

citizenship rather than give up this so-called "divine principle" and sacred right. No spirit of inspiration came upon the minds of their spiritual advisers, to suspend the operation of the practice which was causing all this suffering. No signs of submission to the laws of the land, no reverence for the authority of the government were visible, but in all Utah those laws were denounced as wicked and unconstitutional and their enforcement as persecutions.

At last, in the adjoining Territory of IDAHO,

the legislature passed a measure practically disfranchising all persons who gave adhesion to the Mormon Church. Later, the same, or a similar provision was incorporated into the Constitution under which Idaho was admitted into the Union as a State.

Cases were litigated under one or both of these provisions of disfranchisement, which in due course of time reached the Supreme Court of the United States, where the acts of disfranchisement were held to be valid, and not in conflict with any provision of the Constitution of the United States.

Very soon after this decision of the Supreme court bills were simultaneously introduced in Congress, one in the Senate by Senator Cullom of Illinois, and the other in the House by Representative Struble of Iowa, embodying similar provisions for the disfranchisement of all adhering to such ideas and teachings in any of the Territories of the United States. These bills were considered respectively by the committees on Territories of both houses, and each reported on favorably, and their passage recommended.

Shortly after these reports were made, and when the passage of such a measure was reduced almost to an absolute certainty, the divine impulse began to stir the heart of the First Presidency of the Church, with the result that "inspiration" brought forth the celebrated

MANIFESTO

of September, 1890, wherein this Commission was made the scapegoat for the denunciation of the Church hierarchy, the better to conceal their bitterness towards the government.

That agency of the government which had been most active, persistent and instrumental in exposing the iniquities of its practices, and invoking the powers of the government for their suppression, was selected as the butt for the concentrated wrath of the Church, rather than the government which had created the agency.

Delegate Caine said in Congress that "a great deal of credit had been claimed for the Utah Commission for the wonderful service it had rendered the country by the suppression of polygamy in Utah. Let me ask what these commissioners have done in that regard?"

* * * I fail to see wherein the Commission can claim any credit for the suppression of polygamy."

Perhaps others can read history to better advantage than he. For thirty-five years polygamy flourished in Utah, and for twenty years of that time in defiance of the penal laws of the land.

THE COMMISSION

was organized, and in eight years time the steady and inflexible enforcement

of the laws, aided, perhaps, by fear of further disfranchisement, compelled the authorities of the Church to abandon their cherished doctrine and openly declare their willingness to obey the laws, and the Utah Commission was the only agency referred to as the reason for issuing the "inspired" manifesto.

Where, before, in the history of the world has been recorded any instance of a powerful church with numerous and devoted followers, giving up an article of faith in their creed, given to them, as they aver, and many doubtless believe, by a direct revelation and as a command of God, upon the advice simply of the head of the church, with perfect unanimity and without even a manifestation of discontent?

Such is the marvelous condition of this important change. It is said by the Church organ that the manifesto when read to the conference was adopted by one unanimous uplifting of hands in the Tabernacle. So far as can be seen by those living among these people the only visible manifestation of discontent or of belief or unbelief in the Divine inspiration of the manifesto, is seen in the continuation of the practice by members of the Church in defiance of law and of the manifesto, as shown by the frequent arrests, indictments and convictions for polygamous offences.

It would seem to clearly demonstrate that the charge made against the Church, that it seeks and exercises temporal as well as spiritual power and through

CHURCH INFLUENCES,

dominates its members and willingly or unwillingly compels compliance with the will of those who govern the Church is well grounded.

That the Church has taken this step only a few months since, while still claiming the doctrine a "Divine command," would seem to be no reason why the government should at once withdraw all the safeguards it has confronted and surround these people with, or deliver over to them the sole and complete political power of the Territory. "Time proves all things." It should not be forgotten that at one time the military power of the Nation, and for thirty years the most restrictive legislation and its vigorous enforcement has been required to bring about this very condition they claim now to exist. Every step has been gained over an intense and united opposition led by those same men who are so free to denounce others, and so loud in their self praise.

There seems to be a misapprehension in some quarters as to the

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION,

and even Congressmen appear to think it is charged with the enforcement of penal laws against polygamy, and it was lately said on the floor of the House that no convictions had resulted from its work.

This Commission is not a court to prosecute cases of polygamy. It cannot compel witnesses, and might fail to establish the absolute verity of any case. Its functions are confined to the electoral provisions of the law.

That it has reports which indicate that polygamy is not wholly abandoned is the truth. Is it to be wondered at that a people which has

been taught for many years that polygamy is a Divine principle, that the principle is still divine, and merely suspended by an advisory proclamation, should have some members who will prefer the "divine command," which is in accord with their lustful proclivities, rather than comply with the advice which would cut off the source of their highest felicity, not only in this life, but in the kingdom their faith teaches them awaits the devotee who lives up to the "divine command" which enjoins the practice of polygamy?

Is it at all a matter of surprise that, in a Territory of many thousands of square miles, whose settlements are in valleys isolated from each other, and many of which are inhabited wholly by Mormons, who, whether polygamists or not, are all firm believers in the tenet of their Church faith, and will neither betray their neighbors nor bear witness against them, but on the contrary, will use every effort to conceal the facts, it is supremely difficult to obtain absolute proof of facts which the whole community may believe exist?

COMMON REPUTE

throughout the Territory, would bring conviction to most minds, but without giving weight to that, the Commission has information which compels it to believe that the practice of polygamy has not yet wholly ceased.

A distinguished Judge of the United States District Court for Utah, making a statement in favor of the claimants for statehood or home rule, before the House committee last February, instanced the case of a young man who had married as his plural wife a young woman whose father did not know of the marriage until it was found that his daughter was pregnant with child, which child was born as late as last July." With such secrecy surrounding such marriages, it is difficult to understand why the Commission is expected to furnish direct, formal and conclusive proof of the cases it reports. That the Church has formally spoken against the further solemnization of such marriages; that a large number of its members apparently accept it as final, and profess a willingness to obey the law, is gratifying, and a fact the Commission is glad to record.

But that polygamy still exists and that there are many cases constantly coming to the public knowledge of association between polygamists and the plural wives they had professed to have put away, is a fact that in the face of the statistics presented, can hardly be converted. The cases of arrest for unlawful cohabitation have of late been very numerous, and men of prominence in the church are found among the number.

Possibly this is due to the weakness common to the majority of mankind, but whatever the cause, the fact remains.

Much stress was laid in the statements before the Congressional Committee upon the fact that

NO CONVICTIONS FOR POLYGAMY

have lately been had, as if that finally disposed of the question.

The convictions for unlawful cohabitation, which means living in polygamy, are numerous, and would doubtless be more numerous were it not for the fact that it is so difficult to con-