

## DESERET NEWS

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - Nov. 20, 1878.

## FIGHTING THEIR OWN SEX.

In another column will be found a communication from a lady of this city, who speaks from experience in regard to plural marriage, having been herself for many years a plural wife, and having children and grandchildren reared in the system which some persons pretend to think so contrary to purity.

We draw the attention of the ladies who have been urged to make an attack on the "Mormon" marriage relations, to one point alluded to in the letter of our correspondent. That is, the effect which would be produced upon thousands of now peaceful homes and scores of thousands of innocent children, should the hostile legislation at which their petition aims be obtained. What good do they expect to accomplish in their endeavors to stir up the animosities of people who cannot understand the situation in Utah? Is it a praiseworthy work for professedly Christian ladies to bring reproach and fasten shame upon a large number of their sex, who are just as pure in heart and just as sincere in faith as was Hannah, the plural wife of Elkanah and the mother of Samuel the prophet? Is it the proper thing for members of denominational churches to seek to bring sorrow and mourning into unnumbered families? Do the ladies, who are lending themselves as willing tools in the hands of male conspirators, understand anything of the real principles of "Mormon" marriage, and the inward sentiments of those brave and self-sacrificing women, who have clung with the faithfulness of a Naomi to their religion, though it has led them through dangers, toils, hardships and trials that cannot be penned? And these are they who would suffer most if the movement of the petitioners should be in any degree successful.

It is a crusade of a few women who arrogate to themselves superior virtue to that which shines in the devoted wives and mothers of the "Mormon" Church, against a large number of their own sex who happen to differ from them in their faith, and to have the courage to practise their profession even though it is unpopular. What is there in plural marriage which in the least degree affects these indignant memorialists? When they lived in the States before they had the chance to breathe the air of these mountains, which they claim is "tainted" with polygamy, did they ever find anything of a social nature which caused them to address petitions to Congress and circulars to clergymen? Was there nothing in all the foul corruptions of modern society—which are not hidden in corners, but permeate the whole social structure—that appeared at all "tainted" to their delicate olfactory?

The hypocrisy of all these pretended spasms of virtue would be really laughable, if it were not sickening and despicable. If these memorialists really desire to benefit their sex in Utah, why not seek to convince them of the error of their ways, convert them to the vaunted "better way" of nineteenth century Christianity? But this is not what the opponents of "Mormonism" desire. "Crush it out" embodies the spirit of their wishes; vengeance, bolts, bars and prison walls, disgrace heaped on women, reproach and scorn on innocent children, destruction on the people who have made, by their industry, the desert a charming place for "Christian" gents and ladies to dwell in and plot against the peace of those who have made it possible for them to abide there.

If this is not what they seek, what do they expect to accomplish by their anti-polygamy crusade? The affair is perhaps too small to justify as much notice as we have given to it. But we regret to see ladies, some of whom are worthy of better things, and who might use their talents and influence in doing good in the world; joining with miserable tricksters and corrupt politicians in working for discord,

destruction, and the triumph of bigotry and force over sincere conviction and religious liberty.

## THE TRUE OBJECT OF THE NEW CRUSADE.

ANOTHER anti-polygamy meeting was held in this city yesterday afternoon which was not very numerously attended. Nearly a hundred ladies, however, were present. An address was read by one of them, evidently prepared for her by a member of the sterner sex. This gives us a point or two on which to hang some remarks. We draw attention to them in order that the true meaning of this movement may be understood both by the public at large, and the ladies who appear to be its chief managers. We say "appear" advisedly. As the speech made yesterday afternoon was prepared for the lady who delivered it, so the whole movement is manipulated by other hands than those seen on the surface.

As we hinted last evening, it is the old opposition in a new form. Another outcropping of the seeds of intolerance and religious hate sowed by Satan and cultivated by the professed followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, who are really the disciples of him who was a murderer from the beginning. The spirit of the movement is the same which urged the mobocrats of Missouri, led by "Christian" ministers, to drive, plunder, outrage and slay the defenceless Saints, whose sole offence—for plural marriage did not then enter into their creed—was serving God in a way that did not suit their neighbors. The same spirit that prompted the slaughter of Joseph and Hyrum, the pillaging of Nauvoo, the expulsion of its owners, and the various crusades that have been inaugurated against them since their sojourn in this Territory. It burned in the heart of Cain when he smote his brother Abel. It raged in the bosom of Pharaoh and his host when they pursued Israel into the bed of the Red Sea. It inspired those who persecuted the Hebrew seers and tortured and banished the prophets. It fired the souls of them who hung Christ upon the cross. It enticed to deeds of evil the persecutors of the Apostles and early Christians, the masked and hooded priests who planned the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition, the builders of the fires of Smithfield, the oppressors of the Puritans, and the bigots of all creeds and races who sought to stamp out by violence that which they could not master by reason.

This will be denied and repelled by the ladies who are now yielding to its initial suggestions. Many of them, if they understood what they are doing, and could see the end of the path on which they are entering, would turn with affright and loathing from their course. They do not perceive, at present, anything but the fact that polygamy (magnified beyond its real proportions) appears as something awful before their eyes which they feel in duty bound to aid in suppressing. But if they will look steadfastly at the object before them, as stated in the address prepared for yesterday's meeting, they will be able to perceive what it portends. It states that "the direct object of the mass meeting was to arouse public sentiment throughout the country to the enormity of the crime of polygamy;" and the necessity of a permanent organization is advocated, "to keep urging the country and Congress until that end is attained." And what is that end? It is stated at the end of the address, in the quotation from a speech prepared, as the address was, by a male anti-"Mormon," that the system of polygamy may not "remain a curse and a stain upon the nation any longer;" that it may be "blotted out so completely that its foul memory shall die."

What does all this mean, if not that "Mormonism" is to be put down if possible, by force? That the past history of the "Mormons" is to be repeated? That the people who have fought with and overcome the rigors and barrenness of this arid and desolate region, making beautiful the dreary, treeless wastes, must flee again before the wrath of "Christian" hatred, to leave their homes and gardens, fields and flocks, a prey to their op-

pressors? If not, why this appeal to the popular prejudice? Why this call upon Congress? Why this cry to the pulpit? How in any other way is polygamy to be "blotted out" so that its very memory shall perish?

This "crusade"—it is the term used by the ladies themselves, is not truly a woman's movement. They have been placed in the front, while old male hands at the attack on the "Mormons" lie in the rear. The circular, the address to the clergy, the whole machinery of the organization are masculine work. Men who have miserably failed in their own attempts to bring trouble on the "Mormons" are now flattering some of the weaker sex with the idea that "the women of the country can alone save the country from destruction," and thus cajoled they stand forth before the public and permit themselves to be made the vehicles by which slander and falsehood are hurled against the majority of the people among whom they live. It is slander and falsehood to say that "In the Territory of Utah, to-day, there are more than twenty thousand women in a condition of almost abject slavery, and that many of them would proclaim their wrongs if they dared;" it is slander and falsehood to say that "there has been a time in the history of this Territory when no man's life or woman's honor was safe if it stood in the path of the despotic ruling power," and that "during this period none dare raise their voices in either complaint or condemnation, without taking their lives in their hands."

Yet these are some of the words put into the mouths of the ladies who we have no doubt believe that they are true, but are made the mere tools and mouthpieces of those men who are endeavoring to procure legislation from Congress for their own private and peculiar ends. "If Utah becomes a State" they say "all hope of deliverance" for the women of Utah "will be entirely cut off." They fear the Statehood of Utah, because that would cut off Government pap or the hope of it. What they want is a law preventing any "Mormon" from holding any office whatever, shutting out all "Mormons" from the jury box, prohibiting all "Mormons" from voting. Then with the judicial and executive offices federal and Territorial, the ballot box, treasury and the whole Territory in their hands, they could make it so hot for the "Mormons" that the latter would be glad to emigrate, and leave all to the managers of this pleasant little scheme, which they want the women to aid them in accomplishing. "Polygamy" is but a cry in the new crusade. It catches the ears of the ladies, and urges them forward in this assault upon a peaceable and peaceful community. It injures no one if not the parties engaged in its practice. The plea that it is any harm to the nation is the boldest kind of nonsense. No one knows this better than those who use it as a watchword in the struggle for something else. The plural wives whom the anti-polygamy ladies misrepresent so much, want none of their sympathy and none of their interference. They and their children would be the greatest sufferers from the outburst that the petitioning women seek to invoke.

We notice that a call is made for a mass meeting in the interest of the "Mormon" ladies, that they may express their own views and feelings in this matter. We endorse the call. It will be found in another column. We hope it will be numerously attended by the young as well as the old.

The "Mormon" wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters of Utah are not understood in the world; least of all are they appreciated by those of their sex who now assume, in word, to champion their cause, while in deed they are moving for their disgrace and destruction. Let our ladies speak out fearlessly, and without restraint except that which proper decorum imposes. And let all people understand that the new crusade in which women appear to lead the van, is merely a movement in disguise to effect the disfranchisement and overthrow of an industrious and worthy people, who have settled in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains that they might worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, which they intend to do by the help of God in spite of every obstacle and every foe.

## COFFINS WANTED.

The New York *Herald* of the 8th inst. referring to the anti-polygamy female mass meeting in this city, says: "Now let 'Mormonism' make its will and order its coffin."

The system of religion which is popularly known as "Mormonism" has frequently received a similar invitation, but it has never seen the hour, even in its darkest days, when there was the least necessity for any such preparations. It has survived all predictions of its death, and all attempts at its destruction whether by mobs, preachers, editors, lawyers, judges, legislators or soldiers. Every attack on it has strengthened it. Every blow struck at it has rebounded on its adversaries. It cannot be killed. It will never die. Its "will" is to spread truth and establish righteousness. It has no coffins to make. And those who prepare a coffin for "Mormonism" might as well get ready their own shroud, for they will need one soon, while the object of their wrath grows brighter, stronger and fuller of vigorous life.

The "new move" against it will affect it like all former crusades which started with a flourish of trumpets, boasts of anticipated victory, and the cheers of people of the baser sort, and ended in discomfiture and a muck heap. Let decaying systems, religious, social and political, order their coffins, for their doom is written in heaven, and the death signs are creeping over them on earth. "Mormonism" is deathless, and will flourish over the graves of its would-be assassins.

## A SURE RESULT.

THE enthusiastic and large attended mass meeting of ladies, at the Theatre on Saturday, a partial report of which only we are able to publish this evening, forms another proof that the best way to consolidate and give stronger activity to a religious cause, is to persecute and seek to destroy it. Strong conviction of the truth of any creed, no matter how absurd it may appear to others, cannot be and never has been stamped out of the human mind by the iron heel of force, the power of oppressive enactments, nor attempts to bring it into trouble and reproach.

One of the many evidences of an Overruling Hand shaping the destinies of "Mormonism" and the "Mormons" is the continually recurring, hostile outside influences, which, while they originate in the hearts of evil designing men, and are intended for harm, always result in reviving the faith of the weak, and uniting the trembling with the firm, in determination to stand by the truth if needs be unto death.

Let the warfare go on. It means strength to our cause, defeat to its enemies, and the attraction of the world to its principles, the result of which will be accession to our numbers and the glory of God whom we live to obey.

## MORMON LADIES ON PLURAL MARRIAGE.

THE mass meeting at the Theatre on Saturday afternoon, was the result of a spontaneous effort on the part of a number of ladies in this city. Representative "Mormon" women originated the movement, and the large audience that assembled cordially supported them and endorsed the sentiments which they uttered. The impromptu speeches were full of womanly earnestness and sincerity, and the written addresses, each of which was composed by the lady who delivered it, carry with them unmistakable evidences of devotion to the cause they sustain.

There cannot be a greater mistake than the popular idea, which the originators of the present anti-polygamy crusade are endeavoring to foster, that the "Mormon" women are opposed to the doctrine and practice of plural marriage. Talented ladies, who have proven their devotion to their religion by

clinging to it in the face of death, and trials worse than death, are among its very foremost advocates, and thousands of loving wives and mothers in Utah are as strongly convinced of the divine origin of celestial marriage as of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and resent any interference with their marital relations as strongly at least as any man can do.

The meeting in the Theatre could be duplicated in any of the central towns of the Territory, and in the discussion of the "Mormon" question, whether in the pulpit, the press or the Halls of Congress, it ought to be known and understood that our marriage system is upheld, defended and advocated by the great masses of the women of Utah, those who oppose it forming a numerically insignificant minority.

We publish the speeches in full, the extemporaneous remarks being reported for the NEWS by Brother George F. Gibbs:

The meeting was called to order at 2 p.m. by Mrs. Zina D. Young. The house was filled in nearly every part. Miss Eliza R. Snow was elected chairman of the meeting; Mrs. S. M. Kimball, secretary, and Mrs. Augusta Crocheran, assistant secretary.

The choir then sang "The Standard of Zion," after which the meeting was opened by prayer, by Mrs. Prescinda Kimball. The choir again sang.

On being called to the chair Miss Eliza R. Snow said:

It now becomes my duty, as president over this assembly, to state the object of this meeting. As saints of the living God, and as those who have been persecuted and driven from our homes from place to place, and now located in the valleys of these mountains, having been misrepresented from time to time, we claim the privilege to-day, of representing ourselves. As true and loyal American citizens, we claim the right of protection by that government under which we live, and the free exercise of our religious rights. It is for the sake of our religion, that we are located here; and inasmuch as we, the veritable women of Utah—those who came here when this land and soil belonged to Mexico, and who, through our faith and prayers and indefatigable labors have assisted in reclaiming it—making it habitable and beautiful—we claim that we have, under God and under the glorious Constitution of our country, which has been bequeathed to us by our forefathers, and which we believe to have been given by the inspiration of God through our noble progenitors, to believe as we please,—to listen to the voice of God when he speaks—to obey him by keeping those commandments which he has delivered unto us; knowing that he has spoken in these last days by his own voice, by the voice of his well beloved Son, and by the voice of angels to him whom he raised up, and made his prophet and seer, that he has gathered his people together from the four quarters of the earth, that he is establishing a government upon the principles of purity, peace and righteousness. We feel that it is our right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience without fear or molestation, under the protection of that government which guarantees unto us the right of conscience. And inasmuch as one of the most important principles which God has revealed and which he requires of his children to practice has been assailed, we feel that it is our right to express our views upon this subject.

Before the principle of plurality of wives was known to be practiced by the Latter-day Saints, we were driven, our prophet and patriarch were vilely massacred, and not one of the perpetrators of the atrocious deed has ever been brought to justice. We have submitted to these wrongs, we have suffered oppression, privation, hardships and misrepresentation, and now we feel that it is our right, and duty demands of us, to express our sentiments.

I am proud to state before this large and honorable assembly that I believe in the principle of plural marriage just as sacredly as I believe in any other institution which God has revealed. And I believe it to be necessary for the redemption of the human family from the low state of corruption into which it has sunken. And I truly believe that a Congress composed of polygamic men who were true to