The Etoile Du Deseret: Portrait of the French Mission, 1851-1852

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THE ETOILE DU DESERET: PORTRAIT OF THE
FRENCH MISSION, 1851-1852

by

Douglas James Geilman

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GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

THE ETOILE DU DESERET: PORTRAIT OF THE
FRENCH MISSION, 1851-1852

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Religious Education
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One of John Taylor’s most significant achievements during his mission to France, 1849-1851, was the publication of a French-language Latter-day Saint periodical, the Etoile du Désert. Appearing in twelve issues from May 1851 to December 1852, the Etoile served a variety of functions for the earliest missionaries and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in France. A study of its historical context and of its contents allows readers a glimpse into the circumstances under which the missionaries labored and into the needs of the growing Church. Furthermore, the Etoile provides a vivid example of John Taylor’s spiritual leadership, proselytizing methods, and preaching skills.

The French Mission was established in 1850, three years after the arrival of the Latter-day Saints in the Salt Lake Valley and two years after a revolution had removed
the French monarchy from power and instituted a republic. Although civilization was just taking root in the Great Basin, several members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles departed on foreign missions in the fall of 1849, including John Taylor. Elder Taylor, his companion Curtis E. Bolton, and early convert Louis A. Bertrand took advantage of the liberties granted in the French constitution of 1848 in order to inaugurate their publication. The periodical allowed them to spread their message farther than they could have otherwise, since their proselytizing was limited by governmental restrictions and Taylor's difficulties in speaking French.

The contents of the *Etoile du Désert* reveal that the missionaries used their periodical to introduce Latter-day Saint doctrine and news to readers, in addition to communicating with and instructing fledgling members of the Church. Historical details included in the text allow contemporary readers to create a timeline of events in the early French Mission, such as the establishment of a new branch and the publication of the Book of Mormon in French.

This thesis contends that the twelve issues of the *Etoile du Désert* considered together reveal a systematic preaching method in John Taylor's writings, personal and spiritual growth on the part of the men who worked on the publication, and the situation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during its earliest years in France.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In June 1850, John Taylor—Apostle, missionary, writer and editor—dedicated France for the preaching of the gospel and formally organized the French Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By the spring of 1851, Elder Taylor perceived that a Latter-day Saint periodical, written in the French language, would assist the missionaries in presenting their message and provide a medium by which they could communicate with Church members and provide instruction. Consequently, the *Etoile du Deseret*—Star of Deseret—was inaugurated. This work will study the *Etoile du Deseret* by placing it in historical context, presenting its authors, and examining the contents of all twelve issues that were published. With this information, readers gain distinctive insights into the early missionaries’ labors to establish the Church in France from May 1851 to December 1852.

While historians have recounted the key events of John Taylor’s mission to France, no study has provided an in-depth look at the printed materials he produced during that time. This work provides a thorough summary of the *Etoile*’s content so as to make it more accessible to future students and scholars. In addition to providing

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1 Pronounced approximately: eh TWAL doo day zay RETT. Curtis Bolton, John Taylor’s missionary companion to France, frequently referred to the periodical simply as the *Etoile*. For convenience, this work will do the same.

2 Prior to the publication of the *Etoile* in France, John Taylor produced a pamphlet entitled, “Aux Amis de la Vérité Religieuse.” This study will make reference to the tract but will not thoroughly discuss it.
insights into the early history of the French Mission, the *Etoile* contains early original writings of John Taylor. They provide a valuable example of his command of the scriptures, powerful logic, and masterful preaching.

**Methodology and Development**

In order to place the *Etoile du Désert* in context, this study will present two historical settings in its second chapter. First, the chapter will review challenges in the mid-nineteenth century Utah Church that preceded the creation of the French Mission, and second, the political developments in France from its Revolution in the late eighteenth century to the arrival of the Latter-day Saint missionaries. The content of the periodical, including details in creation, publication, and maintenance, reflects the intersection of both histories.

The third chapter will focus on the three men responsible for the creation and the content of the *Etoile du Désert*. John Taylor, his missionary companion Curtis Edwin Bolton, and early French convert Louis Alphonse Bertrand each contributed an integral part to the periodical. A brief summary of their lives and experiences prior to the publication provides valuable insight into the contributions each made.

Chapters four, five, and six present circumstances preceding publication and content of each issue. Each chapter reflects a distinct stage of the *Etoile*’s development. Chapter four contains an analysis of issues one through four. This period established some patterns that would continue through the entire run of the periodical. Chapter five presents issues five, six, and seven. These three editions of the *Etoile* reflect a clarification of editorial purpose under John Taylor’s direct supervision. Finally, chapter
six analyzes issues eight through twelve. These issues were published following John Taylor’s departure from France and reflect the growing difficulty that the French Mission experienced trying to keep the little periodical alive.

Chapter seven will present conclusions about the significance of the *Etoile du Désert* to the French Mission at the time of its publication. It will also discuss the *Etoile’s* importance to students of Latter-day Saint French history.

**Terminology**

This study will frequently refer to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as “Saints.” This usage is consistent with the New Testament concerning living Church members and the common parlance in the nineteenth century Church. Male Latter-day Saint missionaries are called by the title “Elder,” reflective of their ordination and commission to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Consequently, the term “elders” in this work signifies missionaries. “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” will frequently be referred to as “the Church,” and small congregations of the Church are called “branches.” “Deseret” was the name the Latter-day Saints selected for the territory they settled in the Rocky Mountains. Later, a portion of this area was named “Utah.”

**Survey of Materials**

The *Etoile du Désert* is the primary source of information for this study. Copies of this periodical can be found in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections of the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and the Historical Department
Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. For source material, the *Etoile* drew on scriptures from the standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the teachings of Latter-day Saint Apostles and prophets, and other mid-nineteenth century Church publications.

Laying the proper historical background for the *Etoile du Désert* required a significant amount of research in several areas. Information in this work concerning the general history of France from 1789 forward comes from materials written by Maurice Agulhon, Jonathan Beecher, David Coward, François Furet, Ernest Knapton, Robert Tombs, and William H. C. Smith. Facts and figures concerning press laws, journalism, and readers in mid-nineteenth century France come from the research of James Smith Allen, Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz, Ana-Isabel Aliaga-Buchenau, Irene Collins, Robert Darnton, Robert Goldstein, Eugène Hatin, F.W.J. Hemmings, Martyn Lyons, Dean de la Motte, and Jeremy Popkin.

History concerning John Taylor, Curtis Bolton, and Louis Bertrand comes from primary sources, such as correspondence and journal excerpts, and secondary sources including biographical works. John Taylor’s biographers referenced in this study include Francis Gibbons, B. H. Roberts, and Samuel W. Taylor. Information about Curtis Bolton comes from a volume compiled by his descendant, Cleo H. Evans. The various facts about Louis A. Bertrand were compiled in theses written by Gary Ray Chard and Richard D. McClellan. The work of James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David Whittaker furnishes information about John Taylor’s publishing activities while on his mission to the British Isles with the Quorum of the Twelve.
CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: DESERET AND FRANCE

The first missionaries to France had to strike a balance between their proselytizing activities for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and living under the dynamic conditions of the French government in the mid-nineteenth century. This chapter will discuss two different historical settings that influence the Etoile du Désert. The first pertains to the circumstances of the Church, and the second pertains to the political situation in France.

The Genesis of the French Mission

As soon as the Saints established civil and agricultural foundations in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve turned their sights back to missionary fields of labor described as "white already to harvest" (Doctrine and Covenants 4:4). In the fall conference of 1849, John Taylor received the assignment to officially begin missionary work in France, accompanied by Elder Curtis E. Bolton.¹ One missionary from Wales, Elder William Howells, had ventured to the Channel Islands and a few cities on the northern coast of France to seek new converts in 1849; however, his efforts were severely limited by his inability to converse fluently in French.² Howells

¹ Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 October 1849, 1.
welcomed the missionary delegation from Utah with joy when they arrived in the summer of 1850 and France was formally dedicated for the preaching of the gospel.

The explosive missionary success in the British Isles was not duplicated in France. From June 1850, when the country was officially dedicated for the preaching of the gospel, until June 1864, when the French Mission was disbanded, only a few hundred joined the Church. None of the early branches ever became self-sufficient enough to operate without missionary direction, and only a handful of members emigrated to Deseret to join the body of the Church.

Challenges came to the early missionaries from every side, including language, cultural and philosophical barriers, governmental opposition, and religious apathy. In this climate, John Taylor proposed publishing the first French edition of the Book of Mormon and a periodical, the *Etoile du Désert*. In spite of the effort and expense involved, Elder Taylor placed a high priority on making the Latter-day Saint message available in print.

A Difficult Time to Leave: John Taylor and the Latter-day Saints in 1849

A brief survey of John Taylor’s activities from 1847 to 1849 demonstrates that he was pivotal to the growth and development of the Latter-day Saints’ new society in the Great Basin. He first arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley on October 5, 1847. By that time, the earliest settlers had built the first fort and planted crops which they hoped would give them enough food on which to subsist through the winter, as well as providing seed that would lead to the next year's harvest. During the winter season, Elder Taylor worked

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3 The French Mission was not formally re-organized until 1912.
to prepare lumber for the upcoming year's building needs, in addition to preaching to the Saints and providing spiritual leadership.4

Brigham Young arrived back in the Salt Lake Valley in 1848, but the leadership and encouragement of the Quorum of the Twelve was still essential to help members of the Church strengthen their faith and endure the privations of rugged pioneering. Additionally, John Taylor continued to utilize the carpentry and woodworking skills that he had acquired as a young man for the benefit of the common good. He assisted in the construction of an additional fort and other structures, such as the first bridge to span the Jordan River.5

In 1849, as the foundations of society in Salt Lake began to solidify and the provisional state of Deseret was formed, Brigham Young gave Elder Taylor important civic responsibilities. One was to negotiate with General John Wilson, an emissary of the President of the United States, Zachary Taylor. General Wilson's business was to propose to the Mormons that they join their territory with that of California in order to be admitted to the Union as a free state. John Taylor had been heavily involved with the presidential campaign of Joseph Smith, as well as having been the editor of the Nauvoo Neighbor and the Times and Seasons. He was well experienced in communicating the political views of the Church, and as a result, was a logical choice for the assignment of negotiating terms for statehood.6 Furthermore, he became an associate justice of the

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4 B. H. Roberts, The Life of John Taylor (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963), 161-162. (Hereafter cited as Life of John Taylor.)

5 Life of John Taylor, 166.

6 General Wilson was delayed in the Sierra Nevadas by severe snowstorms. He failed to reach California before the other emissary of President Zachary Taylor sailed east to work out California's statehood with the federal government. Consequently, Deseret was not included in the proposal.
Supreme Court of Deseret, along with Heber C. Kimball of the First Presidency and Presiding Bishop Newel K. Whitney.  

As the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency met in the fall of 1849, however, they felt that the time had come to expand missionary labors in Europe. Just as the fruits of their labors to settle the Valley began to show, four members of the Quorum of the Twelve were sent as missionaries to Europe. During the October 1849 General Conference of the Church, Franklin D. Richards was called to preside over the existing European Mission, while the other three missionary Apostles were sent to open new fields of labor: John Taylor was assigned to France, Erastus Snow to Scandinavia, and Lorenzo Snow to Italy.  

Curtis Edwin Bolton, a French-speaking Latter-day Saint ordained to the office of high priest, was called to be Elder Taylor's companion. Only a few short weeks later, they and others, who had accepted missionary and ecclesiastical assignments, were on their way east. The Quorum of the Twelve had previously served missions during periods of difficulty, so this pattern was nothing new. This time, however, John Taylor would be heading to a land where he did not speak the language. Furthermore, freedoms of speech and religion, essential to his English upbringing and subsequent life in Canada and the United States, quickly waned in a country where governments had repeatedly established and repealed civil liberties over the previous fifty years. This missionary assignment would consequently be nothing like those he had undertaken before.

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Critical Timing

Why did the Church leadership send John Taylor to France at that particular time? Certainly, a desire for the spiritual welfare of humanity weighed heavily on those endeavoring to serve as modern Apostles of Jesus Christ. However, other areas of the world, even other countries in Europe, had not yet seen missionaries preach the gospel in their land, nor would they any time soon. So, why France? And why then?

A close look at the societal currents in France beginning with the French Revolution provides some remarkable background information that leads one to the conclusion that the window of opportunity for the establishment of the Church in France was only open for a narrow time period. Maybe those who took part in the beginnings of French missionary work had no idea just how critical the timing of their mission was. From a modern viewpoint, however, we see that there was no time for delay.

A Series of Revolutions: France from 1789 to 1849

From 1789 forward, France's volatile political scene led to a great diversity of national regimes. Unlike America's Revolution in 1776, the French Revolution in 1789 did not produce an enduring government. Nevertheless, the event gave rise to new ideologies that eventually opened the door for the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in France. The various forces that brought about the French Revolution defy any concise summary. Some observations about its causes and impact, however, provide insight into the social climate that the first missionaries encountered.
Historian François Furet notes, “The history of the French Revolution [is] a story of beginnings and so a discourse about identity.”\(^9\) The events of the Revolution actually began with a political crisis in 1787. Prior to that time, the monarchy—and consequently, the State—held power. Furet asserts that after 1787, the kingdom of France was a society without a State. Most significantly, “the Revolution tipped the scales against the State and in favour of society. For the Revolution mobilized society and disarmed the State; it was an exceptional situation, which provided society with a space for development to which it does not normally have access.”\(^10\) From that time forward, power belonged to society. Even though France did return to a monarchy in the early nineteenth century, the monarchy never did regain the absolute authority that it held prior to 1787. The Revolution gave rise to hopes that every man from every class in French society might enjoy greater liberty and opportunity.

Consequently, the events of 1789 were not so much geared toward the destruction of the monarchy as they were to the establishment of citizens’ rights. The Declaration of the Rights of Man, passed by the National Assembly on August 27, 1789, set forth some foundational ideals for a new social structure in France:

Men are born and remain free and equal in rights . . . .
These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

The source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation . . . .

Law is the expression of the general will; all citizens have the right to concur . . . in its formulation.

No man may be accused, arrested, or detained except in cases determined

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\(^10\) Interpreting the French Revolution, 24.
by law . . . No one is to be disquieted because of his opinions, even religious . . . Every citizen may speak, write, and think freely . . .

Such was the ideal, at any rate. For a brief season, these liberties were freely exercised. Soon, however, problems arose, the monarchy was abolished, and the bloody executions for which the French Revolution is known began. Over the ten years following the first Revolution, three successive constitutions failed at the hands of civilian government. When one government fell short in providing necessary elements of stable civilization, a different group would come to power, sending the social pendulum swinging in the opposite direction.

Additionally, the spiritual climate in France diversified through these years. This phenomenon, like the Revolution itself, is too complex to be adequately analyzed in a brief history such as this. However, some information sheds light on the circumstances that confronted the Latter-day Saint missionaries when they arrived in 1850.

Robert Tombs observes:

The Revolution brought about an upheaval in religious life, its most profound social effect. As has been seen, the Revolution itself took on certain religious characteristics, and at its most radical phase attempted to ‘dechristianize’ France. Catholicism ceased to be the State religion; this had the long-term consequence, notes Gibson, of making Catholic practice no longer automatic.

Consequently, the rational thought of the eighteenth century, combined with greater emphasis on individual liberty following the revolution, led to ruptures in the religious fabric of French society. Some of the post-revolutionary regimes were notably

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11 As quoted by Ernest John Knapton in France: An Interpretive History (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971), 277. (Hereafter cited as Interpretive History.)

anti-religion, while others recognized the value of religious faith in promoting morality and social stability.

Napoléon Bonaparte emerged from the chaotic governmental conditions in the ten years following the Revolution. His military successes demonstrated his personal strength and catapulted him onto the political stage. He seized control of the foundering nation and created the first Empire. By 1814, however, Napoléon had fallen from power. His overambition led France to humiliation among European neighbors. As the post-Revolutionary years had been anything but stable, the French were wary of committing the leadership to citizens again. Consequently, France returned to a monarchy.

Two weak kings from the Bourbon line, Louis XVIII and Charles X, ruled in succession over the next sixteen years. The eventual rejection of the Bourbons appears on the surface to be yet another failure to establish a lasting regime. However, historian Robert Tombs claims that this time was crucial to the political development of France. He asserts:

These sixteen years are not merely a dead end: in many ways they were the beginning. In 1814, royalty had been forgotten, the Empire was collapsing, Catholicism was withering, the Revolution was barely a memory, representative government was exotic and unpredictable experiment. By 1830, during this time of relative freedom, the practice of parliamentary politics began, fundamental political lines were drawn and ideologies and myths elaborated: Catholic, anticlerical, liberal, Bonapartist, revolutionary, counter-revolutionary. They were to remain the foundations of French political culture throughout the century.\(^\text{13}\)

Three days of warfare in the streets of Paris ended the reign of Charles X in July of 1830, and the old revolutionary ideas boiled to the surface again. This second revolution proved that the dream of greater personal freedoms was alive and well in the minds of many. Still leery of a full-fledged republic, the French citizenry chose Louis-

\(^{13}\) *France 1814-1914*, 353.
Philippe, Duke of Orléans, as their new king with the proviso that he be a constitutional monarch. His reign came to be known as the "July Monarchy," so named for the month of the revolution that led to the new regime.¹⁴

**The Birth of French Socialism**

During Louis-Philippe's eighteen-year reign, awareness about what would eventually be known as "la question sociale" developed. Due to greater industrialization and education in the years following the first revolution, and more personal freedom under the July Monarchy, the society favoring the wealthy watched the rise of a powerful middle class made up of artisans, merchants, and journalists, among others. Beginning in the 1830's, many of these "bourgeois" of the middle class developed a concern for those living in indigence and squalor. The revolutionary ideals of equality and fraternity that had fomented over a half-century could not be ignored. Maurice Agulhon states, "The general attitude towards 'the people,' whether workers or peasants, was favourable." Furthermore, "within the thinking world, the prevailing atmosphere was humanitarian."¹⁵

Another factor in the development of socialism was the romantic movement of the early- to mid-nineteenth century. Romanticism defies concise definition; however, it can be described broadly as a quest to resolve what one author calls the "crisis of self." The earliest romantic writers "rejected classicism and took their inspiration of the chivalric and Christian values of the medieval troubadours." Later romantics explored extremes of emotion, including impossible love, alienation, and the rejection of social order. Such

¹⁴ *France 1814-1914*, 356.

themes led to “a crisis of belief and directed the search for new value systems and philosophies.”¹⁶ This denunciation of traditional thought became fertile soil in which new ideas about the structure of society could grow.

Utopian theorists influenced French social thought at this time as well. These thinkers traced the beginnings of their movement to the Revolution, claiming that class struggles at the end of the eighteenth century validated their ideas of the need for social equality. Although referred to at times as communists, they might be more correctly called “communalists” and should not be considered as equivalent to twentieth-century communists. Perhaps the most influential of these writers was the Comte Saint-Simon, who developed a theory of society based on “science and a progressive view of history.”¹⁷ David Coward explains:

[Saint-Simon] classed useful citizens as scientists, industrialists/workers, or artists/priests, each with separate functions. They would work by category and ability, unimpeded by notions of either equality or individualism. Improved productivity, secured by state support for social and industrial development, would bring true fraternity.¹⁸

Another utopian who attracted considerable attention was Charles Fourier, who advanced the idea of the “phalansterie,” a community based on science, sociology, and religion.¹⁹ Some of Fourier’s ideas extended into the wildly fantastic, but a number of followers perceived desirable results from a society based the model he proposed.

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¹⁷ History of French Literature, 214.

¹⁸ History of French Literature, 214.

¹⁹ France 1814-1914, 76.
A more practical utopian, Etienne Cabet, came to prominence following the publication of his book, *Voyage to Icaria*, in 1840. He "portrayed a more regimented society: uniform clothing and uniform opinions, people’s courts, vast factories, identical housing blocks, and instead of gastronomy, rations delivered from central kitchens – as history has shown, a more plausible utopia." Furthermore, Cabet enjoyed influence in the realm of mid-nineteenth century political thought through his journal, "*Le Populaire*."

Unquestionably, to state that every "bourgeois" of the middle class and every popular author embraced the movement which came to be known as "socialisme" would be a gross misrepresentation as Agulhon noted that "not all the Romantic writers were inclined to populism or even to political criticism," and "not all republicans were convinced of the need of social change." However, early French socialists succeeded in creating a new and powerful national consciousness.

This early socialism was not Marxist by nature, as Marx was still developing his theory at that exact time. Instead, it was rooted in the idea that "the French Revolution and early industrialization had produced a breakdown of traditional associations and group ties, that individuals were becoming increasingly detached from any kind of corporate structure, and that society as a whole was becoming increasingly fragmented

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20 "Icaria" was the name of his ideal society.

21 *France 1814-1914*, 77.

22 Cabet’s history intersects with that of the Latter-day Saints when the Icarians inhabited Nauvoo, Illinois, after the Saints moved westward. Furthermore, one of the editors of *Le Populaire*, Louis A. Bertrand, became one of the first Latter-day Saint converts in Paris.

23 *The Republican Experiment*, 11.
Those who embraced the socialist ideology felt that all of the classes could meld into one great society without class conflict. Historian Jonathan Beecher asserts, "What they wanted was a society organized around this common good, around the generous impulses of its members and the devotion of the individual to the whole." Remarkably enough, this idea linked the socialists with the Enlightenment philosophers of the previous century. However, their ideas diverged over the issue of religion. Thinkers of the Enlightenment claimed that man had no need for religion, while societal beliefs of the socialists in the romantic age could be traced to New Testament Christianity. The pendulum that swung intellectuals away from religion at the time of the Revolution was now returning to faith in a religious tradition.

Through the years of Louis-Philippe's reign, these socialists advocated their desire to "reconstruct social and intellectual order in a world turned upside down by the Revolution." In this time period, a socialist press achieved prominence, and romantic writers such as George Sand and Victor Hugo incorporated the socialist cause into their writings. Popular culture thus provided a voice for socialist thinkers. Furthermore, Beecher states that this "romantic socialism" merged with elements of the democratic left and "a common credo took shape." Stated briefly, socialist beliefs affirmed that there should be universal (male) suffrage, differences between classes and countries could be


25 Considerant, 2.

26 Considerant, 3.

27 Considerant, 4.

28 Hugo's views evolved into socialism. He was not at the outset a socialist writer. See A History of French Literature, 234.
overcome, and a "peaceful democracy" could be established if only politicians would act in accordance with the "higher" impulses of "the people."  

As Louis-Philippe's reign ended in 1848 with governmental paralysis and popular revolt, a third revolution brought a new republic to power—one that was formed under a shaky alliance between the "bourgeois" middle class and the common worker. Socialists and the republicans, whose ideas had filled newspapers and literature in the previous decade, now received the opportunity to prove their ideas held practical value.

Many socialist writers and republican politicians had long been critical of Louis-Philippe's government, which appeared at times to be more interested in mollifying the middle class in order to maintain power than in representing the best interests of society as a whole. For years, the socialists had been crying out for reforms that would benefit workers. Furthermore, some political activists renounced the cautious road that Louis-Philippe had followed in foreign affairs, seeing his actions as being motivated by a desire to protect property rather than to protect the interests of France. While neither of these groups had anticipated a complete revolution, once it came about, they had no choice but to move forward with their ideas for better government.

The Second Republic

Although many were unhappy with Louis-Philippe's regime, few anticipated that the king would be driven from the throne. William H. C. Smith states, "The Revolution of February 1848 in Paris which toppled the government of Louis-Philippe was as much

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29 Considerant, 4.

30 France 1814-1914, 369.
of a shock to its 'organisers' as it was to those whom it overthrew." Smith goes on to state, "An amalgam of political figures, ranging from former ministers of the fallen regime to socialist-minded republicans, managed to cobble together a programme which it was hoped would pacify the more turbulent elements in society while buying time in which to restore order." In the mean time, restrictions that had been in place since 1835 were "presumed to be abolished." Without any hassle, anyone could establish a newspaper or organize a political club. In Paris, the general mood of the time was one of détente, discussion, and general happiness.

Only a few short months later, political reality had to face the problems of unemployment and unhappiness over taxes levied by the provisional government. The socialists who had felt that their hopes were to be realized in the new government now had to face the general population who no longer supported them. Practical need won out once again over grandiose ideology. However, some reforms that led to the Revolution, such as universal male suffrage, remained in place. Representatives were elected and the legislative assembly formally proclaimed the Second Republic on May 4, 1848.

Paris' social forces inaugurated the change of regime; however, voices far removed from the capital city eventually elected as president Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, nephew of Napoléon I. Napoléon's years of power were remembered by the uneducated as a time of greatness for France. With the vote in the hands of peasants and the educated

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32 *Second Empire and Commune*, 1.

33 *The Republican Experiment*, 38-39.
alike, the country’s political direction changed dramatically. Ideologies that fueled the third revolution now took back seat to the reality that most of France’s citizens wanted certain stability, under any governmental form. Louis-Napoléon was popularly seen by the lower class as the best choice. Under new law, Bonaparte would serve a single, non-renewable four-year term as President of France. However, Louis-Napoléon had no intentions of relinquishing power after four years. From the beginning of his presidency, he engineered the affairs of the French political scene so as to rise to power as his uncle had before him.

Louis-Napoléon’s true motives are greatly debated in historical circles. Some historians consider him to be nothing more than a greedy claimant to a political heritage, while others see him as a lover of France who wanted to restore order. William Smith asserts, "Napoléon III [the title Louis-Napoléon chose for himself as emperor of France] saw his task as quite simple: to heal the divisions in French society, to promote economic and social well-being, and to recover for France her position in Europe. To achieve these ends he was convinced that there must be firm, efficient, and orderly government which would end the convulsions of the last thirty-odd years."34

Despite ambiguity over his motivations, history records his actions. Unfortunately for the earliest Latter-day Saint missionaries, Louis-Napoléon promoted the Catholic Church—at the expense of others—to assist in healing divisions in his society. Consequently, the era when the Latter-day Saint missionaries arrived in France were years of increasing restriction on their proselytizing activities. However, the wonder is that the missionaries were able to be there and proselytize at all. The years of

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34 Second Empire and Commune, 13.
the second Republic were the last chance for missionaries to enter before the years of restriction fully began under the reign of Napoléon III.

Even though romantic socialism was severely thwarted, it had not entirely failed. The tenets of socialism and republicanism were very much a part of the national consciousness at the time the new Republic was organized. Consequently, some conditions that proved to be critical for the establishment of missionary work—such as the ability to print a periodical—were in place at the time that John Taylor and his companions arrived in 1850. Additionally, some men and women were prepared to break free from the traditions that had dominated the political and religious life of France for centuries and embrace the message of the Latter-day Saints.

The Place of Printing and Journalism in French Society from 1789 to 1849

John Taylor's decision to publish a periodical from the beginning of his missionary work on the Continent provides insight into the role that the printed word played in nineteenth-century France. One French press historian has said, "The daily press will always be the most active and powerful method to circulate thought and propagate facts: it is electricity applied to the domain of the mind."35 Another modern writer has observed,

In [the nineteenth century] when transportation and communications were relatively primitive, and when politics was, at least at the beginning of the century, largely an aristocratic monopoly, the press was the backbone of any attempt to organize popular political opposition and one of the few means by which members of the middle and lower classes could affect governments and attain general recognition. It is not surprising, therefore, that major battles over freedom of the press were fought in many European countries during the

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nineteenth century, and that conservative regimes devoted much time and effort to trying to suppress opposition publications, especially those stemming from the working class or with a socialist orientation. In general, representatives of the traditional ruling elements in Europe detested the idea of a free press.36

Typically, those who ruled were more interested in maintaining power than redeeming the oppressed. Since the press was the only mass media of the time, it became a symbol for human rights and the voice of the governed to citizens and government. The free exchange of ideas represented the ultimate liberation of man. For those emerging from centuries-old cycles of poverty and ignorance, such liberty was the only guarantee against the oppressions of the past.

Robert Darnton notes: “Historians generally treat the printed word as a record of what happened instead of as an ingredient in the happening. But the printing press helped shape the events it recorded.” He proceeds to declare that the press carried out the French Revolution, saying:

Imagine a world without telephones, radio, and television, in which the only way to move opinion on a national scale is by movable type. Imagine that world exploding. It fragments in a thousand pieces. A group of men attempt to put together a new order. At every stage in this process, they use the same basic tool: the printing press. Without the press, they can conquer the Bastille, but they cannot overthrow the Old Regime. To seize power they must seize the word and spread it—by journals, almanacs, pamphlets, posters, pictures, song sheets, stationery, board games, ration cards, money, anything that will carry an impression and embed it in the minds of twenty-six million French people. . . . When the revolutionaries grasped the bar of the press and forced the platen down on type locked in its forme, they sent new energy streaming through the body politic. France came to life again, and humanity was amazed.38


38 Revolution in Print, xiii-xiv.
Consequently, to publish one's position and opinion was to enter into the national consciousness with the aim of influencing readers' actions. The press was the only vehicle by which significant social change could be effected.

Although many publications were dedicated to political thought, others dealt with various social and philosophical issues of the day. No better forum existed at the time to discuss religious topics as well. With this understanding, John Taylor's decision to publish may have been because it was the only way to create a presence in the nation for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to influence readers to believe in its doctrines.

At the time of the French Revolution, only 47 percent of men and 27 percent of women in France could read. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, France had achieved almost universal functional literacy. Consequently, the time in which the first Latter-day Saint missionaries arrived in France was one of rapid educational and technological growth. The ability to read was being expanded to groups that had not previously possessed this skill: women, workers, and peasants. Such social change was disconcerting to those who had long been in power. Martyn Lyons asserts: "Together with the prospect of an increase in untutored female reading, it was a source of anxiety for clerics, educators, liberals, and politicians."

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40 *Readers and Society*, 1. Lyons acknowledges that some women and workers had been literate previously; however, they are included in this list because they became a prevalent force in the reading public during this time.

41 *Readers and Society*, 11.
Education was not the only factor to facilitate reading. Ana-Isabel Aliaga-Buchenau observes that the industrial revolution also played a role in increasing literacy. She states,

New inventions facilitated the publishing and printing process. A steam-powered mechanical press (which allowed the printing of 1,000 rather than 150 sheets per hour), the paper making machine, the binding machine, and later in the century the linotype, the photoengraving machine, and new methods of binding allowed for faster and better production of more printed matter than ever before.\(^42\)

Furthermore, the development of gas lighting allowed for reading beyond the daylight hours, furniture and women’s clothes were designed to be more comfortable and functional, thereby allowing greater ease for the reader, and reading glasses became more generally available.\(^43\)

James Smith Allen records that the greatest amount of material published in the early nineteenth century was religious in nature. He reports, “Prayer books, missals, Bibles, and hymnals dominated the output of most provincial printers and some Parisian ones as well.”\(^44\) This appetite for printed religious material may have been one of the most powerful motivations behind John Taylor’s decision to pursue a ministry in print. The previous information hints at demographic considerations: rural readers may have been more likely to be religious. However, the cities were not devoid of believers. Even though French society had removed some of the influence of the Catholic Church from its government, many—perhaps most—still accorded faith a prominent role in their personal lives.


\(^{43}\) *Dangerous Potential of Reading*, 6.

Considered together, these factors indicate why John Taylor felt that the publication of a periodical would be an effective way to present the Latter-day Saint message to the broadest audience possible. Just as the press brought about the political revolution that gave rise to modern France, John Taylor hoped that the introduction of Latter-day Saint publications would carry out a spiritual revolution within the lives of those who read and lead them to join the Latter-day Saints.

Censorship and Control of the Press

Although John Taylor was able to begin publication of the Etoile du Déséret in 1851, the project was increasingly hampered by governmental restriction as Louis-Napoléon grew in power. The limitations that annoyed and threatened the project were the heritage of fifty years of ideological war between the free press and the successive regimes of France. An overview of the battle for the free press following the first Revolution supplies meaningful insights into the missionaries' situation of 1851-1852.

Despite the lofty ideals that were expressed in the Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789, most national regimes in France following the Revolution took pains to curb the influence of the press. The freedom of the press which was proclaimed at the start of the first Revolution in 1789 led almost immediately to the publishing of hundreds of periodicals, among which one might find any conceivable opinion. Not all took on the form of a regular newspaper; some looked more like modern leaflets or flyers. No matter how unorthodox the printed product might have appeared in its final stage, anyone who had an opinion was at liberty to publish it.

45 Interpretive History, 279.
Soon, however, as the nation found such great difficulty in putting its revolutionary ideals to work in a functional, stable government, leaders began to see that an unbridled press could prove to be the undoing of any regime. Liberty was not the cure for all the problems French society had known, for it merely gave the opportunity to express the conflicts between different classes and elements of society. It had become quickly apparent that the appetite for liberty could destroy any government, with many different factions competing to put their ideals at the forefront of public opinion.

As a result, the Directory, the regime covering the years 1795-1799, found it necessary to repeal much of the liberty of the press in order to maintain sovereignty. As Napoléon came to power following the demise of the Directory, he quickly saw that an unfettered press would prove to be his downfall as well. In fact, he is reported to have said at one point, “If I allowed a free press, I would not be in power for another three months.”46 He managed to reduce the number of newspapers in Paris from seventy-two to four and shut down two-thirds of the city’s printshops. The publications that survived the culling were subject to governmental censorship.47

The Bourbon kings who came to the throne following Napoléon’s fall from power continued to control the press through censorship, even though they proclaimed to the French citizens that anyone had the right to express opinions in print. The only caveat to this declaration was that publications had to “conform to the laws that limit the abuse of this freedom.”48 Naturally, such broad legislation led to the government’s being able to


47 War for the Public Mind, 136.

48 War for the Public Mind, 136.
largely control the press. In addition to being subject to governmental review, hefty security deposits were required of publishers to pay the fines for their infractions of press laws. Nonetheless, the publishers and writers continued to assert themselves, perpetually demonstrating their determination to have freedom of expression. Eventually, Charles X authorized a severe crackdown on the press. This action led to popular revolt and the end of his reign. The French citizenry had withstood many trespasses against their liberty, but the silencing of the press took them to their limits of tolerance.

Consequently, as Louis-Philippe came to power, the press was given broad powers of expression once more. And yet again, as dissatisfaction with the government grew, those in power quickly began to limit those powers through censorship and fines. In 1832, the journalist Alexandre Saint-Cheron wrote that “nowhere else have government and press come into such open conflict, because nowhere else has journalism managed to become so completely representative of the entire society.”49 Furthermore, writer Maxime du Camp remarked of this period, “During the French Revolution, one cut journalists’ heads; under Napoleon one silenced them; under the Restoration [of the Bourbon kings] one jailed them; under the July Monarchy one ruined them financially.”50

Ironically, Louis-Philippe’s reign came to an end at the hands of the press. Journalists, typographers, and students protested in the streets; popular opinion turned against the king, and yet another regime fell.

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49 As cited in War for the Public Mind, 142.

50 As cited in War for the Public Mind, 142.
Historian Irene Collins states,

On the whole, the result of the government’s efforts was to anger the press without silencing it . . . . Republican and legitimist papers were finally joined by the popular press in repudiating the regime, and on 24 February 1848 it was Girardin [a newspaper publisher] who went to the [palace] and told Louis-Philippe that there was no alternative but to abdicate the throne.51

Journalists and writers once again enjoyed unlimited freedom of expression as the new government came to power. Although Louis-Napoléon increasingly reined in the press after being elected president, his power was limited by the constitution that the citizen government had written to usher in the Second Republic.

In this very limited window of opportunity created by the abolition of the monarchy and the renewal of freedom of the press, John Taylor and Curtis Bolton inaugurated the publication of the *Etoile du Désert*. They could not have come to France any sooner due to the unsettled conditions of the Latter-day Saints following the death of Joseph Smith and the Church’s subsequent relocation to the mountain desert. However, if they had arrived in France any later, a publication such as the *Etoile* could not have come about due to the political situation of the time.

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A brief biography of John Taylor, Curtis Edwin Bolton, and Louis Alphonse Bertrand reveals individual talents, training, and experiences that enlisted them to the cause of the Latter-day Saints, brought them together in Paris in 1850, and enabled them to join forces to produce a periodical. This chapter will present items from each man’s personal history that prepared him to fill his particular role in the development of the *Etoile du Déséret*.

**John Taylor's Writing and Publishing Background**

By 1850, John Taylor had already acquired years of valuable experience in defending and preaching the gospel in print. His desire to write and publish can be seen as a natural extension of his particular talents and abilities.

He was born November 1, 1808, to James and Agnes Taylor in Milnthorpe, Westmoreland, England. James Taylor was well educated, and saw that his children were as well. Consequently, John Taylor attended school as a boy, apprenticed as a cooper, and later to a turner. Although he was learning a trade, he continued in his personal study and developed writing skills in his later teenage years.¹

¹ *Life of John Taylor*, 6-8.
He also matured spiritually during this time, with strong religious feelings leading him to pray and seek truth. At sixteen, he abandoned his Anglican upbringing and converted to the Methodist faith, becoming a lay preacher one year later. Due to a remarkable spiritual impression during these years, he felt that he would go to America and preach, although he did not know why or how that would occur. When he was twenty, his family emigrated to Canada. Two years later, he followed them, trusting that somehow his impression would be fulfilled.²

He continued preaching in Toronto, although he was increasingly dissatisfied with the discrepancies between organized religion in his day and the primitive Church of the New Testament. This led him to associate with others who sought a faith more closely aligned with what they read in the Bible. These seekers eventually heard the preaching of Parley Pratt, and John Taylor spent three weeks thoroughly investigating the doctrines of “Mormonism.” At length, John Taylor was certain that he had found a belief system in harmony with New Testament Christianity. He and his wife Leonora were baptized as Latter-day Saints on May 9, 1836. Elder Taylor later said that he “never doubted any principle of Mormonism” after that time.³

The Latter-day Saint preachers found many converts in the Toronto area during the summer of 1836. John Taylor was appointed to preside over the branches that were created during that time. By means of a visit to Kirtland, when he defended the Prophet Joseph Smith, and then through Joseph Smith’s visit to Canada in the next year, John Taylor came to be trusted and recognized as an able leader who was loyal to the faith. In

² Life of John Taylor, 9-11.
³ Life of John Taylor, 12-19.
the fall of 1837, John Taylor received word from Joseph Smith that he would be appointed to fill a vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Consequently, the Taylors prepared to leave Canada and join the Saints in Missouri.  

The beginning of his writing and publishing career can be linked to his relationship with the Prophet Joseph Smith and his call to be an Apostle. The same day that John Taylor was ordained a member of the Quorum of the Twelve he was appointed to serve on a special committee responsible for detailing the abuses suffered by the Latter-day Saints in Missouri to the United States Government. This was the first time that he had ever been called upon to use his powers of expression to formally create a journalistic document. While neither of the reports created had any significant effect as far as the Church was concerned, they proved to be very important in the life of Elder Taylor. The experience of researching and writing persuasively provided invaluable training that would help him for years to come.  

The knowledge he gained while composing this first report led to another significant writing assignment. Joseph Smith had been asked by the editor of the St. Louis Gazette to write an article about the Mormon persecutions. The task was delegated to John Taylor, who then spent most of the summer of 1839 "gathering facts and marshaling them into a convincing indictment of the lawlessness and bigotry practiced on the Saints in Missouri." The article never appeared in the Gazette; however, it later became Elder Taylor's first published piece. As he left for his mission to the British Isles

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4 *Life of John Taylor*, 20-29.


6 *John Taylor*, 31.
with the Quorum of the Twelve, he stopped in Springfield, Illinois, and arranged publication of the article in pamphlet form at his own expense. His purpose for publishing the tract was twofold. First, the information contained in the pamphlet defended the cause of the Saints. Second, proceeds from the sale of the pamphlet would lend support to his wife, Leonora, and Phoebe Woodruff while their missionary husbands were abroad.

Its detailed presentation of facts and persuasive tone revealed Elder Taylor to be a competent journalist. He continued writing while on his mission to England, publishing three pamphlets defending the Church while laboring on the Isle of Man. As a result, when the Quorum of the Twelve returned from England more than a year later, Joseph Smith enlisted John Taylor's help as an assistant editor for the *Times and Seasons*. Within months, Joseph promoted him to the position of editor-in-chief and placed the *Wasp*, another Nauvoo paper, under his direction as well. Once in charge, John Taylor quickly renamed the *Wasp* the *Nauvoo Neighbor* and boosted its "readership and readability" with his "erudite, precise literary style." The main body of Saints thereby became acquainted with his testimony, reasoning, and writing during the Nauvoo period. His influence was extended to all who read the publications of the Church. In many ways, his work with the newspapers in Nauvoo established a pattern for what would take place in France within the next decade.

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8 *John Taylor*, 49.
Curtis Edwin Bolton

Like so many of the early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who participated in several of the defining moments of the Church's development in Nauvoo and subsequent move westward, Curtis Bolton's name is largely unknown. Fortunately, his journals were preserved by his posterity and donated to the LDS Library Archives. One descendant, Cleo H. Evans, compiled information about Bolton into one volume. His life was filled with remarkable experiences, one of which was his call to serve in France as John Taylor's missionary companion. Many attributes made Bolton particularly suited for this assignment. He was well-educated, alert to detail, experienced in writing and record keeping, and faithful to the cause of the Latter-day Saints. The events of his life leading up to his mission to France prepared him for the work that he was to accomplish.

Curtis Edwin Bolton was born July 16, 1812, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His father, also named Curtis, was a prosperous businessman who raised his family in New York City. Curtis Sr.'s children, of whom Curtis Edwin was second, received a liberal education.

While Curtis Edwin was in his early twenties, his father sent him to Europe to learn French and German. Perhaps Curtis Bolton studied French prior to going to Europe; but in any case, he gained fluency in the language during his time abroad.

9 Cleo H. Evans, Curtis Edwin Bolton, Pioneer Missionary (Fairfax, Virginia: privately published, 1968). All citations from Bolton's diary come from this source. (Hereafter cited as Evans.)

10 In a brief history of her grandfather that was included in the Evans compilation, Alberta Bolton Astin reports his birth date and place as being July 16, 1810, in New York City. However, Bolton records his own birth date in his journal as being July 16, 1812.

11 Details about this voyage come primarily from a letter book which was kept by his posterity, and secondarily from occasional references to his previous time in France from his missionary journal.
According to his record, Bolton spent the greatest amount of time in France,\textsuperscript{12} but also visited Switzerland and Germany. Furthermore, at least part of the trip concerned business, for he mentioned the Bolton, Fox, and Livingston Company in a letter to his father. In the same letter, he expressed his desire to be home by New Year’s Day, so presumably he was home by early 1835.\textsuperscript{13}

He married Eleanor Post on June 15, 1835. Tragically, Eleanor died two years later and their infant son was raised by Curtis’ father and mother. Due to his grief, Bolton left his father’s business and took up farming “31 miles from New York, on the Jericho Turnpike.”\textsuperscript{14} While living there, Bolton incurred his father’s displeasure when he married a widow, Rebecca Bunker, without gaining his father’s permission. In fact, Bolton’s father had been paying for the farm. Consequently, Curtis and Rebecca were forced to sell the land when his father refused to make the last payment. With the proceeds, they took the money to purchase a more modest property in Little Falls, New Jersey.

Shortly after arriving in New Jersey, Elder John Leech of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to preach in Little Falls. At first Bolton opposed him, being prejudiced by rumors. Shortly, however, Bolton became convinced that the

\textsuperscript{12} Curtis E. Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 43 and 57a.


\textsuperscript{14} Curtis E. Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 2.
missionary’s message was true. Curtis and Rebecca were soon baptized, and Curtis was confirmed a Latter-day Saint and ordained an elder by Addison Everett and John Leech.15

From this time, Curtis began preparing to move his family to Nauvoo to be with the main body of the Saints. In the spring of 1844, he traveled to Nauvoo and met Joseph and Hyrum Smith, staying in Joseph’s home for five weeks. At the conclusion of the visit, Hyrum gave Curtis his patriarchal blessing and ordained him to the office of high priest. This time in Nauvoo with Joseph Smith affected Curtis profoundly. He wrote in his journal,

A few minutes after my ordination I went on board the steamboat “Maid of Iowa” on my return home. The last I saw of Joseph Smith... he was standing with his youngest boy in his arms at the brow of the hill on the west side of the Nauvoo House in the middle of the street. No one was near him. He was the most beautifully formed man, and was laughing pleasantly to the brethren on board the steam boat, who were leaving to go a preaching. I never in this life shall look on his like again.16

Curtis returned to New Jersey, where he actively preached and worked to build up the Church. By the spring of the next year, 1845, Curtis and his family left their farm and moved to be with the Latter-day Saints in Nauvoo. Once in Nauvoo, Curtis worked on the temple as a carpenter. He states in his journal that he “sawed into lengths and marked out for the buzz saw every piece of wood composing the staircase in each tower of the temple from cellar to steeple.”17

Bolton’s precision soon came to the attention of his fellow workers. He reports that he was recommended to the temple timekeeper as an assistant. After completing this

15 September 4, 1842, is listed in the margin of Bolton’s journal entry describing his baptism and ordination. However, it is unclear whether this is the actual baptism date. At any rate, it was approximately the right time according to the general chronology of events. See Evans, 3.

16 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 5.

17 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 6.
work to the satisfaction of his superiors, he was called upon to fill in for a clerk in the tithing office. Subsequently Willard Richards, Church clerk and historian, asked Bolton to assist in recording Church history, an assignment that lasted for several months. Then, in October, Brigham Young requested that Bolton record the minutes for fall conference and prepare them for the publication.¹⁸

In the fall of 1845, Bolton and his wife received their endowment in the Nauvoo Temple and they prepared to leave Nauvoo with the main body of Saints the next spring. Mobs continued to harass the Saints, and Curtis was appointed to be a captain of fifty in the battle of Nauvoo. Due to his role in the conflict, he had to flee Nauvoo and get to the other side of the Mississippi River soon after the battle, leaving his family to come afterwards.

Eventually the Boltons arrived in Council Bluffs with the main body of the Church. While there, Curtis recorded in his journal that Brigham Young and Dr. John Bernhisel came to dine with him on New Year’s Day, 1848.¹⁹

The following summer Curtis and Rebecca Bolton headed west to the Salt Lake Valley, arriving in October of 1848. Shortly thereafter, Curtis was selected to be the clerk of the High Priests’ Quorum over which John Young presided. He was also chosen to be the clerk of the high council.²⁰ His labors in Nauvoo and his close acquaintance with Brigham Young led to constant utilization of his writing and clerical skills. These efforts brought him satisfaction and were accepted with gratitude by the leadership of the

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¹⁸ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 6-7.
¹⁹ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 7-20.
²⁰ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 23.
Church. Unfortunately, he was not as successful in his farming endeavors. He lost his entire crop from the summer of 1849. He plaintively wrote,

Thus on the 1st day of October, I found I had worked all the spring, summer, and fall, and had not earned a dollar. I had devoted my time to my land, living six weeks on greens, and here at the commencement of winter I found myself without a house, or materials to build one, without provisions, and not much clothing. No fodder for the winter, very much disheartened, I moved my family up on my new lot.21

Under these circumstances, during General Conference on Sunday, October 7, 1849, Curtis Bolton received news of his mission call to France. He accepted the assignment with joy; his wife, however, burst into tears. Nevertheless, after a few moments she said, “Go in the name of Israel’s God and prosper and I will take care of myself.”22 One week later, Bolton was set apart as a missionary and left his family for Europe.

Curtis Bolton’s Journal

Another aspect of Curtis Bolton’s life has significant bearing on the story of the Etoile du Désert. As was mentioned in the previous section, Curtis Bolton faithfully kept a journal during significant times of his Church service. Had he not kept a detailed journal of his mission to France, much of the story of the Etoile du Désert would not be available today. John Taylor and Louis Bertrand contributed more or less to the Etoile at various times, while Curtis Bolton’s involvement remained approximately the same from beginning of the project to end. Although John Taylor had the vision of what type of

21 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 24. After the failure of Bolton’s first farm, Brigham Young gave him a new plot of land with better water access that was less likely to freeze early in the fall.

22 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 25.
periodical he wanted to publish, he had very little knowledge of French and was frequently away from Paris on other responsibilities as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. Curtis Bolton handled the day to day affairs of the operation, as he had enough knowledge of French to accomplish preliminary translations of the articles and to secure a printer for the project. He also was the one to deal with the police and the ministers of government who had jurisdiction over proselytizing and publishing affairs. His role was clearly one of being “in the trenches.” Consequently, his journal is the single best source of information for details regarding the *Etoile*.

Certainly, a second source to verify dates and events would be desirable, but John Taylor did not keep much of a record. As B. H. Roberts stated, “The journals of President Taylor were very incomplete, covering only fragments of his life at best. . . .” However, by reading through what John Taylor wrote to Brigham Young and to his family in letters, scholars will find no contradiction of the chronology and descriptions of the same events laid out by Bolton.

There is one other reason why the Bolton diaries may be considered trustworthy: Curtis Bolton was not writing for an audience. They were his personal journals, and the writings in them are candid and honest. They reflect joys and triumphs, but also failures. Bolton did not hesitate to record problems, frustrations, and occasional conflicts between the missionaries, as well as the challenges in every aspect of the work. Because he was writing his spontaneous thoughts rather than what he felt they ought to be, his journals reveal some of his foibles and a great deal of personality. His entry for Thursday, May 29, 1851 is a good example: “At 12 we started to leave Paris by the Havre Rail Road to

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23 *Life of John Taylor*, xvi.
go to London to be present at the general conference. But Elder Taylor who is everlastingly slow and moves as though he had all the eternities ahead, made us miss the cars."

Clearly, Bolton did not write to impress. Rather, he wrote to preserve his memories and express his feelings. For this reason, a reading of his interpretation of events must be tempered with a critical eye. On the other hand, his precise nature and clerical training prepared him to fastidiously record dates, names, and places. All of the factual historical information is invaluable to the preparation of a history such as this thesis. Most of the historical information for the later chapters of this work will come directly from Bolton’s missionary journal.

**Louis Alphonse Bertrand**

In the first months after their arrival in Paris, John Taylor and Curtis Bolton became acquainted with a communalist group known as the Icarians. Led by Etienne Cabet, the Icarians sent a cohort to Nauvoo to establish a utopian society after the Saints vacated it. As a result of their association with the communalists, John Taylor and Curtis Bolton met an intriguing man who eventually became their second convert: Louis Alphonse Bertrand. Years later, in his published work, *Mémoires d’un Mormon*, Bertrand describes his first meeting with the missionaries as follows:

> I was editing the political section of *Le Populaire* [a Parisian communist journal] at the time the first Mormon missionaries came to Paris. It was in the heart of this

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24 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 57.


26 Bertrand’s life is extensively documented by Richard McClellan in “Louis A. Bertrand: One of the Most Singular and Romantic Figures of the Age” (Honors thesis, Brigham Young University, 2000).
magnificent metropolis and in the very offices of that newspaper that they came to see me. From my first meeting with them I was struck by the far reaching importance of the work they were commissioned to introduce in France. My knowledge of English permitted me to initiate myself into the doctrines of the new Church, and I found in their writings and especially in a work entitled *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, by Orson Pratt, the complete demonstrations of the divinity of that work.²⁷

Bertrand was colorful, unusual, and intelligent, not to mention a revolutionary and a communalist. Nevertheless, the events of his life prepared him to become a staunch convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the third associate in the group of men who produced the *Etoile du Désert*.

The name Louis Alphonse Bertrand was merely a pseudonym, one that he took to protect the identity of his family during his years of his political, and later religious, activity. Since he continued with that name through the rest of his life in the Church, this work will refer to him as Bertrand, even though in explaining his history, he noted, “I was born on the 8th of January 1808 at Roguevaire, a small town near Marseilles, in France. My father, Joseph Flandin, a respectable merchant, gave me the names of John, Francis, Elias, Flandin.”²⁸ He was well educated in his youth under the direction of a Catholic priest of some renown, Father Loriquet, as his father felt that he showed promise for “the ecclesiastical profession.”²⁹

He was too restless, however, to settle into the priesthood. Bertrand loved to travel to far-away places. He wrote in a brief personal history, “When only twenty years


²⁸ Louis Alphonse Bertrand to Brigham Young, August 23, 1859, Brigham Young Papers, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In French, his name would be “Jean François Elie Flandin.”

²⁹ *Mémoires*, 5.
old I had already visited all the nooks and crannies of the Mediterranean area.” Even that territory became too confining for him and he eventually located in the Antilles for a while. From there, his interest turned towards North America. He moved to the United States and lived there for seven years, eventually being naturalized as an American citizen. Evidently, he gained fluency in English during this time.

After briefly returning to France in 1842, he was off once again to exotic locations, this time in a four year journey through the Indian Ocean. He stayed for four months in China, and then moved on to the Philippines, where he attempted to make a fortune in Manila through the production of daguerrotypes. Unfortunately, however, he was robbed of nearly all that he owned and was forced to return to France in poverty. Due to this experience, he realized the “folly and futility of human speculations.” Rather than seeking another fortune in distant lands, he returned to France.

“After these far-away travels,” he later wrote, “the love of study kept me in Paris.” At that time the “burning questions raised by socialism” drew his attention. He studied the ideas of a number of radical thinkers, such as Buchez, who was Catholic in orientation, and Cabet, the noted communalist who had proposed the development of “Icaria.” Bertrand declared,

I dreamed of an alliance between the authority of dogma and political liberty, between Catholicism and the revolution. In the world of philosophical ideas, I had finally rallied to the system advocated by Mr. Hoene Wronski, known under the

30 Mémoires, 5.
31 Mémoires, 5.
32 Louis Alphonse Bertrand to Erastus Snow, June 17, 1855, St. Louis Luminary.
33 Mémoires, 6.
34 See page 15 for information on Cabet.
name of Messianism which I then considered to be the highest scientific manifestation of the century.”

He went on to state, “Such was my position when the revolution of 1848, which I had foreseen for some time, tossed me into the ranks of militant democracy.” Curtis Bolton’s journal supplies the detail that Bertrand was also at that time a member of the Revolutionary Committee of 1848. When Louis-Napoléon came to power following the revolution, Bertrand’s opinions landed him in prison for three months. By the time the missionaries arrived in Paris, Bertrand was editing the political section of Cabet’s communist paper, *Le Populaire*.

Bertrand described his conversion in the following manner:

When Mormonism opertunely [sic] offered itself for my investigation I was in the office of the journal *Le Populaire* in the city of Paris. It was there that the Elders of Israel first visited me and bore testimony to me of the restoration of the everlasting gospel . . . . From the first moment I heard the truth I was struck with its important character, and seized [the immense importance] of this great work which is vulgarly called Mormonism. After seriously and attentively examining and studying the merits of the work during three months, I was baptized in the river Seine by Elder John Taylor and soon rejoiced in the blessings of the gospel administered through one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ . . . . I had lived till then absolutely indifferent to any matters of religion—My conversion was sudden, indeed it might be considered instantaneous. By my obedience to the gospel and by prayer I experienced a complete transformation, so that my eyes once blind were opened, and I can truly say that old things passed away and all things became new, so that I soon worshiped the things that I had despised, and on the other hand despised the things I had formerly worshiped.

Bertrand’s extensive knowledge of English served both him and the missionaries well. Bertrand gained a solid conviction of the gospel by being able to understand its

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35 *Mémoires*, 7.

36 *Mémoires*, 7.

37 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 74.

38 Louis Alphonse Bertrand to Erastus Snow, June 17, 1855, *St. Louis Luminary*. 

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doctrines fully, and the missionaries gained an expert translator and writer with a background in publishing.

**Fusion of Abilities and Talents**

Once Bertrand was on board, all of the pieces were in place to be able to publish the *Etoile du Désert*. The men had a number of things in common which contributed to their ability to work together: similar age, faith in the Latter-day Saint cause, and power of expression. However, differences between them created synergistic strength. John Taylor had a depth of faith that came from years as an Apostle. He had been part of the mission of the Quorum of the Twelve to the British Isles, survived his imprisonment in the Carthage Jail, and helped to lead and establish the Saints in the Great Basin. Although he lacked knowledge of the French language, he knew what he wanted to accomplish in France and set out to do it.

Curtis Bolton had the fastidiousness necessary to undertake a project such as John Taylor envisioned. Publishing a periodical in France required dealing with more bureaucracy than John Taylor had ever encountered in his Church assignments elsewhere. Bolton’s careful attention to detail guaranteed that the work would be accomplished. Furthermore, he loved France and its people. He understood the value of what he was doing and persevered in spite of difficulty because he wanted to see the Church established in France.

Louis Bertrand understood the political situation, the press laws, and the attitudes of the French people at the time. He had a “finger on the pulse” of the audience that John
Taylor and Curtis Bolton were trying to reach. Furthermore, his influence in the translation of the articles from English to French gave the *Etoile* legitimacy and polish.

By tracking the contributions of each through the twelve issues of the periodical, one can sense an unfolding of their individual personalities. John Taylor’s writings demonstrate his masterful ability to present and develop a gospel message. Curtis Bolton’s pieces show his personal development from an Apostle’s junior companion into the president of the French Mission. Finally, Bertrand’s contributions reveal the increasing depth of his convictions about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Their lives began in different countries, and each of them joined with the Latter-day Saints at a different time, but eventually these three men came together for a single cause. The *Etoile du Désert* is the enduring evidence of the fusion of their life paths and their talents at that one particular moment in time.
CHAPTER FOUR

BEGINNINGS OF THE WORK AND THE FIRST FOUR ISSUES

The missionaries did not immediately set out to publish a periodical upon their arrival in France. They began proselytizing just as elders usually did at the time—holding meetings, preaching in the street, and debating with ministers from other religious denominations. Despite great efforts, the missionaries in France found only a few who were interested in their message. Consequently, in addition to translating the Book of Mormon into French, John Taylor felt that the missionaries ought to publish their own periodical, the *Etoile du Désert*, to maintain contact with new converts and to interest others in the Church.

This chapter will briefly summarize the missionaries’ efforts in France prior to publishing the *Etoile*. It will also establish the first four issues’ historical context and content. Frequently, the material the missionaries composed or translated for the *Etoile* reflected the activities and situation of the mission, as well as the personality and preferences of whichever missionary had editorial control that particular month. Additionally, information that the missionaries included—or excluded—provides evidence that they were maneuvering to avoid governmental interference with their publication.
Beginnings of Missionary Work in France

John Taylor arrived in Boulogne-sur-Mer, a French city on the English Channel, on June 18, 1850, accompanied by Curtis Bolton and William Howells. Elders Fred Piercy and Arthur Stayner arrived from London on June 25, and then Elder John Pack followed on the evening of June 26. Apparently, this comprised the missionary delegation in its entirety, for John Taylor waited for Elder Pack to join them before dedicating France for the preaching of the gospel. Curtis Bolton's journal entry on June 26, 1850, describes the dedicatory prayer for missionary work in France in the following manner: "Just at dusk we all went out north of town on to the sand beach and stood in a circle and sang and then knelt and Bro. Taylor offered up a prayer for aid, council [sic], wisdom, health, strength . . . and that many may believe and obey the gospel and we be blessed."¹ In the days that followed, John Taylor began his proselytizing efforts. Immediately, he became acquainted with many impediments to sharing the gospel that he could counter, to some degree, through the use of his writing and publishing abilities. Regardless of time period or culture, missionaries are greatly benefited when they can share copies of the Book of Mormon. However, the earliest missionaries to France urgently required these and other publications for two additional reasons. First, the restrictions placed on proselytizing in France were unlike anything Latter-day Saint missionaries had experienced previously in America or Great Britain. Preaching could only be done freely in dedicated church buildings; otherwise, permission for assembly had to be granted by the city’s mayor each time the missionaries desired to hold a

¹ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 39.
meeting. A successful interview with M. S. Fontaine, mayor of Boulogne-sur-Mer, helped Elder Taylor easily establish the framework of these prerequisites as the work began. Regrettably, however, similar efforts would also be required in each new town where the Latter-day Saint elders proposed to preach. Clearly, the missionaries could not rely upon the spoken word to spread their message as much as they had in other fields of labor.

Second, few of the early Latter-day Saint missionaries spoke French sufficiently well. Concerning his own language difficulties after more than eight months in France, John Taylor expressed the following in his March 1851 letter to Brigham Young:

> It is I can assure you no easy task to establish the gospel in a foreign land among a people whose language you do not understand & whose prejudices customs, laws, & religion, are so dissimilar to ours. There is a very natural difference between reading a language & speaking it, & some of our professedly learned men cut but a sorry figure when they come to test their education by practice. Br. Bolton has been of great service to me in this as he speaks the language. Dont laugh when I tell you that I have preached a number of times to French congregations in Paris in their own language, or rather partly so for I can assure you mine is very bungling french.

The other missionaries found themselves hampered by varying degrees of language difficulty as well. William Howells labored in France for a year prior to Elder Taylor's arrival with little success. Concerning his missionary efforts in 1849, Howells reported, "I have not as yet reaped a rich harvest." John Taylor commented on Howells's

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2 John Taylor, 110.
3 Kingdom or Nothing, 147.
5 John Taylor to Brigham Young, March 13, 1851, Brigham Young Collection, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Original spelling preserved.
difficulty a few months later in his letter to the readers of The Millennial Star: "Brother Howell [sic] who has been labouring here, is a faithful good man, and has laboured with indefatigable zeal, yet from want of books, and being but imperfectly acquainted with the language, he has, like ourselves, had many difficulties to contend with." As a result, Elder Taylor stated in the same letter, "We find we are very much embarrassed for the want of books in the French language. I purpose writing some immediately on the first principles of the Gospel, so that we can circulate them among the French." True to his word, shortly thereafter John Taylor prepared his first Latter-day Saint tract to be published in French, entitled "Aux Amis de la Vérité Religieuse" (To Friends of Religious Truth).

Proselytizing in Paris began very slowly. Curtis Bolton spent much of his time beginning the translation of the Book of Mormon, and John Taylor went to England on business at least twice in the fall of 1850. However, the missionaries must have publicized their presence for Bolton records in his journal that he had visits from people inquiring about Latter-day Saint doctrines. Although most of them rejected Bolton’s message, he does record that he had a visit from “4 ‘Icarians’ . . . 2 of them editors of their newspaper.” Most likely, Louis Alphonse Bertrand was one of them.

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7 John Taylor, "Letter to the Editor," Millennial Star, September 1, 1850, 270.
8 John Taylor, "Letter to the Editor," Millennial Star, September 1, 1850, 270.
9 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 44.
10 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 44. The pamphlet which had been published was possibly the source of the publicity.
11 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 44.
Bolton records that on November 14, 1850, John Taylor announced that the time had come to actively proselytize, although clearly the missionaries had taught anyone willing to listen to their message prior to this time.\textsuperscript{12} Apparently, Elder Taylor and Elder Bolton did not preach in the same social circles. Taylor’s remarks given in the Salt Lake Tabernacle on August 22, 1852, concerning his mission to Europe indicate that he had associations with educated men in Paris.\textsuperscript{13} His language difficulties would have required him to form acquaintances with those versed in English in order to freely communicate.

While Curtis Bolton was capable of conversing in French and had also been well-educated, his journal indicates that his efforts were largely focused on those humble enough to receive the message he brought. Incidentally, the men and women who sought baptism generally came from those Bolton taught. In the time since his arrival in Paris, Bolton had taught six people, all of whom were baptized on Sunday, December 1. A branch was officially organized the next week, and the missionaries were in good spirits at their success. However, the work progressed slowly from there. More were baptized, but clearly the results of their preaching were paltry compared to the early days of preaching in the British Isles. Furthermore, governmental restrictions were increasing. Undoubtedly John Taylor had carefully considered his options and decided that something different needed to be done.

\textbf{Background to the First Issue}

Up until this time, the missionaries had distributed their single French-language tract. Now, Elder Taylor desired to publish more than tracts. He wanted to establish a

\textsuperscript{12} Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 44.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Journal of Discourses}, 1:27.
full-fledged periodical. He described this objective to Brigham Young in the previously mentioned letter: "I purpose on my return [to France] to publish a paper to be issued monthly. I shall forward them to you, & shall be pleased to exchange with the Deseret News . . . . I purpose calling it 'L'Etoile de l'Occident' (The Star of the West)." There is no indication why John Taylor later adapted the name to the Etoile du Désert, although the new name does tie in more clearly with the periodical’s purpose.

A periodical would remedy the challenges that the missionaries faced to some degree. First, printed material had the potential to spread the message of the gospel farther and faster than missionaries could, due to the restrictions which Louis-Napoléon's government had imposed on preaching activities. Second, with the help of able translators, John Taylor and the other missionaries could present powerful gospel messages in print—using flawless French—whereas few of them could accomplish such a feat in public discourse. Consequently, in the spring of 1851, Elder Taylor and Curtis Bolton turned their attention to the publication of the Etoile du Désert.

The First Issue: May 1851

Curtis Bolton’s journal entry for Monday, May 19, mentions that he is in the process of selecting a printer for the Etoile. The next week, he records that he has hired Marc Ducloux for the job, and that copies of the material to be printed have been submitted. On Thursday, May 29, he reports, “This day the ‘Etoile du Désert’ . . . was published and sent to our room. Sent copies every where to our friends.”

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14 John Taylor to Brigham Young, March 13, 1851, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

15 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 57.
Clearly, the first issue’s content was the work of John Taylor. He penned five articles, and composed an introduction to the translation of a letter which had appeared in the *New York Tribune* three months earlier. The front page of the first issue serves as an introduction of the periodical and effectively outlines its diverse purposes. John Taylor writes:

A while ago I had the opportunity to publish an abridged recitation of the origin, progress, establishment, persecutions, faith, and doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I intended to publish another similar work giving more particulars of our doctrine, our organization, and our current position. But, after reflection, and after coming to agreement with my friends, I thought that it would be preferable, for the accomplishment of my purposes, for this work to take the form of a collection [of articles]. Consequently, we will put forth a journal similar to this one from time to time which will not only accomplish the goal which I had originally intended, but will also give news that we are currently receiving from the Great Salt Lake Valley, in the State of Deseret.  

Elder Taylor then explains the purpose of starting a new publication by stating that there are few French publications on Latter-day Saint doctrine, and that Latter-day Saints are scarcely known in France as it is. His goal, consequently, is to remedy both defects. Elder Taylor also declares his intention of printing articles that have already appeared in other contemporary Latter-day Saint journals, including *The Deseret News*, *The Frontier Guardian*, and *The Millennial Star*.

In addition to informing non-Latter-day Saint readers about the existence of the Church and the peculiarities of its doctrines, Elder Taylor proposes to use the *Etoile* as a method of communication with the Saints. He declares: "Our publication will also have
the advantage of giving instruction and consolation to our brothers in Italy, Switzerland, and the French-speaking Channel Islands, in addition to our brothers in France."  

Sensitive to the precarious tightrope which the Church must walk in regard to the French government, Elder Taylor concludes his introductory piece with the following statement: "We have no need to say that we are and that we desire to remain entirely aloof from all political affairs and issues of this country, for our religion requires that we obey, without reservation, all laws, ordinances, and police regulations of each country in which we dwell."  

As a means of opening the door to gospel discussion, Elder Taylor frequently tried to stimulate an intellectual curiosity about the Latter-day Saints. Information on the settlement of the American West and the accomplishments of the Latter-day Saint pioneers often piqued the interest of those with whom the missionaries came in contact more readily than a discussion of gospel principles. Concerning this fact, he attested:

The sacrifices that are being made, in leaving home, and travelling from place to place, combating and overcoming the many difficulties that we have had to cope with, and standing in a distinguished position in the eyes of the nations of the earth, are no small affair. They gaze with astonishment at the stand that this people take at the present time in their territorial capacity; to that all the nations and courts of Europe are looking. Talk about preaching; this is a matter of another importance entirely. I do not care how eloquent men are—these are all good in their place—but it is in the organization in this place; the wise policy of the Governor who presides here, in the extension of this infant state, by building up new colonies, &c.; making such extensive improvements that preach louder among the courts of Europe, at the present time.  

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20 *Journal of Discourses*, 1:19.
Consequently, Elder Taylor occasionally included materials in the *Etoile* concerning the settlement of the American West and the Salt Lake Valley. One article of the May 1851 issue falls into this category. Entitled, "Extract of a Letter Published in the New York Times of 5 February 1851," this piece extols the virtues of the Latter-day Saints and the fruits of their industry in settling the Salt Lake Valley.21

In addition to the purposes already outlined in the introductory article, John Taylor intended to use the periodical to battle the indifferent attitude in French society toward religion. He described the French people of that time as being generally "gay, careless, and volatile."22 According to Elder Taylor's report, some in the upper levels of French society were infatuated with philosophy, a remnant of the glorification of reason at the time of the French Revolution.23 However, Elder Taylor felt that their philosophy was more of a game of words and ideas than a serious attempt to acquire and understand truth. He later expressed his contempt for it by relating the following experience:

Speaking of philosophy, I must tell another little story, for I was almost buried up in it while I was in Paris. I was walking about one day in the *Jardin des Plantes*—a splendid garden. There they had a sort of exceedingly light cake; it was so thin and light that you could blow it away, and you could eat all day of it, and never be satisfied. Somebody asked me what the name of that was. I said, I don't know the proper name, but in the absence of one, I can give it a name—I will call it philosophy, or fried froth, [whichever] you like.24

Elder Taylor took careful aim at counterfeit philosophy in the first issue of the *Etoile*. Attempting to help members of the Church identify erroneous thinking, he contrasted the philosophies of men with the philosophy of God in his article, "To the

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21 Author unknown, "Extrait d'une lettre," *Etoile*, May 1851, 14-16.
23 *Journal of Discourses*, 1:27.
24 *Journal of Discourses*, 1:27.
Elders and the Saints in France, Switzerland, Italy, and the Channel Islands." His carefully chosen words are clear, logical, direct, and unapologetic:

Speaking philosophically, what can bring the greatest happiness to mankind? Intelligence, virtue, purity, unity, and brotherhood. And why is the world, in this unhappy time, in a lowered state, corrupted and disorderly? It is due to the absence of pure principles of the true philosophy, of the absence of a philosophy and an intelligence that gives knowledge of heaven and earth. For the works of God, on earth or in heaven, temporal or spiritual, are all governed and led according to the exact principles of a philosophy, the philosophy of God manifested in the heavens and on the earth. If man has arrived at false conclusions concerning God's actions, it is due to the absence of the knowledge of God and His laws that one can only obtain in its fulness by revelation. . . .

Philosophers have examined man, the earth, and the works of the creation to find a true system. They have all had their day. They have introduced many good principles, but when it comes to the improvement of the world, there, they have failed. Their systems, no matter how good some of them may have been, are far from reaching the desired goal: "They have been weighed in the balance, and have been found wanting." We believe in all true principles of philosophy, and moreover, we seek to associate them with God's wisdom. They [philosophers] seek wisdom from the earth and from the works of God; we seek them from His works, and also from God Himself, their author.  

More than any other type of article, however, John Taylor contributed doctrinal expositions to the Etoile. These articles address an educated audience familiar with biblical Christianity and popular philosophies. In a logical, precise manner, Elder Taylor leads his readers step by step from the intellectual and religious attitudes of the day to an understanding of Latter-day Saint beliefs.

Each of John Taylor's doctrinal articles is individually a complete statement. Considered as a collective whole, however, they reveal a carefully planned doctrinal development. In the first issue, he begins with an article introducing readers to the Book of Mormon. Subsequent articles sequentially expose readers to doctrines of Church organization, modern revelation, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and man's potential.

to receive an inheritance with God in the celestial kingdom. Consequently, Elder Taylor shapes his articles in the *Etoile* into a gospel primer, a resource to which investigators and new members of the Church can turn in order to progress solidly in gospel understanding.

The first of these articles, "On the Book of Mormon," clearly addresses a public unfamiliar with this volume of scripture. He opens his treatise by presenting scholarly discoveries that indicate Hebrew influences found in Native American artifacts, including scrolls containing quotations from the Old Testament. Elder Taylor continues the introductory segment by pointing out Israelite traditions among the American Indians, as well as among certain peoples in Mexico. He affirms, "according to the Book of Mormon, there were truly Israelites, Christians, and pagans in Ancient America."²⁶

The next doctrinal article also appears in the first issue. Entitled, "On the Organization of the Church," it outlines the structure of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by describing every priesthood office from prophet down to deacon. After recounting each position in detail, Elder Taylor states: "We declare that the fear and the love of God are the foundation of all of our actions, spiritual as well as temporal."²⁷ Further emphasizing that the love of God is the only incentive for Latter-day Saint priesthood service in the Church, John Taylor includes the following chart:

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²⁶ John Taylor, "*Du Livre de Mormon,*" *Etoile,* May 1851, 4.

The expenditures of the administration of the Church are as follows:

The President of the Church and his two counselors receive
for their services . . . . . . . . . . Fr [French Francs] 0 00
The twelve Apostles, and the members of the high council . . . Fr 0 00
The Seventy, High Priests, Bishops, Elders, Priests,
Teachers, and Deacons . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Fr 0 00

Total Fr 0 00

Author Samuel Taylor contends that the newspapers in Nauvoo occasionally contained subtle touches of Elder Taylor's wry humor. The preceding chart offers evidence of the same in France.

**History Reflected in the Text of the First Issue**

As was discussed in the first chapter, one of the ways that the French government kept periodicals under control was censorship. One method of avoiding censorship was to have a publication appear at irregular intervals.

John Taylor’s comment in the introductory article saying that “...we will put forth a journal similar to this one from time to time,” may have been an outright declaration to the government that the *Etoile* was not going to be a regular periodical, thereby clearing it of censorship obligations.

**Background and Setting of the Second Issue**

As proselytizing came under increasing restriction, Bolton’s work for the *Etoile* allowed him to still remain active as a missionary. Three weeks prior to the publication of

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29 Kingdom or Nothing, 85-86.

30 Government and Newspaper Press, 10,17.

the second issue, Curtis Bolton mentioned in his journal that he spent a considerable amount of time preparing content for the *Etoile*. In his entry for Sunday, June 15, 1851, he remarked that after returning home from his work on the Book of Mormon, he “[busied] himself writing translating and preparing articles for the next number of the *Etoile*.”

Bolton’s July 7 journal entry contains the news that he had received the second issue of the *Etoile* from the printer. Without Bolton’s journal to provide chronology, a reader would be inclined to believe that the *Etoile* was published every month for a year. However, the month printed on the back cover seems to be more for chronological reference than for the actual date of publication. Discrepancies between publication dates reported by Bolton and printed dates became even more pronounced in later months.

The journal entry for July 7 also reveals that Louis Bertrand was becoming more involved with the publication of the *Etoile* by volunteering to come every night and revise the translated articles. Even though Curtis Bolton spoke French satisfactorily, he still required help to produce pieces for the press that were grammatically correct. The missionaries had engaged a Mr. Auge to check Bolton’s grammar after Bolton had translated passages of scripture or articles for the *Etoile*, however, the quality of the work still needed some help as Auge spoke French but not English and could not verify the original meaning. Louis Bertrand provided the solution. Bolton described Bertrand as being "eminently capable" of this work.

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32 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 59.
33 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 60.
34 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 60.
The Second Issue: June 1851

The content of the second issue was more of a collaborative effort between John Taylor, Curtis Bolton, and Louis Bertrand. Elder Taylor’s contribution comes in the form of a continuation of his article “On the Book of Mormon,” which began in the first issue. This introduced a pattern which would continue through all twelve issues of the Etoile: serial installment. Elder Taylor may have decided to use this technique for a number of reasons. First, serial installments were previously employed in at least one Church periodical. The first volume of the Times and Seasons included several sections of an article entitled, “A History, of the Persecution, of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter Day Saints in Missouri.” Later, when John Taylor became editor of the Times and Seasons, many more articles, including Joseph Smith’s history, were serialized. Clearly, he was partial to the method.

Second, serialization was a well-known marketing technique in French newspapers of the time. Over the previous fifteen years, many publications had maintained and attracted readers by serializing a fictional novel on the front page. Although Elder Taylor’s article was clearly not fictional, the employment of such a technique indicates an awareness of contemporary style. He may have been trying to create a “hook” for readers to continue studying the publication.

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35 Actual date of publication: 7 July 1851


Third, some of the articles were very lengthy. John Taylor may have chosen to break them up in order to present a variety of materials in each issue instead of one long article. And fourth, serialization may have been the solution when the missionaries wanted to present a lengthy discussion of a topic but were unable to complete their writing in time to publish the next issue. In one particular instance, Elder Taylor failed to complete one of his articles before departing from France, leaving Curtis Bolton to pick up the slack by finishing the last two installments. Whatever the reason, the Etoile’s articles appeared in installments through its last issue.

The second of three installments of “On the Book of Mormon” builds on the theme of ancient Israelite settlement on the American continent. After a brief discussion of ancient American ruins, Elder Taylor states: “These facts are more than enough to reveal the existence of one or more nations infinitely superior in intelligence and civilization to the current natives of this continent.” He then asks if one could find proof that those advanced civilizations were part of the lost tribes, and replies that the Book of Mormon alone offers evidence that indeed they were.

The next article in the issue is entitled, “The Voice of Joseph.” This is the lengthiest article in the Etoile, extending over seven issues. It is attributed to Alphonse

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Dupont. Careful study of the available information reveals that Bertrand, no stranger to employing a pseudonym, was the author. The first clue to the identity of "Dupont" is that no biographical information on anyone with the name Alphonse Dupont appears in any available Latter-day Saint source contemporary to the time. The next clue comes from information readers gain about Dupont from the introductory paragraphs of "The Voice of Joseph," wherein he states,

I have traveled the world, I have sought to resolve many problems, I have studied the utopias of the day, I have read thousands of volumes: the truth, like a fugitive shadow, constantly escaped my searching. . . . God, the beginning and the end of all things, taking pity on my distress, shone a luminous ray of his intelligence upon me. The torch of revelation suddenly lighted my mind with its ineffable clarity. I received baptism by water and by fire. I am a believer and I have faith.

A few months ago, I encountered on my path some virtuous, uncomplicated, candid men, coming from America, at the base of the Rocky Mountains. . . .

He goes on to say that these men explained to him how the primitive Church had been restored through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Dupont replied to them that a restoration of the primitive Church must include the gifts of the Spirit, as well as divine authority. At this point, the men from America gave to him a number of religious works published in English, including a brochure by Orson Pratt bearing the


40 Curtis Bolton's diary faithfully lists the names of those taught and baptized by the early missionaries in Paris. The name "Alphonse Dupont" is curiously absent, particularly since he would have had to work closely with Bolton in order to contribute to the Etoile.

title: "Divine Authority, or Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?" Dupont explains at this point that his article, "The Voice of Joseph," is largely a translation of this work.

From what the reader has gleaned thus far, Alphonse Dupont is a baptized member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and has been for several months by June 1851. Additionally, Dupont speaks both French and English, has traveled the world, has studied utopian societies, and particularly enjoys the works of Orson Pratt. By comparing this history with what we know of the other early French converts, we see clearly that Alphonse Dupont was a pen name for Louis Alphonse Bertrand.

Another significant fact confirms this conclusion. Curtis Bolton records in his journal on Monday, November 15, 1852, that he persuaded Bertrand to sell the rights to his translation of Orson Pratt's "Divine Authority" to the Church. Bolton immediately went to the printer and "ordered it stereotyped." The printing of this pamphlet, with Elder L. A. Bertrand listed as the author, contains the same content as the serial article entitled "The Voice of Joseph" attributed to Alphonse Dupont.

This presents the question: Why did Louis Bertrand write under a pen name?

Gary Ray Chard sheds light on this curiosity by stating:

Bertrand was a very talented person. . . . He had led a very colorful life, and during the disquieting period of French history leading up to the revolution of 1848, he had been very active in the revolutionary intrigue and had risen to the leadership of the Revolutionary Party of Red Republicans. With the outbreak of

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42 Orson Pratt, "Divine Authority, or Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?" (pamphlet, 1848).


44 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 117.

the Revolution of 1848, he was chosen as a member of the Revolution Committee. When the uprising failed, his political activity landed him in prison for three months [see Bolton diary, December 22, 1851]. It was upon his release from prison that he associated himself with the communist newspaper *LE POPULAIRE*, owned by a well known French communist, Etienne Cabet. While occupying this position he was contacted by John Taylor and Curtis Bolton, and after three months he was baptized. 46

Evidently, Bertrand was a marked man in the eyes of Louis-Napoléon’s government. Bertrand tried to distance himself from his activist past as his testimony grew and his political views became less extreme. However, Louis-Napoléon’s regime treated any opposing viewpoint as a threat. The government watched Bertrand with a wary eye, since he had already served three months in prison. Using a pen name seems to have been Bertrand’s attempt to employ his writing talents and participate in the work of the gospel without attracting undue governmental opposition.

The pen name Alphonse Dupont appears consistently in the first six issues of the *Etoile*. Following that time, it only appears in the credits for the serial installments of "The Voice of Joseph." Apparently, Bertrand became more comfortable using his publicly known name sometime during the fall of 1851, for that is when it first appears in the bylines of the *Etoile*.

With the identity of “Dupont” clearly established, Bertrand’s role in the publication of the *Etoile* becomes clearer. “The Voice of Joseph,” a translation of Orson Pratt’s “Divine Authority,” was his most extensive offering to the *Etoile* under his pen name.

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After the brief biographical introduction that Bertrand added to Pratt’s text, the main thesis of the article is set forth: the author will prove that Joseph Smith was in fact called of God. Proof 1: The doctrine of the Latter-day Saints is infallible, according to the scriptures. If Joseph Smith had taught false doctrine, then he would have to be rejected as a false prophet. However, Dupont (Bertrand/Pratt) challenges any person to try to prove that any of Joseph’s doctrine in flawed by appeal to scripture. Proof 2: A true prophet would have to receive his message from an angel, as John the Revelator prophesied (see Revelation 14:6-7). Swedenborg, Wesley, and many other modern reformers made no claims of angelic visitation. Among founders of religious movements, only Joseph Smith had declared that the everlasting gospel had been declared to him by an angel. The last line of this article states emphatically, “Here is presumptive evidence that [Joseph Smith] was sent from God.”

The third article in the June 1851 issue comes from Curtis Bolton. Entitled “Conference in London,” this piece sets forth the proceedings of the General Conference of the European Mission which took place in London on Sunday, June 1. Bolton is clearly in his element with this piece. His love of detail shines through as he describes the number of people present, the joy of seeing other missionaries from the Salt Lake Valley, the items of business voted upon, and the dispersal of the American elders to nine different chapels throughout the city where even more Saints were assembled for an evening meeting.


Bolton also details a celebration which was hosted by the London Branch the next day, a sizeable gathering in the Freemasons’ Hotel on Great Queen Street. He describes an elaborate procession, singing, and several discourses about the rise and progress of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, taking care to note that 24 young women and 24 young men served refreshments to the audience during regular intervals. Although reading pieces such as this can be tedious, Bolton’s facts create a very clear picture of what took place, thereby giving the article great historical value.

The concluding article is entitled, “Great Salt Lake City.”49 “A. Dupont” translated this work from a protestant periodical, *The Western Christian Advocate*. It describes the features of the developing city of the Latter-day Saints, along with some of physical characteristics of the region, such as the sulfur hot springs to the north of town, the fertility of the soil, and the remarkably pure mountain air. Bertrand concludes the piece with a brief commentary that the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, that “in the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . and all nations shall flow unto it” (see Isaiah 2:2).

**History Reflected in the Text of the Second Issue**

The text of the second issue demonstrates that the publication of the *Etoile* was really a juggling act between the missionaries and Louis Bertrand. Even though primary responsibility for the *Etoile* had been placed upon Elder Taylor at the London Conference of June 1851,50 his travels and various responsibilities frequently limited what he was

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50 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 58.
able to contribute to the periodical. Logic alone indicates that if John Taylor had been in Paris, he would have been the major contributor to the second issue as well as the first. As a missionary, he had been greatly hampered by his inability to preach and reason in French. With the publication of the Etoile, he finally had a pulpit, so to speak. With his natural tendencies to write and publish, no other activity in Paris would have held more appeal for him.

Details from Curtis Bolton’s journal support this conclusion. The June 6 entry previously referred to also mentions that John Taylor would be remaining in England for a period after the conference, and then going on to Germany. Consequently, the responsibility to sustain the periodical transferred to Curtis Bolton for a season. Naturally, he turned to Louis Bertrand for technical support and contributions.

**Background and Setting of the Third Issue**

Shortly after the publication of the second issue of the Etoile, Curtis Bolton received word from the Minister of the Interior and the Commissioner of Police (*préfet de police*) that the missionaries’ request to be officially recognized as a church and to be able to legally preach in Paris and throughout France had been denied. This was a blow to their hopes for the mission, and placed even greater importance upon the publication of the Book of Mormon and the Etoile.\textsuperscript{51}

To Bolton’s discouragement, another governmental issue complicated the production of the Etoile at the moment. Apparently, the missionaries had not previously classified their publication as a periodical. However, press monitors must have become

\textsuperscript{51} Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 60. See also: Curtis Edwin Bolton to John Taylor, July 14, 1851, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
aware of the consistent nature of the *Etoile* by this time. The third issue was kept from
the press until August 12, when Curtis Bolton decided to pay the extra amount to have
the sheets of paper stamped by the government prior to printing, a process to which all
periodicals were required to submit.\(^{52}\)

Very little time had elapsed after the publication of the second issue before Bolton
was ready to submit the copy for the third issue. The reason for this is clearly the arrival
of the Fifth General Epistle from the First Presidency of the Church. A letter from Curtis
Bolton to John Taylor (who was in Liverpool) dated June 20, 1851, states:

I passed an hour last evening with Dr. Clark he sends his respects to you – I hear
thru him that the “General Epistle” has arrived here from the Valley, he saw it
yesterday in the *Herald*. Please send me a complete copy of the whole of it as
soon as you can get it. I do not want to have to wait for the Star / I will have it
published in two Paris Journals . . . . I am preparing articles for the next paper
*Etoile du Deseret*.\(^{53}\)

No further mention is made of the plans to have other newspapers publish the
Epistle. Not surprisingly, then, the content of the third issue was primarily devoted to a
translation of Brigham Young’s annual message.

**The Third Issue: July 1851**\(^{54}\)

Brigham Young’s letter, dated April 1851, speaks to Church membership
everywhere throughout the world, describing accomplishments of the Latter-day Saints in
Deseret over the last several months. The first several paragraphs summarize the spiritual
state of the world, emphasizing that conditions of war and disharmony among men

\(^{52}\) Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 61.

\(^{53}\) Curtis Edwin Bolton to John Taylor, June 20, 1851, Historical Department Archives, The
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

\(^{54}\) Actual date of publication: August 1851
indicate the approach of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. However, he reminds the Saints that no man knows when that event will take place. As a consequence, he shifts to matters of practical importance to the Church.

Primarily, Brigham Young tells of the great preparations that the Deseret Saints are making for those emigrating from foreign countries. He speaks of several grain mills and saw mills which have been constructed, and mentions that there has been significant production of proper shingles to roof houses. He indicates, however, that Saints desiring to use those shingles should remember to bring their own nails, as nails are in short supply. Brigham Young also invites those who intend to gather that year to bring planting and harvesting machines, cotton, iron wire in order to make animal enclosures, and books for the Deseret Library.

In an attempt to discourage Saints from being tainted with "gold fever," President Young deliberately points out that Elders Amasa Lyman and Charles Rich had recently returned from Northern California. In company with them were more than sixty men who had sought their fortunes in the gold mines, but were obliged to come home with very little to show for their labors. In fact, many of them had to borrow money to make the return trip. Other men were forced to remain in California because they could not come up with means to make the journey.

The rest of Brigham Young’s epistle contains miscellaneous news items about the growth of the Church in the west. President Young speaks of the establishment of a colony in Iron County under the supervision of Elder G. A. Smith, the election of Jedediah M. Grant as mayor of Salt Lake City, the authorization for the establishment of a railroad from the mountains to the temple site for transportation of construction
materials, and the establishment of ecclesiastical units in Weber, Davis, and Utah counties. Furthermore, he speaks of the hope that a chain of Latter-day Saint settlements will be established from Salt Lake to Southern California to make headquarters more accessible, even during the winter months. Additionally, he speaks of schools that remained in session through the previous winter and of the appropriation of funds for a library.

To conclude, President Young appeals for contributions to the Perpetual Emigration Fund and entreats all Saints to gather to Deseret. Returning to the theme of the Second Coming which opened the letter, he reminds the Church that most of the Apostles are abroad, seeking those who will respond to the message of the gospel before the time that the earth is purified in preparation for the advent of Jesus Christ.\(^5\)

The rest of the third issue is devoted to the conclusion of John Taylor’s article about the Book of Mormon. Bringing his argument from intellectual, scholarly materials referenced in previous installments, John Taylor now shifts to scriptural evidence for the validity of the Book of Mormon. Elder Taylor outlines the concluding point of his treatise:

As we have already made several citations taken from the information related to us by diverse travelers in America, who have given us the description of the ruins, the manners, and the customs of this people, travelers, some of whom have supposed that the current Indians were descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel, we will now show that the Holy Scriptures positively speak of such a land and such a people: of this same group of people that the Book of Mormon speaks of, not as being of the lost ten tribes, as writers have supposed, but as being the descendants of Joseph, son of Jacob. Not only do the scriptures mention such a people, but they also say that this people must have records, that these records

must be one day reunited with the Bible to corroborate their testimony, and that these records must come forth to men in the last days for the accomplishment of God's purposes.\textsuperscript{56}

He then lists a number of peculiar blessings promised to Joseph's family by Abraham and Moses, and demonstrates their fulfillment in the Book of Mormon. For example, after citing Genesis 48:16, which states, “Let them [Ephraim and Manasseh] grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth,” John Taylor asks those who read whether Joseph’s posterity ever became a multitude in Canaan or anywhere else on the Asian continent. He affirms that they never did. By contrast, however, he points to the scholarship which has been cited in the previous two installments of this article and says that there is abundant evidence that a nation with Hebrew origins truly did exist on the American continent.

Furthermore, John Taylor points out that Joseph’s family was to possess a land even greater than that promised to Abraham, and that Moses proclaimed that the lands upon which Joseph’s family would settle would be greatly blessed with the “precious things of heaven,” with “fruits brought forth by the sun,” with “precious things from the everlasting hills,” and with “the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof” (see Deuteronomy 33:13-16). John Taylor extols the richness and fertility of the Americas as being the fulfillment of this blessing. He also cites a prophecy of Hosea about the tribe of Ephraim, which states, “They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west” (see Hosea 11:10).

Next, Elder Taylor demonstrates how Joseph’s descendants gather in the west, live in a rich and blessed land, and receive the word of the Lord. He cites Ezekiel 37:15-17, which explains that in the latter days the stick of Joseph would be joined with the

\textsuperscript{56} John Taylor, "Du Livre de Mormon," Etoile, July 1851, 43.
stick of Judah, and that they would become one in the hand of those who read them. He declares that the stick of Judah is the Bible, and that the stick of Joseph must of necessity be the Book of Mormon.

John Taylor then gives a brief recitation of the events of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, citing scriptures that prophesy of those same events, such as Psalm 85:11, which declares that truth must come forth out of the earth, and Isaiah 29:18-19, which states, “And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”

To summarize and draw all of his assertions together, Elder Taylor states,

Of all that has previously been stated, we must conclude that at the time of the coming forth of this book, a great work must begin and be accomplished on the earth, that the Lord must reveal an abundance of peace and truth, give new revelations, dissipate error, restore the house of Israel to its own lands, and prepare a people for the Second Coming of the Messiah. . . . Let us observe, before finishing this article, that the situation of these people on the American continent, the testimony of many historians about their habits and customs, the scriptural prophecies concerning their land and their writings, the coming forth of these writings and the object of their coming forth, are assuredly proofs as strong, rational, and conclusive as any other circumstance of which we are aware. 57

This article serves as an excellent example of John Taylor’s ability to skillfully marshal facts into a persuasive presentation. His preliminary discussions of artifacts and ruins in the first two installments served to stimulate curiosity about the west, one of his favorite themes to draw European listeners into discussion. However, he never abandoned his purpose to declare gospel truths. Elder Taylor’s use of the intellectual curiosity of his readers as a door to bring them to a spiritual conclusion demonstrates his powerful intellect as well as finely honed reasoning and preaching skills.

History Reflected in the Text of the Third Issue

The text of the third issue reveals little about the governmental situation in France. However, Bolton’s choice of materials clearly communicates that the *Etoile* was the channel of communication by which Church members and those investigating the Church received pronouncements from the president of the Church. The *Etoile* plainly served as a transmitter of the prophet’s voice in the French language.

The back page of the third issue also communicates something new: three bookstores in Paris were willing to sell the missionaries’ publication. Naturally, Marc Ducloux, their printer, offered copies for sale at his bookshop. The other booksellers were Trouvé, of 14, rue Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, and Gabriel, of 2, passage du Saumon.

Background and Setting of the Fourth Issue

John Taylor remained abroad throughout the rest of the summer of 1851. During those months, Curtis Bolton was in Paris single-handedly managing the affairs of the French mission. His journal entries note a few baptisms, and a developing friendship with their printer, Marc Ducloux. By Monday, September 8, Bolton submitted the first 50 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript to be printed and copy for another issue of the *Etoile*.

By this time, however, Bolton felt considerable strain due to financial issues. Apparently, John Taylor had been primarily responsible for acquiring funds for the activities of the French Mission. In his absence, Bolton was unable to raise enough funds to live on. He wrote,
I have not heard a word from Elder Taylor since the 10 July although I have written to him 3 or 4 times very urgently for money, that the work might not have to cease for the want of means, for after writing so often and receiving no answer I had concluded it was because he was coming himself soon.58

Bolton submitted copy for another issue of the Etoile on September 8, assuming that funds were on the way with Elder Taylor. This decision proved to be erroneous, as Elder Taylor did not return. Bolton went on to say:

Now although the printer says nothing yet he acts as though he is afraid to trust me which in my utterly helpless condition cuts me to the hearts core. The Etoile is printed and he retains it, and presented me his bill last Monday. And what pains me the most is that I have to go and see him every morning on account of reading and correcting proof sheets for the Book of Mormon.59

One week later, John Taylor sent Bolton 125 francs, 100 of which went to Ducloux, thereby freeing the Etoile for the missionaries to distribute. However, the Church still owed Ducloux 42 more francs. Fortunately, John Taylor and Franklin Richards arrived shortly afterwards in Paris and paid the bill in full. Apparently their friendship with the printer was restored, as Bolton and Taylor dined with Ducloux on September 24.60

The Fourth Issue: August 185161

Since John Taylor had been absent from Paris, the content of the fourth issue was selected by Curtis Bolton. Just as the first issue reflects Taylor’s personality, the content

58 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 65.
59 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 65.
60 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 66.
61 Actual date of publication: September 1851.
of this issue reflects Bolton’s interests, priorities, and character. The cover article proclaims: “Discovery of Ancient Ruins in Northern California.” “A. Dupont” is listed as the translator of this piece. Bertrand briefly states in a preface:

The extreme importance of ruins which have recently been discovered in California compel us to put the principal passages of the correspondence of a traveler, author of this discovery, before the eyes of our readers. This correspondence was published in its entirety by the *New York Herald*.  

The content of this article was summarized by Bertrand himself a few years later in his book, *Mémoires d’un Mormon*. He said:

> Among the latest discoveries, we must mention those made by an American traveler, about eleven years ago, at the merging point of the Gila and Colorado rivers, in New Mexico. These discoveries are of the utmost importance but, through lack of publicity, are practically unknown in Europe. Published in the *New York Herald* and translated by us in *L’Etoile du Désert*, the account of the explorer puts the said ruins among the most remarkable American antiquities. Huge pyramids, temples, obelisks, columns, marble tables, etc., precious monuments, all more or less covered with glyphic characters, there is an almost inexhaustible field of study of European antiquaries. The great pyramid of Cheops is said to be child’s play compared to the principal monument of the valley Nahua. The vandalism of Spanish “conquistadores” has destroyed archeological treasures of immeasurable wealth in Mexico and Peru. Sooner or later the unexplored forests of Brazil will reveal other antiquities just as important. These discoveries, when made, will be so many silent but eloquent testimonies of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

No further translation of the article will be given in this work, even though the article continues in serial installment over the next two issues. Bertrand’s summary of the tediously detailed (and somewhat exaggerated) piece is sufficient. It is hardly surprising that acting editor Bolton felt compelled to include the piece, as it is consistent

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63 *Mémoires*, 42-43.
with his personal taste and the purposes for the *Etoile* as outlined by Elder Taylor in the first issue.

The second article in the fourth issue, entitled “Summary of News Received from Deseret,” contains extracts from the *Deseret News* on a variety of subjects. The first section in the article reports proceedings from General Conference held April 6, 1851, in Salt Lake City, including the vote to begin construction on the Salt Lake Temple. The section also contains brief summaries of remarks from Jedediah M. Grant, E. T. Benson, and H. C. Kimball at conference. Their topics included, respectively, the settlement of Iron County in Central Utah, the payment of tithing so that the temple can be constructed, and the need for each member of the Church to carry out their individual duties.

The next section of this article reports a message from Governor Brigham Young to the legislature of Deseret. He remarks that even though federal sanction of their territory has not yet formally arrived, they expect acceptance shortly so the legislature should proceed to establish a territorial government.

The third section quotes a letter to the editor of the *Deseret News*. This letter speaks of spiritual progress that has been made in the author’s area of Salt Lake City, with Church members attending meetings faithfully and developing a greater spirit of love and fraternity among themselves.

The last installment of information translated from the *Deseret News* includes a letter from George A. Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles describing the abundant natural resources in Iron County, where a group of Saints has recently settled. He describes their efforts to establish a county government and states that they have

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64 Various authors, “Résumé des nouvelles reçues du Déséret,” *Etoile*, August 1851.
petitioned the government of Deseret to build a railroad from Salt Lake City to San Diego, passing through Iron County, so that the resources of that location might be more accessible to the main body of the Latter-day Saints.

An excerpt from the *Millennial Star* immediately following this article provides the reason Curtis Bolton included each of these news items. The unidentified author states:

Knowing how much the Saints of all the different countries of Europe are desirous to hear of the prosperity of the Stakes of Zion in the territory of Deseret, we include here, as we have done in weeks previously, the most important and interesting news items which have come to us.

The attentive reader can only be vividly struck by the ardent zeal that is exhibited here in the founding of new cities, as well as the talents and the means which are employed to cause young colonies with a bright future to flourish and prosper. The diligence and the rapidity which cause the undertaking and the accomplishment of these Herculean tasks indicates in our brothers a spirit which desires to hasten this enterprise, and loudly announces how great is the power of the God of Israel, which rests upon us.  

Next, Bolton pens an item of historical interest. He informs the Saints that there will be no immigrant departure from Liverpool on September 1, 1851, as the Presidency in the British Isles is seeking a new route for immigrants to sail to San Diego and then to journey to Deseret by traveling east, rather than making the overland trek west from Council Bluffs.

Bolton next prefaces an essay about a 24th of July celebration held on the Isle of Jersey from Elder John Hyde, Jr., expressing that the Saints "have joyous souls, filled with gratitude toward the Savior, filled with love, unity, and charity" because of the gospel. He concludes:

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We say, then, to the Saints: Continue to follow the way of justice and holiness. May prudence be your guide, do not forget for one instant who you are, and that you have the hope of eternal life. Watch and pray to be delivered from all evil. Be charitable, just, and pure. Seek wisdom from heaven, avoid even the appearance of evil, and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph will bless you. You will be prospered, and you will be gathered again in his fold. Amen.67

This brief piece reflects a turning point in Bolton’s publishing ministry. Prior to this time, his contributions had been mostly translations of works by others, in addition to a few messages he wrote detailing the growth of the Church and other information intended to build testimony. At this point, however, he assumed the role of a spiritual leader offering counsel, testimony, and blessings.

Two factors can be seen as possible causes for this shift in Bolton’s role. First, John Taylor had been away from Paris since May, leaving Curtis Bolton to manage French missionary efforts in Paris.68 Undoubtedly Bolton had grown spiritually from shouldering such responsibilities. Second, increasing governmental restrictions had been placed on preaching in France. Bolton wrote to Brigham Young,

Government has positively forbid me from preaching in public any where in France. But our little ‘Etoile or Star of Deseret Newspaper’ is finding its way slowly among the people. The work is almost at a stand in Paris, people are afraid to come to our Sunday and Wednesday evening meeting in my own room, for fear of imprisonment.69

Consequently, it seems that Bolton’s writing focus changed out of necessity. With little opportunity to testify in person to members or those investigating the Church, his desire to preach found its outlet in the Etoile.

67 Curtis E. Bolton, untitled contribution, Etoile, August 1851, 60.
68 Curtis Edwin Bolton to Brigham Young, August 30, 1851, Brigham Young Papers, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
69 Curtis Edwin Bolton to Brigham Young, August 30, 1851.
The fourth issue of the *Etoile* concludes with an original hymn text, penned by "A. Dupont." Entitled, "Le Déséret," this is the first of a number of Louis Bertrand’s hymn texts published in the *Etoile.* The selection of this particular piece indicates deliberate thematic development in the issue, as so much of the content was dedicated to the gathering of the Latter-day Saints to Deseret.

(*Chœur*)
Saints-des-derniers-jours,
Quittons nos séjours,
Fuyons de Babylone.
Voici la saison,
Allons à Sion
Gagner la céleste couronne.

(*Chorus*)
(Saints of the latter days,
Let us leave our dwellings behind,
Let us flee from Babylon.
This is the season,
Let us go to Zion
To win the celestial crown.)

1.
Au Déséret, climat lointain,
Des baptisés terre promise,
Sur les bords fleuris du Jourdain,
Allons affermir notre Eglise.
    Saints-des, etc.

(In Deseret, far-away climate,
Promised land of those baptized,
On the flowering banks of the Jordan,
Let us affirm our faith [church].
    Saints of the, etc.)

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70 A. Dupont, "Le Déséret,” *Etoile*, August 1851, 64.
2.
Salut, salut, sol d’Ephraîm,
Tes bois, tes lacs, tes vastes plaines,
Par nous transformés en jardin,
Seront à jamais nos domaines.
   Saints-des, etc.

(Greetings, greetings, ground of Ephraim,
Your woods, your lakes, your vast plains
Transformed by us into a garden
Will forever be our domain.
   Saints of the, etc.)

3.
Du salut le signe éclatant
Flotte au sommet de tes montagnes,
Drapeau sacré de l’Occident,
Tu vas féconder nos campagnes.
   Saints-des, etc.

(The radiant sign of salvation
Waves on the summit of your mountains,
Sacred banner of the West,
You will make our countryside fertile.
   Saints of the, etc.)

4.
Fils de Bréannus, vaillants gaulois,
Héros fameux dans cent mêlées,
Venez vous ranger sous nos lois,
Venez envahir nos valées.
   Saints-des, etc.

(Sons of Bréannus, valiant Gauls,
Famous heroes of a hundred battles,
Come settle yourselves beneath our laws,
Come to invade our valleys.
   Saints of the, etc.)

5.
Là, le travail est en honneur,
Loin des soucis et des entraves;
Là, le sol est au travailleur,
Plus de tyrans et plus d’esclaves!
   Saints-des, etc.
(There, the work is honorable,  
Far from worries and from hindrances;  
There, the ground belongs to the worker.  
No more tyrants and no more slaves!  
Saints of the, etc.)

6.  
Remède unique à tous nos maux:  
Français, embarquons nos familles,  
De nos sabres forgeons des faux,  
Et de nos mousquets des faucilles.  
Saints-des, etc.

(The only remedy for all of our problems:  
Frenchmen, let us remove our families,  
Let us forge scythes from our swords  
And sickles from our muskets.  
Saints of the, etc.)

7.  
Belle oasis, séjour des Saints,  
Nous irons tous, sous tes ombrages,  
Couler en paix des jours sereins,  
A l'abri de tous les orages.  
Saints-des, etc.

(Beautiful oasis, home of the Saints,  
We will all go, beneath your shade,  
To peacefully spend serene days  
Sheltered from all storms.  
Saints of the, etc.)

8.  
Dieu! Si nous sommes tes élus,  
Si par l'Esprit tu nous appelles,  
Si tu nous sauvas par Jésus,  
Rends-nous de plus en plus fidèles.  
Saints-des, etc.

(Our God! If we are thine elect,  
If by the Spirit thou dost call us,  
If thou hast saved us through Jesus,  
Make us more and more faithful.  
Saints of the, etc.)
History Reflected in the Text of the Fourth Issue

The cover of the fourth issue has a date listed below the masthead—“19 September 1851.” This forthright action indicates that Curtis Bolton and Marc Ducloux, the printer, were no longer trying to side-step the classification of the Etoile as a periodical. The government had begun requiring that they pay the periodical tax on sheets of unprinted paper regardless of their efforts to resist periodical status and censorship. Consequently, no reason remained to avoid printing the actual press date.

On the back cover, however, the month of publication is still listed as August 1851 in keeping with the Etoile’s established order.

The First Four Issues Considered Together

Up to this point, the missionaries had faithfully implemented John Taylor’s declaration that the Etoile would be a “collection” of articles. They had included doctrinal expositions, news from the Salt Lake Valley, and information about Church

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71 See page 50.
activities in Europe. A reader who carefully read the first four issues would have at least some ideological and social understanding of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

No conclusive answer presents itself for one critical question: who read the first four issues? Curtis Bolton left only a few clues as to the circulation of the *Etoile* in his journal. First, copies of the first issue were sent to their “friends.” Then, Bolton mentions that he immediately sent 200 copies of the second issue to Jersey, where the largest branch of the Church in the mission was located. No comment is given about the third and fourth issues being sent anywhere in particular, although it may be assumed that Bolton sent copies to those who had previously received issues.

An additional clue emerges about the *Etoile*’s readership. Bolton mentioned to Brigham Young that “. . . our little *Etoile* or *Star of Deseret Newspaper* is finding its way slowly among the people,” suggesting that the *Etoile* was available to at least some of the general public.

The most logical way for such circulation to occur was the submission to local *cabinets de lecture*, or reading rooms.

Historian F. W. J. Hemmings states,

The *cabinets de lecture* were a feature of the French scene that rarely failed to astonish visitors from abroad. In Paris alone, a conservative estimate gives 96 in 1835, rising to 155 in 1845; they were to be found in all parts of the city, with the biggest concentrations in the university quarter and around the Palais-Royal. Outside the capital, no municipality of any importance would be without one. . . .

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72 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 57.

73 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 60.

74 Curtis Edwin Bolton to Brigham Young, August 30, 1851.
In return for a small entrance charge (normally 30 centimes) clients could stay and read the books and newspapers of their choice for as long as they wished: opening hours extended from 7 or 8 a.m. to 10 or 11 p.m.\textsuperscript{75}

Additionally, author Maria Adamowicz-Hariasz numbered 209 \textit{cabinets de lecture} in 1850 in Paris alone.\textsuperscript{76} Referring to the influence that the \textit{cabinets de lecture} had on the social and intellectual climate in Lyon (a major city in east central France) in the 1830's, historian Jeremy Popkin states, “Within the cafés and \textit{cabinets de lecture}, newspaper reading had developed into a ritualized practice through which readers defined and affirmed their political identities.”\textsuperscript{77} Most likely this was still true twenty years later, as the number of reading rooms increased.

While no conclusive proof indicates that the \textit{Etoile} was submitted to these reading rooms, Louis Bertrand was very familiar with such methods for newspaper circulation, as he continued as a political editor for \textit{Le Populaire}, the leading Parisian communist periodical. He could advise John Taylor and Curtis Bolton on how to create a readership for their publication functioning within the nation’s current press laws.

\textsuperscript{75} F. W. J. Hemmings, \textit{Culture and Society in France 1789-1848} (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987), 244.


CHAPTER FIVE

OBJECTIVES REDEFINED: ISSUES FIVE THROUGH SEVEN

This chapter addresses the three issues published between October and December 1851. John Taylor had been absent from France on occasion over the summer of 1851, leaving Curtis Bolton to manage the affairs of the *Etoile*. When Elder Taylor returned to France that fall, he re-defined the periodical’s purpose and consequently shaped its personality for the remaining eight issues.

Elder Taylor originally indicated that the missionaries would include news items from the Salt Lake Valley in the *Etoile*. However, issues five, six, and seven provide ample evidence that his greatest desire was to teach doctrine. Informational bits from the Salt Lake Valley such as Bolton included in the third and fourth editions of the *Etoile* no longer appear. Instead, readers learn more about the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, missionary work, and the first principles and ordinances of the gospel.

Background to the Fifth through Seventh Issues

The publication dates for issues five, six, and seven cannot be identified because Curtis Bolton did not record them in his journal. Consequently, these issues will be grouped together for historical background and information. Evidence from Bolton’s journal places them between October and December 1851.
John Taylor returned from his summer journeys September 22, 1851, ready to resume his editorial work with the *Etoile*. He had previously completed for publication a number of doctrinal articles which Bolton had not yet included in the periodical.  

Presumably, Elder Taylor concluded a few other articles during his month-long stay in Paris. It appears that these contributions removed some of the burden of preparing the *Etoile* from Bolton’s shoulders. Other matters kept the missionaries busy, however, and after a month of collaboration on ecclesiastical concerns and publication activities, John Taylor could see that Curtis Bolton needed a change of scenery. Bolton’s journal entry for October 25 states,

> Since many months past, the spirit has been unceasingly whispering to me to go to Havre, that there was a work there to be begun. But having been incessantly over head and ears in business in Paris, I could not find time to leave. But finally the Lord’s hand is upon me. The tribulations and privations of the past 2 or 3 months have been heavy upon me (destroying my health and peace of mind) so that Elder Taylor and Richards saw a cessation of toil and change of scene necessary to my existence. Elder Taylor has also wanted some one to go to Havre for some time back.

Consequently, Bolton was sent to visit the Saints at the port city of Le Havre. While there, he was to proselytize and strengthen the branch. He remained in Le Havre for three weeks, baptizing and confirming at least twelve new converts. Renewed in spirit, he returned to Paris on Thursday, November 13, 1851.

Shortly before Bolton went to Le Havre, John Taylor left again for Germany. Elder Taylor would only briefly return to Paris before concluding his mission and returning to the Salt Lake Valley. However, the work he accomplished in Paris during the fall of 1851 was sufficient to provide doctrinal material for the *Etoile* through to the last

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2 Curtis Edwin Bolton as cited in *Evans*, 68.
issue. It is significant to note that the fifth issue’s articles are contributions from John Taylor and Louis Bertrand. None of the entries come from Curtis Bolton.

Other events at this time provided some relief to Bolton as well. First, upon returning from Le Hâvre, he learned that the Minister of the Interior and the Prefect of Police who had denied Latter-day Saints preaching privileges had been removed from their positions. Consequently, he had renewed hope that he would be able to openly preach. Second, Louis Bertrand lost his editorship at *Le Populaire* because his political opinions had begun to differ from what they had been previously. This afforded Bertrand the opportunity to work with Bolton full time in the translation of the Book of Mormon and document preparation for the *Etoile*. Bolton’s November 18 journal entry included the following:

Mr. Auge [the translating assistant] came at 10. Bro. Bertrand came in a few minutes after and said with tears in his eyes that Cabet had turned him out of his office and that he was without resources. My joy was extreme, for I knew that as long as he remained in the newspaper office (communist), government would be enimical to us. But he looked only on the dark side of the picture, and saw nothing but starvation staring him in the face. I then went to Mr. Auge and told him the circumstances and that it would be my wish to let Elder Bertrand finish the Book of Mormon. He instantly saw the propriety of it and bid me adieu for a while, with strong expressions of lasting esteeme and friendship. This affair is glorious for the church as it removes Bro. Bertrand from his present political associations and from politics of which he is full, full. And now as he will devote his whole time to the church, his mind will naturally be drawn towards the things of God. He never would have been worth anything to the Church in 20 years if he had not been withdrawn from the political influences that surrounded him. All is well.³

³ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 71-72, original spelling preserved.
Bolton recorded the following day, "Elder Bertrand came at ½ past 8 A.M. and we went to work preparing for the press and on my translation of the Book of Mormon. I hope his ardor will continue. He is an elegant writer, fast."4

Unfortunately for the missionaries, on December 2, 1851, the political climate of France was upset once more. The president of the nation, Louis-Napoléon, led troops into the National Assembly and drove out all of the representatives. This act was the beginning of yet another change of regime in the French government, with Louis-Napoléon defying the newly written constitution and appealing to the French people to support him in the action. On the same day, Curtis Bolton recorded in his journal:

'Troups are pouring into Paris in every direction. There was danger for Bro. Bertrand for he was some years ago one of the head men of the revolutionary party but he has seen the utter folly of their principles more than a year ago. He had been chosen by the people as a member of the revolutionary committee and was a marked man. He was imprisoned 3 months in 1848, merely for his opinions. On account of his safety we concluded to leave Paris for a day or two, which we did at 4 o’clock. Fighting had commenced in Paris.5

Fighting had ceased by the end of the week. Louis-Napoléon had maintained his power for the moment by promising a popular vote to ratify or disapprove his actions. The missionaries worked quickly to prepare themselves for any possible outcome from the elections. John Taylor returned from Germany to hold a conference in Paris on December 20, the same day as the national elections. Despite government prohibitions of assembly, Elder Taylor proceeded with his plans, calling together only priesthood leaders

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4 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 72.
5 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 74, original spelling preserved.
for a day of counsel and training. During this meeting, Curtis Bolton was sustained as president of the French Mission, and Louis Bertrand was ordained a high priest and sustained as Bolton’s first counselor. Elder Taylor then left Paris the next day, heading to England via Le Havre and the Channel Islands.

The Fifth Issue: September 1851

A continuation of Bertrand’s translation of “Discovery of Ancient Ruins in Northern California” headlines the front page of the fifth issue. Following this piece, John Taylor inaugurates a new doctrinal article, entitled “On the Necessity of New Revelations.” This article would appear over seven installments.

To justify the need for a new Church as described in his previous doctrinal article, “On the Organization of the Church,” Elder Taylor refers readers to the pamphlet “To Friends of Religious Truth,” published at the beginning of his ministry in Paris. He reminds readers that in the pamphlet he mentioned the discovery of ancient records, the ministering of angels, and the organization of a new Church which conforms to the model of the primitive Church and enjoys all of the gifts of the Spirit. He also asks readers to recall that he spoke of the power of God being manifest to the children of men, and that the message of this new Church needed to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

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6 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 76. B. H. Roberts claims that there were four hundred in attendance at the conference (see Life of John Taylor, 200.) However, Bolton’s account is much more plausible, as the political situation was precarious and the missionaries had been unable to hold meetings with more than twenty in attendance during the previous months.

John Taylor acknowledges the challenge to accept such a message: “I know that an announcement of this sort is of the nature to produce astonishment among men, that it is contrary to their customs and opinions, and that it tends, at first, to give birth to doubt and unbelief.” Nonetheless, he reminds readers that the scriptures admonish believers to “prove all things and to hold fast to that which is good.”

He recalls Christopher Columbus, who was ridiculed for asserting that the world was round, and Copernicus, who claimed that the earth revolved around the sun. Speaking of these men, Elder Taylor says, “In order to be accepted, they had to combat the ignorance of scholars who opinionatedly held on to ideas received and used from long before, as well as those who, instead of employing reason, resorted to scorn and sarcasm.”

After establishing that scientists advancing new truth typically endured persecution, John Taylor calls attention to prophets who received the same treatment. Noah was ridiculed until the day the rains came upon the earth; Moses was rejected by Pharaoh and even at times by the children of Israel: and Jesus himself was crucified. Elder Taylor summarizes: “Men have been generally hostile to any message coming from God. . . . That which has been previously stated [in this article] teaches us the necessity of not judging any work without seriously investigating it, so as to not reveal ourselves as fighting against God.”

After challenging his readers to study out his claims, he clearly summarizes the main idea of this article:

We find in our day a great number of doctors and professors of Christianity who claim that we no longer need revelation, that the canon of scripture is full, and who immediately reject even the mention of new revelation. I ask these people to think carefully and to examine if it is not possible that they are in error. Is the
Christianity that they profess a true representation of the pure gospel established by our Lord? Are their progress and their influence proportional to that which existed anciently? Show me the beauty, the harmony, the unity, the brotherly love, and the power that attended the primitive church. Where are the development of spiritual gifts and the manifestations of the Spirit of God? Where is the spirit of prophecy, the gift of healing, the visions, and the revelations that were anciently the inheritance of the Saints? . . .

To make all of these things real, to uncover all mystery, to conquer all doubt, and to dissipate the thick darkness that covers the face of the earth, to reassemble and make permanent the union of the people of the Lord, to affirm the kingdom of God, and for the accomplishment of the prophecies, I will show that we absolutely must have new revelation, and without it, the Scriptures that we already have could not be fulfilled.

He argues that existing scriptures are merely new revelations from God to that era, duly recorded. He reminds readers that true prophecy has never come of human will, but from righteous men prompted by the Holy Ghost (see 2 Peter 1:21). Furthermore, some prophets such as Adam, Enoch, Abraham, and Moses received instruction directly from the Lord and even conversed with him. At this point, the *Etoile* indicates that the article will continue in the next issue.

A second letter bearing the title "To the Elders and Saints throughout France, Switzerland, Italy, and the Channel Islands" next appears in the fifth issue of the *Etoile*. Acknowledging that business in England and elsewhere has kept him from contributing to the periodical in recent months as much as he would have liked, John Taylor pledges, "I will try to arrange my affairs in such a way that I might constantly communicate something to the *Etoile.""9

His concern seems to stem from the content of the fourth issue, which was published in his absence. Curtis Bolton had included many items that were forwarded

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from the *Deseret News* and the Salt Lake Valley, just as Elder Taylor anticipated they would do.10 In this second general letter to the Saints of the French mission, Elder Taylor affirms that Bolton made no mistake in his selection of material. However, Elder Taylor added, "My greatest wish is to place, from time to time, before the eyes of our readers, the doctrines and the principles of the Church, so as to give to the Saints instruction and complete comprehension of their position as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."11

While this does not constitute a drastic editorial shift in the magazine, it does show the reader John Taylor's persistent and compelling desire to preach and expound doctrine. Curtis Bolton seems to have acted in concert with the Apostle's newly focused desires from this point forward, for none of the following issues of the *Etoile* contain nearly as much news material as the fourth did.

After expressing his desires concerning the future content of the periodical, John Taylor reminds the Latter-day Saints of their responsibility to carry the message of the gospel throughout the world, even as governments and churches fail, and societies suffer in the commotion. He affirms,

> We must not believe that we come with our own message or our own ideas, no, we come with the word of God, with principles of eternal truth. . . . These principles were given by the administration of holy angels, by the heavens which have been opened, by the revelations of Jesus Christ and the manifestations of the power of God. . . . Let us act as saviors of men.12

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He counsels the elders to avoid preaching about the mysteries of the kingdom of
God, but rather to declare the first principles and ordinances of the gospel—faith in the
Lord, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the
gift of the Holy Ghost. After encouraging all members to be engaged in the service of
God, Elder Taylor states, “By the principles that God has revealed to us, a man may
develop his mind, increase his faculties, and know his true position before God, men, and
the world.” Elder Taylor then declares that a group of such men would be prepared for
the coming of the Savior.

The fourth item in the fifth issue is another installment of Bertrand’s “Voice of
Joseph.” Bertrand (relaying the words of Orson Pratt) begins this section of the article by
presenting his third proof of the divine calling of Joseph Smith. He declares that new
revelation and the restoration of the eternal gospel would be of no benefit to the nations
of the earth without someone having received the authority to preach it and administer its
ordinances. He asks, “In what manner was Joseph Smith ordained to the apostleship,
since the angel Moroni had not the authority to confer it upon him?” Elder Pratt responds
by declaring that Peter, James, and John came to Joseph Smith and laid hands upon his
head to confer the necessary authority. He further states that if Joseph Smith had claimed
the authority of the apostleship solely through the manifestation of the Holy Ghost,
without having had the laying on of hands, the world could dismiss Smith’s claim that he
was called by God. Orson Pratt asks, “Is not this more presumptive evidence of [Joseph
Smith’s] divine mission?”13

Elder Pratt’s fourth argument for the divinity of Joseph Smith’s mission is that the Prophet declared that he had received the authority to gather together Saints from all nations. If this declaration is false, Elder Pratt admits Joseph Smith could be rejected; however, Elder Pratt cites prophetic scripture concerning the gathering of Israel in the latter days.

He concludes his discussion on this point by asking,

Behold an unlearned young man with no experience thus announce the word of God on matters of such importance, revealing doctrines which are in direct opposition not only to his own traditions, but to dogmas and teachings of numerous sects, among which are the most popular and influential of the age, doctrines which have a perfect coincidence not only with the ancient Gospel, but with all the minute details predicted by John relating to the dispensation of the last days. Behold all this; is it not a spectacle capable of making a profound impression on the minds of all men? Is it not an irresistible proof that Joseph, the modest founder of our church, was really called of God?  

Following Bertrand’s piece, a brief announcement appears at the bottom of the page: “In print, appearing soon: The Book of Mormon.” This short statement indicates the missionaries’ anticipation of the upcoming availability of latter-day scripture in the French language.

The last page of the fifth issue contains another hymn text from A. Dupont (Louis Bertrand). This hymn, entitled “The Message,” proclaims,

1. 
Célébrons par nos chants le céleste heritage,
Que le Dieu d’Israël promet à ses élus.
Loin de nous, vil Satan! Nous ne te craignons plus.
Le Seigneur a parlé, nous avons son message.

(Let us celebrate by our songs the celestial heritage, 
That the God of Israel promises to his elect.
Flee from us, vile Satan! We fear you no longer.
The Lord has spoken, we have his message.)

(chorus)

(What brilliant radiance appears in the sky!
Hear the words of life from Mormon.
The rainbow of salvation that shines in the west
Announces the return of the Messiah to the human race.)

2.

L'Evangile éternel, prédit par les prophètes,
En faveur des Gentils est révélé du Ciel.
Fils déchus d'Ephraïm, vous tribus d'Israël,
Sechez enfin vos pleurs et relevez vos têtes.

(What brilliant radiance, etc.)

(The eternal Gospel favoring the Gentiles
Which has been prophesied by the prophets is revealed from Heaven.
Fallen sons of Ephraim, you tribes of Israel,
Dry your tears at last and lift up your heads.
What brilliant radiance, etc.)

3.

Béni soit le mortel que Dieu, dans sa clémence,
Suscita, jeune encore, pour annoncer sa loi.
Honneur à toi, Joseph! Martyr de notre foi,
Tu scelles de ton sang la nouvelle alliance.

(What brilliant radiance, etc.)

(Blessed be the mortal which God, in his mercy,
Raised up while young to announce His law.
Honor to you, Joseph! Martyr of our faith,
You sealed the new covenant with your blood.
What brilliant radiance, etc.)

4.

Arbre faible en naissant et battu par l'orage,
Notre Église a conquis, sur vingt peuple divers,
D'innombrables enfants; bientôt tout l'univers
Sera régnéré par le divin message.

(What brilliant radiance, etc.)

92
(As a tree, weak in its infancy and battered by the storm,
Our church has conquered, from more than twenty different nationalities,
Innumerable children; soon all the universe
Will be regenerated by the divine message.
What brilliant radiance, etc.)

5.
Tremblez, tremblez, Gentils, voici l'ère suprême,
Voici les derniers temps, jours de pleurs et d'effroi.
Abjurez vos erreurs, embrassez notre foi,
Venez renaître à Dieu dans les eaux du baptême.
Quel éclat radieux, etc.

(Tremble, tremble, Gentiles, for the supreme era is here,
Here are the last times, days of tears and of terror.
Renounce your errors, embrace our faith,
Come be reborn to God in the waters of baptism.
What brilliant radiance, etc.)

6.
Vous, Saints-des-derniers-jours, sortez de Babylone.
Le signe avant-coureur surgit à l'horizon,
L'étendard du Très-Haut vous appelle à Sion,
Jésus-Christ triomphant va régner en personne!
Quel éclat radieux, etc.

(You, Saints of the latter days, come out of Babylon.
The sign of the forerunner suddenly appears on the horizon,
The ensign of the Most High calls you to Zion,
Triumphant Jesus Christ will reign in person!
What brilliant radiance, etc.)

Once again, the hymn echoes some of the major teachings presented in the articles
of the same issue. No record exists to indicate whether Bertrand composed the hymn
especially for the issue, or submitted it from a collection he had previously written.

The Sixth Issue: October 1851

Bertrand’s third and final installment of “Discovery of Ancient Ruins in Northern California” headlines the sixth issue. This time, however, John Taylor adds a postscript of two pages of commentary about the significance of the information related in the article. He states,

All that tends to shed some light on the history of the natives of America is always attractive to the numerous readers of the Star. Indeed, while these successive discoveries contribute to our understanding of the history of these great nations, . . . they also bring new and stronger proofs of the Book of Mormon . . . No matter how strange it might appear to our contemporaries, a book has already been published more than twenty years ago, which not only furnishes information about these people and their cities, but also unveils their origin and gives a complete history of their beginnings, their wars, their religion, their progress, and their decline. I refer back to the Book of Mormon.  

Elder Taylor then indicates his personal belief that the ruins discussed by the explorer who originally wrote the article are ruins of the Jaredite civilization, spoken of in the Book of Mormon by the prophet Ether. He acknowledges that the Book of Mormon offers few details about Jaredite history, but expresses his hope that subsequent archaeological discoveries will further authenticate the record of that society.

The second article in the sixth issue is the second installment of John Taylor’s “On the Necessity of New Revelations.” He resumes his discussion of the Bible as being a record of revelations given to ancient prophets, noting that the Bible has become the “supreme rule in the Christian world,” the source to which believers look for answers when questions and disputations arise. Elder Taylor reminds readers that the Bible is frequently referred to as the light, the guide, or the way of the Christian, guiding him to eternal life.

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16 John Taylor, untitled contribution, Étoile, October 1851, 82-83.
He then asks, "How have we obtained this holy book? All that concerns the salvation of the human family is only known by divine revelation. If the Lord had never revealed himself to his creatures, we would never have had the Bible. . . . In every age, righteous men have joyfully received manifestations of the will of God."

At this point, John Taylor dives to the heart of the matter by asking why it is that men who profess to love the Bible are so opposed to the idea that God could reveal anything new in their day. Elder Taylor declares that he will demonstrate that continuing revelation, adapted for the needs of the times in which it is received, has always been part of God’s plan for His children.¹⁷

John Taylor begins the second chapter of this article by demonstrating that revelations received in ancient times were meant to be applied specifically in their time. He refers to the commandment that Noah received to build an ark and the commandment that Lot received to flee from the plain, demonstrating that both Noah and Lot needed to apply their individual commandment in order to be saved from destruction. Had Lot built an ark, or had Noah simply left the plain, both would have perished. Elder Taylor also refers to the prophecy of Jeremiah to King Zedekiah that the children of Israel would remain in captivity in Babylon for seventy years. He says,

This prophecy, as well as those preceding it, was only applicable to the circumstances in which the people to whom it was given found themselves. This new revelation became an indispensable necessity to them, even though they had in their possession many other revelations from times past, those we have already mentioned, as well as hundreds of others.¹⁸

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¹⁷ John Taylor, "De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations," Etoile, October 1851, 84-85.

¹⁸ John Taylor, "De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations," Etoile, October 1851, 87.
Additionally, John Taylor expresses that the need for specific, current revelation applies to individuals as well as nations. He begins a discussion of this point in the last paragraph of this installment of the article, to be resumed in the next issue.

The continuation of Bertrand’s “Voice of Joseph” appears next, reiterating the idea that Joseph Smith acted in complete accord with the scriptural prophecies of the dispensation of the fulness of times, providing another proof of his divine mission. In particular, Elder Pratt calls attention to the prophecy given by Ezekiel that in the last days, the writings of the descendants of Judah and the writings of the tribe of Joseph will join together and become “one in the hand” of those who read them. He declares that Joseph Smith’s translation of the Book of Mormon perfectly fulfills Ezekiel’s prediction. This fifth plank in his argument leads him to ask, “What principles included in [Joseph’s] system are incompatible with ancient prophecies? . . . Who will dare create opposition to this sublime work, without being able to demonstrate in any manner that it is false?”

The sixth proof of Joseph Smith’s divine call, according to Orson Pratt, is the manner in which the prophecies of Isaiah were fulfilled in the translation of the Book of Mormon. In particular, he calls attention to Isaiah’s words that a record will speak out of the dust, and that a learned man will declare that he cannot translate it, but that an unlearned man will be given power from God to translate (see Isaiah 29:11-14). Elder Pratt concludes this section by saying,

One like unto Daniel was necessary to interpret the divine words. He was found in the person of Joseph Smith. A marvelous work and a wonder! The wisdom of wise men and the science of scholars were confounded by the gift of interpretation given to this young illiterate farm boy! If the claims of the Book of

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Mormon are well-founded, if it contains the sacred annals of the tribe of Joseph, it can only be the book which is spoken of in the prophecies of Isaiah.²⁰

At this point in the sixth issue, Curtis Bolton contributes an article about his missionary journey to Le Hâvre during the previous month. To introduce his narrative, he writes, “Having returned to my post in Paris, I believe I offer something pleasing to our readers by giving them a brief history of my trip to Le Hâvre and of the success which accompanied it.” The account contains the detail and romantic tendencies which are inseparably part of Bolton’s personality.

Even though the entry is saturated with minutiae, as was the case in his narrative of the missionaries’ voyage to the London conference, this article shows a greater awareness to include scripture as he recounts his story. He states,

Elder Taylor having designated me to fill this important mission, I left on October 25 and began immediately upon my arrival to make several visits and to preach the gospel. At the end of a very few days, I saw that the Lord had already prepared there some elect souls, and that they joyfully desired to receive baptism by immersion for the remission of their sins (as on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:38) at the hands of a man who had received authority from God to administer it.²¹

When he speaks of preparing those who had received baptism for the ordinance of confirmation, he refers to Acts 8:17, which states, “They laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

In describing the beauty of the location and weather conditions that accompany the baptism, Elder Bolton connects his detail with spiritual significance. For example, he mentions that immediately following the fifth baptism,


all of nature offered one of the most magnificent and imposing spectacles. The sun shone in splendor, rain fell in small drops, and a sparkling rainbow shone over the clouds. Certainly one might say that heaven exerted itself to show us how great its happiness was. It seemed to smile at us and shed tears of joy. And our Father in Heaven showed us His arch of covenant as a sign that the covenant which we had just made with Him had also been made on his part. Never, no never, have I felt more of the presence of my Eternal Father.  

When he reports the unexpected arrival of Elders Pack and De La Mare, he adds the comment, “See how the Spirit of God acts upon his servants.” He then expresses that seven more expressed a desire to be baptized, and that all those who had been baptized the previous day needed to be confirmed. The coming of the additional elders helped Bolton to accomplish all of the ordinances on the given day.

In closing, Bolton pleads, “May the God of Israel bless these dear brothers and sisters, and that He may lead them in the straight path and save them in His celestial kingdom, where we will all be reunited, never to be separated again.” Bolton is unmistakably himself in content and style; however, this contribution shows progression in his awareness of teaching opportunities and in his personal sense of spiritual leadership.

The last page of the sixth issue features another hymn from Bertrand, entitled “Invocation of the Holy Spirit.” The text reveals his understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, as he pleads that the gifts of the Spirit may be poured out upon the Church and the nation of France.

22 Curtis E. Bolton, “Fondation d’une branche de l’Eglise au Havre,” Etoile, October 1851, 94.


Esprit-Saint, comble nos vœux,
Embrase nos âmes
Des plus vives flammes;
Esprit-Saint, comble nos vœux,
Embrase nos âmes
De tes plus doux feux.

(chœur)
Holy Spirit, fulfill our desires,
Ignite our souls
With the most vivid flames;
Holy Spirit, fulfill our desires,
Ignite our souls
With thy sweetest fires.

1.
Seul auteur de tous les dons,
De toi seul nous attendons
Tout notre secours,
Aux derniers jours.

(Only author of all gifts,
From thee alone we wait for
All of our help,
In the latter days.)

2.
Répands sur tous les élus
Le trésor de tes vertus,
Et guide ici-bas
Partout leurs pas.

(Shed upon all of the elect
The treasure of thy virtues,
And guide their steps
Everywhere on earth.)

3.
Verse, verse, à pleines mains,
Sur nos Elders et les Saints,
Tes dons précieux
Du haut des cieux.
(Pour out, pour out, with full hands,
Upon our Elders and the Saints,
   Thy precious gifts
       From the highest heavens.)

4.
Fais triompher l’équité;
Que la sainte vérité
       Brise enfin les fers
       De l’univers.

(Cause equity to triumph;
May the holy truth
       Break at last the fetters
       Of the universe.)

5.
O Créateur souverain!
Prends pitié du genre humain,
   Guéris tous ses maux
       Par nos travaux.

(O Sovereign Creator!
Take pity upon the human race.
   Heal all of its ills
       Through our works.)

6.
Que le flambeau de la foi
Brille sur le sol gaulois:
   Noble nation,
       Viens à Sion.

(May the torch of faith
Shine on the soil of Gaul:
   Noble nation,
       Come to Zion.)

7.
Daigne éclairer les mortels,
Fais crouler leurs faux autels,
   Afin que la paix
       Règne à jamais!
(Deign to enlighten mortals,
Cause their false altars to crumble,
So that peace
Might forever reign!)

Esprit-Saint...²⁵

This contribution reflects a turning point for Bertrand, as it is the first piece that he contributes to the Etoile under his own last name. Possibly by the time the sixth issue was published, he had lost his position at Le Populaire and had removed himself from the political arena. Furthermore, at this time Bertrand had been a member of the Church for nearly a year. His acquaintances would have been aware of his affiliation with “the Mormons,” rendering his pen name, Alphonse Dupont, irrelevant.

The Seventh Issue: November 1851

John Taylor’s emphasis on doctrine shines through in the seventh issue of the Etoile, even though he was most likely no longer in France when it was published. A new doctrinal article, “On Baptism,” appears on the front page. In this work, John Taylor briefly reminds readers that Latter-day Saint baptism is performed according to the commandment given to Joseph Smith and in the manner described in the Book of Mormon. From this point, he continues by asking and responding to six significant questions concerning the ordinance. They include the following:

I. Who were candidates for baptism in the days of our Savior and his Apostles?
II. What was the mode for baptism being employed at that time?
III. What was the object of baptism?
IV. Was this doctrine to be taught universally?

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²⁵ A. Bertrand, “Invocation au Saint-Esprit,” Etoile, October 1851, 96.
V. Who was commissioned to administer this ordinance?
VI. Does any person have the right to change this ordinance?²⁶

As with his other doctrinal expositions, Elder Taylor relies heavily on the scriptures to address the questions and to prove his thesis. Each question becomes a section of the article.

In speaking of who was baptized by Jesus and His Apostles, John Taylor emphatically states that those baptized were adults who could fear God, who could believe, and who were ready to confess their sins. He points out that they had attained the age of reason and were capable of judging for themselves. In response to those who justified infant baptism by pointing out that Jesus blessed little children, Elder Taylor bluntly asks, “What relationship is there between blessing and baptism? None.” Furthermore, he refutes the position that infant baptism replaced circumcision by saying, “As this is only an assertion without the least proof, and as circumcision was only for males while baptism is for all, I will put this question aside until someone can bring me some arguments to support it.”²⁷

The second question concerns the correct mode of baptism. John Taylor points out that the baptisms described in the New Testament all took place where the water was deep enough for the one being baptized to be completely immersed. He states that those being baptized descended down into the water for the ordinance, and then got up out of the water. Furthermore, he appeals to Paul’s description of the symbolism of the ordinance, which states: “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also

should walk in newness of life" (see Romans 6:4). Finally, he declares: “These things are so clear that it would be superfluous to accompany them with commentary.”

The third question asks, what is the object of being baptized? Elder Taylor immediately states, “We baptize in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.” He quickly asserts, however, that baptism is not the only ordinance necessary for salvation. In response to those who consider baptism to be non-essential, he says,

That, to me, is nonsense or folly. I do not recognize any ordinance of God as being anything less than absolutely necessary... If the Lord placed this ordinance in His church and commanded us to administer it as a method of obtaining salvation, who has the right to say that it is not absolutely necessary?

The last question discussed in this installment of the article asks whether or not the doctrine of baptism was intended to be universally taught. Elder Taylor refers to Mark 16:15-16, which says, “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Elder Taylor goes on to comment about this passage:

If we count ourselves among those living in this world, and if we profess to believe in Christ, this must apply to us... It is precisely because the world has distanced itself from this doctrine and has abandoned the other principles of the gospel that there has been the need for the gospel to be communicated anew from heaven, and that the same principles were re-established on the earth to be proclaimed to all human beings.

Clearly by this time, the general informational tone which typified many of his earlier articles had disappeared. Without directly saying so, John Taylor challenged the
precepts of the Catholic church—precepts that figured prominently into the thoughts and traditions of his audience.

The next three pages of the seventh issue are dedicated to the fourth section of “The Voice of Joseph.” In the previous installment of this article, the book spoken of by Isaiah was shown to be the Book of Mormon. Orson Pratt follows that assertion in this installment with passages from Isaiah 29, plus Nephi’s teachings as found in 2 Nephi 27, another affirmation that the Book of Mormon is the book spoken of by Isaiah. Since the Book of Mormon had not yet been published in French at this time, the inclusion of the entire scriptural text was necessary. The *Etoile*’s readers could then follow Elder Pratt’s assertions, at the very least. Perhaps more importantly, the inclusion of this section from Orson Pratt’s work exposed many French Latter-day Saints to their first complete passage from the Book of Mormon.32

The next article is the third installment of “On the Necessity of New Revelations,” by John Taylor. He begins by emphasizing the fact that not every passage of scripture is equally applicable to everyone, citing the letters of John to the seven churches of Asia as an example, as some of the churches received commendation, while others received correction. Elder Taylor then reproves modern Christians for ignoring any scripture that warns or chastens and for assuming that only the favorable passages of scripture apply to themselves. As a remedy for this misapplication of scripture, Elder Taylor affirms the role of modern Apostles and prophets, “... inspired men who, by revelation and by the word of God . . . guide us continually in the way of truth and keep us from evil.”33

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33 John Taylor, “*De la nécessité de nouvelles révélations,*” *Etoile,* November 1851, 109.
Due to the absence of Apostles and prophets, John Taylor remarks that men have taken the easy road and as a result, abandoned the pure principles of the gospel. For this very reason, new revelation is necessary in order to re-establish the Church in its fulness.

Some have asked in response to this declaration, “Then what value, if any, is found in the ancient scriptures?” Elder Taylor replies,

[The scriptures] are invaluable, independent of new revelation. They are to men the most valuable treasure which can be possessed; they contain great events and important truths for the use of the human race in their historical parts, in their doctrines, their ordinances, and their prophecies. They are a voice of warning, an ensign and a guide to the wandering traveler.34

He concludes this section of his article by reminding readers that while Jesus lived on earth, he frequently referred to scripture and commanded men to read and carefully study them.

John Taylor then begins the third chapter of his article, warning against misinterpreting scriptures. In particular, he warns those who “spiritualize” [render figurative] the meaning of scriptures and dismiss their literal content. In this way, the meaning of the clearest passages of scripture is obscured and becomes confusing. Readers consequently attach great significance or no significance at all to the same passage of scripture, depending upon their personal agendas. Elder Taylor then states the object of his writing this third chapter: “I will therefore show, by the scriptures, that the prophecies which have been accomplished have been accomplished literally.” From this point of departure, he declares his intention to show that prophecies yet to be fulfilled must also be fulfilled literally.35

34 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles révélations,” Etoile, November 1851, 110.

35 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles révélations,” Etoile, November 1851, 111.
Another Bertrand hymn, entitled, "Baptism," concludes this edition of the *Étoile*.

In light of John Taylor’s message on the front page, the hymn appears to have been deliberately chosen to further develop the topic.

1.
*Le monde, en sa démence,*
*Eloigné de son Dieu,*
*Se rit d'une ordonnance*
*Qui sauva nos aieux.*

(The world, in its madness,
Estranged from its God,
Mocks an ordinance
That saved our ancestors.)

*(chœur)*
*Jadis à Nicodème,*
*Jésus disait lui-même:*
*De l’Esprit et de l’eau*
*Il faut, dans le baptême,*
*Renaître de nouveau.*

(In times past to Nicodemus,
Jesus himself said:
Of the spirit and of the water
One must, by baptism,
Be born again.)

2.
*A la voix qui t'appelle,*
*Ne sois plus sourd, pécheur:*
*Ah! Ne sois plus rebelle*
*Mais reviens au Seigneur.*
*Jadis à...*

(To the voice that calls you,
Be no longer deaf, sinner:
Ah! Be rebellious no longer
But return to the Savior.
In times past to...)

106
3. La foi, la repentance
   Vers lui sont le chemin;
   Aux pieds de sa clémence
   Viens te jeter enfin.
   Jadis à...

   (Faith and repentance
   Are the path towards Him;
   At the feet of his mercy
   Come throw yourself at last.
   In times past to...)

4. Viens lave ta souillure,
   C'est son commandement;
   Reçois la sépulture,
   Dans ce pur élément.
   Jadis à...

   (Come wash away your filth,
   Is his commandment;
   Receive burial
   In this pure element.
   In times past to...)

5. A ton appel docile,
   Seigneur, j'accours vers toi;
   Je viens de l'Evangile
   Obéir à ta loi.
   Jadis à...

   (At thy gentle call,
   Lord, I run to thee;
   From the Gospel I come
   To obey thy law.
   In times past to...)36

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History in the Text of the Seventh Issue

The back page of the seventh issue reveals that only two bookstores now sell the publication: Trouvé and Ducloux. Gabriel is no longer listed.

Issues Five, Six, and Seven Considered Together

In light of historical considerations, these three issues were perhaps the easiest for the missionaries to produce. John Taylor was in Paris long enough to outline each issue's content and to fund the printing, Curtis Bolton received specific instruction for the periodical’s focus, Louis Bertrand had more time available to help with translation and content issues, and the printer, Marc Ducloux, was clearly the missionaries’ friend and ally.

Readers of the periodical during this period gained a deeper awareness of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the importance of modern revelation and the Book of Mormon to Latter-day Saint theology, the responsibility of members of the Church to proclaim the gospel, and fundamental aspects of Latter-day Saint doctrine that echo the primitive church, such as the role of Apostles and prophets, baptism by immersion, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The favorable conditions that the missionaries enjoyed through the fall of 1851 allowed them to produce their periodical as desired. Unfortunately, these conditions were short lived. A change in the government and departure of John Taylor would complicate the production of the last five issues of the Etoile over the next year.
CHAPTER SIX

BOLTON AT THE HELM: ISSUES EIGHT THROUGH TWELVE

John Taylor’s precipitous departure from France left Curtis Bolton with full ecclesiastical responsibility for the mission and its publications. This chapter groups together the last five issues of the *Etoile du Désert* because they were edited by Bolton and financed through his fundraising efforts. The issues appeared at erratic intervals from February to December 1852 for two major reasons. First, as president of the French Mission, Bolton spent much of his time ministering to the Saints in the Channel Islands, Le Havre, and Paris. His publishing activities were frequently interrupted by his ministerial responsibilities. Second, money to fund the endeavor came in much more slowly without John Taylor soliciting donations from the British Saints. Bolton could only publish the *Etoile* when there were sufficient funds to do so.

Throughout the last five issues, Curtis Bolton remained true to John Taylor’s editorial vision. He selected and wrote doctrinal articles, including miscellaneous announcements only when pertinent to the Saints in the French Mission. His contributions reflect editorial and spiritual growth. Louis Bertrand also contributed another hymn and an original article that reflected his developing strength as a preacher. The doctrinal articles John Taylor wrote for the *Etoile* continued to regularly appear, leading readers to a greater understanding of core Latter-day Saint beliefs.
Background to the Eighth Issue

Following John Taylor’s departure from France, Curtis Bolton began to include more details in his journal about the publication of the *Etoile*. Consequently, a time line can be re-established for the remaining five issues of the publication, spanning February to December 1852.

Financial and governmental restrictions made the publication of the *Etoile* increasingly difficult. Initially, Bolton had hoped the creation of a new government and the dismissal of the previous Minister of the Interior would create new avenues for Latter-day Saint proselytizing. Consequently, on January 10, 1852, he called on the new Minister, Monsieur de Morney, to declare the mission’s intention of publishing a paper.

Bolton recorded the result of the interview in his journal:

He [de Morney] said I cannot publish a paper in France because I am a foreigner. I then entered into an explanation of the nature of the paper. He said I might get a friend a Frenchman in whom I have confidence to assume the ownership. Or if I can’t do that, I must call it a book to come out in numbers 12 a year or at so much a number. After a lengthy conversation I left him and called on Mr. Ducloux who instantly offered to assume the ownership and responsibility and said I need trouble myself no more he would go and make all right, he is intimate with the *chef de Bureau* [head of the office] and will have influence with him.¹

Reassured for the moment, Bolton then turned his full attention to completing the publication of the French translation of the Book of Mormon. On January 22 he recorded that the last page of the translation was in type. Then, on January 24, he submitted articles to Marc Ducloux to be printed in the eighth and ninth editions of the *Etoile*.²

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¹ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 79.
² Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 80.
Louis Bertrand was actively engaged in publication work for the mission at this time. Undoubtedly his assistance enabled Bolton to complete the Book of Mormon project. However, Bertrand’s reputation as a political activist continued to create a degree of uncertainty for the missionaries as the new government began to assert itself. Bolton recorded on January 27:

A commissary of the police called today accompanied by two agents of police to enquire about what Elder Bertrand was doing. Elder B. was terribly frightened. This very morning I had coaxed and counselled Elder Bertrand to write to this very same commissary to say that he was no longer a political but a religious man. He acted accordingly but the commissary had not yet received the letter. I spoke boldly and fearlessly to the commissary so much so that he was astonished, not being accustomed to it. I told him Cabet had turned Elder Bertrand away because he was opposed to him in politics.²

Additionally, the new government immediately enacted censorship measures on the press. Although Bolton had submitted all of the material necessary to complete the eighth *Etoile*, it could not be printed without government approval. His frustration with the situation spilled out in his journal entry for February 2. He fumed:

Mr. Ducloux [the printer] informs me that the State Council (*Conseil d'Etat*) have had it before them the 8ᵗʰ no. of the *Etoile* under consideration and have had it before them the last 6 days, and every time Mr. Ducloux’s man calls for it, they tell him to come “tomorrow” or “next day.” They must certainly have found a mare’s nest. One thing is certain they are sadly puzzled about it for the minister of the interior upon whom I called about it some days since said “it is NOT a newspaper.” The Press Censor says it is a newspaper, and advises me to put the one *sous* [smallest denomination of French money] stamp upon it then I can send it by the post free of postage, and that I must have it stamped because it’s a newspaper. The postmaster declares it is NOT a newspaper and that he won’t receive it as such, stamp, or no stamp. Now if I put on the stamp to make it go through the post, I should also have to put the date at the top of the paper and that would constitute it a paper and it would pass the post, etc., but then again, if I put the date at the top I should have to give 40,000 Francs security and moreover get a Frenchman to take the ownership etc etc etc etc. Such a flutter about the "*Etoile*" never mind it will shine on when they are dead and damned.³

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² Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 80.
³ Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 81.
At length, the government censors returned the *Etoile*, having eliminated twelve lines containing prophecies of Isaiah. With that deletion, the eighth issue was printed. Bolton sent it out on February 11, 1852.  

**Content of the Eighth Issue: December 1851**

The headline of the eighth issue proudly proclaims: “Publication of the Book of Mormon.” After apologizing for the delay in publication of the *Etoile*, Curtis Bolton explains that the missionaries’ goal was to send copies of the Book of Mormon in French with the Saints emigrating from Liverpool to the Salt Lake Valley in February. He admits that all other work, including the *Etoile*, had to be laid aside in order to meet their deadline.

Bolton then continued:

*Eh bien!* The work is finished. The Book of Mormon is now translated and printed in the French language, which is spoken by perhaps a hundred million souls on the earth. And in this solemn moment, when the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the truth of heaven, and eternal salvation are placed at the hand of such a great number of those like unto us, the prophecies of the holy prophets on the moral state of the world in the day of the coming forth of this book weigh doubly on our minds.

Missing from this article are details on the process of translation and publication, of which Bolton easily could have spoken. Instead, he focuses on the content of the Book of Mormon and the significance of the times in which it is coming forth according to the

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5 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 81.

6 Actual date of publication: February 1852

prophets who wrote in it. Bolton concludes by adding his testimony to those of the Book of Mormon prophets:

And now, o people, here is the work which we have just accomplished among you. Awaken yourselves! Awaken yourselves from your profound slumber, the slumber of the dead! Read the Holy Scriptures, examine and see if that which we announce to you is not the truth. Read the Book of Mormon, which is the sacred history of the original inhabitants of America, a book which God sends to you as a second witness of himself and of his work, so that you might be without excuse and that you cannot say, when you stand before him to be judged, that you only had one single witness, and that it came from the Jews. . . . Read without any prejudices; accept and adopt all that you find within it that is good. Believe in God; believe that he exists; believe that he is a God of miracles; repent of your iniquities, be baptized by immersion for the remission of your sins, receive the laying on of hands from the Elders of The Church of Jesus Christ; and in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, the God of miracles, we promise you the gift of the Holy Spirit. And then you will assuredly know, of yourselves, the truth of these things. May God grant these abundant blessings on all those who seek them with sincerity and purity of heart.  

Clearly, by this time, in addition to being a chronicler and facilitator, Bolton has become a powerful preacher.

The next item in the eighth edition of the *Etoile* is the fourth part of John Taylor’s “On the Necessity of New Revelation.” He resumes the article with more discussion of prophecies in the scriptures that have all been literally fulfilled. As examples, he includes the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine in Egypt, and the existence of a promised land for the children of Israel. He affirms, “Indeed, prophecy is history in reverse: it gives the account of future events as history gives them in the past.”

After reminding the reader that all of the prophecies of Christ’s birth were literally fulfilled, he says, “The fact is, no other idea than that of literal fulfillment of the prophecies ever entered the mind of the ancient Apostles. This is why they labored, in all
similar circumstances, to quote scriptures and note their fulfillment.\textsuperscript{10} He then calls attention to the Apostle Paul's prophecy of the day when men would no longer be able to endure sound doctrine, turning to teachers who would allow them to pursue their own desires, closing their ears to truth and opening them to fables (see 2 Timothy 4). Elder Taylor asks in conclusion, "What man looking over the current Christian world cannot see the strictly literal fulfillment of this prophecy?"\textsuperscript{11}

Another installment of "The Voice of Joseph" appears at this point, with a brief summary of the argument that the Book of Mormon is indeed the book prophesied by Isaiah. Speaking of Joseph Smith, Orson Pratt declares,

If this young unlearned man was a liar, one must admit that he has surpassed all the profound doctors or imposters of the last eighteen centuries, for he has discovered a way to harmonize all the points of his vast system, not only with the ancient Gospel but also with the ancient prophecies, and this in a manner so skillful that no one would be able to discover his deceit.\textsuperscript{12}

For a seventh evidence of Joseph Smith's prophetic calling, the article cites the blessing pronounced upon Joseph, the son of Jacob. After quoting extensively from Genesis 49:22-26, Elder Pratt puts forth the position that the Book of Mormon explains the promise made to Joseph and his posterity that they would be a "fruitful bough by a well with branches that run over the wall," receiving even greater blessings than those received by Abraham and Isaac. The article states that the richness of America's natural resources, combined with the Book of Mormon claim to be a record of Joseph's

\textsuperscript{10} John Taylor, "De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations," Etoile, December 1851, 118.

\textsuperscript{11} John Taylor, "De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations," Etoile, December 1851, 119.

\textsuperscript{12} A. Dupont, "La Voix de Joseph," Etoile, December 1851, 120.
descendants and not any other tribe of Israel, is ample proof that Joseph Smith was in fact a prophet.\textsuperscript{13}

The last section of the eighth issue is a continuation of John Taylor's "On Baptism," the second of three installments. He addresses the question, "Which persons were authorized to administer this ordinance?" To help the reader understand the importance of authority, he refers to the laws of men. Elder Taylor reminds his readers that governments employ judges and police to administer laws, and that any other administration of the laws is considered illegal. He asks,

If such is the case for purely temporal governments, and if it is truly necessary that men be legally authorized to fill their functions, how much more necessary and important is it that men be clothed with a legal authority for that which concerns the things of the kingdom of God, since human governments only deal with temporal things, while the kingdom of God incorporates things both temporal and spiritual. And since no earthly government would recognize or allow men to act in its name without being officially authorized, how can we imagine that our Heavenly Father would allow it?\textsuperscript{14}

Elder Taylor then discusses priesthood authority given to Jesus by God, who in turn gives that same authority to his Apostles and the Seventy. At this point, John Taylor affirms, "Here, then, is authority delegated to act in the name of the Savior. Acts performed by this authority would be sanctioned as if they were done by the Savior himself."\textsuperscript{15}

Next, John Taylor teaches that elders held this authority as well. He appeals to the account of Paul's conversion, when Ananias, who was neither an Apostle nor a member of the Seventy, was sent by the angel to baptize Paul for the remission of sins

\textsuperscript{13} A. Dupont, "La Voix de Joseph," \textit{Etoile}, December 1851, 122-123.


and to lay hands upon him to bestow the Holy Ghost. To address the manner in which elders receive authority, Elder Taylor quotes Paul’s letter to Timothy, which says, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery [elders]” (1 Timothy 4:14). Elder Taylor refers to Hebrews 5:4 to show how recipients are chosen: “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”

John Taylor affirms two ways that this authority is received: either by an unbroken and uncorrupted chain of authority from the Apostles to the present day, or by being restored to man directly by revelation from God. He testifies that Joseph Smith truly received his authority under the hands of holy angels, and that he and the other missionaries have come to France bearing that true authority.16

A brief announcement follows this article on the last page: “The printing of the Book of Mormon being completed, our friends may send to us their orders (postage paid), designating the way by which they desire to receive this work.”17

Background to the Ninth Issue

The ninth issue of the Etoile was prepared at almost the same time as the eighth. Curtis Bolton recorded in his journal that he submitted copy for both issues on January 24, 1852, and then gave more copy for the ninth issue on February 3, even before the eighth was printed. No further mention is made of preparations for the ninth issue’s content.


17 Untitled announcement, Etoile, December 1851, 128.
Although Bolton does not record an exact date that the ninth issue was printed, his journal entry on March 13, 1852, says, “I have spent two days trying to find out a plan to send the Etoile to London but without avail.” Evidently, by this time, the next issue had come off the press.

The early months of 1852 were difficult for Bolton. For one reason, the members of the little branch in Paris were becoming increasingly contentious. He recorded on February 1, “Find a spirit of tattling among the Saints. I preached very sharp and warned them that it would lead them to apostatize.” A month later, he wrote of difficulties with a Brother and Sister Bentz, who did not have “a right spirit,” and consequently he “talked plain and sharp” to the little congregation again.

Additionally, Bolton received a letter in February from Brigham Young including a line that caused Bolton to wonder if he were being called back to the Salt Lake Valley. Uncertain of how to proceed, he wrote to John Taylor in England, asking for counsel. After two weeks passed without reply, Bolton learned that Elder Taylor had sailed for the Salt Lake Valley on March 6. Bolton’s journal entry for March 9 says,

I am not willing to shoulder the responsibility of disobedience to President Young. If Bro. Young meant his letter for a recall and I do not obey, then I should not expect to be blessed in my mission and ministry. Yet I wish to be subject to Elder Taylor’s council. I cannot think of one individual in the church capable of replacing me here in Paris. In public preaching perhaps, yes, but not in the publications. I am most anxious to return and most anxious to do exactly right if I could only tell what right is, and yet I feel as though I cannot be spared from here. Bro. Brigham said “use your earliest convenience to return home” what may be considered my convenience. Well the Lords will be done.

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18 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 83.
19 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 80.
20 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 82.
21 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 82-83.
Two days later he wrote Elder F. D. Richards, president of the European Mission, for counsel. A reply from the mission presidency came a week later, instructing him to remain in France another year. After weeks of “intolerable” suspense, Bolton recorded: “So I am content and happy again, as a man always is, when he is right.”

Content of the Ninth Issue: January 1852

The ninth issue consists of four articles: the introduction of one new topic and the continuation of three previous ones. The fifth installment of “On the Necessity of New Revelations” appears first, with John Taylor quoting from 2 Timothy 3:1-5. After rehearsing the Apostle Paul’s list of the spiritual ills prevalent in the world in the latter days, Elder Taylor says,

What a deplorable depiction of a world which professes to be Christian! For it is of these so-called Christians that Paul speaks, and not of those who profess no religion: it is of those who have a form of godliness, but who deny the power thereof.

In our day, a form of religion exists everywhere. But where can we find the union, the love, the peace, the power, and the pure principles of the Gospel, such as they existed in the time of the primitive Church?

His response, naturally, is that new revelation is necessary in order to restore what was clearly included in the Church during the time of Jesus and His Apostles. He then informs the reader that scriptural prophecy of future events will be fulfilled just as ancient prophecies were fulfilled.

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22 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 83.
23 Actual date of publication: March 1852
Elder Taylor begins the fourth chapter of this article with a recitation of Daniel’s interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. After reminding readers that the giant figure that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream was a representation of the kingdoms of the earth from his day to the modern day, Elder Taylor quotes from Daniel’s interpretation: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44).” Elder Taylor asks, “Where is this kingdom?” He reminds readers that this kingdom must be established by God, and not by man. He poses the question, “How will God raise up a kingdom in the last days? By revelation. Without giving new revelations, he could not found it.”

John Taylor then cites Isaiah’s prophecy of an ensign to be raised to the nations in the last days. After asking who will raise that ensign, he replies, “The Lord himself.” In response to those who declare that the prophecy was fulfilled by the first coming of Jesus, Elder Taylor replies that other prophecies contemporary to raising the ensign are yet unfulfilled, such as the scattering and gathering of Israel.

Some of Elder Taylor’s wit is evident in his response to objections that the prophecy of the ensign to the nations is intended to be only spiritual, or figurative. He says:

Some will say to me: Could not all of those events be spiritual? Yes, if the first exodus of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt was a spiritual exodus; if they left a spiritual Egypt, if they crossed a spiritual sea, traveled across a spiritual desert, felt terrible chastenings which were purely spiritual, came to dwell in a spiritual land, fought spiritually against a spiritual people with spiritual weapons; if all these things were only spiritual, then the events prophesied by the prophet [Isaiah] will also be spiritual, for they will be accomplished IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE PREVIOUS EVENTS. But if, on the contrary, men, the

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earth, the sea, and all the other facts were literal events, then those pronounced by
the prophet will also be fulfilled in a literal manner. 26

Next, Elder Taylor refers his readers to a prophecy from Jeremiah:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the
house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenants that I
made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out
of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake although I was an husband
unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with
the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their
inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be
my people (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

Elder Taylor acknowledges that some maintain that the coming of Jesus fulfilled
this prophecy. In response, he asks if all the events spoken of in Jeremiah 31 were
fulfilled during Jesus’ mortal life, such as Israel being restored to their lands and their
iniquities being pardoned. After emphasizing that those events have not yet happened, he
concludes:

Therefore, it is certain that a covenant must be made, a covenant of the greatest
importance, not only for Israel and Judah, but for all nations. This covenant must
bring the children of Israel back from their long dispersal, restore them to their
own land, so that the promises God made to Abraham might be fulfilled. . . .

All of this must come about by a new covenant which will be made. How
can this covenant be contracted without revelation? There are only three ways to
contract a covenant: by spoken voice, by writing, or by an ambassador. . . . If the
Lord neither speaks, nor writes, nor sends a messenger, the covenant in question
could not be made, for it does not concern an ancient covenant, but a new one,
which requires communication. How did the Lord make a covenant with
Abraham? By speaking with him. . . . In what manner was the covenant of the
Gospel established? By revelation. And it is necessary that this new covenant be
made in the same manner, or the Holy Scriptures would not be fulfilled. 27

John Taylor is the author for the next article in the ninth issue. Entitled, “The Gift of the Holy Ghost,” this work sets out to correct false notions of what new members of the Church may expect after having received the laying on of hands. He affirms:

We believe that the gift of the Holy Ghost must be possessed in our days, just as it was in the time of the Apostles. We believe that it is necessary that there be an organized and established priesthood, without which no man can fill any office in the ministry. We believe in revelations and prophecy, in the gift of healing, in the gift of tongues, in visions and diverse gifts, and that one cannot possess these things without the gift of the Holy Ghost. We believe that holy men in ancient times spoke according to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and we believe that holy men of our time also speak by the Holy Ghost. We believe it to be a Spirit of consolation and testimony, a Spirit which will 'cause us to remember all that Jesus Has said,' which will 'teach us all things, lead us to all truth and announce to us things which are to come.' We believe that 'no man can acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost.' We believe in the Holy Ghost in all its fullness, its strength, its power, its greatness, and its glory; but at the same time we believe this in a rational manner, reasonable, consequential, and scriptural, and not according to the false ideas, the extravagant imaginations and the traditions of men.  

After this straightforward summary of Latter-day Saint beliefs about the Holy Ghost, Elder Taylor examines the correct meaning of the gifts of the Spirit and how they are manifest among those who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost. He speaks of many of the gifts one may receive: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, healing, working miracles, prophecy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. He asserts that only two of the gifts—tongues and prophecy—can be detected with the physical senses, and that even then, without belief, they will not be understood as gifts of the Spirit.

The next piece to appear in the ninth issue is the sixth of seven installments of “The Voice of Joseph.” Orson Pratt appeals to recent archaeological discoveries in

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Central America to continue providing proof that Joseph Smith was divinely called of God; this is the eighth of twelve evidences he will list. The article informs readers that the Book of Mormon provides significant information about climate and geographical features of the land, including proximities between cities. The author feels that the discoveries in Central America—made after the publication of the book of Mormon—provide evidence that the Book of Mormon’s account of geography and civilization is legitimate.

Proof nine, according to Elder Pratt, is that prophecies made by Joseph Smith have been fulfilled. The author cites Book of Mormon prophecy of three witnesses who will testify of the veracity of the gold plates. While any imposter could write such a prediction, the article points out that an angel from heaven displayed the plates to the witnesses. According to the authors, any man who did not have the approbation of heaven could not have accomplished this.30

The second prophecy selected foresees that the blood of the Saints would cry from the earth in the day when the Book of Mormon comes forth. Orson Pratt points out that this prophecy runs contrary to the assurances of religious freedom in the Constitution of the United States. Nonetheless, “the blood of many hundred Saints who have been killed and martyred in this church is an incontestable proof of the truth of the prediction.”31

For the tenth proof, Elder Pratt writes:

There are thousands of living witnesses who affirm that God has revealed to them the truth of the Book of Mormon, by dreams, visions, revelations of the Holy

Ghost, the ministering of angels, and by His own voice. If Joseph Smith was an imposter, all of these witnesses are imposters. . . . If thousands of witnesses boldly affirm, with sincerity, that God has revealed to them that this is the Church or the kingdom which must be founded in the latter days, we then have an overwhelming weight of collateral proof to establish the divine mission of Joseph Smith.\textsuperscript{32}

Proof eleven: Joseph Smith has performed miracles in the name of the Lord, including casting out of devils, healing the sick, speaking in tongues, interpreting ancient languages, and prophesying of future events. Additionally, Orson Pratt writes, any miracles that have been wrought by members of the Church that Joseph Smith founded are themselves proof of his prophetic call.\textsuperscript{33} Elder Pratt admits, however, that miracles alone are not proof. He writes:

Latter-day Saints do not believe in the infallibility of miracles. We firmly believe that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost are absolutely necessary in the Church of Christ, without which the church could not exist on the earth. Miracles, connected with pure doctrine, holy and perfect, with reasonable and scriptural doctrine, are a strong collateral proof in favor of this doctrine, and of the divine authority of those who preach it. But miracles alone, taken separately, and without being tied to other witnesses, instead of being infallible proofs, do not prove a thing.\textsuperscript{34}

For this reason, Elder Pratt reminds the reader that membership in the Church of Jesus Christ comes solely through submitting to the ordinance of baptism. After having covenanted with God, he asserts, members of the Church may enjoy miraculous manifestations of God’s power, in fulfillment of the promise that signs will follow those who believe.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32} A. Dupont, “La Voix de Joseph,” Etoile, January 1852, 140-141.

\textsuperscript{33} A. Dupont, “La Voix de Joseph,” Etoile, January 1852, 141.

\textsuperscript{34} A. Dupont, “La Voix de Joseph,” Etoile, January 1852, 142.

\textsuperscript{35} A. Dupont, “La Voix de Joseph,” Etoile, January 1852, 142.
The final article in the ninth issue of the *Etoile* is the concluding installment of John Taylor’s “On Baptism.” The final question addressed in this work is, “Does anyone have the right or the authority to change this ordinance?” Taylor muses,

Did not Jesus give to his disciples the power to bind on earth, saying to them that it would also be bound in heaven? Yes. And did not he say that whatever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven? Yes. But I do not think that he gave them permission to change any permanent law. When a plenipotentiary minister is sent by a court to deal with certain affairs with another nation, he always has definite and indefinite instructions. He is never authorized to change or alter any law of the nation to which he belongs; it is for the nation to do that, and not him.\(^{36}\)

Elder Taylor recognizes that the Apostles had to make decisions on how to interpret doctrines from the scriptures. He points out that prophets and Apostles have always had a discretionary power for administering the gospel in different times and circumstances. However, he affirms, “the alteration of baptism was not a discretionary thing for them; baptism was written law, positive and well defined.”\(^{37}\) He compares this to the fact that the Law of Moses was presented with the instruction that nothing was to be added or taken away (see Deuteronomy 4:2). He also refers to the commandment that nothing shall be added to the apocalyptic vision of John the Revelator (see Revelation 22:19-20).

In conclusion, Elder Taylor writes,

It is evident, according the preceding information, that this doctrine was of the highest importance. But, did the Apostles have the right or the authority to alter this doctrine? No. . . . That which God has instituted for the human family is without fault: His plan of salvation is perfect. God created the Gospel, and the Gospel has for its objective to guide the human family back to heaven. And no one has the right to change or alter its ordinances without incurring the wrath of God.\(^{38}\)

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Background to the Tenth Issue

After concluding to remain in France another year, Curtis Bolton continued the publication work that he and Elder Taylor began. He submitted copy for the 10th *Etoile* on April 1, 1852, noting in his journal that it was to be printed by Monday April 5.

At this time, Bolton had only 20 francs remaining, and that small amount belonged to the Perpetual Emigration Fund. He was summoned to London by the European Mission presidency to discuss the financial affairs of the French Mission at their mission conference. Consequently, the work of forwarding the tenth issue was left to Louis Bertrand as Bolton departed for England.

Bolton recorded the proceeds of his meeting with Franklin D. Richards in great detail. He wrote,

Towards evening, Elder Richards asked me to state my position. I told him I was owing for the publication of the B of M and Etoile over 44 pounds stg. [sterling]. That I myself had been living on borrowed money for over a month expecting every day a remittance which Elder Taylor had promised. He said they had raised in England very much money for the French and German missions just before Elder Taylor left and that many conferences were now in debt from 40 to 50 pounds stg. each for money they had borrowed and presented to Elder Taylor for the French mission. Elder Richards said that he himself had given 300 francs for the French mission. I told him as to myself, Elder Taylor never had furnished me a cent himself, except what he took again out of money raised for me in England, that I have spent as little money as any elder that has been sent out from the Valley, and that I have worn out all my outer and underclothes, and no means to obtain more. That Elder Taylor made no arrangements whatever for my being sustained in France before he left. He mentioned not a word of it and had left the 44 pounds stg. of the printers unpaid and left me penniless. And the few Saints in Paris too poor to supply the necessary means for my expenses. Elder Richards said Elder Taylor told him the French Mission would only want 25 pounds more and would then be out of debt and able to sustain itself. And that Elder Taylor ought to know and therefore England would do no more. I asked him if he would furnish me means to go to my post in Paris. He then gave me 5 pounds and we separated. I feel weary, weary, weary—both mind and body.  

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39 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in *Evans*, 86.
From the beginning of his missionary service, Curtis Bolton had worked to raise funds for himself. He recorded in his journal that he raised 850 francs toward the publication of the Book of Mormon, although he does not indicate how; he lived frugally, to the point of being without shoes or adequate clothing at times; and he sought contributions from wealthy individuals. John Taylor, however, was always more successful at procuring funds that Bolton. In fact, Elder Taylor accomplished something that few other missionaries did. During his entire mission, he functioned independently from the European Mission financial office in Liverpool. The financial ledger for the European Mission records no transactions with the French Mission until June 1853. On his many trips to England, Elder Taylor solicited donations for most of the publication costs for the Book of Mormon, the *Etoile*, and other pamphlets. He personally knew many of the British Saints, and had double distinction as an Apostle and an Englishman. Although Bolton’s journal provides ample evidence that John Taylor expected Bolton to provide for himself, on at least two occasions, Bolton wrote that he had run out of funds and was waiting for Elder Taylor to send money.

Evidently, the question of how the finances of the French Mission were to continue after Elder Taylor’s departure had not been sufficiently established. Without

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40 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 60.

41 See Curtis Bolton to John Taylor, January 10, 1852, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

42 The accounts ledger for the European Mission, 1850-1858, shows no financial information for the French Mission until June 1853, long after Taylor’s and Bolton’s departure from Europe. Evidently, Taylor handled all of the finances on his own. Without any of his personal records, there is no way to establish exactly what the expenditures were for the earliest years of the French and German missions. See European Mission Accounts Ledger, 1850-1858, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

43 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 44 and 65.
Elder Taylor's record showing how funds were distributed before his departure, modern scholars can only speculate what happened. Did the funds go to Germany, where there were even fewer members than in France to support the work? Did they cover some expenses for the sugar beet operation that Elder Taylor was preparing to send back to the Salt Lake Valley? Were they distributed to other French missionaries besides Bolton? Had Elder Taylor not anticipated that Bolton would continue publishing the Etoile? Our available records do not supply sufficient information for conclusion. What can be ascertained, however, is that Curtis Bolton was suddenly left to find other ways to finance the affairs of the Church in France. This new situation dramatically altered the publication timeline for the Etoile, as funds had to be raised to pay off printing debts and continue publishing.

Bolton returned to France, stopping to visit the branch in Le Hâvre. Finding all well there, he arrived in Paris on April 17 to find that Bertrand had not sent out the tenth issue of the Etoile. During Bolton’s absence, Bertrand had found other work and was no longer able to assist the mission full-time. Furthermore, members of the Paris branch of the Church still struggled to overcome differences, as Bolton reported speaking to them the next day on “the necessity of being united.”

Content of the Tenth Issue: February 1852

The lead article for the tenth issue of the Etoile is the translation of an epistle from Patriarch John Smith sent to Latter-day Saints throughout the world. This piece begins

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44 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 87.
45 Actual date of publication: April 1852
with the explanation, “My beloved brothers and sisters, the Spirit of God urges me to write this epistle to you and to give you some paternal counsel. I pray that God, my Eternal Father, will enlighten my mind, and inspire me with words and principles which will be to you as balm upon a wound, or as water to a thirsty man.”

John Smith proceeds to exhort the Latter-day Saints to follow the counsel of their priesthood leaders, to bring their children up in righteousness, to gather with the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley as soon as possible, bringing with them silver, gold, copper, machinery, and the poor who have not any other means by which they may join the body of the Saints.

He advises all to be submissive to their leaders, and charges all leaders to govern by love rather than oppression. Furthermore, he counsels Church members to avoid legal proceedings, to pay their tithes, and to remember the covenants that they have made in the House of the Lord. Elder Smith requests the prayers of all Church members for the redemption of Zion, for the elders abroad in their labors of preaching the gospel, and for their families which remain at home in their absence. By doing this, he promises, “. . . blessings will be poured out upon your heads, your intelligence will develop, the Spirit of God will rest upon you, and your years upon the earth will be numerous.”

After counseling the missionaries abroad to preach without ceasing, John Smith shares his testimony of the restoration of the gospel, of the Book of Mormon, and of the divine calling of his nephew, Joseph Smith, Jr. He calls upon all inhabitants of the earth to obey the gospel, to join themselves with Israel, and to keep the commandments, so that

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they and their dead might be saved and have part in the first resurrection. At this point, he pronounces a special patriarchal blessing upon all members of the Church:

I say to the Saints: By the virtue of the Holy Priesthood that I hold as patriarch, I bless you. Be faithful, and you will be blessed in all things; you will receive all the blessings which were promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the Lord will keep you in the palm of his hand, and no power will stop the work, for all that is directed against it shall fail.

The way will open that every Saint might come to Zion. Joy, peace, prosperity, and the Spirit of God will dwell in your homes, and the angels of the Lord will watch over you and guide you all throughout your life. . . . You will construct temples for the administration of ordinances for your dead; your names will be eternally known among the people of God, and your children will rise up one day and call you blessed.48

The sixth installment of “On the Necessity of New Revelation” follows John Smith’s patriarchal epistle. John Taylor begins this section of his work by further discussing the new covenant that the scriptures promise will be made in the last days. He quotes Ezekiel’s prophecy about this covenant, saying:

I . . . will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered. . . . And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. . . . and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant (Ezekiel 20:33-37). 49

Elder Taylor immediately points out that the Lord promises to make the covenant face to face, just as in times of old. He recalls that Moses and elders of Israel saw the face of God, and affirms that God has promised that He will reveal Himself the same way once more. John Taylor says, “Such scenes were assuredly marvelous, but the future will

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48 John Smith, “Epitre Patriarcale,” Etoile, February 1852, 149.

49 John Taylor, “De la necessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, February 1852, 150.
present us with even greater ones yet. And a man could not possibly better manifest his 
ignorance of the Holy Scriptures than to say: There cannot be any more revelations!”

To remind readers of what has previously been established, Elder Taylor lists 
what he has presented to this point: that a kingdom must be established, an ensign must 
be raised to the nations, a new covenant must be made, Israel must be gathered, 
Jerusalem must be rebuilt, the Jews must possess it, and the Lord will plead with his 
people face to face. “Revelations will lead to more revelations,” he says, “and the power 
of God will be fully manifest.”

John Taylor proceeds with a summary of some principal events that will 
immediately precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. He concludes this section by 
expressing his conviction that these events will be among the greatest revelations ever 
received. Elder Taylor acknowledges that some do not feel that the events will literally 
transpire. In response, he says, “This is why the scriptures also say that Jesus Christ will 
come as a thief in the night. Happy is he who has his lamp filled with oil and trimmed, 
and who will be ready to go before the bridegroom!”

The next article is the seventh and final installment of “The Voice of Joseph.” 
Orson Pratt begins by saying, “There is one thing which is part of the message of Joseph 
Smith which will settle the question of whether or not he was a true prophet.” The 
article quotes Doctrine and Covenants 84:62-72, which admonishes the Apostles to go 
into all the world, just as the Apostles of old, to preach the gospel. They are promised

50 John Taylor, “De la necessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, February 1852, 150.
that signs will follow those who believe them, such as casting out devils, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf. Elder Pratt declares, “Here in no uncertain terms this great modern prophet presents himself to the world, openly making a promise to any soul who believes in his message, a promise which no imposter would dare make without the least hope of success.”

At this point, he concludes by reviewing the twelve evidences he has employed to demonstrate Joseph Smith’s calling as a prophet. He closes by saying, “These are proofs of such force, that they will assure salvation to every soul that receives this message, and damnation to those who reject it.”

The final article in the tenth issue of the Etoile is the second section of “The Gift of the Holy Ghost.” John Taylor began this article but evidently could not complete it prior to his departure from France. Curtis Bolton takes up the topic where Elder Taylor left off by saying, “The gift of tongues is perhaps the least important of all of the spiritual gifts, and yet it is one of the most sought after. . . . The greatest gifts, the best and the most useful, remain unknown to simple observers.” After discussing some of the most spectacular gifts of the Spirit, such as the ministering of angels, Bolton states:

The Lord cannot always be recognized by the thunder of his voice or by the manifestation of his glory and of his power; and those who seek most avidly to see these things would be the least prepared to behold them. If the Lord had to manifest His power, like he did in the presence of the children of Israel, such people would be the first to cry out: “Let not God speak with us, lest we die.”

He reminds the Saints that spiritual gifts are not given to be displayed before the world. Instead, he affirms that gifts are given to men that they may accomplish the work God has given them. Bolton asks,

Where is it written that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or any of the minor prophets did miracles to prove the truth of their prophecies? They were, nonetheless, prophets of God, filled with the Spirit of God by which they predicted the events of the future with admirable precision. Did they predict all things? No, they only predicted determined events that God revealed to them with a specific objective, events which had a particular relationship with the literal descendants of Jacob.  

For another example of the appropriate demonstration of gifts of the Spirit, Elder Bolton refers to the Apostle Paul’s ministry. The New Testament bears record that Paul exhibited many gifts of the Spirit at various times. However, he did not use them to prove he was called of God. Bolton states,

This was a man powerfully clothed with the authority of God, and yet he never did any miracle to prove his divine mission. . . . He was often scourged by very religious people. If the objective of signs was to convince the unbelievers, why did he not paralyze the hands which were ready to strike him, so as to cause them to believe? . . . Paul understood his mission and the gift of the Holy Ghost which was in him, and he knew that the world would be judged by the preaching of the gospel.  

Consequently, when among the unbelievers, Paul was content to tell the story of his conversion and to testify that Jesus who was crucified was indeed the Savior of the world. Paul only worked miracles when he was with the faithful who understood that signs follow believers.

The last page of the tenth issue features another hymn text by Louis Bertrand. Bearing the simple title, “Cantique,” (Hymn), the words, particularly in the fifth verse, reflect messages that were presented in the preceding articles.

(Chœur)

Du Dieu saint d’Israël célébrons la puissance.
Réunissons nos cœurs, chantons à tout jamais.
Chantons avec transport ses dons et sa clémence.
Hosanna, gloire à Christ! Proclamons ses bienfaits.

(Chorus)

(Chœur)

1.
Que le monde s’égaie
Au milieu de la mort.
Par l’oubli qu’il essaie
De se cacher de son sort!
Le flot roule et s’avance
Il gronde avec fureur.
Monde sans espérance,
Tu ris. Malheur, Malheur!

1.

How the world makes itself merry
While in the midst of death.
It is by forgetting that the world tries
To hide itself from its destiny!
The stream rolls and moves forward
It growls with fury.
World without hope,
You laugh. For shame!

2.

On rit sur cette terre,
Seigneur, et nous pleurons!
On chante sa misère,
Et nous nous lamentons!
Absents de la patrie
Comment chanterions-nous?
Sion! Cité chérie,
Loin de toi rien n’est doux.

2.

(We laugh while on this earth,
Lord, and we cry!
We sing of its misery,
And we mourn!
Absent from our native land

133
How could we sing?
Zion! Dear city,
Nothing is sweet when we are far from you.)

3.
_Mais, malgré les tempêtes,_
_Jésus, souverain bien,_
_Par la voix des prophètes,_
_Sera notre soutien._
_Lui seul est la lumière_  
_Qui sur mon cœur reluit,_
_L’étoile matinrière_  
_Qui dissipe la nuit._

(But, despite the tempests,
Jesus, good sovereign,
By the voice of the prophets,
Will be our support.
He alone is the light
That shines upon my heart,
The morning star
That dissipates the night.)

4.
_Que sa main te bénisse,_
_Troupeau cheri de Dieu._
_Que son regard propice_  
_T’accompagne en tout lieu!_  
_Oui, Seigneur, par ta grace,_
_Conduis tes chéris enfants._
_Que l’éclat de ta face_  
_Sur nous brille en tout temps._

(May his hand bless you,
Beloved flock of God.
May his favorable eye
Accompany you in all places!
Yes, Lord, by thy grace
Guide thy beloved children.
May the splendor of thy face
Shine upon us all the time.)

5.
_L’esprit de prophétie_  
_PRÉDIT, AU GENRE HUMAIN,_  
_L’ESCLAVE DU MESSIE_  

134
Dans un temps fort prochain.
Tenez vos lampes prêtes,
Vierges, préparez-vous
Pour l'heure où les trompettes
Annonceront l'Époux.

(The spirit of prophecy
Predicts, for the human race,
The return of the Messiah
In a time very near.
Hold your lamps ready,
Virgins, prepare yourselves
For the hour when the trumpets
Announce the Bridegroom.)

Background to the Eleventh Issue

Curtis Bolton addressed the Parisian Saints in a council meeting three days after his return from the London conference. The members of his little congregation accepted the responsibility to provide for his living expenses after he explained the financial crisis of the mission. However, they eliminated the mission’s other funds for the time, including those for publications.

Nonetheless, Bolton desired to continue publishing the Etoile, in spite of continuing obstacles. He recorded:

I ought to hire a translator to help me with the Etoile as Bro. Bertrand cannot, or else the “Etoile” must cease to shine. How am I to pay him. The “Etoile” costs about 25 francs each time now more than it pays, and if I have to pay a translator it will cost that much more again. The Lord must provide.

On a positive note, new visitors began to attend the Latter-day Saint meetings, and a number of them requested baptism. Even with police frequently monitoring their

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61 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 87.
62 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 87.
little gatherings, Bolton continued to preach. He also commenced a serious search for a meeting hall that they could rent. Eventually, he found a hall in which the Saints could meet, offered to them free of charge if they could provide their own seating.\textsuperscript{63}

Through May and June, 1852, Bolton was completely occupied with ministerial affairs in Paris. He continued to preach and baptize, in addition to smoothing over difficulties between the members of the branch. Fortunately, on June 21, Bolton received 25 pounds from Samuel Richards which went towards the debt owed to the printer. Immediately, Bolton went to work on the next issue of the \textit{Etoile}. He indicates in his journal entry for June 22 that he hired Mr. Auge, a translator, to assist him for three or four days. Auge had worked with him seven months previously.\textsuperscript{64}

Bolton took the articles that Auge translated to Bertrand for a final proofreading. Unfortunately, the work was not good enough to print, and Bertrand had no time to correct the work himself. Furthermore, at this time, Bolton became aware that a number of the brethren in the branch felt that he had “taken his own head,” acting independently of them. Bertrand was among those who felt this was the case. However, Bolton worked to resolve these difficulties by visiting with members individually and by exhorting Bertrand to more fully assume his responsibilities as first counselor in the mission presidency.\textsuperscript{65} At length, the printer, Marc Ducloux, revised the content of the eleventh \textit{Etoile} for Bolton, and it was submitted for the press on July 12.

\textsuperscript{63} Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 91.

\textsuperscript{64} Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 97.

\textsuperscript{65} Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in \textit{Evans}, 98-99. In light of the fact that even those who had worked closely with Bolton for the previous year had difficulty with him at this time, it is possible that he had made administrative errors which are not mentioned in his journal.
Content of the Eleventh Issue: March 1852

The conclusion of John Taylor’s “On the Necessity of New Revelations” headlines the front page of the eleventh issue. Elder Taylor acknowledges that the events surrounding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, as discussed in the previous installment of this article, will be among the most difficult trials that the earth has ever passed through. Nonetheless, he asserts that there will be true prophets on the earth in addition to false ones. He reminds readers that in addition to all of the calamities, John the Revelator prophesied that an angel would proclaim the restoration of the eternal gospel.

Elder Taylor summarizes:

This angel, as I have already said, has come to the earth and the gospel has been restored in its ancient purity; the revelations and the prophecies are once again the heritage of the Saints; the truth, the certainty, the blessings, the authority, and the privileges are once again restored, and the human race is once again invited to listen to the servants of God and to give ear to the words of eternal life.

At this point, John Taylor begins the fifth and final chapter of this article, entitled, “Response to Some Objections against the Necessity of New Revelations.” He begins by quoting Revelation 22:18 and Deuteronomy 4:2, which forbid man from adding anything to the revelation or commandments as they have been recorded. To those who imply that these verses invalidate the claim of modern revelation, Elder Taylor points out: “It is perfectly clear that God did not say that He will never speak again, but that man must not add to His word.”

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66 Probable publication date: July 1852
67 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, March 1852, 162.
68 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, March 1852, 163.
Elder Taylor then addresses those who claim that the instructions given to the Church in the scriptures are sufficient and no new ones are needed. He responds:

Now that, for example, is a very peculiar way of thinking. The primitive church had living Apostles, living prophets, a living God, a living religion; it possessed the gift of revelation and of prophecy and had in the end, certitude. As we have already noted, in ancient times, it was always necessary to instruct people according to their needs and their particular position.  

Elder Taylor writes how some say that gifts, signs, miracles, and prophecy were given to the early Church that Christianity might be established. These people claim that spiritual gifts were no longer necessary once that was accomplished. To counter this argument, John Taylor quotes the Apostle Paul, who said that these gifts were given for the perfecting of the Saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ (see Ephesians 4:12.) Elder Taylor points out with some asperity that Paul does not say these gifts were given for the establishment of the Church. He asks,

Have we all come to the unity of the faith? On the contrary, the world is divided and subdivided into an infinite number of parties, sects, opinions, and beliefs. If God has granted that some be prophets, they must necessarily prophesy, and we will then have new revelations. Oh! How much greater is the wisdom of God for regulating the affairs of his Church than the notions, the theories, and the beliefs of men!  

Elder Taylor refers to Joel’s promise, quoted on the day of Pentecost, which says that the Holy Ghost would be poured out upon all flesh (see Acts 2:17). He also quotes Mark 16:15, which says, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Elder Taylor emphasizes that the gifts of the Spirit will be poured out upon those who accept this true gospel, and that the gifts will not be present when any other

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69 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, March 1852, 163.

70 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, March 1852, 164.
form of the gospel is preached. Consequently, he reasons, those who deny the gift of prophecy do not follow the true gospel.

He comments,

Certain ministers have gravely remarked to me that it would be extremely dangerous to continually have revelations of prophecy and manifestations of the power of God in the Church. It really is too bad that these ministers did not live in the time of the Apostles, for they could have given Jesus Christ and His disciples instructions in this area so as to stop them from teaching such things. As for myself, I have always understood that Jesus and his Apostles were the teachers of the pastors, and not their students. . . . Poor Humanity! Poor doctors of a world which calls itself Christian! Are they so blinded by their pride and presumption that they desire to put God out of the question and present themselves as the only interpreters of the Gospel, of the Word, and of the designs of God, with their jargon, with all their divisions, their contestations, and their quarrels?71

In conclusion, he states:

If one accepts the testimony of the Bible, I believe that I have amply demonstrated in this treaty that we will have new revelations, whether men believe it or not. And “. . . if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”72

Curtis Bolton’s conclusion of “The Gift of the Holy Ghost” appears next. Bolton elaborates at some length on the fact that signs have never been employed by those who preach the gospel as a method to convert their followers. He emphasizes:

We see, by this passage in the Bible [Mark 16:15-19], that Jesus Christ never said to his disciples: “Go ye into all the world, and work miracles, and those who believe in your miracles will be saved;” but he gave them the mission “to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” promising that those who believed in their teaching and who would obey the ordinance of baptism by immersion, would be saved.73

72 John Taylor, “De la nécessité de nouvelles revelations,” Etoile, March 1852, 166.
He counsels members to come to know God through their personal prayers, to follow the counsel of the Book of Mormon, to pray with their families, to ask God to bless their works and their families, to be virtuous and pure, to have integrity, and to keep the commandments of God. He promises that if they do these things, they will be more capable of discerning between truth and error, and between the things of men and the things of God.

In the final paragraph, he implores:

No, my brothers, do not seek gifts with the goal of bringing unbelievers to the faith, but endeavor to preach the first principles of the Gospel. . . . Do you desire to be powerful to convince the world of the truth of the gospel which you have received? “Preach nothing but repentance unto this generation.” Do you desire to enjoy the Spirit of God, and have intelligence flow into you so that you might confound false doctors and the wise? “Preach nothing but repentance to this generation.” And especially, do not teach doctrines that you do not understand yourself. 74

The first half of Elder Taylor's final contribution to the Etoile, "Sons of God," appears next. This article serves as a finale to the doctrinal teachings contained in all of his preceding articles. He extracts the title of this work from the writings of John the Beloved, which state: "He came unto his own, but his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:11-13).

The focus of Elder Taylor's argument is that one must earn the right to become a son of God by believing in Him and by receiving the true gospel. After a brief discussion on the meaning of being heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, Elder Taylor states:

"Few people have an exact idea of the depth, the dignity, and the glory of this subject,

which, when it is completely understood, tends to enlarge the heart and to increase the view of intelligence which gives us vast and exact ideas of Jehovah's plan, and additionally, justifies the designs of God with regard to man."\textsuperscript{75}

John Taylor asserts that men everywhere would embrace this doctrine, the different churches and ideologies that divide the world would cease to exist. He postulates, "For if God instructs a man, he will teach him the truth; and if he were to teach two churches, they would no longer be two, but one."\textsuperscript{76}

At this point, Elder Taylor begins an idea which he will more completely develop in the last installment of the article in the twelfth issue. He says, "There is a material difference between a servant and a son: a father feels bound to his son by paternal bonds. It is not the same with a servant. A father cares for his with tenderness and filial affection, while all he claims from his servant is his work, and pays him for his services."\textsuperscript{77}

The last piece in the eleventh issue comes from Curtis Bolton. Entitled, "Visit to England," the article includes a summary of his recent voyage to London for a conference with the other missionaries in England and Europe. He describes the meetings the missionaries attended in which they reported on their respective fields of labor. After recounting an increase of anti-Mormon preaching in England, he comments: "What foolishness to hear men falsely accuse a church of which they know nothing, absolutely


nothing, of which they have not even read the publications.” He concludes by testifying,

I say, in the name of Him who sent me, every arm lifted against this work will perish. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will always advance and will always grow until—flattening all lies, all falsehoods, and all that causes confusion—it will finish by filling the whole earth with the true knowledge of God and Jesus Christ.79

At the close of this issue, Bolton announces that the first part of the Joseph Smith History will appear in the twelfth Etoile; however, this goal is not accomplished, despite evidence that Bolton did indeed begin translating the work.80

Background to the Twelfth Issue

In the last part of July and the first weeks of August, Curtis Bolton visited branches in the mission away from Paris. He preached in a few cities where the elders had not previously labored, and spent two weeks in the Channel Islands visiting the Saints.

In the third week of August, he was summoned to England to visit with Samuel Richards about the problems in Paris. Louis Bertrand had sent letters to Richards, accusing Bolton of inappropriate conduct. Bolton was able to defend himself and was given a companion, Elder Hart, to help resolve the difficulties with the Saints in Paris. However, Richards reminded Bolton that he would receive no financial aid from the

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80 Bolton’s diary entry for Wednesday, December 1, 1852, explains that he has spent the previous two days “translating Joseph's history into French to be published in the Etoile.”
British Saints and also advised Bolton to cease his work on the *Etoile* if it interfered with his other responsibilities.

After his meetings in London, Bolton returned to the Channel Islands for another month. Then, on September 23, he left the Islands to return to France. He records in his journal,

> As the steamer proceeded from Jersey, my mind turned naturally upon France the seat of my mission. More especially upon the situation of the church in Paris. The improbability of getting them all together to instruct them and try to get them into the good road again. My thoughts were most excessively painful to me. . . . But knowing with a positive certainty that I myself am all right in the sight of God. My whole trust I put in the Lord that all these troubles will end for the advancement of His Kingdom and good of His church. So that by the time I reached France at Granville I had a cheerful countenance again.  

After a week in Le Havre, Bolton returned to face the problems in Paris. Elder Hart had been working there for a month, but once again, Bolton had to visit with the members individually to work out the difficulties. He learned that the reports sent to Samuel Richards by Louis Bertrand consisted of hearsay that that been exaggerated out of proportion. He persuaded Bertrand to send a letter to England which denied all of the charges which had been made previously.

In early October, Bolton and Elder Woodard, a missionary who had been laboring in Switzerland, felt that the branch in Paris needed spiritual revitalization in consequence of the many conflicts of the preceding months. Consequently, they suspended the membership of the branch until all would submit for rebaptism. On Sunday, 10 October, members of the branch journeyed to an island in the Seine River and held a baptismal

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service. Afterwards, Bolton reports that they were “happy as crickets, in full love and fellowship one with another.”

Curtis Bolton then sent Elder Hart on a mission to Liverpool, to deliver the letter from Bertrand which rescinded all charges against Bolton and to “have a serious talk about aid to [the French] mission and sustaining the ‘Etoile’ etc. etc. etc.” Clearly, Elder Bolton was determined to not let the *Etoile* die out prior to the end of his mission.

He continued instructing the Saints in Paris and translated materials for the anticipated twelfth issue of the *Etoile*. Additionally, acting on behalf of the Church, he purchased the rights for Bertrand’s translation of “Divine Authority.” This work had been serialized in the *Etoile* as “The Voice of Joseph.” With full possession of the rights, the missionaries could now print it as a separate pamphlet. By early December, Bolton indicated that a Brother Dehon was helping him write out translations of the articles in preparation for sending them to press.

On December 15, Bolton recorded that he was “reading proof and correcting” for the last issue of the *Etoile*. Three days later, Marc Ducloux informed him that there was not enough material to fill the entire issue, so Bolton wrote one more article. Bolton noted in his journal entry for December 19: “A most busy day. One article for the *Etoile*. Mr. Ducloux pronounced good enough French without one single correction of even a letter, although written after 10 p.m. during the night.”

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82 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 112.
83 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 113.
84 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 121.
85 Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 122.
That same night, December 19, Curtis Bolton dined with Ducloux and his family. Afterwards, a number of the brethren from the Branch came to help him pack his books and papers, as he was leaving to visit the Channel Islands. However, Bolton felt that his mission in France was over and that he would not be returning to Paris. His impression proved to be correct. After visiting the Channel Islands for the next six weeks, he went to England, and then returned to the Salt Lake Valley.

John Taylor had the vision to produce a periodical and was able to raise funds enough to get the project well established. Louis Bertrand provided invaluable translation assistance and a significant amount of material to be printed in it. But in the end, it was Curtis Bolton’s dogged perseverance that kept the Etoile alive through its twelfth issue.

Content of the Twelfth Issue: April 1852

The final Etoile commences with the conclusion of John Taylor’s “Sons of God.” Resuming with the idea that there is a material difference between a son and a servant, Elder Taylor elaborates:

A father reveals his plans to his son, but does not share them with his servant. A son inherits the property of his father; but it is not so for the servant, who, once he has received his wages, can expect nothing else from his master. From that, the remark from Paul: “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Galatians 4:7). From there also, the remark of the Savior: “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15). . . . Christ had revelations and his disciples also had them, because he revealed to them the will of his Father; . . . Such is the great demarcation that exists between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the different existing religious sects. Take

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86 Actual date of publication: December 1852
away the principle of revelation, and it is deprived of its beauty and stripped of its glory.\textsuperscript{87}

Elder Taylor then refers to 1 John 3:1-2, which says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Elder Taylor emphasizes that such an understanding only came to John and the early Saints through the revelations which they had received.

He acknowledges that many in the Christian world since the time of John have desired to serve God, but without proper knowledge, they can never be more than servants. This leads to Elder Taylor’s emphatic conclusion:

Despite the piety and the sincerity of the children of men, it is necessary that they receive baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins; they must receive the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost by those whom God has ordained to do so. Then, they would be able to become the Sons of God, take part in the glories of the gospel, and receive an inheritance of the Celestial Kingdom of God and his Christ.\textsuperscript{88}

At the close of the eleventh issue of the \textit{Etoile}, Elder Bolton announced that excerpts from the Joseph Smith History would appear in the next edition. Evidently, he did not complete the translation. In its place, he composed a number of separate messages.

The first of these items announces the creation of a second Latter-day Saint periodical in French, \textit{Le Réflecteur} (The Reflector), to be published in Geneva by Elder

\textsuperscript{87} John Taylor, “\textit{Les Fils de Dieu},” \textit{Etoile}, April 1852, 177.

\textsuperscript{88} John Taylor, “\textit{Les Fils de Dieu},” \textit{Etoile}, March 1852, 179.
T. B. H. Stenhouse. This periodical will include news items from the Salt Lake Valley and doctrinal articles “drawn from the best authors in the Church.” Thomas Stenhouse had proven to be a loyal friend to Bolton during the difficult last months of Bolton’s mission. Consequently, it is little surprise that Bolton describes the project in glowing terms and finishes the announcement by exclaiming, “Greetings and success to The Reflector!”

Second, he includes a translation of the Word of Wisdom as contained in Section 81 of the Doctrine and Covenants at that time. (Currently it can be found in Doctrine and Covenants 89.) Following the scripture text, Bolton comments: “God has shown us the way to preserve health and to be able to escape the scourges and the judgments of these times, just as he did for the children of Israel in ancient Egypt, and we have his promise.” He exhorts the Saints to follow the revelation’s guidelines so as to extend their lives and to gain the promise of “hidden treasures of knowledge” (Doctrine and Covenants 89:19).

The longest article of the twelfth issue is an original piece by Louis Bertrand, entitled, “Credo of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” The introduction reveals his purpose for writing:

Since joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and especially since the political and religious journals of Paris have become occupied with the Mormons, I have often been asked: "What is Mormonism?" In my eyes, it is the

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89 Bolton wrote in his journal on Wednesday, August 25, 1852, “Elder Stenhouse left at 7 for Paris. I received much consolation from his conversation and prayers. God bless him. He and God have alone stood my firm friends since Elder Taylor left.” Curtis Edwin Bolton, as cited in Evans, 105.

90 Curtis Bolton, untitled contribution, Etoile, April 1852, 179.


greatest religious movement that has ever begun on earth. Such is my invariable response.

But, the asker pursues, "What are the general doctrines that your church professes? Explain to us, for example, what you understand redemption to be, etc. etc. It is with the goal of responding to these numerous questions that I will give to our readers an abstract of our religious beliefs."

The article briefly describes basic Latter-day Saint topics including the Plan of Salvation, Jesus as the Messiah, the Restoration of the gospel, the Fall, agency, repentance, baptism, gifts of the Spirit, the Apostasy, the Book of Mormon, and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. These topics had already appeared in the *Etoile*, particularly in the writings of John Taylor. However, the value of this article is its concise summary of basic Latter-day Saint beliefs and doctrines. Furthermore, it shows that Louis Bertrand had acquired a sound gospel understanding and was capable of effectively preaching the gospel.

The last two messages in the twelfth issue list no name in a byline. However, the content and the style of writing indicate that Bolton was most likely the author. The first of these messages describes the emigration of Latter-day Saints from all parts of the world to the Salt Lake Valley. The author says, "The gathering of the Latter-day Saints in the valleys of Deseret Territory, in the middle of the Rocky Mountains of North America, is a providential fact that excites, at this moment . . . the attention and the astonishment of the civilized world." Bolton explains that thousands of men, women,
and children are joyfully leaving their homes around the world and joining with the body of the Latter-day Saints. The reason, he explains, is the promise of an ideal society in which to raise children and improve their lives. He extols the virtues of this society:

Among the people who live in the valleys of Deseret, there are no drunkards, no players, no robbers, nor idlers; one never hears any imprecations nor any song which might hurt the most modest ear. One never sees those miserable degraded women who infest all Christian cities. There are no bad examples: and is it not the example which can lose or save youth?97

After listing what is not seen in Deseret, Bolton describes what may be found there:

It is in this magnificent valley, among this hardworking and wise people, that a race prepares itself to accomplish the work of the Lord, a race of men who are pure, prudent, uncomplicated and full of faith, like the ancient prophets. It is in view of obtaining this celestial blessing and this glorious privilege for their children that the Latter-day Saints have consistently sought over the last 22 years, a solitary place where they can halt their steps and build the kingdom of God on the earth.98

The second unattributed item, bearing the title "To Our Friends," serves as a summary of the Etoile's first volume and a declaration of what readers can expect in later editions. The writer states,

In all that we have published up until this day, we have labored, as one can see, to make known the doctrines of our Church, and we have hardly occupied ourselves with that which is happening in the Great Salt Lake Valley. We will continue to follow the same direction, not without motive, leaving to the Reflecteur the responsibility of the interesting news from that far country.99

97 Unattributed, "Le Rassemblement," Etoile, April 1852, 190.
Apparently, Bolton hoped that the French Mission would continue to publish the *Etoile*. After renewing the previous month’s pledge to print Joseph Smith’s history, he declares,

> We will also continue to furnish our readers with the spiritual food that they find in the celestial doctrines that God has revealed anciently to man, and that he reveals again for the salvation of man, and we say, ‘Happy and blessed he who reads, who receives, and who follows the holy laws of God that are revealed to his prophet.’

**Issues Eight through Twelve Considered Together**

Curtis Bolton faced opposition from every side through the publication of the last five issues. Governmental obstacles held up the eighth issue, while uncertainty about the future of his mission in France surrounded the ninth. The tenth issue was delayed because Louis Bertrand could no longer assist him, and financial difficulties hampered the eleventh and twelfth issues. Nevertheless, Bolton persevered and brought the first volume of the *Etoile* to completion.

The missionaries use bolder language in the last five issues than in the previous seven. After carefully preparing readers to understand foundational Latter-day Saint theology in earlier installments, the conclusions of the doctrinal articles are direct and powerful. John Taylor, in particular, unleashes criticism on those who reject Latter-day Saint doctrines and affirms scriptural mandate for his beliefs. Curtis Bolton, also, openly comments about sin and corruption in a so-called Christian world.

Despite the assertion in the twelfth issue that the *Etoile* will continue, attentive readers sense that the publication is drawing to a close. Few new articles appear in the

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last few issues, while previous works conclude. Additionally, the announcement of the Reflector indicates a new focal point for French language missionary publications. Nevertheless, the content of the Etoile remains strong and vibrant to the end.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

The *Etoile du Désert* offers a unique view of the earliest organized Latter-day Saint missionary efforts in France. Readers perceive the periodical’s historical significance as they consider the content of the periodical, the lives of its authors, and the circumstances under which it was created.

A study of the *Etoile*’s content reveals patterns of meaning beneath the words on the page. For example, John Taylor’s writings in the *Etoile* are a carefully crafted system designed to introduce readers to fundamental Latter-day Saint theology. His articles carefully guide readers from intellectual attitudes and religious dispositions of the time to a basic gospel understanding, acquainting them with the Book of Mormon, priesthood authority, modern revelation, the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel, and eternal progression. The articles easily stand alone, each one a powerful treatise worthy of individual consideration. However, they mesh together into a cohesive whole, demonstrating careful planning and unity of purpose.

While the contributions of Curtis Bolton and Louis Bertrand do not fit so easily into a discernible structure, they also provide valuable insights. Curtis Bolton’s early submissions to the *Etoile* place the early French Mission in context with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Utah, and his later contributions give readers a feel for the progress of the Church as it developed in France. Louis Bertrand’s translations
demonstrate his appreciation for the writings of Orson Pratt and his affinity for intellectual “proofs” of Latter-day Saint theology, while his original contributions reflect the gospel understanding of a French native and a new convert rather than that of an English or American missionary. Furthermore, the hymn texts Bertrand wrote reveal gospel subjects that were particularly appealing to him and provide a glimpse into the earliest worship services of the Church in France.

The *Etoile* gains additional historical value when readers recognize that it was written to address the needs of the French Mission at the moment of publication. It is one half of a dialogue: the voice of priesthood leaders responding to the circumstances the Church faced as each new issue was published. As a result, the *Etoile du Désert* was a tool for shepherding new converts and providing them with a foundational gospel education.

Furthermore, the *Etoile* demonstrates the missionaries’ desire to interest the broadest audience possible in their message by addressing a variety of religious and intellectual viewpoints. For religiously inclined readers, doctrinal articles provided the Latter-day Saint perspective on theological matters. Writings by John Taylor in the early issues approached readers inclined to philosophy, while the article “Discovery of Ancient Ruins in Northern California” offered a scientific basis for the Book of Mormon’s claims of early advanced civilization in the Western Hemisphere. Articles on the development of the Territory of Deseret, and the gathering of the Saints to it, were crafted to appeal to those fascinated by the westward expansion of the United States.

For all of these reasons, the content of the *Etoile du Désert* is of primary importance to those studying the efforts of John Taylor, Curtis Bolton, and Louis
Bertrand toward the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in France. The periodical brings to light early Church writings, some of which were only published in French, and provides a vivid example of mid-nineteenth century Latter-day Saint proselytizing.

A study of the *Etoile’s* historical context reveals that the timing of the missionaries’ arrival in France was critical to the accomplishment of the work they undertook. They could not have left the body of the Saints any sooner due to the pressing needs of settling in the Great Basin; however, had they arrived in France any later, the political climate might have prevented them from publishing the *Etoile*. Various aspects of the *Etoile’s* content reflect the missionaries’ efforts to avoid governmental difficulties while proceeding with their publication activities.

The fact that John Taylor decided to represent the Church in print demonstrates his awareness of the cultural climate in mid-nineteenth century France. The press played a critical role in shaping the nation from the Revolution to that day, and continued to wield a powerful influence for change in French society. In light of the national appetite for religious reading material, coupled with ever-increasing literacy rates, no better forum was available to the missionaries for introducing the French public to the far-off land of Deseret and the principles of the gospel upon which it was founded.

This being said, it should be noted that printed preaching has distinct disadvantages in comparison to the spoken word. Masterful as his written sermons were, John Taylor could not be sure those who read the *Etoile* understood the message he desired to express. Consequently, the absence of dialogue between teacher and learner limited the converting power of the *Etoile’s* messages and underscores the fact that no
teaching tool can ever replace the teacher. Clearly, John Taylor and Curtis Bolton went to France to preach the gospel. The publication of the *Etoile* was only one means to that end and was not the primary objective of their missionary journey. Nonetheless, the periodical allowed them to make the best of a difficult situation and to extend their influence farther than they could have otherwise.

Consequently, the *Etoile du Désert* reveals personal and spiritual development in the men who collaborated to produce it. The very existence of the *Etoile* is evidence of John Taylor’s personal progress. He never did obtain a command of the French language, despite attempts to learn at the beginning of his mission. The creation of a publishing ministry remedied the situation to a certain extent. As soon as Taylor’s thoughts could be translated into French and printed, he possessed a powerful preaching voice once again. His writings reflect years of preaching experience and a practical knowledge of how to introduce readers to the Latter-day Saint message. Taylor’s mission to France plunged him into missionary circumstances unlike any he had previously experienced, yet the *Etoile* allowed him to partially overcome the difficulty of being a foreigner with limited language ability. The experience prepared him for the next challenging publishing endeavor he undertook for the Church: writing and printing *The Mormon*, a New York newspaper in defense of Latter-day Saint beliefs.

The *Etoile* also serves as a measuring stick for the personal and spiritual growth of John Taylor’s missionary companion, Curtis Bolton. His earliest contributions to the periodical reflect his precise nature and love of detail, as they provide more facts than instruction. Over the twelve issues of the *Etoile*, however, Bolton’s offerings to the periodical demonstrate his developing prowess as a preacher and his growth as a
priesthood leader. By the last five issues, he has evolved from being an Apostle’s junior companion to the president of the French Mission. His later writings temper his details with testimony and display a greater desire to teach than to merely report events.

The *Etoile* turned out to be his only publishing venture, even though he continued to labor for the Church throughout his life. Following his mission to France, he returned to Salt Lake City and worked as a teacher and a court clerk. Eventually, he served settlement missions in Southern Utah until his death.

Louis Bertrand’s contributions to the *Etoile du Désert* reveal spiritual growth as well. In the earliest issues of the *Etoile*, Bertrand functioned primarily as a translator and any contributions he made were made under a pen name. By the last issue, however, he had contributed several hymn texts and a powerful article summarizing core beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The tone and style of that piece prefigure Bertrand’s greatest contribution to the Latter-day Saint cause in print: his book *Mémoires d’un Mormon* (*Memoirs of a Mormon*), a history of the Latter-day Saints which was published in France.

Bertrand emigrated to Utah in 1855. After four years in the Salt Lake Valley, he was called to return to France in an attempt to keep the French Mission moving forward. By that time, however, Napoléon III was at the zenith of his power and Bertrand could not obtain recognition for the Church. In spite of this, Bertrand wrote many articles about the Latter-day Saints that appeared in Parisian newspapers. Furthermore, *Mémoires d’un Mormon* attracted considerable attention following its publication.
Unfortunately, none of this publicity amounted to a significant amount of growth in the Church. Disappointed, Bertrand eventually returned to Utah. He died in Salt Lake City in 1875.

Without a doubt, historians continue to desire concrete statistical data about the early years of the French Mission. How many joined the Church? How large did the branches of the Church grow? How many readers subscribed to the Etoile? What was its impact on the lives of those who read it? While the Etoile provides no help for this type of historical analysis, it does offer readers the opportunity to perceive some thoughts and concerns of early mission leaders. Consequently, the Etoile is an intimate and personal time capsule that transports those who read it into the very moment it was written.

Instead of merely teaching readers about the early French Mission, it takes them directly to it.

John Taylor and Curtis Bolton were among the earliest foreign-language, foreign-culture missionaries sent out by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Louis A. Bertrand was one of the first native French Latter-day Saints. Together, these men embraced the work of preaching the gospel in France through the medium of print. Upon his return to Utah from Europe, John Taylor said, “We have filled [the Etoile] with all that is good for the people to read, that it may be a standing work for years to come.”¹

The Etoile du Désert reveals the intersection of their talents, experiences, and convictions, demonstrating that they met the language, cultural, and governmental challenges facing them with ingenuity and determination. Their work remains as an enduring portrait of the second and third years of the French Mission.

¹ Journal of Discourses, 1:21.
APPENDIX ONE

MAP OF THE FRENCH MISSION 1851-1852
## APPENDIX TWO

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Consciemment, nous ferons paraître de temps à autre un cahier pareil à celui-ci, qui non-seulement réalisera le but que je me proposais, mais en outre donnera les nouvelles que nous sommes à même de recevoir de la Vallée du Grand-Lac-Salé, État du Désert.

Comme, jusqu’à ce jour, il n’y a eu peu de publications françaises sur notre doctrine et sur nos principes, qui, dès lors, sont peu connus dans ce pays, nous avons pensé que notre recueil y faciliterait l’expansion de la vérité et donnerait, à ceux qui sont désireux de l’obtenir, la connaissance de nos conditions morales, religieuses et sociales.


Notre publication aura de plus l’avantage de donner de l’instruction et quelques consolations à nos frères d’Italie, de Suisse, des îles de la Manche qui entendent la langue française, aussi bien qu’à nos frères de France.

Nous n’avons pas besoin de dire que nous sommes et que nous voulons demeurer entièrement étrangers à toutes les questions et affaires politiques de ce pays. Car notre religion nous fait un devoir d’obéir, sans réserve, aux lois, aux ordonnances, et aux règlements de police, régnant tout pays où nous demeurons.

Jost Taylor.
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