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FREEDOM AND "PRIESTHOOD."

Much of the misunderstanding that is common concerning the power and authority exercised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly but erroneously called the "Mormon" Church, arises from the intentional misrepresentation of its opponents, which are repeated without design to deceive by people who do not know any better. Common report thus becomes established in many minds as fact, and hence the prejudice which is so strong against this Church.

In some recent efforts to cause discussion among the Saints, the disturbers have claimed that their object has been, not to stir up strife, but to influence the younger people particularly, "to a point where they dare assert their right to think and speak, without endangering their social and religious standing," and to take a course that will mean, "a putting down of oppressive priestcraft, resulting from an unquestioning obedience to those holding the priesthood," also "to have men and women think for themselves, to read for themselves, read outside prescribed courses laid down by a dominating Priesthood."

All that virtually charges the Latter-day Saints with subservience to "a dominating priesthood," to the extent of ceasing to think or speak for themselves, to read anything but "prescribed" for them, or to do anything but yield "unquestioning obedience to those holding the priesthood." And the whole of it is a silly, sinister and sordid method of conveying impressions by insinuation that are satanic in their utter falsehood. There is no "domination" by the men holding authority in this Church. No member is prevented from thinking and speaking as he wishes, or from reading whatever he chooses. There is no course "prescribed" for them in that respect which are required to take or that is made exclusive. "Unquestioning obedience" to men is not a doctrine of the Church, nor is it expected of any of its members. Therefore, the pretended desire to free them from such alleged bondage is nothing but a sham.

All the organizations, quorums, societies and associations of this Church are for the promotion of free thought, free speech and general intelligence. The members know this, they act upon it, and when their would-be "liberators" talk of "oppression," "bondage," "domination" and the rest of it, they simply smile at such ignorance or pity such perversion. But "there is a time for all things," a place for all things, and proper order must be maintained, or confusion, contention and discord, resulting in darkness and chaos must ensue. The opportunities afforded for the utmost rational liberty are in every way ample, but assemblies for public worship are not to be turned into debating clubs nor avenues for the venting of personal animosities and individual theories and vagaries.

Free thought cannot be stifled or restricted; that needs no argument. Free speech need not be restrained, and is not in this Church except when used on improper occasions, and in unseemly and unlawful ways. To claim, under the slogan of "Free Speech," the right to assault personal character, defame individuals, attack recognized authority, cause disturbance and tumult and make breaches of the peace, is a clear mark of insanity mingled with impudence. It is not to be permitted in any respectable place of public worship, not to be tolerated by civilized society. And yet such conduct is lauded by some zealots as "the exercise of the right of free speech."

The only counsel as to reading matter given to the Latter-day Saints is, to "seek out of the best books words of wisdom;" to "seek learning even by study and also by faith;" to "become acquainted with all good books and with languages, tongues and people," (see Doc. & Cov. Secs. 83, 84, 90, 151). In all the Church schools the best books published by the leading educational houses in the United States are in use, and literature of all kinds is to be had at the Deseret News book store, from popular light reading up to the classics. No one is bound within prescribed times, but all are free to choose their own reading matter. Advice is sometimes given to secure faithful devotion, low morals and fruitful seasonal trash, but the elevating, refining and moral works in poetry and prose, in different languages and by the world's great authors, are placed within the reach of members of the Church and form subjects for comment and discussion in its associations and societies.

The notion that education, except of a religious character, is not fostered by this Church, is entirely fallacious. The number of college graduates among its members is very gratifying, and in larger proportion to the Church population than is found in much older and richer communities. The Bureau of Information in this city is about to

publish a work showing this fact beyond question, and we direct attention to a notice concerning it to be found in another part of this issue of the Deseret News. We hope all such graduates will comply with the request of the Bureau, so that something of the kind desired may be had for public information on this point.

The Deseret News respects all promoters of true liberty, in their endeavors to free mankind from the bonds of superstition, oppression, ignorance, and fear. But it has no esteem for the perverters of truth who, whether by direct falsehood or by sneaky insinuation and inference, endeavor to place the Latter-day Saints in a false light before the world, under the vain pretence of freeing them from shackles they do not wear and from a domination they do not feel.

The power of the Priesthood in this Church is exercised simply by instruction, by light and truth, by a love for mankind and a devotion to duty, regulated by divine law. Therein is their influence over their people, and for that they will, under divine authority, stem the tide of falsehood and malice that flows against them, and accomplish the great work of the latter-days to which they are divinely appointed.

THE POPE NOT ANXIOUS.

Notwithstanding the political warfare in France upon the Catholic church, which, apparently, looks like a signal defeat for the ecclesiastical interests, the pope is reported as not at all anxious about the situation there. He takes the view that the laws passed against the church, are not approved by the people, but are the work of persons who are laboring exclusively for their own personal interests, and not for those of the nation.

As for these individuals themselves, the pope is reported to have said:

"I know these men, and I pity them. They have no thought of anything but their own individual interests."

The pope has all reason to look to the future for a vindication of the cause of the church in France, against persons who have no higher aim than their own personal advantage. Such antagonists are never dangerous. They may for a time sputter and throw out sparks in all directions, and go off towards the stars, as if destined to reach the Pleiades, but they will invariably spend their energy in a short time and fall to the ground, like the stick of a skyrocket, blackened by its own fiery contents. The men who enlist for the side of right and fight for it, under circumstances of poverty, and persecution, or any other contingencies, because it is right, are the men who represent a force in the world, and who will win, no matter how long time it takes. Papacy, whether right or wrong, has absolutely nothing to fear from the knights of selfishness. It was the martyrs of its own fanatic champions, who prepared the world for the Reformation.

AN IMPORTANT COUNCIL.

The most important action taken by the interchurch conference recently in session in New York, was the agreement to organize a federal council to represent the churches in the federation, but without any voice in matters pertaining only to the individual bodies composing that association. The council is to be a kind of central government, without power, or responsibility, in the government of the respective churches.

The council will consist of several hundred members, each church being entitled to at least four representatives. Larger churches, however, will be more strongly represented, being allowed one delegate for each 50,000 members, or major fraction of that number. On this scale it is estimated that the Baptist churches, North, South and colored, will have 99 members; Methodists North 59; Methodists South 54; Disciples of Christ 34; Congregationalists 18; Presbyterians North 25; Episcopalians 20, and United Brethren 6.

The federal council is to have a president, a vice president from each body composing it, corresponding and recording secretaries, a treasurer and an executive committee. Expenses of the council, and salaries of the officers are to be paid by the churches in the federation. It is said that the president of the federal council to be, and indeed its corresponding secretary, will occupy positions of great responsibility, not to say delicacy. Such officers will speak for "evangelical America" when occasion arises. Otherwise, the functions of the council are only advisory. The objects to be gained are: To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian church, to bring all into united service for Christ; to encourage counsel concerning activities; and, especially, "to secure a larger combined influence for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life," and "to assist in the organization of local branches of the federal council to promote its aims in their communities."

Provision was made for the admission of other churches than those represented at the initial conference. But it takes a vote of two-thirds of the council, and two-thirds of the churches represented. But it is a foregone conclusion that only Protestant trinitarians need apply for membership. All others are excluded by the declaration of platform, or the preamble which declares:

"More fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Savior, etc."

The word "divine" was after an animated discussion, inserted, "so as to exclude all Protestant 'heretics' on that doctrine."

Many important addresses were delivered during the conference. Dr. Stevenson rightly defined the church as a missionary society, because a church without a mission, as the sects of today are, is no church at all. President C. C. Hall spoke of the duty of Christians to extend a "trustful and inclusive spirit" to all who seek for the light. He said that there are all over the world men not yet within the inner

circle of faith, but in a most pathetic attitude of seeking a more perfect spiritual self-realization. Such men were found among Mohammedans, Brahmins, Buddhists. Toward all these, he added, who yearn for a finer and higher conception of God we must extend a trustful and inclusive spirit. How those words must have burnt the consciences of the bigots who excluded Dr. Hale and others, from the deliberations of the conference!

The decision to thus mark devout Christians, because of their views on the doctrine of the Trinity, is really astonishing, since it is a well known fact that that doctrine, in its present, alleged orthodox form does certainly not belong to the primitive Christian age; nor can it, to this day, be intelligently explained to any human being. Theophilus of Antioch, a converted pagan philosopher, is, we believe, the first who employs a term that reminds of the modern term Trinity. He says, "The three days which preceded the creation of light represented the Trinity of God and his word and his wisdom." But Theophilus, as well as most of the post-Apostolic writers, blundered in so many things, that they can certainly not be considered infallible. Clement of Alexandria held that "The nature of the Son is most near to the only Omnipotent, which governs all things according to the will of the Father. He was the Father's counselor; this was the wisdom in which the omnipotent God delighted; for the Son is the power of God, the most supreme Word of the Father, before all that is begotten." All of which seems to have a decided leaning toward Arianism, and warrant the conclusion that if the famous presbyter and scholar of Alexandria had lived in this country now, he would have been excluded from the "evangelical" federation, in company with others thus publicly branded.

Most Bible students must see the doctrine of the Trinity taught in the Scriptures, but not as a sine qua non of fellowship with the children of God. Irenaeus contends against the heretics of his age, that "the church believes in one God, the Father, and in one Jesus, the Son of God, incarnate for our salvation, and in the Holy Spirit, who, by the prophets, preached the dispensations of God." That statement represents quite well the Scripture doctrine, without the confused ideas later introduced from pagan sources.

We agree with some contemporaries in regarding the conference as one of the great events of this already so eventful century, though barely commenced. If the plans agreed upon are accepted by the churches represented, the council will meet in 1908, and then every fourth year, and commence operations. It is hardly concealed that its aim is political as well as religious. Its members will constitute themselves the infallible interpreters of the laws of Christ, and apply their interpretation of those laws to the "social" affairs of life. This is almost certain to bring on a conflict with the large number of citizens who rightly believe that churches, as such, should confine their work to the religious field. Time will tell.

ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Dwight L. Moody once called on a ministerial brother in an eastern town, desiring to spend the next day, Sunday, with him. The minister was surprised, but said that he was ashamed to ask Moody to preach. "Why?" asked Mr. Moody. "Well," was the reply, "but people have got into such a habit of going out before the close of the meeting that it would be an imposition on a stranger." "I will stop and preach," said Moody. When Sunday arrived Mr. Moody opened the meeting and then encouragingly said: "My hearers, I am going to speak to two sorts today, the sinners first, and then the saints." After he had addressed the supposed sinners he said that they could now take their hats and go. But the whole congregation waited and heard him to the end.

New York World.

Newly discovered evidence that the Christian religion was known in the city of Pompeii before its destruction by the eruption of Vesuvius in the year 79 runs counter to the accepted theories of the archaeologists. Of course the proof may be disputed as not being conclusive. But the terra cotta lamp of common Roman pattern bearing the symbols of Christianity which has been unearthed by the excavations by the Italian government is a stubborn fact. Students of antiquity have frequently constructed elaborate theories on dinner foundations. There is nothing inherently improbable in the idea that followers of the Christian faith existed in Pompeii. Twenty years before its destruction the apostle Paul had reached Rome. The Christian sect had already gained a foothold there and Paul was allowed to continue his preaching unharmed for some time.

PHENOMENAL PROSPERITY.

The Philadelphia North American quotes figures in proof of the fact that this country has now reached a higher point of prosperity than ever before in its history.

Among the items given are the following. The corn crop of this year is larger than any previous yield. Last year it was thirty bushels for every person. This year it is more than thirty-two bushels. In 1870 the American wheat crop was 287,000,000 bushels. In 1905 it is 700,000,000 bushels. The pig-iron product in October was much the largest on record. With regard to the textile and the boot and shoe industries, the productive machinery is running overtime, and the manufacturers complain of inability to fill orders promptly and to obtain a sufficient number of skilled workmen.

As a consequence of the prevailing business activity, the lines of transportation are only with difficulty able to handle the freight. The swift expansion of commerce of this nation has almost outgrown the capacity of the freight carriers. The farmers, whose bins are bursting with grain, wonder why the railroads do not find cars enough with which to carry the stuff to the consumers. It is estimated that nearly 95,000 trains of forty cars each, or more than half the freight cars in the country, would be required to move the wheat market. The number of commercial failures are said to be smaller than usual and everything points toward a continued prosperity.

The fact is all the more notable because of the depression experienced in other countries. We can only hope that the people to whom these blessings now are entrusted will prove worthy of them, by loyally adhering to the government principles embodied in the Constitution, and by considering property and power as gifts of Providence, held in trust for the benefit of all mankind. If we forget this, the blessings enjoyed will surely be given to some other nation, unless we fail to comprehend the lessons of history.

Ab Hamid is taking his time.

With the allied fleet time is fleeting.

Turkey is about ready to haul in its extensive process.

When Chicago beat Michigan, what a fall was there!

When Greeks meet Goshen then comes the tug of war.

"What is fame?" asks an exchange. Free ads in the newspapers.

The hunting fatalities in Wisconsin this year have broken all records.

In St. Petersburg, the coldest capital in Europe, the government is skating on thin ice.

No recipient of a Christmas gift will stop to ask if it was purchased with tainted money.

Everywhere policyholders are advised

to hold on to their policies. It is good policy to do so.

If Andy Hamilton's formal statement is no more interesting than his interview he might as well not make it.

Isn't it about time to cease calling them the canals of Mars and speak of them as the grand canyons of Mars?

"Young man, come east," says the Manchester, N. H., Union. And become abandoned with the abandoned farms?

If things go on much longer as they now are in Russia, a Dittus Julius may be expected to appear very shortly.

M. Witte should call in Hercules to hold up the Russian empire for a little while so that he might take a well earned rest.

Mr. Balfour will resign and not dissolve parliament. His chances of getting back into office will probably be better under that arrangement.

Mary Ramsey Woods of Hillsboro, Oregon, claims to be a hundred and eighteen years old. Her age indicates that she belongs to the Sequela family.

Dollar-a-line Smith, press agent of the Mutual Life, has tendered his resignation but it has not been accepted. Evidently it was not legal tender, with which he is so familiar.

The clear and candy stand in the City and County building has been looted. But it isn't a circumstance to the looting through the bounty on wild animal scalps in the same building.

Colonel Edwards' recommendation regarding debating of the Philippine coins is not a happy one. Debasement of the monetary standard is always accompanied by a debasement of the moral standard.

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"The Russian Players in New York," by Florence Brooks, with portraits of Paul Orloff and Madame Alla Nasimoff. But of most importance is the first of Frederick Trevor Hill's "Lincoln the Lawyer," showing the writer's enthusiasm for and research into his subject and promising new and valuable chapters in the history of Abraham Lincoln. The Christmas spirit is voiced in verse by Frederic Lawrence Knowles (died September 19, 1905) and William Moody, with other contributions from Henry Austin, Grace Ellery Channing, Richard Watson Gilder, Charles McNeill—New York.

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An extraordinary opportunity to get a very pretty and useful Christmas present for your little girl. Come here and make your selection from an immense stock of

CHILDREN'S COATS

Ages 6 to 14 years.

Bring the children with you and have them "try on" the coats. Do not miss this special sale; if you do, you'll regret it.

The Entire Stock of Children's Coats at ONE-FIFTH OFF REGULAR PRICES.

\$6.00 Coats	 \$4.80	\$10.00 Coats	 \$ 8.00
6.50 Coats	 5.20	11.00 Coats	 8.80
7.00 Coats	 5.60	11.50 Coats	 9.20
7.50 Coats	 6.00	12.00 Coats	 9.60
8.00 Coats	 6.40	12.50 Coats	 10.00
8.50 Coats	 6.80	13.50 Coats	 10.80
9.00 Coats	 7.20	15.00 Coats	 12.00

We have the Largest and Best Assortment Ever Shown in the City.

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Christmas Presents For the Little Folks.

Every department of this mammoth institution is crowded with Holiday gifts. For the children we have

Toys of Every Description Dolls in Endless Variety!

Dressed and undressed Kid Dolls, China Dolls, Wool Dolls, Rubber Dolls, Celluloid Dolls, Dolls with Kid Bodies and Bisque Heads. The best Doll ever made is one called the "Kestner"—ask for it.

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Visit Our Cloak and Suit Department,

Where we are showing a magnificent stock of New furs in neck pieces, boas, muffs, etc. Some of the "swellest" Suits and Coats you ever saw. The most exquisite showing of Winter Hats, the very latest, weaves in Dress Goods, thousands of suggestions for Presents in the Notions Department, a beautiful line of Couch Pillows and Bed Comforters. Our Art Department is filled with a superb showing of Art Needlework, Drawn-work, Stamped Linens, Cords, Skein Silks, Pillow Patterns, etc. Hosiery, Corsets, Infants' wear, Wool and Muslin Underwear.

SEE OUR LARGE AD. ON PAGE 24.

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Here's one of the prettiest of styles for boys from 8 to 14 years.

A very sensible style, too.

It's the full length (almost to shoe-tops), loose-fitting coat with belted back.

Copied after the Men's Belt Style, but imbued with an air of boyishness that makes it decidedly becoming.

Comes in plain Grays, Black, Fancy Mixtures and Gray Grounds, with invisible plaids and stripes, of well-wearing Overcoatings.

\$3.50 to \$12.00.

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All sorts of stylish Overcoats for the Big Boys.

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