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PERPETUAL EMIGRATING FUND (PEF)

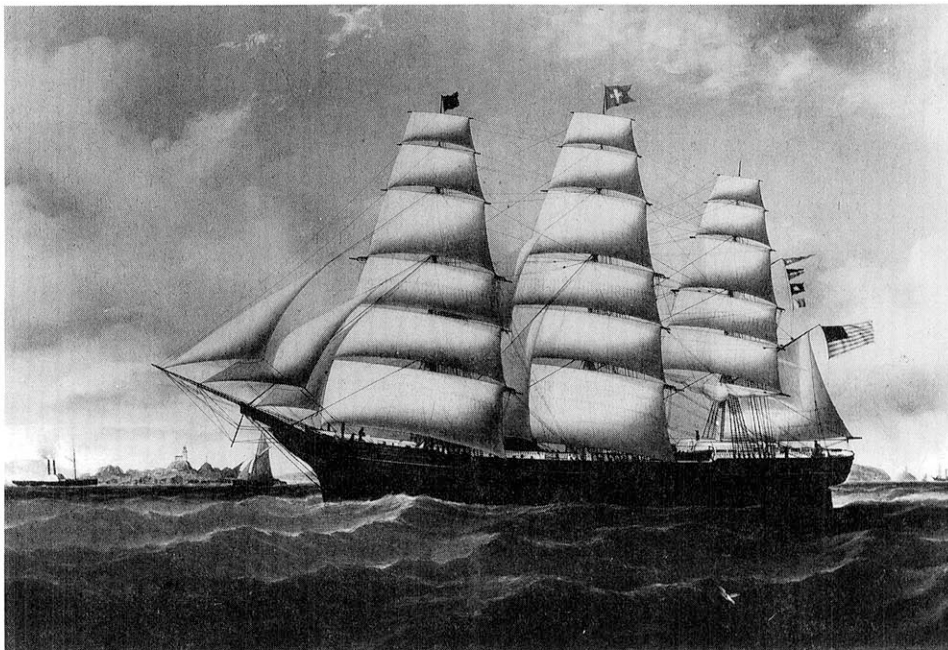
To assist Latter-day Saints in the eastern United States and Europe to gather to Church headquarters in the West (*see* GATHERING), the Church inaugurated the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company in 1849. It is probable that before its demise in 1887, the Emigrating Company assisted more than 30,000 individuals to travel to Utah.

The PEF used Church assets and private contributions to assist individuals commensurate with their inability to pay. With limited funds, fewer individuals could be assisted than wished to partic-

ipate. Those receiving priority included individuals with skills urgently needed in the West, those whose relatives or friends had contributed to the PEF, and those with longest membership in the Church. Cost-cutting measures, including group contracting, doubling up families in wagons, and organizing HANDCART COMPANIES, were also adopted to make the available funds stretch as far as possible.

PEF assistance was always extended as a loan rather than as a gift. Sponsored emigrants signed a note obligating themselves to repay the PEF as they were able. Though it sometimes required years, and some never fully retired their debt, many repaid their loan in cash, commodities, or labor. In 1880, on the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the Church, President John TAYLOR, in the tradition of the Israelite jubilee year, forgave half of the outstanding debt owed by the poor to the fund, while those who were able to pay were still expected to do so. In late 1887, under provisions of the Edmunds-Tucker Act (*see* ANTIPOLYGAMY LEGISLATION), the U.S. government dissolved both the Corporation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company.

[*See also* Immigration and Emigration.]



Monarch of the Sea, the largest sailing vessel to transport LDS immigrants from Europe to America, carried the two largest companies of 955 and 974 people, in 1861 and 1864 respectively. Immigration to Utah was made possible for many more by borrowing from the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. Courtesy Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

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PERSECUTION

Jesus told his followers that they would be persecuted, but promised them a great reward in heaven (Matt. 5:11–12). Latter-day Saints believe that righteously enduring persecution can bring blessings in both this life and the next. Although suffering is as unwelcome to Latter-day Saints as to any other people, they strive to respond with patience and faith and to avoid bitterness or revenge (Matt. 5:43–47; D&C 101:35; cf. 98:23–27).

Although Latter-day Saints claim no greater suffering than many others who have also been persecuted for their religious beliefs through the ages, many Latter-day Saints have been persecuted, beginning with Joseph SMITH (see JS—H 1:33). As the Church grew, persecutions increased; the Latter-day Saints faced threats, murder, rape, mayhem, property damage, and revilement in Kirtland, Ohio (1831–1838), in Missouri (1831–1839), and in the area of Nauvoo, Illinois (1839–1846), culminating in the assassinations of Joseph and Hyrum Smith at Carthage, Illinois, in 1844 (Hull, pp. 643–52).

The isolation and safety of the Great Basin in the American West, to which the main body of the Church fled beginning in 1846–1847, lasted only a few years before persecutions were renewed. The Great Basin area became part of the United States in 1848 after the Mexican-American War, and soon federal laws against the practice of plural marriage forced many Latter-day Saints into hiding or to settlements in Mexico and Canada. More than one thousand Latter-day Saints, mostly polygamous husbands, were fined and imprisoned. Ultimately, ANTIPOLYGAMY LEGISLATION disenfranchised the Saints and disincorporated the Church, allowing confiscation of Church property. After the 1890 MANIFESTO enjoining plural marriage, anti-Mormon persecution declined substantially, but other hostilities persisted.

Anti-Mormon literature has often incited and precipitated persecution, from early attempts to discredit Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, to recent films misrepresenting LDS doctrine. LDS missionaries have sometimes especially been persecuted. Some missionaries sent to England and Scandinavia in the 1830s and 1850s were confronted by mobs, threats, imprisonment, and physical harm. Several missionaries and potential converts were murdered in the United States at the height of antipolygamy agitation during the 1870s. As recently as 1990, two LDS missionaries were killed in Huancayo, Peru, by anti-American terrorists, and Church property was vandalized or destroyed in several South American countries.

Scriptural examples provide comfort and perspective to Latter-day Saints by showing that in God's eternal plan persecutions are sometimes allowed, with blessings then coming to the persecuted (Ivins, pp. 408–413). The biblical stories of Joseph (Gen. 37–46) and Esther (Esth. 2–9) demonstrate that faith can overcome persecution and bring honor to the persecuted. In the Book of Mormon, the Ammonites provide a poignant example of a people who became dedicated to righteousness, willing to suffer persecution and death rather than break their covenants (Alma 24). Many have also been comforted by the Lord's words to Joseph Smith when he was falsely accused and wrongfully imprisoned. Despite his many trials, the Lord reminded Joseph that the Savior had endured even more, and promised him, "All these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:7). He expanded the Prophet's perspective to eternity with the statement "Fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever" (D&C 122:9).

The LDS response to persecution is to temper sorrow and anger in accordance with scriptural counsel. The Savior's admonition to turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:39–42) is expanded in the Doctrine and Covenants: Great rewards are promised to those who do not seek retribution and retaliate, but the persecuted may seek for justice after they have suffered repeated offenses and given their adversaries adequate prior warnings (D&C 98:23–31). Patience and tolerance are admonished in the Book of Mormon (Alma 1:21) and in Articles of Faith 11 and 13. A true Latter-day Saint hopes to be reconciled to, and perhaps even to convert, an enemy.