

THE COMPOSITE

These, then, were the people. The majority were devout, hardy, pioneer stock, some less pious and devoted than others. A few who were not Mormons and never had been, together with an even fewer number of Apostates made up the small minority.

Though there is evidence over the years of apparent weaknesses, ethical and moral deficiencies and inconsistencies, most of them were of the trivial variety, reflecting normal human imperfections and prejudices. Careful searching reveals no evidence of wholesale, gross immorality or corruption in leadership such as existed on a grand scale in the European medieval church. There is nothing of any significance that can begin to compare with the clerical and ecclesiastical godlessness of some other systems of historical Christianity. Rather, there was much for Clem to be proud of in the unsophisticated, home-spun dedication to the cause of righteousness among his people.

CHAPTER II THE ORDER

During the years while his father was manager of the co-op store, Clem assisted in the store after school and on Saturdays. The store was located on the ground floor of the opera house, doing a lively business in general merchandising. Saturday was the big day of the week and the store stayed open late to accommodate customers who came in to town from the outlying settlements to purchase supplies and to enjoy some reprieve from the drudgery and isolation of farm life.

It was on just such a busy Saturday afternoon that a very unexpected thing happened, which caught the settlers unawares and unprepared. It was the custom for one large barrel of Whiskey to be shipped each year from Salt Lake City to the co-op store to be "dispensed, prudently and with discretion in small portions for medicinal purposes." The settlers knew well the long-standing position of the Church as to the use of strong drink of any kind and it was assumed that it would not be used as a beverage. Nevertheless, it was still considered an appropriate, if not officially sanctioned, frontier safeguard to have some on hand in the household for emergencies.

And so it was on that particular Saturday afternoon, a month before anyone expected it, that the drayman unloaded the annual barrel. Ordinarily word was sent out in advance so that the settlers could be there with a container to purchase their allotted portion when the time was tapped, and before it was all gone.

Clem signed the draybill and he and Tom Blackburn helped the drayman put it into the cellar. But, the whole operation had been observed by some of the customers in the store. The curiosity of one man from the North String settlement couldn't be restrained and a few questions soon drew out an adm