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WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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THE SACRED RIGHT OF FREE
BELIEF.The following paragraph is clipped
from the New York Tribune:

"The first election in Utah under the Edmunds law has turned out just as it was expected to, do by those familiar with Mormon affairs. It was shown at the time the law was passed that while it would establish the principle that no polygamist could vote or hold office, or sit in Congress, and so would benefit the cause of morality in general, the Mormons would still control the elections as surely as before. The number of Mormons who are not polygamists, or who cannot be proved to be such, is so large that the Mormon Church is apparently as strong as ever, although its chief men are disfranchised. The 'bosses' of the Church cannot vote, but they can say who shall be voted for by the Mormons who can vote. The dispatches say that the Gentiles felt the contest to be a hopeless one, and so many did not vote. It does not follow, however, that the Mormon problem is as far off from a solution as ever. The very existence of the law disfranchising polygamists must tend in time to weaken their influence. The men who have the ballot will be conscious of a power which they will hardly be willing to use forever at the bidding of men who have not got it. The fact also that it will be necessary to the preservation of the political influence of the Church to have a large body of members who are not polygamists must also tend in time to weaken the 'peculiar institution.' When the practice of polygamy is broken up the concern of the Government with Mormonism will be at an end. Any man can believe that he has the right to break the law, and cannot be punished or disfranchised for that belief; but when he breaks it, as the polygamist is doing, it is time for the Government to bring its hand down hard."

The foregoing is a very temperate discussion of the subject, especially for so strong an anti-"Mormon" journal as the New York Tribune. There is one point on which the fanatics on this question will not agree with that paper. If it were possible to abolish polygamy tomorrow, next day there would be just as much hostility to "Mormonism" on their part as at present. They will not concede the right of the "Mormons" even to believe in the righteousness of polygamy, and are even now planning and devising schemes to procure congressional interference with that belief. They want all "Mormons" disfranchised, that political power may be wielded in Utah solely by the enemies of the "Mormon" people. They find themselves just as deep in the mire of disappointment now as they were in the mud of defeat before practical polygamists were deprived of the right to vote and hold office. The "polygamy" cry has "proven a failure. It is evident to everybody that the alleged evil was greatly exaggerated and grossly distorted for political effect. Notwithstanding the disfranchisement of actual polygamists, and all who could be styled such under the widest definition that could be given to the term, "Mormon" votes still stand in the way of those who seek to plunder Utah. So now they demand the very thing that the New York Tribune and other leading journals say cannot be granted—the political death of every one professing to be a "Mormon."

But they are going to meet with still more disappointment. If a few cranks and rash and incendiary fanatics favor the demand, there are enough reasonable minds to perceive its folly with sufficient clearness to prevent the outrage. For it would be not only an outrage against many thousands of citizens who have violated no law, but an outrage against liberty and law itself, against re-

publicanism, against the Constitution, against the rights and privileges which the government is set up to protect.

The right to believe what seems right, to advocate it and speak and publish facts and arguments in its favor, belongs to all citizens, and those who wish to trample it under foot to favor and foster their own selfish ends, are traitors to good government and renegades to the institutions of our common country. It is a sacred right and is inalienable. The very fact that certain individuals are seeking to deprive monogamic "Mormons" of that right, should be enough to convince all rational Americans that those persons are not working for patriotic or moral ends, but for the accomplishment of private purposes and from beastly greed and hope of temporal gain. "Keep the rascals out."

AMERICA CANNOT AFFORD
TO PERSECUTE.

The American, which cannot be accused of any sympathy with the "Mormons," as it has taken strong ground in opposition to their social system, has the annexed rational paragraph:

"As we never looked to immediate results as the fruit of the Edmunds bill, we are not disappointed, nor can we unite with those who call for still more stringent legislation against the Mormons. The Edmunds bill goes quite as far as it is possible for the United States to go, without falling into a persecution of religious opinions. The nation has done its duty in stigmatizing the crime of polygamy by disfranchisement, and in taking every step possible for its punishment. We look to the gradual effect of this legislation to produce either the dissolution of the sect or its compulsory abandonment of 'plural marriage.' America cannot afford to persecute."

The last sentence in the above is pertinent. Persecution of the "Mormons" will not pay, in the long run. If that can be done by the Government against one religious denomination, under any plea whatever, it will be only a matter of time till it can be done under some fresh plea to another religious body. It will prove the lifting of the floodgates of intolerance and bigotry. Only a small stream may be sent forth at first, but the lever will be applied again and again, until the torrents of persecution will sweep down and overthrow all sects and societies that are deemed unorthodox.

Opinion under this government must at least be free. If the "free exercise" of religion guaranteed in the supreme law of the land is only a phrase, a theory, something to be gauged by the popular standard which is ever changing, opinion must be left unfettered and unaffected by whim, notion, rule or law.

When the "Mormons" claimed the right to freely practice their religion, including its marriage teachings and rites, they were told that they were free to believe what they pleased; that they might think what they liked; that they might put as much faith as they thought proper in any professed revelations, ancient or modern, upon any subject. So long as they did not carry their faith into practice, it was said they were unobjectionable. The Supreme Court of the United States officially announced the same principle in effect. It is only when belief breaks out into overt acts against peace and good order that the law can interfere with it, so that Court proclaimed. The wise judges who enunciated that doctrine did not attempt to show how or in what manner plural marriage broke out into "overt acts against peace and good order," but they assumed that it did, and therefore decided that the law might forbid it, but declared that belief in it could not be legally interfered with.

And yet there are persons and papers who now advocate what the American properly calls "persecution for religious belief. That is, they would deprive all "Mormons" of the franchise on the ground that though those who now have the right to vote are not any of them practical polygamists, yet they believe that plural marriage is right, and therefore ought to be also disfranchised and cut off from all political rights and privileges.

This would be punishment for no crime. It would be doing that which the Constitution, the Supreme Court and enlightened opinion all

over the world say cannot lawfully be done. Such persecution would not only be unlawful, it would be inexpedient. It would be the worst kind of policy. It would form a most mischievous precedent. It would be a sin that would soon bring its own punishment. Disfranchise the "Mormons" for unorthodox belief and what sect would be safe?

And what would be accomplished by such a shameful departure from right, justice and constitutional law? Can error be stamped out by force? Will firm belief give way to violence? Does history show that such a course is likely to succeed? May we expect that admitted wrong-doing will bring about right results? Will acknowledged evil overcome alleged evil? Can the "Mormons" more than any other human beings be coerced into thinking to order, or be deterred from believing and trusting in a creed for which they have already shown they can "endure all things"? No. The attempt will not only be wrong, it will be a failure as it deserves to be.

Since writing the above we have seen the following in the Albany Argus in an editorial of August 12th, it strikes this nail directly on the head, and therefore we clip and insert it here:

"All Mormons believe in polygamy. Not more than two men in ten of them practice it. The eight believing in the abomination out of every ten, who, nevertheless, as a fact do not practice it, made up a ticket of their own number and triumphantly elected it. Mormonism is a religion. Polygamy is a fact. The fact can be made a cause for disfranchisement. The religion cannot. Polygamy has won without factual Polygamists voting or being voted for. What the next step to take will be cannot be remarked yet. The facts in the case are plain. Disfranchisement cannot be based on the 'views' of men in territories. Their acts alone can be regarded. A polygamist in Utah is one who has more than one wife at a time. He who has none or only one can not be disfranchised, for believing that it is right to have more than one at a time. Neither can voting be dispensed with in territories by Congress. The constitution guarantees territories the right to the election of local officers, subject to Congress restrictions, but the constitution, in granting freedom of religion, removes a religious belief either in polygamy or in idols or in anything else from the list of possible restrictions."

That view of the case will be endorsed by all rational persons who are opposed to plural marriage, unless they are interested in the scheme to rule and ruin Utah. The plea of expediency is too far fetched, the alleged object in view could not be reached by the means proposed, and the scheme is too extreme un-American and altogether monstrous to be adopted in the Republic of the United States.

SNUBBING "STRANGE
WOMEN."

The Mayville Sentinel, published in Chautauqua County, New York, has the following lively article in its issue of August 15th:

"A few days ago we received a lengthy circular containing matter enough to fill two columns of our paper, purporting to come from the female publishers of the Anti-Polygamy Standard, of Salt Lake City, the burden of which seemed to be an appeal for a few thousand dollars for the purchase of printing material, etc., and was addressed to the women of the United States. Among other things the statement was made that the projectors wanted the contents of the circular to be brought to the notice of every woman in the land, and suggested that editors should publish the same to the furtherance of that end. Our circulation being limited, and far short of meeting the demand, and knowing that no one else would publish it, we thought of a plan for accomplishing the result, and wrote as follows upon the bottom of the circular and returned it to the fair publishers: 'Get 40,000,000 of these circulars printed and distribute them judiciously, and you will probably attain the end desired.' We expected thanks and a request for our photograph, and were therefore severely shocked at receiving the following, which, however, the poor dear creature forgot to date or sign, but the envelope bore the 'Standard' card, and was post-marked

"Salt Lake City, July 12, 1883, 3.30 p.m." It will be some time before we shall offer any more kindly advice to strange women, if woman it was who wrote these beautiful lines:

"If it were not for the presence on God's fair earth of just such libels on his image as you are, there would be no need of such appeals to the 'Women of the United States,' no need of societies for the suppression of crime, ignorance and bestiality of any kind."

The females who are dragging a very soiled and porous sponge through the country to suck up contributions from the simple, are quite modest in their mendicancy. They only ask for a couple of thousand of the "dollars of our daddies." The poor creatures, it seems, are not succeeding very well, hence their anger and the rough language that they hurl against the editor who does not see things with their eyes. He is wise in his generation. He does not perceive any need to give them free advertising just to draw money for their private benefit. He is right. Those "strange women" would not improve on acquaintance. One has only to read a number of their dirty little collection of stale scandals to learn what they are and how much they are worthy of the contributions of decent people.

The whole thing is a fraud, and he or she who is deceived thereby into giving away their money, that is needed so much for truly charitable and moral purposes, cannot be numbered among the prudent of the earth. The rage of the literary scavengers is a compliment to the object of their feminine and impotent wrath. The women of the United States will save in money and reputation by giving them a wide berth.

THE "CHRISTIAN UNION" AND
THE UTAH ELECTION.

The Christian Union, under the head of "The Outlook," publishes weekly comments on the chief topics of the times, designed to give its many readers a general idea of current events, and help them to form conclusions in relation to them and their bearing upon public affairs. The articles are usually well written and their reasoning is generally logical and fair. The first of these paragraphs in the Union of August 16th, is as follows:

"Utah held her first general election under the new Edmunds law on Monday of last week. By the provisions of that act polygamists of both sexes are debarred from voting or holding office; but Mormons who do not practice polygamy are permitted both to vote and to hold office. The provisions of the law were carried out by a registration of voters under the direction of duly authorized commissioners; but the polygamists succeeded in carrying the fight a step back of the ballot box, and have won the day by nominating their candidates. Many of the nominees for the Legislature were so absurdly incompetent that the Gentiles seem to have regarded the election as a farce, and to have stayed away from the polls in great numbers. The Mormons cast a solid vote for their candidates, and have won a complete victory. None of the candidates were allowed to stand unless they had been approved by the Mormon Church, and some of the persons elected are believed to be dummies, who will refuse to qualify, and thus enable the present office-holders to hold over. By this skillful manipulation the Territory remains under the political control of the Mormons; the commission having the power only to pass upon the regularity of the certificates of the members of the Legislature. The Edmunds act was a step in advance, but only a step, and a very short one at that."

The name of the paper from which the above paragraph is clipped ought to be a guaranty of its truth. Yet there are several statements in it that are very erroneous. If they had been made as copied from other sources the Union would not perhaps have been blamable. But they are given editorially without reserve or reference to other authority. And yet that editor of the Union who prepared the article could not have any knowledge of some things that he positively asserts, for two reasons. First, they are not true. Second, if they were true, there is no way by which he could have obtained information o

them except by hearsay. How did he learn that the polygamists the day by "nominating their dummies." What does he know of the competence or incompetence of the nominees? By what means did he find out that "none of the candidates were allowed to stand unless they had been approved by the Mormon Church?" And would it not be fair and wise to wait a little while before making any remark about "dummies," at least until some of those who are elected "fuss to qualify?"

The election in Utah has been won by the People's Party. This is a political organization in and of itself, like any other party with similar objects. It is not the "Mormon Church." It is as much a distinct and separate organization as a building society, an insurance company, or a mercantile institution. It matters not that it is chiefly, even if it is wholly, composed of persons who are members of the "Mormon" Church. It has its own identity and is not governed by Church dignitaries or by ecclesiastical regulations.

The candidates for election were nominated by the regularly called conventions of the People's Party. There were no polygamists, so far as we are aware, among the delegates to those conventions, who were elected at the primaries. There were not a "dummy" name that we know of put upon the ticket of any county. The men were selected for the supposed fitness for office. It may be remembered that on ground, to a very great extent, had to be explored for selections. Very many of the men of experience in these public positions were rendered ineligible by the Edmunds law. It is possible that in every case the best eligible individuals were not picked out. But it is sure that the representatives of the Party used their greatest wisdom and judgment in making the nominations, and the people endorsed their choice at the ballot box.

The Christian Union says, "Many of the nominees for the Legislature were so absurdly incompetent that the Gentiles stayed away from the polls." Now what does that editor know of the qualifications of any nominee for our local Legislature? All the candidates are strangers to him. He simply repeats what he has heard. Why did he not wait, and will he just look at the absurdity of his remark about the Gentiles staying away from the polls because the "Mormon" candidates were "absurdly incompetent"? Why, they would not have voted for those candidates if they had been singularly competent. They had their own ticket which they called "Liberal." If their candidates were so much more competent than those of the People's Party, why should they stay away from the polls on that account? Does the editor mean to say that the "Gentiles" would have made a stronger vote for their own ticket if the "Mormons" had put up weak candidates? Pshaw! The folly of the remark is equalled by the unwisdom of the rash assertions about matters in which he can have no knowledge of.

All the "skillful manipulation" there was about the election consisted of complying with the law in every respect, and watching its enemy at every vulnerable point, so that they played no tricks to advantage. The remains in its present political control simply because the People's Party outnumbered the so-called "Liberal" party over. What would the Christian Union have? Is it not satisfied with a polygamist can vote or hold office? Does it want to disfranchise "Mormons" for their belief, because it happens to be different from that of the Christian Union? If so, what is the movement it would advise, of which the severe and extraordinary measure known as the Edmunds act was but a "very short step" in advance?

We think that a paper like the Christian Union should be more careful in its assertions and a little closer in its logic on questions that may affect the liberties of American citizens, and that in its dealings with the "Mormon" question it will have to be a little more charitable, or the first half of its title will have to be dropped from the head of the paper.

No matter what your ailment is, Brown's Iron Bitters will surely benefit you.