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SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Fifty-sixth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be held in the new Stake House, at Coalville, Summit County, U. T., on Wednesday, October 6th, 1886, at 10 a.m. All the officers and members who can attend are cordially invited.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY
IN "MORMONISM."

DURING the insane assault upon "Mormonism" which was opened by the passage of the Edmunds Act, all the force and machinery of the judicial power have been brought to bear upon a peaceable community, whose domestic policy affected no one but themselves, and who have proven their integrity to their convictions by unimpeachable evidence. And what has been accomplished? A number of individuals have been incarcerated in prison while their wives and children have been deprived of their presence and support, and the great body of the people have been welded together in closer union, their faith has been confirmed and they have been made firmer in their determination to sustain each other and hold on to that which they are more than ever convinced is true and divine.

A very few have been induced to bend the knee and make promises that were supposed to be agreeable to the chief actors in the anti-"Mormon" drama. They merely formed exceptions to the rule of strict adherence to principle, and the effect of their departure has proven absolutely nil in the desired direction. It has but served to shock the sense of the faithful, and act as a warning to the weak. The institution that has been assailed has remained untouched. It is only the persons punished and their families who have been injured, except so far as the damage done to business interests and the pain inflicted upon relatives and sympathizing friends may be taken into account.

What seems to be wanted and expected is that the body of the "Mormon" people will fall down upon their knees, abjure their attachment to one of the salient features of their faith, promise to put the laws of man before the commandments of God and exalt the human above the divine. This, it is thought, will cause the whole "Mormon" Church to collapse and the victory will be won. But, after some years of judicial persecution, comprehending the perversion of an unjust law and the extension of its penalties away beyond its utmost rational meaning and the intent of its promoters, not a step has been taken in the direction sought. There is no indication of weakness on the part of the people assailed, nor of shrinking in regard to their confidence in their religion or their fealty to their sacred covenants.

The reason of this seems difficult of comprehension to their enemies. Many, no doubt believe the statement made in open court by District Attorney Dickson, that it is the overmastering power of the Church which induces men, when a loathsome prison yawns to receive them for protracted periods, to decline liberty at the cost of their consciences. It is supposed that the Church exercises some sort of terrorism over its members, by which they are forced to refuse freedom when in opposition to its decrees. The whole idea is a fallacy. It has no foundation in fact. The Church has not interfered with the free agency of any man. It has not instructed any person to refuse to make a promise of any kind to the courts. It has not excommunicated any member for making such a promise.

Further than that. The Church has not commanded or compelled or coerced any man or woman to enter into plural marriage or do anything else, in defiance of the Edmunds law. All the fulminations of judges, attorneys, editors, lecturers, politicians and priests charging this against the "Mormon" Church are entirely untrue. The word and will of the Lord on the subject of celestial marriage are before the world and have been since 1832. The Acts of Congress passed in opposition thereto, one ten years and the other thirty years subsequent, are also on record. Every man and woman interested is free to take such a course as may be selected individually. The Church does not force people either one way or the other. It is a personal concern. It is between man and his Maker on the one hand and the laws which fanaticism have procured on the

other. The Church excommunicates no one for taking either course.

The opponents of "Mormonism" seem determined not to take a rational and correct view of the attitude of the "Mormon" people. They have imagined up some extraordinary hold of the Church upon its members that has no existence, and they cannot comprehend the fact of individual conviction and individual choice. Say what they will, the same determination and endurance animate the Latter-day Saints in this matter as were exhibited by the early Christians who suffered at Rome, the so-called heretics who were made victims to the Inquisition, the martyrs under both Catholic and Protestant rule, and all who have refused to recant at the command of tyrants and bigots in Church and State. This may be sneered at as "cheap martyrdom" by a soulless and mercenary attorney, but it means a great deal to them and their families, and is as strong and rich a token to God and the world of their devotion to principle as they have the opportunity to exhibit. Perhaps if their accuser were to change places he would find the voluntary martyrdom not quite so "cheap," but it is not at all likely that principle would weigh a feather with him when balanced against present personal advantage.

The immense strength of the "Mormon" body consists largely of the individual faith of its members. They are not dependent upon any man, living or dead, for their means of spiritual support and personal standing. They are free agents. They have to work out their own salvation. They must choose their own course. They are guided by inspiration to themselves. They are devoted to a cause which they have become convinced is divine. They cannot prove recant to it and retain their own self-respect. They would have no confidence in themselves if they repudiated any tenet of their creed. They would have no faith that God would hear their prayers if they proved untrue to their own knowledge of the truth.

When Jonas Lindberg, threatened with an unjust and illegal three-fold sentence, was offered freedom on making the required promise and was urged to wait till next morning before he decided, he answered: "My conscience will not change by to-morrow." That is the mind of the body of the people. Multiplied sentences will not change their consciences. The merciless and unscrupulous course pursued towards them will have the very opposite effect intended. It always was so. It always must be so with sincere religionists. Nothing that has been done in the Courts since the extreme and vindictive enforcement of the Edmunds Act commenced, has had any tendency to weaken the faith or cause any wavering among the "Mormon" people. On the contrary, it has deepened their devotion to their convictions and stimulated their conscientious resolutions.

It is not fear of men, nor of a Church, nor of anything ecclesiastical, which induces men to decline making a mere verbal promise which would secure their liberty. There is nothing of that character that threatens them. If any such element as fear figures in their motives, it is fear to do wrong, to disgrace themselves in their own eyes, to renounce their families, who would naturally and deservedly despise them, to act dishonorably in the sight of God and all just people who understand the situation. The promise which is to be extorted from those who are weak enough to submit, comprehends the desertion of loving and trusting wives who have been the faithful mothers of their children; the repudiation of those dear companions in violation of sacred covenants to love, cherish and support them; the branding of their names with infamy; the separation of little children from their mothers or else from their fathers; the utter avoidance in public and private, of the objects of fond affection for years; the course of a scoundrel and a villain.

This is what men are urged to do on the glittering promise of exemption from vile imprisonment. What prompts them to refuse? A church? A priestly edict? A pressure from any source of that kind? NO! It is the voice of conscience, the pleadings of affection, the instinct of honor, the power of faith, the determination not to yield willingly to wrong. And it is an individual matter. True, it is endorsed by the community. It is applauded by the good and the true. Even honorable "Gentiles" cannot withhold their approbation. No one approves of the shameful promise but the malicious, the vindictive and those who place little or no value on a verbal agreement. It is useless for the chief workers in the movement against the "Mormons" to try to make the Church responsible for the refusal of convicted men to pledge themselves as required by the courts. The world will find out that individual responsibility is a tenet of "Mormonism." Each person receives the Gospel for himself. Every one must stand or fall for himself. The truth is proclaimed, the word of the Lord is revealed, and the strait and narrow way is opened. Nobody is forced to enter or continue therein. All people will be judged for their own deeds. No one will stand in the stead of another. There is no compulsion, there will be no avoidance of consequences.

The Latter-day Saints know for themselves that their religion is true, they are prepared to act for themselves in relation to it. And their conviction and testimony and inspiration are in-

dividual, and so must be their course whether in relation to law or gospel. It is this personal but similar and united position that the enemies of "Mormonism" have to meet, and they will find it insurmountable and impregnable.

MR. DICKSON AS A "MARTYR"
MAKER.

In the abusive tirade delivered in the Third District Court on Monday afternoon against his "Mormon" victims and the Church to which they belong, Mr. District Attorney Dickson characterized the sending of a Latter-day Saint to the Penitentiary for six months and fining him \$300 and costs—the full penalty prescribed by the Edmunds law—as a species of cheap martyrdom. The gentleman inculcated a truth in his remark. He was right in characterizing the suffering which his victims are willing to endure, as martyrdom, but he is, as usual, a thousand miles wide of the mark in his estimate of the cost. The price is so high that none would accept of it if they could avoid it without doing violence to their conscience, or the existence of which Mr. Dickson is apparently not aware. He evidently cannot understand that the "still small voice" can have a lodgment in those whom he hates, and his course does not indicate that he carries much of the article in stock himself. One would look in vain for indications of it in his official conduct, when "Mormons" are the objects of his pursuit.

Of course the admission of the element of martyrdom in the position assumed by Latter-day Saints—or an overwhelming majority of them—in the present legal and judicial crusade against them and their religion, was inadvertent on Mr. Dickson's part. The price, however, was not of that character. The whole expression was intended as an insult, the source of which is, however, duly considered. Inadvertent or otherwise, the admission is correct. Here is Webster's definition of a "martyr":

(1) One who by his death bears witness to the truth of the Gospel; as Stephen was the first Christian martyr. (2) Hence, one who sacrifices his life, his station, or what is of great value to him, for the sake of principle, or to sustain a cause.

The definition of the word when used as an active verb, hits Mr. Dickson where he lives:

(1) To put to death for what one believes to be the truth; to sacrifice on account of faith or profession. (2) To murder; to destroy. (3) To persecute as a Martyr; to torment; to torture.

The cost of "Mormon" martyrdom is, in Mr. Dickson's eyes, exceedingly small, and therefore he goes beyond all precedent to make it as great as possible. But no one believes that he is a fit and proper person to estimate the price of the article. It would be absurd to place him in the position of a just judge on the subject. It would be a hideous mockery, for this reason: He is, according to Webster, practically the one—because the Judge appears to cut a minor figure in the matter—who persecutes, torments and tortures. Reason would suggest that those who are the victims of those processes are in a better position to judge of their character than he. While he only feels delight in the inflictions imposed, it is the victims who feel the pang; therefore they alone know their real nature.

Most, if not all, of those who are subjected to martyrdom, the cost of which Mr. Dickson has so ingeniously, not to say diabolically, increased, are men of probity, endowed with a high moral sense, and with deeply affectionate natures. In all civilized countries, in matters of jurisprudence, the general character of men charged with offenses has due weight in favor of the accused. In this manufacture of martyrs in which the District Attorney is engaged, such magnanimous considerations are to be thrown to the dogs.

Among barbarous tribes it is not uncommon for men to lacerate the feelings of victims in their power by also torturing before their eyes their wives and children. This mode of procedure has been adopted—in a more civilized way of course, so that the sensibilities of the age may not be too severely shocked—by Mr. Dickson. In all our remarks about him we have never intimated that he did not possess ability. Such an intimation would be untrue. His mental capacity is of the subtle sort; keen but by no means of a high order. When women and children are brought before him and are compelled to testify in this exquisitely cruel crusade against their husbands and fathers they are placed in his merciless crucible. If there is a tender and sacred feeling in the hearts of these helpless victims which he cannot reach by the poisoned dart of his cunning it is not known. He thrusts the venomous blade deep into the sacred recesses of the feelings of women and compels them, by the aid of the court, to tell what the victim would as soon die as disclose. As the tender hearts of women and children bleed, and the accused head of the family is fired with suppressed indignation and sorrow to see those he loves thus outraged before the vulgar gaze of the public, Mr. Dickson simply gloats. He who is thoughtful and sympathetic

can look upon such scenes, and then let his mind revert to what he has read in regard to the Spanish Inquisition and imagine, if he can, a parallel in some bigoted monk of those times who took pleasure in directing that the ankle-crusher be given an additional twist, that he might glut his iron soul over the shriek of a victim. These side-shows—greeted with jeers and hollow mockery from those who have neither conscience nor morality—should be counted as a part of the cost of martyrdom in these peculiar times.

It is cheap in Mr. Dickson's estimation for a man to be torn for six months from the midst of his domestic circle, and from every social amenity. To be a thousand times worse than dead for that length of time. To be compelled to lodge in a prison which is unfit for the lodgment of human beings, and to be under the necessity of associating with some of the most depraved men on earth. To be deprived of the privilege of supporting those dependent on the sufferer for maintenance, with the knowledge also that their hearts are sorrowful on account of his condition. This is what the District Attorney calls cheap martyrdom, and he goes outside of the provisions of the law to make it as costly in the matter of suffering as possible. He also goes outside of every humane sentiment.

The District Attorney is manufacturing for himself a little "cheap" notoriety. It is built on cruelty, whose product is inestimable human distress. These furnish the foundation, while so much material as magnanimity, mercy or justice can be found in the ephemeral superstructure. There being no enduring elements in the component parts it will soon be scattered by a breath. Eternal disappointment is the natural outcome of his course. Make a note of it.

TEACH HIM A LESSON.

Has District Attorney Dickson no friend candid enough to tell him how he appears in the eyes of decent people, when he takes advantage of his position to browbeat women and berate inexperienced witnesses? We have long since ceased to expect that the Court will protect the unfortunate people who are forced upon the witness stand against their will, to be interrogated on matters that ought to be kept strictly private. When the Judge becomes as blindly fanatic and insanely vindictive as the insulting and rabid attorney, it would be vain to hope for decent treatment of men and women dragged before them to be examined. In the courts of the old world, where some dignity is preserved, no member of the bar would retain the standing of a gentleman, or be permitted to play the bully toward witnesses without a reprimand and an intimation of further and more potent reprobation if the offense should be repeated.

Witnesses are not bound to look just to suit Mr. Dickson, nor has he any right as a lawyer or a government official to shout at them in a brutal manner, or act in any way to intimidate or insult them. Messrs. Sheeks and Young properly endeavored to shield Mrs. M. F. Higgins from Mr. Dickson's violence on Wednesday, but ought not to have been placed in the position requiring such interference; it was the duty of the Court to rebuke the overbearing and insolent limb of the law who so presumed upon his position.

In the Commissioner's so-called court, Attorney Dickson has similarly misbehaved himself. Of course no one expected that McKay would check the angry and blustering inquisitor. It suited his own style to a dot. But Judge Zane knows better, and we do not think if the lady so assailed had not been a "Mormon," he would have permitted such an unseemly display of temper and brutality to go unrebuked.

Mr. Dickson is just now clothed with a little temporary power. It will not last forever. It will not, in all probability, run to the same length as his future. Does he ever look forward to the effects of his present course? The ferocity, discourtesy and utter lack of regard for the feelings of helpless women and of the conduct expected of a gentleman, which he so often displays in his extreme anxiety to send as many "Mormons" as possible to prison, will not add to his reputation nor make his retrospections any the more pleasant, when in after years he reflects upon his vindictive career. A little moderation and the exercise of some good manners in court, would do him no harm and would not injure the cause in which he takes so much delight.

HON. RANDOLPH TUCKER.

It is pretty well understood that the Hon. Randolph Tucker, at present Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the U. S. House of Representatives, has declined a renomination in his district, because he anticipates receiving some lucrative appointment under the present Administration. He was strongly recommended for the Solicitor-Generalship but Mr. Jenks gained the position in spite of the Tucker influence.

It has been stated in some prominent papers that the gentleman has an eye to a place on the Supreme Bench of the United States. There is no vacancy at present, but there are prospects for an opening and his advisers think him fully qualified for the post. He is undoubtedly an experienced and talented lawyer, and comes of legal stock in a State which has produced some of our most eminent jurists.

But the latest report concerning the gentleman is that he is likely to be appointed Minister to Austria. This, it is said, would suit his family as well as himself, his wife and two daughters being desirous of spending a season or two abroad. Secretary Bayard is a fast friend of Mr. Tucker's and this appointment would be agreeable to him. It is stated that the Austrian authorities would receive the gentleman with pleasure. We have no doubt that the member from Virginia would do honor to his State and the country on a foreign mission, and that he is eminently qualified to represent the United States at home or abroad.

We have nothing against Mr. Tucker but his sanction to the desecration of Democratic and Constitutional principles, in the bill with which his name is connected concerning Utah, and can but marvel that so good a lawyer and so previously sound a Democrat could be led to father so monstrous a measure. We hope he will get the appointment and that he will gain more honor in it than he is likely to reap from the remarkable bill which came from his committee at the last session of Congress.

A VICTIM OF JUDICIAL
INCONSISTENCY.

The organ of the courts makes an attempt to ridicule the headline in the Deseret News that "W. W. Galbraith tried to follow the rulings of the District Courts but received the full penalty just the same." We maintain that the statement is strictly correct. The defendant, so it appeared in the evidence, after the original ruling of the court lived only with his third wife. When the ruling changed, he lived only with his first wife. But his second wife, whom he did not live with, has a child about two months old. He claimed that in all this conduct he followed the decisions of the courts as he understood them. Let us see how far he was wrong.

In the Musser case, certainly, and we believe in the Daynes case, Judge Zane in answer to questions of the defendant, said a man to keep the law must live with one wife only, and it did not matter which of his wives he selected so long as he did not live with the others. In the Cannon case, under the ruling of the same Judge, cohabitation consisted of living in the same house with more than one woman, and sexual intercourse cut no figure in the offense. The offer of the defendant to prove the absence of this element was refused by the Court. In the Snow case, the new theory of presumptive cohabitation with the first wife was sprung upon the defendant, and the doctrine for the first time declared, that if a man actually cohabited with but one wife, he was guilty under this construction of the Edmunds law of cohabitation with two wives, even if he hadn't seen the first during the time mentioned in the indictment.

Now, under these various rulings, was not Mr. Galbraith right in declaring that he had tried to live according to the rulings of the courts? He first followed Judge Zane's ruling, as others did in good faith and by mutual arrangement of their respective families. He next followed the later Powers decision, sustained by the Territorial Supreme Court. And he was rationally under the impression, in consequence of other rulings by Judge Zane, that if he did not "hold out to the world and live with" his second wife, his other relations with her would not count in court.

Judge Zane's clumsy and mendacious apologist may attempt to shield him from the moral and logical effects of his contradictory rulings and perversions of law and consistency, but it is a fact that cannot be controverted, that not only Mr. Galbraith, but many others have rendered themselves liable to fine and imprisonment, under the latest constructions of the law, in consequence of following the varied and conflicting interpretations of the Utah courts on the third section of the Edmunds act.

And Judge Zane, whose kaleidoscopic course has caused them to be placed in this unfortunate position, takes no account of his own part in the dilemma, but with a vindictiveness only equalled by that of the Attorney whose dictum he appears to be fearful of opposing, inflicts on these victims of his contradictions the same penalties as though they had made no attempt to conform to "the law as construed by the courts." Further comment would be superfluous.

The editor of the Corsicans, Tex. Observer, Mr. G. P. Miller, had a severe attack of rheumatism in his left knee, which became so swollen and painful that he could not walk up the stairs. He writes that after a few applications of St. Jacobs Oil, the pain entirely disappeared, and the knee assumed its normal proportions.