

denn it entirely in the eyes of all sensible men. Little Neil may take what comfort he can out of this small crumb of attempted legislation, and bite his thumb in vexation until the next sitting of the Legislature—two years hence, when he will have a chance to rave again, unless he is sooner removed from office (quite probable) or has, obtained a little common sense (rather improbable), or like a planet that has passed the vaporous stage, has grown a little cooler by experience.

FALSEHOOD FURTHER EXPOSED.

As the statements of Eli H. Murray concerning the election laws of Utah may be repeated by persons and papers without desire to disseminate falsehood, as they will be undoubtedly by intentional liars, we refer to this subject again that there may be no dubiety concerning it. Mr. Murray, among other misrepresentations, stated to the New York Tribune correspondent that a man "may for instance marry a Chinese girl 12 years old, who hasn't been in the country a month, and the act will entitle her to vote."

Let us see how much truth there is in this assertion. First we will quote the act referred to:

"Be it enacted by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah: That every woman of the age of twenty-one years, who has resided in this Territory six months next preceding any general or special election, born or naturalized in the United States, or who is the wife, widow or the daughter of a native born or naturalized citizen of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election in this Territory."—Compiled Laws of Utah p. 88.

This Act requires that every woman, in order to be qualified to vote, must be, first, of the age of twenty-one years; second, have resided in this Territory six months next preceding the election; third, be either born or naturalized in the United States, or the wife, widow or daughter of a citizen. This is as plain as language can make it. It follows, therefore, that a woman under twenty-one years of age cannot vote in this Territory even if she possesses the other requisite qualifications; also that a woman who is of the age of twenty-one years and possesses the third qualification, cannot vote unless she has resided in the Territory six months next preceding the election. These being the facts, what language is forcible enough to characterize Eli H. Murray's statement to the press correspondent? It is either infamously false or incomparably stupid.

We will add here that the principle involved in the provision concerning the wife, widow or daughter of a citizen is that contained in the statutes of the United States, which make citizens of the children of citizens, and also of the wives and widows of citizens without going through the same forms as male aliens in obtaining naturalization papers. And all the strictures that have been made on this subject against the Utah women suffrage act, apply with greater force to the laws of the United States from which the principle that governs the Utah statute was derived.

But suppose some cunning word-twister attempts to convey a meaning other than that evidently intended by the text of the act of 1870, for there are few sentences that cannot be misconstrued, and the quirks and quibbles of legal pettifoggery turn generally upon disputed constructions of the language of statutes. What then? Why we refer to a later law for proof of our statement of this law. The Registration Act of 1873 provides that all citizens must be registered before they can vote, and both male and female voters are required to take a certain oath, which is in form as follows:

"I, _____, being duly sworn, depose and say, that I am over twenty-one years of age and have resided in the Territory of Utah for six months and in the precinct of _____ one month next preceding the date hereof, and (if a male) am a 'native born' or 'naturalized' (as the case may be) citizen of the United States, and a taxpayer in this Territory; (or if a female) I am 'native born' or 'naturalized,' or the 'wife,' 'widow,' or 'daughter' (as the case may be) of a native born or naturalized citizen of the United States.

"Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____ A. D. 18____. Assessor."

All female citizens as well as males must, in order to vote, swear first, that they are over twenty-one years of age; second, that they have resided in the Territory six months and in the precinct one month next preceding the date of registration; and, third, that they are native born or naturalized citizens—in the case of females they may be either native born or naturalized, or the wife, widow or daughter of a native born or naturalized citizen. Observe, each woman voter must swear, not only that she is a citizen, or the wife, widow or daughter of a citizen, but that she is over twenty-one years of age, and that she has resided six months in the Territory, and one month in the precinct immediately before the time of the taking of the oath.

Now read these two statutes together—referred to by Mr. Murray, as "the election laws of Utah," and say how any sane or truthful man could make the statement that, under these provisions, "a Chinese girl 12 years of age who hasn't been in the country a month, can vote in Utah if she is married!" There never was a more palpable and unequivocal untruth told by mortal man than the sentence we have quoted, and that is reported as the language of the absent Governor of this Territory. It is false in every part and false in its entirety. The object of such misrepresentation is as vile as the untruth, and stamps its author as unutterably despicable and contemptible. Those who repeat the falsehood, knowing that they are garbling the laws and maligning the people of Utah, belong to the same category and are unworthy of the respect of any decent man or woman inside or outside of the Territory.

STATIONARY MOTION.

THE Polytechnic Society of Berlin has received an elaborate exposition of a theory of easy travel, from an eccentric German "philosopher," who announces that he has discovered a way to make a trip around the world in twenty-four hours. He says that he is informed by the captains of ships that birds are seen at sea a thousand miles or more from land, and pronounces it self-evident that they must reach shore in a very short time, since they cannot find a resting place in midocean. From this he conceived the idea that they merely raise themselves aloft, and, with only motion enough to keep aloft, remain as nearly stationary as possible, while the earth revolves around under them. All they then have to do is to wait until the desired spot on the earth's surface comes along and thereupon comfortably lower themselves to solid ground. This ingenious practice on the part of birds the Berlin man proposes to imitate for mankind with the assistance of a balloon and passenger-car of peculiar construction that he has invented, and which will soar aloft and remain stationary while the restless earth rolls on below.

This is not the first instance of a "philosopher's" grand mistake. It is when scientists step over the bounds of the known into the domain of speculation and so-called philosophy, that they tumble into the gulf of error, and raise doubts in the minds of the unscientific as to the value of all their reasonings and deductions.

The weak point in the Berlin "philosopher's" plan is the complete ignoring of the fact that the earth's atmosphere travels with the globe, and that simply holding still in the air would not change by a single step the relative positions of the elevated, stationary person and the spot from which he ascended. The theory of the Berlin dreamer is not new, but has been entertained before with the same results that will follow if the "philosopher" attempts to put his theory into practice. He will accomplish about as much as the other "philosopher," who attempted to raise himself into mid-air by lifting on the band of his pantaloons.

LEARN FIRST, TALK AFTERWARDS.

"THE DESERET EVENING NEWS, of Salt Lake City, takes the critics of Mormonism to task for betraying

ignorance of the minute theology of the "Latter-day Saints." It is certainly enough that polygamy is unlawful, immoral and destructive of social order to condemn the system and those who practice it. No great knowledge is necessary to establish these facts."

The above is from the Cleveland Herald. It is true that we have had many occasions to deplore the ignorance of anti-"Mormon" writers. We do not blame them for unfamiliarity with our doctrines and tenets, but for undertaking to discuss and condemn that which they know nothing or next to nothing about. Editors often start out with an assumption that certain ridiculous theories are "Mormonism," then proceed to demolish them by argument and ridicule, and conclude with triumphant expressions of their own success, and clamors for Government to put down "Mormonism" by force of arms. We think we have sufficient cause to complain, and the right to demand that before our opponents denounce our faith they learn just what it is, and not hold up as "Mormonism" ideas that are entirely opposite to its theology.

The Herald says: "It is certainly enough that polygamy is unlawful, immoral and destructive of social order," etc. But we would remind the Herald that the subject is the "Mormon" marriage system, not the Mohammedan or any other. We may admit that it has been made unlawful by a statute of the United States, specially framed against it with the knowledge that it was an establishment of the "Mormon" religion. But the assertion that it is immoral, or that it is destructive to social order is mere assumption. We will go further and say that the statement is false in fact. There is nothing immoral in our marriage system, but on the contrary it tends to morality. There is nothing destructive of social order in it, but on the contrary it establishes and perpetuates social order.

Here are two counter assertions. Which is correct? It will not do to say that society has condemned this practice, and therefore it must be immoral and destructive to social order. This would be jumping at a conclusion and begging the whole question. We who have been familiar with the workings of the system for many years, know that it is opposed to immorality in theory, and prevents much of it in practice. That it has the effect of doing away with a vast amount of the immorality that prevails in monogamic society. That it tends to cultivate self-denial, patience, forbearance, charity, love of offspring, and all the Christian virtues in male and female. That it helps to establish strict principles and regulations as to the relations of the sexes. That there is more social order in "Mormon" polygamic family arrangements, as a rule, than exists in monogamic families, with the same degree of intelligence, wealth and facilities for home comfort and convenience. That the "Mormon" people under the influences of their social system are less criminal, turbulent, lawless, intemperate, licentious and disorderly than communities elsewhere under monogamic influences.

This being the case the rash assertions of the supposed inevitable consequences of polygamous life are without value. Of course our statements will be disputed, but they are nevertheless true, and the facts stand as a positive refutation of the ideas that are accepted by the majority of people in "Christian" countries in relation to this subject.

We can afford to smile at the assumption of lecturers and writers that polygamy must be destructive of the home, when we know to the contrary, and that it breeds social disorder, when we know that its effects are the very reverse. And we cannot help laughing at the logic of our opponents when they argue that it is immoral because there is a law against it, and that laws should be enacted to suppress it because it is immoral. That is about the style of reasoning which its enemies adopt.

We assure the Herald that there is no such dreadful condition of society here as may be imagined abroad in consequence of the misrepresentations and exaggerations of wilful liars, but on the contrary we have one of the most peaceful, orderly, industrious and kindly affectionate communities to be found anywhere in the country. There are exceptional cases, where men, and women too, act more from passion than principle and do things that are unbecoming and shameful. But the

same may be said with much greater reason of people in monogamic society, and in neither instance does that form a valid argument against the system.

We protest against misrepresentation, and reiterate our demand that those who wish to oppose "Mormonism by tongue or pen, or any other weapon, first find out what it is, and not attempt to tell the public something that they know nothing about themselves, nor urge a warfare against a people of whose life, motives and pursuits they are in deplorable ignorance.

"THE MORMON POSITION."

THE Cleveland Herald, under the above heading, gives an epitome of our article, entitled, "At Issue on Principle," which was called forth by some queries from that paper concerning the "Mormon" attitude towards the Government. The Herald states our case pretty fairly in the main, but makes a few errors, and draws a few conclusions not warranted by the premises. For instance, the Herald says:

"The case therefore stands thus: Plurality of wives is an article of faith with the 'Latter-day Saints,' whether they practice it or not. It is prohibited by a law which the highest tribunal in the land has pronounced valid and one that must be obeyed by all good citizens. The Mormons have to choose between their belief and the law. The NEWS says they have chosen. They will obey the 'higher law' of what they claim to be divine revelation, and take their chances as to the law passed by Congress and confirmed by the Supreme Court."

This is not an exact statement of the case. We did not presume to speak for the "Mormons" as to what they would do; we explained our views on the conflict between our religious belief and the law of '62, and showed our perfect right to dissent from the opinion of the Supreme Court, referring to that Opinion itself for proof of our perfect legal and constitutional liberty of belief. But as to the action or intention of the "Mormons" we made no statement. On the contrary, we said:

"As to that we are not authorized to speak for anyone else. That is a matter for every person to decide on his own convictions. How can we tell the intentions of others unless they tell them themselves? Further, our personal intentions are nobody's business but our own. It is only overt acts that the law can take cognizance of."

The Herald would have done better to quote our exact language on this point; its attempt to express our views is misleading. It says: "The Mormons have to choose between their belief and the law." This we regard as a mistake. Our belief remains the same as it was before the law was passed. It will remain the same whether we submit to the law or not. It is not affected by it in any way. Belief is not obliterated or changed by legal enactments or judicial decisions. It is subject to conviction alone. And by that term we do not mean the end of prosecution, we mean a change of views effected by greater light or the force of evidence. If all the courts in the country were to decide that God has not revealed the doctrines of celestial marriage to the Latter-day Saints, it would not affect our faith in that revelation one iota. And our belief would remain the same if all the pains and penalties that legislatures could impose were inflicted upon us. Congressional enactments, judicial dicta, the force of arms or any kind of compulsion fail to reach the secret springs of faith in the human soul. They may control action, or failing that to punish those who will not conform, but the freedom of thought and liberty of belief remain untouched and unchangeable by such agencies.

Suppose the case of a man who believes in his divine right to marry more wives than one under certain ecclesiastical regulations, and who shows his faith by his works. The law takes its course, he is convicted, fined and imprisoned. While he is suffering the judgment of the law, does his belief change of necessity? When he has paid the penalties of the law, has a change of faith been compelled? Not at all. The probabilities are that his views will remain unshaken, and quite likely, judging from the effects of compulsion on the religious mind in all ages, his faith will not only be confirmed, but made stronger and greater. Choice between our belief and the law is therefore

not an alternative. We can keep our belief and not break the law; we can keep it and disregard the law and take the risk of the consequences; and in any event our faith may remain undisturbed. The Herald's "logic" is not so perfect that it can afford to squint at other people's.

After presenting our views—some of them rather distorted—on this important question, the Herald sums up the matter with this sentence:

"They [the Mormons] are contumacious if they may not be properly pronounced traitorous or rebellious."

We regard this as the language of bigotry and intolerance. It smacks of the middle ages, is redolent of the fagot and the auto de fe, grates with the harsh sound of the rack, the thumbscrew and the wheel, and bears the darkness of the dungeon and the vault for "contumacious" heretics and "rebellious" non-conformists. All that we claimed in the article under consideration was freedom of belief, the right to dissent on principle from the measures of legislatures and the decisions of courts. If this constitutes contumacy and may be rightly denounced as rebellion, then are most of the public journals rebellious, and many of our national law-makers contumacious; for they frequently dissent both from laws and decisions, and express their views in vigorous language. We have claimed that our opinions and intentions are "nobody's business but our own," and that "it is only overt acts that the law can take cognizance of." Does the Herald dispute this? If so we will quote from the Supreme Court decision touching this question:

"To suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty."

"It is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order."

"The legislative powers of the government reach actions only and not opinions."

"Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order."

Some of the above sentences were the language of Jefferson, but were adopted by the Supreme Court as true and authoritative. They sustain our position completely, and entirely absolve us from the terrible offences of "contumacy" and "rebellion," so freely charged against us by the Cleveland Herald, and which are the favorite "arguments" against the "Mormons."

We claim the liberty to believe what seems right to us, and to hold to and defend and propagate that belief in spite of the contrary belief of courts, congresses, governors, editors or priests; and we invite the attention of those who wish to deprive us of our civil rights on the ground of our belief in the rightfulness of plural marriage, to the foregoing enunciations of the highest judicial tribunal in the land. Now, briefly stated, our position is this: We believe that God has revealed the doctrines of celestial marriage, including that of the plurality of wives; we believe that the law of '62 is wrong in principle and contrary to the Constitution of our country; we consider the opinion of the Supreme Court on that law to be mistaken and in some points illogical and absurd; we dispute the right and power of any person or authority, civil, military or ecclesiastical, to interfere with our belief and its lawful propagation; we leave men's acts in relation to that faith, to their own volition and judgment; we offer no violence against the law or its execution, whether we consider it just or unjust; we leave the conflict between the law and the revelation to God and the Government, the law having been made against the revelation, and not the revelation against the law; and we view the attempt to magnify the "Mormon" marriage question into a national danger, as ridiculous and uncalled for, and regard with contempt the pretended concern with which a corrupt and licentious generation affect to regard the marriage relations of a few peaceable, orderly, domestic, industrious and God-fearing people in a remote Territory of the Rocky Mountains. We also trust in God, and view the situation without excitement and without alarm.