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AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

WE have been asked the following question: "Is membership in the various trades unions in consonance with the genius of the religion of the Latter-day Saints?" The interrogation could be answered by simply stating that the principles of that religion are in their very nature potential in the rectification of every wrong, whether it be a question connected with the relations of employer and employed or any other. This being the case, why should it be necessary for members of the Church to identify themselves with organizations that are essentially coercive in their character?

The chief difficulty appears to be that men are slow to be governed by the spirit and principles of the Gospel, seeking rather for self-interest than for the maintenance of justice and equality of rights. This makes it the plain duty of all to seek to develop the practice of those conditions within the fold, by a friendly arbitration of questions in order to equitably adjust all serious differences. This internal progress cannot be furthered by members of the Church going outside the pale of its principles.

People who have embraced the Gospel in the world have encountered opposition and tyranny in various forms. One of the shapes in which this persecutive spirit has manifested itself has been in the form of an alternative given by bigoted employers to Latter-day Saint workmen—that they should leave the Church or be discharged. In the great majority of cases they elected to take the latter position and its consequences. The victims of these operations of petty coercion and their friends regarded this treatment as ungenerous and intolerant. So it was. Suppose that these same people should voluntarily place themselves under the direction and control of a trades organization with certain arbitrary rules which they bind themselves to abide by. Suppose one of those rules happens to be that an employer

shall not be permitted to engage the services of a workman who is not a member of the organization. Let it also be presumed that a man who conscientiously abstains from identification with the union is employed. As a consequence all the others—members of the union—give the employer the alternative of discharging the non-union man or they will strike. Is the principle involved not identical in its main features with the alternative given on the ground of religion? That is certainly the way it looks to us. Indeed, it is a sort of double-action coercion process, its application being both upon the employer and the conscientious employee.

Besides, there is no profit, as a rule, in operations of that character. They are not generally in unison with the principles of sound domestic economy. For instance, labor is a marketable commodity for which a fair price should be sought and given. When disputes arise and no special effort at arbitration is made, strikes ensue. The employer takes steps to introduce from other regions workmen to perform the labor he requires. The consequence is inevitable—the labor market is overstocked and its remuneration soon decreased proportionately.

We do not mean, in reasoning in this way, that workmen should tamely suffer imposition at the hands of those who engage their services. This tame submission would be in itself a wrong. But it should be clearly understood in the first place that real injustice does exist. If the affirmative of this question is deemed, after careful and full examination, to be correct, then let every friendly means to reach an adjustment be exhausted before there is any recourse to coercive tactics. Surely in a community like this the rule ought to be that there is sufficient of the spirit of fairness—the genius of the Gospel—to cause a general desire to exist to operate on the lines of justice. The tendency to arbitration of differences is one of the chief and potential elements of the system. Those who are not influenced by it are not in accord with its requirements.

Of course the question comes up in regard to what means should be employed in cases where employers are unscrupulous in their treatment of workmen. That is a hard conundrum. It may be taken as certain, however, that there is a condition to which all parties are more or

less subject. The law of supply and demand.

In all the conditions of life this element of the religion of the Latter-day Saints should be kept in view—that "it is not pleasing in the sight of God that one man should be in bondage to another." This touches the relationship of employer and employed; also the subjugation of the individual will to anybody of men banded together for any purpose whatever. This declaration is against the exercise of tyranny in any shape. Anything tending to suppress or smother the natural rights of man is opposed to the nature and intent of the Gospel, which is capable of curing every evil if men would only allow it to do its legitimate work.

A NUISANCE TO BE ABATED.

THE authorities of Davis County appear to be asleep or strangely indifferent to the laws of the Territory in relation to Sunday. There is a place in that county where drinking saloons are open on Sunday, in violation of law, and where sundry performances are presented to the public and are openly advertised for the Sabbath day. It is all done in flagrant violation of the statute, as may be seen by reference to page 594, Volume II of the Compiled Laws of Utah.

The reason why we draw special attention to this is because the people of this city are importuned, by "dodgers" and other advertising methods, to patronize the public amusements provided in Davis County, for the purpose of enticing our young folks to desecrate the Sabbath. The trip to and from that place and the performances included are offered for a small sum, and it is notorious that traffic in liquor and other intoxicants is openly carried on there on Sunday.

The spirit in which this is done is one of hostility and insult to the sentiment of the majority of the people here. It is unwise, to say the least, for any company depending on the patronage of the people to so flagrantly outrage their religious feelings. But apart from that, these Sunday performances and saloon enticements are infractions of the law, and it is the duty of the authorities of the localities where they are presented to suppress them and prosecute those who are guilty.

There is a great deal of buncombe indulged in here about "loyalty to the laws." It would be only consistent