

## EDITORIALS.

## EARLY AND LATE PERSECUTIONS FOR RELIGION.

We find the following excellent letter from some New York correspondent in the *Eastern Argus*, published in Portland, Maine. Credit is not only due the writer for the manner in which he handled the subject, but the editor of the paper for his liberality in publishing so able a defense of an unpopular people. The only comment he makes upon it is the following:

"Our New York correspondent, L. W. S., is mistaken in supposing that polygamy is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Mormon Church. It was not proclaimed when the Temple was built at Nauvoo, and the Mormons in Maine—of whom there are not a few—regret it with abhorrence to-day. No warrant for it is to be found in the Book of Mormon. Its origin is to be found in the lust of the lewd men who founded the great settlement in Utah."

The editor and not the correspondent is mistaken. Patriarchal marriage was taught and practiced by Joseph Smith and others in Nauvoo, but for good and sufficient reasons it was not then publicly proclaimed. Its origin and the motive which prompted its practice consist of a divine revelation and requirement, and not lust; and no genuine "Mormon" in Maine or elsewhere (and no genuine Bible believer, for the matter of that, who respects the memory of ancient men of God) will affect any abhorrence of the practice as it exists among the Latter-day Saints to-day. Following is the letter:

NEW YORK, Nov. 23.

To the Editor of the *Argus*:

In the early days of New England the Bible and Fox's Book of Martyrs were to be found in all well regulated households, and not unfrequently those two much read books and the trusted almanac comprised the entire family library. In our time, too, many young people know the Bible mainly by reputation and they have never even heard of the Book of Martyrs. I must tell the youngsters what that famous book was or is. Wonder what the young people will do for an instructor when I grow old and die.

The old Jews were very religious, and when certain men among them started a new and as the Jews believed a false and dangerous religion called Christianity, the Jews thought they were very bad men, whereupon they reasoned with those new Christians and adjured them to turn from such wicked ways, and when they found that words were ineffective they punished the Christians by imprisonment and in extreme cases by death, and in so doing they thought they were executing the will of God. Indeed they did.

Agnes rolled on and Christianity became the established religion of Europe, and in the course of years certain men started another new religion called Protestant. And the Christians believed that these Protestants were bad men who were leading the people astray; and they reasoned with these Protestants and adjured them to turn from such wicked ways, and when they found that words were ineffective they punished the Protestants with imprisonment and in extreme cases with death, and in so doing they thought they were executing the will of God. Indeed they did. In short, the (Catholic) Christians treated the Protestants precisely as the Jews had treated them 1,000 years before and for like cause.

The men who thus suffered because of their religious convictions were called martyrs. In later years one John Fox gathered up the sickening stories of those who had been persecuted and having thrown upon them the lurid light of his own heated and warped fancy thereby making them look much worse than the facts would warrant, he published them in a book called Fox's Book of Martyrs, and it was this book of real and unreal horrors which found its way into every well regulated New England family. Our ancestors liked that book best which caused them to hate somebody most bitterly, and to this amiable trait of character is due the unequalled popularity of John Fox's martyr.

In the Book of Martyrs we read of a man named Smith, who when brought before the authorities for the crime of believing in the new religion delivered the following ringing little speech which must find an answering echo in every manly heart.

"I have been placed on trial for practicing my religion, which I do not intend to relinquish under any circumstances whatever. Therefore, I have no promise to make, and I am ready to receive any penalty which the Court may impose. I could not under any circumstances give up my religious principles."

He was convicted, fined and imprisoned. No wonder that the blood of such martyrs became the seed of the church.

In our own time still another new religion called Mormon has been started, and the people of the old religions think these Mormons are bad men who are leading people astray, and

they have reasoned with the Mormons and adjured them to turn from their evil ways, and finding that words are ineffective they are punishing the Mormons with imprisonment, but thank God not with death. With the exception that we no longer put men to death for such a cause, we are now treating the Mormons precisely as the Christians treated the new Protestants and as the Jews treated the new Christians. And the story of the man Smith just now spoken of was not in the Book of Martyrs but in our own newspapers of last week. Smith is a Mormon and he made that manly little speech not in the Court of Mary of England but in our own United States court in Utah a few days ago. I was mistaken you see but the blunder aids to bring the truth home to us. It is a manly speech.

Just here some good man with a wart upon his nose will exclaim that we do not punish Mormons for their religious convictions but for their plurality of wives; to which I meekly respond that a plurality of wives is a part of their belief just as baptism is a part of yours. The Mormons believe the Bible with a fervor and trusting fullness that is equaled nowhere else on earth. They believe it with their whole souls. Nowhere else do we find such sublime trust and confidence in God's word as in Mormon publications. Such being the case we have but to learn what the Bible teaches to know what they believe and practice. The Old Testament teaches polygamy, and God's own chosen ones practiced it. Nor does the New Testament abolish it save in the case of certain church officials, hence when the Mormons practice polygamy they are following Bible teachings, and we are punishing them because they follow such teachings.

In the long run nothing is lost by being honest. I hear gentle women express regret that Ingersoll cannot be put to death because of his disbelief in the Bible, and I hear those same women demand the punishment of Mormons who believe the Bible and practice its teachings. Is that honest? To no man is polygamy more odious than to me, but with Fox's Book of Martyrs and a History of the Persecution of Quakers by my side I am slow to endorse any religious persecution.

Mormonism has become one of the established religions of the world, and we can no more stamp it out than we can stamp out Catholicism. The polygamy part of it is in conflict with the spirit of the age, and will die a natural death if not fanned into fierce life by persecution. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, and Smith's little speech is equal to much blood. Let us go slow in this matter of persecution if we desire to abolish polygamy. There are old men in Utah who married two or more in their youth when it was not unlawful so to do, and now when they have grown grey together and old age is fast settling down upon them we step in and say to them that they must either cast off all but one of these old wives or go to jail. I say that if they obey the law and cast off these wives they are unworthy the name of man, and I further say that any government which under the circumstances makes and enforces such a law is not so very much better than Queen Mary's.

Had I a plurality of wives whom I had married in the bloom of their youth, and who had grown old with me, I would lie in jail until I died and my ashes were carried through the keyhole by pismires before I would cast them off. In Connecticut one marriage in nine is followed by divorce, and it is not much better in any part of New England. When a wife begins to fade, the brute beast of a husband finds a way to rid himself of her. In Utah the wives are not cast off in that way nor in any way, and the unfaithful husbands of New England want to punish the faithful husbands of Utah for their faithfulness.

Men and brethren! in the name of the early Christian martyrs, in the name of the early Protestant martyrs, in the name of the early Quaker martyrs, I adjure you to go slow in persecuting Mormons lest peradventure some later Fox add another sad chapter to the book. However great an evil polygamy may be in our eyes it is a religious conviction with those who practice it and it is inferentially taught by the Bible, in which we profess to believe.

L. W. S.

## THE CHURCH AND THE DRAMA.

THEATRE-going is still vigorously denounced by many ministers of different churches, and the entrance to a temple of the drama is denounced with grim humor as "the way to the pit." Yet the influence of a sensible play is wholesome, and a little fun if free from grossness is beneficial to all classes of people. To condemn the Theatre in toto because some entertainments are demoralizing, is as unreasonable as to forbid all amusement because some games are dangerous.

If the drama could be kept pure and no plays were performed but those which tend to elevate and improve the spectators, the Theatre could be made the most powerful instructor of mankind. It is so much more attractive than the pulpit and the lecture stand, that the masses may be approached by its means with greater force and facility than by any other.

When our Theatre was erected, un-

der the direction of the late President Brigham Young, it was designed to be a public teacher and not a demoralizer. Home talent was to find a stage on which to exhibit and develop itself. A strict censorship was to be observed, so that nothing should be performed that would tend to lower the tone of public morals or pander to depraved tastes. It was to be as free from vice as a conventicle and yet be devoted to harmless fun and entertainment, instruction combined with recreation.

We need not say that these good intentions have not been fully carried out. Neither do we refer to this for the purpose of finding fault. There have been great difficulties, no doubt, in the way of those who have had the management of the Theatre, rendering it sometimes almost impossible to keep within the limits originally designed. But we presume that no one will dispute the assertion that the public would have been the better for close adherence to those restrictions.

The theatre and the tabernacle, the actor and the preacher, should be in harmony. The eye and the ear should be impressed to the same end. Truth, virtue, love, honesty, kindness and charity should be inculcated in one as much as in the other, and the play should teach similar lessons to those of the pulpit although in a different manner. The tendency of the stage should be in the direction of chastity and sobriety, and nothing should appear thereon which would be calculated to undo that which the house of worship seeks to promote and cultivate.

If such influences as would spring from observance of these regulations were made to surround the drama, who could object to theatrical performances? No one but the bigot and the crank. As it is, much good results from our Theatre, and it is far better to have a house of entertainment under control of our own people than to leave the conduct of such amusements in the hands of persons who would not care what was presented to the public so long as the profits were sufficient. But we hope to see the time when, in tragedy or comedy, in drama or farce, in ballet or burlesque, the objects will be pure amusement, chaste instruction, culture and refinement, without any tendency to licentious thought, the ridicule of sacred things, or the promotion of anything low in language or in spirit.

The following remarks, made by Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, of New York, are applicable we think to all Church members who have any dubiety about going to the theatre:

"If you can sit in front of the footlights night after night and keep a clear, bright consciousness that you are the Lord's anointed, and not only that, but can do it so as not to allow your associates there to forget the fact that you have been washed white in the blood of the Lamb and by the grace of Christ are successfully overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil, then my friends, go to the theatre and go as often as you like, and the Lord will be with you. Otherwise stay away, and the Lord be with you."

## ANOTHER "MEDIUM" EXPOSED.

In spite of the repeated exposures of the spiritualistic humbug called "Materialization," people all over the civilized world can be found who will become the ready prey of rogues that profit by human credulity. The latest instance of mediumistic rascality and exposure occurred in Iowa, at a town called Strawberry Point.

A so-called medium named Wyman held a number of seances there which were largely attended, and where spirits, if not from the "vasty deep" or sheol, were called up and apparently presented themselves before the startled audiences in the darkened room. Deceived people recognized their dead relatives and, while some were melted to tears, others were wrought up to a pitch of excitement, bordering on insanity.

But half a dozen unbelieving young fellows formed themselves into a committee of investigation and determined to go to the body of the deception. At the next seance they secured seats in a position to watch the cabinet as closely as possible in the "dim religious light." The medium was placed in a chair and his clothing sewed to it securely. The usual ceremonies and precautions were observed, and after a short time a spirit came forth which was soon recognized as a deceased relative of some one present.

Now was the time for the volunteer committee of six. They jumped forward and grabbed the "spirit." Then followed a general row. Friends and confederates of the medium fought with the young men and their backers, but it was of no avail against the exposure. The lights were turned up and there were the medium's clothes, out of which he had deftly slipped while the singing was in progress to "harmonize the conditions," and there was Wyman who had personated the "spirit," in very light attire, out of breath and considerably dilapidated. He was arrested for obtaining money under false pretenses and it is to be hoped will pay the penalty of his crime.

How foolish the dopes must appear whose feelings were so agitated over meeting with their dear departed! But it will not be long before similar transparent frauds will be repeated, and the old adage that "fools and their money are soon parted" will receive further ample exemplification.

## GOVERNOR MURRAY'S REPORT REVIEWED.

We publish to-day the greater portion of a report made by Governor Eli H. Murray to the Secretary of the Interior. It is in pamphlet form and is dated October 17, 1885. We have omitted the accompanying documents and such remarks as do not apply to the situation in Utah, but have given in full all that has a bearing on that question.

The Governor, it will be seen by all who are acquainted with Utah affairs, starts out with a misrepresentation. It is not true that he came here in the spirit that he indicates. On the contrary, his first public utterance, on the anniversary of national independence, on Washington Square, was a declaration of hostility and a public insult to the majority of the people of Utah. The language he used was intemperate and incendiary and betrayed both his ignorance of the truth and his willingness and eagerness to receive false reports and repeat them in the most insulting manner.

He pretends in this report to give his experience of "six years' official observation." If all his official experience was given, with the condition in which he has been seen on many occasions when making "official observations" with glasses not considered astronomical, except in the sense that they sometimes make Governors as well as other people "see stars," the report might be more amusing and less untruthful.

It is rather difficult to understand what he means by the statement that "the Mormon authorities," "by means of legislatures named by them have persistently thwarted the purposes of Congress," and as he does not explain, we have to regard it as one of his peculiarly obscure generalities.

The next assertion that "a number of leading Mormons convicted of crime solemnly declare their purpose to continue in the practice of disobedience" etc., "and as a reason for such action assert that" to do otherwise would bring them under the ban of the organization to which they belong," is a double untruth. Refusal to make promises to the court which no court on earth has the right to demand, is very different to a declaration of intention to disobey the laws. And only one "leading Mormon," to wit, Bishop (I. B. Clawson, used an expression capable of Executive distortion into such a reason for his position. Governor Murray, with his common duplicity, has given a different construction to the plain meaning of the language used by the one individual whom he has multiplied into "a number of leading Mormons."

He next classes Bishop Clawson, by name, among the cases of those who have made certain promises, etc., which is even a greater misrepresentation of Brother Clawson than the other untruth. The assertion that those men who have yielded to the pressure of the Court have been "denounced as traitors" by the *Desert News* is also untrue. We challenge the Governor to produce the evidence. He offers none in his report but makes incorrect assertions with great facility, as is natural, considering his experience in this line.

His statement that the First Presidency constitute "an ecclesiastical court," denominated by him in another place "the high council," is either another instance of disregard for truth or of consummate ignorance of what he is attempting to explain to the Secretary of the Interior. The First Presidency is not the High Council, neither is it "an ecclesiastical court of the Mormons."

"A treasonable growth of alien sentiment" is one of those buncombe sayings without meaning, with which the Governor has been wont to regale his "Liberal" associates in stump speeches in anti-"Mormon," but not anti-liquor campaigns. The imaginary "appeals of the Government to the Mormons" may be classed with the other expression; but the assertion that "the Mormon leaders have made outcasts of the few who have announced their determination to obey the laws" is simply a piece of wilful and shameful mendacity. Not one case exists to justify such a charge; it is manufactured for the purpose which its author clearly manifests in his specious and misleading report, which will be shown further on.

His dastardly attack upon the Delegate to Congress is of a piece with the rest of his deceptions. He accuses him with others of "using every effort to thwart the execution of the laws," etc., and in evidence of this pretends to cite, but does not quote from a speech of the Delegate at Logan, and then lugs in an isolated sentence from the Salt Lake Herald, of which Mr. Caine is not the editor, and for the insertion of which he is no more responsible than Governor Murray. Such miserable subterfuges are as mean and paltry as they are vile and cowardly. Who has "thwarted the execution of the laws?" Certainly not John T. Caine. The laws have been

executed, and a conviction had upon nearly every case, and nothing has been done to "thwart" their execution but peaceful appeals to the courts provided by the laws for such purposes. We are aware that the Governor considers such appeals "treasonable," but no sober and sensible person entertains such an absurd idea.

His next attempt is indeed a sorry one. How any friend of Governor Murray's suffered him to print such twaddle and inconsistency is marvelous. Read the paragraph commencing with this sentence: "The right of people to believe what they choose is unquestioned, and in that belief they are entitled to whatever of comfort and happiness such belief may bring to them in this world or in the hereafter, and, further, the Government will, as it has done, protect them in the fullest exercise of that belief, be it religious or otherwise."

Then compare with that commencing: "But it is said these have committed no crimes, and therefore should not be questioned," and the following paragraph in which he argues that those who simply believe in polygamy and do not practice it, are worse than those who carry their belief into action, and should be disfranchised for that belief, and because they do not break the law. What condition could he have been in when that part of the report was concocted? He lays down the proposition that the Government must protect people in their belief "whether it be religious or otherwise," then goes on to argue that people "who have committed no crimes" should have certain privileges forfeited, and caps the climax by making those who have broken no law more deserving of punishment than those who have broken the law, and by calling for their disfranchisement on the sole ground of their belief!

The next piece of absurdity is his charge of "painful lack of manhood" on the part of those heroic men who have submitted to fine and imprisonment rather than deny a principle of their faith, and his statement that those men "abandoned their families by going to the penitentiary rather than disobey the cruel edict of polygamous leaders." Seeing that no such "edict" ever existed, and that these men were forced from their families by the "cruel edict" of fanatical Judges, the sanity of the writer of such stuff about their abandonment of families may be reasonably doubted.

The charge that men have "permitted their plural wives to be sent to prison in vain attempts to shield themselves," is a gross perversion of the facts. The ladies who have been sent to the penitentiary were committed because they would not answer to grand jury questions that ought not to be asked of any woman. The odium rests upon those who piled them with such questions, and thrust them into bondage for standing on their lawful privileges and the dignity of their womanhood. But whoever knew Governor Murray to place any facts relating to the "Mormon" people in a true light before the public?

He next pretends to give H. B. Clawson's statement when brought up for sentence, with Judge Zane's reply. But instead of doing so, he gives just two lines of Bishop Clawson's speech and inserts the whole of Judge Zane's attack. But that is quite in consonance with the Governor's notions of fairness.

After the insertion of Mr. Nicholson's remarks and Judge Zane's response, comes a renewal of Governor Murray's former attempt to get the military authorized to execute civil process. He cannot cite a single instance of resistance to the civil officers to justify such an invasion of the rights of citizens, but attempts to make out cases of danger to the officers and the Government, in speeches which he dare not quote because they would not bear out his false assumptions; in the half-mast of the flag, which every man who is not inebriated mentally or physically knows is but a sign of mourning and not of defiance or insult; and in the befouling of houses one night in this city, which there is far greater reason to believe was the work of anti-"Mormons" than of any one else. As reason for the employment of soldiers to serve the processes of courts when it is not even alleged that the civil officers have ever been obstructed, such assumptions are worthy of a semi-lunatic or of a brain like Governor Murray's.

Embodied in the precious plea for the military, which is one of the Governor's hobbies, he makes the assertion that the non-"Mormons" of Utah pay one-half of the taxes. The falsity of this stale assertion has been demonstrated by facts and figures, and its repetition adds one more to the list of falsehoods with which the author seeks to impose on the Secretary of the Interior.

Following this, the Governor tries to asodas a jurist, and of course succeeds in exposing his ignorance. He lays down the dictum that polygamy was "always a crime." Every reader of history knows better than that. He asserts that it was always a crime "under our common law," when any lawyer could have told him we have no common law of our own, that bigamy was not a crime at English common law when this Territory was settled, and that the plural marriage of the "Mormons" was never a crime in principle and was not legislated into a crime until 1862.

The straits to which Governor Murray was reduced in attempting to make out a case against the "Mormons" are exhibited in his attempt to show that