

CORRESPONDENCE.

"IT IS UN-AMERICAN"

That is what an elderly man said to me a few nights ago as he was driving me home from the O. S. L. depot.

It happened this way: The driver of the express which carried my Alta baggage asked me what I thought of the various efforts being made to get control of the city government. I frankly told him that in my opinion, which was grey, politics should never be used to secure selfish objects for individuals, but only and always for the best interests of all the people concerned; that greed for salaries and spoils of office had made our city politics largely a scramble among thieves who called themselves "Democrats" or "Republicans," and that any attempt to wrest the municipal government from their control should command the earnest support of every man and woman who was possessed of sufficient honor and integrity to be indignant at the history of recent city governments in Salt Lake.

"Yes, sir, that is so," the old man said; "but the way the non-partisan candidates were selected, its un-American, isn't it?"

I knew what the honest old English-American was going to say because I knew where he got occasional jobs, and the man from whom they came. His mind was in the fog of mal-advice. He had been told that the present non-partisan candidates for office in this city were inept tyrants and robbers and that never in American history had there been anything done so full of dire threatening to American institutions as was the selection of these candidates. He wanted to believe what he had been told, because there was a little business in it, but he could not understand it and so, having known me for years, he wanted to draw my opinion. Seeing that I was "ferinst" him, he was a trifle disconcerted and so endeavored to steady himself by the question given above—its un-American, isn't it?

But is it? No! Nothing is un-American that is for the homes, the hearts and the happiness of the American people! The government of the United States was founded, to the consternation of all despotisms in the world, for the freedom, the joy and the progress of all mankind.

That such a fake exists as this cry that these non-partisan candidates were selected in an un-American way, proves nothing save the fears of those who started it that the gang rule of the old party bosses in Salt Lake City was in great danger of perennial eclipse.

But among people not quite enough familiar with men and things to understand the proper antidote to such a poisoned arrow there is need of a little coaching. Speaking to this point I would say that the non-partisan movement was begun in the most public manner. A call was made for all interested in an effort to secure better city government, to meet and consider what might be done. That meeting was followed by others, all equally public, until it was decided to put a non-partisan ticket in the field. But it has been impressed upon the minds of the foreign-born population that because "primaries" were not held in various precincts, therefore the work was an un-American attempt to steal Salt Lake City on the part of a few bold pirates.

Let me say now to my old friend of the express wagon and to all who, like him, are in the fog, that if such meetings had been called he and his

honest friends would not have attended, but the old political gangs would have been present in sufficient number to have controlled the meetings and nominated their own men and the work would have been strangled in its cradle. That such meetings were not called and held is a proof of the wisdom of those who undertook the work of regenerating our municipal government.

The situation can be illustrated by a bit of allegory. In the mountains about Little Cottonwood canyon there were through the summer a large flock of sheep. The lambs were very unsophisticated and the coyotes were very forward—indeed they were as bold as the young men are among the young women at the Lake resorts in the bathing season. The result was that many a fair young lamb was led astray and devoured. At length the old sheep determined to protect their own rights by better government. They called a meeting. The lambs were not interested and did not attend. The old folks agreed that the only safety was in electing officers who would keep coyotes out of contact with the government and compel them to obey the laws. A ticket was put in the field—or the pasture, I should say, and the coyotes, seeing their danger of defeat, and no more lamb chop, raised the cry of fraud and un-Americanism, and attempted by that shallow ruse to turn the lambs against their parents. But the quiet, tender, motherly care of a sheep, even, will in time outweigh the shallow, selfish coquetry of a wolf, and when election day came the sheep came down a thousand fold in triumph.

A word, now, of a personal nature. I do not know John Clark. I do not know Mr. Dale. I do not know Mr. Doremus. I do not know the Socialist candidate. If I vote for any of these men I must do so on the judgment of those who do know them. Well, how few men who voted for Major McKinley knew him! How few who voted for Mr. Brynn knew him! Hundreds of thousands of people shook hands with Mr. Bryan last year, but how many knew him? Very few. In a representative government, such as ours, we must, all the time, be governed very largely by the judgment of others as to candidates. I recall the fact that I voted for Abraham Lincoln in 1860, but I knew no more of him than I do of the man in the moon, in fact not so much. But he was the choice of men who represented ideas that I embraced, and that was my guide. I came to Utah on the first day of January, 1889. I found it so much better than I had anticipated that I became an admirer of Salt Lake City. It has been my home ever since, and in all my wanderings I have acknowledged none other. I hoped to see the Mormon people set a grand example to the nation in politics. I was disappointed for a time. But today my hope renews. Men and women come forward and declared that thuggism and gang-rule in politics must go. That is the order of regeneration. I do not personally know the men for whom I shall vote, but I do know some of those who have selected them. Their judgment is good enough for me because they stand for better against worse conditions. If I had been consulted as to the formation of this work I would have suggested a different name. "Non-partisan" is always a misnomer. It pretends to be no party and yet must be a party made up of those who are disgusted with old

parties. In Denver, where there is a fight of the people against the degrading rule of gang politics, which is much worse than it has ever been in Salt Lake City, they have availed the opportunity for opposition afforded by the term "non-partisan," and their phalanx now moves forward as "The Civic Federation." It is the people against the corporations, the saloons, the brothels, the heeled, boot-lers, tin horns, etc., etc. There the women won the fight against corruption last winter and Denver has had the best government in its history. But it is on again at present in the campaign for election of county officers, and all the corporations, but more especially the tramway, water, steam, heat and gas companies, are combined with the very worst elements of population in a lurid determination to destroy the good government inaugurated by the reformers. Against them stand the moral men of the county backed—no led—by the moral women of the county. I quote a few words from an address by Mrs. Mary C. Bradford a few nights ago, in which she urged upon mothers the duty of being interested in good government:

"No mother is a good mother who doesn't do it. You are either too lazy or too selfish or too ignorant to look after the welfare of your children beyond the four walls of their home, if you don't do it."

Speaking of the high duty of casting a ballot for good government Mrs. Bradford said:

"Election day is a religious day, the very sacrament of citizenship. When it comes to the casting of the ballot I am not ashamed nor afraid to say that I shall put my mark opposite the emblem of the civic federation party," the party of reform.

I am sorry to see so little action among the women of Salt Lake City for better morals in politics, and commend them to the example of the women of Denver. How the present campaign will result I do not know, but soon or late the work now begun will grow to gigantic power. When a genuine reform is once well begun it cannot fail. The push of the universe is with it.

CHARLES ELLIS.

PAGE FROM A YOUNG MAN'S HISTORY.

Benjamin Franklin Johnson was born July 28, 1819, in the town of Pomfret, Chautauqua county, N. Y.

In 1831 he heard the Gospel and believed at first hearing, receiving it with his whole heart; he would have been baptized if his father had not forbade him. Although then but a boy in years he was a man in will and desires concerning the great work of Jehovah, for he had been shown his life's labors in childhood as associated with the fullness of the Gospel as then revealed. Only one other fact is necessary to prove that he was a "chosen of God," and that is, that he has kept the faith.

In June, 1833, he moved to Kirtland, Ohio, in company with Father John Smith, a brother to the first Patriarch Joseph Smith, who was father of the Prophet Joseph.

I remember well that Father John Smith stopped over night at my father's house while upon that journey.

Benjamin F. Johnson became apprentice to a saddler soon after arriving at Kirtland. He received a patriarchal blessing under the hands of Patriarch Joseph Smith before he was baptized into the Church, and has realized the blessing. He was a member of the choir in Kirtland, led by Marvill C. Davis. He assisted in building the Temple at Kirtland and received a blessing under the hands of the Proph-