

the history of the latter was that they could not be successfully cultivated at first, but after being thoroughly flooded and irrigated, produced excellent crops."

We are of the opinion that the lands involved in this contest are not naturally saline as contemplated by the law concerning saline lands. That they should be classed as desert lands, and the applicant should be allowed the preference right he has earned and the privilege the desert land law gives him and all other applicants, of four years' time to demonstrate whether they can be reclaimed or not.

In our opinion Mr. Thompson should be allowed to make desert land entry of the tracts applied for, and we so recommend.

FRANK D. HOBBS, Register.

HOYT SHERMAN, JR., Receiver.

The decision of the local land officers will be appealed from by the defeated litigants, and carried to the United States Land Commissioner at Washington, where the defendants are of the firm opinion that a reversal of the decision will be made. In case it should be confirmed, which is not probable, it would work a hardship with local salt companies generally.

## THE PRESENT UTAH SITUATION.

*Editor Deseret News:*

The present political agitation in Utah is destined to create an epoch in our history. There have been sporadic uprisings in Utah politics heretofore, but the fullness of time had not yet come. The chrysalis was not yet perfected by internal and organic changes to burst forth with the wings of a larger life and a more glorious freedom. But now the progress of social development is such that it can only be expressed in a broader independence and a more complete sovereignty.

Utah feels impelled to step forth from the hardship of childhood to the assumption of a civil status that will vouchsafe to her full governmental functions and a brilliant constellation of sovereign States as an environment. Hence it is important to recognize the fact that to obtain a fuller appreciation and preparation for the responsibilities of self government, the people of Utah should become practically and vitally interested in all those questions of national policy that have been and are now the subjects of discussion and of party issue in the several States that constitute an American nation. This work of education can be accomplished only by aligning the people into parties on the line of national politics, and thus require them to unite theory with practice in the actual discharge of the duties of citizenship. Furthermore, the work of preparation for statehood cannot very well be achieved without the affiliation and fraternization that would naturally result from the unrestricted intercourse of the people in all social, business and political relations. The best method is, I think, to start in anew, forget the animosities and antagonisms of the past, and seek for the complete adjustment of all social problems in the wisdom of the fathers, as treasured up in the Declaration of Independence, the national Constitution and all other great landmarks of American liberty.

The only substantial impediment to the advocacy of statehood for Utah in

the past has been polygamy. This obstacle has now been eliminated, and I am free to say that I have entire confidence in the assurances of the Mormon leaders that this action has been taken in the utmost good faith. The plighting of good faith and honest purpose in the abandonment of the practice of contracting plural marriages by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been avowed, not only by the church itself in its most comprehensive and authoritative declarations, but also by its individual members and ministers. In all these cases this action has been predicted as the result of final adjudication in the highest judicial tribunals of our country, a consequence which does honor to the judicial system of our country, as also to the Mormon people, in that they propose to be law-abiding citizens.

Added to these evidences of good faith we have also the further confirmation that is furnished by the fact that the oncoming flow of immigration, the increasing contact of surrounding civilization, the development of business, trade and commerce, the opening up of mines, building of railroads, establishment of schools—all these have a tendency to confirm the action taken by the church, and make the resumption of the practice of polygamy more improbable.

In the face of all this it seems unwarrantable, not to say cruel, that Liberal journals should constantly throw out the danger signal, and charge the Mormon leaders with insincerity, dissimulation and treachery. Such suspicion evinces more than unkindness; it argues incapacity for leadership in the present juncture.

We find in the investigation of the nature and causes of human action that there is a certain solidarity about all social phenomena, so that all criminal actions that come to the surface are to be regarded simply as the more aggravated symptoms of conditions and tendencies that inhere in the body political and social. Prostitution, theft, murder, suicide, all these are extreme forms of vices which percolate with more or less freedom throughout all society. The miserable brothel upon the street has its roots in the disordered, feverish passions of a thousand reputable homes. Murder is the concentrated eruption of the malice and ill-will that festers in unfilial hearts. Suicide is the culmination, in some melancholy soul, of the black despair which like floating clouds overshadow the happiness of the multitude. Theft is largely the result of unjust laws of distribution of property for which society in the aggregate is responsible. So unjust is society in this respect, that it would be difficult to define theft and property rights in an absolute sense. Statistics show that crime recurs with absolute regularity, year by year, in any given nationality. Not only does the same number of crimes recur invariably, but they are committed with the same instruments and by the same methods. The only way to change the annual averages of crime is to employ general causes affecting the whole society. By such general influences the aggregates may be increased or diminished. General causes are such as wars, financial crises, civil government, educational systems, and such like.

Polygamy is not an isolated custom for which the Mormon people are alone responsible. It comes from beliefs in the Bible, which is read, revered and cherished by all Christendom. Dr. Newman undertook to show, in a public debate with Orson Pratt, that the practice of polygamy was unsanctioned by the Bible; but no candid, intelligent and unbiased reader of that discussion can say other than that he made a failure. The Bible nowhere enunciates a distinct prohibition of polygamy. Probably the best and only arbiter on the question of polygamy is the trend and requirements of our civilization. The Mormons have now conformed to this demand as expressed by our courts, although we have been unable to justly condemn them out of the Biblical records of Christendom.

Again, on the subject of Church and State, can we justly condemn Mormon theocracy from the Bible standpoint, without at the same time discriminating against the wisdom and human applicability of those Scriptures that teach theocracy? In this matter, as in the case of polygamy, the Saints resolve to fall in line with our institutions. Hence, human action being controlled as it is by general laws, and growing as it does very greatly out of solidarity and hereditary influences in society, it is unphilosophical and unstatesmanlike to set up a theory of isolated responsibility for individuals and communities. Especially is this the case when there are so many ties of consanguinity and relationship between the American people at large and the Mormon population in Utah. One common blood, one national tradition, the same Bible, it is strange if we can't feel a share of responsibility; enough at least to accept a surrender when an opponent throws down his arms. Rather is it our duty to share the burden, whatever it may be, and give our best endeavors on the principle of mutual friendship, universal brotherhood, and joint responsibility.

But the Liberals claim that Mormons are controlled in their suffrages by the Priesthood; that no vote of any true Saint will be cast in opposition to counsel; that this condition of things must continue under statehood; that Mormons will vote according to instructions; that they will elect all officers, establish polygamy, and under civil forms erect an absolute Mormon theocracy. There are several considerations pertinent in this connection. If any of the orthodox sects were wholly confined to this intermountain region, as the Mormons have been, there would be a spirit of the body prevalent that would ostracize such men as Voltaire, Paine and Ingersoll. The people would not require to be dictated to in order to withdraw their support from such men. The general sentiment as reflected from the papers, the pulpit and the fireside would suffice. The rule would doubtless apply to Mormons equally with the orthodox. Hence the necessity of association in order to have mutual knowledge and trust.

Many of the Mormon citizens are naturalized foreigners who have had no extensive acquaintance with the use of the ballot, and they need to