



*View from the front of the Maeser Building on BYU campus. © Jaren Wilkey/BYU.*

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## Intellectual Rebellion at Home, 1869–72

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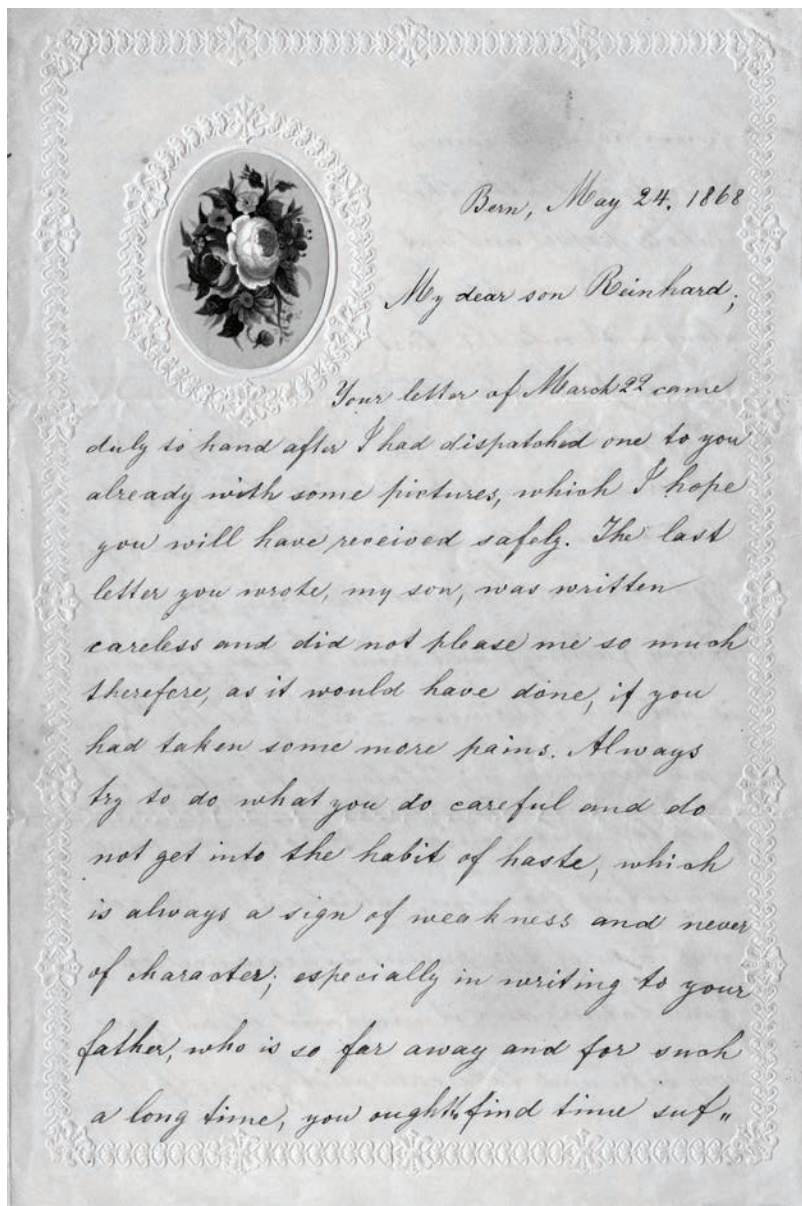
*I do not wish the “Utah Magazine” to be read in my house.*

—Karl G. Maeser<sup>1</sup>

**I**n 1870, after a three-year absence during his mission to Europe, Karl finally returned to the home he had left unfinished. Now the house was furnished and decorated with a new store carpet, chairs, and lace curtains.<sup>2</sup> After showing Karl her work on the home, Anna Maeser handed him the same fifty-cent shinplaster he gave her before he left—all the money he had at the time—plus another. She had found a way not only to survive but to progress, even with all the struggles. Karl’s articles in the *Deseret News* had brought in some income, but the family had pooled their efforts together to rise to the challenge of living without Karl for a time. He was pleased with what he found in his home. He wrote, “I am home again and in His mercy, God has preserved me and mine.”<sup>3</sup>

### Maeser’s Family in Utah

Mission life in the 1860s had been extremely challenging, but pioneer life at home for a wife and children was anything but easy. Unfortunately, Anna kept no record of how she survived during Karl’s absence. Correspondence



This is a letter Maeser wrote to his son Reinhard from Switzerland, May 24, 1868. Courtesy of Eilene Thompson.

between Brigham Young and Anna provides some insight into Anna's experience, especially regarding her sister Camilla, who had traveled with the Maesers to Utah, but little is known about the daily challenges the family faced. Anna took in boarders, sewed, and hired herself out for housework to help make ends meet. It was not easy for her to witness her children being deprived of the comforts she had known while growing up in Saxony. Some insights can be gained by Karl's letters to his son Reinhard, who as a twelve-year-old had taken up work to help support the family, first at the Eagle Emporium and then at Dinwoody's to learn upholstery. For Karl, letters from home, which never came often enough, were like cool water to a parched soul. Karl wrote to Reinhard, "Every word from home and especially from my children is worth more than gold to me."<sup>4</sup> On another occasion, he wrote, "News from my family are as necessary for my heart as food is for the body."<sup>5</sup>

Karl wrote to Reinhard regularly to give him counsel, correct his errors, and plead with him to oversee family responsibilities. In one letter, he wrote, "I beg of you to see that Otilie goes regularly and punctually to school and write me in your news if she does and she learns anything." He expected Reinhard to accept responsibilities and duties as the oldest son. For instance, Reinhard was to see that food was not eaten in the home "without the blessing being asked[;] therefore do that my son, whenever you are at home."<sup>6</sup> Another letter advised, "Continue to be good, honest, diligent, obedient and modest in the performances of all your duties, then your mind will improve, you will enjoy the confidence of those placed over you and will become in future a good and useful man. Speak always the truth, but above everything, shun evil companions, [and] bad words, but cling to your holy religion faithfully, for it will guide you right in all things; be diligent in your prayers; do not neglect them, dear son, not one day."<sup>7</sup>

Karl picked up on Anna's mood from her letters and encouraged Reinhard to be especially mindful of her. In December 1869, Karl wrote, "She has much sorrow and trouble to bear just now, which it is your duty as her eldest son to alleviate as much as you can, that you may be a comfort to her and set a good example for the younger ones."<sup>8</sup> Anna's mother, Henrietta Mieth, had lived with the Maesers since 1865, which

was a great source of strength as well as of extra stress.

During Karl's visit to his family in Germany, his father learned of the challenges Karl and Anna faced in Utah. He even offered him financial help, but only if Karl stayed in Germany. He was not willing to send one *pfennig* to Anna and the children unless it was to help pay for their travel to Germany.<sup>9</sup> Once again, Karl had no hesitation about fulfilling his duty to the Church and declined the offer.



Anna Maeser's mother, Henriette Mieth (1807–75), lived in the Maeser home from 1865 until her death in 1875. Courtesy of Eilene Thompson.

## Church Dissidents and the *Utah Magazine*

Through his letters from home and some of the newspapers sent from Salt Lake, Maeser also picked up on some of the religious struggles that were happening in the Church at home. In particular, some of Maeser's former colleagues colluded to create a schism in the Church. In 1868, while Maeser was in Switzerland, William Godbe and Elias T. Harrison had become highly critical of Brigham Young. As merchants, they disagreed with Young's financial policies. Young encouraged Church members to produce their own goods and avoid buying wares from the States. On a business trip to New York, Godbe and Harrison became acquainted with one another and discovered each other's disagreements with Young's policies. They participated in a series of over fifty séances with a well-known medium in New York and recorded their supposed revelations from deceased spirits such as Heber C. Kimball and Joseph Smith Jr. Upon their return to Salt Lake, they founded the *Utah Magazine*, the precursor to the *Salt Lake Tribune*. At first, the magazine did not openly oppose Young or his policies; the disagreements were subtle and suggestive. For





*From left to right: William Godbe (1833–1902) and Elias L. T. Harrison (1830–1900). Godbe and Harrison opposed Brigham Young and his policies. Maeser knew most of the leaders of their organization who tried to recruit him. Tullidge’s Quarterly Magazine, vol. 1 (1881), facing pp. 14, 82, courtesy of Google Books.*

months, they kept their intentions secret, merely planting seeds of discontent through their magazine. In fact, they kept the extent of their involvement with spiritualism undisclosed from most of their own followers. They even met privately with the US vice president, Schuyler Colfax, during his visit to Salt Lake to share their secret plans for revolution.<sup>10</sup>

This conflict came to a head when Brigham Young convened a very public trial in October 1869, the result of which severed both Godbe and Harrison from the Church. At the trial, they denied that they were involved in spiritualism and appealed to the public to see their loyalty to the principles of Mormonism. After the trial, the dissidents, feeling they were martyrs to the cause, demonstrated even greater boldness in their intentions. They held large public meetings, and people such as G. D. Watt, Edward Tullidge, Henry Lawrence, and Amasa Lyman formally joined their new “Church of Zion.”

This group included well-educated and wealthy Mormons who had had substantial experience in the Church. It was a movement of intellectuals and entrepreneurs who used their influence, ambition, and literary talent to raise significant challenges to the Latter-day Saint Church.<sup>11</sup> Godbe had accumulated great wealth as a merchant and had served as a counselor in the Salt Lake bishopric; E. T. Harrison was an architect who had helped design the Salt Lake Theater; Tullidge was a writer and became an important historian; Eli Kelsey had been an

enthusiastic missionary that brought hundreds into the Church, including Charles W. Penrose, and then became the owner of the Bingham Canyon mine; and Watt had served as an assistant to Brigham Young and had recorded most of Young's addresses in the *Journal of Discourses*.

The members of the movement felt particularly encouraged when they convinced Amasa Lyman to join. Lyman had served in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and as a counselor in the First Presidency. For decades, Lyman had been attracted to spiritualism and universalist doctrines. Numerous attempts were made to correct his heretical doctrine, especially pertaining to his denial of the Atonement of Christ. He was disfellowshipped from the Church in 1867, and in 1870, knowing it would mean excommunication, Lyman began participating in the Church of Zion movement. It was hoped by many in the movement that he would become their new president.<sup>12</sup> He became "a foremost spokesman for the Godbeite movement and Church of Zion for two and a half years."<sup>13</sup>

The Church of Zion saw it as their divinely appointed mission to liberate the captive Mormons from the bondage of their forced ignorance. They defended free thinking, tolerance, conscience, the right of dissent, and open dialogue—but primarily they opposed Brigham Young's presumed infallibility. With rhetoric couched in terms that sounded respectful to the members of the Church and its leaders, they claimed they were not rejecting their old beliefs but had grown beyond them, updating them with the needs of the times and recognizing the brotherhood of all men. Brigham Young himself could well have expressed many of their ideas; for example, the movement claimed that men and women should not allow someone else to think for them but must learn to trust their own capacities and insights. Doctrinally, however, they began to teach a type of universalism and slowly revealed their spiritualism; they eventually adopted a Protestant concept of the Godhead, denied the need for an atonement, rejected priesthood order, and discarded the belief in a devil.

In November 1869, the *Deseret News* published an article signed by the First Presidency and four members of the Twelve Apostles declaring, "The Utah Magazine is not a periodical suitable for circulation among or perusal by [our brethren and sisters in every place], and should not

be sustained by Latter-day Saints.” They had examined recent articles and found them to be “erroneous, opposed to the spirit of the gospel and calculated to do injury.” This article was accompanied by several other articles describing the nature of apostasy and how, in nearly every instance, when “a prominent individual” was cut off from the Church, he or she avowed that it was done “without a cause.” Furthermore the article contended, “Frequently they have continued to assert that they were as strong believers as they ever were . . . but the authorities were wrong; the man who held the keys had transgressed and was in the dark.”<sup>14</sup>

Maeser had had a close relationship to many of the founders of the Godbeite movement. William Godbe and E. T. Harrison had been co-lecturers with Karl in the lecture series sponsored in the Seventies Hall before his mission,<sup>15</sup> and the Maesers had stayed with Edward Tullidge when they first arrived in Liverpool in 1856.<sup>16</sup> Somehow, while serving in Switzerland in 1869, Maeser obtained a couple of issues of *Utah Magazine* and reviewed the edition describing the trial of Godbe and Harrison. However, Maeser, the man partially converted to Mormonism by Moritz Busch’s anti-Mormon text, was quick to see through the Godbeites’ rhetoric. With great concern for his family, Maeser wrote to Reinhard in December:

You may hear once in a while my son, men raising up in our days with fine language and a great deal of declamation, and oppose the priesthood of the living God, but believe the testimony of your father, who had tried the doings, sayings and writings of those men, especially of late, and has not found them to be of God. Keep clear of that spirit of Apostasy which wants to sneak in among our people and lead astray those, that are not wide awake, with fine sounding words and deceptive reasoning.<sup>17</sup>

He warned Reinhard that Satan, “the great prince of darkness,” was playing a cunning game against the Lord’s kingdom but ultimately would lose. Recognizing the participation of his former colleagues, he continued: “I pity poor Billy Godbe, who is the best of the whole apostate crew, to



**THE WINTER LECTURES.**

During the present winter, the Seventies' Hall has been crowded every Thursday evening, and many persons have been forced to return home unable to obtain admission. The following lectures have been delivered:

- 1st. Modern Lecturers and writers, by Mr. E. L. T. Harrison.
- 2d. Ancient and Modern Literature, by Mr. E. W. Tullidge.
- 3d. The New York Press, by Mr. T. B. H. Stenhouse.
- 4th. Magnetism, by Mr. Orson Pratt.
- 5th. History of Ireland, by Mr. Geo. A. Smith.
- 6th. The Art of War, by Mr. Webber.
- 7th. Electro Magnetism, by Mr. Orson Pratt.
- 8th. The Harmony of Colors, by Mr. G. M. Ottinger.
- 9th. Footsteps of God in History, by Mr. Carl Maeser.
- 10th. Universality of Mormonism, by Mr. B. W. Tullidge.
- 11th. The Study of Language, by Mr. Jas. McKnight.
- 12th. The Pleasures of the Sciences, by Mr. E. L. T. Harrison.
- 13th. The Science of Sound, by Mr. J. V. Long.
- 14th. Second Part of Footsteps of God in History, by Mr. Carl Maeser.

*In the 1860s, Maeser began to lecture with some of the leading intellectuals of Salt Lake, several of whom later became disaffected with Brigham Young. This was a report of the 1863–64 lectures on March 2, 1864. Courtesy of Utah Digital Newspapers.*

whom he had fallen a victim. Son please tell your mother, that I do not wish the 'Utah Magazine' to be read in my house." He had examined their claims "and found them myself through the Spirit and judgment within me, independent of anybody else, just what the Presidency and the High



May 8, 1869, issue of the Utah Magazine. While Maeser was in Switzerland, he said he did not want the Utah Magazine read in his home. Courtesy of Google Books.

Council afterwards has pronounced them to be, namely, ‘Sophistry.’” It was his earnest prayer that his family would be preserved “from that evil spirit, as I would be better able to bear the death in body of anyone of them, than to hear of their apostasy.”<sup>18</sup>

## James Cobb

Two sympathizers of the Godbeite movement had been acquaintances of Maeser in 1861 at the Union Academy—Orson Pratt Jr. and James T. Cobb. In fact, Maeser had baptized Cobb on October 24, 1863. Cobb, the son of one of Brigham Young’s wives from a previous marriage, was a dashing, well-educated character. He was born in Massachusetts in 1833, attended Amherst College, and then transferred to Dartmouth, where he graduated in 1855. He had come west perhaps to become better acquainted with his mother, Augusta, and his sister Charlotte,<sup>19</sup>

and he eventually began to show especial interest in Anna Maeser's sister Camilla.

In 1861, so many suitors had been calling on Camilla that Karl wrote Young in frustration about what he should do. Anna seemed particularly interested in getting Camilla "married away as soon as possible," but Karl was concerned about the character of some of the suitors. In his mind, the flattering was affecting Camilla's attitude. She was neglecting her secret prayers and adopting "quite saucy manners . . . Married and unmarried, old and young, men and women have been crowding our house trying to make a match." So Maeser asked Young for some "fatherly counsel."<sup>20</sup> Maeser wondered if he should consider marrying Camilla himself. He knew, however, that Anna may not be pleased with the idea. In his words, she "acknowledged plurality as good as a general thing, but not as far as herself is concerned." Maeser wanted Brigham to know that Anna was a faithful woman and had "stood true to [him] in the days of [his] deepest adversity," but would need extra persuasion if she were to accept plural marriage. It was an unnecessary worry; Young did not approve. Maeser's finances were too scanty at the time to support another wife. Events that followed, however, confirmed the reason for Karl's concern.

James Cobb became Camilla's main suitor. He was already married at the time to Mary Van Cott when he began to court Camilla; some have speculated that James was more converted to Camilla than to the Church.<sup>21</sup> James and Camilla were married on November 14, 1864, by Brigham Young, who also acted as the father of the bride. James then served a two-year mission from 1864 to 1866, but his commitment to the Church seemed to be wavering. He divorced his first wife in 1867. While Karl served his mission in Switzerland, James and Camilla lived in the Maeser home with Anna. Apparently Karl had concerns about Cobb's influence in the home. James had been associating with a crowd of intellectuals and took odd jobs at the *Utah Magazine*.<sup>22</sup> This raised Karl's concerns. He wrote to Anna, who contacted Young for advice. Young wrote Anna in 1868, suggesting that it would be wrong to throw them out, but if there was room, it might be wise for James and Camilla to move in with James's mother.<sup>23</sup>

The Godbeite connection to the Maesers intensified when William Godbe asked James's sister, Charlotte, to become his fourth plural wife in April 1869.<sup>24</sup> At the time, Godbe was attempting to maintain a business-as-usual façade while he was plotting his rebellion against Young. James Cobb was eventually persuaded by the Godbeite arguments. It is not clear how long the Cobbs lived in the Maeser home, but at the conclusion of the trial against the Godbeites in 1869, the attending audience was asked for a sustaining vote. Cobb was one of only five in the congregation who voted against the excommunication of Godbe and Harrison. While Camilla stayed close to the Church and became Utah's first trained kindergarten teacher, a stake Primary president, and a member of the general board of the Primary, James became a long-time opponent of Church doctrine and leadership. He became a Shakespearean scholar who was convinced that Shakespeare and Francis Bacon were the same person. In 1884, he claimed, "I own but one secular lord in literature, or in life—that's Bacon."<sup>25</sup> Cobb claimed that he liked Mormons generally, even though he was convinced that the Book of Mormon was a fraud.<sup>26</sup> To the end of his life, he supported the theory that the Book of Mormon was plagiarized from Solomon Spalding's manuscript.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Juvenile Instructor* Articles**

Karl's warning to Reinhard about apostate ideas, then, had a much stronger justification than the mere presence of the *Utah Magazine* in the home; he was linked to the dissidents through family ties and professional association. He also knew that the dissident forces brewing in the valley could injure the faith of young Church members. Even before his release as a missionary in 1870, Maeser was given an opportunity by George Q. Cannon to address the youth through a series of articles for the *Juvenile Instructor* called the Beehive series. In each article he imagined himself to be a bee traveling to distant lands and times to collect the pollen of insightful stories that would uplift or challenge his young readers. Once more Maeser demonstrated a Pestalozzian's approach to moral education, but as he became more aware of the dissident voices in Salt Lake, the

[For the *Juvenile Instructor*.]  
**THE BEE-HIVE.**

**T**HAR away in the southern part of Asia is found a country, hidden away among the high mountains of the mighty Himalaya, called Tibet, with its large and beautiful capital city, Lhasa, of which little is known, but very little known in the outside world, only that its inhabitants, like all mountain people, have an unquenchable love for freedom and independence, which they have understood and maintained for ages, in spite of all the efforts of powerful conquerors, who from time to time have swept over the Asiatic regions; and further, that they weave and export a fine cloth, made from the almost silken hair of their goats, and which is called after the name of the country itself. Their chief peculiarity, however, is their State organization and the head of the same,

THE DALAI LAMA.

Their government is a kind of theocracy, or a form of government where priests rule according to heaven-given laws, or supposed to be such. The Dalai Lama, or head priest, resides in a very large monastery-like residence near Lhasa, and rules not only over the four million inhabitants of Tibet, but is like the Pope in Rome, the spiritual head of a great many millions of people, who live throughout Asia, belonging to that extensive heathen religion, "Lamaism," which counts its devotees at more than three hundred millions of people. They believe in such a multitude of gods that not one of their most learned priests

rule over devotees who are taught not to think for themselves, but to render the most implicit obedience to everything which their priests, be it ever so monstrous, may require of them; and these priests are not part of the people, to share with them the same duties and obligations, but on the contrary are a select and privileged caste, organized among themselves and for their own purposes. In both religions is the worship of what they consider the divinity secondary to the obedience to their priests, and these are trying to obtain all possible knowledge and information for themselves, endeavoring with all their might to keep the rest of the people in ignorance, to keep them the more effectually in subjection.

To such monstrous beliefs can the human mind stray when left without the guidance of the spirit of revelation; and in whatever name or under whatever pretence men may seek the power over others, if that power and influence has not been conferred and is not sustained by the Heavens in reality, it must lead to misery, darkness and final destruction; it will hamper human progress and dwarf the mind of man to the standard of menials and slaves. But wherever the Lord has inspired men to communicate his will to the inhabitants of the earth and given them authority to administer His laws and the ordinances of the gospel of salvation to His faithful people, life, light and love come out everywhere like beautiful flowers, herbs, plants and blossoms under the awakening rays of the sun in May; the soul expands and feels itself nearer to its God, and all the virtues are nourished to ripen into a rich harvest. The Lord blesses the land, and makes the rough places smooth for his people. This, O children of Zion, is our happy lot, which we enjoy under the guidance of Prophets, Apostles and Elders, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which shall lead us into *all truth*.

K. G. M.

*Even before he left the Swiss Mission, Maeser published a series of articles in the Juvenile Instructor, calling it the Beehive. This is part of his September 1870 article. Courtesy of HBLL.*

themes of his articles shifted. In each article, therefore, he challenged his young readers to observe some object from a culture or time and to relate the potential lessons found therein to their own actions and time. He wrote, "Bro. Cannon has told me, that he wished me to write again for the Juvenile Instructor, I will set my little bee to work, to gather up; and he has now to fly about, and roam over land and sea in far off countries, among the Alps of Switzerland and in the deep mines of Peru, he will even go back sometimes into remote ages to nations long since passed away, to fetch up good things for our beehive."<sup>28</sup>

The first of these articles was published in the June 25 issue, before Karl had said farewell to Switzerland, and it was obviously printed without Maeser's review; it was signed "Carl G. Measer." It directed the reader to the ancient nation of Sparta and the government of Lycurgus. Spartan youth were taught to respect their elders and were not permitted to sit in the presence of an elderly person without permission. Maeser told the story of an old man entering the stadium of the Olympics after thousands were already seated "when five hundred Spartan youths arose simultaneously offering him their seats." Maeser then posed a question: should the children of Deseret "under the



guidance of the Priesthood of the Almighty . . . be surpassed even in this thing by the children of Sparta?”<sup>29</sup>

While Maeser was making arrangements for his return from Liverpool with the Swiss converts to New York, his next article appeared in the July 9 issue of the *Juvenile Instructor*. Liverpool was known for its pickpockets, so it was no accident that Maeser’s article looked at the admirable honesty of the Turkish Muslims.<sup>30</sup> An English gentleman was deeply concerned because his Turkish friend had left no guards to protect his treasures from thieves during the night. “Upon this the Turk smiled and answered. ‘My dear sir, be perfectly at your ease about these goods, nobody will steal them, for there is no Christian for forty miles around here.’” Maeser then reflected on the days in Salt Lake when we “did not need lock or key on our doors when we were leaving the house.” He asked, “Should we, Latter-day Saints that we are, suffer ourselves to be excelled by those Mohammedans in such a simple and easy principle?”<sup>31</sup>

Other stories followed while Maeser was crossing the ocean on the *Manhattan* with a load of emigrants and crossing the plains by train. He noted the great literacy rates among the Icelanders in spite of their long and dark winters.<sup>32</sup> Then he took his readers to early Greece to admire the perseverance and dedication of Demosthenes, who overcame severe speech impediments and obnoxious habits to become one of the greatest orators of all time.<sup>33</sup> Then he took his readers to observe the deep sense of honor displayed by the Magyar noblemen of Hungary.<sup>34</sup>

Maeser was always a keen observer of human nature, and upon his return to Salt Lake City, he observed firsthand the impact of the Godbeite movement. So many of Maeser’s former associates had become disaffected with the Church and were actively accusing Brigham Young of despotic authority. T. B. H. Stenhouse, for example, with whom Maeser had served in the Eastern States Mission and on the Board of Regency for the University of Deseret, actually tendered his resignation from the Church in August of 1870, declaring that he could no longer believe in “Brigham’s claim to an Infallible Priesthood.”<sup>35</sup> Stenhouse had helped found the Swiss Mission in 1850, served as president of the Eastern States Mission, represented the Church to the Lincoln administration,



and defended the kingdom of God with tongue and pen. Yet this former defender of the Church had left all that behind to follow his new beliefs.

Maeser had less time for writing upon his return to his Salt Lake home and added only three more articles to the Beehive series. These last three articles, however, had a much more critical nature to them. He continued to write about far-off places, but his response was not so subtly directed at those he saw criticizing the prophet and seeking disciples to follow them. In September, then, his bee was off to visit the “freedom-loving” mountain people of Tibet and the Dalai Lama. This article, however, was not dominated by Maeser’s normal tolerance for cultural differences. He described the Tibetans’ dedication to a system that educated an elite caste very well while it “rules over devotees who are taught not to think for themselves, but to render the most implicit obedience to everything which their priest-kings, be it ever so monstrous, may require of them.” This privileged caste was “trying to obtain all possible knowledge and information for themselves, endeavoring with all their might to keep the rest of the people in ignorance, to keep them the more effectually in subjection.”<sup>36</sup> Maeser wanted his readers to notice the actual qualities of despotic leaders.

In this *Juvenile Instructor* article, Maeser criticized both the Dalai Lama for his claim of continuous reincarnation and the Catholic pope for his claim of infallibility. He recognized that men “without the guidance of the spirit of revelation” could be led to monstrous beliefs:

In whatever name or under whatever pretence [sic] men may seek the power over others, if that power and influence has not been conferred and is not sustained by the Heavens in reality, it must lead to misery, darkness, and final destruction; it will hem in human progress and dwarf the mind of man to the standard of menials and slaves. But wherever the Lord has inspired men to communicate his will to the inhabitants of the earth and given them authority to administer His laws and the ordinances of the gospel of salvation to His faithful people, life, light and love come out everywhere like beautiful flowers, herbs, plants and blossoms under the awakening

rays of the sun in May; the soul expands and feels itself nearer to its God, and all the virtues are nourished to ripen into a rich harvest.<sup>37</sup>

Maeser concluded this article by bearing testimony that the children of Zion are happy because they live “under the guidance of Prophets, Apostles and Elders, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which shall lead us into all truth.”<sup>38</sup>

In numerous articles and speeches, the dissenters had compared themselves with Galileo and others who, because they followed their own reason, were declared heretics by the Catholic authorities. Edward Tullidge wrote, for example, “My companions, then, are simply affirming what the Protestants for ages have maintained, what the Puritans of England fought for, and what the American Nation won in revolution. . . . What then can we do? One thing only: remain firm to our convictions and the truths of God as illustrated in human experience.”<sup>39</sup> They felt that by opposing Brigham Young, they were showing the courage of the reformers.

Without explicitly pointing out the contrast between these self-proclaimed modern reformers and the man so revered in his fatherland, Maeser dedicated his Beehive series article of November to Martin Luther, “a great and good man, one whom the Lord inspired to be a mighty instrument in his hands, a chosen vessel, to bring about a reformation, even a revolution, among the Christian world.”<sup>40</sup> Maeser made it clear that Luther was a precursor to the Restoration of the gospel, “a preparatory step to that great work of redemption, freedom and truth to be consummated in these latter-days.” Luther’s courage had been exemplary, as he was willing to “face the whole world, fearlessly tearing down the mantle of hypocrisy in which corruption, falsehood and priestcraft had wrapped themselves.” But rather than “marching on until more light could be revealed unto them from on high,” the Protestant followers of Luther “kept up a wretched existence, splitting up into hundreds of sects”:

Thus the work of that great man was left unfinished and defiled by the nonsense of his followers, until God revealed Himself to Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and commenced a work in this the

fullness of time, which embraces all what Luther did or could have done, and all his followers besides and a great deal more, that they never would have found out, as simple as it is. God has hidden it from the eyes of the wise and given it to the understanding of the pure in heart.<sup>41</sup>

Maeser did not specifically mention Mormon dissenters in the article, but left the contrast between the dissenters and Luther to those who had eyes to see.

Maeser's final contribution to the Beehive series in the December 1870 edition of the *Juvenile Instructor* invited his young readers to strengthen their discernment by considering a story about a wise pilot of a ship, an image he often used to represent Brigham Young. In this story, a ship was foundering in a terrible storm, "struggling with the wind and waves and in danger of



*From his days in Saxony, Maeser had great respect for the strength and courage of Martin Luther. Maeser did not believe that the Mormon dissidents of 1870 could be appropriately compared to that great reformer. This statue of Luther is placed in front of the newly restored Frauenkirche in Dresden. Photo by Froerer, 2007, courtesy of Kathy Froerer.*

going in a wrong direction, where she might have struck the ground and been broken to pieces by the angry waves." A wise and experienced pilot had his crew take him to the ship to help. Once aboard, he "gave his orders to the sailors in a gruff, but loud voice, instead of the captain, who had surrendered all his authority over the ship for the time being to our old pilot. More than eight hundred human beings were on board that ship, whose lives depended now, next to God, upon the skill and experience of the old man." After a tense and difficult night of avoiding breakers and weathering angry waves, the pilot brought the ship safely to the

calmer waters of the river. His face belied the perils they had survived. “His features are hard and weather beaten, and you cannot trace many lines of tender feelings there,” but his dreams would have revealed the compassion he held for his family, his mother, and his religious faith. Maeser concluded, “The rough outside of a pilot, you see, is very often only like the rough outside of a vessel at sea in a storm, when nothing betrays to you the feelings, prayers, emotions, hopes and fears of those that are aboard of her. . . . Judge not by appearances, but let us learn that there is a pilot, who will guide us through all the breakers, storms and temptations of life safely into the haven of immortality and eternal lives, let us take him aboard and obey his orders, and we will never fail,—It is the Spirit of God.”<sup>42</sup>

By the end of 1870, interest in the Godbeite movement had significantly waned, attendance at their meetings had dwindled, and they had even stopped using the name “Church of Zion.” They had become little more than “a loose confederation of liberal thinkers.”<sup>43</sup> Maeser had known or worked closely with nearly all of the leading figures in the movement through church assignments, the Territorial Teachers’ Association, and the University of Deseret. As Maeser returned to teaching, he was thrown right into the middle of the intellectual schism that had grown in the community while he was away, but his faithfulness to the Church remained unwavering, and his loyalty to Brigham Young remained steadfast.

Maeser wrote a letter to his beloved Saints in Switzerland in February 1871. He apologized for taking so long to report to them. His letter to Edward Schoenfeld appeared in the March issue of *Der Stern*. In it, he described his return to the United States and added a few comments about the Godbeite movement, following the same allegory he had written in the *Juvenile Instructor*:

Our enemies, who have conspired together into a small clique, now attempt every conceivable trick to allure our people to rebellion; thereby a state of siege could be declared. We have, however, a man on the helm of the ship of Zion, on whom God has bestowed wisdom, prudence, courage and patience; who will securely navigate

through all the shoals. The reader of *der Stern* can be unconcerned what the various squawks are, that are now attempted, because every week a new one is brought to light.<sup>44</sup>

## **Austere Circumstances and Outside Pressures**

Some of Maeser's previous colleagues, now dissidents, supposed they might make him a good recruit to their opposition to Brigham Young. Upon his return, Maeser reconnected with the Territorial Teachers' Association and took a position at the University of Deseret. From his writings, some must have thought Maeser embraced many of the arguments the dissidents were using; he was after all a fierce defender of independent thought and opponent of all oppression. They saw Brigham Young as a tyrant, opposing all progressive ideas, including education. Perhaps, they thought, Maeser could be persuaded to align himself with them.

In October 1871, Maeser was elected president of the Salt Lake Teachers' Association (Camilla Cobb was elected secretary). This placed him in the center of the discussions regarding public education and teacher preparation. He was busily engaged in a myriad of activities. By April of 1872, Maeser was helping to organize the Territorial Teachers' Association and chairing the constitution committee to draft the association's bylaws. He had also reorganized the German meetings on Sunday mornings in Salt Lake for the new German immigrants. His struggles to provide for his family, however, continued to be great. Now there were six hungry mouths to feed, and one more on the way. While Maeser did not favor a tax-supported educational system, he knew very personally the privations suffered by teachers in the territory, and this challenge was growing.

In October 1872, while teaching at his school, an unusual collection of German dignitaries suddenly appeared at the door. They had come as tourists, but their tour guide was no where to be found, so they haphazardly noticed a German name in the city directory listing Maeser as a school director, professor at the university, and elder of the Church. Out of curiosity they decided to pay a visit to their fellow countryman to find out what he could do about helping them make the best use of their time.

The *Tribune* announced the visit of “Count Von Arnim, First Secretary of the German Legation at Washington, Dr. Lindeman, assistant-editor of the *Weserzeitung Bremen*, and Dr. Finch, Director of the Museum of Natural History at Bremen.”<sup>45</sup> These distinguished guests were “introduced by Karl Maeser, Esq.” Nothing more was noted, but later Lindeman wrote an article for the German magazine *Gartenlaube* describing their visit and the man who hosted them, as was mentioned in chapter 3.<sup>46</sup>

Their report was uncharacteristically positive in its description of Utah and its people, but they were unimpressed by the austere teaching conditions they found when they met “Mister M.”<sup>47</sup> They told him of their problem, and he offered to become their tour guide after he completed his lesson. He then invited them to stay and observe, which they did for a short time.<sup>48</sup> Maeser then took them on an impressive tour of the city and its sites, culminating in a visit with Brigham Young in person. In their article, Lindeman expressed his appreciation for their “Friendly Cicero” who gave them a tour of the “Rome of the Mormons.”<sup>49</sup>

The only negative impression they listed was a short comment that notwithstanding all the accomplishments of Brigham Young’s administration, he seemed to have overlooked the contrast between Maeser’s “scanty,” cramped schoolhouse and the “roomy and luxuriously furnished theater” the dignitaries attended in the evening, the construction of which was primarily funded by the Church.

The next chapter will explore how over the next few months, Maeser’s dissident former friends and colleagues would attempt to drive a wedge between his allegiance to his profession and his commitment to Brigham Young by emphasizing the very observation made by these German dignitaries. Maeser knew that the teachers in the territory needed greater support; he felt keenly the exhausting challenge of attempting to teach without sufficient means; he experienced this frustration about lack of funds in his own family. He also felt the appeal to his ego to side with the flatterers who would drive him from his allegiance to Young and the Church, but he remained solid in his faith and loyalty. His advice to his son Reinhard in 1868 was to be put to a personal test: “Bless in your heart everyone whom you are connected with, who will be faithful to God and



his servant Brigham and all the other authorities of this church and kingdom; for others, I care not the ashes of a rye straw.”<sup>50</sup>

Karl had watched the failed revolution in Saxony in 1848; he had lived through the oppressive measures placed on teachers through laws like the *Stiehlsche Regulativ* of 1854; he had felt the prejudices of being both a German immigrant and a Mormon on the East Coast when the United States declared war on Utah in 1857; he had observed, very personally, the forces that exploded into war between the North and South in the United States; he had also witnessed the struggles of the poor Saints in Europe who lacked the means to travel to Zion. Now he was surrounded by colleagues, friends, and relatives who were intellectually breaking away from what he held most dear by attempting to accuse Brigham Young of abusing his authority. To those who supposed themselves better than the Church, Karl would reply as he did to a missionary that needed reproof: “You are like a little rooster that stoops his head very low going through a very high archway for fear he might knock his head against the arch.”<sup>51</sup> He had no patience with those who arrogantly attempted to inflate their own importance in opposition to those holding proper priesthood keys.

## Notes

1. Karl G. Maeser to Reinhard Maeser, December 8, 1869, Eileen Thompson Papers, LTPSC.
2. Maeser’s son Reinhard wrote that Anna did not come to the train station but waited at home for Karl’s return. Reinhard Maeser, *Karl G. Maeser: A Biography by His Son* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1928), 72. This contradicts Karl’s report to Schoenfeld, which I believe is more reliable.
3. Karl G. Maeser, “Mitteilungen,” *Der Stern*, March 1871, 46; translation by A. LeGrand Richards. Upon his return, Maeser was not thrilled with the yard; in this letter to Schoenfeld he noted that in the moonlight on the evening of his arrival, he saw “what a horrible devastation the crickets had perpetrated” in his garden. He then added, “But that is nothing; everything can be replaced again.”
4. Karl to Reinhard, December 21, 1868, Eileen Thompson Papers, LTPSC.
5. Karl to Reinhard, December 8, 1869.
6. Karl to Reinhard, May 24, 1868.

7. Karl to Reinhard, December 21, 1868.
8. Karl to Reinhard, December 8, 1869.
9. Reinhard Maeser, *Karl G. Maeser: A Biography by His Son* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1928), 65.
10. Ronald W. Walker, *Wayward Saints: The Godbeites and Brigham Young* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 2.
11. Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 10.
12. See, for example, Loretta L. Hefner, "From Apostle to Apostate: The Personal Struggle of Amasa Mason Lyman," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 90–104; and Edward Leo Lyman, *Amasa Mason Lyman, Mormon Apostle and Apostate: A Study in Dedication* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009).
13. Lyman, *Amasa Mason Lyman*, 421.
14. Brigham Young, "To the Latter-day Saints," *Deseret News*, November 3, 1869, 6.
15. John V. Long had also participated in the lecture series and had apostatized from the Church before he died suddenly in April 1869. It is believed that he had participated in spiritualism with Amasa Lyman as early as 1859.
16. See *Tullidge's Quarterly Magazine*, July 1884, 263.
17. Karl to Reinhard, December 8, 1869.
18. Karl to Reinhard, December 8, 1869.
19. Dale R. Broadhurst, "James T. Cobb: The Don Quixote of Deseret," The Spaulding Research Project, 2001, 4; <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga/saga10a.htm>.
20. Karl G. Maeser to Brigham Young, June 2, 1861, Eileen Thompson Papers, LTPSC.
21. Broadhurst, "James T. Cobb: The Don Quixote of Deseret," 6.
22. Broadhurst, "James T. Cobb," 11.
23. Brigham Young to Anna Maeser, April 1868, Brigham Young Copybook, CHL.
24. Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 138. Charlotte had been raised as one of Brigham Young's adopted daughters. She was bright, pretty, talented, and literate. Charlotte ignited Godbe's passions and may have been an active participant in some of his séances. For a while their relationship caused jealousies with Godbe's other wives, but by 1871 Godbe started to renounce polygamy, and he separated from his plural wives in 1873. He and Charlotte were formally divorced in 1879.
25. James Cobb to H. H. Bancroft, September 1, 1884, Bancroft Library, University of California-Berkeley.

26. "I oppose Mormonism, I do not antagonize Mormons. Indeed I quite like Mormons themselves." James Cobb to H. H. Bancroft, September 7, 1884, Bancroft Library, University of California-Berkeley.
27. Broadhurst, "James T. Cobb," The Spaulding Research Project, 2001, 1–2.
28. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: The Children of Sparta," *Juvenile Instructor*, June 25, 1870, 99.
29. Maeser, "The Children of Sparta," 99.
30. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: Turkish Honesty," *Juvenile Instructor*, July 9, 1870, 111–12.
31. Maeser, "Turkish Honesty," 112.
32. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: The Icelanders," *Juvenile Instructor*, July 23, 1870, 117.
33. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: Demosthenes or Perseverance Conquers All," *Juvenile Instructor*, August 6, 1870, 125–26.
34. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: The Hungarian Noblemen," *Juvenile Instructor*, August 20, 1870, 134–35.
35. Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 296.
36. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: The Dalai Lama," *Juvenile Instructor*, September 17, 1870, 152.
37. Maeser, "The Dalai Lama," 152.
38. Maeser, "The Dalai Lama," 152.
39. Edward W. Tullidge, "Our Family Difficulty," *Utah Magazine*, November 6, 1869, 424.
40. Karl G. Maeser, "The Beehive: Martin Luther," *Juvenile Instructor*, November 26, 1870, 184.
41. Maeser, "Martin Luther," 185.
42. Karl G. Maeser, "The Pilot," *Juvenile Instructor*, December 10, 1870, 198–99.
43. Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 209.
44. Maeser, "Mitteilungen," 47; translation by A. LeGrand Richards.
45. "City News: Distinguished Visitors," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 16, 1872, 3. Count Harry von Armin (1824–81), Moritz Lindeman (1823–1908), and Otto Finsch (1839–1937).
46. Moritz Lindeman, "Ein sächsischer Schulmeister im MormonenLande," *Gartenlaube*, 794–96; translation by A. LeGrand Richards. The *Deseret News* ran a follow-up article in 1875, calling the piece "a detailed and very excellent and impartial account of his visit here." Maeser had shared his conversion story with the dignitaries, but his full name was omitted from the *Gartenlaube* article, shown only as "M": "Now a gentleman writes from New York, stating that he has read the aforesaid article, . . . being most favorably impressed with the correctness of the principles inculcated in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he is desirous to find out who M. is that he may open correspondence from him." They

handed Maeser the letter to find out who M. might have been only to discover “that he was the very identical ‘M.’ himself.” “An Incident,” *Deseret News*, February 24, 1875.

47. Lindeman, “Ein sächsischer Schulmeister,” 794.
48. Maeser’s lesson was on “the best method of calculating interest, the so-called compound interest.” The classroom was divided into two parts. Maeser was teaching the older children and a woman was teaching the younger ones. Lindeman, “Ein sächsischer Schulmeister,” 794.
49. Lindeman, “Ein sächsischer Schulmeister,” 794.
50. Karl G. Maeser to Reinhard Maeser, May 24, 1868, Eileen Thompson Papers, LTPSC.
51. Edward Schoenfeld, “A Character Sketch of Dr. Karl G. Maeser,” *Juvenile Instructor*, March 15, 1901, 182; see also Alma P. Burton, *Karl G. Maeser: Mormon Educator* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1953), 22.