

DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHARLES W. PENROSE, EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, - JUNE 27, 1883.

THE LIBELS AGAINST OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

POSTMASTER John T. Lynch and his alleged statements to a reporter of the St. Louis Republican, have formed for a day or two one of the most lively subjects of common conversation, dividing the public interest with the great fire and explosion. The indignation expressed at the libels published about the young people of "Mormondom" has not been confined to the "Mormon" population; many non-"Mormons" having denounced the atrocious statements as false and unjustifiable.

On Thursday afternoon Mr. Lynch called on us and made a specific denial of uttering the language or expressing the sentiments attributed to him concerning the girls of this city. He stated that he had held a conversation with the Republican reporter and had spoken, very plainly, his detestation of polygamy and his conviction of its evil tendencies, but had never seen or heard of the statements concerning the young women of Utah and other vile things contained in the report of the interview, until they appeared in print. He claims that the many good things he told the reporter about the "Mormons"—their industry, order, honesty, etc., were left out of the account and things that he had never said, but which were probably told the reporter by others or that he had read somewhere, were attributed to him. He was not very clear about the remarks concerning our young men as frequenters of houses of ill-fame, and did not deny the remark that the reason why there was no such houses before the influx of "Gentiles" was because "the construction of Mormon society obviated the demand for any such establishments." He declared that he knew nothing about the Bates story and was not responsible for anything more in the article than some remarks opposing polygamy on general principles and the testimony to the fidelity of "Mormon" wives.

From what we could gather during the conversation with Mr. Lynch, we learn that while he denies the remarks at which we and the public have taken umbrage, his sentiments on the polygamy question are extreme and calculated to give him a strong bias, and to lead him when conversing with those who would receive his remarks acceptably to say things not justified by the facts and impossible of proof by argument. But to this we raise no particular objection. We have always accorded the right of every man to oppose any feature of our faith and practice, and to do it vigorously, but within the bounds of truth if he refers to matters of fact. We did not dispute the right of Mr. Lynch to impress the reporter with his peculiar opinions and the result of his observations on the "Mormon" question. That is all right, even if his views are all wrong. We do object, however, to the vile slanders and shameful stories made up about our people, and especially those reflecting upon the virtue of our young ladies, which is only assailed by dirty dogs who revel in nastiness and love salacious libel with all the fervor of lust-ridden and corrupt hearts. Such a cur is the author of the libel about "Mormon" girls, foliated upon a fallen woman to save the cowardly hide of the inventor.

Mr. Lynch intimated that it could not be denied that some young men of "Mormon" families had been seen about the premises of a bagnio in this city. We deplored this as a fact, but denied that the statement was correct that "the majority of the frequenters of such places were young men of Mormon parentage."

If Mr. Lynch or anyone else wishes to maintain the unjust statement we can furnish incontestible evidence to the contrary. The patrons of those dens are known. Lists can be furnished if necessary. The depraved youths led away by "Gentile" influence into a "Gentile" social evil that could not flourish here except by "Gentile" support, may be counted on the fingers and their names can be had. At the same time the names of most of the "Gentile" frequenters can be produced if it becomes necessary to prove this matter. We are standing on no uncertain ground. If these foul slanders are to be repeated, and direct evidence becomes necessary to their refutation, we shall not be backward in its production. We brand the statement—whoever may be its author—that the majority of the tainted male bipeds who visit houses of prostitution are of "Mormon" parentage as a base and malicious lie.

We are glad to acquit Mr. Lynch of the infamy which the Republican reporter's statement fastened upon him. We cheerfully receive and announce his denial. But is it at all likely that if no direct attention had been drawn to it, the gentleman would have taken the pains to disclaim any part of the scandalous story? We have no doubt that in other cases public men in this city have been credited by reporters with remarks that they never uttered. Some of them have declared as much in private conversation. But when the subject has been the vilification of the "Mormons," how many of these high-minded gentlemen have had the manhood to come out publicly and deny participation in the falsehood? Mr. Lynch has been named specifically as the Republican reporter's authority for the damnable falsehoods that he published. Will Mr. Lynch deny these things over his own signature or through the associated press dispatches? We shall see.

As evidence of the willingness of Mr. Lynch, who in this has represented a class of polygamy-haters, to accept evil reports about the people of this Territory, he told us a report which he had received from a certain individual, who heard it from an old lady said to be the first wife of a Bishop in Sanpete, that there had been no girl married in a certain settlement in Sanpete for some time who was not previously in a condition to become a mother. We did not dispute the fact that this was told him nor that his informant heard the old woman's gossip, but we do dispute the fact of any such condition of affairs in Sanpete or elsewhere in Utah. And we say further, such stories are usually made up for ears that are greedy to receive prurient scandals, and are credited by persons whose bias and prejudice lead them to accept such stories greedily. And these third-handed and hydra-headed yarns are the foundation for most of the sensational fictions about "Mormon" depravity, which are devoured with an appetite, chewed as sweet morsels and smacked over as tid-bits by "Christian" lips.

We know something of the world, its morality and its social condition, high and low. We also know something of "Mormon" society in plural and other households. And we can and do proclaim before high heaven and all mankind, that in no part of the globe of which we have learned anything, are the virtue and chastity of women so sacredly estimated, guarded and maintained as in Utah. Those who believe it right, under given conditions and religious regulations, to marry more wives than one, also look upon any sexual intercourse outside of the marriage relation as a deadly sin, next in enormity to the greatest, which is the unlawful shedding of human blood. If any "Mormon," young or old, male or female, sins in that direction, it is in violation of precept and covenant and the most solemn and sacred teachings and ordinances of the Church. That lapses from virtue occur we do not deny, but we affirm that they are rare and are shameful, and are usually known and dealt with as the law of God directs. And where a case to the contrary exists, it is because some one in authority has failed to perform a disagreeable but imperative duty. Chastity is a cardinal virtue, and its maintenance a cardinal obligation among the "Mormon" people, and all the revelations, ceremonies and injunctions of the Church are centered upon and point in this direction.

A SENSELESS STORY.

A FEW days ago one of those ingenious but unprincipled transmitters of so-called "news" by telegraph, announced that "Mormon" baptisms were frequent in the South, and were arousing much excitement with threats of violence, because they were performed in a state of nudity. This was taken by many papers for a fact, and editorially commented upon as the truth. The Atlanta Constitution, for instance, announced that before converts are received into the "Mormon" Church "they are baptized, and the rule is to strip them naked for that purpose," and went on to declare that, "these naked baptisms occur at night, and the propagandists are supposed to have a good deal of fun on their own hook." We notice that the Sacramento Record-Union, as respectable a paper as the Atlanta Constitution, follows in the same strain, calling this baptism "a bare-backed sacrament," and repeating the story for the edification of its readers in California.

We do not suppose for a moment that the editor of either of those able-journals take the least stock in the story. Neither of them believes a word of it. To think otherwise would be a strong reflection upon his sanity. Why then should they repeat the transparent lie and thus endeavor to excite prejudice against the "Mormons" in such an unjustifiable manner? Just such absurd and groundless falsehoods as this have stirred up ignorant people in the Southern States to beat old men and women, destroy property and even commit murder. One of our young missionaries is at home disabled through Georgian violence, and the body of another, murdered in cold blood, lies in the cemetery north-east of this city. These outrages were perpetrated in the South through just such stories as that about nude baptisms, and papers which repeat them, thinking perhaps it is a good joke at the expense of the "Mormons," are morally responsible for the deeds of violence which are prompted by such reports. If these journals cannot find anything better to fill up their columns than slanders such as this about "Mormon" baptisms, we will be pleased to supply them with something readable, or if they want fiction instead of fact, and nonsense instead of argument, we can forward them copies of anti-"Mormon" sheets from which they can take stupid yarns to their heart's content, but none more silly and yet contemptible than the story about "nude baptisms."

THE HABEAS CORPUS CASE.

THE points in the Belle Harris case, which were ably argued before the Supreme Court on Friday by Arthur Brown, Esq., and Col. S. Merritt for the petitioner, are embodied in the petition for the writ, which we give in full below. They were all forcibly presented by counsel and backed by quotations from the best authorities. It looks as though the prisoner cannot be lawfully detained, even if the questions she refused to answer were proper, and such as could be required of a witness. This, it is expected, will be decided on Monday, when the Court meets again. Meanwhile the lady still remains in her unjust, and as we believe, unlawful incarceration.

In the Supreme Court of the Territory of Utah.

In the matter of the petition of Belle Harris for a writ of habeas corpus.

To the Honorable Judges of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Utah:

The petition of Belle Harris respectfully shows that she is unlawfully imprisoned, detained, confined and restrained of her liberty by E. A. Ireland, United States Marshal of this Territory of Utah, in the Penitentiary of Utah Territory, in Salt Lake County in said Territory; that said imprisonment, detention, confinement and restraint are illegal, and a copy of the pretended writ by which the said U. S. Marshal claims to detain this petitioner is hereto annexed and made a part hereof, marked exhibit "A," as well

also as the proceedings referred to upon which the same is founded, or necessary to the construction thereof, and which are marked exhibit "B."

That said illegality consists in this, to-wit: First.—That as appears by the said judgment and warrant of commitment the said petitioner Belle Harris was privileged from answering the question propounded to her by the grand jury, and by the court in the presence of the grand jury, for the reason that the answer to said question evidently tended to disgrace the petitioner, and subject her to political disability and to criminal punishment under the laws of the United States and of the Territory of Utah, and therefore the said petitioner had a right to decline to answer the same.

Second.—That said judgment and warrant are illegal in this: That said court attempted to punish the said petitioner for contempt, and at the same time to subject her to imprisonment until she should answer said question, making the punishment both past and future, which is illegal.

Third.—That said judgment and warrant are uncertain and indefinite in this: That no punishment is fixed for a failure to pay said \$25 mentioned as a fine in said judgment.

Fourth.—That said judgment and order are illegal in this: That the Marshal is directed to detain the said witness, Belle Harris, "until the further order of this court," whereas the statute only authorizes a detention for not exceeding five days, and the said court had no jurisdiction to imprison her for any longer time.

Fifth.—That by section 1,692 of the Compiled Laws of Utah Territory, section 468 of the practice act of said Territory, any imprisonment for contempt for omission to perform an act, which is yet in the power of the person to perform, can only exist until the person is ready and willing to perform such act, and the warrant referred to requires the petitioner to answer the question before a body which is no longer in session, and which the witness cannot now perform; and the performance of the same has been placed out of her power by the action of the court itself, to-wit: in adjourning the said grand jury from May 15th to August 29th, 1883.

Sixth.—That the authority of the said Marshal to detain your petitioner ceased when the said grand jury had adjourned as aforesaid, as appears by the certificate hereto attached.

Seventh.—That said pretended offense or contempt was committed in the second judicial district of Utah Territory, and that said judge had no right or authority to transfer the custody of petitioner outside of the limits of said district, or outside of the limits of said county wherein the alleged contempt was committed, and said order, and the detention of the Marshal in holding the said Belle Harris in said Salt Lake County, are illegal for that reason.

Eighth.—That said court had no jurisdiction in the premises to punish the said petitioner at all.

Ninth.—That it does not appear that her testimony was material in any case then pending before said grand jury.

Tenth.—That said order and pretended judgment of said court were never signed by said judge, or under the seal of said court.

Eleventh.—That said warrant of commitment is in excess of the judgment in this; that it directs petitioner's imprisonment in any prison in the Territory of Utah, whereas the judgment is for imprisonment alone.

Twelfth.—That said warrant of commitment does not recite in what manner the said petitioner may purge herself of contempt, or what question or questions she may answer for said purpose; but subjects the said petitioner to indefinite imprisonment at the pleasure of said court and said Marshal.

Wherefore your petitioner prays that a writ of habeas corpus may be granted, directed to the said E. A. Ireland, commanding him to have the body of your petitioner, Belle Harris, before your honors at a time and place to be therein specified, to do and receive what shall then and there be considered by your honors concerning her, together with the time and cause of her detention, and said writ and that she may be restored to her liberty. Dated this 15th day of June, 1883.

BELLE HARRIS.
S. A. KENNER,
Attorney for Petitioner.

LOCAL AND OTHER MATTER.

Continued from first page.

these two buildings had caught fire brands thrown by the explosion, the Tithing Yard were a number of teams, the owners of which immediately hitched up, and the wagon rolled out of the west entrance in a stampede. A young man climbed upon the roof of the building and scraped out the fire on the eaves with his foot, the flames on the surface rendered them of no extinguishment. A number of men, including Mr. Henry and a number of firemen with hose, rushed to the Tabernacle gate being locked, when Young climbed over and broke in the smaller entrance. When the roof of the building gained from the interior, it found that the fire could not be reached without a rope. On procured by George F. Gibbons, Charles Castleton fastened it to his waist, was lowered and to and from the point several times, by dashing water on the fire, it was extinguished. Brother J. Nuttall, was on the roof a considerable time exerting himself the preservation of the building.

EFFECTS OF THE EXPLOSION.

The explosion played havoc with the glass in a large number of establishments within a radius of blocks from the scene of the explosion. The following is a list of the worst losers, nearly all of whom make their own losses and the balance are approximately:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Z. C. M. L. | \$5,000 |
| Hooper and Eldredge | 4,000 |
| Wm. Jennings & Sons | 1,500 |
| J. B. Richards | 1,000 |
| M. Dinwoodey | 1,000 |
| H. Arnold | 800 |
| Little & Koudy | 800 |
| Hardy Bros. & Burton | 600 |
| Barton & Company | 750 |
| D. James | 400 |
| D. H. Wells | 400 |
| Studebaker Bros. | 400 |
| Assembly Hall | 300 |
| Tabernacle | 300 |
| U. C. Railway Co. | 250 |
| Deseret National Bank | 250 |
| U. S. Express Office | 250 |
| Z. C. M. L. Drug Dept. | 250 |
| Gardo House | 250 |
| Thirteenth Ward Co-op. | 250 |
| Mrs. W. B. Williamson | 250 |
| L. & A. B. Young | 250 |
| Careless & Cronan | 250 |
| D. C. Calder | 250 |
| O. O. Annensen | 250 |
| Valley House | 250 |
| F. W. Madsen | 250 |
| Contributor Office | 250 |
| F. W. Madsen & Co. | 250 |
| Mrs. M. V. Young's residence | 250 |
| Mrs. Hopwood | 250 |
| Joella & Park | 250 |
| Beach & Silberback | 250 |
| J. C. Outler | 250 |
| Mrs. B. Dye | 250 |
| Solomon Brothers | 250 |
| Soules and Miller | 250 |
| E. S. Waldron | 250 |
| Young Brothers | 250 |
| Douson Brothers | 250 |
| W. Tadier | 250 |
| O. S. Walsh | 250 |
| John Daynes | 250 |
| W. C. Morris | 250 |
| Co-op Furniture Comp'y | 250 |
| Deseret News Office | 250 |
| Tithing Office | 250 |
| Herald Office | 250 |
| J. Baumgarten | 250 |
| Goldsmith & Co. | 250 |
| Johnquires | 250 |
| Zion's Savings Bank | 250 |
| Mrs. Burrows | 250 |
| Watson Brothers | 250 |

Smaller losses not enumerated, \$25,000
Total, \$25,000

INCIDENTS.

Mr. T. G. Webber reached M. L. building soon after the started, placed men all over it, hose, ready for emergency, and after the explosion occurred he stationed guards at all the exits. Within an hour afterwards he graphed East to forward the replace that destroyed with a cable dispatch.

When the Council House fire Dr. W. H. H. Sharp in the door of the Stake Clerk's turned the desk against the window, broke the secret, seized the papers and records of which he saved some of the ones only being lost, and out. In doing this he endangered his life. When the explosion occurred his face was cut and injured by flying fragments.

We understand that Mr. Do who was in the rear of the Artillery at the time of the explosion was knocked over and besides losing his face and head out, received a severe injury in his back and today unable to walk in consequence.

Mr. N. Empey entered the establishment of Clark, Eldredge & Co. just in time to see a red hot iron land among and ignite a quantity of straw at the rear, but he quickly put out the fire.