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TRUTH AND LIBERTY.
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PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL REVELATION.

WE are in receipt of a letter from one of the brethren in the country who claims to enjoy the spirit of prophecy to a great degree, and who desires us to define the limits to which the gifts of the gospel may extend without infringing upon the legitimate authority vested in the presiding priesthood. This is not his exact language, but conveys his meaning, as we understand it, without circumlocution. We do not publish his letter because while he asks us to reply to his queries, he undertakes to answer them himself, and because it would have to be re-written before it could be placed in the hands of the printers.

According to the teachings of ancient and modern Church authorities, "the manifestations of the spirit are given to every man to profit withal." The same gifts of prophecy, tongues, interpretations, visions, healings, etc., which were bestowed upon the members of the early Christian Church, have been restored and are manifested in the latter-day Church of Christ. But there is one rule that must always be understood and observed: "My house is a house of order, and not of confusion, saith the Lord." To preserve this order, revelation and commandment for the guidance and government of the Church will be given through the head only. The foot is just as honorable as any other member of the body, *in its place*, but it is out of place if it seeks to occupy the position of the head or the hand.

In February, 1831 the Lord revealed this order and warned the Church not to receive any revelations and commandments unless they came through him who was or should be appointed to deliver them to the Church. But every person in the Church may receive the revelations of the spirit, and one or more of the gifts of the spirit for his benefit and guidance in his own legitimate sphere. But individuals may be deceived in regard to the spirit that prompts them, and therefore it is given to the presiding authorities when inspired by the spirit of their calling, to test and try the influences that are manifested among the people over whom they have the watchcare. A revelation or prophecy given to any one not appointed to deliver it to the Church, if it be from the right source, is for the benefit of the person to whom it is given, and the fact that it is not revealed through the appointed mouthpiece, is or should be sufficient proof that it is not intended for the Church, because the Lord has repeatedly declared that when he has anything of this kind for the whole body he will make it known through the head.

Those who live in the light of God will grow in the knowledge of the truth, and their light should shine for the benefit of others. But they must not presume to speak in the name of the Lord for the direction of others, unless they are appointed and set apart for the purpose. And least of all have they the right to attempt to instruct him who is placed at their head.

Our correspondent takes the ground that "every spirit that prompts a man to preach the Gospel, to prophesy, to speak in tongues, to heal the sick and to build up Zion, is of God." We do not think this is a safe rule. We have known men who claimed to be prompted to do each of these things, and they were influenced by spirits that were not of God. Some of those men were ambitious to excel before their fellows, and to exhibit their gifts in egotism. Others wished to act independently of their lawfully appointed leaders; others were under the darkness that comes from transgression and were deceived by false spirits. Thus they were not in harmony with the spirit that governed the presiding powers and the great body of the Church, and therefore were not reliable guides.

Every man and woman in the Church has the right to seek and obtain light and knowledge direct from God. Some may receive information in advance of an authoritative declaration of doctrine or rule of action. But this is for their personal benefit as a reward of diligence, and as a preparation for the revelation to come through the living oracle, and gives them no right to step into the place of him who is appointed. The manifestations of the spirit may be freely exercised in meetings conducted for that purpose, but he who presides should be able to discern whether such manifestations come from above or beneath. If the Lord reveals anything to a man or woman let the recipient of the blessing rejoice in the gift and profit thereby. But let all beware of any influence which prompts them to consider themselves on that account better and more highly favored than their fellows, or qualified to instruct, guide or direct those who are ordained and appointed to preside over and direct them. The wise will understand.

THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

LAST evening we took occasion to show that the Ogden *Junction* was gravely in error as to the nature of the offence of bigamy or polygamy under the law of '62. We notice that the *Herald* of this morning enlarges on this subject, taking the same ground with us, and that the correspondent W. who called the attention of the *Junction* editor to his error, has another letter in this morning's issue of our Ogden contemporory, giving an extended legal argument which substantiates his and our position. He is a lawyer of large experience and matured intellect. He shows clearly that under the common law it is the contracting and consummation of the marriage, and not the living together as man and wife, that constitutes the offence, and that the law of '62, which he quotes, affirms the common law rule,

"By applying it only to such marriages as occur within the Territories, or other places of exclusive jurisdiction in the United States, such as forts, etc.

"2d. In not providing that living together as such husband and wife, whether not married at all or illegally married, shall be the offense of bigamy."

The consequence of this is that as the statute of limitations requires an indictment for this class of offences to be found within three years after the infraction of the law, no prosecution under the law of '62 will lie against any person in this Territory who has not contracted a plural marriage within the past three years, unless indicted within three years after the solemnization of such marriage. This should be generally understood, and is a matter that has been thus decided by the District Courts of this Territory.

It will be perceived by our readers that we now put the limitation at three years, while last evening we placed it at two years. We find that we, in company with W., the *Herald* and almost everybody with whom we have conversed on the subject, learned lawyers included, were mistaken as to the time though not as to the principle. We hasten to rectify the error. We find that an Act of Congress was passed, being approved April 13, 1876, amending the Revised Statutes so as to extend the time of limitation to three years instead of two.

It reads as follows:

"No person shall be prosecuted, tried, or punished for any offense, not capital, except as provided in section one thousand and forty-six, unless the indictment is found or the information is instituted within three years next after such offense shall have been committed.

"But this Act shall not have effect to authorize the prosecution, trial or punishment for any offense, barred by the provisions of existing laws."

The exceptions referred to above are for crimes under the revenue and slave trade laws, the limitation for which is five years.

"W." springs another question in the *Junction*, which it seems strange the counsel for the appellant did not take up in their case before the higher court. He asks:

"As Congress has only provided for a fine of not exceeding $500, and imprisonment not more than five years, where is the authority in the Court to add "labor" or "hard labor" in any penitentiary, to this fine and imprisonment? Is not the penalty fully exhausted by the fine and imprisonment in any prison?

This is quite consistent with the whole proceedings in the case—the exclusion of "Mormon" jurors, the admission of others who had expressed an opinion of the defendant's guilt, &c. And it is just as consistent as the decision of a Judge now on the bench, inflicting a fine of $500 for an alleged contempt of court when the statute puts the maximum fine at $200.

When courts as well as other officials manifest so strong an animus against accused persons, it is no wonder that the latter try to take advantage of every technicality for their own protection, and we consider any other policy, under all the circumstances, would be perfectly suicidal.

We hope the *Junction* will now frankly acknowledge its mistake, so that it may retain the confidence of its wide circle of readers and supporters.

TOO ZEALOUS TO BE TRUTHFUL.

BY reference to a dispatch in our telegraphic columns, which arrived just as we were about to go to press, it will be seen that District Attorney Van Zile is in Washington urging the vigorous enforcement of the anti-polygamy, or rather anti-"Mormon," anti-religious-freedom Act of 1862.

This is perhaps quite proper for an official in his position, and then again it may be viewed in a different light by those who are not bitter partizans, and interested in creating and stirring up litigation. But there is one thing that no honorable person can possibly endorse, and that is the uttering of positive falsehood, or the manufacture of stories that cannot be supported by proof, in order to influence public opinion and induce severe measures against a body of people, of whom the worst that can be said about them is that they are religious fanatics.

When Judge Van Zile makes the statement that "76 polygamous marriages occurred at the Endowment House on the day the decision of the Supreme Court was announced," he utters a positive untruth. That house was not open at all at the time he mentions, therefore no marriages, either monogamous or polygamous were then solemnized. But setting aside this fact, for he may claim that perhaps he was in error as to the date, though not as to the fact, we would like to ask him how he knows that any of the marriages which have recently taken place in the Endowment House were polygamous? Our young people, with rare exceptions, who enter into wedlock, have their marriages solemnized in that house, and neither Attorney Van Zile nor the infamous transmitters of false dispatches to the press, who concoct such stories as Van Zile repeats, know anything as to the facts in the case. With one breath they will exclaim against the secrecy of the "Mormon" marriage ceremony, and with the next they will assume to know all about it, and to disclose the number of marriages that are thus solemnized.

We are at liberty, if the dispatch reports Van Zile correctly, of which we have little doubt, to list him with those over-zealous officials who do not scruple to resort to fiction in their eager anxiety to injure the people of Utah.

SUPREME COURT SOPHISTRY.

ONE of the arguments upon which the decision of the Supreme Court in the polygamy case is based, was enunciated by the Chief Justice as follows. While admitting that marriage "from its very nature is a sacred obligation," he says:

"Upon it society may be said to be built, and out of its fruits spring social relations and social obligations, and duties with which government is necessarily required to deal."

This at first sight looks very plausible. But on applying it to the matter under consideration, that is whether the Congress of the United States has a right, under the Constitution, to prevent a man from marrying more wives than one under an ordinance of religion in which he conscientiously believes, its weakness is at once apparent. Granting that there are "social relations and social obligations" growing out of marriage, with which "government is necessarily required to deal," does this affect the question of how many wives a man may marry? Let us see how the rule will work when carried to its legitimate conclusions.

If, on the grounds stated, Congress may say how many wives a man may not have, may it not also say how many children he may not have? Are there not "social relations and social obligations" growing out of the latter question as well as the former? And is not society at large materially affected by it? If the argument is sound, not only may Congress determine the limits of a man's offspring, but also the property rights that may be affected by his decease. Laws may then be made compelling the father to divide his property among his children, equally or unequally, as may be thought most consistent with proper "social relations and obligations." More than that. Government may assume to direct how a man shall distribute his property or his favors to various members of his family while living, so as to protect society from the ill consequences of any neglect of one child or favor to another. If family relations may be regulated by law to the extent claimed, why stop at the point of marriage? Why not extend the legislation to its fruits and consequences?

Further. If marriage is necessary to the welfare of society, and government may regulate everything that springs from "social relations and social obligations," or that affects this "most important element of social life," why should not laws be passed against bachelorhood and spinsterhood? When government once commences to invade the social sphere, and attempts to regulate it on one point, where shall it stop? and at what point shall it be consistently said, "thus far shalt thou go and no farther?"

It may be argued that civilized governments generally have legislated in regard to bigamy, and that in this respect the United States have only followed eminent examples. But this comes from confounding "Mormon" plural marriage with the offence generally called bigamy. Against the latter, as essentially a criminal offence, we concede laws may legitimately be enacted. For in committing bigamy a man marries a second wife, deceiving his first, and generally also deceiving the second as well as the person officiating at the ceremony, and the whole transaction is in the nature of a fraud, involving a trespass upon the rights of others. And this is where we consider the power of governments may be legitimately exercised. But a "Mormon" plural marriage is entered into by common understanding and common consent of all the parties affected by it. Moreover it is directed and governed by ecclesiastical law which each of the parties accepts as the declared will of God. Therefore there is no parallel between a marriage of this kind and the spurious, fraudulent and therefore criminal relationship created in bigamy.

And it must not be lost sight of through all the argument, that Congress is barred by the Constitution from any legislation against "an establishment of religion," which Mormon plural marriage most certainly is, being founded upon a divine revelation given in the present age, and having for its examples the practice of holy men of old who held converse with Deity, and whose marriages were all under ecclesiastical regulation. In this respect the Government of the United States holds an exceptional position. Other nations are not held by the same Constitutional restrictions. And if the Supreme Law of the Land may be trampled upon in one particular, or wrested from its meaning by such wretched sophistry as, that it intends religious freedom in opinion but not religious liberty in act, the process may be continued until that glorious instrument is pressed into the mire by popular prejudices, or so twisted and distorted by special pleading and renderings to please the public, that its meaning will be involved in mystery, and its influence will become like salt that has lost its savour.

Then, farewell to the liberties for which the fathers fought, and which God designed for the crowning glory and honor of this Government and the benefit of the oppressed of all nations. Proscription of one religious body is the thin end of the wedge that may ultimately be driven through all but the dominant sect, and then what will be left of the boasted freedom of American institutions?

The only prospect is, a return of that very intolerance which the Constitution was designed and established to render impossible in this land of liberty.

THE UTAH LADIES IN WASHINGTON.

FOLLOWING is the programme which was arranged for the Convention of the Woman Suffrage Association held in Washington, D. C., on the 9th and 10th insts., after a full discussion, at a meeting held at the house of Mrs. Belva A. Lockwood, the talented lady lawyer:

"Reading of call for convention and naming of committees, S. B. Anthony. Committee on credentials—Matilda J. Gage, Elizabeth Oakes Smith, and Caroline B. Winslow. Committee on resolutions Sara Andrews Spencer, Matilda J. Gage, Emeline B. Wells, Helen M. Cook, and Belva A. Lockwood. Committee on finance—Ellen C. Sargent, Helen M. Slocum, Julia B. Dunham, Zina Young Williams, and Ellen H. Shelden. Committee on programme—Susan B. Anthony, Lillie D. Blake, and Massilla M. Ricker. Opening address, Elizabeth Cady Stanton; report of the committee on resolutions; report of the committee on finance.

Afternoon session, Thursday—Speeches by Lillie D. Blake, Elizabeth Oakes Smith, Lavina C. Dundore, and Caroline B. Winslow.

Thursday evening session—Speeches from Emeline B. Wells and Susan B. Anthony.

"Friday morning—General Discussion of 'Utah and Wyoming;' United States Rights vs. State Rights,' to be discussed by Mesdames Gage, Stanton, Smith, Williams of Utah, and others.

"Friday afternoon—Speeches by Helen M. Slocum, Zina Young Williams and Sara Andrews Spencer.

"Friday evening—Speeches by Belva A. Lockwood, Frederick Douglass and Elizabeth Cady Stanton."

It will be seen that the Utah delegates received their full share of recognition. They occupied prominent seats on the platform during the Convention. Following is a condensed report of the remarks of Mrs. E. B. Wells at the evening session on the 9th inst., taken from the Washington *Star* of January 10:

"Mrs. Cady Stanton introduced Mrs. Wells, of Utah, wife of Gen. Wells, the Mormon Apostle and polygamist. She spoke to the fourth resolution in the series reported by the committee. She said the right of franchise held by the women of her Territory should not be wrested from them, and Congress had better heed what wrong is contemplated to be *done* by taking away the *only* safety they enjoy. The women of Utah have never broken any law of that Territory, and it would be unjust as well as impolitic to deprive them of this right. It was a shame and outrage, which the intelligent people all over the world will condemn. (Applause.)"

At the morning session on the 10th inst.

"Mrs. William, of Utah, daughter of Brigham Young, addressed the audience. She expressed her thanks for the kind manner in which she has been received in Washington, where she expected to meet with prejudice, and especially by the ladies foremost in the female suffrage movement. As to the ultimate success of this movement, she entertained no doubts. The women of Utah do not propose to relinquish their rights, but to aid their sisters throughout the land. They have enjoyed the elective franchise for eight years, and they