

DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHARLES W. PENROSE, EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 1884.

A VILE SLANDER REFUTED.

A COMMUNICATION appeared in yesterday morning's *Herald*, under the nom de plume of "Vic." The writer purports to give an narration of some disgraceful doings, that he alleges took place on a car of the train of the Utah and Nevada railroad which conveyed the Fireman's Band excursion party on the return trip from Garfield to this city. The story is so disgusting, on account of its unmistakable suggestiveness as to shock every sensitive reader.

It is well known that the superintendent of the road has taken the most stringent steps for the prevention of any such detestable proceedings as those described by the correspondent. In view of this fact it would be next to impossible for anything of the kind to occur. Not only are known disreputable characters denied the privilege of riding on the trains, but the train men are strictly instructed to prevent any and all indecent behavior. To render this rule effective officers travel over the road to enforce it under the law.

Officer Wm. Calder was on the train on the occasion referred to and arrested the only person guilty of unbecoming conduct. The offending individual was a soldier in civilian's clothes, who insulted a lady on the train. Mr. Calder passed through the cars and found nothing else wrong in any of them.

Mr. Samuel Riter, the conductor, characterizes the statements of "Vic." as infamously false. He states that a young man (whose name has been given us) in a frolic blew out the light. The conductor told him if he repeated that act he should put him off the train. But there was no disturbance or intrinsically bad conduct.

Mr. Julius A. Cushing, of Camp Douglas, teacher of the Fireman's Band, telephoned this morning in answer to an inquiry, that the statements of the *Herald* correspondent are unqualifiedly untrue. Being in the particular car referred to by "Vic." during the return trip, he is prepared to sustain his assertion. Mr. Ernest Rawlings, a member of the Fireman's Band, makes the same showing, and says that nothing unseemly occurred, the excursionists behaving as any ordinary pleasure party would, spending a part of the time in singing songs incorporating no questionable sentiment.

The management of the road has made inquiries of every source within reach, for the purpose, providing the statements made by "Vic." were found correct, of punishing the guilty parties, but thus far the investigation gives them a flat contradiction.

The information obtained as the result of inquiry comes from persons who were on the train, and some of them in the particular car referred to by the correspondent, while he admits in his communication that he only heard the disgusting story he told from another. He does not claim to have been an ear or eye witness, but merely to have been posted by "our informant."

An effort has been made to discover the author of the letter, that he might be requested to sustain his statements or stand convicted as a slanderer, but these endeavors have been unsuccessful.

The communication has the appearance of a plea in behalf of prostitutes and prostitution, as the action of the management of the road in preventing those who are known to be lewd women from traveling over the line to and from the popular bathing resort is condemned by him. The alleged disreputable conduct which "Vic." says occurred on the excursion train is thrown up for the purpose of making it appear that the prohibitory regulation in regard to prostitutes is inconsistent and partial.

The tenor of the communication leads to the suspicion that it might have been written by some person who had been personally disappointed by the operation of this prohibitory and salutary rule of the road.

Now let anybody who knows anything about the disgraceful doings alleged by "Vic." to have occurred on a Utah and Nevada railroad train step forward and aid the management in the investigation which is in progress. If no evidence is forthcoming on that side of the question beyond the secondhand statement of the anonymous communication, then its writer must stand in the light of a person of unripe intellect, easily imposed upon, or an intentional but clumsy falsifier, who has reason for being ashamed of his vile production, which not only casts a shade upon the people who traveled in the car where the unseemly behavior is

said by him to have taken place, but upon the railroad company and to some extent the community generally.

ANTI-"MORMON" PETITIONS.

PETITION No. 1.

Presented in the U. S. Senator, June 16th, 1884, by Senator Hoar.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:

At the last annual meeting of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov. 13th, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved: That a Committee be appointed to confer with the civil and religious authorities of Salt Lake, and to make careful investigation of the relation of the ballot in the hands of the women of Utah, to Territorial Legislation and to Congressional Representation at the National Capital, and above all as to its power to perpetuate the religious bondage and domestic slavery of the women so enfranchised, and if upon such conference and examination, they shall find the facts to warrant, they shall draft a petition to Congress for the disfranchisement of the women of Utah.

The committee appointed in pursuance of the above resolution, having made the investigation required, find that the women of Utah were enfranchised by an Act, approved February 12, 1871, that the Act was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah, all the members of that body being men high in authority in the Mormon Church, and that it is the testimony of reliable witnesses, of the Territory who are familiar with the facts, that the authorities of the Mormon Church placed the ballot in the hands of the women of Utah for the sole purpose of neutralizing the votes of non-Mormons, who at the date of this Act were settling in the Territory in considerable numbers. The committee likewise find that under the provisions of this Act aforesaid, which makes the wife of a native born or naturalized citizen a legal voter, foreign born women who have married citizens within a few days or weeks after their arrival in Utah are permitted to vote at elections occurring less than six months after their arrival in this country, and that many votes are thus cast at every election by foreign born women who are wholly ignorant of our institutions and laws, and in many cases of our language. No subsequent law has changed these conditions except under the rulings of the Utah Commission they must be six months resident. This committee also find that the Mormon women thus enfranchised are bound by obligations which they consider sacred to obey the authorities of the Mormon Church in things temporal as well as spiritual, and that to cast a vote in opposition to the will of these authorities is to incur the penalty of excommunication. They also find that the laws of Utah, which deprive the wife of the right of dower, and or any claim upon the property or earnings of her husband, give the husband the power to punish the wife for disobedience, by depriving her of a home and of the means of support; and as this power is and has been exercised to compel women to submit to the introduction of plural wives into the household, it is not reasonable to suppose that a wife will risk the loss of a home and the means of support by voting in opposition to the commands of her husband and the authority of the Church. The committee find further that as a consequence of the subjection in which Mormon women are held, they vote as a unit for the men selected by the Church to fill all the offices in the gift of the people. Should the act conferring suffrage upon the women of Utah be annulled, the power of the Mormon leaders would be weakened by the loss of about 12,000 votes, and it would be possible in some instances to elect as county officers and members of the Legislative Assembly, men who do not owe primary allegiance to the Mormon Church. Under existing conditions Mormon women perpetuate their own slavery by voting only for men who can be relied upon to carry out the will of the First Presidency of the Church. As members of the Legislative Assembly, and as county and municipal officers, these men clothe the exactions of the Church with the forms of law, and cement the union of Church and State, and through their Delegate to Congress and otherwise they persistently oppose any legislation designed to lessen the power of the Mormon Priesthood. For the reasons above given your petitioners therefore pray that the act conferring the right of suffrage upon the women of Utah be annulled.

Mrs. R. S. Rust, corresponding secy., W. H. M. S. M. E. C.
Mrs. Amelia S. Quinton, Secretary National Indian Association.
Frances E. Willard (Mrs. Joseph Cummings), Mrs. Thos. A. Hill, cor. sec. W. F. M. S.; Mrs. A. H. Hoge, President of the Woman's Presbyterian Board of Missions of the Northwest; Mrs. S. S. Fisher, President Woman's Ch. Assn. (Mrs. O. Lunt) Mrs. T. C. Hoag, A. D. Cummings, Jane J. Bancroft, Dean of the Woman's College, Evansville, Mrs. E. E. Marcy, Anna S. Davis, Mrs. Asbury Lowrey, Mrs. Elton Foster, Mrs. Bishop Harris, (M. E. Ch.) New York City, Mrs. Bishop I. W. Wiley (M. E. Ch.), Cincinnati, Ohio, Mrs. A. R. Clark, Treasurer Woman's Home (M. S.) Mrs. Bishop C. H. Fow-

ler (M. E. Ch.) New York City, Mrs. I. E. P. Kummer, President Woman's Foreign Miss. Sec. of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, O., Mrs. P. R. Warman, President W. C. T. U. No. 2, Cincinnati, O., Mrs. F. A. Aiken, Secretary Woman's Home Mission Society, M. E. Church, Cin., O., Mrs. S. K. Leavitt, President Cincinnati Woman's Baptist H. M. S. Cin. O. Mrs. Louise E. Fisher, Pres. W. C. T. U. Cin., O. Mrs. A. E. Newman, Lincoln, Neb. Mrs. O. V. Culbertson, Secretary W. F. M. S., M. E. Ch. Mrs. Bishop Jagers, P. E. Ch. Mrs. Bishop Walden, M. E. Ch. Mrs. Amos Shinkle, Covington, Ky. Mrs. John Davis, Ch. Ex. Bd. W. H. M. S. Mrs. Mary Maher, Mrs. C. V. Culver, Cor. Sec. and Treas. Erie Coress. W. H. M. S. Judith Hennessy, Mrs. Anna Nichols.

The names attached to this paper represent at least 250,000 women of the different Christian denominations in this country, through the offices of the several benevolent and philanthropic associations included in the list.

PETITION No. 2

Was presented in the Senate June 19, 1884, by Senator Hoar.

It is the same petition as No. 1, but signed Mrs. Angie F. Newman, Supt. of Mission Work of the M. E. Church, Utah Territory.

BLAINE ON THE "MORMON QUESTION."

"RELIGIOUS liberty is the right of every citizen in the Republic. Congress is forbidden by the Constitution to make any law respecting the establishment of religion or permitting the free exercise thereof. For a century under this guarantee, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, have worshipped God according to the dictates of conscience, but religious liberty must not be permitted to the justification of offences against the law. A religious sect strongly entrenched in one of the Territories of the Union, and spreading rapidly into four other Territories, claims the right to destroy the great safeguard and monument of social order, and to practice as a religious privilege that which is a crime punishable with severe penalty in the other States of the Union. The sacredness and unity of the family must be preserved as the foundation of all civil government and as the source of orderly administration, and as a guarantee of moral purity. The claim of the Mormons that they are divinely authorized to practice polygamy, should no more be admitted than the claim of certain heathen tribes, if they should come among us, to continue the rite of human sacrifices. The law does not interfere with what a man believes; it takes cognizance of what he does as a citizen. The Mormons are entitled to the same civil rights as others, and to this they must be confined. Polygamy can never receive National sanction or toleration by admitting the community, that upholds it, as a State in the Union. Like others the Mormons must learn that the liberty of the individual ceases where the rights of society begin."

In his letter of acceptance of the Republican nomination for President of the United States, Mr. James G. Blaine inserts the paragraph which we have given above. It contains nothing new on the "Mormon" question but simply expresses the views of the party which has chosen him as its representative. The fallacies it contains have been exposed many times, but since the gentleman has seen fit to repeat them as though they were indisputable axioms, and to publish them to the country, it will be in order for us to throw a little light on them once more.

Nobody disputes the statement that "religious liberty is the right of every citizen of this republic." The only point of dispute that can be interposed is as to how far this liberty may be properly extended. Mr. Blaine adopts the narrow view and copies the contracted definition that religious liberty only extends to "what a man believes." That is to say he is protected in his belief, by the Constitution, but not in his actions based upon that belief. If his religion teaches him that marriage is a divine institution and that men are justified under certain conditions and restrictions in marrying more wives than one, he is guaranteed the liberty to believe that part or any other part of his religion, but if he carries this belief into exercise he will not be protected in it, but may be punished for it by secular law.

This would open the way for the introduction of the worst forms of bigotry and intolerance. It would permit interference with any religious practice that the majority or that influential persons might see fit to denounce as against the interests of society. It would make the guaranty of religious freedom which is the boast of the American people one of the most ridiculous of shams. For, it is liberty of action which needs to be protected. Freedom of belief needs no aid from law. It is independent of itself. You cannot chain a man's thoughts. You cannot bend or break or limit his belief. That which appears correct to him he will believe in spite of all restrictions, sometimes in spite of himself. A constitutional guaranty of freedom of belief would be a work of supererogation. "Thank you for nothing," would be the sentiment of every citizen on reading it. The First Amendment to the Constitution makes no such mockery of freedom or pre-

tense of protection. It is the "free exercise" of religion which is there upheld, and Congress is forbidden to pass any law which would interfere with it. "Religion" and its "free exercise" are treated of in the Supreme Law of the Land, and mere belief is not touched upon or alluded to in that sacred instrument. He who would limit religious liberty to the simple right to believe as people choose, is a foe to the freedom specified in the Constitution, and which alone is worth anything. He exalts an imaginary shadow and tramples upon the real substance. Mr. Blaine's theory of constitutional religious freedom is less than a shade; it is worth nothing because it is nothing.

In pursuance of his insubstantial notion, he argues that "Mormon" polygamy should no more be tolerated than human sacrifice. He might just as logically have argued that baptism by immersion should no more be tolerated than widow burning, because both are claimed to be religious ordinances and both are against the opinions and customs of the majority in this land. His reasoning, to be worth anything, to prove anything, requires the establishment of a parallel between the two institutions which he tries to dispose of together in one sentence. If there was any likeness between human sacrifice and plural marriage Mr. Blaine might have some ground for linking them together. But there is none. There would be more semblance of comparison between the celibacy of nuns and the Sutte, than between the customs that he brings together. But Catholic celibacy is not under the popular ban as is "Mormon" polygamy, and the gentleman being after votes would not like to vex the Catholic citizen nor alienate Irish ballots. To link together as similars the destruction of human life and the marrying of plural wives because both are done under the plea of religion, is one of the greatest extremes of absurdity ever attempted.

Mr. Blaine is not the author of that piece of incongruous nonsense; he has merely copied it. But it has been in print a hundred times, and the Supreme Court of the United States were idiotic enough to adopt it in one of their elaborate Opinions. Mr. Blaine may consider himself in good company and think that if the notion was good enough for them it was good enough for him. But all the same it is unworthy of a man of his intellectual metal.

We do not dispute the truth that the liberty of action guaranteed in the Constitution must have some limit. But where shall the line be drawn? Must it not be at the point where it would impinge upon the liberty of others? Should not religious freedom extend to the utmost point of personal liberty that does not prevent or interfere with human rights? The rights of life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness must be general. No one under the plea of his religious belief or otherwise, must be permitted to interfere with those rights or either of them. Human sacrifice is destructive of human life and consequently of a natural right. Plural marriage is the very opposite of this, for it is promotive of human life. If "Mormon" polygamy justified force or the stealing of one man's wife by another, it would properly come under the ban of secular law to that extent. But while it interferes with no man's rights and no woman's rights, and is regulated by and consequent upon a religious belief and establishment, it is beyond the constitutional sphere of congressional enactment.

Mr. Blaine says that "a religious sect," alluding to the "Mormon" Church, "claims the right to destroy the great safeguard and monument of social order." This is untrue. That Church makes no such claim. It makes no such attempt. Its object, in its marriage regulations, is to strengthen and build higher "the safeguard and monument of social order." It aims to marry all the marriageable woman and leave no "surplus" as a prey to lust and as an element of social disorder. The system has been "an establishment of religion" long enough to test its effects in these directions. Those who know its workings have proven beyond a doubt that it both strengthens social order and helps to prevent social disorder. And "the sacredness and unity of the family," which Mr. Blaine says "must be preserved" are much more the object of solicitude and are under much better conservation than in anti-polygamic communities. There is a far greater guaranty of moral purity under the regulations of "Mormon" plural marriage, than in the Christian society that surrounds the home of Mr. Blaine or is made familiar to his senses in the capital of this great country.

"Religious liberty must not be permitted to the justification of offences against the law," says Mr. Blaine. Very true. But there is another side to this: The law must not be made to justify encroachments upon religious liberty. Mr. Blaine does not consider the matter from that standpoint. But before one can rationally censure any religious action as an offense against the law, he must examine the law to see if it is prohibitory of "the free exercise of religion." If it be found that a law is of that character, then an infraction of that law is not a crime, and the enforcement of the law ought not to be required, much less made the plea for the oppression of an unorthodox body, or the pretext of politicians to pander to the prejudice of an unreflecting multitude.

The "Mormons" have long since

learned the lesson which Mr. Blaine assumes they have not studied, that the liberty of the individual ceases where the rights of society begin. There are no people who exhibit more respect to the rights of society than the "Mormons." What society needs is to learn to respect the rights of "Mormons" as individuals a little more. We have the right to our faith and the free exercise of our religion so long as we do not interfere with the rights of other people. Under Mr. Blaine's own remarks we are entitled to our "civil rights the same as others." But the party which he represents has been trying, particularly of late, to deprive us of our civil as well as religious rights. And this, mark it, apart from our practice of plural marriage against which it professes so much hypocritical repugnance. It has sought to punish men and women because they are members of the "Mormon" Church, to take away the civil rights of "Mormons" who do not practice plurality of wives. To put the "Mormons," the monogamous majority as well as the polygamous minority, all and equally under the heels of an oligarchy and give them over, bound hand and foot, to an anti-republican power of local government worse than any monarchical form known to modern civilization. If Mr. Blaine should reach the goal of his great ambition it is to be expected that he will see to it that the "Mormons," in common with all other citizens, will be protected in their civil rights, if his notions of religious liberty are not as broad as they appear to be in his letter accepting the Republican nomination.

A PREVENTIVE PROJECT.

We learn from Mr. Cyrus H. Gold, a property owner in the district adjacent to this city recently flooded by the Jordan River during high water season, that the residents of that locality are working up a project for the permanent avoidance of any such disagreeable and destructive condition in future.

The proposition is to cut a channel by which a large portion of the waters of the Jordan can, when floods prevail, be carried directly into the Salt Lake.

In conversation with Surveyor Jesse W. Fox of the subject, we learn from him that this undertaking could be consummated with but small expense compared with its magnitude and the extent of the benefits it would confer. There is a natural channel most of the distance that would be traversed. Its head is at the south end of F. Little's farm—on the west side of the river—where it joins the county road, and at a point where the water has already broken over. From there it sweeps around in a northwest direction to the Salt Lake.

In the prosecution of this work the Surveyor expresses the opinion that a great deal of expense would be saved by utilizing two alkali lakes that are near the line of the partly formed channel, by doing the excavating that we bill needed between them, thus saving further work for the entire length of both.

In addition to the amount of excavation that would be required, it would be necessary to construct two short flumes to conduct the stream over the Brighton Canal at the points where it would have to cross that aqueduct. A bridge would have to be built to allow passage for the water under the Utah and Nevada railroad track, and several bridges over public roads encountered on the route and on the lands of private parties through whose grounds it would pass. A strong head-gate at the opening would also be indispensable.

Had this outlet been in existence all the trouble, anxiety, work and expense incurred by this season's flood would have been saved, as it would have lowered the river about eighteen inches. It is never too late to mend, however, and the project of an additional outlet for Jordan River is presented as a preventive of subsequent damage from the same cause. Surveyor Fox expresses the opinion that it would be a permanent solution of the overflow question in the locality interested, saving a large breadth of county and city property from damage by flood or seepage, of which, especially the latter, there is more or less every year. Besides the large interest in relation to the subject in this county, a number of Davis County farmers are involved, and would probably be willing to bear their proportion of the expense.

We are informed by Mr. Gold that the property owners of the district are taking steps to present a petition setting forth their views and proposals on the matter to the county and city authorities. In view of the importance of the subject, we believe it would be well for the county and city to jointly order a survey of the proposed outlet and an estimate of the entire cost of the project, and if it be found that the outlet would be warranted in view of the benefits to be derived from such an enterprise, to make an equitable arrangement in regard to the proportionate bearing of the expense from the public treasuries and the pockets of the people more immediately interested. The plan bears the impress of feasibility upon its face.

THERE are eighty-three prisoners in the Penitentiary at present.