

A GOOD RECORD.

"The Salt Lake Tribune has been for months using its anti-Mormon columns to heap upon me unlimited and malignant abuse. In every instance it has been without cause. I have never been the aggressor and have only answered after quietly waiting for months to find opportunity to enter the field.

That paper has intimated that I had been engaged in some desperate thing "back east" in "Michigan." I have over and over challenged a publication of whatever it is they think they possess. Hollister has publicly admitted that he had been trying to discover something against me. Still nothing comes but insinuation. They seem to proceed upon the assumption that a lie well stuck to becomes as potent as truth. Personally, I do not bother myself as to what these fellows may print, but as they are trying to destroy the good effect of my work in Utah, I desire, in the interest of that work, to make known what it was I did in Michigan that this paper is hinting at as derogatory to me.

Readers of the News may recall my letters concerning the Indians of the Isabella reservation in Michigan. I said but little in those letters as to the persecutions I have suffered because of my work for those poor Indians. I stated that after long effort I secured the attention of the President and through him obtained an investigation. That done, I turned the work over to the agents of the government. I had spent four years on that work absolutely "without money and without price." I had held to it with a strange and stubborn tenacity that I cannot myself explain. I was a poor man and "getting on in years." The Indians could not appreciate what I was doing for them. There was not even "thank-you" in it for me, and yet I "stayed" with the "job" until I had induced the United States government to come my relief. Then I set out to reinforce my depleted purse by lecturing.

I went to Kalamazoo, Michigan, where I had been years before, and obtained of the trustees of that institution, the Unitarian church, which had been shut up for several years, in which to give four lectures. Kalamazoo is only about 150 miles from the Isabella reservation, and the ring-leader of the thieves whom I had exposed got his wife in K. Before I had given my four lectures that man had heard of my work in K., and hastened there to inaugurate a fight against me, the same fight which was begun on the reservation where, as I have said in previous articles, the thieves started a paper and hired a most disreputable character to blackguard me. The leader of the thieves, as I have said, came to Kalamazoo and employed a broken-down lawyer, and "the meanest man in town" to fight me. He came into one of my meetings and attempted to create a riot by making charges against me in the name of the men who had fought me on the reservation. He flooded the town with scurrilous publications. He sneaked about the city among my friends, as persons whom I could name have done in Salt Lake, trying to create prejudice against me sufficient to deter the people from com-

ing to hear me. But instead of turning against me, the people said: "We see no evidence of wrong in this man and we will stand by him until you prove your charges." In open meeting, wherein this man who had been engaged to fight me was present, the people, a large audience, demanded an investigation. A committee of the best known and reliable citizens of Kalamazoo was nominated and selected by unanimous vote of the audience to hear and investigate any charges that might be preferred against me. In addition, the people invited me to remain and continue my lectures, and I remained there nine months.

That committee at once met and organized and notified my defacers that it was ready to hear and investigate their charges against me. The committee was given but three weeks by the people in which to make their investigations, but it extended the time and spent four weeks on the work, in order to give my opponents all the time they needed to obtain their evidence and make their case. At the end of one month the committee made its report to an audience that, as you can readily imagine, crowded the building in which I was lecturing to its utmost capacity. That I may not be accused of making a statement in my own favor I will quote the closing paragraphs of the committee's report:

"When the committee compared the evidence received from Mount Pleasant in Mr. Ellis' favor with that against him and took into consideration the character of the man who published the charges against him, there was but one straightforward, honest thing to do, and that was to acquit him.

"The committee begs to say further that the documentary testimony put in on both sides is so voluminous as to make it impracticable to embody it in this report, but gives the society (for which Mr. Ellis was lecturing at that time) full assurance that convincing and unquestionable proof was offered to convict Mr. Ellis' principal defamer; that is, one A. N. Brown, of having been for many years a vindictive, malicious and untruthful man, whose word will not be believed under oath.

"On the other hand, Mr. Ellis' character, not only in Mount Pleasant, but elsewhere for the past thirty years was shown by unquestionable testimony to have been good.

"For all these reasons your committee, after a full, careful and impartial investigation of the charges preferred against Mr. Ellis, would report that the said charges have not been sustained.

"The committee would say further that much of the testimony placed before it pointed to the following as the cause of this attack upon Mr. Ellis:

"Several years ago, that is, in the year 1883, Mr. Ellis began an investigation of frauds and wrongs perpetrated upon the Indians of the Isabella County reservation. As a result of his work a number of Mr. Pleasant men, among whom are several of the owners of the Mt. Pleasant Tribune, are now indicted in United States courts with a prospect of conviction. This fact in the estimation of many reliable men in Mt. Pleasant, is the chief cause of the Tribune's attack. But in addition to this, it is clear to the committee that Mr. Ellis' theological beliefs, while not in themselves necessarily false or wrong, were, as a matter of fact, very objectionable to many trinitarian believers; and the charges against Mr. Ellis are in the main due, not to any immorality in his character, but to his theological heresies. Your

committee, therefore, for these reasons also, after an impartial investigation, beg leave to report that none of the charges against Mr. Ellis have been sustained and that he is still worthy of your confidence and esteem.

[Signed.]

L. G. BRAGG, Chairman,
MEYER DESENBERG,
A. J. HOLMES,
I. N. STEARNS,
A. J. SHAKESPEARE,
SILAS HUBBARD.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Committee.
Jan. 30, 1888.

If, now, the Tribune, or any others of the anti-"Mormon" ring that has been trying for many months to force me out of Salt Lake because I would not join in the clamor against the "Mormon" people, has any doubt as to the justice of this report, I make unto them the following proposition:

Appoint for yourselves one, two or any number of your men (allowing me to appoint an equal number, both parties being instructed to unite in the appointment of a chairman not of either party) and I will procure and place before those men the evidence upon which the Kalamazoo men based their conclusion, and the only condition I will impose is that the Salt Lake Tribune, daily and weekly, shall publish the finding of these men in Salt Lake.

Having no faith that they will do anything so honorable I wish to incorporate as a part of this article a letter from the "B. F. Underwood," who introduced me here, to the chairman of that committee. Mr. Underwood, I wish to say, is a man of national reputation as a lecturer and writer. He was for years editor of *The Index* in Boston; later he founded *The Open Court* in Chicago and has been editorial writer for other eminent Chicago papers. He is a "Freethinker" of that class that places the emphasis on the "thinker," assuming that all men are or ought to be in this country "free." Away back in the seventies he was in Salt Lake and his *Index* is the only "liberal" paper that I know of that has spoken editorially in favorable terms of the Mormon people. But now for Mr. Underwood's letter.

86 SOUTH PAGE STREET,

CHICAGO, Dec. 17, 1887.

L. G. Bragg, Kalamazoo, Mich.:

Dear Sir—In reply to your letter of inquiry dated Dec. 15th, I have to say that I hope you will carry out your laudable purpose of keeping Mr. Ellis at work for your society. He is an earnest liberal thinker who has the courage of his convictions, and is able to present them with vigor and in a literary form that commands the attention of men and women of intelligence and culture. I hope you will pay no attention to "vague and indefinite" rumors. No man who opposes humbug and sham as Mr. Ellis has done can hope to escape misrepresentation and calumny. I have known him many years and I know nothing "derogatory to his character." I believe his life will compare favorably with that of any of the men who are attempting to prejudice you and the Kalamazoo society, against him. I should call upon them to make their charges definite and to accompany them with proofs before allowing them to have any weight whatever.

Truly yours,

[Signed] B. F. UNDERWOOD.

I want to say further that in May, 1889, a meddlesome person in Salt Lake, learning through rumor of this fight