

"while the Mormons believe polygamy is enjoined by divine law."

How many times has he joined in the general statement that the "Mormons" are fully entitled to freedom of belief, and that no lawful power can be exercised against opinion? And now it is bare belief and abstract opinion that he wants suppressed or renounced.

Governor Thomas may imagine he is a very great personage because he occupies, temporarily, an exalted political position. Actually he is of light mental weight and small personal force. A little insect, though, can make a considerable buzz. But were he as big and important as he would like to be, he could not, with all the might of armies or the strength of chains, either drive out an idea or blind a belief. His expressions in this pretended interview show that the faith of the "Mormon" people is the real cause of his wrath and the actual object of his assault. And he will learn by the time he comes down again to his natural level, that he and all the schemers and plotters in the universe, with kings, potentates, and rulers, are utterly powerless to chain a thought or crush a conviction, and that honest faith will outlive all mean men and motives and flourish when they pass out of place and memory.

A UTAH COMMISSIONER'S PER- VERSIONS.

A DISPATCH from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, conveys what purports to be an interview with Col. R. S. Robertson, of the Utah Commission. The newspaper "interview" is so often deceptive and misleading that little confidence can be placed in it. Prominent persons are alleged to have said things which they never thought of, sometimes they have not been seen at all by the veracious (?) reporter, and at others their views are so incorrectly stated that the public are deluded when they place any dependance upon the report.

However, in this "interview" there are some remarks which were evidently made by the Commissioner, and we will therefore treat them as genuine. He endeavors to throw cold water on the declaration published by President Wilford Woodruff, and in a roundabout way attempts to meet the emphatic denial in that document of the assertion in the Commissioners' report as to recent plural marriages. Much of the interview, as reported, is

wide of the mark, and amounts to a very ungentlemanly and coarse insinuation concerning President Woodruff's veracity. As to that we are perfectly willing to have the reputation of the two individuals for truth and honesty compared, and have no fears for the result, so far as President Woodruff is concerned. We do not believe there is an anti-"Mormon" of any prominence in Utah who believes that he would publish anything he believed to be untrue.

Passing this by, with the simple comment that such low reflections indicate the sort of person who cast them, we reproduce some of the closing remarks of the Commissioner as reported in the *Globe-Democrat*:

"It has been shrewdly suggested to President Woodruff," concluded Commissioner Robertson, "that it would be exceedingly profitable for him to have another revelation, declaring that the doctrine of polygamy should be no longer adhered to by the Saints. Such a revelation would greatly assist his case and put him in the light of one willing to abide by the law that seeks the extinction of the horrid crime of which he is the chief apologist. But no revelation has as yet been forthcoming, probably because without the institution of polygamy the Mormon leaders might lose the power which make abject subjects out of thousands of ignorant and bigoted persons, and the vast revenues of the Church might then be expended in directions not calculated to upbuild the monstrous institution of which Woodruff is the 'inspired' head. Plural marriages are yet entered into beyond a doubt, and the Mormons continue to hold their conferences and hurl defiance at the government and its agents."

The suggestion which the Commissioner thinks is "shrewd" is neither original nor sensible. It has been offered many times for several years. It is an evidence of the thoughtless and flippant manner in which anti-"Mormons" attempt to regulate the creed of the Latter-day Saints. A quotation here from the New Testament ought not to be considered out of place, especially by persons who profess respect for Christianity. It is this:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Revelation, whether it relates to the past, present or future, is not at the command of men. If Col. Robertson knows of any means whereby the Almighty can be compelled to reveal something that will suit him and other persons who make this demand, we would like him to use them without delay. Disbelievers have the right to reject anything purporting to be revelation that does not appeal to

their reason or their faith. But they have not the right to expect a revelation to order, nor to find fault because such an absurdity is not forthcoming. On the other hand, believers have the right to their convictions and to believe that which commends itself to their judgment or evokes their faith. They should be protected in that right, and not be subjected to the sneers and ribaldry comprehended in Col. Robertson's stale wit and cheap plagiarism.

When President Woodruff receives anything from a Divine source for the Church over which he presides, he will be sure to deliver the message. And there is no power on earth that can compel him to make a counterfeit, or pretend to anything which to him is not as genuine as the pure light of heaven. As to what would be "profitable," in the sense which seems to appeal to the soul of Col. Robertson, we know, and so do the whole body of Latter-day Saints, that such considerations have not the slightest weight with our venerable President. His whole life is proof of his disinterested and unselfish nature and motives. And before he would put his name to anything untrue, or descend to such misrepresentations as appear to be indulged in by some of the Utah Commission, he would endure the bitterest pangs of poverty and drain the cup of adversity to the dregs. Five thousand or five hundred thousand dollars a year would not tempt him to malign any people or person, and to retain a "profitable" position he would never pander for an instant to the prejudices of the times.

The "abject subjects" which exist in the mind's eye of Colonel Robertson, or rather in the words of his lips, are not to be found elsewhere. We will not accuse him of uttering anything original. The words are but an echo. But they embody a falsehood. It is one that suits his purpose and is likely to find favor. But it is utterly without foundation in fact, whether he knows it or not. The Commissioner is not acquainted with the people of Utah or with their faith or condition. He has been here, he has been told the usual tales, he has drawn his salary, but he knows no more of the "Mormons" than if he had never seen a "Mormon," and is no more competent to discourse concerning them than of the dwellers in the antipodes.