

general Church authorities, and proposed to the members of the Church, was accepted by them, they gave their assent to it, and it is regularly established as a rule of the Church by the announcement of the law to the people and their acceptance of it. Is it your idea that common consent means unanimous consent? If so, you are wrong. Government by unanimous consent is out of the question, utterly impracticable. There is no issue that can arise in the Church but what can be settled within the Church. To go outside the Church to settle any difficulty that has arisen within the Church means war upon the Church—an utter lack of confidence in the institution which you and I believe God has founded! I pray you no longer entertain that thought.

Your proposition for the settlement of the supposed difficulty is a novel one, viz., the election of Moses Thatcher to the United States Senate, which event, you say, "would be accepted by the self-sufficient leader whose personal ambition to become the dictator of the Church is widely believed, as a warning of [from] the people, that although their voice is now impotent in the councils of the Church, in the affairs of the State, it is omnipotent."

I was extremely sorry when I read that remark, and I wondered what cloud of darkness could possibly have come over your mind; and in charity I must think you wrote that passage without thought. I pass over the injustice [you do the member of the First Presidency] to whom you refer, and come directly to the consideration of your proposed settlement of the supposed difficulty, by the election of Brother Moses Thatcher to the Senate. You complain of the NEWS having said that his election to the U.S. Senate by the coming Utah Legislature would be an "insult" to the Church; whereas in your judgment his election would be a settlement of the questions that have arisen through the "manifesto," and that "the great body of the Church would feel honored rather than insulted at such a happy consummation."

Let us see: 1—The general Church authorities formulated a rule to be followed by the leading Church officials in respect to politics, which obtained the approval of all the general authorities of the Church, except one of the Apostles, who was absent on a mission, and another Apostle who refuses to accept it because, as he alleges, and that in the face of the protest of his brethren to the contrary, it is intended to be and will result in the domination of politics in the State by the Church, and is, in fact, the forging of chains for the enslavement of the people.

2—The aforesaid Apostle refused to sign it, but it went before the general Conference of the Church and was upheld by the common consent of the Church then assembled; and the Apostle who refused to sign the document embodying the rule is not presented before the conference for acceptance as an officer of the Church; that the rule promulgated by the authorities and accepted by the general Conference might be more widely accepted by the Church members, and out of respect for the very principle of common consent (which you seem to think is abrogated by the policy of the

Church in this matter), the document is presented to the Stake conferences and, I think, even to the ward conferences of the Church, so that no rule ever promulgated before by the Church has been more widely accepted by the Saints than this one, nor was the principle of common consent ever more thoroughly respected. Six months passed, and another general Conference of the Church is held; no action is taken in the case of the suspended Apostle, but extended explanations are made as to why he is suspended. Meantime, a political campaign is fought out. In the past the suspended Apostle has been prominently in politics, and the year before was his party's candidate for United States Senator. But in the campaign of last fall he is not made a candidate for the senate, though a senator is to be chosen by the legislature elected. Nothing is said of him in his party's platform, or the principle he is supposed in some way to represent by his opposition to his brethren. This campaign was at its height when the October Conference was held, at which the reasons why the Apostle was suspended from office were given. Still there was no exception taken by the political party of which he was a member. No voice even from the stump was heard in protest, so far as I have learned,—nothing from the editorial columns of his party's press appeared. But after the election is over, and is won by the Democratic party, not on the issue, however, of exception being taken to the course the Church had pursued with reference to Moses Thatcher, but on quite different issues,—then Brother Thatcher steps forward and springs upon the members-elect to the Legislature an issue upon which they were not elected, and asks them for their support. In his interview published in the Salt Lake Tribune, in which he announces his willingness to become a candidate for the Senate, he is quoted as saying: "I prefer private to public life, and the peace of the social circle to the strife of politics. If I had not been placed in a position involving a great principle, I could not be tempted to accept even the high office of United States senator. But if Utah, if young Utah feels that my selection would be a vindication of that for which I have contended, and would aid in preventing the forging of chains upon the people of this State, I should accept the office of senator should it be tendered me." Brother Thatcher does not ask to be elected on any issue of the campaign or because of any peculiar fitness of qualification he possesses above other candidates, (though, in my judgment, he does possess some qualifications superior to those of the other candidates) but solely because of the attitude he has assumed towards the so-called "manifesto." Remember, that the overwhelming majority of the Democratic party are of the Mormon faith. Remember that the Mormon people have almost unanimously adopted the so-called "manifesto" as a Church regulation; and Moses Thatcher and his friends ask the members-elect to the Legislature to send him to the Senate because of his opposition to a rule of the Church which they themselves assented to. Under these cir-

cumstances I do not hesitate to say that his election to the United States Senate would be a gross insult to the members of the Mormon Church, for he is virtually asking their representatives to elect him to the Senate because he is still opposed to a rule which they in their capacity as Church members have accepted by a free vote as a rule of their Church.

If he thinks that they have accepted that rule under duress, or yielded to it because of their weakness, or the overbearing tyranny of their leaders, then he insults their manhood and their intelligence. But should he succeed in being elected because of his opposition to this Church regulation, let no one suppose that it would be a vindication of Brother Thatcher's course, for the members-elect of the coming Legislature are not elected with reference to that question.

If that question had been before the people of Utah in the last election and the Democratic party had championed the cause represented by Moses Thatcher, viz; opposition to the Church rule in question, favorable as were all other conditions for Democratic success, there is not a man of sense but that knows there would have been no Democratic victory in Utah this year. The issue he asks to be elected on is an improper one in and of itself, because he asks to be elected for his opposition to a church. It is doubly an improper one because it was not an issue of the campaign which resulted in a Democratic victory. It is, in addition, impolitic for the Democratic party, as it would be in the nature of a direct and positive insult to the great majority of that party, and would not augur well for future Democratic control of the State of Utah. Were I an enemy to Democracy, instead of now and always an ardent supporter of it, I might urge the Democratic legislators-elect to take the course now urged upon them by the chief organ of Republicanism; but as I desire to see the ground gained by the Democratic party of Utah maintained, I would to the best of my poor abilities dissuade them from following the course you propose. The great principle of separation of church and state is in no danger; nor is there any forging of chains for either the limbs or minds of young Utah. Let us as soon as possible have peace.

Very truly yours,

B. H. ROBERTS.

NOTES OF STRANGE THINGS.

HELPER, Utah, January 7th, 1897.

I commenced the journey of life November 5th, 1819; was born in Erie county, Pennsylvania, near the state line between Pennsylvania and New York. The county was sparsely settled at that time. In that region of country the people had to make all their clothing and whatever they used.

In 1825 my father moved six miles west, through a dense forest, took a claim of one hundred acres of land, and commenced to clear and cultivate it and make a home. The following year another family moved in and located two miles west of us. Father and myself went to see our neighbors, and the meeting was pleasing to all. When meal time arrived we were in.