

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE
TELLER BILL.

THE bill introduced by Senator Teller for an enabling act for Utah contains this provision:

"That the perfect toleration of religious sentiment shall be secured and that no inhabitant of said State shall ever be molested in person or property on account of his or her religious belief or his or her mode of religious worship."

It is strange that any citizen of the United States, whether Republican, Democrat or "Liberal," would offer any objection to such a clause. It simply secures that religious toleration which the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States requires, and which all the State constitutions provide for.

But the "Liberal" organ of this city has attacked it vehemently, on several occasions. When advised that it was a counterpart of the act providing for the admission of Colorado, it responded:

"If that is true, and the Constitution of Colorado was framed under the restrictions and commands of the enabling act, then we do not see why any polygamist could not go to Colorado and live his religion; and if arraigned before a Colorado court plead the Constitution in bar."

The folly of all this needs no pointing out, it dances before the eyes of the reader and shakes its bells in his face. Colorado has no polygamy question under its Constitution framed in accordance with that provision, although it has quite a large "Mormon" population. And it must take a tremendous effort to distort and strain this common restriction into anything like the purport invented by the *Tribune*. But speaking of "Liberal" dissent from the measure, it says in another article:

"We think this feeling was greatly intensified by the one clause in the Teller bill which inhibited in advance the framing of any constitution under which polygamy could be successfully prosecuted. That to hundreds of people was a notice that after all the Saints had been acting in bad faith; that it was their purpose to resume polygamy so soon as the Territory could be hedged around with State lines, and they could obtain control, and instantly the thought came to hundreds that the whole business had been prepared by a willing attorney and presented to Congress by a willing Senator. The audacity of inserting such a clause was something that shocked many a man who had begun to believe it was time to give the Saints a chance."

What nonsense that is! And what a desperate attempt to connect "the Saints" with the preparation of the bill! They knew nothing of either scheme until the telegraph brought tidings of its introduction. We do not believe the writer of those foolish sentences believes for a moment, either that protection of polygamy is intended in the provision, or that the Latter-day Saints had anything to do with its preparation, for we do not set him down as an idiot.

The meaning of the term "religious worship" has been so often and so clearly defined by the courts, that there is no room left for doubt that it does not include any practice that is contrary to law or to public decorum. The *Tribune* has contended for that itself many a time and oft. This provision would not prevent a clause in the Utah Constitution forbidding polygamous practices, nor the enactment of laws relating to them, any more than the First Amendment to the national Constitution prevented Congress from passing the anti-polygamy laws, which have been sustained by the Supreme Court of the United States.

This provision is in common to all the Constitutions of the States, at least in spirit, and is identically contained in the "Enabling Act," for the States of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Washington.—See vol. 25, U. S. Statutes at large, 677. The same provision is also in the "Enabling Act" of the State of Nebraska.—13 U. S. Statutes at Large, 48. Also in the "Enabling Act" of Nevada.—13 U. S. Statutes at Large, 31. Also, as previously stated, in the "Enabling Act" of Colorado, upon which the Utah bill was modeled.

Will it be contended that "Mormons" could go into any of these States and practice polygamy without danger of prosecution, or that they could plead in bar the constitutional provision as to freedom of religious belief and worship?

Again we suggest that the opponents of this, and the other measure designed to liberate Utah from the thralldom of the Territorial system, fight it fairly, if at all. Such subterfuges and misrepresentations as we have quoted from the "Liberal" organ are unworthy of civilized and rational warfare. Give us reasonable grounds of objection if you have them; if not, don't descend to drivel.

GOVERNOR THOMAS AGAIN DENIES.

GOVERNOR THOMAS was met today by a representative of the News, by whom his attention was called to the following, which appeared in the *Herald* of this morning:

"Governor Thomas denies that he attended the Republican meeting held last week, and which resulted in the birth of the Teller statehood bill, and of course that settles it.

A *Herald* reporter found the governor at his office last evening, and he stated emphatically that he was not at the meeting.

"Did you not know in advance that the meeting was to be held, and what the object was?"

"I did not know anything about it."
"Did you express yourself as being in sympathy with the bill?"

"No. My position is the same now as before. I have been and still am opposed to statehood."

Have you anything to say, Governor, regarding what you are represented as having said on the statehood question?

Only this, that at the interview of last evening, during which, by the way, Governor Saunders was present, not a word was said on the subject of statehood. I do not know why I should be misrepresented in such a persistent and inexcusable way.

Do you still hold the same position in reference to statehood that you expressed the other day to a News reporter?

I assuredly do. While I believe that statehood ought to be delayed until there is practical unanimity of all classes in favor of it, as between the Caine-Faulkner and Teller bills I favor the latter and endorse the action of those who prepared and introduced it.

DEATH OF FANNY Y. THATCHER.

SISTER FANNY Y. THATCHER departed this life, at her residence, 247 E. South Temple street, at 8:30 a. m. today (January 21st). Deceased was a daughter of the late President Brigham Young and Lucy Decker Young and wife of Brother George W. Thatcher. She was born in this city January 25th, 1849, and would consequently have been 43 years of age had she lived until the 25th inst. She had been ill for some time, and her friends were therefore, to some extent, prepared for the news of her departure.

Sister Thatcher was a woman of surpassing gentleness. She had a heart overflowing with sympathy for her fellow creatures. Hundreds of instances of the exercise of her benevolence might be cited. These manifestations of her character were of the nature of acts of that class defined by the Redeemer as genuinely charitable. They were entirely free from ostentation. One special trait of her disposition could not escape even a casual acquaintance—an entire absence of pride or affectation. The humblest person was treated by her as a brother or sister. This is no fanciful picture, but is truthfully drawn after an acquaintance with her of a quarter of a century.

The whole life of the departed was tempered with a devotional tendency, her religion being all in all to her; hence she was a loving and devoted wife, an affectionate and indulgent parent, a steadfast, unchangeable friend. Her religious faith was exhibited so long as consciousness remained. This was shown yesterday, when, in