

that they have no right to trifle with the rights of a voter and that the man who would attempt to do so must be a superficial, reckless, thoughtless man or a very wicked, bad citizen.

In the Cumberland case there may have been some shadow of a pretext for the exercise of that discretionary power which Judge Zane rules is vested in a registrar, when the polygamy question is involved, although the evidence demonstrated that, as a matter of fact, there was nothing in it. But even granting that the mandamus in that case might legally be denied, what has that to do with the other cases, to which there was no claim or pretense that the polygamy question had the remotest relation? Judge Zane, after disposing of the Cumberland case because that question did relate to it, concluded with the remark: "For the same reason the writ asked for in the case of John H. Back against J. R. Morris, registrar, and in the case of William J. Bachman vs. E. R. Clute, registrar, should be denied."

This is where the surprise comes in. The reasons given for the denial in the Cumberland case, cannot possibly apply to the Back or the Bachman case, for the same question was not involved in them. In fact the argument of His Honor, and his clear drawing of the line between the judicial and ministerial powers of the registrars, go to establish the conclusion that the peremptory writ denied in the Cumberland case must logically, legally and certainly lie in the other two cases.

If the registrars had only ministerial functions outside of matters relating to polygamy, and the Back and Bachman cases had no connection therewith, either claimed or implied, and the officers refused to perform their plain ministerial duty, then they should have been compelled by mandate of the court to perform it, that those voters, in the language of the court might be protected in the lawful exercise of a right "that is one of the most important that any man can enjoy in this country."

If there were any reasons whatever why the writ was denied in these cases, the court failed to produce them. His words, "for the same reasons," show that either he did not understand these two cases and confounded them with the other, or that he erred in not giving some pertinent reason for denying their application.

The closing sentence of the opinion is nothing short of extraordinary. The rest of it we regard as based on legal grounds and just what might be expected from a judicial mind like Judge Zane's. It establishes the important point that outside of questions and matters relating to polygamous practices, the registration officers have no judicial or discretionary functions, that their powers are purely ministerial, and that they can only refuse or obstruct registration at their peril of civil suit and criminal prosecution.

A POET'S IMPRESSIONS.

A FEW months since Joaquin Miller, the noted poet, paid a brief visit to this city. He has lately been giving publicity to his impressions of Salt Lake through the columns of the *New York Independent*. One of his papers giving an account of his trip over the D. & R. G. and R. G. W. to this point, has already appeared in these columns. He is a quaint prose writer, somewhat Frenchy in style, his productions being cut up into unusually brief paragraphs. Here is his introductory flash:

"If you enter Salt Lake City by the Denver & Rio Grande you are continually reminded of the plains of Lombardy, and half expect every moment to see the marble towers of Milan's cathedral and the horses of Napoleon's Plungers in the air from their lofty marble arches.

"For here in this industrious city of less than fifty years, you see all that may be seen in the suburbs of Milan. The long, long lines of Lombardy poplar trees, the laden orchards, the coming and going of laden wagons, the patient people herding to their work from daylight to dark; the dust and the sweat of devoted husbandry; the dairy ranches and the laden fruit trees! then back of it all the everlasting mountains of snow, just like the mountains that rise beyond and about Como. Surely it is dear old Milan!"

The kindly heart of the poet leaps out here and there with pleasing prominence, and perhaps the genial old gentleman feels a little twinge of remorse at having done injustice to the "Mormon" people in his play of the "Danites," he being the author of that unjustifiable dramatic production. When he comes in contact with the Saints a new light seems to break in upon him, and he exclaims:

"You fall in love with these people of Salt Lake as you approach. The nearer you come to know them the better you come to love them. It is the long-haired man and the short-haired woman who wants to lecture on 'Mormons and Mormonism,' that don't know a single thing about this people or their work, who don't like them. Let these same people first plant a tree, one single tree among

them all, where these people have planted thousands and tens of thousands in the desert, and then the land may listen to them with a little patience. But until they have at least tried to 'make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before,' be a bit patient with a people of whom they know nothing at all; of whom they are actually incapable of knowing anything at all."

As if he had not sufficiently expressed himself in this direction, he takes up the point again and portrays his disgust "for the idlers and sensationalists who write books and deliver lectures about the 'Mormons.'" Following up this idea he says:

"Let all such go to work and work as hard as the Mormons work, and they will have but little time to meddle in things that they know nothing about, and care but little about except as a matter of profit. Salt Lake City is building right along."

Taking a practical turn as he glances at Fort Douglas, he exclaims:

"Out yonder is a great fort, with a full regiment in its barracks. It is beautiful to look upon. It adds to the landscape. The officers are mainly fellows; they treat me with great courtesy. But I tell you they are idlers every one in this great beehive of a nation! I say, let us have a school there in place of this fort! It would cost less, far less, and see what good we could do with a school. Or, if the lovers of brass bands and of lanterns still insist on keeping their costly toy, why, let them; but let us have the school of mines also."

"Mr. Miller states that after he had published the "Danites" in London, Congress sent for him and required him to say to a committee what he would do to suppress "Mormonism." His reply was: "Don't give them bullets; give them books."

We make a further extract:

"Having been told that the towers and walls and battlements that surround the old newspaper office and the 'Beehive' and other of the old Brigham Buildings was to be torn down next year, I went to the proprietor to protest.

But these Mormons are an extremely practical people. The man told me that the six strong stone buildings, now half up, would quite overwhelm him, and the old houses, walls, towers and all would soon have to go.

"Well, what did you build them for in first the place—Indians?"

"No, no; we never had trouble with any of the Indians. People say Brigham Young wanted the walls to keep his wives at home; but the truth is the walls were built to get the stones off the ground; and then we needed walls in the first place to keep cattle out."

Prosy, practical, candid and truthful was this ardent Mormon in his talks with me, and I bought a few of his books, all printed on paper made in Salt Lake. I bought some paper of him—half a dollar's worth and I was compelled to either get a cart or leave the biggest half behind. The paper on which I write this letter is part of it.

I liked this man's proud and honest way of speaking and dealing with me; and as I stood there with my bundles