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THE SCATTERING POLICY.

THE New York *Herald*, Philadelphia *Bulletin*, and many other prominent journals are rejoicing over the supposed fact that a large number of "Mormon" young men have "forsaken the faith," and, "throwing overboard their religion, are leaving Utah to start life anew in communities where they will be free to act independent of the command of the theocratic rulers."

These jubulations are caused by some remarks made by President George Q. Cannon at the late Conference in this city. He spoke of the disposition of many of our young men to scatter into surrounding regions in order to secure large areas of land. He thought this was not good policy. The Latter-day Saints had been called to gather, not to scatter, and he did not think it wise for young people to go away from their homes to such distant places.

This did not imply in the least that "the youth of Zion were forsaking their religion," as our outside contemporaries imagine. The editors who have taken this peculiar view have been drawing attention to the overflow of "Mormonism" into surrounding Territories, and sounding the alarm to the nation as portending the balance of power in those Territories in the hands of the "Mormons." Why should they now proclaim that this overflow means the departure from the faith of those who thus migrate?

There is no such wholesale apostasy as depicted by these forgetful and inconsistent writers. Change of abode does not mean change of faith. Desire for a large farm does not imply renunciation of a man's religion. Young people, or old people, need not throw their belief overboard when they start life anew in some newly settled region. It is a question of policy, not of fidelity to principle.

Neither is it necessary to go outside of the boundaries of Utah or any of its counties to be "free to act inde-

pendent of theocratic rulers." There is no spot in the United States freer from such rulers than this Territory. The preachers for gifts and scribes for pelf who talk of "theocratic rule in Utah," know that they are deceiving the public. They play upon the prejudices of the ignorant and presume upon the indisposition of the masses to investigate. Every man and woman in Utah is free in thought and act, so far as any priestly domination is in view, for it has no actual existence here. There is a thousandfold more reason to descend upon its prevalence in New York and in Philadelphia than in Salt Lake City.

Why do editors persist in writing such rubbish as they deal out daily on the "Mormon" question? Why will they not learn something about the facts in the case? Their ignorance is palpable and their unwillingness to inquire is pitiable. Liberty is the vital breath of "Mormonism." And thousands have embraced it to escape the despotism of old creeds and the tyranny of orthodox ecclesiasticism. The "Mormon" Church has no manacles for the mind and no fetters for the free agency of man.

The advice of President Cannon was timely and wise. If strangers to our faith can come into these beautiful valleys, find homes, make a livelihood and become measurably independent, why cannot our vigorous and acclimated young men do the same? There are openings in business right at home for those who have eyes to see them and hands to work in them. There are acres to be tilled right around the homesteads where our young men have been reared, if they are only willing to redeem and cultivate them.

But the difficulty is in the desire for large tracts of land. A little farm well tilled is far more profitable than a big one half worked. The Chinese who make money off tiny plots of ground afford hints to the observing. A great deal of land is wasted in Utah by poor cultivation. Young men who strike off to some distant place and toil half to death in a comparatively new country with all its disadvantages, would with much less labor make a better living near the old homestead, by intelligent and thorough tilling of the soil around them.

People hear of a place where a section or a quarter section of land is unoccupied, and they imagine they

will jump into riches by simply going there and "taking it up." By the time they have conducted water upon it and paid for it, and brought a part of it into cultivation, they will find they are no better off than they would have been with a small piece of land right at home, with their relatives and friends, with school-houses and church influences and the advantages of culture at hand. The idea that wealth may be measured by the acres possessed is a miserable fallacy.

Our young people need to exercise their brains and get out of the ruts in which so many of them move. There are ways and means of making an honorable living, in a community like ours, that will suggest themselves to the thoughtful. Parents and children who are approaching manhood should consult and plan together for future action, with a due regard for the needs and wishes of all. There are many waste places near to home, which by new methods and economical measures, might be made profitable and beautiful. But they have been deemed worthless so long that no thought is given to their possibilities. If all that is within our reach was utilized, there would be small need for so much swarming into surrounding regions.

We believe that it would be wiser policy, all things considered, for our leading men in the various settlements to plan for the grouping and employment of our youth, around the homesteads of their parents and neighbors, than in looking up new locations far away.

And right in this city, we need wise measures for the utilization of muscle and brawn waiting for redemption from idleness and to be worked into wealth for the good of the community. Where are the wise who will plan for this crying need? Where are the moneyed men who will help in the good cause? Employment for all who are ready to work ought to be found in a community like ours. If it is not, it is a reproach to our system and a reflection on our faith.

Shall we invite outside immigration and welcome foreign capital, and let our own young men and women scatter abroad for lack of means to make a livelihood? Is this the policy of prudence? Were not the remarks of President Cannon pertinent and to the point? We think so. And while we see no reason to fear that the youth of Zion who migrate into other Territories will forsake their religion or lose