

DESERET NEWS. WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHARLES W. PENROSE, EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, - MAY 23, 1883.

"MORMON" CONVERTS IN TENNESSEE.

THE New York Commercial Advertiser has the annexed paragraph:

"A correspondent of the Nashville American, writing from Wilson county, Tenn., denies in very forcible language that the Mormons have made any converts among the best citizens of the place, and says that the missionaries who have been operating in the country over two years have not made a single proselyte that is free from dishonor or stain."

Without stopping to take issue with the correspondent who professes to know the social status and private history of all the "Mormons" of Wilson county, Tennessee, we would remind the papers which gleefully copy his unsupported statements that when a similar assertion was made about the converts to the personal teachings of the founder of the Christian religion, he exclaimed, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He also exclaimed: "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." It was "the common people" that "heard Him gladly," and He was accused by "the best citizens" of Jerusalem of consorting with "publicans and sinners."

We have noticed in a not unextensive experience in relation to "Mormon" proselytism, that men and women who bore an irreproachable character previous to attending the preaching of our Elders, were afterwards made the objects of slander and base insinuation. While the converts were considered highly respectable and eminently exemplary. But as soon as they became convinced of the truth of "Mormonism" they were transformed, in the minds of bigots and libelers, to fools or knaves, or a mixture of both.

It is the old story repeated. Saul of Tarsus was all right in popular estimation until he beheld the light from heaven and learned that his orthodoxy was of human manufacture, and that the "little sect everywhere spoken against" was the Church of the true and living God. "He then became a pestilent fellow," fit only for scorn and stripes and the rigors of the Roman law. To gain the applause of the world one has to float with the tide of worldly thought and custom, and all who take an opposite course must expect to meet the opprobrium, if not the blows, of the self-sufficient multitude.

But it matters not what may be said by the truth's opponents. It is one of the signs of the Gospel of the Kingdom to-day, as in the time of the Nazarene, that "to the poor the Gospel is preached," and those who embrace it "have their names cast out as evil." The mission of our Elders is to preach repentance to this generation. And if they can succeed in turning from the error of their ways, men or women who have sinned and have thus stained and dishonored their souls—as all do who break God's holy laws—they perform a good work and will receive a goodly reward. Are any of the best citizens of Wilson County without sin? Is there no stain upon the correspondent of the Nashville American? And are the wealthy speculators who profit by the news gathered for their financial benefit by the Commercial Advertiser, altogether free from every species of dishonor?

Of one thing we may be pardonably proud. The converts to "Mormonism," whatever they may have been when connected with the "Christian" world, will compare favorably for morals and fidelity to their faith with the converts to any other creed in Christendom. And when they stand before the bar of eternal justice with the light of

omniscience shining upon them as they are, we have no fears for the comparison that may be then be made between them and their accusers.

THE STORAGE OF INFLAMMABLE OILS.

THE oil agitation in this city has done no harm, but, according to present appearances, is likely to result in considerable good. An ordinance regulating the storage of oil in this city was presented in the City Council last evening, and is under consideration. The New York World, commenting on the recent great explosion at the Standard Oil Works, says:

"There is probably no way of preventing the burning of oil tanks when they are struck by lightning. Such a mass of metal as the tank itself is far more attractive to the lightning than any number of lightning rods which it would be practicable to rig around it."

The only safe plan is to prevent the storage of inflammable oils in settled localities in such quantities as would be greatly dangerous. And even in places apart from buildings, tanks ought to be placed at such distances from each other as to render unlikely a catastrophe of the magnitude of the series of explosions at Communipaw.

The ordinance presented in our City Council last evening provides against the storage of inflammable oils which "shall flash or emit an inflammable vapor at a temperature below 110° Fahrenheit, in quantities above a thousand gallons," unless in iron tanks, in a licensed building, or in quantities between one hundred and one thousand gallons, without a permit, or in any but fireproof buildings. Less than one hundred gallons may be kept anywhere or anyhow. And it looks as though oil that will stand the fire test of 110° may be kept in unlimited quantities without license. Also that all oils for illuminating purposes must stand this test.

The ordinance, as it appears in print, is yet in a crude state, and has not been examined and discussed. We therefore refrain from criticism, but point out for the consideration of the Council, the omission to provide for the methods of testing oil; the apparent contradiction that all oils for illuminating purposes must stand the fire test of 110°, while all the provisions seem to be for the regulation of the storage of oil below that standard; and the seeming permission for the storage of oil in any quantity and any place which will stand the 110° fire test. We find no fault, we merely draw attention to points that need thorough consideration.

LITERARY NOTICE.

BANCROFT'S "HISTORY OF THE
PACIFIC STATES."

THE second volume of the History of Mexico has been received from the publishers, A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco. This is the fifth volume of the "History of the Pacific States," by Hubert H. Bancroft, volumes two and three, for reasons heretofore explained, having not yet appeared. This volume takes the reader down to the close of the sixteenth century, interesting in the annals of Mexico. It shows in a graphic manner the labors of Cortes after the conquest; how, instead as at first, of hunting for the treasures of the country, he turned his attention to developing it, introducing the industries of the Old World and becoming a shrewd and strong ruler. Without denying the accusations against the Spanish invader of torturing or permitting the torture of Mexican chiefs to obtain knowledge of the hiding places of their treasure, the author disputes the imputation that Cortes greedily appropriated the wealth obtained—largely exaggerated in story—for his own emolument. Reforms were instituted which showed him sagacious and desirous of building up the country rather than of enriching the invaders to squander the means in their native land. The events that led on to the deposition of Cortes and the succession of Mendoza, the return of the conqueror to Spain, his humiliation and death, are all told in excellent style, and an account of the rule of the Viceroy who managed the affairs of

Mexico, and the work of the religious orders therein, with a learned criticism upon the chroniclers of that time, and a full list of authorities referred to, closes this valuable and interesting volume. As a sample of the style of this finished historian, we copy the following on the character of Cortes:

"In finally reviewing the character of Hernan Cortes, after our long acquaintance and comparing him with his contemporaries, we find conspicuous a supreme worldly ambition, love of power, of wealth, of fame, united to intense religious zeal and loyalty to the King. In the combination, there was much that might be called remarkable. This union of the spiritual and the sensual, a selfishness as broad and deep in heavenly as in earthly affairs, an all-abiding, heart-felt loyalty to the sovereign of Spain, paramount even to self-love or to church devotion seems here more evenly balanced than in any person of note among those who came early to the Indies. Though his religious zeal was so fervid, he seldom permitted it to stand in the way of worldly advancement; but there was ever present a fighting piety which might have adorned a member of the house of Hapsburg. * * * In mind and manners, in adventure, war, diplomacy, he everywhere displayed great versatility. There was little that he could not do; there was little he could not do better than another. Where ships required, he would make them, were they in the way, he would burn them. Did he want powder, there was the sulphur of the volcano; did he lack iron for guns, he used silver or copper. Were the hosts of Anasac too many for him, he turned against them other hosts, before whom he was likewise in point of numbers an insignificant enemy. But though his feats as an Indian fighter were wonderful, it is not in these that we find him at his best. A stupid slur was that made during the Alger expedition by the King's courtier, who said that Cortes would find the Moors a very different enemy from naked Americans. Cortes was a match for any Moor or any Spaniard; indeed, his most brilliant exploits were achieved when he found himself opposed by his own countrymen, and he was scarcely less successful as a ruler than as a military leader. His nature, as we everywhere have seen, was one of emphasis and intensity. Affairs of gallantry he conducted with as much skill and persistency as were required to win a battle. The grave and courtly manners by which the Spaniard commonly veils his real character, were in Cortes modified by a freedom and vivacity due in a great measure to New World influences."

JUST COMPARE THE TWO CASES.

THE case of Belle Harris is one of considerable interest and importance. It will attract general attention. It should be considered side by side with the case of Carrington, the Farmington bigamist, the particulars of which appear in another part of this paper.

On one side is a lady with a nursing infant, having another child from whom she is forcibly separated, torn from her home in Monroe, Sevier, County, brought from Beaver to this city, and after a fatiguing journey yesterday and all night, put into a lumber wagon and hauled to the penitentiary. What for? Because she declined to answer questions from the Grand Jury of the Second Judicial District as to whether she was a married woman and who was her husband. On the other side is a man with an unsavory reputation, who has clearly committed bigamy, the facts being so patent as to leave no room for doubt, and he, after great difficulty was found in bringing his case to the cognizance of a court, is permitted after arrest to go at large and apparently clear out of the country. Why this difference? The woman is a "Mormon," the man a "Gentile." One is supposed to be a plural wife, the other is known to be a bigamist in the fullest sense of the term.

In order to compel a "Mormon" woman to give evidence which it is thought may aid in the indictment of a person supposed to have married a plural wife, the harshest treatment is resorted to. Her innocent baby has to breathe the air of a prison, and her other little one to be deprived of a mother's care. But

when an anti-"Mormon" man is under arrest for a crime against the law, against society and against his family, he is let loose with the chance to escape from justice. The woman with her nursing babe is denied bail, pending an appeal to the Supreme Court of the Territory, and the Grand Jury, although its business is concluded is not discharged, but held till August, so that a woman guilty of no crime, may be detained in prison till she answers its questions. But the man who has deceived his wife, deceived the girl whom he betrayed into a false marriage under the impression made upon her mind that he was divorced, deceived the Justice of the Peace who performed the ceremony, and violated the law of God and of man, is proceeded against with great reluctance, and then allowed to go at large without bail and slip off at his own sweet will.

It is often claimed that all the rabid "Mormon" eaters want is the execution of the laws in Utah the same as in other parts of the Union. Do they take a course of this kind for the vindication of the law anywhere else in the United States? Is it usual to force witnesses to answer privileged questions? Is it usual to proceed as in the Carrington case? We rather think not. These methods appear to be peculiar to the administration of the laws in Utah.

Belle Harris is evidently a lady possessed of considerable strength of character. Residing in a rural district and unaccustomed to the ways of courts and legal methods, she has shown that when necessary she can grasp a principle and stand by it. The question put to her by the Grand Jury was threefold. "Are you a married woman; if so to whom were you married and when?" was the triple query propounded. She replied that this was a privileged question, and she stood upon her privilege and declined to answer. It is for this refusal that she stands committed. Observe, the information sought to be elicited was not in relation to her knowledge of an alleged crime. It was in reference to herself. With her babe in her arms the question itself was an implied insult. We are in favor of sustaining the law and its officers. But we must confess that we admire the courage of Belle Harris in declining to reply to questions in relation to herself, which we think no Court has the right to compel her to answer.

She is now in the penitentiary. But there is no taint of crime clinging to her garments. She is defending a principle. The rights and privileges of witnesses are as precious and sacred as the rights of courts. Belle Harris is suffering in their defense. In about two weeks the Supreme Court of the Territory will convene. A writ of *habeas corpus* will at once be applied for, and it will then be seen whether she can be longer detained. An appeal has also been taken to save some points that cannot perhaps be argued in the *habeas corpus* hearing. We do not believe that her detention will be for any great length of time. We understand the scheme on hand, and we have good reasons to think that the bottom will fall out of it. And we regard this extreme measure towards this woman, for the purpose of extorting from her something that might be used in a prosecution instituted for the meanest purposes, as harsh, unnecessary, illegal and contemptible.

THE "CONTEMPT" CASE.

IN a letter from Judge D. Tyler will be found some account of the character and family connections of Belle Harris, who is now in the penitentiary for refusing to answer improper questions put to her by the Grand Jury of the Second Judicial District. They were part of a programme arranged with a special object in view. The extreme measures taken in her case were the result of anger and vexation at the turn given to the scheme by her determination. She could not be badgered into replying nor frightened by threats of fine and imprisonment. She believed that she was in the right and the Grand Jury was wrong, and had the grit to maintain her position. We have no doubt of the correctness of her views in this respect. At any rate she is prepared to stay where she is as long as may be necessary to determine the point. And we are of the opinion that she will not answer the impertinent questions under any circumstances; however, that remains to be seen.

As we briefly pointed out last evening, the questions asked of her were not in relation to a person charged with crime, nor to any circumstance concerning anyone but herself, was her own social status that the Grand Jury was attempting to inquire into, after compelling her attendance. As pointed out by Judge Tyler, that is very different questions put to a witness who voluntarily before a court gives evidence in favor of a charge that has preferred. It was no business of the Grand Jury to find out whether she was married or single, if it was, that body had no right to compel her to impart such information concerning herself.

We have not imputed any intentionally wrong action on the part of Judge Twiss, who sent the case to the penitentiary for an indefinite period. But we think here it is not the first time that he or other Judges of District Courts have blundered. They are not apt to be on the side of mercy to a "Mormon," but are nervously anxious to appear firm in the enforcement of the law on the other side, in a case that bears the remotest relation to polygamy. The Judge admitted that the judgment was appealable. An appeal was taken and he refused to admit the defendant to bail, although an amount was tendered. It is provided in section 1053, Comp. Laws, that from judgments in but capital cases, appeal may be made by the defendant into bonds in such sum as the court may determine, conditioned to the judgment of the Supreme Court. We think the Court erred in making the questions were proper, the judgment that the witness should be imprisoned indefinitely, well as fined, and in refusing her a mission to bail.

We think this is a case misplaced zeal against polygamy. We are sure that it will not have the desired effect. It will not intimidate the lady so harshly treated, nor others from whom it might be thought desirable to extort information not otherwise attainable. It is the wrong age in which to set an Inquisition. And the penitentiary will not work in the direct sought, any more than did a thumbscrew and the rack, and other methods to compel desired testimony in medieval times. Due to be taken, too, that the infamous tactics vainly resorted to in the Clinton affair, in order to "squeeze him till he squealed," will not be repeated in this instance. Well of the opinion that in this and other cases that may be attempted, it is to be found that it is vain to strive stay or still the stubborn torrent of woman's will;

"For if she will she will, you may depend on it; And if she won't she won't, so there's end on't."

AUGUST ELECTION.

RULES OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF
REGISTRATION OFFICERS.OFFICE OF THE UTAH COMMISSIONERS,
Salt Lake City, Utah, 1883.

Members of the Commission—Alex. Ramsey, Chairman; A. B. Paddock, G. L. Godfrey, A. B. Carlton, J. R. Pettigrew; A. L. Thomas Secretary.

To—

Sir—I enclose herewith a commission appointing you a Deputy Registration Officer for _____ Precinct—County. Upon your acceptance of the appointment please subscribe and swear to the oath enclosed, and return the same to me. The following rules defining your duties have been adopted by the Commission:

Rule I.—There shall be appointed one Registration Officer for each county, and a Deputy Registration Officer for each precinct thereof.

Rule II.—Such Registration Officer shall, on or before the first Monday in June, proceed from the office of the Clerk of the County Court the last preceding Registry List on file in his office, and by himself and his deputies during the week commencing on said Monday in said month, enter on his Registration List the name of any qualified voter whose name is not on said list, on such registration and taking the following oath of affirmation:

TERRITORY OF UTAH,
County of Salt Lake.

I, _____, being first duly sworn, (or affirmed) depose and say, that I am over twenty-one years of age, and have resided in the Territory of Utah for six months, and in the precinct of _____ one month immediately preceding the date hereof, and (if a male) am a native born or naturalized (as the case may be) citizen of the United States, and a tax-payer in this Territory; (or if a female) I am a native born or naturalized, or the wife, widow, or daughter (as the case may