

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

The following letter has been received by a prominent gentleman of this city and will be read with interest by those who are familiar with the efforts of the non-"Mormon" writer to present our cause in its proper light to the eastern public:

HYDE PARK, Mass.,
April 8, 1886.

HONORED AND DEAR SIR: Please accept my acknowledgment of yours of the 30th ult., commendatory of the sentiments expressed in a recent letter of mine to Elder James H. Hart. That my feelings of sympathy for your people, and of indignation against your oppressors, are not of recent growth, is evident, though more restrained in my published letter of 1882 to "The Massachusetts Members of Congress" on "The Mormon Problem," and "Plural Marriage." At that time the malice of your enemies, though threatening, was not so crooked, nor the fires of persecution so lurid, as they have since developed.

But the conduct of your people under the flagrant outrages perpetrated upon them in the sacred name of law and justice has been, so far as I know, so patient, submissive, and Christ-like, that my sympathy for them has broadened and deepened. Though now they mourn, they, as I believe, will yet be comforted; and I trust that you and they will receive the blessing long ago pronounced upon those who are reviled, and persecuted, and lied about because of their religion.

It is an ancient saying confirmed by many experiences, and which, your present suffering will yet further corroborate, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church; and the reason of it, to me, is evident; viz.: that the good elements in human nature survive and outgrow the bad. Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Tyranny is transient. The power that daily overturned negro slavery in the United States, sanctioned and upheld though it was by Congress and the Supreme Court, will yet, as I believe, invisible and divine in its workings, annul the statutes, and reverse the judgments that now oppress your people. Hoping that that morning light may soon dawn, I am sincerely yours for freedom and right living.

ALFRED E. GILES.

We have the assurance that many thoughtful and impartial men and women look upon the persecution of the Latter-day Saints under the name of prosecution, and the attitude maintained in regard to this intolerant crusade, very much in the same light as they are viewed by the author of the foregoing letter. It is a fact that our people have borne the outrages to which they have been subjected with a patience and forbearance that should gain the admiration of good people everywhere. No others would have submitted to what they have endured without violent resistance.

It is easy to talk about the enforcement of the laws and the duty of citizens to support them. But the "Mormons" have put up with outrages foreign to the law and scandalous to the administration of justice. They might have resisted lawless intrusions and the repeated violations of the rights of domicile. They might have met violence with violence. Few persons would have endured what they have without retaliation. But they have not only yielded to legal authority, they have submitted to usurpations and excesses in the execution of the law, which prove their willingness to suffer wrong rather than do wrong.

Their conduct during the vindictive prosecutions that have been the special work of the courts for some time, has demonstrated to those who have watched their course that they are a simple and truthful people, instead of the crafty and perjured set that their villainous defamers have represented. The success of the prosecuting officers has been consequent upon the information extracted from the wives, daughters, brothers and sons of men accused of living with their plural families, and in numerous instances from the open admissions of the accused themselves.

Many have been, no doubt, "unwilling witnesses," that term having been used by the courts as one of reproach. What else could they be expected to be? When men's families are forced before tribunals to give testimony against the dearest friends they have on earth, how much willingness can be anticipated in their evidence? But their truthfulness has been the chief dependence of the officers, grand juries and courts which have compelled their attendance. In numerous instances by lying they could have screened their husbands and fathers from fine and imprisonment. But on their unsophisticated and innocent character has the prosecution relied for evidence. And the cunning and craft of the questioners have been exhibited strong contrast to their unsuspicious and straightforward nature and conduct. This must be perceived by the critical onlooker and the facts will push themselves to the notice of the public.

The words of comfort and cheer that are contained in the letter will be duly appreciated. They are in accord with the whisperings of that Spirit which guides the Latter-day Saints in the midst of their afflictions. The sure triumph of truth buoys them up, and the certainty that all that is now happening will strengthen their cause and lead to the very opposite of what its enemies intend, stimulates them to

bear with equanimity the trials which threaten to disturb them. Justice will be done them in due time. But they think far more of the work in which they are engaged than of their personal condition, difficulties, suffering or prospective victories. For that they are willing to endure all things, and because of that willingness, which is practical, not merely theoretical and is manifest in their actions, the present crusade, like all the efforts of their enemies, is bound to prove a failure.

For our vindication we can afford to wait. We have seen the enemies of our cause spread themselves in boastful attitudes over imagined conquests, to go down to deserved infamy or drop out of notice time and time again. It will be so once more. And all that they do will tend to give prominence to the cause to which we have devoted our lives and labors and spread in the world the principles we advocate. And the just and good will come to understand us and our faith, and the result will be the final triumph of Zion and the establishment of righteousness and peace.

MORE LETTER STEALING.

As it appears certain that neither District Attorney Dickson, Judge Zane nor the grand jury of this district will pay any attention to the robbery of the United States mails, which has come to public notice through the publication in the Salt Lake Tribune of a letter sent by Mr. Fordham of Franklin, Idaho, to Mr. Best of this city, which the latter never received and which there is every reason to believe was stolen from the mails, it becomes necessary for the public protection that some measures be adopted to obtain a thorough official investigation into this and similar outrages.

We have recently heard of three definite cases similar to the Fordham-Best affair—minus the publication of the stolen letter. It is not, or has not been for several months past safe to send important letters by mail from Idaho postoffices to Salt Lake City. We are not yet prepared to say whether the stealing has occurred on the Utah & Northern, on the Utah Central, or at the postoffice in this city. But there is no doubt that letters containing money, and others conveying intelligence of great moment both to parties seceding and those who should have received them, have been duly posted and have never reached their destination. One test letter at least has met with this fate during the past two weeks. The facts of the mailing and of the non-reception have been fully established. No doubts remain concerning them. There are thieves at work somewhere along those lines or at this end of the service.

The failure of the prosecuting officer to inquire into the theft of the letter of Mr. Best is quite ominous. It indicates that the public need not look for help in that direction. The courts seem so absorbed in the profitable business of hunting down, and punishing to the utmost extent, "Mormons" who are endeavoring to support and care for their plural families, that there is no time left to waste upon mere robberies of the United States mails. Breaking up "Mormon" homes and impoverishing "Mormon" families, is such congenial employment for the minions of the law that the mails can be robbed with impunity.

We bring this matter forward, supporting the efforts of our contemporary the Salt Lake Herald, not with the expectation that the Best letter thief will be prosecuted, or that the infamous sheet that received its contents to the world, will be held legally accountable. Those whose duty it is to attend to this seem too much afraid of the Tribune lash to move in the proper way. But we do it to call the attention of the postal authorities to this condition of affairs. A searching investigation is called for. The letter thieves should be pursued and prosecuted. The public should be protected. These anti-"Mormon" fanatics, legal and judicial, may see no importance in this crime compared with the enormity of a "Mormon's" living with and acknowledging two wives, but there are some officials in the country who are not weighed down with a single idea, and can be moved upon to take action against this crying evil.

This is a matter of public moment. It affects, or is likely to affect, all classes of the community. If important letters from "Mormons" can be abstracted—no matter on what pretext, the robbery will not stop at that. It will be extended as the thieves may consider safe and profitable. It is time that this was stopped. Will the local postal authorities move in this matter, or will other steps have to be taken to prosecute the letter-stealers?

W. H. SHEARMAN

DEFINES HIS POSITION IN RELATION TO THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS AND THEIR RELIGION.

Twice in my life have I sacrificed every earthly consideration and endured hatred, obloquy and ostracism rather than be untrue to my convictions; and now, for the third time, conscience compels me to take the same stand under more difficult and trying circumstances than before.

So long as the "Mormons" were riding the flood-tide of prosperity and power I kept silent. But I was born with sympathies for the "under dog in the fight," and now, in the day of this people's affliction, my feelings are enlisted in their behalf. The time is approaching when every man will have to take a stand for or against them, and it is not in my nature to wait until forced to do what conscience and judgment approve. So I deem it best—regardless of consequences—to clearly define my position.

One of the ancient Apostles advised the former-day Saints to be ready to give to every man a reason of the hope that was in them. I neither hope nor expect to be able to give reasons for my belief in the truth of what is called "Mormonism" that will satisfy many men, to say nothing of "every man." Nor can I state so clearly and fully as I could wish the reasons that satisfy me of the correctness of my faith.

There are at least seven great and vital problems which to-day agitate the world, and which the wisest of mankind are trying to solve. They are:

First—The true position of woman and her equality with man.

Second—The social question, or the relation of the sexes; which may be considered a part of the first proposition.

Third—The temperance question.

Fourth—The ownership of land.

Fifth—The relations of capital and labor.

Sixth—Religion—its nature and sphere.

Seventh—Governments—their source and power.

On all these subjects "Mormonism" gives no uncertain sound. An answer to and solution of every one of them can be found in its principles. "Mormonism" is denounced by those who do not understand its principles or aims, as an attempt to return to the ages of barbarism. The fact is the very reverse. It has taken the lead in all important reforms, and it grapples fearlessly with problems that the wisest statesmen shrink from handling. In its earlier days it incurred the hatred of slaveholders because it was opposed to slavery. It was, and still is, denounced by orthodoxy because it teaches that there is hope of redemption from sin beyond the grave; that, though all men will be severely punished for their wrongs without the possibility of escape, the punishment will not be eternal unless the sinner continues wilfully and eternally to sin. It teaches that woman in her sphere is equal to man in his. "That the woman is not without the man in the Lord nor the man without the woman." In other words, that there is no full and complete salvation for either separately. If the woman is dependent on the man, he is at least equally dependent on her. This of things that are unseen. Let us turn to those that pertain to this life.

From time immemorial woman has been either worshiped as a goddess—that is the few; or treated worse than a slave—as with the majority. There have been two social codes—one for men, the other for women. Men could violate every principle of virtue, betray, degrade and desert as many women as they could and "society" still held open doors and arms to them. But what of the poor victims? They must be ostracized and thrust into the slough of degradation and want in this life and into the darkness of despair in the next. But "Mormonism" has one code for both. Or rather, while holding both guilty, it holds the man the guiltier of the two. While men everywhere—excepting the honorable minority—regard women as their lawful prey and, while professing horror at the idea of any one acknowledging two wives, will have as many mistresses as their influence and means permit, "Mormonism" condemns all intimacy of the sexes outside of the marriage relation, and imposes on its members the most sacred obligations, to respect and, so far as in their power, to defend the chastity of every woman in the world, of whatever name or nationality. As between these two social systems I am first, last and all the time on the side of marriage. But this is an important subject and demands fuller explanation than space will permit here.

As to temperance, that is and always was an integral part of the "Mormon" religion in a wider and fuller sense than mere abstinence from intoxicating liquors.

On the land question "Mormonism" is equally emphatic. It recognizes the fact that "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." That He holds it, so to speak, in trust for all His children, and that the few have no right to monopolize it to the exclusion of the many. That, like air and sunlight, it is indispensable to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and that land monopoly is the worst kind of robbery, for it defrauds unborn generations. This will doubtless be branded as another dangerous "Mormon" heresy.

"Mormonism" also holds that whatever the talent with which individuals may be endowed, it is obligatory upon them to use their gifts for the good of the race and not for their own exclusive gratification. That we are the children of one common Father and that there should be one universal brotherhood and co-operation of effort, so that all might enjoy the blessings of life and be knit together by a community of interest and by the ties of brotherly love.

In reference to religion it takes the common sense view that while all religions which do not violate nature's

laws should be protected—there can be, as with all scientific truths, but one true system. Briefly put, "Mormon" religion consists in believing that God is our Heavenly Father, who knows what is most conducive to the welfare and happiness of all His children, and in keeping His commandments, and His will is implicitly and joyfully obeyed in heaven and is destined so to be on earth, producing here the same peace and happiness that prevail there.

The government of God! This is the pivotal principle upon which all other reforms turn, the keystone to the social arch without which all will fall to ruin. Until God's government is established upon the earth all reforms will be but partial, fleeting, vain, as they always have been. And it is in reference to this very principle that the great struggle will be made. Think of the political condition of the world. Divided into a vast number of discordant and antagonistic States; each trying to outwit and rob the other, either of commerce, or people, or territory, or all combined. The people but puppets in the hands of their rulers. Ever and anon compelled to cut each other's throats, destroy each other's property, inflict inexpressible suffering, sorrow and privation on each other's families, and to fill the land with widows and orphans and the sounds of lamentation and mourning. And for what? In nine cases out of ten in order that some ambitious and unscrupulous potentate may add a few square miles to his dominions, a few more coins to his treasury, a few more taxpayers to his list and a few more soldiers to his army. To keep up this horrible state of affairs the people are taxed to pay enormous incomes to their oppressors and are required to maintain immense standing armies, besides herds of officials to collect, receive and spend the money stolen from the people in the shape of customs and other unnecessary taxes. When God's government is established—as it will become day—all this will be changed. Peace will supplant war, comfort and prosperity will exist everywhere instead of penury and woe, while universal love and brotherhood will banish animosities and hatred.

This is what I understand "Mormonism" to be, and these its grand purposes. If I imagined for a moment that I misapprehended its objects or that it was simply a scheme for the enrichment and aggrandisement of a few, either in this world or that which is to come, I would have nothing to do with it. But I love it because it designs to bless and benefit the entire race, or at least all who will permit it to do so. True, it has accomplished comparatively little to what it would have done had all its professed disciples faithfully exemplified its principles in their lives. But it is a point of inestimable value gained that there is an organized body of people who even believe in these principles. How such gradual and stupendous changes in the social and political condition of mankind are to be effected and the necessary details perfected mortal wisdom cannot tell. I am content in the assurance that the Lord knows how and will, in His own time, accomplish them. That they must come is certain. If the Latter-day Saints prove unequal to the glorious work others will be found to do it. But it is their mission and I believe they are able and willing to make the sacrifices necessary to establish the nucleus of such a social organization.

The conduct of many has not accorded with these views. But it ought to be unnecessary to say that I have no word of justification or excuse for wrong either in myself or any one else. There is one standard of character for the high and the low, the rich and the poor. Whether prominent or obscure the soul that sinneth must suffer the consequences. But this I do know, that any professed Latter-day Saint who is not striving to live—in public and in private—a prayerful, humble, upright, kind, pure, noble and unselfish life is not living in accordance with his professions and his covenants. But I also know, from sad experience, how possible it is to strive after such a life and yet fall far short of it.

For these and many other reasons—though not a member of their Church—my lot is unalterably cast with the "Mormon" people, in their struggle to correct their own faults, and to establish the principles for righteousness, justice and true liberty of all mankind. That they will ultimately succeed in this I have not the shadow of a doubt; though I do not pretend to foresee how much of disappointment, humiliation and suffering they will have to pass through first—except that it will be all that mortal nature, sustained by Divine strength, can endure.

For many months past, in the seclusion and solitude of my chamber, have I carefully and prayerfully considered the subject and earnestly and disinterestedly sought to be led to right conclusions. This appears to me to be the path of duty—the only course that offers peace of mind. The cost has been deliberately counted. In one scale I put reputation, friends, comfort, social recognition, prosperity and life—in the other, ostracism, probably financial ruin, suffering, possibly death, and DUTY. The decision is in favor of the latter. Those who desire to ignore me for that decision will save me much embarrassment by doing so in an unmistakable manner. I can truthfully say that I have besought the Lord to save me, above all things from error—and in the language of Luther, "Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other."

Good Christian people don't be afraid that the "Mormons" won't not

suffer enough for all their mistakes and errors! "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." He wants and will have a tried and pure people whom He can trust to faithfully and unselfishly carry out His purposes for the benefit of the entire human family. The squeezing process has but just commenced, nor will it cease until every drop of injustice, impurity and unrighteous selfishness has been eliminated from our hearts, and all who work wickedness from the midst of this people. No doubt many very good and estimable persons will also be unable to endure all that the Latter-day Saints will have to pass through. But those who do, and survive, may be trusted by God or man to an unlimited degree and in all things. The rod is going to be used with severity; but, as sure as the Lord lives, when He has done with the rod He will burn it. I wish all men could realize as I do that whoever takes part in or consents to gross injustice, oppression, or the shedding of innocent blood—whether they be Jew or Gentile, "Mormon" or Mohammedan, professed Saint or avowed sinner—will wish they had been burned at the stake before they had ever given their consent to these things. This saying will provoke the sneer of the skeptic and the evil doer. But I know whereof I speak, having tasted the sweetness and beauty and glory of the heavenly world, and the awful bitterness and anguish of the opposite.

The painful consciousness of my past errors and my present inability to conform to the true standard of a divine manhood has made me shrink from my present step more than any other cause. But I know that the Lord Jesus Christ lives and reigns in the affections of millions in heaven as he will yet in the hearts of the majority on earth; and, notwithstanding all my imperfections, I love Him and elect to serve Him as best I can—my present course being the result of that determination. I love those who do love and obey Him, of whatever name or sect, and am sorry for those who do not so understand His character and teachings as to be attracted thereby.

W. H. SHEARMAN.

A REVIEW

OF ANTI-"MORMON" LAWS AND METHODS, AND A COMPARISON WITH THE CONSTITUTION.

From the Utah Journal.

As the times are full of events especially interesting and significant to Latter-day Saints, and expressions from the people being always in order, allow me to say a few words through the columns of your worthy paper. You know we have often heard talk of "one man power," "church and state in Utah," etc. Of the former, I have never seen it exhibited only in the Chief Executive and other Federal appointees, who frequently wield it against the voice and interests of an entire Territory. Of the latter, it is only manifest in Utah when

A CONCLAVE OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSORS

assemble like that recently convened in Nephi, calling for anti-"Mormon" legislation to suppress that which those persons (?) are totally unable to overthrow from either a Biblical, scientific, social, or any other respectable platform. Is it not cowardly for an individual to call for the hands of those he despises to be secured and made helpless, while he gives them a lashing? It certainly is, and yet this is the position taken by Sectarians in Utah. They asserted that since our brethren had been incarcerated in prison "the freedom of the people to attend the churches and schools has been greatly augmented." Being a young man born in Utah, I have only lived here twenty-seven years and several months, but during that short period no one, either parents nor church authorities, has ever laid a straw in my way of attending churches of any denomination, and the more I have listened to the preaching of these learned (?) religionists, the more I appreciate the plain, Biblical teachings of "Mormon Elders," who neither preach for money nor divine for hire, but, being freely given, freely impart, speaking as men having authority, and not as the Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.

Another exhibition of the church attempting to rule the state occurred in the winter of '81 and '82, when a great religious furor was raised throughout the Union by the churches calling Congress to pass iniquitous laws relating to "an establishment of religion and prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Congress yielded, violated the sacred oath of office to support the Constitution, laid its freedom at the feet of religious hypocrisy and as the fruits of this "unlawful cohabitation" of church and state, brought forth the Edmunds law. To those who are thoughtful, intelligent, and truthful, the evidence is abundant to prove that plural marriage is with us.

"AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION,"

and embraced by Latter-day Saints in sincerity, knowing full well that the animosity of the world will be waged against them. The Utah Commissioners in one of their reports to the general government reported that polygamy was as much a part of our religion as baptism, remission of sins, etc. Then in the passage of the Edmunds act and the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court thereon it appears evident that three de-