

facts before the people. I have written to two of the papers here, but they are too one-sided for any use; seemingly they are afraid of the truth concerning the Latter-day Saints.

One of the "citizens" of Harry County, South Carolina, made an attack on "Mormonism" in the *Harry Herald*, which is misleading and the cause of renewed persecution. I attempted to reply to the article wherein the writer accused us of "preaching polygamy to the people privately," "of putting our converts under iron bound oaths" and "swearing them to eternal secrecy," also "holding in our doctrines that women have no soul," and the "only way she can avoid annihilation is to immediately form a bond of union according to the Mormon Church;" that those who have accepted the Gospel and emigrated, dare not send a letter home to friends without first submitting it to a vigilant committee and all objectionable matter stricken therefrom," that we "Elders are agents employed on large salaries by the Mormon Church to play upon the passions of the ignorant," and a great deal more such stuff as that which is utterly false and they have refused to publish anything in favor of us.

Here is a copy of what I sent to the paper named, but the editor instead of publishing it, threw out more insults and lies about us.

"Editor of *Herald*, Harry Co., S.C.

I feel in duty bound to make a reply to a piece recently printed in your paper on 'Mormonism' and I trust to your honor as a gentleman that you will publish the same; and "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

This is a free country; its Constitution was framed by inspired men, and sealed with their blood; and why do men who pretend to be Christians try to prohibit the exercise of freedom in religious matters? Why do they try to take from us that which our parents so nobly fought and died for? Our parents came from the old countries to escape the hand of oppression, and here found laws guaranteeing the right to everybody to worship God according to the dictates of conscience; and those who try to prohibit people from that exercise are rebels unto the government under which we live.

The accusations made against the "Mormons" are calumnious and libelous, and it is not just on the part of any person to judge and condemn a man or a community without hearing both sides. We do not preach any doctrine we are ashamed of, and I will assure you we are willing to "pass it around and herald the good news abroad." Give us a chance and we will herald it, and from us one can get the truth about the Mormons and their doctrines, but from our enemies or from the enemies of any people you can expect but little truth. In receiving the history of Christ do you accept the testimony of the unbelieving Jews or the testimony of the believing ones and His friends? The testimony of the believing ones or his followers you accept, then why not accept the evidence given by our friends?

Yes, the United States did enact laws prohibiting the practice of polygamy anywhere in the territory;" and the "Mormons," being a law-abiding

people, abandoned that practice. The "Mormons" "believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law." When the law was passed prohibiting polygamy, and proven to be constitutional, the "Mormons" also passed laws in their Church, a manifesto, which debarred its members from practicing that principle, therefore making it a Church crime.

Why not give the "Mormons" credit for what good they do? If they are not a good people, why not take steps to convert them from their evil ways and not kick them because they're down, but lend them a helping hand God will forgive you your trespasses as you forgive those that trespass against you. "Mormons" do not preach nor teach polygamy in public or private, but hold it as a dead issue, and would be willing for it to remain buried in circuit riders and some Liberal (?) politicians would not rake it up. More than that, it is unfair to condemn a people for what a few have done.

We do not put our "converts under an iron-bound oath," and they are at free to accept or reject the Gospel as the people of any denomination on earth. There have been upwards of seventy join the so called "Mormons" in this section of the vineyard which have been baptized at public baptisms where hundreds of people have witnessed it and no "swearing to eternal secrecy" took place.

We do not claim that the "good women haven't any soul." The accusation is utterly false and without foundation.

Women converts who have emigrated to Utah or other localities are free to write what they will to friends or relatives in any country. There are hosts of people in Utah who are not "Mormons," and I wish to say also that Utah is in the United States too. I have had people, who pretended to be intelligent, ask me how many days I was on the water coming to Utah, and some think the vessel only sails from Utah about every six months.

We are not sent out as "agents employed by the 'Mormon' Church to play upon the passions of the ignorant." We come to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto the people and warn the wicked of their evil ways and do good to our fellowmen, and I can assure you we bear our own expenses and look to the Lord for our pay and not to man. The "disgusting romances" published on "Mormonism" are written by our enemies, and if you want the truth, go to a friend and not to some narrow-minded enemy.

We appeal to the world for justice and fairness to be meted out to us, and all other people in our great republic. If we are a free people let us prove it by our works. Even here in this "enlightened" country people know but little about the Latter-day Saints outside of the exaggerations and misrepresentations of our opponents. Therefore I ask you to investigate from an unprejudiced standpoint into the "Mormon" question; for "Mormonism," as it is called, is actually the same identical Gospel that was taught by Jesus Christ; exactly the same as the apostles were sent out to teach which caused so much contention, strife and opposition. They were everywhere

spoken evil of, whipped, imprisoned, their names cast out as evil, and many other outrages heaped upon them; always misunderstood by the majority, yet they accomplished what the Lord sent them to do, and it should be a reminder for people today, that Christians don't persecute; but are the ones who receive the persecution, and if they call the "master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?"

HENRY S. TANNER.

## THE INDIAN MISSION.

A word from the Indian Territory may be of interest to some of your readers.

Since the visit of President Kimball and Elder Dolton the Elders have labored energetically, endeavoring to present the truths of the Gospel to the people. All have enjoyed good health up to the present time, with the exception of President Merrill, who has had a short spell of chills.

The work on the meeting house is progressing favorably and is now nearing completion. Much credit is due to Elder Rawlins for his untiring energy, especially considering the many difficulties he has had to contend with.

The labors of the Elders during the last six months have been principally in the Cherokee and Choctaw nations. Many public school houses have been built of late. To many of these the Elders have had access, and opened the way for us to hold public meetings. These have been well attended on nearly all occasions. The principles of the Gospel have thus been presented to many persons whom it would otherwise be difficult to reach during the busy season of the year.

The Elders have been treated with kindness and hospitality. Much prejudice has undoubtedly been removed from the minds of the people, many of whom knew nothing of the true status of the "Mormon" people, their doctrines or motives, their minds having been poisoned from what they had read or heard previously. But when truth is brought to bear error flees away.

Reports from Elders Allen and Woodbury who recently returned to the Chickasaw nation, show that the opening made last winter is still favorable. Many warm friends remain true to them, and are glad to welcome them back again. They will visit the Seminole nation and endeavor to make an opening while there. Some of the Elders will also visit the Osages during the summer.

The recent high waters and floods have done more or less damage to crops, more especially to cotton. More rain fell during one season than the oldest settlers could remember before.

The mission, generally, is in a prosperous condition. Several baptisms have taken place. The Elders are in the enjoyment of good health, and are unitedly laboring for the spread of truth and the welfare of the mission.

The News comes regularly to hand, and is gladly received. When we have read it, it is promptly mailed to others. We thus find it a great aid to us in our labors, assisting to remove the prejudice from the minds of the people and to sow the seeds of truth.

P. H. PETERS.