

TEN DAYS AS THE GUEST OF A LATTER-DAY SAINT.

BY K. A. BURNELL.

On route for this city, I passed several days at Cheyenne, in meetings with that uniform, unflinching, faithful Christian soldier, Col. J. D. Davis and others, and while there a Mormon train passed through. A pleasant-faced Welshman was in charge, who took us through the train. A deformed, paralytic, and very old man, sitting in a chair, said to him: "I follow you to my latest breath." I passed an hour here in the family of that Welsh missionary and was delighted with his spirit and all that I saw in his family. He has been absent four years, and most untiringly has preached the gospel of Mormonism in Wales. He, in common with others, has been persecuted, but has steadily gone onward. As we passed his garden he remarked, "My things of course have gone to rack during so long an absence," but he spoke of it as being a part of the all things that work together for good. This missionary spirit has settled this Utah Territory (running down into Arizona) for 500 miles north and south, and 75 east and west. I took supper with one who on a mission has walked over 1,300 miles in India. Apostle-like, they go without purse or scrip.

The preaching in the Tabernacle by the Twelve and the First Presidency is well presented. Last Sabbath, Bishop Kingsley spoke, when Brigham followed. The advantage is entirely with them; they know their audience, understand perfectly the hold they have upon them, and there is no lack of improvement of the opportunity to impress upon them what they have suffered in coming here, how they have been persecuted by the Gentile church, and how they are the chosen people of God. I did not come to learn Mormonism and to be taught by it from its leaders so much as from the common people. The only one of the Twelve with whom I have talked at length, is Apostle G. Q. Cannon. He is the editor of the DESERET NEWS, (a daily), and a children's semi-monthly paper. I have studied Brigham through the people and closely watched him as I have passed and repassed and seen him on the rostrum. The people venerate him, love him, pray for him in public and private. Out of forty or fifty public and private prayers I have heard, not more than three have failed of the petition, "Thy servant Brigham, give him wisdom and new revelations of Thyself, teach him how to lead the people," etc. The appointments of his house, barns, carriages, lands, and all, were in the States tolerably splendid at least, and yet no one finds any fault whatever, but on the contrary every one endorses his every movement, and all regard him as above anything approaching to the selfish or unchristian. They say that sometimes he speaks and is not much, but when the Prophet speaks it is wonderful. I cannot discover in him greatness, only as it has been thrust upon him. It does not appear that he has a creative mind, or is a genius, in fact I do not see but what hundreds and thousands of men in his position would have stood as high or higher. Out of Mormonism he would have made a fair judge or lawyer, a successful merchant or railroad president. He is modest and a gentleman, and although some of his remarks sound very, very strange to Gentile ears, yet when explained by his peculiar views, this harshness is very much removed.

That any Christian in our land can learn more lessons in this valley than anywhere else, of thrift, economy, a dogged persistence, a grand unity, an untiring devotion, and a holding his life in his hand, and an obedience to orders, I firmly believe. My opportunities have been the very best to see the people in the streets. Both to-day and during all last week, crowds were in to see a circus, the first that has ever visited these valleys. Much has been said about lack-luster eyes, stolid, sad and depressed countenances, especially among the women. That there is occasion for this I believe, and why not? The masses are the unthinking and burdened of the old world. Of course the schools are not what they are in the States—this is freely admitted. One teacher said to me that they were more anxious to cultivate the spiritual than the mental. Every body works. The President's house and the entrance to his yard is surrounded by a bee-hive. This brings me to the vexed and vexing question of polygamy. Of this I was determined to learn, hence my gratitude to be in the family. Mine host I love like a brother, while the more I see of him, the less I agree with him, and I frankly and warmly tell him so. Yet I do like his earnestness, his love and sacrifice for his faith, and his real, brotherly anxiety to make me see as he does. He says I shall certainly be led into darkness if I do not embrace the truth. If every one does as well in polygamy as he does and his family, I feel that it would be a wonderful improvement on the wretched infidelity that in many families in the States is perdition on earth. That is no argument, and yet it is often used. It is simply a choice of evils. I can say of this family, what I can say of comparatively few of the hundreds of families whose guest I have been—and I have been the guest of large numbers of the best of families—I have not heard an unkind word, or seen a scowl, and there are eleven children. Having said so much and knowing how intensely anxious Gentiles are and have right to be, I will venture into detail a little, not thinking that in any sense it invades domestic privacy. Mine host is 55; his first wife, dying six years ago, left him with three sons and three daughters. His oldest daughter is one of Brigham's wives, his oldest son is married and away. Sons 20 and 23, daughters 16 and 18, of the "first family," are here. The present first wife is 26, with three interesting children, under four. The second wife is 23, has two children, the eldest two and a half. The first wife has charge of the family. The second wife has pleasant rooms in a wing or north end of the house, both wings or ends opening on the front piazza. The house is large and all on one floor, and well arranged for the two families. The second wife lives entirely separate, having front and back door. In one of the Bishop's families he introduced me to a wife that looked to be as old as himself, and he was seventy; and to another

about thirty-five; and he did not say so to others. I have passed two hours twice with one of the wives of Parley P. Pratt, who was murdered in Arkansas. Many who read this will remember him. At the second interview the fourth wife was present, the other wife being the ninth. Both of these women made their mark in their way, and were both married (unfortunately though, no way before becoming the wife of Apostle Pratt). They are both women that would have grandly filled any position in life, and when I expressed amazement beyond any comprehension of mine, that such women as they could consent to share a husband's affection with nine others, they both said they rejoiced with great joy to have it so. I have met four intelligent and thinking women who defend the system with more tenacity than men. It is a religious idea to honor the man, they being honored in his honor, and without it having no part or lot in the kingdom. The more numerous the posterity, the greater the honor in the kingdom. It is utterly impossible for any woman to be tolerably happy (to say nothing about wifely comfort, triumph and rest,) in polygamy, unless she is truly, soundly converted to this feature of their faith. I judge from much questioning, that nearly all believe, but that not more than one-fourth practice polygamy. In spite of seeing this thing so favorably, I firmly believe that nine tenths of the women in Utah, could they be left to themselves, would vote so thoroughly out of existence, that it would never be heard of again.

Although I have written very much at length, I have failed to say that the tabernacle seats 8,000, and is to have a gallery put in that will seat 3,000 more. It stands on 18 stone piers 3x9 feet, in a extremes 150x250 feet; the spring of the roof is 40 feet, elliptical in form, and looks like an immense inverted saucer. The openings between the columns make the egress grand. To-day 9,000 moved out by my watch in three minutes. By the grace of God, here increasingly, I have learned to be more single-minded and eyed for Christ and perishing souls.

Salt Lake City, July 5.

[The Advance.]

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