

did outfit and took with him to Winter Quarters four families besides his own. Signed, Mrs. Sarah A. Thurston Grant, now of Oakley, Idaho; Mrs. Julia K. Thurston Arthurs, of Scofield, Emery county, Utah; Mrs. Caroline R. Thurston Fry, of Ogden City, 349 Eighteenth street; Mrs. Cordelia Thurston Smith, of Ogden City, 2335 Quinoy.

ABOUT SECRET ORDERS.

A Springville correspondent sends to the NEWS the following:

Will you kindly tell me if the authorities of our Church forbid the union of members with secret orders, as the [naming a society] for instance. Please state if it is forbidden or only advised not to join, or if they have no interest in the matter. In the event of their objecting, kindly tell me the reasons for the same. D. P. F.

So far as any attitude the authorities of the Church assume upon any matter, that is made known to the members of the Church by the direct expression of these officers, either in their discourses, over their own signatures in published addresses or notices, or through through the various presiding authorities to whom it is communicated to be delivered to the Saints. Any member of the Church desiring to know the attitude of any Church authorities, local or general, as such, may ascertain it by direct application to the officer whose views he wishes to obtain. All members of the Church have free access to all Church authorities in their particular jurisdiction.

So far as relates to the policy of members of the Church joining secret societies, the NEWS can state this, from the public expressions of the highest authorities in the Church and from the standards of Church doctrine: That members of the Church are forbidden to join secret oath-bound societies, or any organization that comes under the heading of secret combinations as described in the Book of Mormon. The reason for being thus forbidden is because the Lord condemns such organizations, hence no Church member who possesses the spirit of his religion will desire to unite with them. The principle relating to these secret oath-bound organizations is set forth clearly in many places in the Book of Mormon; for instance, in the eighth chapter of the Book of Ether it is recorded that a certain individual "did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old, who also sought power;" and it is further said:

And it came to pass that they formed a secret combination, even as they of old; which combination is most abominable and wicked above all, in the sight of God; for the Lord worketh not in secret combinations, neither doth He will that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it, from the beginning of man.

The Prophet Moroni goes on to describe the purposes of such secret combinations as are referred to, says that they had caused the destruction of the Nephites and their predecessors, and predicts that any people or nation which should uphold those organizations should be destroyed, since the design of such societies, as shown in their effect, is to overthrow freedom among mankind. Hence the care with which every lover of freedom

should avoid any friendly association with such secret combinations.

It is pointed out that there are other secret orders which do not partake of the objectionable characteristics of those described in the Book of Mormon. Our correspondent mentions a society, but we do not publish the name, since, knowing nothing of the interior workings of the order, we do not wish even by implication to cast any stigma upon it, or upon any society that may be purely benevolent in character. We might remark that the badge of secret oaths that cover ulterior designs is not essential to benevolent societies; yet every organization has a right to keep its lawful society business from the gaze of the public if it so desires, and only a Paul Pry disposition would seek to learn of affairs with which it has no more concern than with the family matters of other people.

But it is advised that Church members refrain from secret orders generally, for the reason that the Church doctrines and organization comprehend all that is necessary for its members. If there are developments in the way of the association of individuals in societies that have not been reached as yet, there is ample room for them within the Church; hence there is no occasion to go outside, and to do so is to ignore the opportunities provided in the Church. The Gospel being perfect, embraces all that is good; and the mission of the Church in this age is to teach the fulness of the Gospel.

The separation in effect and meaning which our correspondent seems to make between "forbidding" and "advising" is a distinction without a difference. The "forbidding" and "advising" referred to are based upon the same foundation—the law of God. The presumption that a thing may be forbidden, and because this comes in the shape of a direct order a disregard of it would be an offense, yet at the same time authoritative advice may be ignored because in that form it is less liable to be right, is a grave mistake. The order and the advice emanate from the same source, and are equal in effect so far as their righteousness is concerned. And no Saint entitled to full fellowship will proceed in a course that is either forbidden or advised against by the Church authorities acting in their official capacity in directing the affairs of the Church.

PROSPECTIVE FLOODS.

An enormous quantity of snow has fallen this winter in the mountains east of this city, and it is highly probable that lands lying in the southwestern portion of the corporate limits will be flooded when the season for high water arrives. The present prospect is that considerable damage will result.

The discussion of this subject which occurred in the City Council last evening was opportune, and that body ought to take prompt measures to avert the threatened danger.

It will be observed from the report of the City Council's proceedings that City Engineer Kelsey recommended that a canal be dug from Eighth South street northward on Eighth West to First South, thence west one block to Ninth West, and thence north along the last named street to Ninth

North, which would take it to Hot Springs lake; or at least a drain ditch from First South to Ninth North. Councilman Allen introduced a resolution favoring the latter scheme. Mainly owing to a legal question as to whether the Council had a right to order the canal dug without action by the board of public works, the matter was referred to a committee with instructions to report at the next meeting of the Council.

The NEWS announces itself as squarely opposed to the shorter ditch project, which is intended to benefit only the people north of Third South street, while the greater danger lies to the south of that line. The reason for our objection is that the proposition is an unfair discrimination against the people south of Third South street. What is the reason for abandoning the residents of the whole southwest of the city, from Third South to the city limits, to the greater danger and injury, and relieving only those to the north? We do not believe the latter would endorse the unfairness to their southern neighbors. The urgent necessity of the situation is that the entire southwestern part of the city be protected from high water during the next two months.

The fatuity of some of the things that were done by the City Council during the "boom" is well illustrated in connection with the canal question. Six years ago, at the instance of real estate speculators, the Council caused to be filled up a canal which exactly paralleled the route recommended by the city engineer, and which lay one block east of that route, its entire length. Had not that canal been destroyed it would have served the purpose of the one proposed, in every respect.

Other canals, in the south and west parts of the city, in the same spirit of fatuity, and against the warnings and expostulations of property owners, at whose expense they were originally constructed, have been filled up by order of the City Council. These canals were intended by those who dug them to act as a protection against floods; and it is a serious question if the municipality is not liable for the damage that may result from their destruction.

We repeat, the City Council should act promptly in this matter; so indeed should the county commissioners. Drainage from the southwest part of the city should be provided in time to meet the emergencies of the high water season, which is very close. Even now the water is nearer the surface of the soil in that region than it has been for many years, showing that when spring arrives there can be little or no drainage by percolation, and that extensive districts are likely to be totally submerged unless the surplus waters are carried off by suitable channels.

Presumably the county would have enlarged and extended to the lake the surplus canal, had it not been for difficulties encountered in connection with rights of way. This canal would be the best protection against floods that could be provided, at reasonable cost, for the lower part of the city, and every obstacle in the way of its completion to the lake, and of its enlargement to a sufficient capacity, should be removed as soon as possible.