

perty of the church and of the emigration fund contributed by the people have been confiscated, but they now desire to be commissioned as missionaries to convert the Mormons from their belief, which is so wicked in their eyes that they propose to put them on a judicial rack with some new and sharp spikes in it if they do not renounce their faith.

The *Advertiser*, commenting editorially on this matter, says:

The Government has nothing to do with Mormonism as a religious creed; its duties are limited to the suppression of polygamy. The Idaho law that a Mormon believer cannot vote, even though he takes oath that he never has practiced and never will practice polygamy, is contrary to the spirit of our institutions and to the interpretation which the Supreme Court of the United States has placed upon the guarantee of religious liberty in our federal Constitution. The proposal of the Utah Commission that a national law to the effect should be enacted is pre-eminently a foolish one. The only effect of such an enactment would be to strengthen Mormonism, by making martyrs and embittering the Mormon population. \* \* \* The measures already employed for its suppression are drastic enough. They remind one indeed of the attitude of the English missionaries in the east who refuse to baptise converts unless they rid themselves of their former wives—an attitude which in one case at least (vouched for by Bishop Selwyn) resulted in a New Zealand chief's fitting himself for this sacrament by eating eight of his wives out of the nine. We cannot expect or indeed desire that all polygamists should be so zealous as this to conform with the requirements of our civilization. The sensible thing for the United States to do is to let Mormonism die a natural death, instead of attempting to strangle it outright.

The San Francisco *Alta* comments on the report of the Commission in this wise:

There is no demonstrable evidence of an increase in polygamy. The majority of the Commission insinuates that it still flourishes, but confesses its inability to prove it. A Mormon polygamist is not discharged from responsibility for the support of his plural wives and their children, and it is hardly possible that this obligation should leave the officers of the law without evidence of the existence of such families. The whole issue is the most delicate that our Government has ever been called upon to handle. Outsiders have refused to treat polygamy as a religious ordinance, made to sincere believers in a future life to appear as a means of grace, and to warrant a hope of glory. If those who practice it were a lot of lustful hypocrites, a

colony of satyrs, the treatment of the case would be different and much easier. But the institution has been allowed to exist for more than forty years. It has been fortified behind imposing ritual ceremonies; it has been divested of the flesh and clad in the spirit for more than a generation. Therefore it requires philosophic study and treatment. The new laws asked for contemplate the infliction of what will be regarded as ignominy upon those who are convicted of this offense. To imprisonment is to be added hard labor, and as imprisonment now overtakes more old men than young, there will be presented to the Mormon community the spectacle of its patriarchs imprisoned and driven to labor under the guns of keepers. The more sincere the Mormons are the more revolting will the sight appear to them, and they will point to it as persecution for the sake of religion. It is surprising that under the circumstances the whole matter has not been brought to a conference between the Mormon leaders and representatives of the government. So far they have appeared as two hostile camps, with no exchange except the appearance of officers with Federal writs to take members of one party to prison. We seem to have forgotten that the Mormons are perhaps as incapable of subjection by force as were the Huguenots and Puritans. They use the same arguments and make the same appeals to conscience and religious duty, and it is the history of man that such appeals have always profoundly moved him. It is well to think of this before we add to the volume of legislation upon the subject statutes that lead to the sword as the final agent of ridding the country of a religious custom by the extirpation of a people.

The subjoined extracts are taken from an editorial in the Auburn, New York, *Dispatch*:

It is truly to be hoped that if there is a spirit of intolerance towards Mormonism, merely as a religion, in this country, that spirit may be sternly discouraged. This country has with the greatest diversity of races the greatest diversity of religions under the sun. The surest pledge of the perpetuity of American republican institutions must lie in the more complete assimilation of the different races, institutions, habits of thought, etc., which are exhibited in the face of our society. \* \* \*

Mormonism is undoubtedly spreading, and in a certain sense it is aggressive. It is beyond all doubt dangerous in its tendencies, even if polygamy be abolished. But the policy of the Government in dealing with it ought to be shaped very carefully, so that the cry of religious discrimination cannot be justly raised. It was the conflict of sects which overthrew England's

dream of a republic in the days of Cromwell and paved the way for the restoration of a monarchy which under a modified form still survives.

Our closing quotation is from an editorial in the Sacramento *Record-Union* which has always been a strong anti-Mormon paper:

"The Utah Commission reports to the Federal Government that in its opinion Congress should pass laws severely punishing women who enter into the polygamous relation, as such infliction would lessen their zeal. This is gross error. The history of all time proves that the most faithful fanatics of superstition, the most devoting and self-sacrificing of religionists are women. If it is true, as the Commission recites, many Mormons accept polygamy not from choice, but because they are taught, and so believe that it is an essential of their faith, and we believe it to be true, then the punishment of Mormon women for adherence to this tenet of their faith would simply strengthen them in it. They would burn at the stake before they would recant, and suffer in dungeon cells rather than disobey the command to be "sealed" to the brethren of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It has been our fortune to know many of these people and to live for a time in their midst, and we do not hesitate to aver that there are no devotees on earth more courageous, faithful and ready to suffer martyrdom for their belief than the sincere Mormon women—the few insincere do not enter into the polygamic state, at least very rarely. To attach penalties to these misguided women and attain them of crime would not serve to check the evil, but rather to aggravate it."

#### TO ALL VOTING CITIZENS.

WE clip from the Salt Lake *Herald* of October 19th, an epitome of the instructions and recommendations of the Utah Commission, to the registration officers appointed for the municipal election to be held on the second Monday in February, 1890. It will be found in another column. There is only one point in the recommendations of the Commission that we think necessary to add to the epitome, and that is the form of the oath to which each voter is required to subscribe. It is as follows:

TERRITORY OF UTAH,  
County of Salt Lake. }

I, .....  
being duly sworn [or affirmed] depose and say that I am over twenty-one years of age, that I have resided in the Territory of Utah for six months last past, and in this precinct for one month immediately preceding the date hereof; that I am a native-born [or naturalized, as the case may be] citizen of the United States; that my full