

we had of dividing on party lines came to us from Ogden. There is, therefore, no foundation for the charge that the Church brought about the dissolution of the People's party."

"Does the Church claim the right to dictate to its members in political matters?"

"The Church does not claim any such right."

"The Times has held that the appearance of Church management of the People's party during recent times resulted purely from the fact that the party was composed almost entirely of members of the Church with prominent Churchmen taking part in its affairs, and that there has not been Church rule as charged. Is this view correct?"

"The Times has correctly stated the facts connected with the appearance of Church management of the People's party. That party having been composed principally of members of the Church, and self defense having compelled them to consult together and to decide concerning the best steps to be taken to preserve their rights, some color has been given to the charge that it was a Church party. But this has not been done in a Church capacity. Men have had influence in that party and been listened to according to their experience, and not because of their official position in the Church."

"That being true, are we to understand that the Church will not assert any right to control the political action of its members in the future?"

"This is what we wish to convey and have you understand. As officers of the Church we disclaim the right to control the political action of the members of our body."

"Will there be any reason why members of the Church should come together and vote solidly, if political conditions here are similar to those which prevail elsewhere?"

"We cannot perceive any reason why they should do this in the future, if, as you say, political conditions should exist here as they prevail elsewhere."

"Would leaders of the Church counsel the support of Church members, irrespective of party affiliation?"

"It is not probable that the leaders of the Church would give any counsel upon such subjects, and certainly would not discriminate against equally suitable men because they were not members of the Church. We would be in favor of voting for suitable men, regardless of their religious beliefs or associations."

"Do you understand that those who join the Republican and Democratic parties will vote and work for Gentile candidates of those parties as freely as for Mormon candidates?"

"This is certainly our understanding, and we fully expect that former members of the People's party who join the two national parties will be true to their party convictions and sustain the nominees of their respective parties, though they may not be members of the Mormon Church."

"Is it your intention to advise members of the Mormon Church, when the People's party members have divided and after the Liberal party has been broken up, to unite in favor of the Mormon Church and against the Gentiles? Do you know of any intention or understanding on the part of the heads of the Church to advise the members of the Church, if statehood should be obtained, to unite and co-operate in respect to the interests of the Church against the Gentiles?"

"We have refrained from interfering in political matters because of our position, we ourselves not having a vote. But we would consider it the height of folly, even if we had a disposition to direct the members of our Church upon political mat-

ters, to advise them to unite in favor of our Church and against the non-members thereof, if the present political movement should continue. We see no good reason, if the 'Liberal' party should break up, for any such division as has heretofore existed between Mormons and non-Mormons. We have deplored the existence of this class feeling, and believe it has been a fruitful source of trouble. We shall hail with unfeigned gratification the time when the people of Utah, without regard to their religious views, can unite as citizens and labor for the advancement and prosperity of the Territory. If statehood should ever be obtained, all the influence we could use to break down the distinctions which have created such bitterness in the past would be exerted."

"Do you believe that if Utah should be admitted as a State the Mormons will unite in electing members of the Church to the legislature, and that the legislature will make laws favorable to the Mormons and unfavorable to the non-Mormons?"

"As we have already intimated, whatever influence we can use will be exerted in favor of legislation that will be in the interest and for the benefit of the whole people. It would be most unfortunate if any attempt were made to pass laws favorable to the Mormons and unfavorable to non-Mormons. Any such attempt would be sure to bring upon the Mormon people evils which they are desirous of averting. It is to our interest to furnish no pretext for the formation of an anti-Mormon party, which would no doubt be the result if members of the Church in the legislature were to attempt to discriminate by legislation in favor of their co-religionists."

"Is it your understanding that the People's party has honestly and in good faith dissolved, and that they will unite with the Democratic and Republican parties according to their convictions of what is right?"

"This certainly is our understanding. We can perceive no reason why the representatives of the People's party should have taken their recent action unless it was their honest intention to unite themselves with the national parties."

"Do you know of any intention on the part of the Church or any of its officers or members ever to organize a political party with respect to the conceived interests of the Mormon Church?"

"We know of no such intention on the part of anyone, and can see no object to be attained, under the new conditions which now surround us, by organizing any such party."

"Do you understand that it is the wish of the Mormon Church to maintain a separation of Church and State with respect to all political questions?"

"However much appearances may have indicated that we have favored the union of Church and State, and notwithstanding the many assertions which have been made of this nature, there is no real disposition among the people of our Church to unite Church and State; in fact, we believe there should be a separation between the two. But in past times the situation in this Territory was such that officers of the Church were frequently elected to civil office. If the people availed themselves of the best talent of the community they were under the necessity very frequently of selecting officers of the Church to fill these positions. You must understand that nearly every reputable male member of the Mormon Church holds office in the Church. Of course, where the people, as was the case in many localities, were all Mormons, if they elected any of their own members they had to choose men who held position in the Church. Men were selected for

Bishops because of their superior ability to care for and manage the affairs of their wards. They were the practical and experienced men of their several communities, and in the estimation of the people were suitable for legislators, etc. Their election to civil offices led to the idea that there was a union of Church and State."

"Do you believe that it is the wish of the Mormon people to unite with the great national parties and to conduct politics in this Territory as they are conducted in all other States?"

"That is the impression we have received from conversation with the men among us who take the greatest interest in political matters."

"Is there any reason why the members of the Church should not act freely with the national parties at all times?"

"We know of no reason why they should not."

"Would the leaders of the Church, under any circumstances, countenance defiance of the laws against polygamy?"

"Speaking for ourselves, in view of the experience of the past, 'No, they would not.'"

"Would leaders of the Church, if placed in official position, wink at violations of the anti-polygamy laws?"

"We cannot say what others might do, but for ourselves we say, 'We would not wink at violations of the law.'"

"Would there be any desire among Church leaders to abolish the laws against polygamy or to make them less stringent if Utah were admitted to statehood?"

"You may rest assured that Church leaders would neither attempt themselves, nor advise others to attempt, to abolish those laws, if Utah were to become a State."

"Is it your understanding that if a member of the Mormon Church, since the issuance of the manifesto and its adoption by the Church, should enter into polygamy he would thereby violate the creed of the Church, and would it be wrong for him to do so?"

"We ought to state to you that we have no creed. We have what are called the Articles of Faith, among which, however, there is nothing said concerning polygamy. A member of the Church who should now enter into that relation would violate the rule of the Church, and he would be considered a wrong-doer."

"Would you or any officer of the Church authorize a polygamous marriage or countenance the practice of unlawful cohabitation?"

"Again we have to say we can only speak for ourselves, and say that we would not authorize any such marriage or any practice violative of the law."

"Is it your understanding that the Mormon people are in good faith observing the laws of the United States prohibiting polygamy and unlawful cohabitation?"

"That is our understanding."

"Is there any foundation for the charge that the Mormon leaders are now engaged in a political conspiracy to secure political power for the Church?"

"There is not the least ground for any such statement. We are not engaged in any conspiracy of this character."

"Is there anything to be gained for the Church by securing political control in Utah with or without Statehood?"

"We see nothing to be gained for the Church in this way."

"Is it not true that the members and leaders of the Church desire to place it in a position in the community like that occupied by other Church societies?"

"The only protection the Church desires is that which it should obtain under general laws which secure the rights of all denominations. It would be most unwise for the Mormon people to en-