

news, to the "Liberal" organ of this city. And the dispatch fiend of the Associated Press here sends sensational sentences to the east and west, to keep up the agitation that seems to be specially desired by the Salt Lake anti-"Mormon" clique at this juncture.

Among the most recent efforts of this kind is a special to the San Francisco *Chronicle*, designed to cast doubt upon the Official Declaration of President Wilford Woodruff. We here copy the dispatch in full, which appears in the *Chronicle* under a number of sensational headlines:

"Salt Lake City, September 26.—Governor Thomas was interviewed today in relation to President Wilford Woodruff's proclamation. The Governor said that it was impossible to give a definite opinion of the purpose or effect of the proclamation. 'If it is put forth and hereafter observed in good faith it is an important step, and will do much to remove one of the political objections to Mormonism,' he said.

"The general sentiment is a hope it is in good faith. Many things lead to doubt, among which may be named the present political situation, the fact that it does not come in the usual channel and its studious and indefinite language. The last general proclamation on the subject in 1885 came from the general conference ratified by the States, and asserted that the Mormons could not yield the doctrine of plural marriage to legislatures or judicial decisions. The whole proclamation is based on the clause that because certain laws have been passed and decided constitutional, therefore submission is advised.

"Attention has been called to the fact that it only advises submission, and for many years the Mormons have submitted, but refused to ever promise to obey. That there is no injunction to obey the laws; that it is twelve years since the decision affirming the constitutionality was made; that nothing is said of the law against unlawful cohabitation, which has also been affirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States, and under which most of the convictions are made; that it in no way asserts that polygamy is wrong or the law right, and as it is understood that temples have been opened elsewhere for the ceremonies which formerly took place in the old Endowment House, the statement of the summary punishment of the building is rather dramatic.

"Referring to the last clause of the proclamation, there are inquiries as to what the author considers the law of the land, and whether any opinion or proclamation will be effective so long as the Mormons believe polygamy is enjoined by divine law. The semi-annual conference of the Church will soon be held, which has the power to place the Church on record in unambiguous language. For myself I propose to await developments; and in the mean time hope it is a step taken in good faith."

It is well known that Governor Thomas is fully in sympathy and working union with the plotters against the "Mormon" people, who desire to deprive those citizens of Utah of the elective franchise that

will not submit to their dictation and join in their schemes for the political control of the Territory. The course of the Governor in Washington and his efforts to obtain power to appoint those local officers who of right should be elected by the people, are well known to the Utah public, and their estimation of his character and calibre is well defined. Whatever he might say on the subject treated of in the dispatch to the *Chronicle* would have no weight with any class or party here. But people and papers at a distance may take some notice of his opinions because of his official position.

What he has said has been uttered for foreign distribution and effect. It is couched in his usual cunning style of pretended fairness with covert misrepresentation and thinly concealed bitterness. Of course he hopes certain things while casting a doubt upon them, and in throwing out false insinuations and direct untruths he makes them appear to be the opinions of others.

Anyone who calls the language in President Woodruff's declaration "indefinite" must be either exceedingly dense or determined to find fault. It is so definite that its meaning cannot be mistaken by any one who understands simple English. The statement that "it does not come in the usual channel" is a direct falsehood and preclaims either the Governor's deplorable ignorance or his woeful disregard of truth.

The revelation on celestial marriage, which has been the guide to the Church on this subject, declares that there is never but one man on the earth at a time who holds the keys of the sealing power. That power is vested in the President of the Church. He alone can give any authoritative utterance to the Church for the regulating of the marriage ordinance under the "everlasting covenant." The Official Declaration of President Woodruff is the only one that could properly have been made on this matter, and that the Latter-day Saints would receive as ecclesiastical authority in reference to it.

The Governor's attempt to contrast with this Official Declaration the expression of the "Mormon" people five years ago that they could not yield their religious faith or doctrines to legislatures or other secular powers, is characteristic of his shifting and disingenuous methods. There is nothing in President Woodruff's declaration in regard

to faith, or doctrine, or tenets. But it contains a volume in a few words as to *practices*. It is only with these that legislatures or other earthly powers have anything to do. He announces his determination to refrain from violating the laws which forbid plural marriages, and he advises the Latter-day Saints not to contract any marriage contrary to those laws, in future. He also denies the statement that there have been any such marriages in any place in the Territory during the time in which dispatches from this city falsely declare that forty or more have been solemnized.

The Governor objects to the declaration because it is "based on the clause that certain laws have been passed and decided constitutional, therefore submission is advised." Is not this carping criticism and puerile contrariety? Has not the decision of the Supreme Court that these laws are constitutional been held up to the "Mormons" as the end of controversy, and the demand been made upon them to accept the situation? And have they not been assured that this would be all that the country would require? And now that the only officer of the Church who can authoritatively advise the members on this matter points out the supremacy of the civil law as to conduct, is it decent or sensible for the Governor to find fault with such advice?

The truth is, this declaration is a little too "definite" for the Governor. It interferes with his schemes and those of his confederates. It is all that they have pretended to want for years. They never did desire it. He doesn't like it now. Therefore his attempt to cast doubt upon it, to misinterpret it, and to aid the manipulators of the wires in misleading the press and the public as to its meaning and effect.

His assertion that "temples have been opened elsewhere for the ceremonies which formerly took place in the Endowment House" is a mean and contemptible insinuation, in view of President Woodruff's positive statement that the leaders of the Church are not teaching polygamy nor permitting its practice, and his denial that any plural marriages have been solemnized during the period named in the Temples or in any other place in the Territory.

The point put prominently forward in the Governor's paltry effort is, that the declaration "in no wise asserts that polygamy is wrong or the law right," and he flings another doubt as to what will be done