

prefer correspondence that dispenses with the necessity for such trimming; no also do readers and good correspondents.

NINE LINES, FIVE LIES.

Readers who believe everything they see in the columns of the newspapers—particularly if they are prone to fear as to some terrible catastrophe that is threatened by reason of the enunciation of a plain, simple, honest principle of Church discipline—ought to be warned that they are being greatly imposed upon by a lot of nonsense that is being published concerning the proceedings of the Utah Stake conference at Provo last Sunday afternoon. One of the country papers condenses the whole bugaboo into the following:

The daily papers report that President Joseph F. Smith made a radical talk in the Provo conference on Sunday and even threatened those who refused to sustain the recent declaration. His remarks were not well received, and when the vote was taken a great many withdrew from the tabernacle, while others voted "No."

We shall not undertake to say how many misstatements are made in the foregoing, but they are numerous, and we have just time and space enough to point out some of them.

Firstly, President Joseph F. Smith's talk was not a radical talk at all; on the contrary it is described by every person who was present and who has alluded to it in writing or speaking to the NEWS as a temperate, logical, sound discourse.

Secondly, such a thing as a threat was not uttered or intimated; the only thing that could be so construed was the very proper suggestion in effect that only by their action in accepting or rejecting the rules and doctrines of the Church could its members be judged as to their standing and fellowship—can a person be deemed a Mormon in full standing, or can a man be deemed in full standing and membership in any church, unless he subscribes to and is in harmony with the doctrines of that church?

Thirdly, President Smith's remarks were extremely well received—the audience was large and paid the closest attention, as well as seeming to be in thorough accord with the spirit of the speaker; two gentlemen who occupied elevated seats from which they could see the people, declared to the writer this morning that they never saw a more interested and attentive congregation; and hundreds of others will bear the same testimony—there was no whispering or uneasiness, and not the slightest visible sign of disapproval.

Fourthly, as to the "great number" who "withdrew when the vote was taken"—the withdrawing was done by President Smith and other visitors who had to take the train for their homes and who left even before the "recent declaration" was read upon which the vote was taken. This "withdrawing" included perhaps a dozen or a score of persons, nearly if not quite all of whom pattered straight down to the depot through the mud and rain as fast as they could go in order to catch the train. Of course it is possible that per-

sons may also have left during and after the reading of the document and before the vote was taken—people sometimes grow impatient or have other calls upon their time when they have remained in a meeting for over two hours, as was the case on this occasion. But if any did subsequently leave, they were but very few—one of our informants says he only noticed three—and there was not enough of a movement to cause any one to notice it, to say nothing of regarding it as in any way significant.

Fifthly, as to the "others who voted 'No'"—the negative vote was represented by one single, solitary individual!

There may be other falsehoods, equally palpable, concerning this much-discussed meeting in Provo, and concerning what was uttered and done; but we have said enough on the subject for today.

PRIESTLY RULE.

The Church Review, which is published in this city, according to its own announcement, "with the co-operation of the Methodist Episcopal, Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist and Christian denominations, and the Y. M. C. A., W. C. T. U. and other societies," has the following in its "Central Christian" column this week:

A great deal of anxiety has been expressed over the last Mormon manifesto. It looks as though the leaders of the Church were attempting to gather up the reins once more so as to direct and control the affairs of the State. At present it looks as though we were to have the old struggle over again, with the Mormons decidedly in the saddle. If this is to be, then the sooner we know it the better. For no permanent prosperity can come while priestly rule exists in Utah.

If certain classes in this State, whose motive for persistent agitation is readily discernible, were to follow the Mormon example of minding their own affairs for a while, there would be some chance for the State to progress without being handicapped by the foolish scares that are sprung with great frequency in certain publications, denominational and otherwise. The "Mormon manifesto" referred to has received little attention in the way of explanation from the NEWS, for the reason that its statements were so clear and its logic so convincing to thoughtful, reasonable and fair-minded people, that any explanation would have been superfluous. It was addressed to the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and every member of that Church in full fellowship and touch with its inspiring genius understood its meaning and endorsed it as the reiteration of a well established rule of discipline, essentially applicable in a business sense to any organization. There have been some few whose heads have been measurably "carried off" by a spirit and associations foreign to the genius of their religion, who have started up as though some surprising thing had been discovered; but even these, on calmer consideration, find out that there was nothing to be disturbed at except that it recalled them to their duties. The epistle reached to Church

members only in their obligations to the Church, and had no effect whatever on their politics.

The document named is simply the enforcement of the moral rule of contracts. It says, in language not to be misunderstood, that when an official who has taken upon him Church obligations proposes to undertake anything that will interfere with the fulfillment of those obligations he shall consult his immediately superior Church officers if he wished to retain his official position. This rule of discipline is purely a defensive rule, and is of common application in business affairs. For instance, if an employe of a mercantile house desired to engage in some other calling that would interfere with his employment for a brief space of time, and he wished to retain his position as such employe, he would consult with his employer and get permission or leave of absence for the time desired; if he proceeded without such leave he would be properly regarded as either retiring from his former position or of violating an obligation of his contract as an employe, if he thought to continue in the position. The application of such a rule is as essential to consistent Church discipline as it is to a business contract, and goes no further in the "manifesto" referred to. It is so simple and reasonable that it is with difficulty that its application can be distorted; hence foolish and vicious newspapers and persons fill their attempts at distortion with "ifs" as to improbable and impossible meanings in order to find any basis at all for complaint or criticism.

The Church has touched no man's politics in the epistle of April 6. It merely announced that when one holding a position of authority in the Church proposed to assume official political responsibilities which interfered with his official Church duties, he ought to consult those immediately concerned. If his proposed action does not so interfere, then he is not affected. The rule is good in other than political matters, and its violation is discourteous and would tend to disruption; hence a man who persists in insisting that he is at liberty to violate it, or does so by his action, must be regarded as relinquishing the Church position which is interfered with. The Church has no alternative but to abide by his choice.

When it comes to the matter of priestly rule, this Church Review which we quote from stands in a wholly different position to that which we have shown the Mormons to occupy. The latter directed their discipline only to their own body, in a Church capacity alone. But the Review gives illustration of an attempt from its own quarter to discipline persons outside of the church membership it represents, and to dominate directly the highest authority in the State—its legislative body. Here is what it says on the first page of the issue quoted from:

It made the friends of the Sabbath feel very bad to see the first Legislature in the new State setting the bad example it did last Sabbath, by holding its sessions on that day. * * * The state which tramples on the fourth commandment cannot expect the blessing of God. Those who believe in the Sabbath should have uttered their earnest protest against the