

TEN DAYS AS THE GUEST OF A LATTER-DAY SAINT.

BY K. A. BURNELL.

From the Chicago Advance.

When I determined to spend this summer in Christian work in Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and California, I assigned a week to this city, but so much is here to be learned, that my tenth day finds me here. My itinerant life the past dozen years has often brought me in contact with Mormons, both singly and in their immense trains, as they have been journeying to these valleys of the mountains. Some of them have impressed me much, as being intensely in earnest, and lead me to believe that important lessons were to be learned if one could get an inside view here. The letters I have read have uniformly made an impression on my mind as being written after a short stay, and that at a hotel and from a very prejudiced standpoint. I prayed much that the door might be opened for me to be one of them, while in this remarkable city and valley. A good Iowa brother warmly commended me to one of his old friends, and when I presented my letter to a brother builder, surrounded with jack-plane and hammer and the sweet odor of pine shavings (how it waked up the past!) I believingly prayed like one of old, that I might find favor in his sight, and was soon quartered in his polygamic family. That my opportunities should be the very best, I have sat down by the blacksmith's forge and the tailor's bench, been through the market, stood over the brick makers, smelled the freshness of the mortar as it comes from the plasterer's trowel, chewed pine shavings with the carpenters, and sat down with the small farmer in his family. Gentile and Mormon merchants have freely answered my questions. The only billiard saloon-keeper thinks the Saints are no better than others. Governor Durkee spoke kindly of the people, though they of course think there is no demand for his office. The only Gentile effort made religiously is by high church Episcopalians, the attendance at the morning and evening services yesterday numbering each about fifty. The chaplain at the fort is an Episcopalian, as are all the army chaplains that I have met, and while three years' army experience told me somewhat of the difficulties incident to their work, still, if it is a work of love, rather than of profession, I do not see how their influence can be so narrow.

"Bro. Brigham," or "the President," as he is uniformly, very respectfully and often lovingly called, is the man of all men here, the central idea, and has a power over 130,000 of this valley as well as an influence abroad, that I believe is unequalled, yea unparalleled in modern times. He has two counselors: the three with the twelve apostles are photographed and hung in every dwelling. The power of President Grant and his Cabinet over the nation does not compare with the unlimited control and dictation of this fifteen over the people. The city has 20 wards, each one having its Bishop, with his two counselors. Each ward has nine blocks, each block contains ten acres and has two teachers, whose monthly duty it is to visit every family, supplying wants temporal and spiritual, and making his reports. The Bishop is the man of his ward. I attended two ward Sunday Schools, held from 10 to 12 a. m., the new Tabernacle services both Sunday afternoons, and a part of the old Tabernacle service yesterday morning, with the evening service at one of the ward churches, and a five and one-half hours' fast day baptismal confirmation and testimony meeting. The latter is held the first day of every month and is a part of the much talked of, and intensely believed Joseph Smith revelation. I stood at the baptismal font last Thursday as ten or twelve were buried beneath the waters, the officiating brother always and very heartily commencing with, "Having authority from Jesus Christ," etc. Some were baptized for their health. Several were boys, which was a service exceedingly interesting. All that were baptized for admission to the church had hands laid on them for the reception of the Holy Ghost. The seven or eight officiating elders all took part, and spoke heartily, naturally and well. I was impressed with their freedom and promptitude. It was as well done as ministers generally do, I think I may say better, because there was a cheerful and most suggestive remove from the cant and sanctimony, that sometimes we see, and that always is so unnatural and often painful. But one little child was pre-

sented to "be blessed," similar to our baptism. They make a great deal, yea a very great deal of baptism and laying on of hands. They seem to wish to make of it a saving ordinance.

The testimonies of the nine men and five women in the "testimony meeting," of fast day were excellent, in fact I never heard an equal number of experiences or testimonies from people as unlike as they were that were better. Every one spoke with a cheerful, hearty, natural positiveness, and the deep features of the soul as written upon the face, showed how honest they were, and I have no doubt they are taught of God. Of course I gave Gentile testimony from a full soul and it was instructive in the extreme, to hear several in their responding, say, The strange brother, is doubtless honest, but he needs to take steps further, he needs to be baptized as we understand it. I am continually impressed and reminded of their confidence in Joseph Smith's revelations, and in him as a prophet, with Brigham as his successor, as well as their individual confidence that they are right. They know that they are right and that Gentiles are wrong. It is a constant recurrence to the law and the testimony, and when I say I understand that passage differently, then comes another, "Thus saith the Lord." Some features of their church management are grand. Their unity seems complete, and next to the papal power, it is a unit, I have no doubt. Yesterday at the close of the Tabernacle service, sixty names were read of young men who are to go on a mission to settle Bear Lake 100 miles north. This holding themselves in readiness to be sent abroad to preach the gospel if sufficiently experienced, or to settle new regions and build up and sustain the church and kingdom as they understand it, is noble.

En route for this city I passed several days at Cheyenne, in meetings with that uniform, untiring, faithful Christian soldier, Col. J. D. Davis and others, and while there a Mormon train passed through. A pleasant-faced Welchman was in charge, who took us through the train. A deformed, paralytic, and very old man, sitting in a chair, said to him: "I'll follow you to my latest breath." I passed an hour here in the family of that Welch missionary and was delighted with his spirit and all that I saw in his family. He has been absent four years, and most untiringly has preached the gospel of Mormonism in Wales. He, in common with others, has been persecuted, but has steadily gone onward. As we passed his garden he remarked, "My things of course have gone to rack during so long an absence," but he spoke of it as being a part of the all things that work together for good. This missionary spirit has settled this Utah Territory (running down into Arizona) for 500 miles north and south, and 75 east and west. I took supper with one who on a mission has walked over 1,300 miles in India. Apostle-like, they go without purse or scrip.

The preaching in the Tabernacle by the Twelve and the First Presidency is well presented. Last Sabbath, Bishop Kingsley spoke, when Brigham followed. The advantage is entirely with them, they know their audience, understand perfectly the hold they have upon them, and there is no lack of improvement of the opportunity to impress upon them what they have suffered in coming here, how they have been persecuted by the Gentile church, and how they are the chosen people of God. I did not come to learn Mormonism and to be taught by it from its leaders so much as from the common people. The only one of the Twelve with whom I have talked at length, is Apostle G. Q. Cannon. He is the editor of the DESERET NEWS, (a daily,) and a children's semi-monthly paper. I have studied Brigham through the people and closely watched him as I have passed and repassed and seen him on the rostrum. The people venerate him, love him, pray for him in public and private. Out of forty or fifty public and private prayers I have heard, not more than three have failed of the petition, "Thy servant Brigham, give him wisdom and new revelations of Thyself, teach him how to lead the people," etc. The appointments of his house, barns, carriages, lands and all, would be called in the States tolerably splendid at least, and yet no one finds any fault whatever, but on the contrary every one endorses his every movement, and all regard him as above anything approaching to the selfish or unchristian. They say that sometimes he speaks and is not much, but when the Prophet speaks it is wonderful. I cannot discover in him greatness, only as it has been thrust

upon him. It does not appear that he has a creative mind, or is a genius, in fact I do not see but what hundreds and thousands of men in his position would have stood as high or higher. Out of Mormonism he would have made a fair judge or lawyer, a successful merchant or railroad president. He is modest and a gentleman, and although some of his remarks sound very, very strange to Gentile ears, yet when explained by his peculiar views, this harshness is very much removed.

That any Christian in our land can learn more lessons in this valley than anywhere else, of thrift, economy, a dogged persistency, a grand unity, an untiring devotion, and a holding his life in his hand, and an obedience to orders, I firmly believe. My opportunities have been the very best to see the people in the streets. Both to-day and during all last week, crowds were in to see a circus, the first that has ever visited these valleys. Much has been said about lack-luster eyes, stolid, sad and depressed countenances, especially among the women. That there is occasion for this I believe, and why not? The masses are the unthinking and burdened of the old world. Of course the schools are not what they are in the States—this is freely admitted. One teacher said to me that they were more anxious to cultivate the spiritual than the mental. Every body works. The President's house and the entrance to his yard is surmounted by a bee-hive.

This brings me to the vexed and vexing question of polygamy. Of this I was determined to learn, hence my gratitude to be in the family. Mine host I love like a brother, while the more I see of him, the less I agree with him, and I frankly and warmly tell him so. Yet I do like his earnestness, his love and sacrifice for his faith, and his real, brotherly anxiety to make me see as he does. He says I shall certainly be led into darkness if I do not embrace the truth. If every one does as well in polygamy as he does and his family, I feel that it would be a wonderful improvement on the wretched infidelity, that in many families in the States is perdition on earth. That is no argument, and yet it is often used. It is simply a choice of evils. I can say of this family, what I can say of comparatively few of the hundreds of families whose guest I have been—and I have been the guest of large numbers of the best of families—I have not heard an unkind word, or seen a scowl, and there are eleven children. Having said so much and knowing how intensely anxious Gentiles are and have a right to be, I will venture into detail a little, not thinking that in any sense it invades domestic privacy. Mine host is 55; his first wife, dying six years ago, left him with three sons and three daughters. His oldest daughter is one of Brigham's wives, his oldest son is married and away. Sons 20 and 23, daughters 16 and 14, of the first family, are here. The present first wife is 29, with three interesting children, under four. The second wife is 23, has two children, the eldest two and a half. The first wife has charge of the family. The second wife has pleasant rooms, in a wing or north end of the house, both wings or ends opening on the front piazza. The house is large and all on one floor, and well arranged for the two families. The second wife lives entirely separate, having front and back door. In one of the Bishop's families he introduced me to a wife that looked to be as old as himself, and he was seventy; and to another about thirty-five; and he did not say as to others. I have passed two hours twice with one of the nine wives of Parley P. Pratt, who was murdered in Arkansas. Many who read this will remember him. At the second interview the fourth wife was present, the other wife being the ninth. Both of these women made their mark in their way, and were both married (unfortunately though, however) before becoming the wife of Apostle Pratt. They are both women that would have grandly filled any position in life, and when I expressed amazement beyond any comprehension of mine, that such women as they could consent to share a husband's affection with nine others, they both said they rejoiced with great joy to have it so. I have met four intelligent and thinking women who defend the system with more tenacity than men. It is a religious idea to honor the man, they being honored in his honor, and without it having no part or lot in the kingdom. The more numerous the posterity, the greater the honor in the kingdom. It is utterly impossible for any woman to be tolerably happy (to say nothing about wifely comfort, triumph and rest,) in polygamy, unless she is truly, soundly con-

verted to this feature of their faith. I judge from much questioning, that nearly all believe, but that not more than one-fourth practice polygamy. In spite of seeing this thing so favorably, I firmly believe that nine-tenths of the women in Utah, could they be left to themselves, would vote it so thoroughly out of existence that it would never be heard of again.

Although I have written very much at length, I have failed to say that the tabernacle seats 8,000, and is to have a gallery put in that will seat 3,000 more. It stands on 18 stone piers 3x9 feet, is in extremes 156x250 feet; the spring of the roof is 40 feet, elliptical in form, and looks like an immense inverted schooner. The openings between the columns make the egress grand. To-day 6,000 moved out by my watch in three minutes. By the grace of God, here, increasingly, I have learned to be more single-aimed and eyed for Christ and perishing souls.

Salt Lake City, July 5.

[The Advance.]

A NEW SENSATION.

THE electric telegraph is a great institution, it has become an indispensable necessity of the age. We do not know what we would do without it, especially the overland dispatches. For instance, we have two items of news this morning of thrilling interest to the country. They are equal to the startling announcements which one sees in the English papers—the *Court Journal*, &c. "Her Majesty took an airing this morning at Windsor Castle." "Her Majesty left by special train for Balmoral." The country is under obligations to the agent for furnishing them a new sensation in the shape of these dispatches. How profoundly will every reading man in the Territories, or the Pacific slope, and—should the news be sent by cable—in Europe be stirred when he reads:

Chicago.—The faculty of the medical museum made a post mortem examination of the President's favorite mare, which died the other day; some believe the animal was poisoned; other members of the faculty think death was occasioned by natural causes.

And again: The *Tribune's* special at Washington says, the President returned early yesterday, and the White House being closed and the cooks absent, he went to Welker's and ordered breakfast and a private room; the clerk not recognizing him refused to give him a private room, whereupon the President went to another restaurant.

POSTAL CHANGES.—In consequence of a change in the schedule time of the arrival at and departure of the mail trains from the terminus, A. W. Street, Esq., postmaster, wishes to notify the public that until further notice the mails for the East will leave the Salt Lake City post-office at 8:30 p.m., and will arrive at 6 p.m.; the mails for the West will leave at 4 a.m., and will arrive at 12 m. Through mails will close an hour earlier and Territorial mails half an hour earlier than the times above specified.

DAN CASTELLO AT SAN FRANCISCO.—Dan and his circus gave their first performance at San Francisco on the 26th inst. The *S. F. Times* says "it is undoubtedly the largest, best selected and most perfect company that has ever visited the Pacific Coast." The highest encomiums are paid to the performance. The *Times* says "The one single act of a daring equestrian, jumping through a hoop, the rim of which was pierced with knives, the joints extending several inches inwards, deserves especial praise, and which for boldness and coolness of execution on the part of the performer, we have never seen equalled."

Hundreds were unable to obtain admittance to the second performance, given on the evening of the 26th, the enormous booth being crowded to its utmost capacity. We are glad to hear of the success of Dan and his circus, but seeing that the folks of Salt Lake City treated him handsomely we think it hardly fair that he withhold some of his best tricks, the hoop and knife trick for instance. We certainly must have that sensation if he ever pays us another visit.

SEXTON'S REPORT.—The Sexton's report of Salt Lake City for July 1899 is as follows: Males 11, Females 14, of these, adults 8, children 17. Died of the following causes as reported: Lung complaints 7, measles 4, imperfect nutrition 3, consumption 2, bowel complaints 2, dropsy 2, child bed 1, still born 1, congestion of the brain 1, abscess 1, killed accidentally 1. Total interments 25.

JOSEPH E. TAYLOR, sexton.

Married:

At St. Thomas, July 5th, by Bishop James Leithhead, Mr. Homer A. Bouton and Miss Nancy Foote.