GEN. BURTON IN COURT.

A brief session of the Third District Court was held on the afternoon of Mar. 15, shortly after 4 o'clock. The business was to deal with the case of Gen. R. T. Burton, against whom there was an indictment for living with more than one wife between January 1, 1885, and September 1, 1886. The defendant was arraigned, and pleaded guilty to the charge of unlawful cohabitation.

F. S. Richards, attorney for the defendant, said — If your honor please, Mr. Burton desires to waive time for sentence and to receive the judgment of the court now. Before sentence is passed, however, I desire to call the court's attention to a few facts pertaining to this case. The defendant is over sixty-eight years of age. He married his last wife in 1856—six years before the passage of the first act of Congress forbidding the practice of polygamy or making it an offense. His families have at all times lived separate and apart. For several years past and prior to the finding of this indictment, I believe, he has lived with his first wife only. He is a man of good standing in the community, and has held several important positions, which he at all times filled to the satisfaction of his constituents. In addition to the fact that this is his first offense, when he learned that witnesses against him were wanted, he instructed his sons to go before the grand jury and give that body all the information within their power.

Judge Sandford—How long did you say it is since he has lived with his second wife?

Mr. Richards—He has lived with none but his first wife for at least three years past. The condition of Mr. Burton's health is anything but good. He is a man who, in the past, has never shrunk from danger when he could serve and protect others. His experience with the Indians in the early settlement of this place is a proof of this; and to his labors in this regard is, perhaps, partially due his present ill health. As I said before, however, his health is very poor, and if imprisoned for any length of time it would have a bad if not a fatal effect upon him. I have here a statement, signed by a number of non-"Mormons" which I wish to read.

Judge Sandford—You may do so and hand it to the clerk.

Mr. Richards—The paper is as follows: "We, the undersigned, residents of Salt Lake City, respectfully represent that we are personally acquainted with Robert T. Burton of said city, and that we have known him for many years. We take pleasure in stating that Mr. Burton is a man of high character and excellent standing as a law-abiding citizen in the community in which he lives, with the exception of the present charge of unlawful cohabitation; that he has occupied many public positions of honor and trust, and has discharged the duties pertaining thereto with honesty, fidelity and ability; that he is sixty-eight years of age, and of late years his health has been poor and at times critical. In consideration of all the circumstances of the case, we believe that the ends of justice would be better served, and the dignity of the law fully maintained, by a light penalty, rather than a severe punishment; and we, therefore, ask the clemency of the court in Mr. Burton's behalf." This document, your honor, is signed by Robert Harkness, R. C. Chambers, John E. Dooly, Thomas Marshall, S. J. Lynn, T. R. Jones, Byron Groo, J. G. Sutherland and O. A. Palmer. Had I deemed it to be necessary, I could easily have secured at least a hundred more, but these, I think, are sufficient to show your honor the estimation in which he is held. While Mr. Burton has been honored with civil positions, he has not been forgotten so far as ecclesiastical honors go, and today he is one of the presiding Bishops of the Mormon church. I mention this latter fact, your honor, not that it has any particular bearing upon the case, but because of a desire to be frank and fair in the matter.

Judge Sandford—Mr. Peters, what has the government to say?

Mr. Peters—I am not acquainted with the gentleman. The gentlemen whose names appear on the statement are men of the highest standing, and their recommendation doubtless should have weight. Yet, the defendant is an intelligent man and must have known that he was disobeying the law. He cannot plead ignorance, as he might otherwise.

Judge Sandford—There is no dispute, then, as to the facts.

Mr. Peters—No. I believe the defendant was appointed to an honorable position by President Lincoln.

Judge Sandford—What was that?

Mr. Richards—Collector of internal revenue. He held that position until the office was abolished.

Judge Sandford—I have no doubt that the ends of justice would be served without inflicting a severe punishment. What have you to say, Mr. Peters, as to punishment?

Mr. Peters—I do not see that it is a case in any way different from others.

Judge Sandford—Have you anything to say, Mr. Burton?

Mr. Burton—No, sir.

Judge Sandford—Well, in view of the testimony before me of the gentlemen mentioned, your age and health, I think justice will be satisfied without any imprisonment. You will be sentenced to pay a fine of $150 and costs. I hope we will not see you here again. If you do appear the sentence will be heavier.

Mr. Richards—It is quite possible, your honor, that you may see Mr. Burton in court again. His business frequently calls him into court, but when he comes again it will be in a different capacity.

OUR CHICAGO LETTER.

I am far from being a pessimist. In fact, my natural disposition is towards the sunny side of existence. But, when it rains one should know enough to come inside. It is of no use trying to make oneself believe that a heavy downpour is merely a slight mist. Optimism of this character is the worst kind of folly. Post prandial orators may tell us nice stories, and favor us with roseate pictures of national prosperity and political beatitude, but we must not let ourselves be deceived by champagne oratory.

The plain truth is that 40,000 able-bodied men are out of employment today in Chicago. It is estimated that 30 per cent of this army of unemployed are heads of families. When one considers these figures, what a sorry spectacle presents itself. It means shoeless, shivering children, woe-begone, anxious, irritable mothers, and desperate, despondent fathers. Several cases of actual deaths by starvation have been reported during the last week. The newspaper offices have been turned into relief and aid bureaus. Each paper has its own special relief staff. Great distress prevails in the stock yards district. This has been a very dull winter in the packing and dressed meat industries, and the employees in these departments are notoriously extravagant, thriftless and drunken when earning money.

The steel mills are idle, and this means misery of the grimest kind. Operatives in iron and steel generally eat and drink their wages before earned; then what must it be when there is no earning of any kind.

On the whole the business outlook; not alone for Chicago, but for the whole country, is very, very dark indeed. Railroad earnings are falling behind, the currency is being contracted to an alarming extent, and gold is leaving the country.

"As reported by the comptroller of the currency the amount of national bank currency outstanding on the 1st of February was $229,089,957. This is a decrease of $36,542,891 for the twelve-month preceding and of $4,385,928 for the month preceding. Add to this the increase of the surplus for the year, and it makes a contraction of the currency that is being seriously felt in its depressing effect on business. On the 1st of December, 1887, the amount in the treasury available for the reduction of the debt was $280,874,906.56; on the 1st of February, 1889, the amount so available had increased to $398,525,-144, showing an accumulation of $118,-151,237.44 in thirteen months. Thus more than $155,000,000 has been withdrawn from circulation by the banks and the government in a little more than a year."

The business of railroads tells its own story. In 1887 the net earnings of the 95 roads in the country was $217,026,607, and in 1888, $202,544,-611, leaving a decrease of more than $1,000,000 a month.

This decrease means depressed industries all over the country. The roads are now curtailing and retrenching in every available manner. Men are laid off, and those retained are pressed to work harder. There is talk of a general reduction of 10 per cent in wages, but fears are expressed that labor won't stand it. With railroads it is one of two things, either a reduction in the wages of employes, or organization into a gigantic trust. This latter seems