

My sisters, let us, inasmuch as we are free to do all that love and duty prompt, be brave and unflinching in sustaining our brethren. Woman's faith can accomplish wonders. Let us, like the devout and steadfast Miriam, assist our brothers in upholding the hands of Moses. Like the loving Josephine, whose firm and gentle influence both animated and soothed the heart of Napoleon, we will encourage and assist the servants of God in establishing righteousness; but, unlike Josephine, never will political inducements, threats or persecutions prevail on us to relinquish our matrimonial ties—they were performed by the authority of the holy priesthood, the efficacy of which extends into eternity.

But, to the law and to the testimony. Those obnoxious, fratricidal Bills—I feel indignant at the thought, that such documents should disgrace our National Capital. The same spirit that prompted Herod to seek the life of Jesus—the same that drove our Pilgrim Fathers to this Continent, and the same that urged the English Government to the system of unrepresented taxation, which resulted in the independence of the American Colonies, is conspicuous in those Bills. If such measures are persisted in, they will produce similar results. They not only threaten extirpation to us, but they augur destruction to the Government. The authors of those Bills would tear the Constitution to shreds. They are sapping the foundation of American freedom—they would obliterate every vestige of the dearest right of man—liberty of conscience, and reduce our once happy country to a state of anarchy.

Our trust is in God. He that led Israel from the land of Egypt—who preserved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace; who rescued Daniel from the jaws of hungry lions, and who directed Brigham Young to these mountain vales, lives and overrules the destinies of men and nations. He will make the wrath of man praise Him; and His kingdom will move steadily forward, until wickedness shall be swept from the earth, and truth, love and righteousness reign triumphantly.

HARRIET COOK YOUNG.

In rising to address this meeting, delicacy prompts me to explain the chief motives which have dictated our present action. We, the ladies of Salt Lake City, have assembled here to-day—not for the purpose of assuming any particular political power, nor to claim any special prerogative which may, or may not belong to our sex; but to express our indignation at the unhallowed efforts of men, who, regardless of every principle of manhood, justice and constitutional liberty, would force upon a religious community, by a direct issue, either the curse of apostasy, or the bitter alternative of fire and sword. Surely the instinct of self-preservation, the love of liberty and happiness and the right to worship God are dear to our sex as well as to the other, and when these most sacred of all rights are thus wickedly assailed, it becomes absolutely our duty to defend them.

The mission of the Latter-day Saints is to reform abuses which have for ages corrupted the world, and to establish an era of peace and righteousness. The Most High is the founder of this mission, and in order to its establishment, His providences have so shaped the world's history, that, on this continent, blest above all other lands, a free and enlightened Government has been instituted, guaranteeing to all, social, political and religious liberty. The Constitution of our country is therefore hallowed to us, and we view with a jealous eye every infringement upon its great principles, and demand, in the sacred name of liberty, that the miscreant, who would trample it under his feet, by depriving a hundred thousand American citizens of every vestige of liberty, should be anathematized throughout the length and breadth of the land as a traitor to God and his country.

It is not strange that among the bigoted and the corrupt such a man and such a measure should have originated; but it will be strange indeed, if such a measure find favor with the honorable and high minded men who wield the destinies of the nation. Let this seal of ruin be attached to the archives of our country and terrible must be the results. Woe will wait upon her steps, and sorrow and desolation will stalk through the land; peace and liberty will seek another clime, while anarchy, lawlessness and bloody strife hold high carnival amid the general wreck. God forbid that wicked men be permitted to force such an issue upon the nation!

It is true that a corrupt press, and an

equally corrupt priestcraft are leagued against us—that they have pandered to the ignorance of the masses and vilified our institutions to that degree, that it has become popular to believe that the Latter-day Saints are unworthy to live; but it is also true that there are many, very many, right thinking men who are not without influence in the nation, and to such do we now solemnly and earnestly appeal. Let the United voice of this assembly give the lie to the popular clamour that the women of Utah are oppressed and held in bondage. Let the world know that the women of Utah prefer virtue to vice, and the home of an honorable wife to the gilded pageantry of fashionable temples of sin. Transitory allurements, glaring to the senses, as the flame is to the moth, but short lived and cruel in their results possess no charms for us. Every woman in Utah may have her husband, the husband of her choice. Here we are taught, not to destroy our children, but to preserve them, for they, reared in the path of virtue and trained to righteousness, constitute our true glory.

It is with no wish to accuse our sisters who are not of our faith, but we are dealing with facts as they exist. Wherever monogamy reigns, adultery, prostitution, free-love and feticide, directly or indirectly, are its concomitants. It is not enough to say that the virtuous and the high-minded frown upon these evils, we believe they do, but frowning does not cure them, it does not even check their rapid growth; either the remedy is too weak, or the disease is too strong. The women of Utah comprehend this and they see in the principle of a plurality of wives, the only safeguard against adultery, prostitution, free-love and the reckless waste of pre-natal life practised throughout the land.

It is as co-workers in the great mission of universal reform, not only in our own behalf, but also, by precept and example, to aid in the emancipation of our sex generally, that we accept in our heart of hearts, what we know to be a divine commandment; and here, and now, boldly and publicly we do assert our right, not only to believe in this holy commandment, but to practise what we believe.

While these are our views, every attempt to force that obnoxious measure upon us, must of necessity, be an attempt to coerce us in our religious and moral convictions, against which did we not most solemnly protest, we would be unworthy the name of American women.

MRS. H. T. KING.

My Dear Sisters:—I wish I had the language I feel to need at the present moment, to truly represent the indignant feelings of my heart and brain on reading last evening a string of thirty "Sections" headed by the words "A Bill in aid of the execution of the laws in the Territory of Utah, and other purposes." The "other purposes" contain the pith of the matter, and the adamant chains the compilers of the said "Bill" seek to bind this people with, exceed any thing the feudal times of England, or the serfdom of Russia ever laid upon human beings. My Sisters! are we really in America the world renowned land of liberty, freedom, and equal rights? the land of which I dreamed in my youth as almost an earthly elysium, where freedom of thought and religious liberty were open to all? The land that Columbus wore his noble life out to discover? the land that God Himself helped him to exhume, and that Isabella, a queen—a woman, declared she would pawn her jewels and crown of Castile to give him the outfit which he needed? The land of Washington, "The Father of his Country"—and of a host of noble spirits too numerous to mention? the land to which "The Mayflower" bore the Pilgrim Fathers, who rose up and left their homes, and bade their native land "good night", simply that they might worship God by a purer and holier faith in a land of freedom and liberty, of which America has long been synonymous? Yes, my sisters, this is America; but oh! how are the mighty fallen! Who or what is the creature who framed this incomparable document? Is he an Esquimaux or a Chimpanzee, or what isolated land's end spot produced him? What ideas he must have of women! Had he ever a mother, a wife, or a sister? In what academy was he tutored, or to what school does he belong, that he should so coolly and systematically command the women of this people to turn traitors to their husbands, their brothers, and their sons! Short-sighted man of sections and the Bill! Let us the women of this people—the sisterhood of Utah,

rise en masse and tell this nondescript to defer "the Bill" until he has studied the character of woman such as God intended she should be, then he will discover that devotion, veneration, and faithfulness are her peculiar attributes; that God is her refuge—and His servants her oracles, and that especially the women of Utah have paid too high a price for their present position, their present light and knowledge—and their noble future to succumb to so mean and foul a thing as the Baskin, Cullum & Co's Bill. Let him learn that they are one heart, hand and brain, with the brotherhood of Utah—that God is their Father and their Friend—that into His hands they commit their cause—and on their pure and simple banner they have emblazoned their motto—

"God and my right."

PHOEBE WOODRUFF.

Ladies of Utah, as I have been called upon to express my views upon the important subject, which has called us together this day, I will say that I am happy to be one of your number in this association. I am proud that I am a citizen of Utah, and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I have been a member of this Church for thirty-six years, and had the privilege of living in the days of the Prophet Joseph and heard his teachings for many years. He ever counseled us to honor, obey, and maintain the principles of our noble Constitution, for which our fathers fought, and many of them sacrificed their lives to establish. President Brigham Young has always taught the same principle. This glorious legacy of our fathers, the Constitution of the United States, guarantees unto all the citizens of this great Republic the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, as it expressly says, "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Cullum's bill is in direct violation of this declaration of the Constitution, and, I think it is our duty to do all in our power by our voices and influence to thwart the passage of this bill, which commits a violent outrage upon our rights, and the rights of our fathers, husband and sons; and whatever may be the final result of the action of Congress in passing or enforcing oppressive laws for the sake of our religion, upon the noble men who have subdued these deserts, it is our duty to stand by them and support them by our faith, prayers and works through every dark hour until the end, and trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to defend us, and all who are called to suffer for keeping the commandments of God. Shall we as wives and mothers sit still and see our husbands, and sons, whom we know are obeying the highest behest of heaven, suffer for their religion without exerting ourselves to the extent of our power for their deliverance? No! verily, no!! God has revealed unto us the law of the Patriarchal order of marriage, and commanded us to obey it. We are sealed to our husbands for time and eternity, that we may dwell with them and our children in the world to come, which guarantees unto us the greatest blessing for which we are created. If the rulers of our nation will so far depart from the spirit and the letter of our glorious Constitution as to deprive our Prophets, Apostles and Elders of citizenship, and imprison them for obeying this law, let them grant us this our last request, to make their prisons large enough to hold their wives, for where they go we will go also.

MRS. HORNE

Had been connected with the Church since 1835, and spoke her indignation at the bill. She is one of the so-called oppressed women of Utah; is the wife of a man who practices plurality of wives and expects always to sustain him. Whether the bill is passed or not, it will be all right, if the Saints only are faithful and true to their God and themselves. She thought if the bill was passed, it would fill up the cup of the iniquity of the nation.

MRS. ELEANOR M. PRATT

Said she was born in America, and thought she was free to teach that which came from God. It is many years since three men in rags came to her home in Mississippi, and by the Bible she held, they proved to her Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. Eleven years after, she heard the same principles in California and received them. For so doing she was turned out of doors, her children were taken from her twice, and innocent blood was shed. She longed to see the women of

Utah rise and express themselves concerning their rights. When she saw innocent blood shed like as in a slaughter house she did not fear as much as to-day. God gave her strength, and the officers and the soldiers trembled at the power God gave her. Fear falls on the enemies of the Saints because the women of Utah do not fear death; and she was willing to let her blood be shed for the principles of truth, but not for any ignoble purpose.

ELIZA R. SNOW.

My Sisters, My remarks in conclusion will be brief. I heard the prophet Joseph Smith say if the people rose up and mobbed us and the authorities countenanced it, they would have mobs to their hearts' content. I heard him say that the time would come when this nation would so far depart from its original purity, its glory, and its love for freedom and its protection of civil and religious rights, that the Constitution of our country would hang as it were by a thread. He said, also, that this people, the sons of Zion, would rise up and save the Constitution and bear it off triumphantly.

I wish to say to my sisters, to the mothers in Israel and to the daughters, cultivate in your bosoms the spirit of freedom and liberty which has been bequeathed unto us by our fathers, or grandfathers I should say. My grandfather fought in the Revolution and was taken prisoner. He lay in a filthy prison, with a companion who was taken with him, and fed on such a scanty allowance as would scarcely support life.

His companion died, and for the sake of having his allowance of food he covered him up in the bed and kept him just as long as he dare to stay with a decaying body. And the spirit of freedom and liberty is what we should always cultivate, and what mothers should cultivate in the breasts of their sons, that they may grow up brave and noble, and defenders of that glorious Constitution which has been bequeathed unto us. Let mothers cultivate that spirit in their own bosoms. Let them manifest their own bravery and cherish a spirit of encountering difficulties, because they have to be met more or less in every situation of life. If fortitude and nobility of soul be cultivated in your own bosoms, you will transmit them to your children, your sons will grow up noble defenders of truth and righteousness, and heralds of salvation to the nations of the earth. They will be prepared to fill high and responsible situations in religious, judicial, civil and executive positions. I consider it most important, my sisters, that we should struggle to preserve the sacred Constitution of our country, one of the blessings of the Almighty; for the same spirit that inspired the Prophet Joseph Smith inspired the framers of the Constitution, and we should ever hold it sacred and bear it off triumphantly.

My sisters, I am happy to meet with you, although this is not the occasion that we could have desired to meet together; at least the circumstance which has led to the occasion, is one not to be so regarded. Yet I am happy to meet with you; and my desire is that we may as mothers and sisters in Israel defend truth and righteousness, and sustain those who preach it. Every sister in this church should be a preacher of righteousness; and I think we all are; I believe it is our aim to be such. Let us be more energetic to improve our minds, and develop that strength of moral character which cannot be surpassed on the face of the earth. We should do this. The circumstances in which we are placed and our positions in life demand this of us, because we have greater and higher privileges than any other females upon the face of the earth.

Having said so much I will close by saying, God bless you and help us all to keep His holy commandments and be valiant for the truth, that whether life or death, in life and in death, we may triumph over evil and return to the presence of the Holy One, pure, having kept the faith and finished our course, that the crown laid up for us may be presented to us in the kingdom of our God in the eternal world. Amen. (amen from the audience).

Mrs. Zinah D. Young then moved that the meeting adjourn sine die, which was carried; and Mrs. Phoebe Woodruff offered the closing benediction.

The old Tabernacle was crowded with ladies at this meeting, and as it will comfortably seat five thousand persons, there could not have been fewer than between five and six thousand present on the occasion.