

whose fault is that? A Democrat in a strong Republican town, if he was as false and silly as R. G. McNiece, could make the same absurd accusation.

And now let us assure R. G. McNiece that nobody vilifies him for "standing up for his rights as an American citizen." We have exposed him for trying to take away the rights of the "Mormons" as American citizens, that is all. We expected he would be mad. We did not expect that he would repent. We have not threatened him at all, but we considered that he made a covert threat to us in repeatedly talking about an "account" we had to "settle" with him, to which we respond, "settle" away, in any form you please. Our remarks which he quotes, simply invited the people to watch for the shame which sooner or later is sure to overtake those who follow the course he pursues. His endeavor to twist that into a threat, when he knows, as we stated in the same article from which he partially quotes, that we advised leaving him and his kind "in the hands of Him who controls the destinies of men and nations" is quite in his line as a pious pettifogger.

And now let us say in reply to other passing charges, that there are no people here "enticed from foreign countries" such as are helped here are aided in response to their own strong entreaties, and no other inducement than religious principle is offered to the Saints abroad to gather to this land. Also the assertion that "Mormonism" has "foreigners at its head" is just as untrue as other assumptions of Mr. McNiece. The large majority of our leading men are American born; and others who first saw the light in another land, have been American citizens longer than R. G. McNiece has figured in that capacity.

And to conclude, we think that when all classes in this Territory shall be found "dwelling together in peace," the unprincipled plotters and malignant hypocrites who profess friendship and work enmity, who lie about the people and seek to rob them of every right and privilege which is dear to a citizen, will have moved to more congenial climes or have found their level in the place designed for "them that love and make a lie."

R. G. McNiece's Final Reply to "The News."

Editor Deseret News:

I ask for only a single column of your space to make final reply to the five or six columns of abuse and misrepresentation which you have hurled at me during the past two weeks. You seem to think that the abuse of an opponent is just as good as argument against him. And so you have called me a "bigot," a "wily falsifier," a "defamer," an "impudent slanderer," a "villain," a "scoundrel," a "hireling," and various other things taken from your choice and fragrant vocabulary. You have classed me with "liars and hypocrites," with "persistent libellers," and with "petty-souled hirelings." You have accused me of desiring that the Mormon people should be "lundered and pillaged," of having a "scaered and dead conscience" and a malignant and corrupt heart; and of pursuing a "depraved and malicious course." If you thus speak of one who is a faithful, law-abiding friend of his country and its institutions, and who leads a moral and temperate life, I was wondering what you would say of the immoral and law-breaking classes, and of those who are the bitter enemies of their country.

Now, I have more respect for the readers of the News than to suppose that they consider blackguardism equivalent to argument. And so, notwithstanding all your accusations, since I am conscious of entire truthfulness, and of a disposition to do no injustice to anyone—not even to an enemy—I shall write with good natured calmness and civility. There are four or five points I would like to touch upon, and then drop further discussion in the News.

1. Let the main question at issue be kept clearly in view. I stated in the Independent that we had not been able to "prevent the midnight stoning of the windows in the houses occupied by our ministers and teachers;" that "life had been thus endangered again and again," and that "our buildings had been repeatedly injured and set on fire." You denied that such things had ever occurred, and denounced me as a liar and slanderer for making this statement. I then cited you to four towns where these things had occurred, in two of which our buildings were set on fire and in two of which they were repeatedly stoned in the night.

Strangely enough, you have brought forward witnesses and affidavits to show that our buildings were set on fire in Nephi and Logan as I stated, thereby giving away your case in your over-anxiety to convict me of falsehood without regard to the facts.

While attempting to belittle the serious character of the outrages against the Rev. Mr. Gillespie and his family, at Brigham City, you do not yourself deny, nor do your witnesses deny, that the windows of the building where he lived were repeatedly stoned in the night, as I stated.

So far as the first three cases are concerned, then, there is no dispute as to the occurrence of the firing and the stoning. The dispute is in regard to the perpetrators of these things. You profess to believe that the Mormons

had nothing to do with these acts of lawlessness. And, under the circumstances, when you declare such a belief, have I not as much right to accuse you of hypocrisy and lying as you have to accuse me of falsehood and slander. But I do not believe in that style of discussion.

On the other hand, because of the circumstances, I am compelled to believe that these lawless acts were perpetrated by Mormons. But I am free to say, however, that I do not believe the Mormon people as a body approve of such misdeeds. I believe just the reverse.

But I am not prepared thus to acquit the priesthood behind the people of all responsibility for such lawlessness. For, the frequent vindictiveness of speech against worthy and law-abiding Americans, on the part of prominent members of the priesthood; the obstacles put in the way of our renting buildings and buying lots for school purposes by this priestly power behind the owners; and, to crown all, the savage denunciation and the vindictive slanders and insinuations that are constantly thrown out against those connected with these American schools, by the representatives of the priesthood, seem to me calculated to promote and encourage such outrages as I have referred to, and such other frequent misdeeds as the disturbance of our religious meetings, the cutting to pieces of our hymn books; the plastering of filth upon the doors of our school-buildings, and the breaking of windows at night, not only in the places mentioned, but in Fillmore, in Wellsville, and in Smithfield. These constitute a series of lawless acts against a particular kind of work, and against a special class of people, entirely different from the boyish mischief which is sometimes perpetrated in the best governed communities. And it seems to me that these things are the natural fruit of the vindictive teachings and example to which I have referred. Anyhow, that is the impression made upon me after living for seven years in the midst of this priesthood. If I am wrong in my conclusions and beliefs, I shall be glad to be set right.

2. In regard to Spanish Fork, you bring forward two witnesses to say that they never saw anybody stoning the building that our teacher occupied there, I do not suppose they did. You deny that any such thing occurred. Well, let it stand so. I do not feel the need of any affidavits to support my statement of the matter. Not only before this community, but before every community where I have lived, and before the American people, I am perfectly willing to let my unsupported word, in regard to any statement of fact, stand against your contradiction of that statement backed by all the affidavits you can bring.

3. I deny that I am an enemy of the Mormon people. On the contrary, I have toward them feelings of the utmost kindness and goodwill. I think the majority of them honest, kindhearted and hospitable. I believe that I am a far better friend to the Mormon people than you are, and I'll tell you why: You are doing all you can to keep the people in bondage to priestly despotism. I am doing all I can to set them free from that bondage, so that they may have the same liberty that every free American has, of choosing the store where they wish to trade, the newspaper they wish to take, the school they wish to send their children to; and of deciding what disposition to make of their own property, and how much they will contribute to the support of religion—in short, may do whatever a free American citizen has a right to do, without any priestly dictation whatever. I want no restrictive legislation against the Mormons which I am not willing to submit to myself. I want no ecclesiastical or political privileges for myself, which I do not want the Mormon people to have.

What I am opposed to in Utah is that priestly government in political and secular affairs which is hostile to free schools and the freedom of the people, and hostile to the fundamental principles of our free government. But while opposing this system which I believe to be wrong, I have no ill will against individuals.

4. You wish to know when my rights have been interfered with in Utah. They are interfered with every day by this priestly despotism which exacts of me taxation without representation; which, through its representatives abuses and vilifies me for standing up for my rights as law-abiding American citizen and for the rights of other Americans; which accuses me of slander and falsehood when I complain that the lives of my friends are endangered by lawlessness, and that the property which I helped to pay for is wantonly injured; which beggars me in purse and robs me of valuable time in taking care of its victims who are enticed here from foreign countries, and then left to suffer for food and clothing if they do not agree with every odious doctrine and practice which they are surprised to find prevalent here; which, through its representatives, under the garb of prophecies, makes covert threats against me and other American opponents, and then leaves no influence unused to bring about the fulfillment of these prophetic threats. The first article in the series of articles in the News to which I am now replying, contained two of these covert threats. Let me quote one of them: "It is interesting to watch the career of such individuals (opponents) and to mark the fate which invariably awaits them in process of time." Do you wonder that

I, as an American citizen, oppose a system, with foreigners at its head, which encourages its representatives to carry on this style of warfare against worthy Americans, and to promulgate dark threats calculated to encourage the very lawlessness of which I am complaining?

5. You think I am greatly troubled over the criticism and opposition of the News. Not at all. I was too long the editor of a daily paper myself, and have had too many newspaper discussions to be much troubled in regard to what the News may say about me. There is one thing, however, that I fear would trouble me, and that is, to have the praise of the News. In that case I think I would feel obliged to inquire what mean thing I had been doing.

Now let me close this discussion by reiterating that I am a friend to the Mormon people, and that while earnestly opposed to a system which I believe is not only hostile to the best interests of the people, but hostile to our free government. I bear no ill will to any individual, and expect to see the time when this shall be an American Territory with all classes dwelling together in peace. R. G. McNiece. Salt Lake City, June 27th, 1884.

THE TRAGEDY AT MOUNTAIN MEADOWS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the proofs which have been given from non-"Mormon" sources that the tragedy known as the Mountain Meadows massacre was perpetrated without authority from the "Mormon" Church or its leaders, and from other sources that it was in utter opposition to authoritative instructions and in violation of fundamental principles of the "Mormon" faith, the charge is frequently reiterated that the terrible deed was done by direct order of President Brigham Young, and that the "Mormon" Church is responsible for it. That this is not only unfair, but really wicked and detestable, most persons who have impartially investigated that deplorable matter have frankly conceded. We seldom notice the absurd and malicious stories told in relation to it by those who write and lecture against "Mormonism." Everybody with ordinary sense ought to see the folly of charging to a society or a community the wrong-doing of a few of its members, particularly when the spirit and sentiments of the body are opposed to the evil complained of.

We refer to this matter now because of a statement recently made by a seceder from the "Mormon" Church, one who is opposed to its teachings and authority, one and who has joined a hostile sect, and whose testimony would naturally be of an unfavorable character, if possible. His name is John Hawley. He lived in John D. Lee's neighborhood at the time of the massacre, and openly denounced the deed. He claims that he was warned to be more on his guard in his language, but continued to express his abhorrence of the murder. His statement is published in the Lamoni, Iowa, Herald (the "Josephite") organ of June 28th, and is generally antagonistic to this Church. But he closes his letter with testimony that we think should be put on record.

He refutes the statement in John D. Lee's history that he was at the meadows, and declares that he knows nothing about the massacre except from hearsay; and after describing the dispute at the time over his outspoken denunciation of the deed, he says:

"That day brought Brigham's message to the people, concerning the company just killed, but too late to do them any good. It read as follows: "Let them pass, and treat them as you would like to be treated were you passing through their land."

When this was read I had friends. This testimony I must meet some time. JOHN HAWLEY.

At the final trial of John D. Lee, the United States Prosecuting Attorney frankly admitted that the evidence entirely exculpated President Young and the "Mormon" Church from any complicity in the massacre. And there are no people in the world who are more opposed, in principle and in practice, to the unlawful shedding of human blood than the Latter-day Saints commonly called "Mormons."

TWO DAYS MEETING IN ALABAMA.

On the 14th and 15th of June, Elders B. H. Roberts and A. Cazier, President of the Alabama Conference, met with the following named traveling Elders, near Travelers Rest, Corsa County, Alabama: J. S. Ferrin, Andrew Jensen, Wm. Moultrie, R. M. Stephens, N. S. Whitney and J. C. De La Mare.

These Elders did not meet at the Alabama Conference held in La Mar Co. on the 31st of May and the 1st of June, as some of them would have had a journey of from 250 to 300 miles. To avoid this Elder Roberts arranged to meet with them on the dates above mentioned.

The principal object of the meeting was to hear the reports of the Elders who have been traveling in Central Alabama, and to make such arrangements for their labor for the future as may be necessary, and to offer such suggestions and give such instruction as the spirit might suggest.

The Elders were all in the enjoyment of health, and filled with desires to faithfully perform their duties toward

their fellowmen by preaching the Gospel to them. Although in discharging this duty they very frequently met with insults and abuse, not only from those who make no pretensions of Godliness, but also from those who profess to possess a better faith than that the Elders have to propose for their consideration.

The experience of the Elders in Alabama is pretty much the same as that of the Elders in other States. A great amount of traveling, plenty of insults from the people, with now and then a tendency to resort to mob violence, and where this is not the case, they find supreme indifference.

The minds of the people are prejudiced by the false reports of our enemies that many would think it doing God's service to abuse a "Mormon" Elder, and an indication of good breeding to insult him. Still through all this, the brethren of the Alabama conference are cheerful, and by no means feel like faltering in the prosecution of their labors.

They regard this treatment of them by the world as a witness of the divinity of their calling. When the world turn away and refuse to hear the message of great joy which the Elders have brought unto them—and then add insult, abuse and persecution to their rejection of this message sent to them by the Lord, they bear a potent testi-

mony to the world that these Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are in very deed the true servants of the living God, for, "Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake," was the language of Jesus, "Rejoice ye in that day," etc.

Still the Elders occasionally find a few who are willing to listen to their teaching, and obey the Gospel. Since the last conference held in that State a year ago, 35 have been baptised.

Several council meetings were held, in which the traveling Elders received instructions similar to those given to the Elders in the conference meetings in this and other States, a synopsis of which has appeared in the News when the minutes of these conferences were published.

Four public meetings were held, but the attendance was not large. The first principles of the Gospel and those things immediately connected with them were dwelt upon by the speakers and those present manifested considerable interest.

The few families around Travelers Rest kindly provided food and lodgings for the Elders, and did all they could to make them comfortable.

It is needless to say that it was a time of enjoyment to the brethren, only those who have been separated from the fond association of friends and home for long months together, can understand how exquisite the joy is upon meeting with our fellow-laborers in the cause of Christ.

Very respectfully, J. G. KIMBALL.

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