

Causality.—9, 1. Ability to think and reason clearly, and perceive the relations of cause and effect.

Comparison.—10, 1. A discrimination; power of illustration; ability to perceive and apply analogies.

This chart is not only worth preserving as a curiosity, but it is, in many respects, an excellent index of Heber's character and idiosyncrasies.

CHAPTER XLVI.

REVELATION OF CELESTIAL MARRIAGE—SECRECY THE PRICE
OF SAFETY—JOSEPH TESTS HEBER AND MAKES HIM HIS
CONFIDANT—HOW VILATE KIMBALL WAS CONVERTED—
HEBER AND VILATE GIVE THEIR DAUGHTER HELEN TO
THE PROPHET IN CELESTIAL MARRIAGE.

A STARTLING innovation, a test designed to try, as never before, the faith and integrity of God's people now came upon them. Not in the shape of fire and sword, nor toilsome pilgrimage, nor pestilence, nor wealth, nor poverty. Ah! no; something far different from these, and far more difficult to bear.

A grand and glorious principle had been revealed, and for years had slumbered in the breast of God's Prophet, awaiting the time when, with safety to himself and the Church, it might be confided to the sacred keeping of a chosen few. That time had now come. An angel with a flaming sword descended from the courts of glory and, confronting the Prophet, commanded him in the name of the Lord to establish the principle so

long concealed from the knowledge of the Saints and of the world.

That principle was the law of celestial or plural marriage!

Well knew the youthful Prophet the danger of his task. Well knew he the peril and penalty of disobedience. Fearing God, not man, he bowed to the inevitable, and laid his life—aye, was it not so?—upon the altar of duty and devotion.

Among those to whom Joseph confided this great secret, even before it was committed to writing, was his bosom friend, Heber C. Kimball. Well knowing the integrity of his heart, so many times tested and found true, he felt that he ran no risk in opening to Heber's eyes the treasured mysteries of his mighty soul.

But why careful, among so many friends, to select only a few as the recipients of such a favor? Would not the Saints have died to a man in defense of their Prophet—God's seer and revelator? Alas, none knew so well as Joseph the frailty of man, the inherent weakness and wickedness of the human heart.

"Many men," said he, "will say, 'I will never forsake you, but will stand by you at all times.' But the moment you teach them some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are retained in the heavens, and are to be revealed to the children of men when they are prepared for them, they will be the first to stone you and put you to death.

"It was this same principle that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cause the people to kill the Prophets in this generation."

What! would even the Saints have so done? Did not some of those who *were* Saints then, so do?

Had not Joseph said many times—are not men now

living who heard him say: "Would to God, brethren, I could tell you who I am! Would to God I could tell you what I know! But you would call it blasphemy, and there are men upon this stand who would want to take my life."

"If the Church," said he, "knew all the commandments, one half they would reject through prejudice and ignorance."

No wonder, then, that he should choose his confidants; for their sakes no less than his own. For these also are Joseph's words:

"When God offers a blessing, or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it, he will be damned."

Revelation is ever the iconoclast of tradition; and such is the bigotry of man, his natural hatred of the new and strange, as opposed to his personal interests or private views, that the very lives of those whose mission is to introduce and establish new doctrines, though designed as a blessing to humanity, are ever in danger from those whose traditions would thus be uprooted and destroyed.

Joseph was not a coward; it was he who said that a coward could not be saved in the kingdom of God; but neither was he lacking in caution, especially when warned of the Lord of the necessity for its exercise. Therefore, was he now revealing, to a chosen few, whom God had prepared to receive what he should tell them, one of the grand principles of the everlasting Gospel, "unlawful to be uttered" to the multitude, yet one day to be thundered from the house-tops in the ears of all living, with many other mighty truths locked in the treasure house of future time, of which eternity still holds the key.

Before he would trust even Heber with the full secret, however, he put him to a test which few men would have been able to bear.

It was no less than a requirement for him to surrender his wife, his beloved Vilate, and give her to Joseph in marriage!

The astounding revelation well-nigh paralyzed him. He could hardly believe he had heard aright. Yet Joseph was solemnly in earnest. His next impulse was to spurn the proposition, and perhaps at that terrible moment a vague suspicion of the Prophet's motive and the divinity of the revelation, shot like a poisoned arrow through his soul.

But only for a moment, if at all, was such a thought, such a suspicion entertained. He knew Joseph too well, as a man, a friend, a brother, a servant of God, to doubt his truth or the divine origin of the behest he had made. No; Joseph was God's Prophet, His mouth-piece and oracle, and so long as he was so, his words were as the words of the Eternal One to Heber C. Kimball. His heart-strings might be torn, his feelings crucified and sawn asunder, but so long as his faith in God and the Priesthood remained, heaven helping him, he would try and do as he was told. Such, now, was his superhuman resolve.

Three days he fasted and wept and prayed. Then, with a broken and a bleeding heart, but with soul self-mastered for the sacrifice, he led his darling wife to the Prophet's house and presented her to Joseph.

It was enough—the heavens accepted the sacrifice. The will for the deed was taken, and “accounted unto him for righteousness.” Joseph wept at this proof of devotion, and embracing Heber told him that was all that the Lord required. He had proved him, as a child of Abraham, that he would “do the works of Abraham,” holding back nothing, but laying all upon the altar for God's glory.

The Prophet joined the hands of the heroic and

devoted pair, and then and there, by virtue of the sealing power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, Heber and Vilate Kimball were made husband and wife for all eternity.

Heber's crucial test was in part over. Vilate's trial was yet to come. The principle of celestial marriage was now known to them, so far as their own eternal covenant was concerned, but the doctrine of plurality of wives which it involves, was yet to be revealed. How Heber and Vilate received and embraced this feature of the principle is thus tenderly told by their daughter Helen:

"My mother often told me that she could not doubt the plural order of marriage was of God, for the Lord had revealed it to her in answer to prayer.

"In Nauvoo, shortly after his return from England, my father, among others of his brethren, was taught the plural wife doctrine, and was told by Joseph, the Prophet, three times, to go and take a certain woman as his wife; but not till he commanded him in the name of the Lord did he obey. At the same time Joseph told him not to divulge this secret, not even to my mother, for fear that she would not receive it; for his life was in constant jeopardy, not only from outside influences and enemies, who were seeking some plea to take him back to Missouri, but from false brethren who had crept like snakes into his bosom and then betrayed him.

"My father realized the situation fully, and the love and reverence he bore for the Prophet were so great that he would sooner have laid down his life than have betrayed him. This was one of the greatest tests of his faith he had ever experienced. The thought of deceiving the kind and faithful wife of his youth, whom he loved with all his heart, and who with him had borne so patiently their separations, and all the trials and sacrifices

they had been called to endure, was more than he felt able to bear.

“He realized not only the addition of trouble and perplexity that such a step must bring upon him, but his sorrow and misery were increased by the thought of my mother hearing of it from some other source, which would no doubt separate them, and he shrank from the thought of such a thing, or of causing her any unhappiness. Finally he was so tried that he went to Joseph and told him how he felt—that he was fearful if he took such a step he could not stand, but would be overcome. The Prophet, full of sympathy for him, went and inquired of the Lord; His answer was, ‘Tell him to go and do as he has been commanded, and if I see that there is any danger of his apostatizing, I will take him to myself.’

“The fact that he had to be commanded three times to do this thing shows that the trial must have been extraordinary, for he was a man who, from the first, had yielded implicit obedience to every requirement of the Prophet.

“When first hearing the principle taught, believing that he would be called upon to enter into it, he had thought of two elderly ladies named Pitkin, great friends of my mother’s, who, he believed, would cause her little, if any, unhappiness. But the woman he was commanded to take was an English lady named Sarah Noon, nearer my mother’s age, who came over with the company of Saints in the same ship in which father and Brother Brigham returned from Europe. She had been married and was the mother of two little girls, but left her husband on account of his drunken and dissolute habits. Father was told to take her as his wife and provide for her and her children, and he did so.*

* Heber was told by Joseph that if he did not do this he would lose his Apostleship and be damned.

“My mother had noticed a change in his manner and appearance, and when she inquired the cause, he tried to evade her questions. At last he promised he would tell her after a while, if she would only wait. This trouble so worked upon his mind that his anxious and haggard looks betrayed him daily and hourly, and finally his misery became so unbearable that it was impossible to control his feelings. He became sick in body, but his mental wretchedness was too great to allow of his retiring, and he would walk the floor till nearly morning, and some times the agony of his mind was so terrible that he would wring his hands and weep like a child, and beseech the Lord to be merciful and reveal to her this principle, for he himself could not break his vow of secrecy.

“The anguish of their hearts was indescribable, and when she found it was useless to beseech him longer, she retired to her room and bowed before the Lord and poured out her soul in prayer to Him who hath said: ‘If any lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.’ My father’s heart was raised at the same time in supplication. While pleading as one would plead for life, the vision of her mind was opened, and, as darkness flees before the morning sun, so did her sorrow and the groveling things of earth vanish away.

“Before her was illustrated the order of celestial marriage, in all its beauty and glory, together with the great exaltation and honor it would confer upon her in that immortal and celestial sphere, if she would accept it and stand in her place by her husband’s side. She also saw the woman he had taken to wife, and contemplated with joy the vast and boundless love and union which this order would bring about, as well as the increase of

her husband's kingdoms, and the power and glory extending throughout the eternities, worlds without end.

"With a countenance beaming with joy, for she was filled with the Spirit of God, she returned to my father, saying: 'Heber, what you kept from me the Lord has shown me.' She told me she never saw so happy a man as father was when she described the vision and told him she was satisfied and knew it was from God.

"She covenanted to stand by him and honor the principle, which covenant she faithfully kept, and though her trials were often heavy and grievous to bear, she knew that father was also being tried, and her integrity was unflinching to the end. She gave my father many wives, and they always found in my mother a faithful friend."

Helen also refers in her narrative to the sensation caused in Nauvoo, one Sabbath morning, prior to the return of the Twelve from England, by a sermon of the Prophet's on "the restoration of all things," in which it was hinted that the patriarchal or plural order of marriage, as practiced by the ancients, would some day again be established. The excitement created by the bare suggestion was such that Joseph deemed it wisdom, in the afternoon, to modify his statement by saying that possibly the Spirit had made the time seem nearer than it really was, when such things would be restored.

These facts serve to show something of the nature and extent of the sacrifice made by the Saints in accepting this principle, and likewise the pure, lofty, religious motives actuating both men and women who could thus heroically embrace a doctrine against which—as is generally the case with the gospel's higher principles—their traditions and preconceived notions instinctively rebelled.

Soon after the revelation was given, a golden link was forged whereby the houses of Heber and Joseph were indissolubly and forever joined.* Helen Mar, the eldest daughter of Heber Chase and Vilate Murray Kimball, was given to the Prophet in the holy bonds of celestial marriage.

CHAPTER XLVII.

JOHN C. BENNETT'S APOSTASY—HEBER AND THE TWELVE SENT OUT TO REFUTE HIS SLANDERS—HEBER'S FAMOUS SERMON: "THE CLAY IN THE HANDS OF THE POTTER"—INCEPTION OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY—VILATE'S VOW AND HEBER'S PRAYER.

WITHOUT doubt, the revelation of the great principle of plural marriage was a prime cause of the troubles which now arose, culminating in the Prophet's martyrdom and the exodus of the Church into the wilderness. True, the old causes remained, sectarian hatred and political jealousies, and these were the immediate reasons for such results. But back of all was the eternal warfare of truth and error, battling each for the world's supremacy, and the mailed hand of Omnipotence pushing the chosen people along the thorn-strewn, blood-sprinkled path of a glorious destiny.

John C. Bennett, an individual who had wormed

* The Prophet Joseph, I am informed, in blessing Heber C. Kimball, told him that his inheritance in Zion should adjoin his on the north.