

EDITORIALS.

WHAT THE "WATCHMAN" SAYS.

"THERE is a quickened interest in all parts of the country in regard to the growing power of Mormonism in our Western Territories. It is rapidly extending in its demoralizing influence, especially in Colorado and Idaho, where it claims to hold the balance of political power. In Utah there are thousands of children growing up with no other education than what the Mormon schools furnish, and where they use an alphabet exclusively their own, so that the children are unable to read books in the English language. They claim that the polygamic relation is not the same as civil and Christian marriage, and that a State law imposing penalty upon bigamy or polygamy would not touch them, who have a religious system of their own. Every enterprise that is started is made subservient to the Mormon Church as far as possible, and must pay one-tenth of its earnings into the treasury of the church. The available revenues are thus very large, amounting to several millions yearly, and furnishing abundant resources for the propagation of the faith and the sustaining of its interests. It is a great political power thoroughly hostile to our Government. Its religion is only a cloak to cover its nefarious practices and its political aspirations."

The above is taken from the *Watchman*, a religious paper published in Boston. We need not inform our Utah readers that the article is a tissue of falsehoods. But people at a distance, who are not acquainted with affairs in this Territory, seeing such statements in an organ of "Christian" orthodoxy, may take it for granted that they must be true or such a respectable and pious paper would not make them in so unqualified a manner.

We will briefly refer to these assertions in their order. "Mormonism" does not claim to hold the balance of political power in Colorado, Idaho, or any of the Territories named. There are members of our Church in those Territories, and such of them as are citizens of the United States have the same political rights as other citizens, no more. And the "demoralizing influence" they exercise consists of settling upon the soil and bringing it into cultivation, building up neat little villages and towns, living in order, peace, sobriety and industry, erecting school-houses and places of public worship, minding their own business and interfering with no one. Everybody who tells the truth is constrained to acknowledge that they are valuable colonizers and a desirable addition to the population. And, let the *Watchman* write it down, they uphold and observe the laws of the Territories or States wherein they reside—the marriage laws included—and in this respect as in others are an example to most of the people who profess to be "Christians."

In Utah, the children educated in the "Mormon" schools use the same kind of books that are in vogue throughout the country. For instance, the "National" readers and "Elementary" spellers (in some schools the "Pacific Coast" series), Ray's arithmetic, Cornell's and Monteith's geographies, Pinnock's Grammar, Steele's Philosophy, Peck's Ganot's Physics, Hamill's Elocution, and other books in the English language. The *Watchman* should be careful when fathering the falsehoods that are in circulation about the "Mormons," and while eager to aid in passing them round, would do better to state its authority for the rumors than to assert them on its own responsibility. The foundation for the nonsense, no doubt, was the aid given to the reform spelling movement in Utah by the arrangement of the Deseret Alphabet—a modification of Pitman's phonotypy, which was designed to facilitate the study of spelling, but which has not lately been in use in our schools. It was not intended to supersede the common alphabet, but was learned by some of our children in connection with the old form.

What we are said to claim about our marriage system is stated by the *Watchman* in a singular manner, and is so foolish as to need no comment.

As to the tithing of every business enterprise, we beg to inform the *Watchman* and other violators of the ninth commandment, that no

one is in such bondage here that he must pay one-tenth or anything else into the "Mormon" Church. Our Church members pay tithes as a religious duty, and it is altogether an ecclesiastical affair, in which there is no subservience, and enterprises of a business character are carried on as in other parts of the country. The revenues arising from the tithing are not millions annually, nor a half of one million, and they are expended for the general benefit of the Church, the support of the poor, the erection of temples and other edifices, and various Church uses, and the leaders of our Church are under exactly the same obligations as others to contribute their tenth. Those who assert that these gentlemen appropriate the funds for their own emolument or for any ulterior purpose, simply talk about that of which they know nothing, or they lie—under as great a mistake or spirit of calumny as the *Watchman* does. Further, this is a matter that belongs to the people who pay their tithing and it is no one's business but theirs how much it amounts to or what is done with it.

The statement that our Church is hostile to the Government is an oft-repeated but stupid and altogether groundless untruth. There is not the slightest excuse for it. Neither in sentiment nor in act has this Church placed itself in political hostility to the Government. The Church as an organization, is not a political power. Its members have political rights in common with other people. They claim nothing more. They interfere with the rights and privileges of no political party, and seek to deprive no person of the exercise of any political prerogative. But on the other hand, such pious papers as the *Watchman* aim to deprive us of our political rights and to relegate us to a condition of serfdom. Why? Just because we have a different religion from the dogmas and clashing creeds of apostate Christendom, of which the *Watchman* is a representative.

This is not the first time that the Bostonian exponent of orthodoxy has assailed the "Mormons" with bitterness and mendacity. And while we have had occasion to notice its falsehood and anti-Christian spirit, we have never had the pleasure of seeing it retract when its errors or calumnies have been refuted. There is no enemy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints so utterly unjust and untruthful in assailing us and our faith, as the acknowledged exponents of modern spurious "Christianity."

MEXICAN MISSION.

CONFERENCE ON MOUNT POPOCATEPETL.

On Monday morning, April 4th, at 7 o'clock, Elders Moses Thatcher, James Z. Stewart, Feramor L. Young and three native brethren, left the City of Mexico and proceeded by the Morelos Railway, a distance of about 40 miles, to Ozumba, reaching which we proceeded to the house of Brother Lino Zarate, whom we had baptized on Jan. 30th of the present year. He and his wife received us kindly, and after partaking of refreshments, we spent the afternoon in walking through the fields and viewing the surrounding country from a beautiful little timber-clad mountain which rises out of the valley immediately west of the orchard-surrounded village of Chimal, located perhaps a mile and a half southwest from Ozumba. Among the thick pine trees, the leaves of which carpeted the ground before leaving the mountain, Bro. Lino Zarate being with us, we each in turn prayed to the Lord to prosper us on our contemplated journey on Mount Popocatepetl, whither we desired to go to hold Conference and otherwise worship the God of Israel.

Leaving Ozumba at 6 a. m. April 5th, we walked to Aclautla, a distance of about 12 miles, and partook of a light breakfast, while one of our brethren secured a horse to carry our provisions and bedding. At 8 o'clock a. m. we left the latter place for the mountain, being nine in number, seven of whom were members of the church. We had two horses, one of which was for use in case any of the party should fail in performing the journey. At 3 p. m., after having traveled nine hours, save two brief stoppages, we reached the upper edge of the timber lines, fifteen or sixteen miles from Ozumba. The length of time required in making this distance can be understood when we explain that we had reached a point probably between 11,000 and 12,000 feet above the sea; the

last ten miles being much like the steep drag roads in Utah, over which wagons are never hauled. Our party were all in good spirits though considerably exhausted, and having rested a short time, huge quantities of pine wood were speedily piled up for our night camp fires. We were no longer in a tropical clime, for the chilling winds came down upon us from the ice-clad rocks and frozen snow, extending downward more than 3,000 feet from the summit of the grandest, and second highest mountain on the North American Continent, for Popocatepetl (the Aztec name for smoking mountain), is 17,700 feet above sea level.

Having prepared and eaten our frugal meal, we built a regular old-fashioned camp fire, around which we closely gathered, and held a short and interesting meeting, which was opened with prayer by Elder Thatcher.

Elder Stewart explained the object of the journey to be, as above mentioned, and trusted that each of the brethren would feel it a great privilege to serve the Lord in such a pure and holy place, as we must feel this to be, and urged all to be prayerful that we might serve the Lord acceptably.

Elder Silviano Artiaga (native Elder) spoke of the hope which gladdened his heart, regarding the deliverance of his race and people from bondage, superstition and ignorance, if they would receive the truth brought and freely offered, without money or price, by the servants of God. Yet expressed fear that many would stumble over, and pass by as valueless, the priceless treasure of eternal salvation, loving and hoping for the things of the world rather than the things of God. Said that a number who had joined the Church plainly indicated by their works that they desired these things more than the truth.

Brother Ventura Pais expressed a desire to increase in faith and good works, and said it was a pleasure and privilege to be with his brethren, whose company he appreciated and enjoyed.

Elder Thatcher explained how happy and great the forefathers of the Lamanites were, when they rejoiced with the Nephite people in serving the God of their ancestors. Said that the present deplorable condition of blindness, misery and bondage of the Mexican people (referring to the remnants of Israel) was the result of disobedience—the killing of prophets and rejection of God and His commandments by their progenitors 15 centuries ago. As servants of God, we come to this people, offering the means of deliverance and of salvation; but obedience to the laws of the Almighty is alone the medium through which they can be made pure, happy and free. If the remnants of Israel reject this, the only means of escape, as did their fathers, they must remain in their present wretched condition of servitude, bowing down to strange gods, until they were willing to repent and turn to God with full purpose of heart. Said those who love the truth will manifest it by their works; having received the light, they will let it shine, while warning their neighbors. Our hearts have been heavy and our souls have mourned over the indifference and wickedness and abominable practices of this people, and yet we have pitied them, knowing that they have been oppressed and taught all manner of false doctrine, to the corruption of their hearts, the darkening of their minds and the pollution of their souls. We come upon this mountain, far above the pollutions and abominable soul-destroying practices which darken the valleys below, that we may, surrounded with the sweet air of heaven and upon sacred undefiled ground, pour out our souls' earnest desires in prayer for the people, that light, joy, peace, happiness and the freedom of the gospel may come to them.

Meeting dismissed with prayer by Brother Fernando Lara.

The night became intensely cold, owing to which we slept but little, for our bedding was not abundant. The howling of mountain lions around our camp kept us from being lonely most of the night.

On the morning of April 6th we were astir at 4 o'clock and having eaten breakfast and had prayers, we commenced at 5 a. m. to climb the mountain. The first hour was occupied in walking through heavy black sand and burnt cinders not unlike the formations at Soda Springs, I. T. Three hours hard work brought us to the first ledge of reddish rock which glistened like burnished pottery. We were ascending on the southwest side and

had reached at this point an altitude of probably not less than 14,000 feet, and notwithstanding the great exertion required in climbing the steep ascent we were obliged to retain our coats, for the air seemingly became thinner and colder at each step, and it becoming evident that it would be unwise for some of the party to proceed higher, we concluded to hold our conference here.

Elder Stewart prayed and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us, causing our hearts to rejoice. Elder Artiaga followed by his own request, praying most earnestly while the tears rolled down his cheeks, that God would have pity upon his people, and deliver his race from the darkness that blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts. There were nine persons composing the gathering, eight in the Church and one believer, the other young man having been left to watch camp. Elder Stewart made some remarks pertinent to the occasion, explaining that this day we honor and commemorate the 51st anniversary of the organization of the Church; and then proceeded, by request, to present the Presidency, John Taylor, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith. They were each by vote unanimously sustained in their high and holy calling. The eleven Apostles, with Wilford Woodruff as their President, were sustained in like manner, and so were all the General Authorities of the Church as sustained at the General Conference held in Salt Lake City, October, 1880.

Moses Thatcher was sustained as President of the Mexican Mission, and J. Z. Stewart and F. L. Young as Elders in the mission to assist him. On motion it was voted to ordain Bro. Lino Zarate an Elder, which was done, Elder Thatcher pronouncing the ceremony of ordination. Benediction by Elder Young and the Conference adjourned.

Elders Thatcher and Young and Brother Pais and our young believer then continued the ascent two hours longer, reaching the base of the second ledge on which stands what is called Fraile (Friar), a high sharp point of rock which rises abruptly about 100 feet above the ledge. We had now reached a point probably not less than 15,500 feet above the sea, and possibly even higher, for we were far above the perpetual snow line as indicated on the north and west sides. The intense cold, the lightness of the air, and the peculiar sensations produced, admonished us that it would not be wisdom to go higher. So crowding close up to the hard, crusted snow, seeking protection under the sharp cliff, from the piercing wind, we read certain passages in the Book of Mormon, regarding the Lamanites and the promises made, through the ancient prophets, to the remnants in the latter days, when the gospel should come to them from the Gentiles.

Then kneeling before the Lord, Elder Thatcher besought the God of Abraham to whom the promise was made, to remember the descendants of Joseph and fulfil the predictions recorded in the Book of Mormon, regarding the remnants of his seed in this land. He plead with God to remove the scales of darkness from their eyes, to open their ears and soften their hearts that they might see, hear and understand. He prayed that the mountain might be sacred to the Lord, a mighty monument of honor and glory to Himself, and that His servants might go from hence with increased faith and power to do good; that the great rocks towering above us might be considered an altar upon which we come to pour out to Him the devotion of our souls and the supplication of our hearts; that the whole land wherever the Lamanites dwell might be dedicated and preserved unto the Lord in peace, until they might hear the voice of the true Shepherd and cease to follow strangers; that they might receive the truth with glad hearts and help to build up the Center City of Zion, while, with songs of joy they flourish upon the mountains and rejoice upon the hills of their everlasting inheritance, drawing water out of the wells of salvation forever, because God shall cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and lay low the haughtiness of the terrible ones, breaking the staff of the wicked and placing the sceptre in the hands of the righteous and just.

Elder Young followed in prayer, beseeching the Lord to remember in mercy all God's people, and to give them power to overcome all things; that the young may follow the ways

of righteousness, resist temptation and know God.

We now descended the mountain, proceeding some distance with great care, for the volcanic flow had formed in many places a hard crust, only slightly covered with burnt rock and cinders, and being very steep, should one start to slide or roll, he would hardly be able to stop, until reaching the sand thousands of feet below. We reached camp in one hour; we were nearly five in going up. After eating a lunch we started for Ozumba, walking there in five hours, thus covering the distance in a little more than half the time it required to go up. Remained at Ozumba all night and reached this city at 10 a. m. next day, very sore and tired, but feeling to rejoice exceedingly in our trip, and because of the favors and blessings of God bestowed upon us during our absence.

A COMMON ERROR REFUTED.

The Philadelphia *American* of April 30, devotes considerable space to Hon. George Q. Cannon's article in the *North American Review* and falls into the error that the article is intended chiefly as a defense of polygamy. Even a cursory examination will show that it embraces a variety of subjects, and presents an array of facts and arguments covering the ground of the chief popular objections to the people of Utah, and the supposed evils existing among them. It is a protest against the policy of proscription and violence which seems to be the favorite method with politicians and public men of different professions for solving what is called the "Mormon problem."

The *American* is also greatly in error in the idea that polygamy is "the sole point of controversy" between "Mormons" and their adversaries. That paper, in common with others, treats "Mormonism" as polygamy and vice versa, while the truth is that the marriage part of our creed and practice is only a part. It is but one tenet among a great number wherein we differ from the orthodox religious systems. The *American* says:

"Mr. Cannon very well knows that, if it were not for plural marriage as a Mormon tenet of faith, his fellow-saints never would have been persecuted. Therefore, no argument, no plea in abatement, is of any avail, which does not recognize the fact that polygamy is the sole offence of the Mormon people."

This shows that the *American* is neither familiar with the history of the latter-day Saints nor acquainted with their principles. Plural marriage was not a doctrine of the Church during any of the great persecutions through which it has passed. Revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1843, it was not proclaimed to and accepted by the Church as a body until 1852. The horrors of Missouri, the martyrdom at Carthage, the expulsion from Illinois were not even claimed by our persecutors to have been incited by our adoption of polygamy. That is comparatively a new "cry." And, we would like the *American* and all who say "polygamy is the sole offence of the 'Mormons'" to understand, that since the adoption of plural marriage by our Church, we have not suffered anything in the shape of violence to be compared with the terrible ordeals through which our people passed before that doctrine was made part of our creed.

In Missouri where "Mormon" houses were burned, cattle shot down, the leaders imprisoned, children brained, men whipped and murdered—some cut to pieces, women violated, and the whole people driven from county to county and finally out of the State, it was not alleged that their offence was polygamy. There was no reason for such a charge. It was not pretended as an excuse for these outrages. Search the records of the State. Read the history of those awful times from the pens of "Mormons" and anti-"Mormons," and it will be found that the crimes of the Latter-day Saints were not belief in present revelation, organization under prophets and bishops, claim to the supernatural gifts of the spirit, and union in voting at the polls. Polygamy cut no figure in the shameful proceedings. It was nothing more nor less than religious persecution blended with political hatred. We do not intend here to comment on the merits of