

to serve the purpose of the present poor church, which is without a belfry, and this is called in irony "the Tower of San Blas." But at Mazatlan we are in a bustling harbor, and in a well and handsomely built little city, with improvements, and especially shops of the better sort, which other countries than Mexico might be proud of. It is surprising, until the large demand from the country tributary is understood, how a city of but fourteen thousand people can be justified in having stocks of goods so elaborate.

We steam across the ancient Sea of

Cortez, and up the coast of that long peninsula which seems on the map one of the remotest points of the globe. The days are calm and blue; the bold outlines of the shores offer constant novelty. It is like sailing in the waters of Mount Desert. An arbitrary line is passed. We have lost Mexico, but we have gained California, which was once her province. It is singular to remember that on the accession of the Emperor Iturbide, before the American conquests, Mexico could boast of being, with the exception of Russia and China, the largest empire in the world.

AN AMERICAN KING.

A SMALL pamphlet, printed within thirty years on the republican soil of the United States, and still to be found in the new settlements along the shores of the great lakes, bears this title-page:

THE BOOK OF THE LAW OF THE LORD,

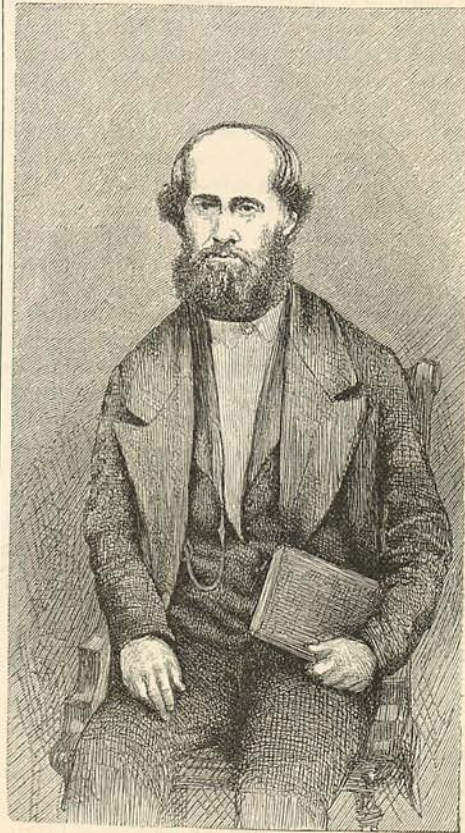
CONSISTING OF AN INSPIRED TRANSLATION OF SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PARTS OF THE LAW GIVEN TO MOSES, AND A VERY FEW ADDITIONAL COMMANDMENTS, WITH BRIEF NOTES AND REFERENCES.

Printed by command of the King, at the Royal Press, St. James, A. R. I.

"The Law of the Lord," thus at once claiming Divine origin and kingly sanction, consists of a series of precepts relating to things spiritual and temporal, written in a verbose imitation of the style and imagery of the Bible. Within the lifetime of a generation it was implicitly received by an entire community as a celestial revelation miraculously transmitted through a divinely anointed monarch to his favored subjects. It is now chiefly prized for its connection with a curious chapter of frontier history.

The northwestern shoulder of the lower peninsula of Michigan is skirted by an archipelago divided into the three groups of the Beaver, the Fox, and the Manitou Islands. Their inhabitants comprise a little band of the semi-civilized survivors of the Ottawa and Chippewa tribes, and a white population of traders, fishermen, and farmers, not greatly exceeding one thousand in number. The Indians are the peaceable occupants of comfortable homesteads bestowed upon them by the general government. A small colony of

Germans and Swedes successfully follow agricultural pursuits upon the Manitous. The other pale-faces have, as a rule, strongly marked Hibernian features, and form an insular community as distinct in its habits from the surrounding world,



JAMES JESSE STRANG.

and as unconcerned in the turmoil of the times, as the people of the Shetlands. The mail-carrier visits them but fortnightly. The lake steamers pass by their shores, unless in need of wood, or in quest of a cargo of fish. Neither a lawyer nor a doctor dwells among them. Chance visitors find them a hardy and hospitable race, as orderly as occasional outbreaks of the Tipperary spirit will permit, handling the net and the oar with more skill than the plough and the hoe, but still exporting wheat as well as white-fish and trout, and living industrious and uneventful lives in a rude Arcadian simplicity. "These islands are valuable fishing stations, and in the season, within a circle of fifty miles, the surface of the lake is flecked with the white sails of the mosquito fleet, often numbering one hundred and fifty of the open, overgrown, and stanch double-enders known as Mackinac boats." The most important of the whole group—their names range from vulgar Hog to classic Paros and apostolic Patmos—is Beaver Island. It contains several thousand acres of arable land, broken by small lakes and streams, and rising in a gently rolling surface to over forty feet above the level of the lake. At its northern end a bay of much natural beauty opens like a horseshoe to the east, inviting a navy to a safe anchorage. North of the entrance rises the graceful tower of a light-house, with a few buildings clustered about its base. A mile distant, and half-way around the curving shore, an irregular row of low cabins straggles along a single street of deep and drifting sand. Here a few dwellings, three or four stores and warehouses, and several cooper shops form a hamlet, which is clothed by law with the dignity of a county seat. This is St. James, where once a "Royal Press" executed kingly commands, and its name preserves the self-canonization of one who founded and maintained in the United States a monarchy absolute during its brief term and within its narrow and isolated limits, and romantic in its history—an *imperium in imperio* in democratic America.

The King of Beaver Island in his plebeian days bore the name of James Jesse Strang. He was the son of a sturdy farmer of Cayuga County, New York, was born in Scipio on March 21, 1813, and passed his boyhood in Hanover, Chautauqua County. The ordinary education of a farmer's

son was re-enforced in his case by the habit of omnivorous reading, which a retentive memory made useful. As a lad he was a conspicuous figure in the rural debating clubs about his home, and at the age of twenty-three he was admitted to the bar. By those who knew him then he is described as a young man of eccentric ideas and voluble tongue, entirely reputable in life, with large confidence in his own capacity, and morbidly anxious for distinction. His early manhood was one of restless activity. He worked on his father's and other farms, taught school, delivered temperance lectures in the villages of the Middle States, practiced law at Mayville, edited a paper at Randolph, dabbled in politics and served as postmaster of Ellington, and finally was caught in the current of Western emigration, and borne to Burlington, Wisconsin, where in 1843 he became one of a firm of attorneys.

The remarkable career of Joseph Smith was then approaching its tragic close. Within fifteen years an obscure and illiterate man, born in poverty, nurtured in vice, and profligate in life, had established a religious sect whose creed had been accepted by over one hundred thousand disciples, and was preached with striking success by hundreds of devoted missionaries on both continents. After ten years of stormy and perilous efforts to obtain a home for his followers in Ohio and Missouri, he had founded the thriving and beautiful city of Nauvoo. There he was by law the commandant of a formidable legion of armed men, and the civil head of a prosperous community, whose people, as frugal and industrious as they were fanatical, received his lightest word as the utterance of a prophet of Jehovah, and yielded to his authority the obedience due to the vicegerent of God. The Latter-day Saints in Illinois now felt with reason that after a decade of persecution the era of Mormon triumph had come, and their proselytism sought a wider field, and became more zealous in spirit. During Strang's life in Western New York, Smith's revelations and his successful preaching had furnished a frequent theme for fireside gossip and village discussion. From the outset, young men of energy and plausible speech had been eagerly welcomed to high positions in the new Church, and now the surprising growth of the settlement on the banks of the Mississippi added to the promises of abundant spiritual

blessings the more tangible prospects of earthly honors as the immediate rewards of Mormon membership. Strang came within the influence of this temptation soon after his removal to Wisconsin, and in January, 1844, was persuaded to visit Nauvoo and meet "the American Mohammed." Undoubtedly Joseph Smith saw useful material in the well-informed, ambitious, and fluent attorney, for on February 25 the baptism of James J. Strang was recorded; on March 3 his ordination as an elder followed; and he became at once an active and trusted member of the Mormon ministry. His special field of labor was Wisconsin, and he soon applied for authority to there "plant a stake of Zion," or, profanely speaking, to found in that State a branch of the Church. Before this request was acted upon, Joseph and Hyrum Smith surrendered themselves to the Governor of Illinois, and on June 27, 1844, were murdered by the mob which stormed the Carthage jail.

No claimant of the succession to Joseph Smith's position was prompter or more persistent than Strang, whose age in the Mormon Church was not yet five months. He exhibited what purported to be an autograph letter from Joseph Smith, dated on June 18, bearing the Nauvoo postmark of June 19, and said by several "witnesses" to have been received in the mail at Burlington, Wisconsin, on July 9. This epistle, dated nine days before "the martyrdom of Joseph," and alleged to have reached Burlington a week in advance of the news of the murder, gave the details of a vision in which "the spirit of Elijah came upon" the Mormon prophet and "the voice of God" said:

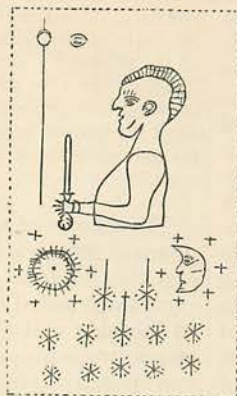
".....My servant Joseph, thou hast been faithful over many things, and thy reward is glorious; the crown and sceptre are thine, and they wait thee. But thou hast sinned in some things, and thy punishment is bitter. The whirlwind goeth before, and its clouds are dark, but rest followeth, and to its days there shall be no end. Study the words of the vision, for it tarrieth not.

"And now behold my servant James J. Strang hath come to thee from far for truth when he knew it not, and hath not rejected it, but had faith in thee, the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, and to him shall the gathering of the people be, for he shall plant a stake of Zion in Wisconsin, and I will establish it; and there shall my people have peace and rest, and shall not be moved, for it shall be established on White River, in the lands of Racine and Wal-

worth.....And I will have a house built unto me there of stone, and there will I show myself to my people by many mighty works, and the name of the city shall be called Voree, which is, being interpreted, garden of peace, for there shall my people have peace and rest, and wax fat and pleasant in the presence of their enemies."

The officers of the Church quickly pronounced Strang a presumptuous impostor, and the letter a clumsy forgery. They excommunicated him at once, and followed this step with the circulation of printed attacks upon his private character. Strang was speedily driven from the field at Nauvoo, but he continued to assert his title in pastoral letters and in sermons in and about Wisconsin, and soon obtained a small body of devoted followers. With them he founded "the city of Voree," at Spring Prairie, in that State, organizing the colony on the basis of community in the ownership of all property. The *Voree Herald* was established as the organ of "the primitive Mormons," and their prophet showed himself to be tireless in labor and skillful in duping the credulous. The methods adopted by him to strengthen his supernatural claims with his disciples were close imitations of those which Joseph Smith had made so successful. The Prophet James had also his hours of rapt ecstasy, when Divine messengers or Omnipotence itself communicated "revelations," which were given to the faithful in a language following as closely the phraseology of the Scriptures as any of the inspired utterances of Joseph Smith, while departing less frequently from the uninspired rules of the English grammar. As Joseph found in the Ontario hills a golden volume in which the chronicles of the Book of Mormon were preserved in cabalistic characters, translatable only by the crystalline Urim and Thummim, so James discovered in the sloping banks of the White River a long-buried and miraculously preserved record of the downfall of a great Israelitish tribe which inhabited this continent centuries ago, and whose patriarch, in lamenting the annihilation of his people, foretold the coming in future ages of a "mighty prophet," who "should bring forth the record." Four of Strang's congregation, acting as "witnesses," declared that they were led by him on September 14, 1845, to a hill near the White River Bridge, and on the east line of Walworth County, Wisconsin, where, aft-

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each side "an alphabetic and pictorial record." This "miracle" was followed by a trance, in which the Urim and Thummim were "brought by an angel of God to the Prophet James," and the hieroglyphics of "the Voree plates," certainly unintelligible enough to human wisdom, were thus translated:

"My people are no more. The mighty are fallen, and the young men slain in battle.

"Their bones bleached on the plain by the noonday shadow. The houses are levelled with the dust, and in the moat are the walls. They shall be inhabited.

"I have in the burial served them; and their bones in the death-shade, toward the sun's rising, are covered. They sleep with the mighty dead, and they rest with their fathers. They have fallen in transgression, and are not; but the elect and faithful there shall dwell.

"The Word hath revealed it. God hath sworn to give an inheritance to His people where transgressors perished. The Word of God came to me while I mourned in the death-shade, saying, I will avenge me on the destroyer. They shall be driven out. Other strangers shall inhabit thy land. I an ensign will then set up. The escaped of my people there shall dwell, when the flock disowns the shepherd, and build not on the rock.

"The forerunner men shall kill, but a mighty prophet there shall dwell. I will be his strength, and he shall bring forth the record. Record my word, and bury it in the hill of promise.

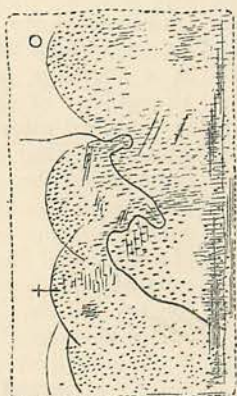
"RAJAH MANCHORE."

Subsequently Strang also claimed to have discovered other buried metallic sheets, eighteen in number, and nine by seven and one-half inches in dimensions, which were called "the plates of Laban," and were declared "to have been written before the Babylonish captivity." His translation of the characters on these plates, supplemented by nine sections of "direct revelation," made up "The Book of the Law of the Lord," whose title-page has been given. This was a plain imitation of the revealing to Joseph Smith of

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THE VOREE PLATES.

A fac-simile of both sides of the three brazen plates alleged to have been miraculously discovered by James J. Strang on September 14, 1845.

er digging through thick sward and solid clay, which had manifestly been undisturbed for years, and cutting away the net-work of roots of a large oak-tree, they found a case of baked earthenware, containing three brazen plates, bearing on

"The Book of Doctrines and Covenants," and in the Strangite theology both these productions were given equal authority with the Book of Mormon and the Bible. "The Law of the Lord" partakes largely of the nature of sumptuary legislation.

Its pages contain minute rules as to diet, attire, personal habits, the construction of dwellings, walks, and roads, the care of forests, and the similar details of domestic and municipal economy. Those who question its heavenly origin must at least admit that its mortal author possessed much useful information and some legal knowledge.

The community at Voree grew steadily in numbers, and in 1846 its leader determined to plant a colony in the Lake Michigan archipelago. In May, 1847, he with four others visited Beaver Island on an errand of exploration. The few traders and fishermen already in possession received them with deliberate inhospitality; but they built a camp of hemlock boughs, found food in beech-nuts and wild leeks, and completed their task in the face of many obstacles. When winter came, five Mormon families were permanently settled at Beaver Harbor. In the summer of 1848 their number was quadrupled, and in 1849 they began to be counted by the hundreds. Their Gentile neighbors strenuously resisted their immigration, but they were persevering, industrious, and sober, and their foot-hold in the islands constantly grew firmer. The village on the harbor was named after its founder the City of James, a title which was soon shortened and sanctified into St. James; a road was cleared to the farming lands of the interior, a saw-mill was built, and a schooner was launched. The missionary work was also carefully planned for the winter of 1849, and with the opening of navigation in 1850, converts came in large numbers. St. James was then made the permanent head-quarters of the new Church, which at its annual conference in July was reorganized as a "kingdom," with Strang as king, his office uniting those of "apostle, prophet, seer, revelator, and translator." Counsellors and subordinate officials were numerous, but Strang's restless energy was felt everywhere. The communal plan was abandoned, and the lands of the Church were apportioned among its members. A system of tithing was instituted, and the fund thus created paid the taxes, cared for the poor, and met all general expenses. Schools for children and debating clubs for adults were established. A well-equipped printing-office not only executed the orders of the king, but from "the Royal Press" was issued regularly (weekly for some years, but

daily at the last) *The Northern Islander*, a paper whose appearance and literary merit surprised the occasional tourist in that remote region. The erection of a large tabernacle was commenced, and roads, docks, and kindred improvements contributed to the comfort of the settlers. The prohibitory principle was rigidly applied to tea, coffee, and tobacco, as well as to liquor, and the observance of Saturday as the Sabbath, and attendance at church upon that day, were made compulsory. Prostitution was threatened with rigorous penalties, but polygamy was sanctioned, although it was never practiced in more than twenty families. The king had five wives, but in no other case did the number exceed three, and in every instance it was required that ability to support a large family should be shown before plural marriage was permitted. All the women were compelled to wear the short skirts and ample pantalets of the Bloomer costume. With its domestic affairs managed in this exceedingly paternal fashion, the Mormon kingdom grew into a community of nearly two thousand souls, occupying homes which were at least comfortable, controlling a small commerce, and slowly accumulating property, but never approaching the civilization of Salt Lake City. Strangers who visited Beaver Island at this time described the men of its population as rough and generally illiterate, and its women as, with but few exceptions, sensual and ignorant. Strang himself was found to be "a man of vigorous frame, light complexion, and high forehead, intellectual, fluent in speech, of suave manners, and very companionable." He was the master of a fervid variety of oratory, and skilled in the art of appealing to the untrained sensibilities of his hearers by stimulating his own emotions. At times his authority was unsuccessfully resisted by some of the more turbulent or the more capable of his followers, but the faith of the mass of his subjects in his supernatural powers was implicit, and over them his sway was absolute.

The ruler of the Beaver Island kingdom never succeeded in establishing its foreign relations upon a peace footing. For three years the Gentile islanders opposed the Mormon immigration by all lawful and some lawless means. Then the new-comers found themselves strong enough to abandon their original policy of non-resistance, and they commenced

to club the disturbers of their meetings, and to retaliate violence with harder blows. The result was a fierce and often bloody border feud, which continued with varying fortunes for six years.

As the outcome of this chronic frontier warfare, the Mormons, who were constantly growing in numbers, and had the advantage of a definite organization, became in the end practically sole possessors of the islands, and were heartily hated and feared along the entire coast.

In his diplomacy, King Strang was shrewd and successful. He speedily established friendly relations with the Indians, despite the interested hostility of the traders, who possessed great influence over the chiefs. In 1851, the United States authorities became convinced that the islanders were a band of land pirates who had trespassed on the public domain, robbed the mails, and harbored counterfeiters, and that the kingly pretensions of their leader constituted a veritable case of high treason. Suddenly the United States war steamer *Michigan* entered Beaver Harbor, bearing the officers of the national courts. Strang surrendered gracefully, and with several others was taken under guard to Detroit. A trial of some length followed, in a crowded court-room, and amid much public interest, Strang aiding in conducting the defense, making a dramatic speech, in which he postured before the jury as "one persecuted for righteousness' sake," and being rewarded by a verdict of acquittal.

The versatility of this king exceeded that of many potentates of wider realms and more durable fame. He was the orator and law-giver of his Church, and the author of its official publications. His duties in the administration of its temporal affairs and as a public officer were multifarious and constant. He was the editor of a better newspaper than is now published in any frontier community of a few thousand inhabitants, and his pen still found leisure for frequent polemical controversy, for pamphleteering, and for elaborate defenses of his people in the columns of Eastern journals. He was an intelligent student of natural history, and contributions from him are to be found in the publications of the Smithsonian Institution. His library was not a mean one in size or character, and he never grew lax in his habit of miscellaneous reading. Literature was always his chosen refuge from

the vexations that proverbially disturb a crowned head.

The downfall of the Beaver Island Empire came not from foreign foe, but from domestic sedition and conspiracy. Its ruler's discipline was at times severe, and included the corporal punishment of adults in its list of penalties. His determination to compel obedience to the minutest regulations of Church law also grew more resolute, and in the conference of 1855 he sternly denounced the tea-drinkers and tobacco-users of his flock, and said, with significant emphasis, "The law of God shall be kept in this land, or men shall walk over my dead body." To these sources of disaffection should be added his systematic efforts to make polygamy popular. At intervals, also, some of the more enlightened Mormons became jealous of his pretensions or disgusted with the imposture, and joined the Gentile enemies of the Church. The most capable of Strang's disciples was Dr. H. D. McCulloch, of Baltimore, an educated physician, an ex-surgeon of the United States army, and a man of social position at home, but of unfortunate habits. In him Beaver Island Nihilism found an organizing head. In the winter of 1855, chronic differences with his superior ended in his deposition from office in the Church on the charge of renewed intemperance. In the spring he left the islands, and visiting the various lake ports, infused fresh eagerness into the general desire for the overthrow of the Mormon kingdom. The exact details of his plotting are not known, beyond the fact that two Mormons were found, named Thomas Bedford and "Aleck" Wentworth, who were ready for any scheme of vengeance. One of them had been horse-whipped by an injured husband, not by the king's specific direction, but without his disapproval, and the other had been severely and publicly rebuked for some violation of Church law. Both men also asserted that other causes of grievance existed, and pointed for further justification to the growth of polygamy on Beaver Island under the influence of Strang's injunctions and practice. On June 16, 1856, the United States steamer *Michigan* was at anchor in Beaver Harbor, and King Strang left his house in the afternoon to call upon her officers. As he was stepping upon the deck, Bedford and Wentworth sprang from behind a convenient wood-pile, and fired upon him with a navy

pistol and a revolver. He fell with two slight wounds in the head, and one in the region of the spine, from which recovery was manifestly impossible. His death was not immediate, and in a few days he was removed to Voree, where he received the devoted care of the lawful wife of his purer days, an estimable woman, who had rejected his gross "revelations," but clung to her personal belief that death alone could release her from the obligations of the marriage vow. He died on July 9, and was buried in a still unmarked grave in the "Cemetery of the Saints" at Spring Prairie.

The kingdom did not survive the assassination of the king. Some of the Mormons left Beaver Island on the boat which carried him to Voree, and the dying man advised a general removal; but before his followers had determined upon any defi-

nite plan of action, a band of exasperated and armed men from the mainland descended upon their settlements. The tabernacle was burned, the printing-office was sacked, and the king's library was destroyed, and his house pillaged. The faithful among the Saints were given but one day in which to leave the island with their movables and stock, and even then they were driven on board the boats without the property which they had brought to the shore. The invaders used the axe and the torch freely, but the homesteads and improvements of the exiles they seized and occupied. It was another banishment from Acadia, and demands for many of the houseless wretches driven forth on that day of retribution a pity as keen as the pathetic fortunes of the neutral French receive from the readers of "Evangeline."

THE NEW FRENCH MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

WHO is Paul Bert? Why is Paul Bert a member of the new French Ministry? Why does Gambetta signalize his accession to power by the choice of Paul Bert for his Minister of Public Instruction?

Let us see if we can not make a contribution toward an intelligent answer to these questions, for they are questions about which, as will presently appear, no part of the civilized world can afford to be indifferent. Paul Bert was born at Auxerre, in the department of the Yonne, on the 17th of October, 1833; consequently he is now forty-eight years of age. He studied medicine in Paris, was admitted Doctor of Natural Sciences in 1866, appointed Professor of General Physiology in the Faculty of Sciences at Paris in 1869, and in 1875 the Academy of Sciences awarded him a prize of 20,000 francs for a series of papers *touchant l'influence des modifications de la pression barométrique sur les phénomènes de la vie*. After the memorable events of September, 1870, he was named Secretary-General of the Prefecture of the Yonne, but resigned immediately upon the resignation of Gambetta as Minister of War. He was elected from Auxerre to the Assemblée Nationale in 1874, and again in 1876, and was one of the 363 Deputies who in 1877 refused to give the Broglie cabinet a vote of confidence. At the succeeding election, his constituents

testified their approval of his action by a re-election. In 1876 he was appointed on the commission *des travaux historiques et des sociétés savantes*; in December, 1878, he was chosen president of the Society of Biology, replacing Claude Bernard. Among the books upon which his fame as a scientist rests, the best known are *De la Greffe animale*, published in 1863; *Revue de Travaux d'Anatomie et de Physiologie*, published 1864-6; *Notes d'Anatomie et de Physiologie comparée*, 1867-70; *Recherches sur la Mouvement de la Sensitif*, 1867-70; *Leçon sur la Physiologie comparée de la Respiration*, 1869; *La Pression barométrique; Recherches de Physiologie expérimentale*, 1879. He has, besides, for many years, furnished the *Feuilleton scientifique* for M. Gambetta's journal, the *République Française*. He was educated at home by his father and aunt, has an interesting and devoted family, and is a great admirer of Gambetta, who, he says, is the only man who has ever tried to govern France through her heart: the only way, he thinks, she can be well governed.

Such, in brief, are the incidents and achievements by which Paul Bert is mostly known, where he is known at all; but they do not explain his selection by M. Gambetta for what, under the circumstances, is perhaps the most critical and difficult post in his cabinet. As in the