

the week commencing on the last Monday of September, and the completed lists and affidavits are to be delivered to the clerk of the County court on or before the second Monday in October. The filing and hearing of objections to the right to vote is left as before.

To comply with the law will require at least two and perhaps more sessions of the Commission in each year, only the long winter sessions being rendered unnecessary.

Complaint was made before the Congressional committee that after the Commission had suggested changes in the registration law, the legislature enacted a law to remedy the evils, which was approved by the Commission and still was vetoed by the governor.

This is an incorrect statement. The Commission has not "approved" such an enactment. It has no authority so to do. Advice has more than once been asked of individual members of the commission upon such proposed legislation, and their opinions as to the propriety of the proposed reforms have been freely and frankly expressed, but the acts when passed have always contained features which could not be endorsed by the Commission.

The act in question contained features and provisions which seemed objectionable to the governor, who alone has the power of approval or veto, and it failed to receive his approval. With his reasons of failing to approve the act the Commission has nothing to do, but is satisfied that the Governor not only acted conscientiously in the matter, and for what he deemed to be the best interests of the people of the Territory, but that he was right in withholding his approval.

POLYGAMY.

Prior to the last report of the Commission the President of the Mormon Church had issued a manifesto on the subject of polygamy which was claimed by the authorities to have the force and effects of abolishing that institution. But because the Commission pointed out the fact that it was merely an advice to suspend the operation of what the Church authorities still claimed was a divine law, and presented facts which tended at least to show that polygamy and its kindred offenses were still to some extent being practiced, it found itself at once the subject of the most violent denunciations as retailers of falsehoods.

The report was published in but one of the Salt Lake papers on the 6th of October, 1891, its first appearance in print in Utah. On that day the General Conference of the Church was in session, and a committee was appointed and on the same day presented the following preamble and resolutions:

These resolutions have already been published.

If by these resolutions and declarations they mean to say that the Commission states falsely that it has such information, the reports are on file in the archives of the Commission. If they mean that these sworn officers of the government report falsely, it may be answered that these officers live in and are familiar with the precincts, make the house-to-house canvass for registration, and cannot possibly have an interest in reporting anything but the facts, and that common rumor abundantly corroborates their reports.

Denials and denunciations prove nothing. Both have been resorted to by the Church authorities for many years. They denied the existence of polygamy when it did exist, and only ceased to deny when it could no longer be hidden.

The Utah Commission has, and can have, nothing to gain by inventing and narrating falsehoods, or perverting the truth. It aims to "set naught down in malice, and naught extenuate."

How long was it before the formulation of the offending report that Professor Talmage, principal of the Latter-day Saints' College, a school where both sexes are taught, testified under oath in the United States district court at Salt Lake as follows:

"We teach that we have a right to obey all the revelations of God. I believe that the revelation in regard to plural marriages is from God, and believe that if the Constitution was properly administered, the law against plural marriage would never have been passed. I think Congress overstepped its authority in passing that law. . . . We teach pupils that the revelation in regard to celestial marriage is from God, and that it is their duty to obey. All plural marriages are celestial, but all celestial marriages are not plural."

The revelation on plural marriage has not been expunged from the Book of Doctrines and Covenants, nor have the countless arguments in its favor been withdrawn from the hands of the people or their teachers. What avails it thence to say the doctrine is not taught? Since the report of 1891 was made some of the highest authorities in the Mormon Church have been called upon to testify in the United States District Court in what is known as "the Church Exchequer Case."

Here is given the testimony of Presidents Woodruff, Cannon and Smith and Apostle Lorenzo Snow before the Master in Chancery in the Church cases.

The foregoing is not a statement made by the Commission. It is the sworn statement of the beliefs and teachings of the highest dignitaries of the Mormon Church two weeks after they placed before the General Conference of their Church and had unanimously adopted their denunciation of the Utah Commission as liars, because it said in its report that they believed and taught that doctrine.

It is the testimony of the three dignitaries who affixed their names to the "Declaration of the First Presidency," saying of the Commission's report: "It is utterly without foundation in truth."

It may be added that this Joseph F. Smith who spoke so certainly upon this subject had

NOT BEEN VISIBLE

in the Territory for nearly eight years until the meeting of that conference. During that time he had been a fugitive from justice, in hiding on "the underground," evading the officers of the law, and upon his full confession that he had been guilty of the practice of this very doctrine, and his earnest appeal for clemency, and solemn promise to obey the law in the future, had just received the pardon from the Executive which permitted him to be present and attack and denounce as falsifiers representatives of the government who had

been on the ground from six to eight months of every year of the eight years during which he was a fugitive and in hiding in other parts of the world.

The Utah Commission would call attention to the fact, which it esteems no cause for regret, but rather something to be gratified with, that in all three of the public and official declarations of the church which marks its change of front as to the heretofore cardinal doctrine of its creed, the acts of the Commission are given as the reason for their promulgation. The Commission considers this fact stronger evidence than it could elsewhere adduce to prove that the work it was called upon to perform has been well and thoroughly done.

The Commission credits the church with all that can reasonably be claimed for it from the official declarations it has promulgated.

Much credit has been assumed by the Mormon Church and people for their change of front on the subject of polygamy and their asserted willing submission and obedience to the laws of the general government, and profound reverence for the rulings of the courts of the country. In this connection it may not be unprofitable to recall certain facts which may have had a potent influence in producing that change of front.

It is a matter of history that by reason of their peculiar practices they were

DRIVEN FROM OHIO, MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS.

When they migrated to the mountains they were left to themselves from 1847 to 1862, and there openly established and practiced polygamy, not then made a crime by statute, but a practice in violation of the common law of the country, and of the sentiment of the civilized world. In 1862 the practice came under the ban of the penal laws of the nation, by the enactment of what is known as the Poland law, but these people openly defied and set that law at naught, and the courts for twenty years found it impossible to enforce it or to punish for its violation, by reason of the united action of the people in preventing the execution of the laws and process of the courts.

The country demanded

MORE STRINGENT LAWS,

and the Edmunds law was passed in 1882, giving the courts more power, adding the penalty of disfranchisement, and authorizing the appointment of the Utah Commission, whose powers are limited to the provisions of one small section of the law. The courts were busy, and became able to make their power felt, and the work of the Commission was progressing, but both were always confronted with the united and determined opposition of the Mormon people acting under shrewd and able leaders. The people of the country were impatient at the slow progress made, and further legislation was had in what is known as the Edmunds-Tucker law of 1887, which strengthened some of the weak points of the former law.

The opposition was still active, united and determined. Hundreds and perhaps thousands were convicted and went to the penitentiary as convicts rather than submit to the law. Thousands submitted to be deprived of