

EDITORIALS.

IS "MORMONISM" A RELIGION?

ONE of the favorite arguments of the enemies of the Latter-day Saints, put forward as an excuse for special legislation and the employment of force against them, is that "Mormonism," as their faith is nicknamed, is not a religion. Congress is forbidden by the Constitution of the United States to enact laws against "an establishment of religion" or to prohibit "the free exercise thereof." And there is a strong public sentiment among the better part of the American people against any interference with religious sentiment and worship.

Therefore the excuse of those who are filled with hate, and want to see "a deadly thrust aimed at the heart of the system," and "a blow direct upon the head of Mormonism" so that it may at once be "crushed out of existence," is that it is not a religion and therefore any violence against it is justifiable and praiseworthy.

In this connection we publish below, a portion of a paper read at the eighth annual meeting of the New West Commission, held in Chicago, by the general secretary, Mr. Bliss. It was on what he considered "the chief evil of Mormonism," and, curious to state, that is that "Mormonism" is a religion. The New West Commission is a society of the Congregational Church organized for the education of youth in Utah and New Mexico, under the auspices of that sect. It claims to have 2,725 pupils, 1,500 of "Mormon" parentage, and property in schools worth \$75,000. One of them is at Ogden that cost \$18,000, and another at Provo, \$10,000. The sum of \$8,000 is to be expended for a school at Heber City, Wasatch County.

Mr. Bliss, who claims to have "an intimate acquaintance with Mormonism," after decanting upon what he considers evils in the system, says they are not the chief evil. What that is, he describes as follows, which we commend to the notice of those who claim that "Mormonism" is not a religion:

"We wish to rescue an honorable and valuable word from a use and a contact that seems a profanation. Yet the word religion is one of great breadth and covers the vilest systems of materialism and even Satan-worship. Islamism is not less a religion because violence and fraud and lying visions attended its introduction. The implicit faith of millions of mankind, who have for a thousand years accepted it as a religion, make it such, however false and designing its founders may have been. It is therefore not a conclusive answer to the question, whether Mormonism is a religion or not, to say that Joseph Smith was a corrupt, false and wicked impostor, that Brigham Young was an unscrupulous, remorseless, worldly, and self-seeking ruler and tyrant, and that the early leaders who managed the unworthy cause, were, in not a few cases, brutal and lustful, and in nearly all visionary and fanatical, or designing and cunning men. All this may be true and the fact remain, that Mormonism as it exists today is in its main elements—in its vital and central forces—a religion."

The question at issue is whether there is in what is called a Mormon Church a faith that deserves to be ranked as religious; whether their most thoughtful and serious preachers and leaders do hold and set forth dogmas and tenets which relate to unseen things and the future world; whether in their assemblies on Sunday and at their homes they do present to themselves themes of meditation which reach into their souls, touch their conscience, and effect for good or evil their moral feelings; whether their Sunday school children, numbered by tens of thousands, are carefully taught points of doctrine and made to believe asserted miraculous events which affect their religious sensibilities, awaken their imaginations, and stimulate in them, in ways right or wrong, devout exercises; whether or not there are in Mormon beliefs large numbers of accredited miracles and supernatural occurrences, and large numbers of ideas to be inspired by God, which have been so adjusted to the intellectual conceptions and moral feelings of the people as to have taken captive their faith, and brought them into the glad, enthusiastic and determined support of a system believed by them to have been given by God to them as a peculiar and chosen people. This question can, in our opinion, have but one answer. It is utterly impossible to explain the facts which meet one everywhere in Utah, without granting, not only that Mormonism is a religion, but also that the chief sources of its present vitality and power lie in the religious ideas, hopes and fears of its adherents. The tenor of their discourses in the tabernacle, the forms of devotion which they observe, the enthusiasm which attends their frequent conferences, the steadfastness of their devotion to their church, maintained by the great majority of them, the constant departure of the missionaries in the face of continual discouragements, the uninterrupted building of temples, the constant and universal recurrence to the supposed miraculous origin, and the well known rapid early progress of the Church, and the unabated confidence of the early

coming of a deliverer who will smite their enemies and carry forward their church to a position of great glory and universal influence—all these things are unaccountable save upon the ground that Mormonism, whatever it was at first, has grown to be a religion, entrenched in convictions and powerful as a source of motives, hopes and courage.

THE INDUSTRIAL HOME BUSINESS SETTLED.

In the *Congressional Record* of Oct. 10th, appears some further discussion of the Industrial Home muddle. From this it appears that in furnishing accounts of income and expenditures, the sum of \$8,800 received from the Treasury Department was not accounted for in any way. Mr. Barnes, chairman of the committee of conference cited this as evidence that business methods did not seem to prevail in the Home management. The receipts, Mr. Barnes showed, were placed at \$40,000, and the expenditures \$13,500 for the Home and \$10,500 for land for a building, making a total expenditure of \$24,000, and leaving a balance of \$16,000. But he had learned that in addition to the \$40,000, four sums of \$2,500 each were drawn from the Treasury, and \$1,168.95 returned, leaving a balance of \$8,831.05, in exact figures, that the Home people must have on hand in addition to the sum they have named.

It seems that the conferees finally came to an agreement on this subject, which had been discussed with vigor in both Houses of Congress, and during which many gross errors were advanced as facts in regard to "Mormonism." By this agreement the amount appropriated was reduced from \$80,000 to \$32,000 and its expenditure, with that of the balance now in hand, placed in control of the Treasury Department, and the whole business put in charge of the Utah Commission. The title of the property is to be vested in the United States. The amendment as agreed to is as follows: "Amendments numbered 112 and 113: That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendments of the Senate numbered 112 and 113, and agree to the same with an amendment as follows: In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by said amendments insert the following:

"Industrial Home in Utah Territory: The Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and directed to cause all of the unexpended balance of appropriations made by two acts of Congress, one approved Aug. 4, 1886, to aid in the establishment of an industrial home in the Territory of Utah and to provide employment and means of self-support for the dependent women who renounce polygamy and the children of such women of tender age in said Territory, with a view to aid in the suppression of polygamy thereby; and the other act approved February 1, 1888, to aid the Industrial Christian Home Association of Utah in carrying out under its articles of incorporation, the work of providing employment and means of self-support for the dependent women who shall have renounced polygamy and their children of tender age, now in the hands of Caleb W. West, or any other person or corporation, to be immediately paid over and delivered to a properly qualified disbursing officer of the United States, to be appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury. And said Secretary of the Treasury is further directed to cause a valid title to the lot or lots of ground in the city of Salt Lake in said Territory, that were purchased and paid for with money of the United States appropriated in the acts before cited, to be immediately vested absolutely and unconditionally in the United States forever. When said balances are fully paid over to said disbursing officer, the Utah Commission shall be and become the board of management and control thereof and of all expenditures of said money, and of such as may be hereinafter appropriated, and the said board of management and control shall proceed at once, on plans and specifications to be made or approved by said board, to erect or complete on said lot or lots a building adapted and designed to carry out the purposes of this act, and which when entirely completed and finished, in including the approaches and the fencing and grading of said lot or lots shall not in cost exceed the sum of \$30,000; and for these purposes the money appropriated under the two acts of Congress above recited and unexpended is hereby appropriated, and a further sum is hereby appropriated to complete the work above mentioned, not exceeding the sum of \$24,000.

"There is also hereby appropriated the further sum of \$4,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, to suitably furnish said building when the same shall have been completed.

"When said building shall have been completed and furnished it shall be placed in the custody of the Industrial Christian Home Association of Utah Territory, to be used and occupied by it for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of polygamy, and of furnishing an industrial home and providing employment and means of self-support for the dependent women who renounce polygamy, and the children of such women of tender age in said Territory; and for the purpose of extinguishing polygamy the following classes may also be received, to wit:

"First. First or legal wives.

"Second. Women and girls with

polygamous surroundings in danger of being coerced into polygamy.

"Third. Girls of polygamous parentage anxious to escape from polygamous influences.

"Fourth. Women and girls who have been proselyted elsewhere and remove into the Territory in ignorance of the existence thereof of polygamy.

"For aiding in the work of said association for the present fiscal year, including the transportation of inmates of the institution who desire to permanently remove from said Territory, \$4,000.

"Said Utah Commission shall hereafter cause the board of control over said association, both in the erection of said building and in the conduct of the work of the association hereafter.

"Said Utah Commission shall audit all expenditures of said association under any appropriations herein or hereafter made, and shall make an annual report to Congress covering their expenditures and work hereunder, together with that of said association.

"Said Industrial Christian Home Association of Utah Territory for the work herein defined shall have the use and occupation of said building and grounds, free of rent or charge, until such time as said work shall be accomplished, or Congress shall otherwise direct, when possession and occupation of the same shall revert to the United States."

And the Senate agree to the same.

It will be seen from this that the gentlemen of the committee who were opposed to the introduction of a provision to encourage people to "sever their connection with the Mormon Church," and who wanted the funds appropriated for the Home distributed by a responsible agent of the United States, prevailed and obtained their points. But it is evident from the wording of the amendment that falsehood, as usual, has had its influence in this measure designed as an anti-"Mormon" movement. There are no women or girls in Utah "in danger of being" coerced into polygamy. There never have been any. Congress has been lied to so much on this and kindred questions by so called "Christian women" and designing men, that it is not surprising there is a false impression among our nation's legislators concerning life in Utah.

The concern for which Uncle Sam has been so freely phlebotomized can now obtain enough inmates to give it an appearance of accomplishing something in the desired direction, for the terms of the provision afford latitude enough to gather in unfortunates of many grades and classes. But the handling of the cash has passed into other control and the sweetness of the movement is thus lost to the chief promoters of the scheme.

A fine building will now be erected for the Industrial Home, and it is to be hoped that it will be of benefit to some indigent women and children needing an asylum; also that there will now be no more need to pour anti-"Mormon" falsehoods into the ears of susceptible Congressmen, for the pious purpose of drawing a big appropriation from the national pocket.

A TERRIBLE CRIME.

OUR readers will most likely remember an item of so-called "news" that "went the rounds," to the effect that a prominent "Mormon" had been interviewed by a Topeka, Kansas reporter, and that he was on his way to Mexico with "several of his wives, whether he was to be followed by a large number of "Mormons." Only a few days after this, the gentleman said to have been interviewed at Topeka, and who had not been within several hundred miles of the place, surrendered himself to the Federal officials in this city, and went to the Penitentiary. The Topeka *Capital* now admits that the rumors—which it has so materially helped to circulate—of a wholesale begira of "Mormons" into Mexico, is entirely incorrect. The *Capital* says:

"We fear the report that the Mormons of Utah are preparing to move in large numbers to Mexico is not authentic. But they have been guilty of buying land in northern Chihuahua, and are expecting to buy more. Probably large numbers of the polygamous Mormons who have found it unpleasant trying to evade or defy the law in Utah, will go to Mexico."

The *Capital* does not inform us as to the penalty that will or should be imposed upon the "Mormons" for the crime of buying land in Mexico, nor under what statute or provision of law they can be declared "guilty" of this heinous offense. Probably there is no need for any trial, or charge, or law on which to base a complaint, since the *Capital* has settled the matter by declaring the "Mormons" "guilty." The penalty, we suppose, considering the source of the verdict, will be *Capital* punishment.

What with bogus interviews, editorial "expectations" and newspaper "probabilities," it is very easy to start a sensational anti-"Mormon" story. And the journals of this country seem far more inclined to publish and help spread a falsehood about the "Mormons" than to present the truth or correct their own errors. A nearly every prominent paper in the country has repeated the stupid story of immense purchases of land, and a systematic plan of exodus to Mexico, of which the "Mormons" are not "guilty," but a very few have had the

grace to present the facts since the canard has been exploded.

CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS.

"An" act making appropriations for sundry civil expenses of the government for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 1889, and for other purposes," appears in the *Congressional Record* of a late date, and contains the following:

Utah Penitentiary.—Towards the construction of an additional wing to prison, one hundred and twenty cells, with hospital, female prison, and chapel attached; for stockade entrance, to consist of officers, warden's residence, guard quarters, dining-rooms, and armory; for wall with sentry-boxes to inclose about two acres of land, and for purchase of water right and twenty acres of land, the cost of said water-right and land not to exceed five thousand dollars, fifty-five thousand dollars.

Expenses of Territorial courts in Utah Territory.—For defraying the contingent expenses of the courts, including fees of the United States district attorney and his assistants, the fees and per diems of the United States commissioners and clerks of the court, and the fees, per diems, and traveling expenses of the United States marshal for the Territory of Utah, with the expenses of summoning jurors, subpoenaing witnesses, of arresting, guarding and transporting prisoners, of hiring and feeding guards, and of supplying and caring for the penitentiary, to be paid under the direction and approval of the Attorney-General, upon accounts duly verified and certified, thirty-five thousand dollars.

HOME INSURANCE.

In this issue appears the annual report of the President of the Home Fire Insurance Company to its stockholders. The showing of the exhibit is highly gratifying, and we congratulate those interested in this important local enterprise that they are able to make it. It is an institution that should be sustained and ought to prosper, for a variety of reasons, one of which is that, being a home affair, the profits arising from the enterprise are retained in the community, which is to that extent, benefited by it beyond the important fact that it is unqualifiedly solid, there being not the slightest risk in insuring with it. Its officers and directors are recognized as among the soundest financial men in this region, and their names are a guaranty of permanency and safety. They are: President, Heber J. Grant; Vice-President, James Sharp; Secretary and Treasurer, Elias A. Smith; Directors, Henry Dinwoodey, John Henry Smith, Geo. Romney, John C. Cutler, Thomas G. Webber, David Eccles and P. T. Farnsworth.

STILL BEARING FALSE WITNESS.

The Brooklyn *Times* has published a special dispatch from Washington, in which the following appears:

"Mrs. Angie F. Newman, who is a sister of the Hon. John M. Thurston, of Nebraska, is here working, as she has been for several years, in the interest of the establishment of a refuge for Mormon women in Utah. She said this afternoon:

"If this appropriation is made for the Industrial Home the Mormons believe that it will have the effect of bringing many polygamists to grief. There is a defense fund raised by the Mormon Church which goes to the relief of the wives who refuse to testify in the courts against their husbands under prosecution for bigamy. If there was a place where these women could go and live after their separation from their husbands many of them would testify against their husbands and send them to the penitentiary, and this is one of the main reasons why the Mormon Church is opposed to the establishment of the Industrial Home."

This is more of the female lobbyist's misrepresentations. There is not a word of truth in the statement that there is a fund here "for the relief of wives who refuse to testify against their husbands." Neither is it true that if there were a dozen Homes like that for which money is being obtained from the Government under false pretences, many wives would be induced to enter them and testify against their husbands. Evidence is at hand when wanted, to prove that inducements have been offered by agents of the concern for women to enter their so-called Home, and that all their cajolery has failed. It is utterly false to say that the "Mormon" Church has opposed the establishment of the Industrial Home; it has never interfered with the matter in any shape or form. It would be a strange thing that no virulent anti-"Mormons," male or female, ever opposes the Church without lying about it, were it not for the fact that they could not say anything against it if they only told the absolute truth. Bearing false witness for the sake of raising money, may comport with some people's ideas of modern "Christian" conduct, but we do not believe it is so regarded by the Author of the Christian religion Himself. And we believe that in the great day of accounts His view of the case will be given in the most emphatic manner.

ATROCIOUS FALSEHOODS EXPOSED.

We have paid some attention to the untruthful and deceptive methods employed by certain individuals to gain an appropriation of \$80,000 for the benefit of "The Industrial Christian Home Association of Utah. Our readers will have observed that we have not opposed the establishment of any institution here for dependent "women and children," whether they are such as have "renounced polygamy" or not. But we have exposed the means by which funds have been drawn from the public treasury for the purpose, and which was simply obtaining money under false pretences.

In proof of the charges we have made we could cite from the *Congressional Record* a great deal of evidence, but we do not wish to take up valuable space with a mass of abusive matter. However, there is a statement made by Mrs. Angie F. Newman which appears in the *Congressional Record* of October 30, and which we cannot pass by without special notice. It is as follows:

"On the second Monday in March I visited the penitentiary in Salt Lake City and addressed a great host of polygamous brethren. These men are mostly incarcerated for a term of six months, and therefore many such groups have come and gone since the famous Rudger Clawson case, of which John T. Caine had the temerity to declare before the committee, 'It was the last of which he had knowledge.'"

"I found in one cell 10 by 13½ without floor, six women, three of whom had babies under six months of age, who were incarcerated for 'contempt of court' in refusing to acknowledge the paternity of their children. When I pleaded with them to answer the court and be released they said, 'If we do there are many wives and children to suffer the loss of a father.'"

In another cell were two girls, one fourteen, one sixteen, each married to her own father, both with babies, and yet polygamy is a lost art!"

The bare-faced and malicious falsehood of the last of these statements will strike all classes of our community with astonishment if not disgust. No such cases were ever known to the courts of Utah. No such imprisonment appears on the records of the Penitentiary. No such occurrence was reported in any paper in this Territory. If such things had been facts they would have been telegraphed, with sensational exaggerations to every part of the United States, and would have appeared with glaring headlines in all the newspapers taking the press dispatches. It is simply an atrocious and wicked fabrication for the purpose of extorting money.

In order to obtain information from official quarters, a representative of the *Deseret News* applied to Marshal Dyer, Warden Pratt and Mr. Doyle, one of the chief guards at the Penitentiary. They all declared the statement about the two girls incorrect, and without any foundation in fact.

In conversation with H. B. Clawson, who is a public-spirited citizen, manager of the Salt Lake Theatre, and well known in business circles, we learned that he had seen the *Record*, and, being startled with so terrible a charge in a public document, he addressed a letter to the United States Marshal, who must have knowledge of the facts if they ever existed, asking for a statement concerning them.

The Marshal replied, courteously, to the effect that at the time named there were seven women in the Penitentiary for different offences, and that two of them only were detained "for contempt of court in refusing to answer certain questions put to them by the Court touching their polygamous family relations." The Marshal said further:

"The statement as to the size of the room in which these prisoners were kept is about correct, being so small as for it to be almost inhuman to keep female prisoners in such a place, but it is the only place we have for that purpose. There is a floor on it, however, which is always kept neat and clean."

But concerning the two girls "in another cell," said to be "married to their own father, both with babies," the Marshal adds:

"This is wholly incorrect and I cannot understand how anybody could have been so misled. Somebody must have made malicious misrepresentations to Mrs. Newman on this subject, as we have never had any girls of this age confined in the Penitentiary since I have been Marshal."

Before replying, Marshal Dyer took pains to have the records of the Penitentiary examined so that his answer should be exactly correct. This was not furnished for publication, but as Mr. Clawson's inquiry was for public information we do not think the Marshal will object to this reference to his reply.

We have felt some reluctance to mention Mrs. Newman's name in connection with the shameful means by which a Congress has been induced to appropriate money, but since she has placed her own name before the country as authority, for these schemes, we are doing her no injustice in referring to her personally. Mrs. Newman has been lobbying at the Capitol for some time, and has been circulating her slanders through the country accompanied with certificates as to her