

with the Mormon revelation on marriage. He reads the first five paragraphs, then leaps into the air, passes over all the horses and elephants, turns himself three or four times in the transit, alights with both feet upon paragraphs 61, 62 and 63, and bows gracefully to his audience. Then he holds up his hands in holy horror and assures you that in these paragraphs he has found polygamy commanded and blood atonement.

"Whoever will carefully analyze that production will find that it is in part to Joseph Smith only, and in part to others. That it relates to 'celestial marriage' in one part, and to polygamy, a different matter, in another. That celestial marriage, which is defined to be the marriage of a man and a wife for all eternity, is mandatory upon all who desire to obtain the highest glory, namely, the celestial. That the marriage of other wives is permissive under given conditions; that there is no command in it to any one to enter into plural marriage but Joseph Smith himself, and no judgment pronounced upon any woman who refuses to join her husband in this matter but the wife of the head of the church, and that this judgment is to be executed by the Lord Himself and not by any man or church.

"In justice to the people I represent I cannot pass by in silence what Mr. Baskin said in this connection about 'blood atonement.' He manifestly, or I wholly misunderstood him, undertook to impress upon this committee that if these plural wives committed adultery their throats were cut from ear to ear and their bowels to be cut out; 'Jack the Ripper' was to be turned loose, and after this chapter of horrors the judge pronounced the doctrine monstrous, and said that those who adopt it are not fit to be admitted as a State. But it is not taught there. It is not in that revelation. The destruction there mentioned is by the Lord, just as you find it expressed in substance a hundred times in our Christian Bible. And I pronounce it 'monstrous' to attribute to these people any such doctrine."

Judge Wilson then made Mr. Baskin very uncomfortable by showing up the manner in which he had attempted to make it appear that certain articles on theocracy, taken from the *Millennial Star*, and wide-apart sentences of which he had culled and attached without a star between, were written by Mr. Richards' father. It was a lively tilt and agitated the agitator considerably, though Judge Wilson was as suave and polite as a courtier. He next took up the subject of Church control of private business and said, "It is very evident from the remarks of the gentlemen of the opposition, particularly of Governor West, that they do not understand the doctrines and tenets and belief of the Mormon people. Of course I would not say that they willfully misrepresent them. All their assertions and imaginings about revelations to control private individuals in business affairs are without foundation in fact. No president or other

leading man in the Mormon Church claims to be always inspired, nor that he is at any time infallible. For a great many years anything purporting to be direct revelation has been very rare, and in no case has it related to property or business of the people. Every man in Utah is free to attend to his own business, and nobody, whether he be prophet, bishop, or priest, attempts to interfere with it.

"The 'Mormon' people do not regard the opinions and views of their leading men as revelation, and all these exaggerations to which we have listened are wild and baseless.

"When Governor West went to Utah it was very natural and very proper that he should begin to study the existing conditions, and he evidently became a pupil of our friends Baskin and McBride. 'As the twig is bent the tree's inclined' is an old adage, and you know from your personal experience how through life the teachings and opinions of your instructors have clung to you.

"Eighteen or twenty years ago our brother Baskin, and fifteen or sixteen years ago our brother McBride, began brooding over this subject; and they have been brooding over it ever since. It is a peculiarity of the human mind that constant poring over any subject has a tendency to twist and distort judgment in regard to it. It engenders suspicion; it evokes doubt as to the integrity of all who differ; it breeds intolerance; such men begin to see visions, dream dreams; airy nothings take the shape to them of veritable substantial demons with cloven feet and darted tails.

"And so it has come to pass that my brothers Baskin and McBride have fallen into the condition ascribed to the lunatic, the lover, and the poet—I class them with the poets, of course—they are of 'imagination all compact' on this subject. They see more devils in 'Mormonism' 'than vast hell can hold;' and so it happened that when the governor went to Utah and put himself under their tutelage it was a case of the 'blind leading the blind,' with the consequence assured eighteen hundred years ago and verified by experience through all the centuries since—all fell into the ditch together.

"If all the garbled extracts from old sermons and writings that have been produced here were ever entitled to the grave importance sought to be attached to them, they were the utterances of the long since departed, and not of the people who come to you and ask for their political rights and against whom not one iota of evidence has been introduced."

Judge Wilson then read and commented upon the "Mormon" articles of faith and cited some publications of distinguished travelers on the good character of the "Mormon" people. The speaker drew the conclusion that if the Church had so much control in Utah as had been claimed by the opposition, the power had been exercised with excellent results; but he remarked:

"Gentlemen, this is, I believe, the first time in the history of our government when a religious creed has been brought under discussion as a basis of legislative action. Our Constitution guarantees perfect freedom of religious thought and belief.

"What a strange spectacle this is in a government one of the most cherished principles of which is freedom of thought and religious belief, that we should be searching, as with lighted candle, for the thoughts and beliefs of men with reference to a matter of granting political privileges, and that we should be splitting hairs in argument as to whether this means this, that, or something else.

"This Church and its adherents have been subjected here to the sharpest and most unkindly criticism. These criticisms are to be printed, not only for the eye of Congress, but of the nation; they will be repeated from the pulpit and the stump, and around Christian firesides, and on the strength of what these gentlemen have said here these people will be, as they have heretofore been, held up as moral outlaws. That is my apology for troubling you with what I have quoted, and it is my apology for turning to another side of this situation and presenting to you some unpleasant statistics, and I feel additionally excused because of what was said by Judge McBride."

The committee were then surprised by citations from the records of Salt Lake City, showing the few "Mormon" convictions for common crimes and the number of Gentile convictions, the small minority of population furnishing the immense majority of criminals. This brought Messrs. West and Baskin to their feet, but they were promptly sat upon by the committee. The way in which anti-"Mormon" petitions are fixed up was next exposed, and Judge Wilson said: "Many a Christian woman has signed these petitions in full belief that she was resisting everything that was bad."

The next point touched upon was the Utah constitution and its history and special provisions. The speaker maintained that the power of Congress to make special compacts was indisputable and had been exercised for more than a third of a century. He cited numerous cases in support of this. He considered the Utah constitution beyond criticism. It was so good that even its opponents had not attempted to attack it. As to the question of sincerity he said, "The idea that any set of men fit to be outside of a lunatic asylum could suppose that a fraud of the kind suggested by the opposition could prevail is simply preposterous. Any man one remove from an idiot could not fail to see that such a scheme backed by only 175,000 men, women, and children, against the sentiment of 80,000,000 of people and against the sentiment of the civilized world, would come to instant grief. There is no fact upon which such a charge can be based, but there are abundant