

be raised against his neighbor. Certainly these are indications of it,—and we see the fulfillment of prophecy in these things. It is a most unpleasant report for a person to have to make of the situation of their country. We are not aliens to our land. We love and revere and respect the constitution of our common country. We have a love for the old flag that floats over it, and it is with feeling of mortification, chagrin, and pain that we have to report back to the Saints here in the valleys of the mountains the fearful condition in which matters are to-day. One instance comes to my mind in connection with a matter in which the Latter-day Saints are interested. During the trial of the men—or one of them at least—who assassinated Elder Joseph Standing, I was astonished and surprised to listen to the testimony of the witnesses. The court would commence its session at eight o'clock and run till twelve and then adjourn for an hour and run till candle light, and when night came we would hear the bells ringing across the street calling the people to a revival meeting. I noticed that those men who had been upon the witness stand would pass over to the meeting, and for two weeks the revival was kept up calling men and women to Jesus after dark, and in the day time came into that court and testified to things they knew were utterly false, and that they knew the people in the court room were satisfied were false. The thing was a talk and a laughing stock on the streets of Dalton. It seemed strange to me, and after I had had several days experience I asked the Attorney General, a man that I looked upon as an honorable man, a man who sought to do his duty in that trial to the best of his ability—I asked "how many men are there that came upon this stand that you can rely upon to testify to the truth?" His reply was, "If I get one in ten I am doing very well." I thought that a strange comment indeed upon this boasted land of freedom, of free schools, churches, libraries, lecture associations and yet hold ourselves up before the world as a representative government for all other governments to copy after, for all civilization to follow, and for all Christians to model themselves from. It looks strange to me, and I scarcely could have believed it had not mine own ears heard and mine own eyes beheld it.

The sentiment and feeling of the better class of people in the South, and I may say in the United States, is in favor of letting the Latter-day Saints alone, of letting them work out their own problem, and but for the religious influence that is brought to bear there would be but little said in relation to the work the Latter-day Saints are doing. But this religious influence has not changed in the least. The same influence that fought and contended against the Latter-day Saints in the State of Missouri, and that drove them to the valleys of the mountains; the same influence that cried out nearly 2000 years ago "crucify him, crucify him," is still abroad in the land, and I think the worse treatment I have ever received at the hands of any class of men has been from men who can pray the longest prayers, preach the loudest sermon, and wear the longest face, and who profess to be going straight back to Abraham's bosom. This class of men have always contended against the elders. They have sought to bring persecution upon them, and to vilify them upon every hand, and if we have difficulties they are to a greater or less extent caused by those who profess to believe in this Bible, and who preach "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men." But this perchance, is but history repeating itself. Notwithstanding the difficulties and obstacles the elders have had to contend with in this and other directions they have been blessed and prospered. They rejoice in the privilege of going forth to proclaim the principles of the gospel, to bring Israel to a knowledge of the truth, and to gather the honest in heart home, that Zion may be built up and the kingdom of God established on the earth. The elders rejoice in this privilege. Our young elders who go abroad with fear and trembling in regard to their own ability are willing to pass through all kinds of difficulties, are willing to endure anything and everything that they may be instruments in the hands of God in proclaiming the principles of the gospel. I heard but very little complaints from the elders. It is true that sometimes they are not situated as pleasantly as they would desire to be, but I heard very little complaints. They

express very great surprise at the situation of affairs abroad. They say, "why, we did not dream that matters were as bad as they are. We did not dream that the world was so corrupt as it is both politically, religiously, and socially." They seemed surprised, when walking through the streets of the religious St. Louis, whose editors, you know, write long homilies in the shape of editorials in regard to the terrible situation of affairs in Utah,—to see, on a Sunday, just close by where these articles are published, saloons open, men and women drinking, and business going on just as though it were any other day in the week. "Why," say these young elders, "in reading these articles back in Utah we were led to believe that these places here were really religious. But we find that such is not the case. We find they are allowing their charity to play leap frog over their own wrongdoings, and in place of looking to the affairs of Utah they had better attend to their own." These things look strange to the young elders when they first come in contact with the world. In speaking with one of the officers of the State of Colorado, said he to me, "we trust that you people will assimilate with our people, that they will adopt our habits and customs and become one with us." I told him we did not wish to make any rash promises about that, for, said I, "we would not wish to have drinking saloons on the corner of each block. We would not like to have all kind of wrongdoings in our midst, and certainly here in this city of Denver, we would not wish to copy after the morals of this or your adjoining city of Leadville."

Some people seem to have an idea that the Latter-day Saints gathered here in the valleys of the mountains are samples of all that is wrong, all that is iniquitous, and I have sometimes been amazed at the situation we have been placed in. In one neighborhood where we stopped over night, and had some talk with the folks in regard to the social conditions with which they were surrounded, one sanctimonious person, the next day, refused us the privilege of meeting in a log cabin schoolhouse, for fear we should corrupt the morals of the people! In another instance, a large number of people had gathered together in a meeting house to hear one of the Elders preach. When he

got through preaching he asked a gentleman who had been induced to come to the stand to tell the people what he thought of the doctrine that had been advanced. He very reluctantly did so in about these words: "I have listened with great attention to my young friend. I believe he is honest. I believe he has tried to tell the truth, and in fact he has told you the truth. He has read from the Scriptures;" but at this stage he drew up (evidently realizing that he had gone too far to please his friends) and concluded by saying: "but my dear, dying friends, I do not believe one word of it." Notwithstanding that he had just told the people that the young man had told them the truth, and that he had preached according to the Bible. It sounded strange, even to his own people. Yet there are a class of people who, when we come down to the real facts of the case, will not, do not believe in the Bible, however much they may pretend to do so. They believe certain parts of it, and disbelieve other parts. This spirit of unbelief is growing in the minds of the people, until in the United States to-day there are thousands of people who openly repudiate their belief in the Bible. Ingersoll, and various men of that stamp who are lecturing throughout the United States, take for texts the mistakes found in the books of Moses, and otherwise ridicule the word of Scripture. By this means they are undermining the faith and belief of the people in the Bible, and are creating infidels by the thousand. We meet them on the railroads, we hear them from the lecture stand, we find them among all classes of people, lawyers, doctors, &c, and as I told one of them, a leading citizen in St. Louis, with whom I traveled a couple of days, I can understand opposition to preaching and praying from those who do not believe in this book, but I savor of hypocrisy coming from those who profess to believe in the teachings of Jesus and his apostles.

Well, these are some of the reflections that pass through our minds as Elders in preaching the gospel. We pray that the blessing of Israel's God may rest upon his work, and upon the Elders who are abroad preaching the gospel, that they also may be permitted to return in peace, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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