Legislative Assembly in June 1958, where supporters of the Mormon mission attempted to show that the decision was in defiance of Article Nine of the Trusteeship Agreement; Article Eighteen of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Section Thirty-two of the Samoa Amendment Act of 1957, and hence unconstitutional. The motion that the Assembly viewed with concern the government's decision was put by H.J. Keil, a part-European M.L.A., and a long-time member of the Mormon church. Keil spoke at length on the educational achievements of the Mormons in Samoa, claiming incorrectly that the teaching missionaries all had educational qualifications. The restrictions, he said, would curtail not only the religious work of the mission, but also its educational programme, a prospect the country could ill-afford to face.

Keil's chief opponent in the debate was Attorney General E.R. Winkel, whose interpretation of the quoted articles was at odds with Keil's. Freedom of worship, he said, was not being restricted, nor were the Mormons' educational activities being inhibited. But unrestricted entry of non-Samoan people was not in the best interests of the Samoans; interests which it was the government's duty to safeguard. 'Nobody', he pointed out, 'has the right to come to this country, unless he is Samoan.' Moreover, in imposing a general quota system, the government had taken pains to ensure that the work of no particular church would suffer. Keil's motion was defeated by twenty-four votes to nineteen.¹⁶⁰ Their missionary numbers restricted elsewhere, the Mormons now had to cope with a restricted force in Western Samoa.

A number of possible reasons help to explain the

160 Territory of Western Samoa, Legislative Assembly Debates, 4th Assembly, 2nd Session commencing Feb. 1958, 641-7.

Mormon 'invasion', the most obvious of which has been mentioned. There are others - administrative and political. Samoa was an ideal location for a strong Mormon mission; it was the geographical heart of Polynesia, and would have served as an excellent administrative centre for the central Polynesian missions. In addition, despite the opposition from other missions, church and state were far less closely identified in Samoa than in Tonga or French Oceania. In Western Samoa, unlike Tonga, land was not inalienable, and could still be obtained on freehold or by purchase. The Mormons may also have relied on the fact that among Western Samoa's legislators they had at least one church member - Keil - and a number of supporters, a situation without parallel in the political assemblies of Tonga and French Oceania. It is quite likely that, with independence for Western Samoa only a few years away, the Mormons were anxious to demonstrate their benefits to the country by speeding up their building and educational programmes, thus hoping to secure favoured treatment and further concessions from an independent government. If they could impress sufficiently the Western Samoan government by their good works, might not other islands governments also be induced to grant concessions and relax the restrictions on Mormon missionaries? The facilities provided by the Mormons in their educational, recreational and building programmes were such that they could not easily be ignored or dispensed with. The revenue provided by duty on imported materials was a significant addition to islands treasuries.¹⁶¹

161 Christensen claimed that more was paid in duties on a single shipment than Tahiti's tourist trade would bring in one month. Christensen to First Presidency, 9 Feb. 1957, Tahitian Mission Letters. In 1956 duties paid on imported materials in Tonga amounted to forty per cent of their value. Fred Stone to W.B. Mendenhall, 25 Apr. 1956, Tongan Mission Letters.

It was largely in these respects that the Mormons finally obtained reluctant acceptance by islands officialdom. It is not too much to claim that they bought their way into favour - qualified though the favour may have been. Regular and generous contributions to public works projects and non-denominational charities and institutions in the Polynesian islands,¹⁶² in addition to the abovementioned facilities and revenues, won official acknowledgement for the Mormon missions in a way that their earlier activities, characterized as they were by tactlessness and ineptitude, could never have.

162 Contributions to the Filariasis Foundation in Tahiti had been made since 1952. On the occasion of the first contribution, church authorities wrote to mission president Othello Pearce: 'We have indicated...that we would like to handle it in the way that will be most advantageous to yourself. We gather that you also desire that the matter be so handled as to give the maximum of advantage.' First Presidency to Pearce, 12 Sept. 1952, copy in Tahitian Mission Letters.

Earlier in 1952 a gift of dental equipment was made to the leper colony at Orofara. 'We suggest', wrote the First Presidency, 'that in making this equipment available...you make the gift directly.... We think this is quite important in obtaining the good-will which you suggest will come to the Church through this gift, as otherwise our identity in this service might be lost.' First Presidency to Pearce, 15 May 1952, copy in Tahitian Mission Letters.

More recently Western Samoa has benefited by Mormon generosity. In 1972 \$(W.S.)33,000 was made available to the Department of Works towards the construction of a sewerage scheme for Apia. A further \$(W.S.)47,000 on an interest-free loan basis was also offered.

CHAPTER NINE

'LAMANITES TO THE CORE, BUT WE LOVE THEM!'

THE attitudes and responses of L.D.S. missionaries to the islanders among whom they labored were governed essentially by the belief that the Polynesians were 'of the blood of Israel', though the apparent corruption of the strain was a frequent cause of concern. We have seen that the belief was used to interpret both missionary successes with, and lack of understanding of, the islanders; to justify the Polynesians' acceptance of L.D.S. teaching or to explain their transgressions or aberrations. Given the promises made by the Book of Mormon to the Lamanites, however, most missionaries were inclined towards optimism concerning the outcome of their teaching to the Polynesians. Wrote Willard L. Smith, after satisfactorily demonstrating to an Upolu tradesman that the Samoans were Jews: 'When these people become white and delightsome they will be grateful to those who have labored with them.'¹ Alberta Lake of the Reorganized Church was happy that she was permitted to fulfil God's purposes concerning the Lamanites.² The theory, then, was ever in the background, manifesting itself publicly on occasion to both saints and gentiles, and more often confidentially in diaries and letters. Genealogist and mission president William Waddoups, frustrated at his attempts to establish the genealogical

1 Tutuila District Record 1930-33, 16 Dec. 1930.

2 Zion's Ensign, 25 Feb. 1909.

purity of some Samoan saints, grumbled that Israel's besetting sins had been always idolatry and adultery.³

The missionaries' view of the islanders, however, could not always be expressed simply in these terms. Personal prejudices and practical day-to-day situations also called forth other responses which were often more revealing of the real relationship between teacher and charge, whatever may have been their theoretical association. Doctrine notwithstanding, social and individual bias came regularly to the fore in the missionaries' contact with the Polynesians. Educational and environmental backgrounds also must have played a part in determining attitudes and responses. On a personal level, reactions among the missionaries varied from surprise at the islanders' appearance and customs, to qualified acceptance, to total revulsion and disgust. 'Excuse the expression', wrote elder R.H. Dowdle from Rimatara in the Australs, 'but, Butts and bobbies are more common sights than, stars and orange blossoms.'⁴ William Seegmiller's first baptisms at Mahu on Tubuai caused him to enthuse: 'These people with all their faults are ahead of white nations in, honesty morals & Hospitality.'⁵ Thomas Ogden, as pre-occupied as were his contemporaries with the regularity of meals, was offended at the manner of serving at a Samoan feast: '[the food] was just put in a pile in the center of the room and then two niggers with

3 Waddoups to John Q. Adams, 25 Sept. 1947 Waddoups papers.

4 Dowdle to W.H. Chamberlin, 15 Mar. 1900.

5 Seegmiller Journal, 4 Oct. 1892.

there dirty paws dished it out to each one of us.'⁶ The uninhibited dancing of the islanders with its characteristic overtones was offensive to most missionaries, but carried a fascination of the repulsive for some. Joseph Merrill wrote of a Samoan siva:

In these dances they dance stark naked and imitate the dog, cat and most all beasts. familiar to them in their seasons and many times have sexual intercourse before the whole crowd. and often it becomes general among the whole crowd. and even men have intercourse when women are scarce. My heart weeps for this wicked, hard hearted people. the solemn cry of repent ye, does not stir them.⁷

His heavy heart did not prevent his watching a subsequent performance which included the village taupou and four young nude males. To Seegmiller Tahitian dancing was 'most grand also hideous. Some of the most heathen actions one could amagine.'⁸

L.D.S. contact with the Polynesians was being made at a time when other mission churches, of necessity, had begun to accommodate or adapt to native custom. Earlier attempts, especially by Protestant missionaries, to eradicate all heathen practices and usages had met with only limited success in many areas. By the time Mormon missionaries became a common sight in the islands, other missions were adopting a tolerant, in some cases almost a laissez-faire, approach. The Mormons' overwhelming conviction of their

⁶ Ogden Journal, 3 June 1899.

⁷ Merrill Journal, 15 Mar. 1893.

⁸ Seegmiller Journal, 15 July 1892.

own righteousness, however, did not permit them to learn from the experience or the mistakes of others. As a result they began with, and long maintained, an attitude to native custom that for many other missionaries was already obsolete.

There were few traditional practices that were not looked on with disfavour by L.D.S. missionaries. Kava drinking, the preparation of certain food and eating habits, tattooing, nudity, customary marriage, casual sexual relationships, and casual attitudes to property, in addition to the above-mentioned dancing were but some of the customs that disturbed missionary sensibilities. Biblical law was invoked to show that the eating of strangled animals, blood and unclean animals (dogs especially) was contrary to God's word.⁹ Tattooing was discouraged as far as possible, though expediency dictated that only the professional tattooist rather than his patron would be denied the sacrament.¹⁰ Less fortunate than the tattooed saint was the siva enthusiast. He might be refused not only the sacrament¹¹ (bread and water or coconut milk), but also the opportunity to speak at a meeting.¹² Elisala, a Samoan missionary, was obliged to plead forgiveness at a conference on Savai'i for having prepared poi on a Sunday - not to appease his hunger, but to satisfy a craving for something sweet.¹³

9 e.g., Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, Apr. 1889.

10 Ibid., 24 July 1890.

11 Merrill Journal, 6 Sept. 1891.

12 Ogden Journal, 29 Jan. 1899

13 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 6 Apr. 1903.

Of all the customs which concerned the missionaries, those concerning marital and sexual relations were the most disturbing. Though the Mormons had elevated polygamy to the status of spiritual law, nakedness and promiscuity were rarely understandable and never excusable. The islanders' lack of inhibitions in sexual matters, and their seemingly nonchalant attitude to the obligations of marriage, provoked reactions ranging from disappointment to anger and near-horror. This was especially so on the occasions when a female missionary was the offended party, though these incidents were admittedly uncommon. Joseph Dean's young wife Florence was awakened one night by the touch of a hand, and was alarmed to observe 'the form of a native crouching outside the mosquito net with the hand he had touched her with inside.' Sister Dean saved her honour, but lost a small quantity of corned beef and condensed milk to her aspiring seducer. The following evening every male in Vatia swore freely upon the Bible and under pain of destruction that he had been guilty of neither crime.¹⁴ Two months later Sister Lee, also of the Samoan mission, resorted to her umbrella and some stones to dispel the advances of two young Samoans who approached her saying 'you kisse me.'¹⁵

More serious because of their frequency, and their effect on both missionary relationships with the islanders and mission policy, were the transgressions of the saints themselves. The way of the sexual transgressor

14 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1889-1903, 8 Apr. 1889.

15 Dean Journal, 3 June 1889.

varied little; sexual licence was condoned, even encouraged, by Polynesian custom. Missionary response was usually disapproving, occasionally despairing. But action taken was inconsistent, and varied according to the particular mission president or the prevailing attitude of the First Presidency. Baptism might be withheld from the regular fornicator or from the couple living together 'according to the native custom'. But the effect of this would be to so drastically deplete the ranks of potential saints, that often a more realistic view would be taken. William Moody, during his second mission to Samoa (1908-10), was much concerned with the problem of baptizing the informally married couple. 'We have urged them', he wrote, 'to get married first then get baptized, but this they are slow to do.'¹⁶ The church authorities' reply was opportunistic: 'It is preferable to baptize them, and then get them to comply with the law if possible...we think a stronger and better influence could be exerted over them in the Church than out of it....'¹⁷

Admittance to church membership, then, would more often than not be granted, on the assumption that closer contact with missionaries and other saints would result in a change of habits. All too often it did not, creating a fresh problem; how should the transgressing member be dealt with? Three possibilities presented themselves; he could be denied full fellowship, or excommunicated, or simply

16 Moody to Joseph F. Smith, 8 Apr. 1909, Samoan Mission Letters.

17 Smith to Moody, 16 June 1909, Samoan Mission Letters.

ignored. Again, the problem's solution depended largely on the character of the mission president concerned and, to some extent, on the degree of the offender's penitence. William Moody was inclined towards leniency. The Samoans' weakness, he told his elders, suggested that they should be treated charitably.¹⁸ Moody's predecessor, Thomas Court, advocated sterner measures. Court, wrote the mission diarist

Thought that we would never see the day that all would join our church unless a new generation grew up and the old one passed away. We had been laboring now for seventeen years among the people and our work seems to be but of little value, as the Saints are rarely any better than the other natives. He will be pleased when the Saints are gathered together, so as they can be taught to obey as well as to listen. Any of the Saints who are not Saints or who have committed themselves should be disfellowshipped. All sinners who did not desire to repent should be excommunicated. The time has come for sweeping.¹⁹

To illustrate his point, Court disfellowshipped three saints for adultery.

Generally, the view presented by Court obtained. The first offender or the infrequent adulterer or fornicator was readmitted to full fellowship provided that he displayed his penitence - usually at a semi-public confession - and proved by subsequent actions that he deserved to be fully reaccepted. The unpenitent, especially if he combined insolence with lack of contrition, suffered excommunication.²⁰

18 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 23 May 1908.

19 Ibid., 29 Apr. 1905.

20 e.g., Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, Apr. 1892.

situations, however, could arise to complicate even these apparently straight-forward regulations. Many saints held the lasting impression that if baptism could remit sins once it could do so as often as caprice dictated. A Tongan couple charged with sinful living in defiance of the church's commands told Emile Dunn that 'it would be alright to excommunicate them and when they want to do right they will be baptized again and have their sins forgiven.' It was not quite so simple, Dunn informed them.²¹ The precise designation of a Polynesian couple's relationship occasionally worried missionaries. 'Do you know', asked a puzzled L.H. Kennard from Huahine, 'what the difference is between a Wife and a Concubine?'²² An unidentified missionary in Samoa recorded that 'Afutu and his wife Mary confessed to having commit sin the fruits of which was a baby boy.'²³ The frequency of the offences, even in the exclusively Mormon villages, resulted in a note of desperation when the incidents were recorded. 'What can one do?' wondered Orval Doney, after trying vainly to establish the details of one offence at Mapusanga, 'develop pictures!'²⁴ Expediency, as it often determined other matters, sometimes also determined a course of action against transgressors. In Samoa in 1941, with no white elders in the country save the mission president, it was thought appropriate to quickly forgive a

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- 21 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 Nov. 1938.
- 22 Kennard to D.T. Miller, 22 Sept. 1898, Tahitian Mission Letters.
- 23 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 8 Dec. 1902.
- 24 Mapusanga Branch Record 1924-32, 13 June 1929.

Samoaan missionary who confessed to four recent sexual
lapses.²⁵

It was, of course, the mission president who determined the appropriateness of such action, and the extent to which the church's injunctions should be applied. Any attempt to find a thoroughly consistent policy is bound to be frustrated by the difference in personalities of the several mission leaders. Some were tolerant, some flexible, a few, because of the exigencies of a particular mission, almost latitudinarian. Tanito mission president Clyde Ellis reported the instance of a Tahitian elder twice excommunicated for adultery, drinking and lying with the qualifying comment:

This is only one of dozens of cases which are about the same in nature. We have to be lax and at times let such things pass.... I say we have to be lax, I mean we have to pretend we are ignorant of the facts...for if we did not we would not have many members in some branches.²⁶

For the disciplinarian mission leader, on the other hand, membership rolls were less important than the mission's reputation. In Tonga, despite the inhibiting influence of Methodism, many traditional practices persisted to the dismay of Mormon leaders. D'Monte Coombs was one such president. During his term (1952-55) Coombs conducted an energetic campaign to weed out fallen saints. In one particularly eventful five-day session in June 1953, hearings

²⁵ Samoaan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 3 Jan. 1941.

²⁶ Ellis to First Presidency, 7 Dec. 1921, French Polynesian Mission Letters (R.L.D.S.).

were held on thirty members of the Vava'u branch.²⁷ Some of the effects of Coombs' investigations may be seen from a subsequent report.

Even in our church, adultery and fornication were not looked upon as a great evil, so that when we began excommunicating those who wouldn't repent of these practices, some of our people were quite indignant because they felt that once a member always a member, no matter what the nature of their lives. Some of the people handled by us for their membership had been prominent in the affairs of the Church as well as openly being involved in adultery or fornication.... It seems that our church is the only organization in Tonga that is making any real efforts to curtail these practices.²⁸

Coombs' complaints found frequent echo in the other Polynesian missions.²⁹

Despite the rigorous measures of some mission presidents, in general the casual transgressor was not likely to be excommunicated simply for sexual misadventure. The saint who combined adultery and apostasy, however, was considered the worst of miscreants, and certain to be 'cut off'.³⁰ But the flexible attitude of many Polynesians towards permanent commitment to a particular faith made it

27 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 June 1953.

28 Coombs to First Presidency, 17 Oct. 1955, Tongan Mission Letters.

29 e.g., Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 Sept. 1951; Tahitian Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1957.

30 e.g., Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, 6 Oct. 1891; Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, May 1935.

difficult at times to distinguish between the real apostate and the drifter or curiosity seeker. The simply 'luke-warm' saint could usually be encouraged or cajoled, providing he did not seek active participation in another church; the part-time saint, who seemingly wanted the best of a variety of worlds was more difficult to deal with. In the foundation years of each mission, the novelty of Mormonism evidently attracted a number of islanders who later reverted to previous affiliations, L.M.S., Catholic or Methodist. At Falealupo on Savai'i in 1909 the saints told a visiting elder that 'they were made too much fun of by the other people they could not stand it. The man they were depending on had turned to the Lotu Pope....'³¹ At Matautu on Upolu, Fiame, a once-prominent saint in the village, joined the L.M.S. and became an office-holder. When asked to state his true allegiance, Fiame declared himself to be convinced of the truth of Mormonism and pleaded not to be excommunicated.³² Commenting on the difficulties of keeping accurate membership lists, Willard Smith observed in December 1931:

Many join the church and then after a time drift back to their original church, very few apostatize at heart - they wish their names kept on our records - but leave the church as far as works are concerned. We must it seems retain their names.³³

Such a view was not shared by men like Thomas Court and D'Monte Coombs, who applied the same methods to apparent apostates as to adulterers. Between September 1906 and

31 Salelavalu Branch Record 1909-16, 3 Sept. 1909.

32 Upolu District Record 1906-21, 21 Dec. 1906.

33 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1931.

April 1907 Court excommunicated over 200 Samoan saints, forty of them from the Mormon village Sauniatu.³⁴ In two hearings in August 1955, Coombs excommunicated forty-eight Tongan saints for either desiring to take positions in other churches or actively supporting them.³⁵

Both Court and Coombs may be regarded as authoritarian mission presidents. As such they were in a majority, though instances are found among missionaries of a variety of attitudes to their position vis-a-vis the islanders. Paternalism, tolerance and a degree of compromise were all advocated at various times. There is no indication of a particular change in attitude or policy over the years, suggesting that personalities rather than comprehensive policies determined the relationship between missionaries and members. William Moody, a man of apparent sensitivity, endeavoured to promote understanding of the islanders. 'We must get acquainted with their manners and customs', Moody told his elders, 'and respect the same.'³⁶ Earlier he had claimed that too much authority was being used over the natives.³⁷ Joseph Merrill, for all his horror of the siva, also displayed a degree of concern over the association between elders and saints. In February 1902, after some evidence of high-handedness on the part of missionaries,

34 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 28 Sept., 5 Oct. 1906, 13 Apr. 1907.

35 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 Sept. 1955.

36 Mapusanga Branch Record 1907-10, 23 Apr. 1901.

37 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1903-11, 2 June 1908.

and reports of uneasiness in several branches, Merrill felt obliged to counsel his missionaries:

Elders should respect natives in general and saints in particular, and always lead with love and respect. Do not use your priesthood as a shield for your faults.

The thought has obtained in the minds of some Elders that, because they are called and set apart to preach the Gosple and hold the high Priesthood, they can not err, in judgment, and therefore the saints should not suggest any thing or question their actions and it is a false idea. You are not perfect because you hold the priesthood.... Be humble, and if you should cause a native to be offended, do not feel above, asking forgiveness....³⁸

Merrill's advice could hardly have found a more appropriate antithesis than that offered by Edward Wood, not a mission president, but elder in charge of the Tutuila district of the Samoan mission in 1916:

Put yourselves above these natives you have all been through the temple and made the covenants. You are a thousand times better than them.... You have the power to do most anything even commune with angels.... Take charge extend your power, never allow a native to tell you what to do. Never allow a native to compare him self with you in any way.³⁹

Wood's guidance was being offered at a time when mission president Ernest Wright was complaining frequently of dereliction, laziness and general inadequacy among his missionaries.⁴⁰ Both Moody and Merrill had served as

38 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1900-03, 21 Feb. 1902.

39 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 24 Mar. 1916.

40 See Ch.5 above.

missionaries to Samoa before their terms as mission president, while Wood was in his first term. But previous service in the islands was no guarantee that a more egalitarian view would result. For some Mormon leaders the white missionary represented an ideal to which the islanders should aspire. During a second visit to Samoa in 1916, Joseph Dean told native office-holders that they should 'leave of[f] Samoan customs and live the gospel, be led by the power of the priesthood and not fa'asamoa.' If they compared their conduct with that of the white elders, Dean told them, they would not go far astray.⁴¹ William Lee, Dean's successor in 1890, described the relationship between missionaries and saints as being like that between father and child. 'No Elder', Lee assured his missionaries, 'need fear that his superior knowledge and intelligence will be wasted on them....'⁴²

Even among missionaries who espoused a less authoritarian view of the islanders, the belief that native custom was a hindrance to the advancement of the mission was the common one. Besides frequently drawing imaginary ethnic analogies, some missionaries reacted enthusiastically to apparent similarities between Polynesian tradition and Christian teaching or its L.D.S. variation. After hearing a Tahitian saint relate some traditions, William Seegmiller wrote excitedly that they 'corrospond mighty close to our writings. They have a God head of three. Tell about Kain killing Able and the flood etc.

41 Tutuila District Record 1915-23, 16 Nov. 1916.

42 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 4 Feb. 1892.

etc.'⁴³ For all the apparent correspondence, however, the islanders' traditional usages, together with those learned by contact with Europeans, were serious barriers to their total acceptance of Mormonism. Especially did some of Mormonism's more distinctive tenets suffer from the islanders' customary or acquired habits. The Word of Wisdom, though often advocated by missionaries, was only rarely practised by saints. 'Not one of the whole Island observe the "Word of Wisdom"!', complained Grant Lee Benson from Tubuai, 'and few accept the Work of the Church other than the Bible.'⁴⁴ Baptism by immersion, especially during the early years of the missions, was likely to produce more mirth than reverence among the islanders. Joseph Dean found it necessary to request Samoans not to laugh or cause any confusion at the spectacle. He insisted also on other forms of propriety: 'I always encourage the people to put on decent clothes...and would not consent to administer the ordinance to a female unless she had some kind of a covering for her breasts.'⁴⁵

The Polynesians' penchant for oral tradition and genealogy was regarded by Mormons as especially compatible with their own genealogical obsessions. And William Moody found that those Mormon beliefs dependant on genealogical research - salvation for the dead and eternity of marriage - also aroused interest among many Samoan saints.⁴⁶ But attempts

43 Seegmiller Journal, 21 Apr. 1910.

44 Benson Journal, 31 Dec. 1918.

45 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1888-1903, 24 July 1890.

46 Moody Journal, 28 Dec. 1908.

to clarify and classify Polynesian pedigrees, with a view to permitting vicarious baptisms and the 'sealing' of couples in eternal marriage, were often frustrated by the islanders' apparently casual regard for the consistency of given names, and the seeming looseness of the extended family. Willard Smith spent over three years trying to organize an accurate card-index of Samoan members, intending, at the conclusion, to ensure that all the worthy dead received their endowments in the Mormon temple at Laie on Oahu, yet had to admit that many who had prepared for, and been summoned to, the temple had been found unworthy or had simply used the trip as an excuse to leave Samoa.⁴⁷ Fourteen years later the problem persisted, but by 1947, according to John Q. Adams, the trickle of Samoan saints to Hawaii was threatening to become a flood. Adams wrote complainingly to genealogical specialist William Waddoups:

...hundreds here are thinking of dropping everything and rushing pell-mell to Laie - for what? They don't know. They have no genealogy records prepared...they have no money for passage, and the vast majority are not half worthy to ever go to the Temple - and yet they want to stampede thereto! And some are going surreptitiously - on their own responsibility, and with no recommends, and in most cases merely to tafao (wander).⁴⁸

Even those who had made the journey to the temple, received their endowments, and returned wearing the accoutrements of their new covenants could not always be

47 Smith, 'A brief summary of events in the Samoan Mission' in Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 1933.

48 Adams to Waddoups, 1 Sept. 1947, Waddoups Papers.

relied upon to maintain the dignity expected of them. Among Samoan saints, for example, the fa'a Samoa was apt to prove stronger than the fa'a Mamona. At least as early as 1911 the problem of encouraging endowed Samoan saints to wear their temple garments at all times was seriously discussed. Especially in the villages, the lava-lava was much preferred to a neck-to-knee undergarment.

Wrote Samoan mission president Don McBride:

They often leave them off. We have warned them repeatedly about it but that only causes them to do it on the sly.... They don't seem to realize the sacredness of them and under such circumstances we wonder if they are not a detriment instead of a blessing.⁴⁹

On one occasion a Tongan husband's failure to understand the true purpose of his wife's temple garments resulted in divorce.⁵⁰ The practice of genealogy and the associated temple ceremonies, however, were too significant in Mormon teaching to allow such problems to affect their continuance. Missionaries and visiting church leaders repeatedly stressed their importance in the face of all difficulties.⁵¹ In 1958

49 McBride to Joseph F. Smith, 9 Mar. 1911, Samoan Mission Letters. Before the building of the Laie temple some Polynesian saints had been permitted to visit temples in the U.S.A.

50 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1955.

51 e.g., Apostle George Albert Smith: 'The Lord did not build the temple in Honolulu for nothing.' Tongan Mission Manuscript History 1891-1957, 31 May 1938; Howard Stone on the difficulties of establishing Mormon genealogical work among the Samoans. 'Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 Sept. 1954.

the completion of a temple near Hamilton in New Zealand's north island relieved Laie of much of the pressure of numbers it had faced earlier.

The reactions of the Polynesians to the teaching of plurality of gods and wives is, regrettably, poorly documented. Both doctrines, of course, had their counterpart in Polynesian custom, but by the time of the first Mormon contacts both had been denounced by earlier missionaries. The doctrine of celestial marriage was certainly preached by early Mormon missionaries in Hawaii, as we have seen. Elsewhere it may not have been preached with the same vigour, but, especially in the early years of the missions, it was a frequent topic of debate, and often defended by missionaries. The church's manifesto abolishing its practice was issued in 1890, but both before and after this the doctrine inspired much argument in the islands. The polygamous Joseph Dean was often called upon to speak in its defence, and, at least once, delivered a sermon on the subject to a group of Samoan Catholics.⁵² The impression usually created by his expositions, he felt, was a favourable one.⁵³ On Makatea in the Tuamotus William Chamberlin successfully defended the purity and truth of polygamy before a small crowd. He also preached on the subject of the plurality of gods 'with special reference to Adam's being a God and our King.'⁵⁴ He was inclined to doubt, however, if the islanders 'appreciate the truths of

52 Dean Journal, 15 Sept, 1889.

53 Ibid., 10 Nov. 1888, 18 Sept. 1889.

54 Chamberlin Journal, 30 May, 7 June 1898.

celestial marriage, and the plurality of the Gods and Adams position over his children.'⁵⁵

Generally though, despite the oft-stated fears of officialdom in the islands, there is no indication that the actual practice of polygamous marriage was advocated. It can be said that both this doctrine and that concerning the plurality of gods were part of the 'meat' of Mormon teaching as opposed to the 'milk', and that instruction in these matters was postponed until the convert had completely accepted the more fundamental principles.⁵⁶ The faithful saint of long standing was made fully aware of the doctrines and their apparent consequences. 'I have been three times married', said an elderly Tongan saint, 'and my wives will be with me in heaven. It is very good to know.'⁵⁷ An influential Tahitian Mormon claimed that he found the belief 'As gods are, men may be' to be one of the most appealing of Mormon teachings.⁵⁸

55 Ibid., 6 June 1898.

56 When I first began research for this study, I requested a copy of the Doctrine and Covenants from a Mormon missionary in Sydney, informing him that I had already read the Book of Mormon. Assuming that I was a potential convert, he declined to supply one, insisting that there were many truths contained therein which I was not yet ready to receive.

57 Personal interview, Nuku'alofa, Sept. 1971. Name of interviewee withheld at his request.

58 Personal interview, Papeete, Dec. 1971. Name of interviewee withheld at his request.

IN most areas where Mormonism was introduced, the constant presence of, or regular visits from, white elders permitted a reasonable measure of social and doctrinal control over native saints. This was especially so in the gathering places - the exclusively Mormon villages such as Sauniatu. Long periods of neglect, however, were likely to result in situations which could seriously hamper the progress of a particular mission. Large-scale apostasy and transgression were two possible results of inadequate supervision. Doctrinal aberration, though still within the context of Mormonism, was a third. Such aberrations were relatively few in the history of Mormonism in Polynesia. They were also on a relatively small scale; there are no counterparts in Polynesian Mormonism to the Mamaia heresy or the Siovili cult.⁵⁹ But two at least were of sufficient importance to the missions they affected to justify examination. These were the 'Church of Ahua' which concerned the Mormons on Tubuai, and the Pupu Autahuaraa⁶⁰ which affected the Tanito in the Tuamotus. The latter is very poorly documented, the former less so.

59 For accounts of these see W.N. Gunson, 'Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas'.

60 Best defined as the 'Priestly Company'. Robert Louis Stevenson, In the South Seas, 173-9, describes briefly the practices of other Tuamotuan sects, Israelites and Whistlers. A.C.E. Caillot, Les Polynésiens Orientaux au Contact de la Civilisation, 37ff, adds Baptists and Sheep (Mamoe) to the list of Tuamotuan sects. Both contain the implication that some of these sects are derivatives of Mormonism. There is no evidence from Mormon or other missionary sources to substantiate this. Caillot also attempts to distinguish between Mormons and Latter-day Saints, calling the latter Kanitos and crediting them exclusively with practices which are actually common to both the Mormon and the Reorganized Churches.

According to his own account, given to William Chamberlin in 1898, Ahua, leader of the dissidents on Tubuai, had been baptized by the first Mormon missionaries there. Presumably he had been an L.M.S. convert previously. Upon his conversion to Mormonism he demanded the office of bishop, and although failing to obtain it was extremely energetic on behalf of the Mormons during their absence, gathering some sixty followers. When missionaries of the Reorganized Church arrived in the 1870s and proceeded to rebaptize Mormons, Ahua and his people briefly became Tanito. In the 1890s when the group was rediscovered by James Brown and William Seegmiller, Ahua and his followers were won back to Mormonism, the condition being that Ahua be appointed president of the Tubuai branch of the mission.⁶¹

In June 1895, however, when Frank Goff arrived on Tubuai to assume leadership of the branch he found a 'perversed and stiffnecked people' who were 'determined to drink & carouse & [would] not do half ways decent.' He requested mission president Cutler to send a copy of his written appointment, that he might read it to the Tubuians,

as it will give us more influence with them & again they more fully realize how they are under us when they see we have our authority from the Peropheta...as we are all young we need all we can to get influence with a people who have ruled their own affairs, in church matters, for 40 years.⁶²

Ahua was evidently unimpressed by Goff's appointment, for when Goff attempted to excommunicate several members for

61 Chamberlin Journal, 6 Sept. 1898.

62 Goff to Frank Cutler, 2 June 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

drunkenness and adultery, Ahua blocked the proceedings by calling for a local policeman (himself a member of Ahua's congregation) and threatening Goff with arrest. When Goff produced the Doctrine and Covenants and commenced to read from it the laws concerning adultery and authority, Ahua dismissed them as being of little importance. The Bible, he insisted, was his gospel, and the only one he needed. He later agreed to accept Cutler as mission president and Goff as branch leader, but only to the extent of the latter's teaching and preaching. As for taking charge of affairs, especially those concerning church discipline, he claimed that his competence and authority exceeded those of Goff. Goff had to admit to Cutler that Ahua's influence was seemingly unshakeable.⁶³

The Mormons uneasy relations with French officialdom in 1895 prevented their doing much about Ahua's dissidents at the time, though after Cutler's departure Tubuai was visited by the new mission president Daniel Miller, who objected without effect to Ahua's manner of conducting services.⁶⁴ In August 1898 William Chamberlin, the new appointee in charge of the Tubuai branch, found that services were still being conducted after the Protestant rather than the Mormon fashion, and attempted to take Ahua to task.⁶⁵ Chamberlin's efforts to assert his authority were no more successful than those of Goff. When he asked the congregation to uphold his appointment as branch leader,

63 Ibid., 12 July 1895.

64 Chamberlin Journal, 25 Aug. 1898.

65 Ibid., 25 Sept. 1898.

only six out of sixty hands were raised in his favour. Ahua remained 'pious faced' throughout the proceedings, but Chamberlin learned later that the Tubuaian leader had pronounced the curse of death upon him.⁶⁶ In October, after several fruitless remonstrations and threats, Chamberlin wrote out a series of charges against Ahua, including the latter's failure to observe the Word of Wisdom, and delivered it to the errant leader. When Ahua failed to appear to answer the charges, Chamberlin pronounced his excommunication for apostasy, disobedience and lying.⁶⁷ The following month he excommunicated a further five office-holders.⁶⁸

His gestures hardly brought the trouble to an end. In December the remainder of the congregation refused to endorse Chamberlin's pronouncements, many claiming not to know what sin had been committed. Chamberlin explained that 'it was like what the Jews did when they rejected the Savior', an analogy that the Tubuaians found unacceptable. Tama'i, a deacon, told Chamberlin that apostasy was an offence they were not accustomed to dealing with. Why, Chamberlin was asked, had their error not been pointed out sooner, and why had he humiliated them by excommunicating Ahua first?⁶⁹ Chamberlin's response to these questions is not recorded.

66 Ibid., 2 Oct. 1898.

67 Ibid., 10, 11 Oct. 1898.

68 Ibid., 4 Dec. 1898.

69 Ibid.

The removal of Ahua and several of his leading followers did not automatically win the remainder over to the American elders' leadership. Many were too dismayed at Chamberlin's tactics to seek immediate reacceptance within the bosom of the mission. Moreover, they remained convinced that they had done nothing which justified such actions. For over a decade Tubuai continued to be a trouble spot in the mission, until in January 1911 the elderly Ahua and his followers were permitted to rejoin the church without going through the formalities of rebaptism, following a recommendation from the church authorities that those not actually guilty of immorality could be reaccepted by popular vote.⁷⁰ Ahua by this time participated little in the holding of meetings, though his influence was still strong, and he continued to criticize occasionally the Mormon manner of conducting services.⁷¹ For the Tubuaians, however, the Bible remained the exclusive source of authority, to the dismay of successive Mormon missionaries. In 1918 Grant Lee Benson found the Tubuaians still stubborn, easily provoked, and sceptical of Mormon scriptures:

The natives are very peculiar regarding the laws of the Gospel, they put every thing in the Bible, and will not except the Book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, Doctrine and Covenants or any of our church works of today unless they agree with the Bible.... They do not believe that the apostles and prophets of today have as much authority as those of old.⁷²

70 French Polynesian Mission Manuscript History, 22 Jan. 1911.

71 Seegmiller Journal, 9 Mar. 1911.

72 Benson Journal, 9 June 1918.

In 1919 Benson was able to write what he hoped was the final word on the 'Ahuaites', by which time leadership of the dissidents had fallen to two men, Rua and Taivi. Commenting on their death from influenza in Tahiti, where they had gone to explain their case to the mission president, Benson wrote that the hand of God evidently did control all things.⁷³

Despite the stated reasons for the excommunications performed on Tubuai by Chamberlin and subsequent missionaries, the chief issue involved was not apostasy but authority. At no time did Ahua and his group claim to be anything other than Latter-day Saints. What they sought, however, was not subservience to the American elders, but at most a local autonomy and at least a kind of partnership in the management of the Tubuai branch. At one stage they were indifferent as to which Latter-day Saints faction they joined; in 1909 Alberta Lake wrote that Ahua had offered to cooperate with the Tanito, providing he could have 'half the say.'⁷⁴ The Protestant form of service to which the Mormons objected was only symptomatic of the major issue of authority, and not really an issue in itself. In view of Tubuai's early experience of Protestantism, the fact that Addison Pratt taught at first largely from Protestant works, and the long period of neglect by the Mormons, it is not surprising that a feeling of self-sufficiency existed among the Tubuaians, nor that it manifested itself in terms of local autonomy and a Mormon-Protestant hybrid. Apart, perhaps, from their refusal to accept the authority of the

73 Ibid., 2 Mar. 1919.

74 Zion's Ensign, 1 July 1909.

white elders, Ahua's congregation reflected no strongly nativistic element.

The Pupu Autahuaraa, on the other hand, appears to have blended L.D.S. teaching with elements of traditional Polynesian beliefs and practices, to produce a sect given to personal revelation, prophecy and spiritualistic exercises. According to Tanito mission leaders Joseph and Emma Burton, The Pupu began on Anaa in the early 1900s.⁷⁵ It arose partly as a response to a series of natural misfortunes; an influenza epidemic, the Tuamotus hurricane of 1903, and the poor seasons in pearling and copra. The discouraging effects of these, wrote Emma Burton,

had a tendency to shake their [the Tanito] steadfastness in the faith; they were also becoming dissatisfied because of not having the gifts of the gospel as are enjoyed by their brothers and sisters of America and elsewhere. They had witnessed them, had felt the power, and the happifying influence that accompanied such manifestations, and coveted them for themselves...after having received manifestations they wanted manifestations all the time, thinking that they could get revelations to guide them in the most trivial matters, or rather thinking what they got were revelations, and denounced those who could not receive them.⁷⁶

The sect did not disclaim association with the Tanito, but claimed to be responding to a 'greater light', and developed certain exclusivist tendencies, meeting apart from other Tanito to exercise their powers, and building separate meeting houses. They were mutually suspicious, and often

75 Burton to E.L. Kelley, 19 Feb. 1907, Burton Papers (R.L.D.S.).

76 Zion's Ensign, 10 Sept. 1908.

antagonistic towards one another.⁷⁷ As had been the case with Ahua and his followers, the Pupu developed in the absence of an American elder.

The activity of the Pupu was restricted mainly to the Tuamotus, especially Anaa, Tikehau, Apataki and Ahui,⁷⁸ although they cast a brief influence on the Tanito at Faaa on Tahiti also.⁷⁹ The exact number of saints involved is not known, though it may have been up to 200.⁸⁰ Several influential Tanito were evidently involved, including Taneterau (whom Burton claims to have originated the movement), Pohemiti, Tetuarere and Metuaore, the latter a Tanito bishop.⁸¹ Their gifts were not restricted to revelation and prophecy, but included other manifestations of enthusiastic religion, vision, prophetic dreams and glossolalia, though Joseph Burton thought the latter to consist chiefly of 'pigeon English or French of the few words they have learned partly of those languages.' They acknowledged also a belief in the power of spirits, and apparently claimed communion with them.⁸²

Apart from these techniques, the other practices of the Pupu are obscure. They retained the offices that had

77 Ibid.

78 Burton to E.L. Kelley, 12 Jan. 1907, Burton Papers (R.L.D.S.).

79 Ibid., 19 Feb. 1907.

80 Ibid., 30 Apr. 1907.

81 Ibid., 6 Dec. 1907.

82 Ibid., 25 Sept. 1907.

been conferred upon them by earlier Tanito missionaries, but also allowed women to exercise certain priesthood functions. The form of their meetings is not known, for evidently these were restricted to members able to exercise the necessary gifts, and excluded not only the American missionaries but also other Tanito. A large measure of secrecy was practised at meetings, many of which took place in the bush and may have included ritualistic sexual activity.⁸³

Unlike the Tubuaians under Ahua's leadership, the Pupu did not repudiate L.D.S. scriptures.⁸⁴ Indeed, their influence, especially those concerning revelation and prophecy, was obviously much stronger than the American missionaries would have preferred. The problem of individual revelation had been an early one in Latter-day Saints history, and was ever likely to occur among converts who were left without the disciplining presence of a missionary to remind them that such gifts were really the prerogatives of church leaders. The problem of authority did not arise directly as it had with Ahua's followers, for the simple reason that white elders were never present at Pupu meetings to raise the issue. It was, however, implicit. Burton's objections to the sect turned mainly on the spiritualist element, which he regarded as its most offensive quality, on the matter of adulterous practices among members, and on the secrecy of their activity.⁸⁵ When persuasion and

83 Ibid., 6 Dec. 1901.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

argument failed to have any effect, Burton resorted to excommunication. Over a two-year period he excommunicated eighty-one Tanito who had been associated with the Pupu.⁸⁶ As had been the case with the aberrant Tubuaians, the pronouncements were not taken very seriously by the excommunicants. In late 1908 Alberta Lake reported that they continued to hold meetings as though they had never been severed from the church, and delivered regular testimonies, swearing fidelity to the end.⁸⁷ Earlier, however, Burton had been glad to write that few prophecies and visions were being reported, and that the practice of 'leading companies into the bush' had been abandoned.⁸⁸ Many of those excommunicated were later received again into the Tanito fold.⁸⁹

The Pupu is a good example of the product of a confusion of tongues. That it arose in the Tuamotus is significant, for the Tuamotus had been influenced by successive waves of missionaries; Mormon followed L.M.S., Catholic followed Mormon, Tanito followed Catholic. Few remained long in one place; perhaps only long enough to discredit their predecessors, introduce the superficialities of their own doctrine and leave many Tuamotuans in a state of bewilderment. The Tanito influence, however, had been the most recent, and since the usual Tanito methods involved a denunciation of Mormonism, it is probable that this was

86 Ibid., 24 Mar. 1908.

87 Zion's Ensign, 3 Dec. 1908.

88 Burton to E.L. Kelley, 24 Mar. 1908.

89 Zion's Ensign, 18 Dec. 1913.

achieved by pointing to the greater gifts and truths possessed by the Reorganized Church, perhaps even by suggesting that these were readily accessible to Tanito members. Superficial and contradictory missionary teaching, promises left unfulfilled, and the disheartening effects of a series of natural calamities combined to find an outlet and a consolation in personal revelation and prophecy.

Nor was the Pupu the last instance of these manifestations in L.D.S. branches. In 1942 Ernest Rossiter reported that Tepati a Pae, a young female member of the Mormons' Takaroa branch, claimed to have received an angelic visitor who identified himself as the prophet Elijah. Her visitor had conferred upon her an authority greater than that possessed by Rossiter or any member of the local priesthood. She in turn conferred the power of the trinity and various ancient prophets upon other members of the branch, having convinced the young Tuamotuan branch president that her authority was genuine. Almost the entire branch, wrote Rossiter, had been swept away by her professions of authority and direct revelation. Tepati's professions were short-lived. Rossiter hastened to Takaroa, exorcized the deluded young woman, and succeeded in pointing out the error of her claims to the Takaroan saints, leaving them 'very 'humble and grateful for having been delivered from the grasp of the devil....'⁹⁰

90 Rossiter to First Presidency, 10 Aug. 1942, Tahitian Mission Letters.

SUCH were the problems likely to arise in areas outside the direct control of the American elders. Doctrinal and social discipline were both part of the L.D.S. missionary's authority, conferred upon him with the other powers of the Melchizedek priesthood. The exact form of discipline applied depended largely on the personality of the missionary involved, and on the nature of the offence. In matters of doctrinal aberration, persuasion was usually attempted before more extreme forms of authority were resorted to. In matters of social discipline, an individual missionary's quick temper might occasionally get the better of him, resulting in physical force rather than moral suasion. William Sears wrestled with, and flung to the ground, a Samoan saint who ignored his order not to peer into a missionary's dwelling.⁹¹ George Spillsbury hit one of his school pupils across the head for breaking wind in the classroom, and used a switch upon another for the same offence.⁹² He slapped another in the mouth for making a disrespectful vocal sound, though he reprimanded himself for this soon after.⁹³ Spillsbury also applied other forms of physical punishment. Samoan children who failed to attend his Sunday school or day school were made to carry up to 100 rocks to a distance of 100 yards.⁹⁴ Thomas Ogden was not loth to use physical punishment for similar offences.⁹⁵

91 Merrill Journal, 21 Dec. 1901.

92 Spillsbury Journal, 24, 30 Nov. 1897.

93 Ibid., 11 Jan. 1898.

94 Ibid., 2, 27 Feb. 1900.

95 Ogden Journal, 4 Mar. 1900.

When a Samoan woman thrashed one of her daughters for associating with the missionaries, elder Iverson responded in kind, breaking a stick upon the woman in the attempt. He assured her, however, that if she would look at it in the correct light it would do her good, by encouraging humility. 'But', he commented, 'she did not see it that way....'⁹⁶ At Sauniatu one Leamoni was accused of disrespect to the Mormon faife'au and 'got his slats booted.'⁹⁷

Sauniatu, and its companion gathering places, Mapusanga and Vaiola, provided the best opportunities for the exercise of social control over church members. They had, of course, been acquired and maintained for such a purpose, in addition to hopefully providing the church with a revenue from the sale of their agricultural produce. The misconceptions concerning land ownership among saints who came early to the gathering places were soon corrected in the mission's favour,⁹⁸ and once the embryo Zions began to boast a reasonably stable population, the flexibility and inconsistency of their early years gave way to a more formal organization, and the drawing up of regulations governing conduct in the villages. Those formulated for Mapusanga in 1927 by Willard Smith were typical of all three villages. They consisted of a series of prohibitions,

96 Tuasivi Branch Record 1895-1903, 9, 16 May 1903.

97 Suaniatu Branch Record 1925-29, 17 Aug. 1929.

98 At an elders' meeting at Mapusanga in July 1910, 'The plantation was the first thing considered. The Question "What benefit will the natives receive." The purpose of the plantation is to make the mission self-supporting and to be entirely owned by the Church and worked by the natives.' Mapusanga Branch record 1910-15, 21 July 1910.

presented as follows:

1. It is forbidden for people without shirts in this village of Mapusaga.
2. No smoking is allowed in this a village of saints.
3. It is forbidden for one to be out of his house after the last bell, unless on important business.
4. It is forbidden for children to play around or in front of this the missionaries house.
5. It is forbidden to make unnecessary noise on Sunday.
6. It is forbidden for any one to get coconuts or coconut leaves from the Plantation no one in this village or in other villages own or work land in the Plant, except talo patches upon mountain.
7. It is forbidden to sleep in other families all must sleep in their own family.
8. It is forbidden to drink green coconuts in the Plant. without permission from those in charge.
9. It is also forbidden for any one to play cards in this village of Mapusaga.

A fine of fifty cents or more will be taxed to those found breaking these laws or work in the Plant. according to the amount of money taxed.⁹⁹

The Sauniatu regulations also prescribed punishment (unspecified) for saints who failed to observe the bells calling them to prayer; forbade the tethering of horses within the village, and forbade the leaving of the village without permission.¹⁰⁰

The most common forms of punishment imposed on those who contravened regulations in the gathering places were fines or, in lieu of money payments, labour. Serious

⁹⁹ Mapusanga Branch Record 1924-32, 23 May 1927.

¹⁰⁰ Sauniatu Branch Record 1930, 4 Apr. 1930.

offences, however, could result in temporary or even permanent banishment from the villages. The most common offences were against the injunctions on smoking and obtaining coconuts, although the regulations against too frequent-visiting and semi-nudity were also often contravened. Fines were frequent, and imposed at regularly held 'elders' courts' in the villages, in which the elders claimed an authority higher than that of the village matai, thus creating grounds for occasional friction. Matai who attempted to impose fines or punishments of their own without the elders' approval were severely reprimanded.¹⁰¹ Banishment from the villages was usually reserved for saints guilty of fighting or sexual offences, but the habitual smoker could also be turned out for long periods,¹⁰² as could the husband or wife who refused to accept an elder's guidance of their marital relations.¹⁰³ Group rebellion against village regulations was rare, although instances of groups of school children leading walk-outs of their colleagues in protest against school conditions are recorded.¹⁰⁴ On one occasion a number of Mapusanga school boys who succumbed to the Samoan enthusiasm for cricket instead of performing their allotted tasks were expelled temporarily from both school and village.¹⁰⁵ Laziness or

101 Mapusanga Branch Record 1932-35, 5 Sept. 1933.

102 Tutuila District Record 1930-33, 22 Apr. 1933.

103 Ibid., 19 Feb. 1933.

104 Upolu District Record 1930-39, 14 July 1936; Mapusanga Branch Record 1936-40, 27 Oct. 1937.

105 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Dec. 1940.

disobedience on the part of adults or children brought reprimands or fines, whatever the status of the offender. After roundly criticizing a group of Sauniatu school teachers for lack of obedience, and threatening one with expulsion, John Q. Adams was delighted to note that their previous sullenness had turned to humility. 'Lamanites of uncertain action to the core!' he wrote. 'But we love them above any race or people upon the earth.'¹⁰⁶

THE extent to which this professed affection was returned is less easy to measure. Almost no Polynesian Latter-day Saints succumbed to the L.D.S. obsession for record-keeping or journalizing; the few examples extant are of little help in assessing the islands saints' attitudes to their mentors. Evidence from missionary journals and mission records suggests that the gregariousness and hospitality of the Polynesian were often mistaken for a genuine interest in the L.D.S. message. There were few outright acts of hostility directed by islanders against the missionaries, unless these were instigated by rival religionists. But there were many examples of indifference to or bewilderment at the presence of the L.D.S. missionaries, whose early efforts at preaching to the previously converted seemed redundant to many islanders. 'The most ordinary question put to us by natives', wrote William Chamberlin in 1899, 'is why dont you go to the heathen in Papua.'¹⁰⁷ He was frequently told that the omission of Joseph Smith's name

¹⁰⁶ Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 7 Aug. 1943.

¹⁰⁷ Chamberlin Journal, 12 Sept. 1899.

from the Bible was sufficient evidence that Smith was not a true prophet.¹⁰⁸ The suggestion that he go to the heathens or blacks was also put often to Joseph Merrill in Samoa.¹⁰⁹

Such comments, however, were no more a bar to the missionaries' efforts than they were to the islanders' providing the necessities of food and accommodation to visiting missionaries, though the constancy of these demands was apt to become wearying at times. Wrote Frank Goff:

...when the elders are with the saints here... day after day, day after day living entirely on them, it no doubt proves burdensome to them to care for us...it is impossible for them to realize, the great sacrifices we have made to come & teach them the ways of salvation, & little do they think of the many bright attractions at home that we are deprived of....¹¹⁰

It was humiliating, thought Abinadi Olsen, to have the islanders regard the missionaries as a burden and feed them only grudgingly.¹¹¹

The non-vocational nature of the L.D.S. missionary's call, and the youth of so many were found to be obstacles to progress. Accustomed by the time of L.D.S. arrival to theologically grounded missionaries who were several years

108 Ibid., 26 July 1899.

109 Merrill Journal, 21 Feb. 1892.

110 Goff to Frank Cutler, 16 Dec. 1895, Tahitian Mission Letters.

111 Olsen Journal, 18 Aug. 1896.

removed from their teens, islanders found it difficult at times to take seriously the youth whose manner clearly revealed his background. Merrill complained that the Samoans thought the Mormons to be common working people and therefore unable to be satisfactory teachers of the gospel.¹¹² On Tubuai Grant Lee Benson found that his age tended to discourage respect:

...the kanakas must realize that we are not afraid of them when we have the truth and that we are able to look after ourselves and are not know nothing kids.¹¹³

The missionary's limited term in the field was a barrier not only to his understanding of the islander, but also to the islander's regard for him and his gospel. During the first thirteen years of the Samoan mission, Thomas Hilton told the church authorities, the islanders entertained little hope of the elders' returning, and said they did not care to associate with a church in which they were required continually to educate new ministers in their language.¹¹⁴ At a meeting of native office-holders on Tutuila in 1914, two Samoan elders argued that it was essential to the mission's progress for the mission president to have a command of the language and remain in the field for longer than the customary year or two.¹¹⁵ Their first requirement was eventually met when missionaries with islands experience were called to serve again as mission

112 Merrill Journal, 23 May 1891.

113 Benson Journal, 5 Aug. 1918.

114 Hilton to First Presidency, 4 Apr. 1901, Hilton Papers.

115 Tutuila District Record 1906-15, 5 Feb. 1914.

presidents; the nature of Mormon missionary service largely denied their second. But if the missionaries' linguistic inadequacy was one source of dissatisfaction, the very fact that they spoke English was often an attraction. Missionaries throughout the islands found that they could often arouse interest by conversing in English with an islander. When the conversation turned to gospel matters, however, interest often waned. Much of the interest shown in Mormon mission schools in Samoa and Tonga came specifically as a result of the instruction in English.

Acceptance of L.D.S. missionaries and their message by individuals or groups came about frequently as a direct result of disappointment with, or disaffection for, a missionary of another faith or a native pastor. Since the time of Addison Pratt, seemingly trivial incidents had resulted in converts being won for Mormonism. On Temarie in 1846 six islanders, chagrined at the non-appearance of Charles Barff and a promised supply of Bibles, offered themselves to Pratt for baptism.¹¹⁶ It was a continuing tendency, and one the Mormons exploited to their advantage. At Falefa and Fusi in Samoa petty discontent with local L.M.S. pastors led to their dismissal from these villages and requests for resident Mormon faife'au.¹¹⁷ At Tafatafa and Safatoa Methodist faife'au were similarly dismissed and Mormons invited to replace them. At the former village, in addition to receiving a ready-made congregation, the Mormons acquired

116 Pratt Journal, 1 Oct. 1846.

117 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1892-96, 18 June 1896; Sears Journal, 7 July 1900.

the Methodist meeting house and the ex-pastor's residence.¹¹⁸
 The fact that such additions to their strength were capricious was not entirely overlooked by some missionaries. Commenting on the poor spirituality of Tongan saints in 1923, Mark Coombs wrote:

Many, I was going to say most, of the adult baptisms performed were possible because these candidates became angry with their minister and joined the MORMONS in spite. The children in all too many cases have been baptized just because they have been attending our schools.... There have been altogether too many of such baptisms performed in Tonga.... The Elders, in some instances, barely knew the names of the candidates for baptism.¹¹⁹

But the need to demonstrate a mission's viability by a constantly growing membership roll meant that the cautionary measures implied by Coombs were often disregarded. The real test of a missionary's effectiveness was the number of convert baptisms he could personally account for, even though the faith of his subjects and the methods he applied may have been dubious at times.¹²⁰

The worth of a native missionary or office-holder had to be measured also in terms of his ability to refrain

118 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Mar. 1932.

119 Coombs to Heber J. Grant, 14 July 1923. Tongan Mission Letters (Emphasis in original).

120 A disaffected Tongan Mormon told me that he knew of several instances of 'forced baptism' by Tongan L.D.S. missionaries. He was sure that the practice was condoned by some white elders. The Honourable Ve'ehala of the Tongan Traditions Committee provided similar information. Personal interviews, Nuku'alofa, October 1971.

from sexual misconduct, his diligence in paying tithing and observing the Word of Wisdom, and his familiarity with the L.D.S. scriptures. The ordaining of men to a priesthood office sometimes within a few days of their conversion had long been practised by Latter-day Saints, and the practice was maintained by the very first Pacific missionaries. Advancement in the priesthood of worthy saints was, of course, essential in terms of doctrine; it was also a necessary expedient in the field to supplement the force of white elders. Church leaders and mission presidents were rarely fully convinced of the wisdom of handing the responsibilities of such office to the Polynesian. 'It is surprising', wrote one, 'how little our priesthood even, understands of the Gospel. Parrot like a Samoan repeats scripture not knowing the meaning.'¹²¹ When Willard Smith, having established Tonga as a separate mission in 1916, inquired as to the policy of ordaining islanders, he received the following reply.

There could be no objection to your ordaining native brethren to the priesthood provided they are worthy to bear the responsibility. But great care should be taken by you in a matter of this kind, because of the tendency among our Polynesian brethren to become self-sufficient and to manifest insubordination when clothed with the authority of the priesthood....¹²²

It was advice that Smith heeded for years. Over a decade later, during his term in Samoa, he was constantly critical

121 Sauniatu Branch Record 1904-07, 2 Apr. 1905.

122 First Presidency to Smith, 13 Dec. 1916, Tongan Mission Letters.

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of the Samoan priesthood, regarding them as lacking in scriptural knowledge, dignity and dependability. Those who were effective he considered to be high-minded, over-zealous or over-bearing.¹²³ Branches under the charge of a Samoan missionary, Smith felt, were under a disadvantage.¹²⁴ Some of his successors were like-minded. 'Very few Samoans ever display requisites for important positions', wrote John Q. Adams, 'they're too erratic, heady, jealous, superficial.'¹²⁵

But the demands of increasing membership together with the limitations placed on the entry of American missionaries made necessary a greater reliance on local office-holders, both as resident village pastors and as itinerant missionaries. In Tonga in 1952 a hitherto untried system of sending out pairs of native elders after a fortnight of indoctrination was introduced and attended by considerable success.¹²⁶ Elsewhere native elders were encouraged to use the power of their own priesthood to confer blessings, rather than relying entirely on the white elders. The same power, they were told, was available to them, and there would be no difference in the outcome.¹²⁷ The Tonga mission in 1957 boasted sixty-two

123 Tutuila District Record 1930-33, 16 July, 16 Dec. 1930; Smith, 'A brief summary of events...', Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports 1933.

124 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1916-30, 13 Feb. 1927.

125 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 17 Mar. 1944.

126 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Dec. 1952.

127 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, Mar. 1957.

full-time native missionaries and fifty-seven labour missionaries.¹²⁸

The labour missionary scheme, introduced in the 1950s during the church's intensive building programme, actually served a dual purpose. Under the ingenious scheme Polynesian saints were called to serve as labourers or artisans on building projects in the islands for periods ranging from a few months to three years; most on their home islands, but many on neighbouring islands also. Their services were obtained gratis, their testimonies to the truth of the work were recorded at length, and the responsibility for their material welfare was placed entirely in the hands of L.D.S. villagers in whose areas they worked. The main purpose of the scheme was to enable the church to complete its building programme as rapidly and as economically as possible, but a second purpose was also being fulfilled. Mormon teaching placed great stress on the importance of missionary service; in theory, at least, any adult church member could be called upon to render service, and great were the blessings which would accrue therefrom. There was a limit, however, to the number of Polynesian proselytizing missionaries who could be accommodated in the islands, and doubts about the doctrinal efficiency of the Polynesian still lingered. But constant teaching about the significance of missionary service had bred a desire among many Polynesian saints to render such service. The labour missionary scheme could fulfil such a desire: the term of service need not necessarily be as long

128 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Dec. 1957.

as that served by a proselytizing missionary, the saint's abilities could be appropriately channelled, and he need never become any more familiar with doctrinal matters than to deliver a stock testimony. Between 1950 and 1959 almost 400 labour missionaries served in central Polynesia, over 200 of them from Samoa alone.¹²⁹

The church's building programme was impressive to islands officialdom and to islanders alike. For the labour missionaries, the opportunity to learn English and perhaps learn new skills, and contribute visibly to the ostentatious extension of Zion seemed to repay amply the time and effort contributed. Polynesian conviction of the value of Mormonism was reinforced for many and begun for an impressive number. The Tongan mission, where the labour missionary scheme had started in 1950, more than doubled its membership figures within the decade of the 1950s.¹³⁰ Saints involved in the building projects enthusiastically committed to paper their reactions to the programme and their testimonies to the truth of Mormonism. 'One can see the progress of the church', wrote one, 'in that we can worship God in beautiful clean chapels.'¹³¹ The building programme, wrote another, 'does improve my faith and my testimony.'¹³²

129 David W. Cummings, Mighty Missionary of the Pacific, 320-37.

130 From 2,975 in 1950 to 6,358 in 1961. Statistics from Tongan Mission Office, Nuku'alofa.

131 Arlean Tyler and Anna Po'uha (comps) "History of the L.D.S. Tongan Building Program, 1955-1959", 45.

132 Ibid., 38.

Many were those involved in the scheme who testified also to the lessons of humility and obedience learned from their white supervisors during the building programme;¹³³ further lessons in the obedience that had been long taught in village congregations, in the social codes of the gathering places, and in the native priesthood meetings. Where other churches attempted as far as possible to indigenize their Pacific missions, the Mormons regularly reminded their saints of the indispensable nature of white leadership. Polynesians may aspire to various positions of limited responsibility in the L.D.S. missions, such as branch or district leadership or counsellor to a mission president. But very few believe that a Polynesian may ever become president of a mission; fewer still believe that a Polynesian may achieve apostolic status in the church.¹³⁴ Elder Fitisemanu, a Samoan saint of some influence and an active figure in the early years of the building programme in Samoa, expressed particularly for Samoans, but more generally for all Polynesian saints, one of the lessons learned from Mormon teaching. 'Samoans will need the white man to lead them until Christ comes. God', Fitisemanu reminded his Polynesian brethren, 'is a white man....'¹³⁵

133 Ibid., 35-57 passim.

134 These conclusions are based on interviews conducted with and questionnaires distributed to Latter-day Saints in Tonga, Samoa and Tahiti in September-November 1971.

135 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1939-51, 9 Oct. 1948.

CONCLUSION

A STUDY of Latter-day Saints missionaries in Polynesia reveals the recurring theme of persistence in the face of hostility, opposition and indifference. From the outset the missionaries met hostility, opposition and suspicion from older missionary bodies and officials. From the islanders themselves they often met indifference. As relative latecomers to the islands, preaching a doctrine unpopular even in their home country, and in its most outstanding tenets at odds with, and even offensive to, accepted Christian teaching, it was not surprising that this should have been the case; nor that much of their activities were taken up with justifying their presence, explaining their motives and defending their position. In the mission records the personal difficulties of the missionaries, and their encounters with hostile rival religionists and suspicious officialdom, often take prime importance, and seem to outweigh their dealings with the islanders themselves.

Yet although their relations and conflict with other missionaries and officialdom forms such a significant part of their record in Polynesia, it is in terms of their contact with, and their acceptance by, the islanders that the success of the Latter-day Saints missionaries must be measured. The success of a missionary enterprise is often assessed - and by the missionaries themselves - in terms of its membership; less often, and even less appropriately, by the extent of the members' contributions. Both methods are misleading, though understandably employed. The extent of a church member's real commitment - his faith, his spirituality - is difficult, if not impossible, to measure.

By 1960 the hostility that L.D.S. missionaries had regularly encountered from other missions had given way, to a large extent, to resignation at their presence. The suspicion of islands officialdom towards the missionaries had given way to acceptance. The indifference that so often characterized the islanders' earlier attitudes had given way to a reception that seemed - if membership figures alone are consulted - quite remarkable. In central Polynesia by the 1960s the L.D.S. Church was showing a faster growth rate than any other mission church.¹ The impressive growth was largely a feature of the 1950s, the decade of the church's major building programme, but the obvious attraction of the new facilities for religious, social and educational activity does not alone account for the appeal of the Latter-day Saints religion for Polynesians during a period of contact of over a century.

Its first appeal, in Polynesia as elsewhere, was to the disaffected and neglected of other Christian faiths, those for whom earlier promises seemed to remain unfulfilled. The doctrinal simplicity of L.D.S. teaching, presented generally in a straight-forward manner, and later systematized

¹ Available census figures make this clear. For example, the 1956 census report for Tonga shows an increase of 195.15 per cent for L.D.S. membership over the intercensal period. The 1966 census report for Tonga shows a 47.01 per cent increase on 1956 figures. It should be pointed out, however, that there is a great discrepancy between membership figures provided by the mission and those recorded in the census reports. For 1956 the figure claimed by the Tongan mission is 4,260; the figure reported by the census is 2,925. For 1966 the respective figures are 10,243 and 5,519.

so as to avoid possible inconsistencies, had a clarity that made it attractive to the unsophisticated. Once its basic premise, continuous revelation, had been accepted, the rest followed with apparently unassailable logic. Moreover, it was presented by missionaries who, whatever their other deficiencies may have been, maintained the evangelizing spirit at a time when most of the older established churches had abandoned it. In Polynesia the fact that so many L.D.S. missionaries were seemingly content, in the initial stages, to live with and off the people, despite the opposition of officialdom to the practice, added to their individual appeal and made their doctrine more acceptable. Later, as the missionaries themselves began to take on the appearance of greater respectability and the missions gave evidence of permanence, fears of L.D.S. transience and inadequacy were obviated and the church's gains consolidated.

Certain aspects of L.D.S. doctrine, especially the Mormon variant, concerning the plurality of gods and wives and the closeness of the association between gods and men, were coincident with traditional Polynesian beliefs which lay not far beneath the surface of the islanders' nominal Christianity. Polynesian saints have also seemingly accepted the racial doctrines of Mormonism, which award them a special status in the scheme of salvation and guarantee them superiority over the dark-skinned Melanesian. Polynesian saints who would accept Melanesians into the church, particularly as priesthood

officers, are very few indeed.²

The L.D.S. priesthood structure itself offers another attraction for Polynesians. The reasonably diligent saint has little difficulty in obtaining a position and a degree of advancement, at least to the rank of elder, within the L.D.S. hierarchy. Moreover, he can aspire to this office simply by displaying good works and a measure of faith. The theological training required of a Congregationalist or Methodist pastor, the seminary experience of a Catholic priest, are of little concern to a member of the Latter-day Saints priesthood. With no theological grounding and little doctrinal expertise he can secure a priesthood position that awards him prestige, guarantees certain charismatic gifts, and confers upon him authority over lesser saints.³

The optimism inherent in Latter-day Saints teaching, repudiating the burden of original sin, minimizing the concept of eternal punishment, and dwelling largely on the material, struck a responsive chord in many Polynesians. Eventually they received tangible and impressive evidence of materialism to sustain the faith of older saints, act as an incentive to younger ones and

2 These conclusions are drawn from the results of a survey conducted among over 300 Polynesian saints in September-November 1971. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 church members in each central Polynesian mission; Tonga, Samoa and French Polynesia. In the latter area, where both Mormon and Tanito Churches are present, fifty questionnaires were distributed among members of each church. In addition thirty-six personal interviews were conducted among church members.

3 Survey and personal interviews, September-November 1971.

draw into the L.D.S. fold additional thousands of hitherto uninterested islanders. In L.D.S. teaching, which so likened the city of God to that of man, this materialism was carried beyond the earthly, to the realm of the eternal. And for tens of thousands of Polynesians, a religion that offered them a material heaven, which included all the benefits and none of the disadvantages they had experienced on earth, was an attractive religion indeed.

APPENDIX A

MORMON MISSIONARIES AND THE FIJIAN

IT was not until 1954 that the Mormons began regular work in Fiji - their first inroad into the black Pacific - and then it was not to secure Fijian converts, but to uphold the faith of immigrant Polynesian Mormons and, incidentally, to proselytize other non-Fijians. The missionaries came close to Fiji in the late nineteenth century, establishing a mission in Samoa in 1888 and extending it to include Tonga in 1891. There is no indication for the next few years that they gave a thought to the possibility of work in Fiji, for to have done so would have been in defiance of the church's teaching on race. In 1895, however, Andrew Jenson, on a 'special mission'¹ from Salt Lake City, spent some days in Suva. 'I should be very pleased to see a mission established here by the Latter-day Saint Elders', wrote Jenson, 'though I have reason to believe it would require an extraordinary effort to make it a success.'² It was not the fact that Fiji had been already Christianized that concerned Jenson, for the Mormons generally took prior conversion to Christianity for granted, and never attempted to work in areas that had not been exposed to and influenced by Christian teaching. He was disturbed more by the Fijians'

1 Jenson's primary task was to 'collect Church history of foreign missions', but he was also empowered to 'preach the gospel and administer in all the ordinances thereof.' Andrew Jenson, Autobiography, 230.

2 Jenson's account of his stay in Fiji is included in Hawaiian Mission Manuscript History, 8 Aug. 1895.

colour. His first impression on meeting the Fijians 'was rather an unfavourable one. Their appearance seemed to indicate partly African origin very plainly...though their intermarriage with their Polynesian neighbours on the east entitles them to some of the blessings vouchsafed unto the promised seed - the House of Israel'.³ The problem of the Fijians' 'African' or 'Negro' origin was to cause the Mormons some concern in later years, leading to confusion and an eventual compromise in church attitudes.

Once Samoa and Tonga had become established as mission fields, there was occasional, though casual or accidental, contact with Fiji. In 1896 two Mormon missionaries on a tour of duty through the Tonga islands 'were drifted off down to Feejee',⁴ but apparently did no proselytizing there. In 1916 another, en route from Samoa to Tonga, stopped at Suva for three weeks and 'held meetings each Sunday with Samoans and half casts'.⁵ No attempts at conversion or baptism were reported. By the 1930s contacts with Fiji, though still unplanned, were becoming a little more frequent, and missionaries sometimes found themselves in Suva awaiting permission to land in Tonga or awaiting the lifting of quarantine regulations in Samoa.⁶ Although such sojourns could last up to a month, during

3 Ibid.

4 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1896-1900, 27 Dec. 1896.

5 Samoan Mission Historical Record 1911-16, 3 Sept. 1916.

6 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1934; Elders Tingey and Johnson to H.G. Reynolds, Suva, 12 Feb. 1935. Tongan Mission Letters.

which time the missionaries might hold meetings and distribute tracts, no attempts were made to convert and certainly no suggestion made that regular missionary work should commence in Fiji, for the difficulties of dealing with people of 'negroid blood' who might seek baptism and subsequent ordination precluded this possibility.

But even in those missions where there had been no anticipated racial problems, missionaries were faced with situations which caused them discomfort and embarrassment. In Samoa, Melanesians - mainly Solomon islanders - had had a small but significant influence on the native population since the days when they were recruited to serve on German plantations. In 1927, the presence of mixed bloods in the church was viewed with dismay by mission president Willard Smith. 'The seed of ham from the plantations is mixed I find with the saints', he wrote, 'this we all regret. I presume one must move with caution ere he gives out the priesthood here.' By his own admission, however, Smith had not moved cautiously enough. He had given the priesthood, he said, to a member of the Mormon village Sauniatu on Upolu only to find later that 'he is of this seed'. Smith understood, though, that 'we do not advance them any farther when this is discovered'.⁷

In Tonga, Smith's counterpart and contemporary, Newell Cutler, was having similar difficulties with Tongans of part-Fijian descent. When he sought advice on the problem from the church authorities in Salt Lake City, he received

⁷ 'A brief summary of events in the Samoan Mission'.
Samoa Mission Quarterly Reports, 1933.

an unequivocal reply: 'It has always been the policy of the Church to withhold the priesthood from those concerning whom there may be a question of their having Negro blood in their veins.'⁸ Proof of a convert's mixed ancestry was not considered necessary; the merest doubt about his racial purity was sufficient to exclude him from office.

Mormon church authorities, however, could not always be certain which of the races partook of 'Negro blood'. Nor could they consistently agree that it flowed in Fijian veins. In 1935, the issue of ordaining part-Fijian Tongans was again raised, this time by Cutler's successor, Reuben Wiberg, who was evidently as unfamiliar with his church's doctrine as he was with his predecessor's problems. Wiberg's query was two-fold: was it possible for a Fijian or one having part-Fijian blood to receive the lesser Priesthood; and what extent of remoteness from the Fijian line of ancestral connection would justify a member 'if otherwise worthy' to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood with its rights and privileges?⁹ This time the Mormon authorities, in a complete reversal of their earlier pronouncement, informed Wiberg that although 'the Church has not carried out missionary work among the Fijians...yet it does not consider them of negro descent. Should there be any negro blood in the Fijian he would not be permitted to hold

8 First Presidency to Cutler, 11 Dec. 1928. Tongan Mission Letters.

9 Wiberg's letter, addressed to the Presiding Bishopric of the Mormon Church and dated 11 July 1935, is not accessible. His queries, however, are quoted in the church authorities' reply. First Presidency to Wiberg, 14 Aug. 1935. Tongan Mission Letters.

even the Aaronic Priesthood'. Wiberg was assured that if a Fijian was worthy of receiving the Aaronic Priesthood then he may also receive the Melchizedek Priesthood 'if occasion and merit suggest such ordination'.¹⁰

The reasons for this extraordinary contradiction are not entirely clear; it is made even more curious by the fact that the president of the Mormon church in 1935 was the same man who, seven years earlier, had issued the apparently definitive statement on the ordination of men of 'Negro blood'.¹¹ It would seem, however, that the new stand was not an indication of a more liberal turn in Mormon thinking but a temporary expedient. In between the release of Cutler in 1932 and the appointment of Wiberg to the Tongan mission presidency in 1933, the office of mission president had been held briefly by a young missionary to whom Cutler had given interim appointment. The acting president had been lax in his official duties, but this was the least of his offences. He had also, in company with three other missionaries, been guilty of smoking, drinking and fornication, on occasion using the mission home for his activities. When Wiberg arrived, he found the books in disarray and the members disaffected.¹² The four missionaries were promptly dismissed for what the official

10 Ibid.

11 Heber J. Grant (1856-1945) President of the Mormon church from 1918 to 1945.

12 Tongan Mission Historical Record 1916-36, Jan.-Feb. 1934, passim.

mission history demurely termed 'un-Christianlike conduct',¹³ but the reputation of the Mormon mission in Tonga had already been badly shaken, and Wiberg spent much of his first year trying to repair the damage. At this time the Tongan mission was the least successful and had the weakest numerical strength of the Mormon Church's South Pacific missions; with the lowest membership and the smallest number of American missionaries. Responsibilities for missionary duties were already being given, to a great extent, to Tongans. Indeed, for a brief period in 1935 there were no American missionaries in the kingdom save Wiberg himself. The mission could ill-afford to lose members and offend or alienate potential office-holders by pursuing a hard line on a member's ancestry, especially in the light of recent events. It is likely then, that, faced with transgressing missionaries, a disaffected membership and the necessity of relying largely on a local priesthood, the Mormon Church felt it wise to withdraw its objections to the ordaining of Fijians and part-Fijians, at least until the mission gained strength and redeemed its reputation.

That the egalitarian gesture was only temporary is illustrated by later events. The Mormon Church authorities had been aware as early as 1935 that several Tongan members had migrated to Fiji,¹⁴ but their number had not been considered large enough to justify the sending of a missionary to Fiji to ensure that they did not become estranged from

13 Ermel J. Morton, Brief History of the Tongan Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 30.

14 Mission Secretary (H.G. Reynolds) to Elders Tingey and Johnson, 27 Feb. 1935, Tongan Mission Letters.

Mormon teaching. In 1943, however, when it was learned that a Tongan Mormon was to leave for Fiji to study at the medical school, he was hastily ordained to the office of elder and instructed to visit other Tongan church members and hold Sunday school classes with them while in Suva.¹⁵ Ten years later Suva's population of unsupervised Tongan Mormons had increased sufficiently to warrant Tongan mission president D'Monte Coombs writing to the First Presidency to inquire what might be done on their behalf.¹⁶ After giving 'very careful consideration to the matter of looking after this little colony', the First Presidency informed Coombs it was prepared to authorize regular supervision but, for the sake of administrative convenience, would assign the task to the president of the New Zealand mission. Their instructions to the latter reinforce the conclusion that the earlier decision was a temporary contrivance:

You will understand that the assignment relates primarily to the supervision of the Tongan Saints in Suva. It is not intended at the present time to open a Fijian Mission. You will also have in mind that if, as the result of the activities of the Tongans, any Fijians should become interested in the Gospel, that the Fijians are negroid in their origin, and that therefore they are not entitled to receive the Priesthood. This should always be kept in mind in connection with any interest manifested by

15 Tongan Mission Quarterly Reports, Feb. 1944.

16 Coombs to First Presidency, 21 Feb. 1953, Tongan Mission Letters.

the Fijians in the Gospel...for the present there should be no proselyting amongst them.¹⁷

The instructions were signed by David O. McKay, by this time President of the Mormon church. Eighteen years earlier McKay, as counsellor to the then President, Heber J. Grant, had countersigned the letter permitting the ordination of Fijians and part-Fijians on the grounds that they were not considered to be of Negro descent.

Supervision from New Zealand of Fiji's Tongan Mormons was less than successful and twelve months later, in May 1954, the responsibility was transferred to the Samoan mission under Howard B. Stone, who was authorized to 'effect such an organization...as to keep them interested and active in the Church'.¹⁸ But the Polynesian population of Fiji consisted of more than a small colony of Mormons. In 1954 there were over 9,000 non-Fijian islanders living in the Crown Colony, of which the greater number were Polynesians, representing the only large group of Polynesians as yet unassailed by Mormon missionaries. There were also over 8,000 Europeans.¹⁹ Clearly, then, it was a field to which consideration should be given for proselytizing and not simply extra-territorial supervision. By August 1954

17 First Presidency to Coombs, 1 Apr. 1953. Tongan Mission Letters. A copy of the instructions to the New Zealand Mission president is contained in this letter.

18 First Presidency to Stone, 21 May 1954. Samoan Mission Letters.

19 R.W. Robson (comp and ed.) Pacific Islands Year Book 1956, 223.

permission had been requested and received for two Mormon missionaries to commence full-time proselytizing in Fiji. Evidently under instructions to avoid direct contact with Fijians, the elders concentrated as much as possible on the non-Fijian population in Suva, distributing tracts and conducting the by now standard house-to-house method of approach. If, in their canvassing activities, they were greeted by non-Fijians, they would engage them in a discussion on religion with a view to arousing interest in Mormonism leading to conversion. If, however, the elders were confronted with a Fijian, they would forgo the introductions and the conversation, perhaps leave a tract, and depart with as much haste as tact would allow.²⁰

In their determination to observe instructions, the missionaries ignored, as far as they were able to, almost half the population of Fiji. But to complicate their task, Suva's Europeans did not seem especially interested in Mormonism, and nor did Suva's Indians. Moreover, by far the greater number of Indians were non-Christians, in itself an inhibitory factor to Mormon missionary work. Complained Howard Stone some time later: '...only 2% of them are Christians and being of a mercenary nature they only find time to make money.'²¹ Thus, if the missionaries avoided Fijians and made no attempt to proselytize non-Christian Indians, it meant that they were concentrating their efforts on less than ten per cent of the population. Since

20 The foregoing information was obtained in a personal interview with James Christensen, president of the Mormon mission in Tonga, at Nuku'alofa, Oct. 1971.

21 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1956.

Europeans were showing no interest, the actual amount of people who might give a hearing to the missionaries was much smaller. Stone, anxious to secure new converts as well as maintain the interest of the Polynesian Mormons, was inclined to advise his missionaries against being over-scrupulous in their selection. At a meeting in January 1955, Stone told his Suva-based elders that they '...were not to look up the genealogy of these people with the purpose of finding out if they have negro blood in them...'. Indeed, they were not to bring up the subject at all. 'As of yet', he informed them, 'the general authorities have not decided if they have Negro blood or not.'²²

While the Mormon authorities were revising their attitude once more, D'Monte Coombs of the Tongan Mission was having problems with his Tongan priesthood. In his letter of 1953 to the First Presidency, commenting on the unsupervised situation of the Tongan Mormons in Fiji, Coombs had made clear his inhibitions concerning Fijians,²³ and this may explain in part why the jurisdiction over the small branch in Suva was given to someone else.

But Coombs had also discovered to his dismay that many of his Tongan members had part-Fijian ancestry; enough to make him fear that all of them may have had. He could hardly dismiss from office all of his Tongan office-holders without causing dissatisfaction among members

22 Suva Branch Historical Record 1954-55, 30 Jan. 1955.

23 Coombs to First Presidency, 21 Feb. 1953, Tongan Mission Letters.

and considerable embarrassment to himself. Coombs did, however, what he considered to be the next best thing; he completely stopped making further appointments or advancements. On 27 May 1955 he wrote somewhat despairingly:

We have several priests who should be advanced in the priesthood and quite a few boys who should be made deacons but our ordaining and advancing...is still awaiting permission and instructions from you in answer to a letter that I sent you on January 25 1954 relative to the fact that so many of our people have Fijian blood...there has been no ordinations to the priesthood in this mission since December of 1953 because of the Fijian question.²⁴

The Mormon Church, therefore, was finding that its negrophobia was affecting its progress in both Fiji and Tonga. Yet, even while church authorities were fumbling for an answer to the 'Fijian question', an extension of activities in Fiji was being planned. In January 1955 David O. McKay had authorized the purchase of land on which to build a chapel and recreation facilities. Two months later a one and a half acre site in Suva was purchased at a cost of £(Fijian)12,000, the problem created by American ownership being overcome by the simple expedient of having the purchase made in the name of a Canadian missionary.²⁵ While construction arrangements were being made, the Immigration Office was hearing and refusing constant requests to allow more than two Mormon missionaries to work full time in Fiji.²⁶ On 13 October, in an attempt to secure

24 Coombs to First Presidency, 27 May 1955, Tongan Mission Letters.

25 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 June 1955.

26 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1955.

government approval for an increase in missionary numbers, Howard Stone and an American elder obtained an interview with the Governor of Fiji, Sir Ronald Garvey, and Colonial Secretary Stoddart. Stone, to whose demanding tone the Immigration Office had on one occasion objected, endeavoured to convince the Governor of the worth of the Mormon cause by pointing out that the missionaries were self-supporting; that no money would be leaving the colony; that the Mormons needed to 'gather' their saints, and that there was far too much work in Fiji's three hundred and sixty islands for two missionaries to cope with, especially since there were members scattered throughout. As evidence of his church's good intentions, Stone pointed to the Mormons 'beautiful schools and buildings throughout the islands and the World', the finance for which, he said, came from America. The church, he informed Sir Ronald, intended to build in Fiji in the very near future.²⁷

The Governor raised no objection to Stone's hugely exaggerated claim that Fiji's Mormons were scattered throughout the colony's hundreds of islands. Moreover, he could not have known that the proceeds of the church's compulsory tithe on members were forwarded to church headquarters in the U.S.A., or that the 'gathering', while still an important Mormon scriptural doctrine, had long since ceased to be a practised principle in the Pacific islands. He did, however, express the opinion that Stone's demand for ten or twelve full-time missionaries was unreasonable, in view of the 250 or so alleged church

²⁷ Suva Branch Historical Record 1954-55, 13 Oct. 1955.

members in Fiji,²⁸ though he advised Stone to apply through the Colonial Secretary for further permits. At least one aspect of Mormon doctrine had preceded Stone's representation to the Governor, however. Was it true, Sir Ronald asked, that the Mormons did not work with Negroes or Fijians? The missionaries' reply was evasive to the point of dishonesty. 'He understood that we don't', Stone's companion later wrote, 'but we told him that we do. Priesthood wasn't mentioned.'²⁹

Although approval to build on the church's newly acquired property had been granted, there was no relaxation of the government's restriction on missionary numbers. Despite the limitation, however, the missionaries maintained a vigorous house-to-house campaign throughout 1955, arousing strenuous opposition from other churches in Fiji. The Catholic and Methodist Churches, the Mormons claimed, were 'doing everything they can to drive us out of these islands'.³⁰ Catholic opposition was blamed for the refusal of Suva's

28 The figure of 250 given by Stone was undoubtedly a gross exaggeration. When the Mormon newspaper Deseret News, 2 Mar. 1957, announced the completion of the Suva chapel, it claimed that only two families in Suva belonged to the Mormon church when the mission was commenced in 1954. The actual number was probably about fifty. A chart of membership growth in Fiji drawn up by the Tongan mission office shows membership in 1957 to have been less than 100. The Fijian Census for 1956 lists only sixty-six Latter-day Saints, including twenty-one Europeans.

29 Suva Branch Historical Record 1954-55, 13 Oct. 1955. Emphasis in the original.

30 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1955.

radio station to allow the Mormons broadcasting time.³¹ By this time, also, the Mormon attitude to blacks was becoming well known in Suva. It was alleged that the Seventh Day Adventists 'and other opposing factors' had announced publicly that the Mormons were 'Negro-haters' and, since they regarded the Fijians as Negroes, were not interested in preaching to them.³²

In response to these accusations, Howard Stone announced that the Mormons did not regard the Fijians as Negroes at all, but considered them to be '...among the Children of Israel and were interested in preaching the Gospel to all nations, kindreds and tongues'.³³ Yet only a short time before Stone had been forced into evasiveness by the governor's question concerning Fijians, while earlier in the year, he had told his missionaries that the Mormon authorities had not decided the racial status of the Fijian. At some time towards the end of the year, the vacillating Mormon authorities had apparently reached a decision on the vexing 'Fijian question', and had communicated it to Stone, who was then able to give the impression that criticism of the Mormon's racial doctrines was unfounded and, in the case of Fiji, irrelevant.

Early in 1955 David O. McKay, president of the Mormon Church, had visited the South Pacific missions,

31 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 Sept. 1955.

32 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1955.

33 Ibid.

including Fiji and Tonga.³⁴ McKay was not unfamiliar with the issue concerning Fijians, having, over a period, signed two mutually contradictory letters on the subject. His visit in 1955 gave him a brief first-hand acquaintance with the situation. After his return to the U.S.A. he issued a statement that had the flavour of revelation. The Fijians, he declared, were 'a branch of the house of Israel and should receive the gospel'.³⁵

The reasons for this final compromise are not difficult to discern. Although the Mormons faced opposition and accusations of racial bigotry from other churches, they had long been accustomed to the hostility of other religious bodies, and this alone would not have affected their attitudes. But the opposition of officialdom would have, and it was hardly likely that officialdom in a successful multi-racial community would look favourably upon or continue to tolerate the activities of a religious organization which held doctrines of racial inferiority to be dogma and practised racial discrimination in its proselytizing campaign. Observed Howard Stone with some naivete: 'The officials seemed to be much more friendly after this clarification....'³⁶

Furthermore, the Mormon Church was already committed to a programme of expansion in Tonga³⁷ and had

34 McKay's arrival in Fiji was noted by the Fiji Times and Herald, 7 Jan. 1955.

35 David W. Cummings, Mighty Missionary of the Pacific, 198. Similar information was given to me by James Christensen of the Tongan Mission at Nuku'alofa in Oct. 1971.

36 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1955.

37 An extensive building programme had commenced in Tonga in 1950. Cummings, op.cit., 135-44.

begun one in Fiji, initially, at least, without a thought to the consequences that might attend their attempts at racial exclusivity. Although Mormon missionaries had entered Fiji at first merely to ensure that the church did not lose a number of its Tongan members, they were soon anxious to gain additional converts, providing they could ignore the Fijian population. This proved totally impracticable. Moreover, there was always the possibility that no matter how much careful screening was applied to new converts and potential office-holders, they might be found after ordination to be of part-Fijian extraction and, as events in Tonga had shown, this could lead to embarrassment on the part of missionaries and perhaps dissatisfaction and hostility from members. Indeed, it must have been obvious to McKay that the progress of his church in both Tonga and Fiji was being retarded by the doctrine of exclusivity.

But a doctrine that had its roots in supposedly divinely revealed scripture and a history of over a century could not be repudiated lightly, and to do so would have caused problematical repercussions elsewhere; especially perhaps in South Africa, where the Mormons had for years maintained a white-only mission in circumstances as convenient as they were congenial. Far easier, therefore, than to remove the restrictions on Negroes and Melanesians was to declare the Fijian to be non-Negro - hence non-Melanesian - and to award him the same status as that gained long ago by his Polynesian neighbours.

Although the Fijians were adopted reluctantly into Israel's scattered family in 1955, for a while at least there does not appear to have been an anxious desire to see them as future leaders in the Mormon mission field.

In October 1956 Howard Stone found gratifying the number of Indians at a church meeting in Fiji, and expressed the opinion that, since Fiji's Europeans had not responded enthusiastically to Mormonism, 'much of our leadership in years to come will be found among the Indian people'.³⁸ In June the following year, when the missionary in charge of the Suva branch was choosing his key assistants, he selected two Tongans as counsellors and an Indian as branch clerk.³⁹ And while the mission diarist could observe in March 1958 that recent converts included representatives of several of the races in Fiji, writing with evident surprise that 'there seems to be very little conflict between races',⁴⁰ it was well into 1959 before the first Fijian elder was ordained.⁴¹

Certainly, the admission of Fijians to the communion of saints did not mean that membership in the Mormon Church was to be extended to Melanesians generally, for the Mormons continued to remain aloof from the other black Pacific islanders. In October 1961 the Mormons organized a mission branch in Noumea, New Caledonia; not, however, because of a sudden desire to take the Latter-day Saints gospel to New Caledonians, but to insure the continuing adherence to the church of a number of immigrant Tahitians.⁴²

38 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Dec. 1956.

39 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 30 June 1957.

40 Samoan Mission Quarterly Reports, 31 Mar. 1958.

41 Chronology of Important Events in the Fijian Mission. Fiji Mission Office, Suva.

42 Noumea - New Caledonia, Tahitian Mission Office, Papeete.

APPENDIX B

THE ISLANDS OF ISRAEL

THE following are extracts from published and unpublished writings of Latter-day Saints dealing with the origin of the Polynesians. They are presented in chronological order of appearance. The references accompanying some have been omitted.

Origin of the Brown South Pacific Islander

As the insignificant, wafted straw points out unerringly the path of the wind, otherwise unseen, so in the onward march of great historical events, apparently minor incidents have often, within themselves, the indication of the general trend.

Some centuries back there was recounted by Alma, prophet-historian, a seemingly insignificant narrative, brief and simple, that undoubtedly has assumed broad proportions in the light of more modern developments. It is this:

'And it came to pass that Hagoth, he being an exceedingly curious man; therefore he went forth and built him an exceedingly large ship, on the borders of the land Bountiful, by the Land Desolation and launched it forth into the west sea, by the narrow neck which led into the land northward.'

'And behold, there were many of the Nephites who did enter therein and did sail forth with much provisions, and also many women and children; and they took their course northward, and thus ended the thirty and seventh year.'

'And in the thirty and eighth year, this man built other ships, and the first ship did also return, and many more people did enter into it; and they also took much provisions, and set out again to the land northward.'

'And it came to pass that they were never heard of more. And we suppose that they were drowned up in the depths of the sea. And it came to pass that one other ship did also sail forth; and whither she did go, we know not.'

Now for a geographical query: 'Where was the 'Land of Bountiful,' the 'Land of Desolation,' the 'narrow neck,' the 'west-sea' and the 'land northward'? And, of what relative value is all this to our theme? We shall note presently that answering the above questions provides for us a very stable foundation upon which we shall proceed to erect our more modern superstructure.

The 'Land Bountiful' is familiar to all students of the ancient scriptural history of the western hemisphere as having been located in the northwestern corner of South America, adjacent to the Isthmus of Panama, which, by the way, is, of course, the 'narrow neck,' and the Pacific Ocean the 'West Sea.' The 'land northward' may have referred to any part of the western coast of North America, probably off Central America or Mexico, as voyages of that time were limited rather than extended.

Bearing all this in mind in its plain simplicity, we shall now deal with something nearer our own time.

Out in the South Seas, approximately four thousand miles from San Francisco, lies the group of land dots known variously as the Navigator or Samoan Islands. On the 24th day of November, 1901, Elder Martin F. Sanders, then laboring as a missionary on the island of Savaii, the largest of the group, visited quite by accident, a rude, thatched native hut, where dwelt a couple who had the day previous picked up on the beach, a bottle of rather curious appearance. It was seen to be the depository of a written message of some sort which had not been damaged in its hermetically sealed abode, and curiosity led to further investigation. On the paper in seven different languages the finder was informed that it had been dropped into the Pacific off the western coast of Mexico by the ship Cavalier Ciampa, in the endeavor to ascertain the direction and velocity of the ocean current that sweeps along there. Incorporated with this information was the request that any one picking it up in any quarter of the globe should return it to Washington, D.C., where the facts gained would be valuable to that department of the national government interested in such work. This was done.

Now for a summary. In little more than eight months, without aid other than drifting with the current, the bottle had crossed the intervening four thousand-mile span of ocean water between Mexico and Samoa, proving conclusively the existence of an ever-moving, vast 'ocean

river' in this latitude. We are all aware of the peculiarly restless nature of the ocean. Not only in waves does its surface keep up a perpetual movement, but as huge rivers and stretches of it shift about in varying directions and rates in different sections of the earth. To further substantiate the presence of the current in question, an Englishman, four years after the occurrence narrated above, accidentally was set adrift in a canoe from the Marquesa Islands, far to the eastward of Samoa, and he, too, followed the drifting course taken by the bottle, eventually bringing up at the same destination.

In concluding this first phase of our dissertation, let us call to the fore once again the part played by Alma in all this. Hundreds of years before the existence of maritime knowledge now in our possession, he refers unconsciously to two vessels having been lost in the exact waters where, two thousand years later, the bottle was to begin its corroborative journey. What is more consistent than to draw the fair inference that very easily a small, clumsily constructed craft, devoid of other propelling force than wind or wave, could easily have become dismantled in a squall, and, drifting sailless and rudderless, where would she next have been heard from? Anyone will logically exclaim: 'The bottle and boat traversed identically the same course.'

To lengthen this particular point in the discussion would fail to add to its deep impressiveness, and we shall now proceed to the remaining array of facts which establish from various standpoints the identity of the brown Israelite of the seas, simply suggesting that from Alma 63:5-8 may be evolved a very consistent and logical reason for holding to the Hebraic origin of the brown islander.

Thus far we have rested our case in establishing the identity of the brown man of Oceania or Polynesia with the presentation of a chain of facts which tended to show that he undoubtedly originated on the American continent, at the time the Nephites and Lamanites were alternately at the helm of history. This connects them up with the descendants of Abraham in the Holy Land of back centuries, for no doubt exists as to the blood that flows in the veins of the offspring of Father Lehi.

John Quincy Adams, South Sea Memories (Salt Lake City, 1919),
102-5

The Origin of the Polynesians

Ever since Captain James Cook, explorer for His Majesty, King George III of England, made his memorable and startling voyage to the Pacific and discovered the brown race of people, the Polynesians, men have wondered where they came from and to what race of men they belong. The problem has become more intricate and interesting with the passage of time. Other voyagers noted the customs, language, and physique of the people in the Central Pacific, for they seemed to have no relationship with the Melanesians or other Asiatic racial groups. In appearance they resembled the American Indians, yet they were located so far from the American mainland that it seemed almost impossible that they could have strayed so far from the main body. Also there was another significant factor, the languages of Polynesia seemed to differ greatly from the dialects of the American Indians.

The first intensive exploration of the Southern Pacific revealed that there were numerous island tribes all speaking closely related languages and all bearing similar physical characteristics. These two factors justified archeologists in giving them the name of 'Polynesians.' 'Poly' meaning 'many' or 'people of many islands.'

It was thought at first that the Polynesians constituted most of the inhabitants of the Pacific, but further exploration toward the Asiatic mainland revealed numerous other tribes. In Melanesia, Papuasia, and Indonesia they found languages which at first appeared to be similar to those spoken by the Polynesians and so the newly discovered people were called the 'Malyo-Polynesians.' Immediately followed the conclusion that all the brown-skinned people of the Pacific in the east, central and western areas were of the same race and had a common origin in Asia. It did not take long, however, for scientists to disprove such a theory for the more they examined the baffling situation the more convinced they became that there were three different races of men in the south, east and west. The races in the west differed in too many respects from the Polynesians to be of the same origin. The races in the south they discovered to be a black, negroid type and were not even closely associated with the western and central Pacific tribes.

The three racial groups are now definitely established, the Mongoloid in the west, the Negroid in the

south and south-west, and the Polynesian in the east and northeast. The negroid element of the New Zealand islands, and some of the smaller islands of the southwest Pacific were declared to have their origin in Australia and their presence in New Zealand came about through migration rather than originating in that island. The flat noses of the Polynesians created great confusion in the identification of the race for this characteristic prevented any racial connection with the American Indian. When, however, it was revealed that the new-born babies of the Polynesians had normal Caucasian noses and that the flatness appeared through the massaging of the delicate membranes when the child was very young, the mystery was solved. The flat nose appeared to be a mark of beauty to the Polynesian following their contacts with certain Negro tribes in the south Pacific. It had become traditional, although not universal among the Polynesians in all the islands.

Further research into the habits and legends of these interesting and talkative people seemed to reveal no reliable evidence that would prove their origin. Intensive investigation was conducted in all areas even to the most remote regions. Similarities were observed between the pyramids of Egypt and some native architecture of New Zealand, but the investigations also revealed the same types of architecture in some of the ancient American ruins. As a result no conclusion was possible except to admit that there were similarities in the Egyptian, Maori, and American designs. This led archeologists to believe that Egypt was the original home of the Maori, and that the American Indian was descended from those who had migrated to New Zealand. This was a logical but a tragic error for it reversed the direction of the course of migration of the Polynesians and inhibited the solution to the problem for many years.

During the investigations the scientists refused to take much stock in the legends of the Polynesians. They found discrepancies in some instances and so jumped to the conclusion that none of them were of sufficient reliability to be used as evidence. Had they concentrated upon the literary evidence of the legends extant in New Zealand and Hawaii they would have found some remarkable parallels which would have revealed the hidden story of the peoples of Polynesia.

Testimony of the Book of Mormon

Students of the Book of Mormon agree with the assertion of the archeologists that the Polynesians,

Egyptians, and the American Indians had a common culture background, but they doubt the assertion that the American Indian was a product of later migration from New Zealand. The testimony which the Book of Mormon bears justifies us in the belief that the migration from the cultural area of which Egypt was a part, was directly to the American Continent by the Nephites, and that the people now living in the Central Pacific found their way to those islands some centuries after the Nephite landing on the South American mainland. The similarities which are observed by trained scientists do exist and constitute one of the strongest links which tie the American Indian with the Polynesian, the only point in conflict being that which has to do with the point of embarkation of the Polynesians.

The evidence which the scientists failed to consider, however, the customs, legends, and genealogies of the Polynesians is now being used to substantiate the evidence given by the Book of Mormon that the ancestral home of the Hawaiians, Maoris, Tahitians, Tongans, Samoans, Rarotongans, Aitutakians, Mangaian, Maukeans, Ra'iateans, and Marquesians was in America.

Hawaii-loa

According to tradition Hawaii-loa was the first man to set foot on the Hawaiian Islands. He came there with only one canoe on his first voyage but when he discovered the nature of the islands with their rich fertile soil, the abundance of fruits and edible berries, and the bounteous fish and birds, he concluded that such a paradise would be an ideal home for himself and family. And so he promptly set sail again for the mainland, called in Hawaiian legend, Ka-aina-kai-melemele-a-Kane, where he gathered his family, relatives and friends and returned to the islands.

This simple story sounded too fantastic to be believed at first and proved of little assistance to the ethnologist who sought for the facts. The legend did not state the direction of the mainland from Hawaii, and the Hawaiian name didn't yield much inspiration, so the legend with its secret was discarded as not valuable information at that time.

There is a remarkable supplement to the tradition, however, but it comes from a most unusual source as far as scientists are concerned - the Book of Mormon. It is the record of Hagoth, a Nephite navigator who decided to

build some ships a short time before the time of Christ. Alma the historian tells the story:

'And it came to pass that Hagoth, he being an exceeding curious man, therefore, he went forth and build him an exceeding large ship, on the borders of the land Bountiful, by the land Desolation and launched it forth into the west sea, by the narrow neck which led into the land northward.

'And behold, there were many of the Nephites who did enter therein and did sail forth with much provisions, and also many women and children; and they took their course northward. And thus ended the thirty and seventh year.

In the thirty and eighth year, this man built other ships, and the first ship did also return, and many more people did enter into it; and they also took much provisions, and set out again to the land northward.

'And it came to pass that they were never heard of more. And we suppose that they were drowned up in the depths of the sea. And it came to pass that one other ship also did sail forth; and whither she did go, we know not.' (Alma 63:5-8.)

This story doesn't mention the fact that the Nephites went to Hawaii. It merely infers that one of the ships, the first one built by Hagoth, had landed its cargo safely somewhere in the land northward and returned for another. This doesn't mean that it went to Hawaii, for the particulars of the story conflict with those of the Hawaiian legend which states that only one man landed there, Hawaii-loa. According to Mr. Bancroft, eminent American Indian historian, there is a tribe of Indians now living in northern California who tell in legend of the Hohgates (compare this name with that of Hagoth), seven in number who first came there in a boat. 'They built their houses after the style of the white men now. These Hohgates killed many elk on land and seals and sea lions in fishing excursions from their boats. Some of these Hohgates were caught in a typhoon and swinging around and around, their boat floated steadily into the vast of heaven.' (Native Races, Bancroft, Vol.III, p.177.)

The 'vast of heaven' to the California mainland is westward, and it was in that direction that this traditional fisherman-navigator floated. The California current flowing down the west coast of North America begins to make its circuit westward at about the same region where the Hohgate

fishermen became entangled in a typhoon. With his boat comparatively helpless in the current he became subject to the movement of the water and would eventually be carried to the region of the Hawaiian Islands. He could not get across the Equatorial Drift which runs directly westward through the epicenter of the California and Antarctic currents for the water of the northern current would carry him irresistibly westward.

To some this may be discarded as mere supposition, and without further substantiation. The Book of Mormon says that Hagoth built his ships in the 37th year of the reign of the judges which when calculated according to Book of Mormon chronology gives the year 54 B.C. The Polynesians in their pedigrees trace back eighty generations to Hawaii-loa. A generation according to the Polynesian Society averages twenty-five years. This average was established after thorough and exhaustive research into Maori pedigree-histories and the genealogies of other islanders. If we use this as a unit of measurement, multiplying eighty by twenty-five we estimate two thousand years from 1936, the date of this calculation, to the arrival of Hawaii-loa in Hawaii. Taking this number from 1936 we arrive at a negative 64 years, or 64 B.C. the date of Hawaii-loa's generation. This is only ten years different than the date of Hagoth's ship-building project, so is substantially the same time. It is so close in fact that it will be readily accepted that there does exist a possibility of it being the same date allowing a margin of error in the Hawaiian tradition or estimate of years per generation.

The Book of Mormon account by Alma states that it was at the narrow neck of land which leads into the land northward that Hagoth built his ships and began his journey. The Maoris report a legend concerning their migration from the mainland where two great continents are connected by a narrow neck of land.

In additional support of this legend Mr. R. Horseley, author, of New Zealand, writes: 'A study of the culture and habits of the Polynesians in New Zealand has brought ethnologists to the conclusion that he (the Maori) must have been living in the tropics near the equator before he came to New Zealand. In his first abode he had become accustomed to the short interval between day and night, and so when he arrived in New Zealand he was amazed and delighted with the long twilight and named the land "Ao-tea-roa" or "The Land of the Long Lingering Day," or the "Land of Twilight." Always poetical,

others called it "Aotea" or the "Land of the Dawn." Certain it is, that nowhere in the world could more magnificent twilights be found than in New Zealand. ' (New Zealand, p.10.)

The departure of the Polynesians from such a region is also verified by Mr. Wm. Colemso who says: 'A large migration has ever been traditionally spoken of as having anciently taken place from Mexico and Central America (on the breaking up of the Toltec Empire); and it is an easy and short voyage, and one not impossible to large canoes, from Central America to several of the nearest Polynesian Islands.' (Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute. Vol. 1, 1896, on 'the Maori Races of New Zealand.)

San Miguel Gulf

One of the most unfriendly shores in the world runs southward along the western foothills of the Andes Mountains from the northern end of South America. It is almost without exception a long and harborless coast. There is no place in two thousand miles, it is reported, that a ship such as Hagoth built could be launched. There is one place further northeast, however, that has sufficient depth and harbor for such an event, both for constructing and launching a ship, San Miguel Bay, at the juncture of Central and South America on the Pacific coast. The bay is part of the greater Gulf of Panama which extends for several hundred miles along the Isthmus of Panama northward. It is an excellent harbor, very calm and with an outlet twenty-five miles in width. It has a tide of twenty-two feet which would be sufficient for launching almost any boat of that time. Beside these favorable characteristics it lies in close proximity to some of the longest grained timber in the Americas, ideal for ship building.

To the east of the Gulf of Panama are high mountains which cut off the winds from the Atlantic, making the gulf exceptionally calm in comparison with the very rough waters in the Gulf Stream on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus. All in all it was an ideal location for just such an adventure as Hagoth planned. The early Spanish explorers used it as early as the sixteenth century thinking that, because of its depth, it constituted a channel connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Ocean Currents

Immediately to the west of the Gulf of California there flows one of the world's most famous ocean currents.

It is a warm body of water coming from the Asiatic mainland. When it leaves Asia to make its northern circuit it is called the Kuro Siwo. Its southward movement begins at about the location of the Aleution Islands which help to divert its northern flow along the coasts of Alaska and thence down the west coast of North America. Its southernmost flow is stopped by the influence of both the South American Continent and the force of the cold Antarctic current, and it turns directly westward running parallel with the Antarctic current along what is called by oceangraphers as the Equatorial Drift.

It is reasonable to assume that if a boat, properly manned and equipped set sail in this current that it could make the voyage from San Miguel Bay across the Gulf into the protection of the Gulf of California in safety, but if the boat became helpless in the current to the west it would have little chance of reaching the American mainland but would be carried westward by the force of the California current. Maori legend verifies the fact that the first migrants from the mainland to Tahiti used the influence of the current for their journey to the west. This situation is like the one in which the Hohgate found himself as described in the California Indian legend.

The first group of islands in the course of the California Current is that of Hawaii. It lies in the most direct course westward from California, and is not an impossible journey for a small craft.

Navigation was not an unknown art in the days of Hagoth even though the Book of Mormon has little to say concerning it. Phoenician ships from Tyre and Sidon had explored the far reaches of Africa and rounded the Cape of Good Hope on their journey north. Tradition also suggests that they even made the voyage to the Americas where they traded with the Jaredite people many centuries before, it was this legend concerning the land beyond the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar) that led the ancients to conjure the idea of the continent of Atlantus. As early as the twelfth century B.C. Chinese Junks went far into the Pacific Ocean on trading expeditions. The Book of Mormon infers in several places that transients from the southern to the northern continents used the water route rather than the difficult land route along the Isthmus which even today is almost impassable.

That Hawaii-loa was either Hagoth, or one of his sea-captains, or a member of his party that sailed to California, there is little doubt. It is erroneous, however,

to assume that Hagoth and Hawaii-loa must be one and the same person for while the ships plied the Pacific waters, Hagoth remained in Central America to build more ships and there is no record that he ever set sail himself. The time element and the circumstances of the departure of the ships are important facts of the story as they connect with the origin of the Polynesians.

Legends Substantiate an Asiatic Migration

Legends of the Maoris of New Zealand trace the origin of that people for 134 generations from Te Raka, (born in 1884) to the Ithiria, or Assyria (the Holy Land of Bible days). This was the land where Luu Nuu (Abraham) dwelt. When mankind migrated in different directions the White Maori went to the North; the Black Maori to the south; the Yellow Maori to the East; and the Brown (New Zealand) Maori to the west.

This is the beginning of the Maori ancestry following the flood. Their most intimate ancestry begins with the twelve nations or houses of Ha-Kopa (Jacob). They first migrated to Egypt where they built cities. After a time they returned to Assyria (Land of Canaan) but in a few generations they split into two groups (Northern Kingdom of Israel, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah). One group began its great migration to the west. Only two nations remained in Assyria (Canaan, presumably Judah and Levi), but the ten crossed the high mountains (Caucasus) until they reached a 'cold climate' (the Black Sea region) where most of them turned westward and journeyed across the land (Europe).

It is at this point that the legend becomes somewhat confused for the Maori history speaks of their connection with the ten tribes that went across Europe, saying that three of them turned northward, but that seven continued across until they came to the ocean. Two more of the tribes refused to make the journey across the ocean and remained in Europe.

The actual relationship between the Maori and the northern tribes is certain for Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh, and Ishmael of the tribe of Ephraim, both members of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. These two men remained in Jerusalem following the exodus of the Northern Kingdom across the Euphrates and the Caucasus mountains, and thence across Europe. The migration must have been known to the ancestors of these people just as it was known to Ezekiel who wrote of it.

The confusion that has come with the legend arises probably from a most interesting custom among the Maoris. The seven tribes mentioned by the Maoris must refer to the seven male members of Lehi's party, Lehi, his four sons, Ishmael, and the servant of Laban. These seven men constituted the original ancestors (with their wives) of the Polynesian people. During the eight or more years that the people of Lehi wandered in their journey to the Pacific and during the time it took to build the ship, the four sons, Laman, Lemuel, Nephi, and Sam, and the servant of Laban married and undoubtedly had offspring. (Inca tradition indicates that the four Ayar brothers led their posterity or tribes from the land of Paccari-tampu, indicating that tribal relationship must have become pronounced long before they arrived in South America.) In tribal organization the birth of a child constitutes a tribe. When, however, all the children of parents marry, forming other tribes, the tribe of the parents ceases to be known as such and is not counted. The forming of the five tribes by the marriage of the children of Lehi and Ishmael and the lack of additional offspring by Lehi or Ishmael would constitute the five tribes that crossed the Pacific and landed in South America. It will be remembered that Lehi, Ishmael and the servant of Laban are almost completely ignored following their arrival in the Americas, for the record then takes up the activities of the four sons, and constitutes the beginning of the Inca legend of the four Ayar brothers. Frequent references are made to the four brothers and their posterity after their disembarkation.

One of the most amazing facts concerning the Maori assertion that 134 generations passed from Assyria to the time of the birth of Te Raka (1884), is that when this number when multiplied by twenty-five, the established period of a Maori generation, we arrive at the number, 3,350, and when Te Raka's own generation is added the number 3,375. Examination of the Old Testament chronology reveals that the Israelites came out of Egypt in 1491 B.C. This is the point at which the Maori legend begins its calculations (from Iberia). This number when added to 1884 also gives the total of 3,375 years, the identical figure obtained from the oral traditions of the Maoris.

American Origin Verified

Numerous generations dwelt in the Americas before the Maori emigration from the mainland and in succeeding migrations from one island home to another eventually landed and settled in New Zealand.

Mr. S. Percy Smith, noted New Zealand ethnologist and historian concluded from traditional and scientific evidence that the ancestors of the Maori were living in a land known as Atia-te-varinga-nui in 450 B.C. when they were ruled over by a great king or supreme chief named Tu-te-Rangi-marama; that not long before the beginning of the Christian Era they began to migrate to the islands of the Pacific.

Mr. Smith's approximation of 'not long before the beginning of the Christian Era' conforms with the date of Hagoth's enterprise (54 B.C.) and with the Hawaiian legend of Hawaii-loa (64 B.C.). It also confirms another Hawaiian legend which has to do with the earliest Tahitian migration in 200 B.C.

At this point it would not be amiss to repeat two very interesting legends of the Maori for they are brief yet reveal the step by step migration of the Maoris from one home to another.

A noted Maori chief recited the following chant of the migrations:.... When translated into English it reads: 'I came from great-distance, from long-distance, from very-distant places from the Gathering place of Souls, from Hawaiki.' Still further translated in the light of other evidence given it means: I came from Tahiti, from Tawhiti of long distance (America) from Tawhiti of very distant places (Assyria), from the gathering place of souls (heaven). Another Maori chant says: 'Turn once again your face to the shadowy land from whence we came, to the home of our ancestors far away, to Great Hawaiki (Hawaiki means home just as Tawhiti does) to Hawaiki of Great Distance, to the Hono-i-Wairua (the place of Spirits) the land where man was formed from the earth by Great-Tane-of-the-Sky, and had life breathed into him. So begin our genealogies.'

Mr. Cowan, commenting upon these two remnants of Maori folklore says that they are a formula that summarizes the Maori's idea of the migration of his ancestors from one Tawhiti or Hawaiki (home) to another across the island strewn Pacific.

So conscious are many of the Polynesians of their American connections that Americans are amazed at the reception they receive from the islanders: 'We welcome you to our land from America, for we are Americans too.' They know that their lives and customs are inextricably

tied up with those of the inhabitants of this continent, the Indians.

Earnest L. Whitehead, The House of Israel: a treatise on the destiny, history and identification of Israel in all the five branches (Independence, Mo., 1947), 432-45

The Route of Migration

The singular characters inscribed on both the Easter Island and Middle Indus scripts, have some proclivities of the Reformed Egyptian hieroglyphs inscribed on the New York plates discovered by Joseph Smith in the year 1827. From a careful perusal of this information we may draw the obvious conclusion, that Polynesia was originally settled from Asia passing through the areas mentioned, thence to the Pacific Islands and finally onto the coast of Ancient America. If this be true it would naturally relate the Polynesian people with the American Indian tribes in their very earliest history, connecting them with Babel, Nimroud, Mohenjo Daro, several Islands in the Netherlands East Indies, Australia, the South Pacific Islands of Easter, and finally with Ancient America. That is not to say, however, that the white-skinned Jaredites, who merely passed through these areas, are the inventors of the numerous artifacts now found in the museums of the world. Neither can it be shown that the Jaredites are the ancestors of the present bronze-skinned natives of Polynesia, nor the founders of the mystery city. But it is highly probable that the white skinned aborigines of Polynesia were related, at least partially, to the descendants of that mass following which may have set out in pursuit of the Jaredites in search of the 'Fountain of Youth', or more correctly speaking that 'land of promise.'

The Jaredite Barges Were a Forerunner of the Polynesian Double Canoe

The first fleet of ships built on the coast of India by Jared and his brother were probably abandoned somewhere along the Northwest coast of Australia. The overland travel through the 'wilderness' of Australia culminated in the tent-city region of Moriancurr, somewhere on the extreme Eastern coast. Here instructions as to the manner of the second fleet of barges were received. They were to be the length of a tree, with top, sides, and bottom

tight 'like unto a dish'. A hole in the top and another in the bottom was a peculiar innovation introduced by the Jaredites and only recently included in the constructional plans of modern shipbuilders. The purpose was evidently for the circulation of air and the disposal of sewerage. The singular repetition of the phrase 'like unto a dish' held a special and very significant meaning for those early peoples. It must be remembered that modern crockery and dinner service as compared to dishes of ancient design are direct antipodes in workmanship. It is, therefore, necessary to obtain a picture of the earliest possible earthenware or dish to see how the early dish moulds compare with the modern design. An early Tahitian dish of ancient design appeared in the works of Ellis in the year 1829. It is easy to see how the construction of a ship could resemble this dish. Two notable changes were to be made; the top was also to be curved and tight, with fore and aft decks slanting upward into a peak. This manner of construction has been accepted by modern shipbuilders in that the fore and aft decks of most modern transport vessels tend to slant upward at an angle of about 10 degrees.

The manner of construction would readily permit the complete submersion OF THE BARGE in time of storm, which according to the record actually happened.

Against the Wind

In the Pacific and Far East, the prevailing winds are from East to West. This poses one of the most baffling problems with which the scientists, who claim that Polynesia was peopled from Asia, have to deal. To float or drift against the wind is impossible, yet there is strong evidence that they did initially migrate from Asia. Here again the ancient record is clear, which says, 'ye cannot cross this great deep, save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth.' This clearly shows that they were to travel against the winds which had already 'gone forth', or in other words, against the prevailing winds from the East.

So it was that the Jaredites set out into the Pacific in eight small barges from the coast of Australia, to be blown by divine power against the winds until they set foot on the 'land of promise'. To coincide with this record is a tradition among the Ancient Americans, that there were seven small ships or barges which arrived on the coasts of America from out of the Pacific in a very early period.

The General Route Across the Pacific

To follow the exact course of the Jaredite cruise across the Pacific is impossible, as the record is mute, but it is logical to believe that their general route can be marked out by drawing a direct line, following the curvature of the earth, from Australia to Ancient America. This would take them close to the Island of Fiji, through the Society Islands, and finally onto the coast of Mexico. It is likely that the Jaredites observed these various Islands as they passed by, since it is logical to believe that they lived above deck most of the time in good weather. Three hundred and forty four days later they landed on the shores of the promised land and there established a civilization in the new world.

The Settling of the Pacific

Although some few members of the original Jaredite expedition may have remained along the migratory route through the East Indies or on Australia, it is becoming increasingly certain, born out by evidence of fact, that the Jaredites were followed by friends who peopled the Pacific Islands of Polynesia. These friends no doubt followed the path of Jared to Mohenjo Daro and later into the Java sea, touching en route The Mollucas, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and The Celebes from whose Negroid aboriginal pygmies they gained the knowledge of the Jaredite passing. At Moriancumr on the Australian coast the trial was lost, but the search did not terminate there. No doubt many years were spent on the continent of Australia in search of the colony of Jared, but this beautiful paradise could not be the promised land, since the colony led by divine providence was nowhere to be found. So the search went on and on, probably from Cape York to New Guinea, where mementoes of the former colony were found. Here they were compelled to construct ocean going vessels in order to investigate the Pacific in quest of the promised land which they supposed to be just beyond the horizon. Visions of an Utopia in which the Jaredites were comfortably settled no doubt enticed the later expedition forward. It is quite conceivable that the members of this second expedition numbered from fifty to one hundred ocean going craft, sailing in a fan formation about a mile apart, assembling in groups of 25 at each sunset. This would have given them a commanding view of the Pacific for about 100 miles over a vast area of sea.

The Islands Visited by Votan's Mass Migration

In this way nearly every Island in the Central and South Pacific could have been visited by this second wave of migrants, and in this way populate the islands. The islands visited by this group must have included Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Tokelau, Manihiki, Malden, The Society Islands, and finally to the Marquisas. Fanning out further to the East was fruitless as no other islands were located and the cold tempature probably drove them temporarily back to Polynesia. Fanning to the North brought them into contact with Hawaii, and to the South with Easter Island, but here the search probably ended. It was evidently Votan and a small company of people who finally made contact with the Ancient American contenent. The bulk of his company no doubt remained on the islands of the Pacific which they had discovered.

Polynesian Affinities along the Route from Asia

The striking similarity of place names along the route to Polynesia from Asia cannot be disregarded. A careful examination of the chart below suggests a former relation between the aborigines of these several places:

POLYNESIA

ASIA - MALAYSIA - INDONESIA

Hawaii	Oahu	Borneo	Ouahou
Hawaii	Molokai	Borneo	Bolotai
Society Islands	Moorea	Java	Morea
Society Islands	Porapora	Sumatra	Pulopora
Tonga - Fiji	Namuka	Mollucas	Namusa
Hawaii	Kavai	Sumatra	Kawai
Tonga	Pangai	Sumatra	Pagai
Marquisas	Puna	Borneo - India	Puna
Hawaii	Kohala	India	Kosala
Tahiti	Papara	Borneo	Papal
Hawaii	Anahola	Sumatra	Ankola
Hawaii	Laie	Sumatra	Laye
Hawaii	Mana	Sumatra	Mana
Hawaii	Ninole	India	Ninore
Tahiti	Hana	Arabia	Sana (the "h" and "s" are interchangeable)
Hawaii	Kaioa	Moluccas	Kaion
Hawaii	Lawai	Borneo	Lawai
Hawaii	Manoa	Celebes	Manoa

Basing our conclusions upon the foregoing information, there would seem to be sufficient evidence to sustain the belief that the Polynesian Aborigines were closely related to the fair-skinned Jaredite race who arrived in Polynesia from Asia. The Jaredites, though passing through Polynesia, evidently sailed directly to America. These two migrations it would seem account for the peopling of the Pacific and of Ancient America in the beginning of time.

The Polynesian word 'Mata' meaning the human eye, is found to be in the following places:

Celebes
Ceram
Mentawej Island
Singkel
Malay
Java

It has the same meaning in each of these places.

Chapter III The Origin of the Polynesian Race

A third migration moved from the old world about the year 600 B.C. under the leadership of four brothers the youngest of whom became their leader. Baldwin in his secular history recorded that four brothers were mentioned in the traditions of Ancient America, and that the youngest of these became their leader. The Book of Mormon record is not only strikingly in accord with this information, but actually names the four brothers, the youngest one called Nephi dramatically assuming control of the tribe. Although preceded into the Pacific by the Jaredites, it is thought that the Nephites, so-called in honor of their young leader Nephi, were the predecessors of the Polynesian race. It is recorded that this colony left Jerusalem about 600 B.C. headed toward the borders of the Red Sea.

An Altar of Stones

One of the first official acts mentioned in respect to the departure of this colony, was the erection of a stone altar in reverence to their deity. Stone altars are found throughout Polynesia and have become one of the distinguishing features of the Polynesian race from other contemporary races. These stone altars are not dissimilar in structure to those found throughout Ancient America.

Weapons of War

As the colony migrated South along the shores of the Red Sea, their record shows that they employed certain weapons for hunting and for war. The stone and sling, the spear and cimeter were the most common weapons used for warfare among the Nephite factions. These are the exact types of weapons in use among the early Polynesians, according to the accounts of the early Explorers of the Pacific. Young Nephi, skilled with the bow and arrow in hunting, did not use this instrument in warfare. The scientific journals now declare that the bow and arrow, though in common use, was not used in Polynesia as implements of warfare. The cimeter is still in use today in the Orient and retains the name 'Scimitar' described by Webster as an Oriental curved bladed knife.

...

The Nephite colony, like the Jaredite colony of old, was also followed by a second wave of migrants, under the leadership of Mulek who may have stopped at the Island of Madagascar where the people have some Polynesian affinities, for example: numerals in Polynesia and Madagascar are the same. Once in America, the Nephite and Mulekite colonies amalgamated, although their languages were quite different. This may also account for the various dialects among the ancient Indian tribes, as well as the various lingual divisions of Polynesia.

The Lamanites, cursed with a dark skin for slothfulness and disobedience, separated themselves from the Nephite colony and became a distinct nation.

Hagoth

In the year 55 B.C. a curious shipbuilder by the name of Hagoth set out to Sea from a Central American port with a shipload of passengers headed for North America. A second ship followed soon after and neither was ever heard of again. Corianton, son of Alma, a youth of royal blood, also disappeared at sea about the same time. It was generally supposed that these people were swallowed up in the depths of the Sea. It is the belief of the church that these people and possibly other later migrations drifted or sailed into Polynesia and set up their civilization in the Pacific. It is conceivable that the bulk of these passengers were of Lamanitish origin, as it was at this precise time that many

of the Lamanites deserted their national birthright to join with the fairer skinned Nephites. Naturally, this body of people would be anxious to remove to a distant and peaceful location. So it was that Hagoth and a sister ship, with possibly a third under the command of Corianton sailed into the Pacific area loaded with hundreds of families mostly of the bronze-skinned Lamanites. These colonies no doubt intermarried with the white Nephite element and with the remnant of the post Jaredite colony whom they discovered in the Pacific when they arrived.

F.E. Butterworth, 'Sons of the Sea' (unpublished typescript), references omitted, pp.10-15, 18

Nephites and Lamanites in the Pacific

Two Races of People. It is believed by some, because of the great stone images in Easter Island and the Marquesas Islands, built by a people skilled in the art of working in stone, that these islands were among the earliest to be inhabited, and as pointed out by Thor Heyerdahl, these islands are nearest the American Coast, where a similar culture in stone existed many generations ago.

E.S. Craighill Handy, an authority on the Marquesas Islanders, wrote that the earliest inhabitants of the Marquesas Islands were the descendants of two brothers, Tane and Atea. 'Tane was fair with light hair, and is said to have been the ancestor of the white race (the Hao'e) (Hawaiian - Haole); Atea was dark like the natives, who are his descendants.... All that one may say with assurance is that the Marquesas Islands, like the rest of the Polynesians, must, at some time prior to the first recorded visits of Europeans, have known of the existence of a white race.... Some credence is certainly due also to the statements of natives of the present day, with many of whom I have discussed this subject. All insist that in ancient times before the arrival of any Europeans, there were many of their people with very light skin and reddish hair.... Evidence from various sources leads me to conclude that after this original settlement of the group there was a subsequent immigration of another people.'

It would appear that two races of people settled in the Marquesas Islands, a white race and a brown race. Could these have been Opukahonua and his descendants; and Lalokona and his descendants? Could these have been settlements of Nephites and Lamanites? More will be said about Opukahonua and Lalokona in the next chapter.

Percy Smith makes the following statement about the Polynesians: 'All through the race, everywhere we meet with it, we find a strain of light colored people who are not Albinos, but have quite light hair and fair complexions. With the Maoris this strain often runs in families for many generations; at other times it appears as a probable reversion to the original type from which the strain was derived. There are also traditions amongst the Maoris of a race of "gods" called Pakehakeha, who are said always to live on the sea, and are white in complexion - hence the name Pakeha they gave to the white men on first becoming acquainted with us in the eighteenth century.'

Two Races in Easter Island. The great stone images found in Easter Island were carved by a people called the 'long-ears.' 'There had been two peoples on the island and they lived side by side all over it. One of these peoples had a peculiar appearance; their men and women pierced their ears and put heavy weights into the lobes till the ears were artificially lengthened right down to the shoulders. For this reason they were called Hanau eepe, "long-ears", while the other people were the Hanau momoko, "short-ears".' The ancestors of the 'long-ears' were described as having white skin, red hair and blue eyes, and the natives today still divide their ancestors into two categories according to the color of their skins.

Traditions indicate the 'long-ears' were a very energetic people. They planned to rid the island of all unnecessary stone, by building platforms and statues, and thus make more land available for cultivation. The 'short-ears' were forced to help in this work, but they rebelled violently, and war followed.

The result of that war was very much the same as the last war on the American Continent between the Nephites and the Lamanites. All the 'long-ears' were killed except one, a man named Ororoina. He was permitted to marry a 'short-ear' of the Haoa family and some of his descendants now live in Easter Island.

The Melanesian Theory. There are writers and students of Polynesian culture and history who advance the theory that before the coming of the Polynesians some of the islands like Tahiti, Marquesas, and others were already inhabited by Melanesians, and that they were the 'Menehune' people, the people with dark skins; and that the original Polynesians were lighter in complexion, and through the

generations of mixing of blood we now have the light and dark strains in the Polynesian people. If this theory were true then it would be the Melanesians who were the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, according to the Menehune genealogy given by the Hawaiians.

The Evidence of Blood Tests. The theory that the Menehune people were Melanesians may be disproved by blood typing tests. In recent years it has been discovered that the blood of various species of animals differed in certain characteristics. Likewise, characteristics of human blood differ. These various types of blood have been 'labeled' as A, B, O, AB, etc. It has been learned that these groupings are hereditary, thus it is possible to distinguish various racial groups, to some extent, by typing the blood characteristics.

For example, the A factor is highest among peoples of Western Europe, but the B factor predominates in Asia, Malaya and Melanesia. In the people of India, type B has its maximum.

Among Polynesians, the B factor is almost non-existent. Similarly, the B factor is also absent, or nearly so, in the American Indian. Evidence for these facts was obtained some years ago. Recent new blood-typing tests have confirmed these earlier findings.

The Polynesians who do have the B factor are the Tongans and Samoans, or those who have the nearest contacts with the Melanesian races. There is also a slight scattering of type B blood among the Maoris, but this same B factor is almost totally absent among the islanders who inhabit the easterly isles of Polynesia.

The Menehune could not have been Melanesians, for if so, then the Melanesian type B blood would also predominate in all of Polynesia. Further, because the B factor is predominant among the peoples of Malaya, Melanesia, Asia, and even of Micronesia, this would seem to rule out those lands as a place of origin for the Polynesians. Is it not strange that at the borders of Polynesia we find a sudden break in the type B blood? On the other hand, blood factors of the Polynesians conform quite closely with those of the American Indians. And since they contrast with those of Asiatics and Melanesians, this seems to be a confirming scientific evidence that the basic racial stock of the Polynesians had its origin with the American aborigines.

It is also suggested that the Polynesian traditions of a light-skinned, and a dark-skinned race, from both of which the Polynesians trace descent, would further indicate an American origin. Similar traditions are had by the American Indians, and archaeological evidences have been found to sustain these traditions. This also confirms the story in the Book of Mormon, which states there were light-skinned and dark-skinned people upon the American continent.

The Polynesians Had Ships. It is easy to conceive that all the early Polynesians who left the Americas to sail into the Pacific had ships. Not only Hawaii-loa, but Opukahonua, Lalokona, and others who may have settled islands in the Pacific. The Book of Mormon not only tells of Hagoth building ships, but tells also that 'Corianton had gone forth to the land northward in a ship.' 'But behold, a hundredth part of the proceedings of the people, yea, the account of...their shipping and their building of ships... cannot be contained in this work.'

We are told in the Hawaiian traditions of Hawaii-loa, that after the Hawaiian Islands had been settled, the young brothers of Hawaii-loa, known as Ki'i and Kanaloa, went on to explore the Pacific. It may be inferred that they were still using the ships of Hawaii-loa. It is easy to conceive of the first Polynesians using ships to explore the Pacific and learn the location of the islands, and that later when materials were not available to build ships, they used their 'canoes' and rafts to travel from island group to island group.

As additional evidence that the early Polynesians had ships we quote 'the news that Arne (Hartmark) had made a new discovery at Rano Raraku (Easter Island). He had dug out the body of a giant statue which had been standing with its head above ground, and on the chest of the figure was a picture of a large reed boat with three masts and several sails.' 'We could see that this was an unusual ship and certainly not a European craft. But it was strange to realize that the Easter Island statue makers built themselves vessels so large that there was room to step more than a single mast. And yet, who would have thought that these same people could have erected gigantic human figures as high as four story buildings, but for the fact that these statues still remained, thanks to the imperishable stone in which they were carved? ... But native legends contain vivid descriptions of large vessels used for long voyages by their ancestors in the golden age of long ago.'

If Hagoth could build ships, certainly others of the Nephite nations could also build ships using as a pattern the ship built by Nephi, as he was commanded by the Lord. The people of the same race as Hawaii-loa, that were discovered by Ki'i and were living in Tahiti, were undoubtedly the descendants of some previous migration from America, which will be discussed in our next chapter.

To Become a White and Delightful People. Not all the descendants of the Lamanites were altogether unworthy. There are good and bad among all nations of people. In morality the Lamanites were sometimes superior to some of the Nephites. Jacob, the brother of Nephi, declared to the Nephites: 'But wo, wo, unto you that are not pure in heart, that are filthy this day before God; for except ye repent the land is cursed for your sakes; and the Lamanites, which are not filthy like unto you, nevertheless they are cursed with a sore cursing, shall scourge you even unto destruction.... Behold! the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you.... The Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them; and one day they shall become a blessed people.'

Nephi was even more explicit in speaking of the Lamanites: 'And the Gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers. And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightful people.'

These blessings also apply to the Polynesian people. We believe that the Polynesians are descendants of the Nephites. There is traditional evidence to cause us to believe that there were Lamanite as well as Nephite descendants in the Pacific, and we may infer that as a result of intermarriage, as well as because of transgression, the Polynesians also partook of the curse of a dark skin. The blessing of Joseph, son of Lehi was, 'thy seed shall not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book.' Thousands of Polynesians have hearkened unto the words of the Book of Mormon, have been faithful members of the Church, and are preparing their genealogies for temple work. Surely the Lord will keep his promise that they shall become a white and delightful people.

... Today the missionaries of the Church are preaching the Gospel to the Lamanites and many have accepted the message of truth. A great work is about to come forth amongst that people. 'But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose.'

William A. Cole and Elwin W. Jensen, Israel in the Pacific: a genealogical text for Polynesia (Salt Lake City, 1961), pp.97- 102, 104

As we met with the people in Sauniatu, we prayed with them, we spoke to them, we sang with them, and again recognized that these people were but representative of all of the Polynesian Saints and that the Polynesian Saints are characterized by a tremendous faith.

Why do they have this great faith? It is because these people are of the blood of Israel. They are heirs to the promises of the Book of Mormon. God is now awakening them to their great destiny.

As Latter-day Saints we have always believed that the Polynesians are descendants of Lehi and blood relatives of the American Indians, despite the contrary theories of other men. For that reason, from the beginning of our Church history we have had more than an ordinary interest in them as a people.

But now that interest is even more keen. Recent research on the part of world-recognized scientists and scholars has focused a new light upon them and writings of early explorers in both America and Polynesia have become available now for detailed study.

The new knowledge which has been developed shows that the Polynesians without any reasonable doubt came from America, that they are closely related to the American Indian in many respects, and that even their traditions and genealogies bear that out.

So pronounced is this feeling among the world scholars of today that one of them, Thor Heyerdahl, widely known Norwegian anthropologist, who sailed the raft Kon Tiki from America to the Polynesian Islands, titled one of his books, 'American Indians in the Pacific.' It is a remarkable volume of great interest to Latter-day Saints.

With him are other writers who confirm and re-confirm the facts now being disclosed that there is every reason to believe that the Polynesians are directly related to the American Indians, that they came from American shores, and sailed westward to their Pacific Islands, and that they took with them their customs, their food and religion, all of which have left a permanent mark upon Polynesia.

Pronounced as are these views establishing the relationship of Polynesians and American Indians, there are equally impressive data now available to disprove the theory that the Polynesians originated in the Orient and came eastward from Indonesia, Malaya, and nearby lands. Let us just mention a few of the convincing points of evidence.

Most of you have seen the great stone pyramids, or photographs of them, discovered by archaeologists in Mexico, Central and South America. Pyramids of almost identical structure, both in plan and material, if not in size, have been found in Polynesia. I saw some of them myself within the last month.

Stone roadways, so characteristic of the pre-Inca period of America, are found to be duplicated in some of the Pacific Islands. Giant stone statues such as are found in the lands of the South American Incas, are now discovered in the Polynesian Islands, with characteristics and markings so similar that few can doubt their common origin. This includes many of the structures found in Easter Island.

The sweet potato of the Pacific Islands, known in Polynesia as the kumara or kumalla as it is called in Tonga, is now found by botanists to be the identical plant which is native to South America with impressive evidence as to the manner in which it was transported from Peru to the Pacific Islands.

Cotton, coconuts, pineapples, and papaya are likewise being traced from Polynesia to America by botanists who now announce that the Polynesian varieties of these plants are but offshoots of the parent plants in America.

The ocean currents have been observed in our time to carry drifting objects to Polynesia from two places in America, one being the Pacific Northwest and the other the Central and South American region. Large Pacific Northwest pine logs have been traced in the drifting currents of the Pacific Ocean from the Vancouver area of North America, to

the Hawaiian, Marshall, and Caroline Islands. Hawaiians and other Polynesians have made canoes from these drifted pine logs and in them have traveled from island to island. There are no such trees growing in Polynesia. They came by ocean currents from the Pacific Northwest of America.

This is the more notable when it is observed that customs and household articles characteristic of the Indians of the Pacific Northwest of America have been found on a wide scale in Polynesia.

Written descriptions of fortifications built on some of the Polynesian Islands remind one of chapters in the Book of Mormon which portray the fortifications built by the great general Moroni here in ancient America. Kivas, characteristic of American Indians today, are found in Polynesia.

Words and place names in the language of the Polynesians of the various island groups are now found to be identical to those common among the Inca people of Peru. Many of these words are actually identical in spelling and pronunciation.

I cannot resist mentioning one of them. It is Kanakana, the name of one of the deities of both the Incas and the Polynesians. The reason this name interests me so much is that it means brightness or light or knowledge or intelligence. They believed that the glory of their God was intelligence and therefore named him so. This is noted in both pre-Inca and Polynesian religions.

There are many other religious teachings which are the same in both areas. Both people believe in the creation by the Almighty. They both believe that the first man was the father of all living and that the first woman was the mother of all living, using these actual phrases. They believe in the flood. They accept an atonement by a Savior. They both believe in a White God who came among their forefathers and performed mighty miracles. They believe in the water of life, or living water which is given by the Savior.

The islanders say that their forefathers came from the east, from a land of high mountains and plateaus in the skies, which fits the description of the western coast of South America. The genealogies of the Pacific islanders are traced to American ancestors.

Large fonts which archaeologists claim were baptismal fonts, have been found in both areas. Burial customs are similar. Both groups believed in an all-powerful governing trinity of Gods. There is one story in Polynesia which reminds us of the story of the brother of Jared.

One of the most interesting of all the reports brought out by Heyerdahl and other scientists who have made a serious study of the Polynesians and their relationship to the Americans, is this, and it surprised me tremendously:

These anthropologists have learned that prior to the coming of the Spaniards, there were both white and brown people in America, that the white people were as white as snow, according to their descriptions, and that they had brown, blonde, or red hair. The hair was not dyed nor treated in any way. It grew that way.

Now, to our great astonishment, they tell us also that white people as well as brown people emigrated from America to Polynesia and that some of these white people lived in the Islands in the times of the early explorers in the Pacific who saw them and wrote about them.

Think of the significance of that fact in relation to the Book of Mormon.

...

We live today in a time of research, discovery, and knowledge. The new knowledge bears testimony that both Nephites and Lamanites lived in ancient America. Regardless of the names given them by the scientists or the early Incas, to us they were Nephites and Lamanites. This new knowledge likewise bears testimony that both Nephites and Lamanites emigrated from America to Polynesia, that they have been seen by modern explorers and seafarers who have written about them and that their customs and beliefs relate to the Book of Mormon.

To me it all adds up to a renewed testimony that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, that the gospel is true, and that indeed Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the White God known as well to the Polynesians as to the early Americans, and that his coming to America after his resurrection in Palestine, is the basis of the religion of both ancient Americans and ancient Polynesians, now handed down to modern times with the rest of their traditions.

It is glorious to see the confirming evidence as it comes forth from unexpected sources, sustaining in principle after principle our holy faith. We do not depend upon it for our faith at all, but we welcome its sustaining power nevertheless.

The gospel is true. The Book of Mormon is true. Jesus is the Christ, and Joseph Smith is his prophet. That is the testimony I leave with you, in the name of the Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mark E. Petersen, Polynesians
Came from America! (Salt Lake
City, 1962), pp.5-10, 13.

APPENDIX C

MORMON MISSION PRESIDENTS IN CENTRAL POLYNESIA

The following are the Mormon mission presidents who have served in French Oceania, Samoa and Tonga, together with their terms of service. The months and years were obtained from the Historical Records and Quarterly Reports of the missions concerned, and do not always coincide with those available from other L.D.S. sources.

<u>President</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<u>FRENCH OCEANIA</u>		
Noah Rogers	May 1844	July 1845
Addison Pratt	July 1845	Mar. 1847
Benjamin F. Grouard	Mar. 1847	May 1850
Addison Pratt	May 1850	May 1852
Joseph W. Damron	Jan. 1892	June 1892
James S. Brown	June 1892	July 1893
Joseph W. Damron	July 1893	May 1895
Frank Cutler	May 1895	Sept. 1896
Daniel T. Miller	Sept. 1896	July 1899
William H. Chamberlin	July 1899	Mar. 1900
Joseph Y. Haight	Mar. 1900	July 1902
Edward S. Hall	July 1902	July 1905
Franklin J. Fullmer (pro tem)	July 1905	Oct. 1905
Edward S. Hall	Oct. 1905	Aug. 1907
Frank Cutler	Aug. 1907	Sept. 1908
William A. Seegmiller	Sept. 1908	Sept. 1911
Franklin J. Fullmer	Sept. 1911	June 1914
Ira Hyer	June 1914	Mar. 1915
Ernest C. Rossiter	Mar. 1915	Nov. 1919
Leonard J. McCullough	Nov. 1919	Feb. 1920
Leonidas H. Kennard	Feb. 1920	Aug. 1922

<u>President</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<u>FRENCH OCEANIA (cont)</u>		
Ole B. Peterson	Aug. 1922	May 1925
Herbert B. Foulger	May 1925	Apr. 1926
S.W. Bird (pro tem)	Apr. 1926	May 1926
Alma G. Burton	May 1926	May 1929
George W. Burbidge	May 1929	July 1933
Leroy R. Mallory	July 1933	Feb. 1937
Thomas L. Woodbury	Feb. 1937	Jan. 1938
W. Dean Palmer (pro tem)	Jan. 1938	July 1938
Kenneth R. Stevens	July 1938	Aug. 1940
Eugene M. Cannon	July 1940	Nov. 1940
Ernest C. Rossiter	June 1941	Dec. 1944
Edgar B. Mitchell, Jr	Feb. 1945	June 1949
Franklin J. Fullmer	June 1949	Jan. 1950
Leroy R. Mallory	Jan. 1950	Apr. 1952
Othello P. Pearce (Acting Mission President)	Apr. 1952	Mar. 1953
John K. Orton	Mar. 1953	Mar. 1954
Larson H. Caldwell (Acting Mission President)	May 1954	Mar. 1955
Ellis V. Christensen	Mar. 1955	Nov. 1958
Joseph R. Reeder	Nov. 1958	-
<u>SAMOA</u>		
Joseph H. Dean	June 1888	Aug. 1890
William O. Lee	Aug. 1890	Jan. 1892
George E. Browning	Feb. 1892	Nov. 1893
Ransom M. Stevens	Nov. 1893	Apr. 1894
Thomas H. Hilton	May 1894	Mar. 1895
John W. Beck	Mar. 1895	Apr. 1896
Orlando Barrus	Apr. 1896	Nov. 1896
Edward J. Wood	Nov. 1896	Jan. 1899

PresidentFromToSAMOA (cont)

William L. Worsencroft	Jan. 1899	May 1899
William G. Sears	May 1899	Jan. 1902
Joseph Merrill	Jan. 1902	Jan. 1903
Martin F. Sanders	Jan. 1903	Oct. 1904
Thomas F. Court	Oct. 1904	Apr. 1908
William A. Moody	Apr. 1908	July 1910
Don C. McBride	July 1910	Jan. 1912
Christian Jensen	Jan. 1912	Jan. 1913
John A. Nelson, Jr	Jan. 1913	Apr. 1916
Ernest Wright	Apr. 1916	Mar. 1918
Willard A. Keith	Mar. 1918	Jan. 1920
John Q. Adams	Jan. 1920	Oct. 1923
Ernest L. Butler	Oct. 1923	Jan. 1927
Willard L. Smith	Jan. 1927	Mar. 1934
William G. Sears	Apr. 1934	June 1936
William M. Waddoups	June 1936	June 1937
Gilbert R. Tingey	June 1937	Aug. 1940
Wilford W. Emery	Aug. 1940	May 1943
John Q. Adams	May 1943	Feb. 1948
Golden H. Hale	July 1948	Apr. 1951
Earl S. Paul	Apr. 1951	Jan. 1953
Howard B. Stone	Jan. 1953	Feb. 1957
Charles I. Sampson	Feb. 1957	June 1961

TONGA (Prior to 1916 Tonga was merely a branch of the Samoan Mission, and had no separate president)

Willard L. Smith	Apr. 1916	Mar. 1920
Elmer L. Fullmer (pro tem)	Mar. 1920	Aug. 1920
Mark V. Coombs	Aug. 1920	June 1926
Jay A. Cahoon	June 1926	Sept. 1928
Newell J. Cutler	Sept. 1928	Aug. 1932
Verl L. Stubbs (pro tem)	Aug. 1932	Dec. 1933

<u>President</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<u>TONGA</u> (cont)		
Reuben M. Wiberg	Dec. 1933	Mar. 1936
Emile C. Dunn	Mar. 1936	Apr. 1946
Evon W. Huntsman	Apr. 1946	Sept. 1948
Emile C. Dunn	Sept. 1948	July 1950
Evon W. Huntsman	July 1950	Nov. 1951
D'Monte W. Coombs	Nov. 1951	Oct. 1955
Fred W. Stone	Oct. 1955	May 1959
Mark V. Coombs	May 1959	Feb. 1963

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- C.H.O. Church Historian's Office, Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt
Lake City, Utah
- C.H.O.R.L.D.S. Church Historian's Office, Reorganized
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day
Saints, Independence, Missouri
- G.S. Genealogical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah
- S.L.C. Salt Lake City
- U.S.H.S. Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake
City, Utah

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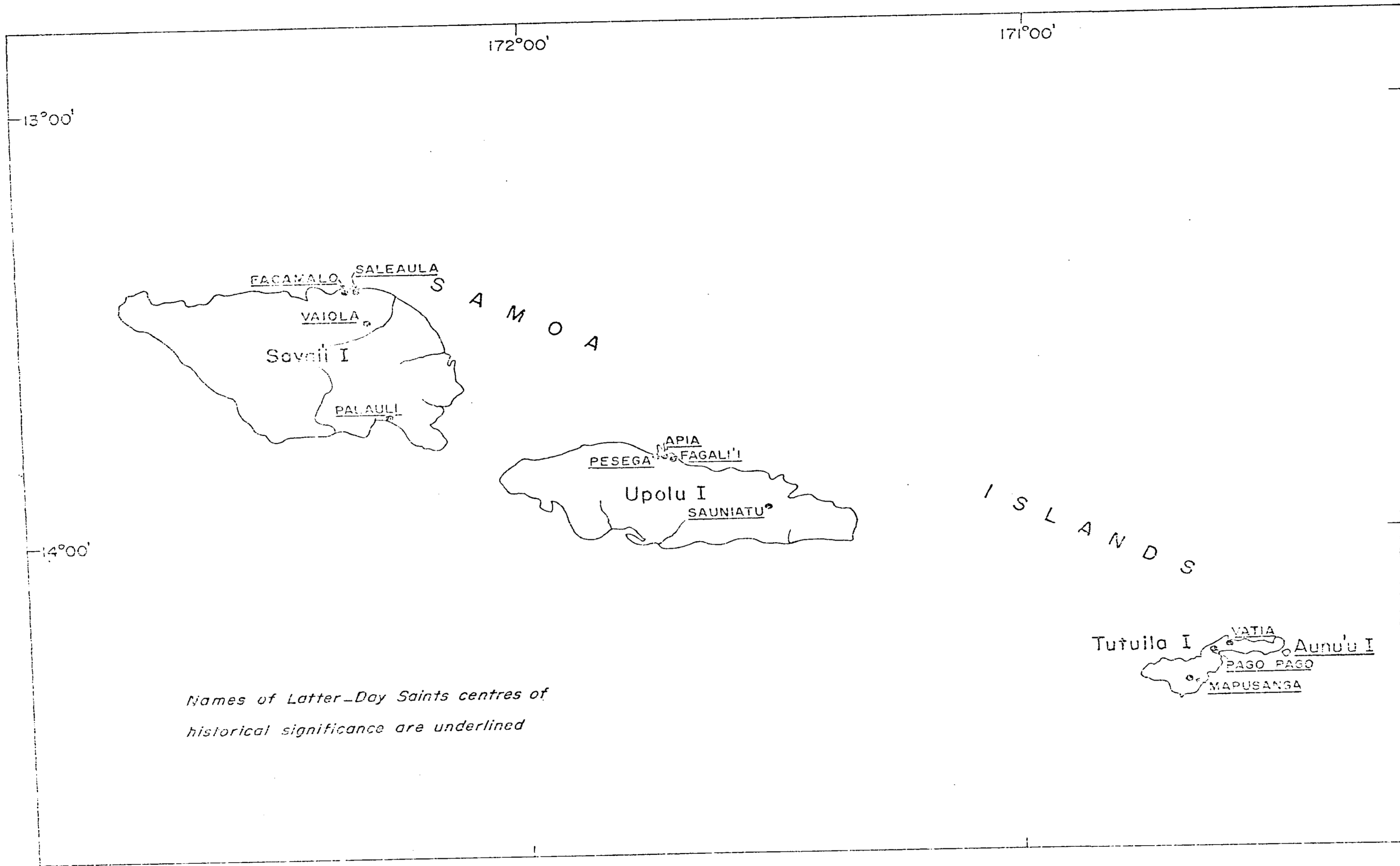
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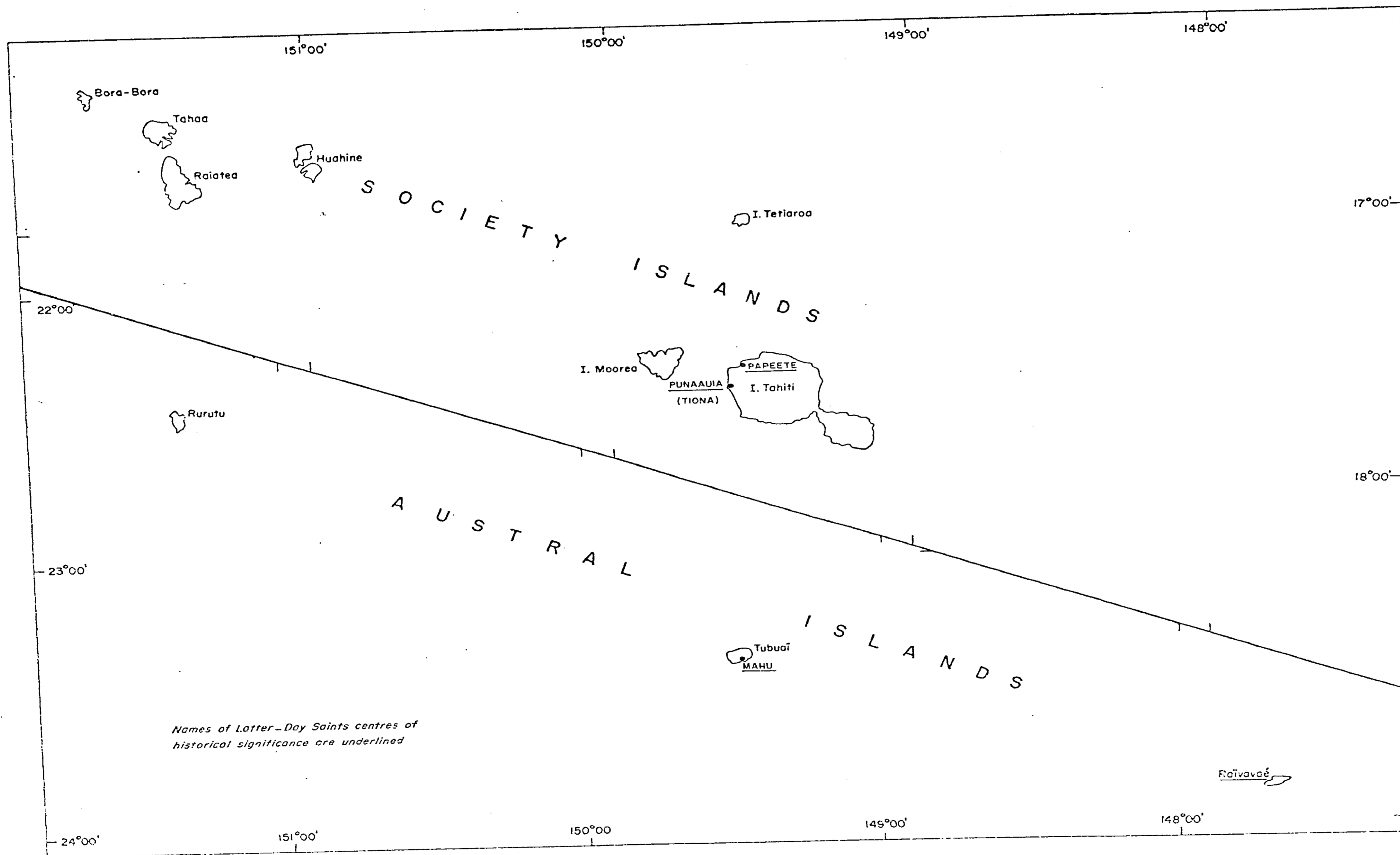
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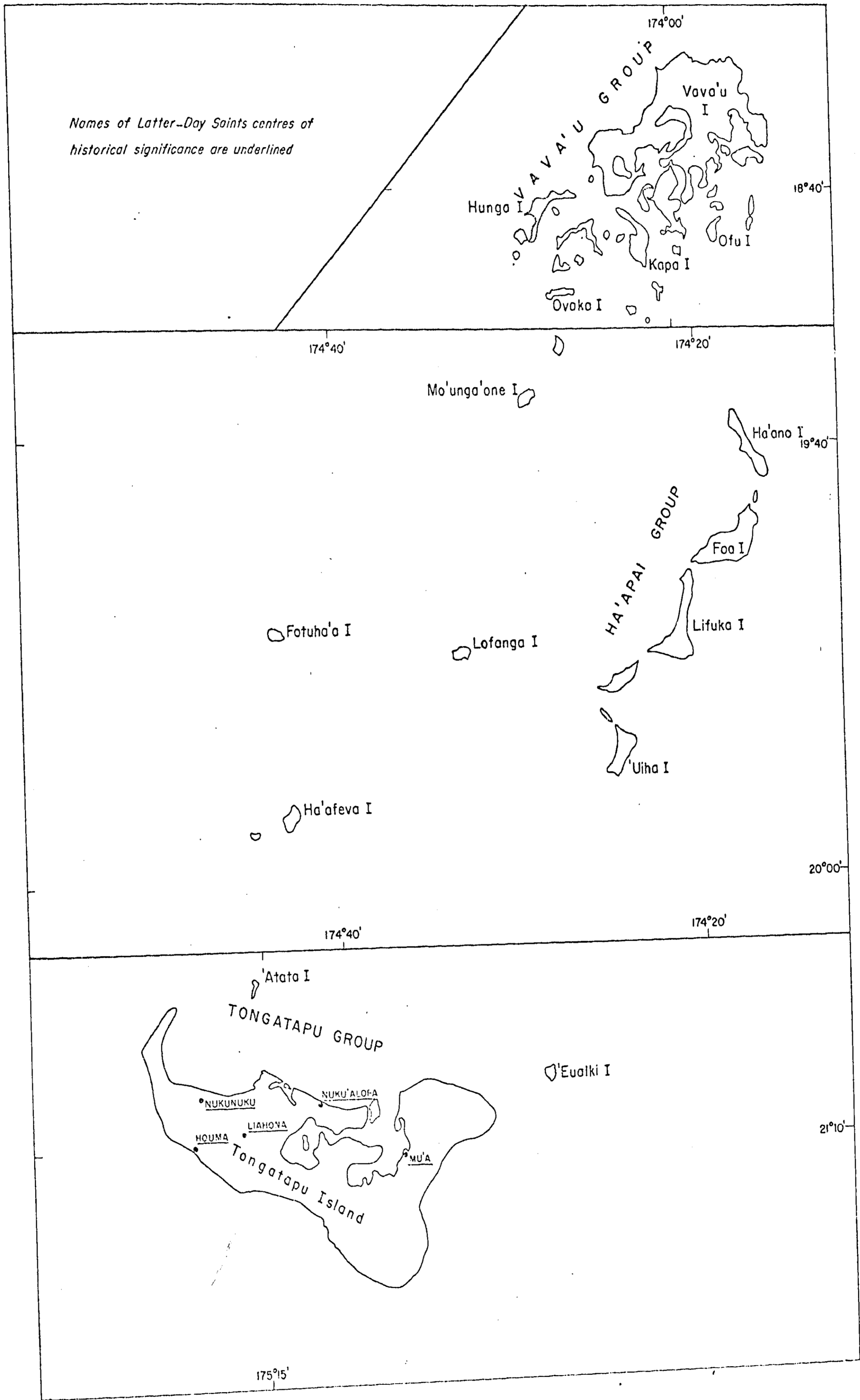


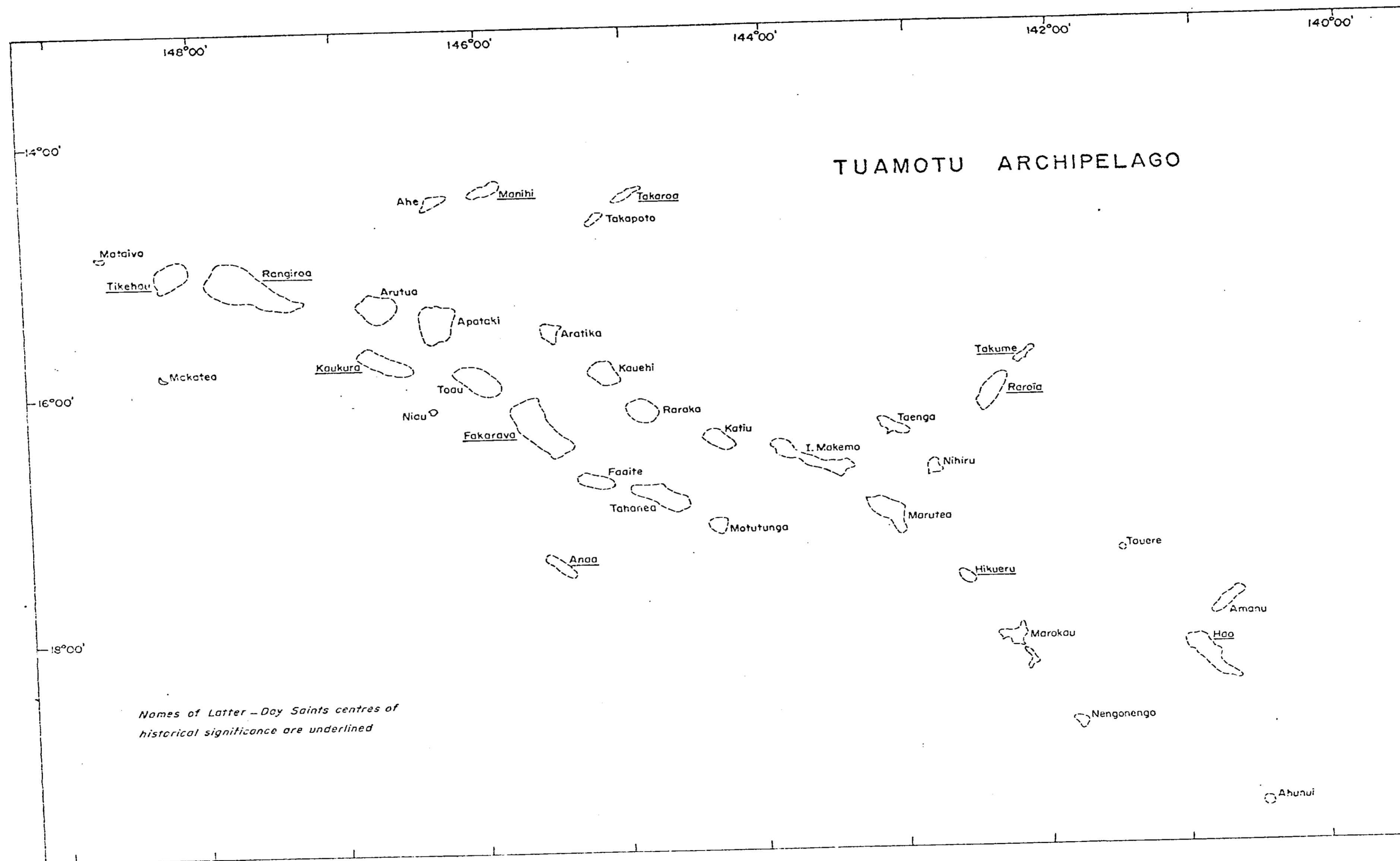
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