

untrammelled choice of the majority of the convention.

Notwithstanding this declaration, the same unprincipled person in the same disreputable sheet will, in a short time, repeat the statement that "the News does not deny" this; that "the News admits" so and so, and, very likely, so garble and misquote our words as to convey the exact opposite of what we affirm.

There have been times in the history of Utah when the leading men in the Church had much to say in the affairs of the Territory. They had votes and they were prominent in all affairs that pertained to the interest of the people. Their advice was sought for and given, and was usually valued and acted upon. Sometimes it was not asked, and at others was not followed when solicited and tendered. The only consequences that followed the latter course were the results of a mistake in despising wise counsel and the regret that experience brought as the fruit of the folly.

The active and prominent men who led out in secular affairs, however, did so as American citizens, exercising political freedom and such influence as their known judgment and experience had gained for them in the community. They had the right to do this and the people recognized it, and when they were led by it they yielded from choice and not from compulsion.

The "Mormon" people know that whoever says they are coerced in any manner or form in the exercise of the elective franchise, is either greatly mistaken or willfully lies. The writer of the sentences that precede this article is, in our firm belief, not mistaken but states the falsehoods knowingly and intentionally, with malice prepense and aforethought.

But suppose a citizen or any number of citizens, should desire to know the opinion or to ask the advice of some individual or individuals thoroughly acquainted with the whole public situation? Why should there be any bar to the fruition of this desire because the opinion or advice relate to politics, and the gentlemen consulted are officials in the same Church as the inquirers? Are American citizens under any obligation legal, moral or social, to get their counsel from professional politicians? Is a whisky soaked, profane and venal trickster, of neces-

sity a better counselor for sober and God-fearing citizens than an experienced, temperate, devout and circumspect man who occupies a prominent ecclesiastical position?

We notice that the leaders of the so-called "Liberal" party arrogate to themselves far more authority, assume larger dictatorial powers, and require more implicit compliance with their behests than can be alleged against the leaders of the People's Party of would be tamely submitted to by its members. But that is supposed to be all right because, no matter what may be the character or reputation of those "Liberal" manipulators, they are not churchmen. This to us is the very acme of political absurdity. Coercion in any form would be quite as distasteful to us from a disreputable political boss, as from an arrogant and dictatorial but sincere ecclesiast.

Our position is this. Citizens should be free as to the ballot. Conventions should be free as to their choice. All should be free as to seeking advice and endeavoring to reach the wisest conclusions. No man should be shut out from any of the rights, privileges and immunities of citizenship because of his membership or office in any church. Compulsion, whether from secular or ecclesiastical sources, is equally irksome and improper. And those who attempt to dictate where citizens shall or shall not seek for political advice, are as tyrannous and contemptible as the imaginary power against which they declaim. "Mormonism" is opposed to compulsion, the "Mormon" Church neither claims nor exercises political control.

ANTI-"MORMON" REASONING (?).

"THERE are men in this city who belong to Christian churches. They are devout religionists. The News certainly would not favor admitting them into a priesthood meeting, on the ground that they were Christians, that they believed in redemption through the Savior, that their lives were above reproach and had been for years. The News would answer: 'Very well, but you do not believe in our Prophet. You could not conscientiously take the obligations that a Mormon has to take to belong to our institution, and hence you have no right to a voice in its control.' In the same way Americans say that while Mormons are good men, while their lives are honest lives, while there is complaint against them as peaceable citizens, there is no hardship in denying them a part in the government of this country because they are not of it."

The foregoing mess of sophistry and nonsense is taken from the only paper which makes this kind of

babulum a staple. The notion it contains has been presented again and again yet is almost too weak to bear the breath of a passing notice. Certainly the DESERET NEWS would not favor admitting to a Priesthood meeting members of the various Christian churches because they were Christians. But the objection would *not* be on the ground that they had not taken certain "obligations." A Priesthood meeting would be composed of persons holding the Priesthood. Persons not of that class would not be admitted, and unless they were without common sense or common propriety, they would not ask to be admitted.

A "Mormon" would not expect to intrude into a conclave of Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist or other sectarian ministers, no matter what position he might hold in his own Church. A church meeting of any denomination not open to the general public, would be exclusive of all but church members. The question of their Christian character or irreproachable lives would not enter into the matter at all. There is no reason why the "Mormon" Church should form an exception to this universal rule.

But what has this to do with the denial of the franchise to "good men" of "honest lives" against whom "there is no complaint" as "peaceable citizens," simply because they belong to the "Mormon" Church? What relation has one of these propositions to the other?

There may be fanatics in the "Mormon" Church. There are some in all churches. But there is no fanatic anywhere who is equal to these anti-"Mormon" bigots. Their hatred of everything "Mormon" not only makes them savage and untruthful but idiotic and nonsensical.

Because a Catholic or Methodist of good character and devout faith would not be admitted to a "Mormon" Priesthood meeting, therefore a "Mormon" of honest life, a good man and a peaceable citizen, ought not to exercise the elective franchise and there is "no hardship in denying" it to him. That is *Tribune* logic. It has been reiterated for some years as profound reasoning and acute argument!

If no better excuse than this can be offered for the infamy contemplated in the bills which the "Liberals" of this Territory have framed and fostered and now urge on their passage, they ought to be gathered in bundles and burned, and their ashes cast into the nearest cesspool. Give the writer of such rubbish some bromide, tie a wet cloth around his brow and put him to bed or send him to Provo!