

LET THEM FURNISH THE PROOF.

It was to be expected that the "Liberal" Utah Commission would be applauded by the "Liberal" organ for still further misrepresenting the condition of affairs in Utah. The Commission has been largely governed by that organ and the organ has been ready to defend the Commission. They have worked together for the same end. They have talked the same things. They have scattered the same slanders. And when they have been asked for proofs they have utterly failed to respond, but have demanded that the accused shall prove their own innocence. The organ now wants us to prove a negative.

Is not this the proper mode of procedure? The Commission make the charge, in effect, that fifteen male persons have during the past year entered into polygamous marriages. Let the names of those persons be given. If the Commissioners have them they can produce them. If they have them not, they have no right to make the charge. And, if they do not know these names, they have the names of the persons who make this report to them; let them give the names of the accusers. If they will not do either, why should anybody be expected to attempt to disprove the accusations. But the organ complains that we are engaged, "not in disproving the charges made, but in hurling anathemas at the Commission." No anathemas, however strong, would do justice to the feelings of contempt we feel for men who take the cowardly course that these Commissioners have pursued. But why should we be engaged in "disproving" a bald assertion without a solitary fact or argument or witness to support it, and couched in such language that those who make it dodge from the issue in the most sneaking manner possible?

The Commission are repeating the old slander they have been repeatedly challenged to substantiate. They have never attempted to prove their covert charges. The Presidency and the General Conference of the Church solemnly denied them and the only answer of the official slanderers is, "denials and denunciations prove nothing." It is for the Commission to furnish the proof. All that the other side is required to do is to plead. If no evidence is forthcoming there is no need for anything but the denial. Again we challenge proof that fifteen or any number of male persons have contracted polygamous marriages in Utah during the past year. They are afraid to give the names of the persons alleged to be suspected, because the falsehood of the charge could then be exposed. That is what is the matter.

Their organ rushes to their rescue with the insinuation "they may have gone over the line to be married." They "may" have gone to heaven or some other place. What they may have done is not the point. Give us the names and the proofs. We deny that either in Utah "or over the line," wherever that may be, there have been since the adoption of the manifesto fifteen polygamous marriages solemnized by the "Mormon" Church or any of its authorized ministers.

The Commissioner's organ says: "Any member of the priesthood can

marry a Mormon man to a Mormon woman and by some trick a good many of those marriages have been solemnized." If by "those marriages" is meant plural marriages, the statement is utterly and knowingly false. No member of the priesthood in this Territory is permitted by the Church or its authorities to marry any "Mormon" woman to a "Mormon" man who has a lawful wife living and undivorced. Nor is it true that "any member of the priesthood" is authorized to solemnize a marriage between a "Mormon" man and a "Mormon" woman, even if it be lawful. The Commissioner's organ is dealing in the same kind of deception as the Commissioners are themselves. The civil law permits a recognized minister of any denomination to solemnize a marriage, but the "Mormon" Church does not authorize all the members of its Priesthood to so officiate, and the whole statement to the contrary is manufactured to deceive.

We deny that "by some trick," or in any other way, these polygamous marriages that the Commissioners and their organ are circulating lies about, have occurred during the past year or the year before that. Raking up rumors about alleged occurrences just after the passage of the Edmunds Act will not do. They will not divert attention from the charge that during the present year or two, notwithstanding the manifesto and its adoption, polygamous marriages have continued to be contracted by the "Mormons." That charge is groundless, and we believe no one understands that better than the Commissioners who give it publicity, and the organ that supports them in their duplicity.

As to the belief of the "Mormon" people, thank God neither the Commission nor any other earthly power has any business with that! Our opinions are our own. We ask nobody's consent to entertain them. We are indifferent to the sentiments of such persons as the Commissioners in relation to them. While we submit to the law the law has no issue with us. If we choose to uphold the law, even believing it to be unwise or unjust, we are constitutionally protected in our freedom of faith. And if there were no constitution or declaration of human rights in this respect, the liberty of thought and belief exists and is beyond the power of mortal man to suppress.

We say that the "Mormon" Church and the "Mormon" people have ceased to solemnize and contract plural marriages, out of deference to the law of the land. We say that they have been wonderfully submissive to the acts of Congress in relation to polygamy since they agreed to observe them. And we regard the effort made by the Commission to hold them up as insincere and recreant to their agreements, as one of the most dastardly and cowardly and mercenary attempts to malign a noble people, for the purpose of retaining a petty office, ever perpetrated in a civilized country.

"Denials and denunciations" may be distasteful to persons who engage in such malicious work, but they provoke denials by their assaults and lay themselves open to denunciations by their repeated dissemination of slanders for

which they offer no element of proof. As it is, they are official retailers of stale scandal, and even their greatly reduced salaries are, for such work, a gross imposition upon the government and people of this country.

GENERAL JOHN POPE.

ANOTHER of the historic characters of the civil war passed away in Ohio on the 24th inst. In army annals the name of Pope does not figure as brilliantly as Sherman, Sheridan, Hooker and several others. However, it is universally acknowledged that General John Pope was a dashing soldier, but his military career has been so acrimoniously discussed that it is difficult to estimate it accurately.

Pope was born in Illinois in 1823, graduated at West Point 1842, served in Florida 1844, fought at Monterey and Buena Vista 1846-48, was made brigadier-general of volunteers in 1861, commanded the army of the Mississippi in 1862, and later on the army of Virginia. At the close of the war he was mustered out of the volunteer service, and placed in command of the department of the Missouri with headquarters at Fort Leavenworth. He published a work entitled "Explorations from the Red River to the Rio Grande," now embodied in the Pacific railroad reports, vol. 3. He also published a history of the campaign in Virginia during July and August, 1862.

DR. ILIFF'S ERROR.

THE Salt Lake public are familiar with the charge of plagiarism against Dr. Iliff, of the M. E. Church. They also understand the explanation, given by the gentleman's friends, of the circumstances under which he made use of some eloquent utterances of Dr. Guard's without giving credit for them. We have exposed the treachery of some of Dr. Iliff's pretended friends and fellow ministers, in hunting up the evidences of this plagiarism and giving them to a daily paper to print. It was a traitorous stab in the back, and the hand that made the cowardly thrust was dyed deep with the stain that it intended to stamp upon Dr. Iliff.

We regard the failure of the gentleman to inform the public of the source of his extracts, when they appeared in print as his own, as an error of judgment which has, no doubt, pained him more than it has injured anybody else. When the address he delivered appeared in a public journal without proper credit, a few lines of explanation would have put the matter right, saved Dr. Iliff much mortification and absolved him from the charge of intentional plagiarism, which some of his colleagues have been eager to fasten upon him.

On Sunday morning at the close of the services in the Iliff M. E. Church, the following frank and manly statement was read by Dr. Iliff to the congregation:

"It is already known to the public that early in September I asked Presiding Elder J. D. Gilliam to call my brother ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Utah together, and proposed to them to take any step that might by