

wife, that is, the first one to whom he was married. The others—though living wholly separate and apart from them—he is morally required to and does support, furnishing them and their children with the means necessary for them to live comfortably. Public opinion condemns in the strongest manner any man who fails to do this. But I can tell you they are kept under the strictest espionage by the United States marshals and their deputies. A man is not permitted to visit his former plural wives. He cannot even go upon her premises to cut a supply of firewood for her without rendering himself liable to arrest. You will readily see that the extreme rigor with which the law is enforced, works much hardship. There are many men who have a natural and sincere affection for their former wives and their children. They would be glad to visit them now and then, not with any intention or desire of violating the law by resuming their former relations, but solely in order that they might supply them with the necessities of life. As the law is administered they cannot do this. Former husbands and wives are as completely separated as though they had always been strangers.

"How many of those who lived in polygamy had more than two wives?"

"Only a small number. A few had three and still fewer four or more. Brigham Young had nineteen. No other man had nearly as many. Several of Young's wives were 'sealed' to him for the hereafter and did not sustain the marital relation. Other leading men in the church has also 'sealed' wives. It is a part of our religious belief that the future state is but a continuation of the present, and that family relations existing here will be resumed after death and go on through eternity. The question of plural marriage was a practical as well as a sentimental one. It is about as much as the average man can do to support one wife and family, and in this respect our people do not differ from others. It would have been the height of folly, indeed criminal, for a man to encumber himself with wives and children whom he could not support. This was guarded against, as I have already told you, by the ruler of the church. I do not think that 10 per cent of the men who lived in polygamy had more than two wives each."

"Aside from polygamy, is there anything in the principles and teachings of the Mormon religion which can be considered as inimical to the social and political welfare of a people? In other words, in your opinion has the prejudice, if you please, that exists through the country at large against Mormonism any good and reasonable foundation other than the practice of plural marriage?"

"Emphatically it has not. There is nothing in the Mormon religion, leaving out its permission of polygamy, to which any objection can be made. Of course there are some points in our belief with which many persons would not agree, but the same can be said of Baptists,

Methodists, Unitarians, Catholics, Spiritualists, and all other religious denominations. What I mean is that there is nothing in our belief or teachings which we have not a perfect and unquestionable right to believe and teach, or that is in the slightest degree hostile to the spirit of our government and its institutions. We have a right to claim the same religious liberty that is guaranteed to others by the Constitution of the United States. Now there are in our country a great many good people who believe, sincerely no doubt, that the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church is unfriendly to the principles of our government, but in the legislation of Congress, or of any State, there is not, to my knowledge, any discrimination against Catholics. Why should there be against Mormons, now that this one point of objection is removed. We concede that the popular verdict condemns polygamy and we accept this as final. So far as our religion is concerned I need only point to the morality, industry and prosperity of our people. A tree is known by its fruits, men do not 'gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles.' I may confidently challenge the civilized world to show more sober, orderly, thrifty and law-abiding communities than those of the Mormons in Utah. Now that every man cleaves only to one wife, surely none can say that our people are not good citizens.

"Let me give you just a few figures taken from the official police records of Salt Lake City, which appear to me to be convincing on this point. It should be borne in mind that the Mormons are largely in the majority there as to population, although in voting strength the Gentiles are now in the ascendant. During one year the arrests were: for offenses against virtue, 78 Gentiles and not one Mormon; for drunkenness and violation of liquor laws, 522 Gentiles, 23 Mormons; personal violence, 5 Gentiles, 1 Mormon; larceny, 144 Gentiles and 27 Mormons; sundry other offenses, 330 Gentiles, 22 Mormons. Does not this strike you as a pretty good showing for our people? As an evidence of their industry and thrift let me cite the fact that all through Utah nine-tenths of the Mormons who are heads of families own their homes. There are no mortgages to speak of. The census inquiry shows that the recorded indebtedness in Utah is but a small fraction per capita of what it is in the other States and Territories. I think no one will deny that this is very strong evidence of prosperity, and good citizenship. When Brigham Young was living he always advised the new comers to make it their first object to secure homes. 'Get a piece of land,' he would say, 'and if you are not able to build a house at once make a 'dug-out,' and live in that until you can do better.'"

"What is the feeling among the Mormons in regard to the admission of Utah into the Union, and what, in your opinion, is the prospect that it will be admitted in the near future?"

"The people of Utah, Mormons and Gentiles, earnestly desire Statehood. We are unable to see any valid reason why this should longer be denied. The polygamous life of some of the Mormons has been the cause of objection to the country at large, but this no longer exists. Our population is more than sufficient to entitle us to admission and we have abundant agricultural and mineral resources to assure our permanent and increasing wealth and prosperity. I think the republican party will make a mistake if it continues to oppose the admission of Utah. Whichever party does allow it to come will have a strong 'pull' on the people for their votes. Perhaps it ought not to be so, but I suppose political considerations always have had and always will have more or less influence in such matters."

"Which of the two great parties—republican and democratic—would probably control the politics of Utah in case of its admission?"

"It would be difficult to say, because our people have never, at any election, been divided on that line. Our contests have always been between the Mormons and Gentiles. The Mormons are known as the People's Party and all opposed to them as the Liberals. There are republicans and democrats in both of these parties. It is probable that a majority—though not a large one in my opinion—of the Mormons would affiliate with the democrats. A reason for this is found in the legislation which many of them feel to be unnecessarily severe, passed and rigorously enforced by the republicans. A large minority of the Mormons, however, are outspoken republicans. Prominent among these are the descendants and family of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church. Utah has very large wool and mining interests, and this fact makes many of our people protectionists, and, of necessity, republicans. Probably forty per cent of the Mormons would vote with that party. In Wyoming a large majority of those who were not disfranchised voted the republican ticket. I have no doubt that the greater part of the Gentiles in Utah would be republicans. I am of the opinion that if Statehood were given us today both parties would have an equal chance to carry the State. Salt Lake City and Ogden are our chief cities. Both are controlled by the Gentiles. The majority of their population, men, women and children, are Mormons, but the Gentiles have a much greater per cent of voting strength. In these cities the Gentiles have of late years been largely augmented by immigration from other parts of the country, and they have now obtained full possession of the municipal governments."

W. F. HINMAN.

TAXPAYERS' COMPLAINT.

On Tuesday, Oct. 14, an important suit was planted in the Third District Court by James Lowe, Frank Mitchell, Charles Livingston and