

Religious Persecution--The Mormons and the Cincinnati Gazette.

Whatever may be the revolutions that occur to the Cincinnati Gazette, it is worthy of remark, that in one respect, that journal seems incapable of change. Its philosophy, to whatever branch of human concerns it is applied, continues for ever the same. In religion and morals there is the same cold and narrow bigotry, and in politics and public economy the same shallow and old-world conservatism that have for so long a time contributed to make up and confirm that fossil reputation which it enjoys.

Unable to conceive of anything outside of its church and its caste, it imagines the whole world to lie within the circle of its own vision; and with a spirit of intolerance which seems like the combined product of impotence and superannuation, looks upon every invasion of its interests as an attack upon its principles, and every suspicion of the correctness of its principles as a wanton blow at its interests. In fact, its sentiments upon morals and business are such as one might expect to hear from the lips of the exemplary and pious Thomas Allibone, president of the Bank of Pennsylvania, or of the Rev. P. B. Manchester, late of this city, while engaged in his endeavors to spread the gospel in California. And if we add to this a palpable ignorance of the most common things, we shall have that compound of superstition, cruelty and stupidity which, more than in any other concern we can think of, is the distinctive feature of the editorial columns of the Cincinnati Gazette.

There is no recent case that we remember of, in which the Gazette has been more successful in exhibiting the peculiar style of its learning, and its piety, than in its Mormon article of yesterday morning. The knowledge displayed by the editor of the character and functions of our Government; the rights of citizens and of men in general, if not very brilliant, has other qualities which render it remarkable.

His religious feelings, we have no doubt, have been seriously outraged by the sins of the Latter Day Saints. He is fully convinced that such wicked people ought not to cumber the earth—is greatly scandalized by their improper conduct; and if he had his way would, doubtless, bring in a cross between the Mosaic and the Hudibrastic dispensations, and cut them off from the face of the earth.

Nor is the editor of the Gazette destitute of the skill necessary for a bigot. He knows how, by slander, to prepare the way for persecution, and can bear false witness in order to secure justification for a premeditated crime. We do not remember to have seen within the same space, a larger amount of misrepresentation than is contained in the following paragraph—misrepresentation which, under present circumstances, is no better than cruelty:

"The event to which Mormonism was rapidly tending has at length arrived. With insulting language they defy the power of the United States, attack its troops, and resist all lawful authority. Without owning an acre of land, they seize upon a large territory, and claim the right to control it. They are now in the attitude of open war, and an army is now marching upon them. From the commencement of this question, we have considered the Mormon colony as alien to the Government and laws of the Union, and which must ultimately be suppressed. This result was inevitable. They could not live in Missouri. They could not live in Illinois. They cannot live in Utah."

The Mormons may be a very bad people. Indeed we may safely admit that they are so, without thereby affording ground for the inference that the superior intelligence, virtue, morality, or religion of the people of the States, of itself, confers upon the latter the right to cut them off at will from the face of the earth.

It will not do, notwithstanding the Gazette to the contrary, to assume the right to kill all who do not come up to our standard of excellence. Besides, it may be that, in the controversy between the Mormons and the government, we do not know the whole truth. It is neither impossible nor improbable, that the Administration may have treated Utah as it has Kansas, to a succession of scoundrels. That such has been the case in part, we have reason to believe. That similar causes were in operation in both cases is certain, and there is nothing unnatural in the presumption that they have produced like effects.

It is said that the agents of the Government have been men who have disgusted the Mormons with their vices and enraged them with their offences; and it is, at least, equitable to admit that the blame has not been all upon the side of that unhappy people.

To one who knows their past history, and the crimes that have been committed against them, the allusion to their residence in Illinois and Missouri, is especially disingenuous. If they were bad, facts show that they were surrounded by worse; and if their acts were criminal, the treatment which they received was fiendish. Our pious cotemporary proceeds:

"To us it has seemed strange, that any person should think the existence of a separate Mormon colony as at all compatible with the religion, laws and institutions of the United States. They might live individually, as they do, in any of the States; for they would then be held accountable to the laws of the State, and their crimes be punished, as they are in others. But for that very reason, Mormonism is adverse to living in any other community. It cannot endure the law or the light. It was as short-sighted as weak, to allow them to seize upon a part of the public domain, and occupy it without price and without responsibility."

To one who understands what is constitutionally meant by the term United States, there is nothing in the existence of a 'separate Mormon colony,' upon the same continent at all incom-

patible with any of its rights or functions. There is nothing in the Constitution that commands uniformity in religion, laws and institutions; even in the members of the confederacy—to say nothing of communities that are not included therein. No one will contend—in theory at least—that communities without the United States are not entitled to as much indulgence at the hands of the government, in regard to their religion, laws and institutions, as those that are within; and any Administration that should attempt to dictate, by means of an armed force or by oppression under the form of law, to the State of Ohio, either in respect to religion, laws or institutions, would not only violate express provisions of the Constitution, but would be apt to meet with an unusual rising of the people. Our civil character—the spirit of the Constitution from beginning to end, is a protest against such interference.

It is not very surprising that the Mormons, having institutions differing in some respects from those of the people of the United States in general, should desire to join in separate communities where those institutions can be protected. This, so far from being wrong, is in their favor.

In carrying out this desire, they comply with the spirit of that federative form of government under which we live, and which was made federative for just such purposes—to adapt it to different conditions, modes, creeds and institutions. Nothing but the perverse spirit of a religious bigot could see in this a cause of complaint. Such a bigot, assuming that all institutions, creeds and practices that differ from his own are—because they so differ—wrong, wicked, criminal, Heaven-defying, and deserving the wrath of an angry God, is ready to proceed at once with fire and sword to carry extermination to the wrong doers.

Our neighbor of the Gazette, for example, does not appear to be aware that he is not an avenging deity. The divinity, the seat of whose power and glory is at the corner of Fourth and Vine streets, does seem to have been sorely tried in his spirit by the crimes, offences, iniquities, adulteries and uncleannesses of the Latter Day Saints. He has borne with their transgressions until he can bear no longer. They have sinned away the day of his grace. His mercy is exhausted; his forbearance turned to hate, and a desire for sudden and bitter retribution. They 'must be suppressed.' Remember—O puny dealer in damnation!—volunteer wielder of the thunder bolts of the Almighty!—intruding judge, juror and executioner, into the chancery of Heaven!—remember that thou art mortal. Try to bow thy sour and stony spirit to the conception that, in the sight of God, thou too art a sinner; and as thou mayest need mercy thyself, do not be too severe upon the errors of others. It was a sublime precept, and not unworthy even of thy consideration: Let him who was without sin cast the first stone.

The closing paragraph of the Gazette is a proper climax to the others:

"This Mormon question has now come to be one of deep importance. The Government cannot afford to be defied by a band of pirates. It must vindicate its right to govern. One of two results must certainly take place. Either, there will be a Mormon war, which will require more troops and more energy; or, when spring comes, the Mormons will break up their settlement, at Great Salt Lake City, and move to the North in a more secluded position, or, perhaps, the British Possessions. The latter is not altogether improbable. The exploring expedition of BRIGHAM YOUNG last summer, will be recollected. It probably had reference to some such contingency. If such a movement is not made then there must be a war, which will be by no means trifling or unimportant."

If we understand this, we do not remember to have seen anything more wicked in print, nor to have read anything more detestable, even in the annals of that meanest and most horrid of human crimes—religious persecution. The editor of the Gazette wants the Mormons to be exterminated upon the ground where they are. He is afraid they will fly beyond the reach of judicial or military murder, and find refuge from death in some unknown and inaccessible region, where the gospel according to gunpowder will be of no avail for their conversion. He is therefore in favor of energetic measures. His cry is, push on the column. He would give them a little more grape, and purge the iniquity in the valley of the Great Salt Lake—washing it out with the blood of its inhabitants, lest, peradventure, in some dreary region of the vast North-west, a persecuted people shall find still a refuge from slaughter and a safe though desolate home for their wives and little ones. In God's name, what next?

We are no apologists either for the institutions, the creed, or the practices of the Latter Day Saints. They are a poor, deluded people, and if we differ from others in the sentiments which we entertain toward them, it is because we regard a poor deluded people as proper objects of pity, rather than of hatred, of sympathy rather than of persecution. If they have sinned, it is undeniable that they have been sadly, bitterly, sinned against. They have incurred the double misfortune of having for their enemies the party in power in the Government, which is ready to use any means however wrong, to prevent the entry of another Northern member into the confederacy, and the professedly religious, who see in their domestic institutions, what they look upon as a flagrant violation of one of the precepts of the decalogue. The one is cruel from false views of interest; the other from perverted religious sentiment. Thus, opposed by the South from political, and by the North from moral considerations, there is no party to which they can appeal for justice, either in word or deed. In the mean time, their own counsels are unwise and guided by fanatical rashness rather than sober reason. Some of them, perhaps, have been guilty of crimes against the Union; but in the midst of the cloud of falsehoods that are told, it is impossible to determine where lies the truth. Their pre-

sent acts of resistance against the power of the United States are wrong and injudicious, and will be bitter enough in their consequences, without any cries for their extermination coming from other quarters. That they are men and women—human flesh and blood—creatures made in God's image—for whom Christ died, is a sufficient reason why man should withhold from them his hand to persecute. If they have sinned is this great nation guiltless in the sight of Infinite Purity, that it may, without offense, assume Heaven's high prerogative, to exterminate a guilty people? If they are fanatical, have all the rest been distinguished by coolness of head and meekness of spirit? If they have been violent, shall we, because we have the power, distinguish ourselves by being more violent than they? Have they been law-breakers, must we, in our eagerness to punish them, trample under foot the great paramount statutes of humanity? Even suppose they are adulterers, is licentiousness among us so very uncommon that we may be permitted to neglect the beam in our own eye from the superior claims of the mote in our brother's? Let us reflect. Who made us to differ? God is just. 'He will not free the guilty.' Why not leave them in his hands?—[Cincinnati Daily Commercial, Nov. 24.]

What shall be done with the Mormons?

I am opposed to the next war. It is unrighteous, even if it is Christian. The Mormons, like our Puritan Fathers, claim a right to have a religion different from those who surround them. Like our Puritan progenitors, they have been hunted from place to place, until they have departed from the rest of mankind by going into the wilderness and establishing a home among the savages of the desert. Let them alone. Is it not enough that they have gone from us to be by themselves—gone on purpose to get out of the way, but we must dog them in their retreat by such creatures as have been sent there to worry them—the Drummonds, the Sumners, the Parris, and the drunken rabble they had with them. Let them alone.

Why send an army there? To fight them? For what? If they are a bad people, will you scatter them again through community? Are they not in the best possible place, where they cannot contaminate others by contact and influence? They interfere with none that stay away from them. They ask no favor or support from any body. They are the most universally industrious of any community known of its size. Their only intercourse with us, is traveling occasionally through the country and buying what they want of us—they have nothing to sell us. They are a sober people—they drink no whiskey. Who ever heard of a large community, industrious, sober, self-reliant, and isolated, who were a bad or troublesome people? The charge is preposterous. Then why send an army to fight them?

Perhaps the leaders are polygamists! Well, is that kind of debauchery worse than that practiced at Washington by Congressmen and Government officers in far larger proportion to their numbers? Is it worse than the kindred pollution in all great cities? And are we so righteous, as a people, that we must send an army to fight debauchery in Utah? Is the 'Old Bachelor' at the White House so exercised in that matter as to order its suppression by the bayonets of our chaste and sinless soldiery?

Perhaps somebody thinks the Saints do not like our government—have they any reason to like it? What has government done for them but harass them with offensive and troublesome officers,—appointing for judges, clerks, marshals, &c., men who are opposed to them in every particular—opposed to them religiously—or what is probably more truthful, opposed to them irreligiously,—opposed to them politically, morally and socially. Do the people of Kansas, who are not Mormons, like the government appointees, any better than their Mormon neighbors? Then why send an army to fight them? Is it because fort reservations and capital sites are not good speculations for government officers in Mormon districts? And when Mormonism is governmentally dogged out of Salt Lake, what will have been the cost of money, of life, and what will have been gained against Mormonism? Are fanatics silenced by oppression? Are bigots brought to reason by abuse? Are heresies corrected by gunpowder and morals by paid soldiery? When did persecution convert a people or the blood of their martyrs wash out the faith of a church? Will not a government war on Mormonism disseminate the doctrine a thousand times faster than it could be done by any other means, both in this country and in the old ones? Will it not enlist a sympathy such as always follows an onslaught of a larger power upon a smaller,—a sympathy that begets discussion, and that would convert thousands who otherwise would never know more of Mormon doctrines than were perverted and told by its enemies?

If the doctrines and practices of the Saints are errors, as I believe they are, the best way to deal with it is to confine it as much as possible to Utah—give it full scope to work itself out in its intensity. Let its fanaticism be unchecked by any outside interference and its evil will correct itself, but oppose, and diffuse it and it will spread, with such modifications as the surrounding elements may impose, until it will pervade the whole land. It has elements of growth if stirred by opposing fanaticism, that neither orthodox nor heretic can reason down, nor ridicule from its stand. For the reasons suggested here, and many more, I am opposed to the next war. Call off the dogs.—B. C. T.—[Baltimore Sun.]

Mormonism.

Much anxiety is felt at present as to what the Mormons intend doing. We see it stated that they are making great preparations to resist by force of arms the legalized authorities of Uncle

Sam. Now, it is not our purpose to defend the Mormons, or to screen them from censure where censure should fall; but this we do say, they are bitterly and cruelly persecuted, and that, too, without any just cause or provocation.

The Mormons, as a class, are not so base as many represent them. They, like us, are human with human sympathies, with likes and dislikes. And because they differ from us in sentiment, is it a reason sufficient to warrant us in sending an armed force, and, under the point of the bayonet, compel them to bow to our God and live up to the requirements of our creed. It matters not how black and how foul a person's character may be, we are not justifiable in meting to them the measure of their guilt in the spirit of revenge.

The Mormons are a devoted people; they are bound to each other by ties of the strongest sympathy, and the first violent step taken to sever that tie, will be the first to arouse the intense feelings of their hearts, and cause them to resist to the last, any force, or any means, by which their rights are invaded and the peace and the quietness of their families disturbed. Does not the Lion protect her whelps, and should the Mormon show less sympathy for the cherished endearments of their homes, than the king of the forest?

This spirit of revenge, savors too much of partialism. It is the spirit that crucified our Savior; and which is now seeking to drive a deluded people from their dear bought homes. Is there no sympathy for a persecuted people? Is there no human heart to plead their cause? Yea, no human voice may be raised in their behalf, but the voice of Immanuel rings through the broken arches of crumbling ages, saying come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Let us remember that the people, in whose blood we seek to wash our hands, are our brethren, children of the same Father, and heirs of the same promise. Return thy sword to its scabbard and learn to love a people whom God loves, and to bear the iniquities of a people who are under the same moral law, and to whom judgment will be meted out in the full measure of justice.—[Star of the Pacific.]

[From the New York Evening Post.]

The President's First Year's Progress.

We were for some time, says the N. Y. Evening Post, at a loss to know the President's motive in making his recent communication to the public in reply to the New Haven memorialists, for it seemed both an unnecessary and an undignified step for a Chief Magistrate to take, who had nothing more to say than appeared to be disclosed in that letter. A more careful perusal of the document has revealed to us what we presume to have been his purpose, viz., to change the position which until that time he occupied in reference to the nationality of slavery under the constitution. In his letter accepting the nomination of the Cincinnati Convention, he took the ground that the territories had a right to determine for themselves whether slavery should be tolerated within their borders or not. We quote his language:

"This legislation is founded upon principles as ancient as free government itself, and, in accordance with them, has simply declared that the people of a territory, like those of a State, shall decide for themselves whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits."

"The Nebraska Kansas act does no more than give the force of law to this elementary principle of self-government; declaring it to be 'the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into the Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States. This principle will surely not be controverted by any individual of any party professing devotion to popular government. Besides, how vain and illusory would any other principle prove in practice in regard to the Territories? This is apparent from the fact admitted by all, that, after a Territory shall have entered the Union, and become a State, no constitutional power would then exist which could prevent it from either abolishing or establishing slavery, as the case may be, according to its sovereign will and pleasure."

This was the language which Mr. Buchanan held one year ago. The people of the Territory must determine for themselves whether they would have slaves among them. He has since discovered reasons for changing that position, and for holding that slavery exists under the Constitution in the Territories without any legislation, and of course in spite of any legislation. We quote his language to the New Haven memorialists upon this point:

"Slavery existed at that period, and still exists in Kansas under the Constitution of the United States. This point has at last been finally decided by the highest tribunal known to our laws. How it could have ever been seriously doubted is a mystery. If a confederation of sovereign States acquire a new Territory at the expense of their common blood and treasure, surely one set of the partners can have no right to exclude the other from its enjoyment by prohibiting them from taking into it whatsoever is recognized to be property by the common Constitution. But when the people—the bona fide residents of such Territory—proceed to frame a State Constitution then it is their right to decide the important question for themselves whether they will continue, modify or abolish slave. To them, and to them alone, does this question belong, free from all foreign interference."

Last year Mr. Buchanan thought the people of the Territories could permit or exclude slaves at their pleasure. Now he thinks they have no power over slavery, until they are organized and admitted into the Union as a sovereign State. Slavery is in the Territories by virtue of the Constitution, and there is no power to modify or