

EDITORIALS.

TRUE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THERE are people in every so-called "Christian" country who consider it part of their duty to interfere with the opinions and doings of their neighbors. In the egotism of their imagined superiority and infallibility, they make their views of what is right and proper the standard of faith and conduct for everybody else. Not content with endeavors to influence and induce others to stretch up or shrink down to their chalk mark, they proceed to force when persuasion fails.

Those fanatics at a distance who worry themselves and the country over the "Mormon" question are of this class. Oblivious of the corruptions of their own society, they are eager to reform imagined evils in Utah. Without taking the trouble to investigate the marriage system of the people whom they assail, they take for granted that it must be wrong because it is different from their own. And yet the evils that are prevalent in monogamous society are so great and widespread that they are surely sufficient to raise a serious question as to whether there is not something wrong at the root of the prevalent system.

The laws that have been enacted against "Mormon" marriage have been passed in this mingled ignorance and egotism. They have been urged by the religious fanatics, prompted by political conspirators. They have been originated in that spirit of meddling and desire to reform everybody's errors but their own, which has been a characteristic of New England puritanism from the beginning. It is contrary to the principles of civil and religious liberty on which this government is founded, and savors of that persecuting and coercive disposition that lit the martyr's fire and forged the instruments of medieval torture.

This nation was built upon the basic principle of the greatest individual liberty compatible with the public safety. People were to think and act as they pleased, so long as they did not interfere with the rights of others. Religion was to be completely free. This immunity of religion from restraint meant something more than liberty of belief. It comprehended "the free exercise" of religion. The right to believe, without the right to act on that belief would be worthless. Faith needs no human protection. The mind of man is free to think and believe without any legal guaranty. Laws cannot bind it, fetters cannot chain it down, prisons cannot confine it. It is the right to carry belief into active exercise, that is meant by constitutional prohibitions against interference therewith.

Of course there must be a limit to that liberty. The line by which it must not pass is infringement upon the liberties of others. Society may enact laws for its own protection. It may legislate to shield the weak from the strong, to secure individual freedom, and to prevent personal and social destruction. But it has no right to enforce the views of the many upon the few, nor to prevent anyone from doing that which may be considered wrong by the majority if it only injures himself.

The following extract from the writings of the celebrated Mill puts this forth so prominently and sharply that none can fail to see its pertinence:

"That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection; that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil, in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign."—(Mill on Liberty, p. 23.)

Bringing this indisputable doctrine to bear on the "Mormon" question, we maintain that the marriages contracted under the religion of the Latter-day Saints are properly exempt from legislative interference. The parties are mutually agree to the compact. They do not interfere with or infringe upon the marriage relations of others. No one is forced into the association. Society is not injured by it. That society is really benefited by the system is capable of demonstration, but that is not necessary in this argument. As the Supreme Court of the United States has declared:

"It is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its

officers to interfere, when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order."

This was quoted by the Court from the language of the great Jefferson, and is in accord with the sentiments of Mill. It cannot be shown that a "Mormon" family in which one man is the acknowledged husband of more than one wife and father of their children, interfere with the peace and good order of the community in which they live or of the nation at large. They are simply acting upon their guaranteed liberty of conscience and religion, doing no injury to their neighbors or to society. It does not signify that the egotists and Puritans consider them in gross error, doing a wrong to themselves and risking their eternal salvation. That is not the business of the Government. It is only to be met with argument and persuasion, not with pains and penalties, because it does not attempt to destroy or injure society or invade the rights of individuals.

The venerated Madison, speaking in support of the religious liberty guaranteed in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, said:

"The only proper objects of civil government are the happiness and protection of men in the present state of existence, the security of the life, liberty and property of the citizens, and to restrain the vicious and encourage the virtuous by wholesome laws, equally extending to every individual; but the duty they owe their Creator and the manner of discharging it can only be directed by reason and conviction, and is nowhere cognizable but at the tribunal of the Universal Judge."

That is the position taken by the Latter-day Saints. They claim this religious liberty for themselves, they accord it and extend it to others. The laws that have been specially framed against a part of their religion violate this principle of freedom and, in that respect, violate the Constitution of our country. To obey and sustain all Constitutional laws is enjoined upon the "Mormons" by their religion, and the indisputable fact is that they do obey the laws, both local and national, with such fidelity that they are an eminent example to their traducers and persecutors.

Only a small portion of the people of Utah, comparatively, have practically entered into the order of celestial marriage, which comprehends and includes a plurality of wives, and they have done it under religious ordinances and regulations. They do not interfere in any way with the practice of monogamy. A great deal of foolish bluster is indulged in about "the danger threatened to the American home." But it has never been shown how, in the remotest degree, a family in which there is but one wife is injuriously affected by the fact that in another family there are two or more wives to the same husband. Both forms of family life exist side by side in Utah harmoniously, and all the interference and infringement upon the rights of others, comes from the monogamists who desire to force their system upon the polygamists. If any restraint of law is needed it is for the protection of the latter, because they are assailed in "the free exercise" of their religion, and make no assault upon or attempts to restrain of compellers.

The consistency of people who come here from the great cities of the East, where the very air is impregnated with the odors of debauchery and crime, and on common rumor, without learning anything of the facts, commence to berate and threaten the "Mormons," and talk of using force to compel us to do what they think is right, and refrain from what they think is wrong, is not very apparent to reflecting minds. And yet there are many good people—apart from those foul-mouthed blatherskites that are to be met with in most crowds, and a few of whom have exhibited their ruffian natures and coarse manners at the rink—who join in this hue-and-cry against something they have never investigated, and would persecute the "Mormons" because they are different in faith from their accusers. On this disposition to use force against the heterodox, Rev. Lyman Abbot, who recently visited this city, has the following to say in the *Christian Union*:

"And so it has been through all history. The persecuting of heretics, the execution of dissenters, the burning of witches, have all come about, not from an exceptional moral turpitude, but from a fundamental misconception of the rights of man over man. We make the greatest mistake when we suppose that those who persecuted the fathers were sinners above all those who occupy these modern temples of ours. On the contrary, from the days of Marcus Aurelius, the noblest of Roman rulers, down to Calvin, who inspired the burning of Servetus, and John Wesley, who declared that Christianity would have to be given up if the belief in witchcraft were abandoned—during all this range of modern civilization an examination would undoubtedly show that at least a very large part of what by any standard would be regarded as the best people of the time, have either been actively engaged in the direct work of persecution or have given it their sanction and support."

And it is so with thousands of people in the United States who echo the Satanic cry uttered by men with murder in their hearts, for "Mormonism" to be stamped out, if necessary, by force. They are trampling on the very liberties to maintain which this nation

was established. They are unwittingly opening the floodgates to let in the dark tide of intolerance, to escape which the Pilgrim Fathers fled from the Old World. They are attempting to accomplish by force that which should only be essayed by reason and example. But the reason that has been tried is met with superior reason, and the example does not appear in a very good light by contrast, and so force is invoked and a peaceable and harmless community are threatened with the destruction of their religion, "to be wiped out in blood."

We can tell these enemies of freedom, and all the world, that they will not succeed. They may repeat the history of bygone persecutions, and when oppressive laws and vindictive prosecutions fail, invoke the aid of the rifle and the bayonet. But the struggle for full civil and religious liberty will go on, and the religion they seek to crush will gain new strength from every resort to violence. The blood of the martyrs will again be the seed of the Church, and truth will triumph, while the names of the chief persecutors will be covered with everlasting infamy.

"RELIEF" OFFERED TO "MORMON" WOMEN.

DURING the past week Utah has been visited by a large number of people from the East. Some of them have been kept under vigilant watch by the anti-"Mormon" ring, and have been diligently crammed with anti-"Mormon" fabrications. Others have managed to escape from the leading strings of the conspirators and have freely roamed about the city, conversing with and asking questions of citizens whom they chanced to meet, and learning many facts which both surprised and pleased them.

The latter class will carry home with them a tolerably fair idea of the situation here, to as great an extent as is possible from so hurried a call at the capital of the Territory. Of the former, some were completely disgusted with the manner in which the so-called "camp-fires" were turned into howling anti-"Mormon" camp-meetings, and with the conduct of a few of their comrades who had no better manners, nor more common sense, than to join in abusing a people and a system about which they had only heard rumors and the statements of bitter and extreme opponents. The few individuals who publicly exhibited the rancor and ignorance of impromptu partisanship, giving exaggerated echoes of local lying expiations, simply exposed their own folly, ill-breeding and hasty and ill-formed judgment.

One thing this class neglected to do in declaiming against the supposed immorality of Utah; that is, to think of the condition of social affairs at home when boasting about compelling people here to conform to their notions and practices. A lady from New York invited the women here, whom she supposed to be in bondage, to come to New York for relief. Suppose some of the thousands upon thousands of poor creatures in that sin-soaked city were to apply to her department for help. Say they were from the ranks of the fallen sisterhood, or from the hosts of half-starved operatives ready to famish or fall into the Cyprian army to get the larger wages of sin. How much relief would they be likely to get from the corps to which the inviting lady belongs? What hope is there for the hordes of women, more in numbers than the whole female population of Utah, who are doomed in Gotham to a life of shame or semi-starvation?

Here are women who in their own society are counted honorable wives and mothers, who are contented with their lot, who love their husbands and children, who are comfortable in their quiet lives of industry and peace, and who desire no change. But creatures misrepresenting the law are endeavoring to break up their homes and happiness and boasting persons from the East are threatening blood and thunder, and canting women who spurn the needy and fallen that swarm around them at home, pretend that our wives and mothers and sisters would better their condition by rushing to the East, and depending upon the cold charity of the latter-day Pharisees, in cities where people of their own creed and race perish for want and rot with loathsome disease.

A few facts and figures will apply come in here by way of illustration. From an article in the *Mail and Express* upon "How the poor working girls of New York are treated," and asking "Who will save the girls?" we make the following extracts:—

"If any person has a desire to know just how much human nature can endure, and yet live on, he has but to investigate the actual condition of the working girls of New York, and by that time it will seem wonderful that the rivers are not full of despairing suicides. In one house live 22 working girls, not all of one family nor all of the same trade, and yet all belonging to one sisterhood of suffering, so that the song of the shirt might with equal propriety be sung of them all, as far as their misery is concerned. In one room of this building two young girls make their home together, paying \$2 a week for a room and alcove, and they join in the expense of living and take

turns in cooking. They are machine operators on saddlery and have labor heavy enough to tire a strong man, running the machines ten hours a day. They are fined if they are ten minutes late, but they often have to stay over the time for closing, and for this they never receive anything."

"Harder still is the labor of the girls who work at the government mail bags and ore sacks. Three of the inmates of this house work at that, and their physical condition is very bad. They are pale and wan and stoop painfully, and suffer from weak sides or backs, as do also the saddle workers. The government gives contract to different firms for the making of the mail pouches, and they used to get from five to seven cents apiece; but now the price has been reduced, and the sacks for which the girls used to receive two cents apiece they must now make for one-fourth of a cent each. This work is the hardest that can be done by women, as the material is so firm and closely woven as to require a terrible outlay of strength to drive the machines. This labor is so hard and straining that girls cannot work at it long. A few years at most and they fall by the wayside and die, or grow weary of the toil and strife and go to worse than death."

"The younger girls of families live here, or sisters of those who work in the harder trades either go to learn trades or else work at paper box making, at which they earn about \$1.50 per week, or making pills for druggists, which pays about the same, or else as cash girls in stores, or capping and labeling medicine bottles and packing proprietary medicines."

In one store where there is a large business done in the basement, the saleswomen and cash girls alike have a pale, blanched appearance, and the little girls suffer greatly from the damp, unwholesome air, redolent of straw and packing paper. In another store the heating apparatus and engine for hoisting the elevators is stationed in the same basement with the sales counters, where hundreds of women and little girls sweeter through all the year, with no ventilation but what comes through the grating of the sidewalks. The writer has seen in warm days as many as ten little girls overcome with the heat taken from the basement.

The constant nervous strain, the hurrying to and fro in heated, crowded places, the scoldings and fear of fines, and the improper food they get, let alone its insufficiency, makes it a wonder one of them lives through it."

"One day last winter one little cash girl, in this place was about to be sent away after having been reprimanded many times for her inactivity, when some one saw her groping in the garbage box and picking out the crusts and refuse of the lunches of the other girls and eating them like one famished. Investigation showed that she had had nothing else to eat for three weeks, her parents being both sick and helpless at home, and the money she earned went for their support, \$1.50 per week."

"There are a number of other minor industries which afford work for little girls, among them fringe making. The fringe is measured into fifteen-yard lengths, and the sewing silk and the beads or chenille are all weighed in a finely-balanced pair of scales. The work is simple and almost mechanical, and full of hope the poor creature takes it home and finishes the first 15 yards and takes it back, where it is weighed, and the worker told that she has not used all the beads, or has wasted the chenille or sewing silk, and finally she is told that the work is badly done and that they can give her no more. A demand for the pay at 1½ cents per yard is invariably refused on the ground that they never pay for sample work. One firm is popularly supposed to get all its bead and chenille fringes made for nothing."

"The morals of the very young girls who are thus set to work in crowds undergo a great trial, and few are those who escape scot-free, for the talk and actions of those naturally bad exert a great influence over others, and a girl needs unusual strength of character and pure home influence to enable her to withstand them. Add to this the ever-grinding poverty, the natural longing of every young girl for pretty clothes and the perpetual temptations before them, what wonder they fall?"

"Some of the work is of the cheapest quality and some of it again of the richest and finest, but however it is the girl's pay remains about the same, just enough to keep body and soul together while living in the most squalid manner. There are immense quantities of this work done in the poorer houses in the city by the mothers of families who cannot leave their little children. In cases of contagious diseases the work goes on just the same, and the germs of sickness can be carried in the fine coat of the society man."

"In one tenement house lives a woman who supports herself and three small children by finishing gentlemen's fine overcoats. She hems the satin linings and sews in the sleeve linings and the velvet collar and puts in several stays, in all setting from eight to ten thousand stitches on each and earns at most thirty-five cents a day. Out of this she pays \$5 a month for rent. She works Sundays too. She sends her babies to a kindergarten, where they are fed, but in the summer the school is closed, and how she lives and keeps

them in clothes and fire none but those who live in the same way know."

"The swiftest and neatest sewer on bands and flaps, with the aid of a first class machine, can make at home about 50 cents a day, from early morning to 10 at night. Those who do the fells and boddies, in short the other work, earn on an average about the same with the aid of their machines. The shirts when all done but "finishing" require four gussets, six buttonholes and five buttons, and this work is given out in large quantities to women in tenement houses. They are paid for the common ones seven cents a dozen shirts, and for the finest shirts nine to nine and a half cents a dozen shirts—48 gussets, 60 buttons and 72 buttonholes!

Little boys' percale shirt-waists retail at seventy-five cents each, and they are difficult articles to make. Each is to have ten buttonholes, thirteen buttons, and triple collars and cuffs. The price paid for these is ninety cents a dozen, all finished, with pleats in front and back.

Men's white percale neckties are paid for at thirty-five cents a gross, twelve dozen, and few, indeed, can make two gross a day. Handkerchiefs for ordinary use are paid for at the rate of from twenty to twenty-eight cents per gross, for plain hemmed ones. Hemstitched ones, of course, are paid for a little better. The result seems to be always the same. Just enough pay for slavish toil to keep body and soul together in one frail tenement.

Commenting on the condition of the poor working people of New York this summer, the *Mail and Express* says editorially:

"Crowded into small, badly ventilated rooms, emaciated in many instances from lack of proper food and unprovided with medical attendance when the dreadful cholera infantum seizes them, while the thermometer reveals in the nineties, it is no wonder that we had to record the death of 125 of them under 5 years of age in a single day this week. Many poor mothers are found suffering for want of the commonest necessities of life, owing to absence from the city of families who furnish with employment and other aid when they are at home."

Now consider the following, taken from a sermon by Rev. Dr. De Witt Talmage and portraying facts that have never been disputed:

"I hear from all this land the wail of womanhood. Man has nothing to answer to that wail but flatteries. He says she is an angel. She is not. She knows she is not. She is a human being, who gets hungry when she has no food, and cold when she has no fire. Give her no more flatteries; give her justice! There are 65,000 sewing girls in New York and Brooklyn. Across the sunlight comes their death groan. It is not such a cry as comes from those who are suddenly hurled out of life, but a slow, grinding, horrible wasting away. Gather them before you and look into their faces, pinched, ghastly, hunger-struck! Look at their fingers, needle-picked and blood-tipped. See that premature stoop in the shoulders! Hear that dry, hacking, merciless cough! At a large meeting of these women held in a hall in Philadelphia, grand speeches were delivered, but a needlewoman took the stand, threw aside her faded shawl, and, with her shriveled arm, hurled a very thunder-bolt of eloquence, speaking out of the horrors of her own experience."

"Stand at the corner of a street in New York at 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning, as the women go to work. Many of them had no breakfast except the crumbs that were left over from the night before, or the crumbs they chew on their way through the street. Here they come! The working girls of New York and Brooklyn. Those engaged in head work, these in flower making, in millinery, paper-box making; but, most overworked of all and least compensated, the sewing women. Why do they not take the city cars on their way up? They cannot afford the five cents. If, concluding to deny herself something else, she gets into the car, give her a seat. You want to see how Latimer and Ridley appeared in the fire. Look at the woman and behold a more horrible martyrdom, a hotter fire, a more agonizing death. Ask that woman how much she gets for her work, and she will tell you six cents for making coarse shirts, and finds her own thread."

"A Christian man went into a house of a good deal of destitution in New York, and he saw a poor woman there with a sick child, and he was telling the woman how good a Christian she ought to be, and how she ought to put her trust in God. 'Oh!' she said, 'I have no God; I work from Monday morning until Saturday night, and I get no rest, and I never hear anything that does my soul any good; and, when Sunday comes, I haven't any bonnet that I can wear to church, and I have sometimes got down to pray, and then I got up, saying to my husband: 'My dear, there's no use of my praying; I am so distracted I can't pray; it don't do any good.' Oh! sir, it is very hard to work on as we people do from year to year, and to see nothing bright ahead, and to see the poor little child getting thinner and thinner, and my man almost broken down, and to be getting no nearer to God, but to be getting farther away from Him. Oh, if I were only ready to die.'"

That despairing wail goes up to heaven from thousands upon thousands of famished lips, and people who shut their "Christian" ears against the cries of their own neighbors, come out here and invite "Mormon" women