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NATIONAL WRONG-DOING.

"THE State cannot afford to do wrong to the citizen. We use the word State to denote the organized community as represented by its Government, whether State or Federal. When the State does wrong it encourages and stimulates individual wrong-doing. There is no excuse for State offences against equity. The people do not wish their Government to take unfair advantage of any nation or community or class or person. The people desire to have equal justice done to all."

The foregoing is from an able article in *Belford's Magazine*. It contains some pertinent and timely truths. The chief object in the formation of the State—using the term as above defined—is to protect all the people in the enjoyment of their common rights and privileges, and particularly those citizens who are in danger of the improper exercise of power by the majority.

The stimulation and encouragement to individual wrong-doing given by the State when it oppresses a class, or a community, or a person, is a consideration of great moment. Such an example is strong and far-reaching and likely to produce very disastrous results, not only as they may affect the class or citizen oppressed but as they operate upon public morality and the general spirit.

One of the greatest "offenses against equity" ever sought to be perpetrated in this nation, is the proposition to impose such test oaths on the law-obeying citizens of Utah as shall prevent them from exercising the elective franchise. "There is no excuse" for this. The pretext is so flimsy that it can be "seen through with half an eye." The object is to place the Territory in the control of the minority. And the only way to accomplish this is by the path of injustice and wrong-doing on the part of the State.

Whether the people of this great nation "want their government to take unfair advantage" of the "Mormons" or not, should make no

difference with statesmen sworn to uphold the Constitution and to perform their duty as legislators. They should do right and refuse to do wrong, even if the people, through prejudice or passion or misunderstanding, should clamor for wrong to be done to a community or an individual.

We do not believe this nation would want to do this evil thing to the "Mormons" which is proposed, if the people understood the facts in the case. The wrong intended is glossed over by the false pretence that polygamy is the point of attack. That is why many would either approve or condone it. If it was generally known that the legislation projected will have no bearing on this question, but will simply punish the innocent, and deprive unoffending citizens of the franchise because they belong to the same Church as others who are charged with offending, we do not believe there would be many persons found to endorse the contemplated outrage.

But whether they would or not, the wrong would be the same. For while this is a government of the people, and *vox populi* is the ruling force, yet there are principles which are above all clamor, and the instrument framed to restrict the exercise of governmental authority, in which many of those principles are affirmed, should be honored above the voice of the multitude uttered without the legal formalities required to make that voice authoritative. It will be found by experience, and history teaches the same, that when nations do wrong and take unfair advantage of classes, communities or individuals, punishment follows as harvest succeeds the sowing. Retribution comes to nations as well as persons, and the effects of injustice are sure to follow its infliction. For there is a Supreme Ruler who is above "the powers that be," and justice and judgment go before His face and eternal compensation is in His right hand.

THE CAMAS DISTRESS.

LAST winter a couple of residents of Camas Prairie, Idaho, visited this city and represented that the settlers of that section were in a lamentable state of destitution, owing to the total destruction of their crops the previous year. A large amount of grain and other produce, besides money, was donated by generous, kind-hearted people to relieve the

unfortunate and distressed dwellers in Camas. Collections for the same benevolent object were made in portions of Idaho, Montana and adjacent States.

A correspondent of the Boise (Idaho) *Democrat*, who resides in Camas, complains bitterly about the distribution of the means thus obtained. He represents that the awarding of it has largely been conducted upon the principle of giving unto him who already hath, and leaving some of the most destitute to continue without. He even introduces names in connection with his strictures.

Of course there is no way, at this distance, of verifying the statements of the writer in the *Democrat*. There is probably some truth in his assertions, but they come too late to cause any correction of the matter complained of. The leading effect of the agitation of the subject at this juncture will doubtless be to cause kind-hearted people to be more careful with regard to the giving of gifts to relieve the distressed. If the relief committee have abused their trust no censure would be strong enough to express the contempt to which they would be entitled, but the charitable view is the best, and that is that they probably did as well as they could under the circumstances.

The same writer states that grasshoppers are playing havoc with the crops in that section this season, and that, consequently, the people will be confronted with a condition in future probably worse than that which led to the solicitation for aid in their behalf.

THE SITUATION AND ITS OBLIGATIONS.

WE are in the midst of peculiar conditions. The times seem to be somewhat "out of joint." It is difficult to understand how intelligent Latter-day Saints can otherwise view the situation of affairs in general. This reflection has special force in regard to conditions that have direct relation to themselves as a community.

The question as to whether the prevalent spirit of the world is gaining ground among some who profess better and higher aims is an important one. The god of the world is mammon. With people who profess the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ the possession of wealth and the enjoyment of the comforts and conveniences it affords