

lations, some of which were not only considered by the Commission to be of doubtful expediency, but to be without the pale of the law, and in excess of its powers as defined by law.

At the same time the non-Mormons were complaining because the Commission failed to inaugurate the extreme measures urged by them, the Mormon element was making numerous complaints as to what they denominated the injustice done them in denying to them equal or proportionate representation in all positions which the Commission has power to fill.

There would be some degree of plausibility in their demands if the population, and the division of the political parties were to be considered numerically only, for the Mormon element is largely in the majority in most of the voting precincts, the exceptions being in two or three cities where the anti-Mormon element has centered, and in the mining districts.

But the Commission has acted on the idea that it was the intention of Congress to impress upon the Mormon people that it has a fixed purpose to compel obedience to the laws enacted by it, and if possible to bring them and their institutions into harmonious relations with the general government. That to do this, it has prescribed grave punishments for offenses either sanctioned or tolerated by them, and a denial of the right to participate in the affairs of the government by voting, or holding any office of honor, trust, or profit to all who are guilty of such offenses; and are thereby to convince those who are not actual offenders and criminals, but who adhere to the same creed, and lend their moral if not open support and encouragement to those who do violate the law, concealing their crimes and persons from the officers of the law, and ostracising those of their number who give aid in enforcing the law in any manner; that they, to that extent, are under bans, and not to be promoted to places of trust and emolument, so long as they thus give aid and comfort to those who defy the law, and lionize those who are convicted and punished as heroes and martyrs who have suffered persecution for conscience sake, by meeting them with bands and triumphal processions as they leave the door of the penitentiary, and promoting them to higher offices in the church.

It may be considered a quasi punishment imposed upon them while they are still permitted to use the ballot in all elections held in the Territory. It is quite certain, too, that if Mormons were placed in control of the election machinery they would give the most liberal construction possible in favor of the peculiar practices and tenets they profess to hold as revelations from God.

We therefore insist that the Commission did right originally in adopting the rule that the duties pertaining to registrations and elections should be placed in the hands of and be performed by those who were not in sympathy with the

Mormon Church and creed, and that the wisdom of a strict adherence to that line of policy has been demonstrated by the changes that have been produced, and in the awakened prosperity and progress which are everywhere visible.

PRACTICE OF POLYGAMY.

Polygamy is not at the present time openly practiced, except, perhaps, in a few remote and out of the way places, but the non-Mormon element insists that plural marriages are solemnized clandestinely, and practiced secretly in the larger centers, and throughout the Territory. This may, or may not, be true. This Commission neither affirms nor denies in the absence of positive evidence. We know this, however, to be a fact. There are places where Mormons must necessarily be appointed registration officers for the reason that no Gentile qualified to hold the position is to be found in the community in which the duties are to be performed. This commission annually sends out circulars to each registration officer in the Territory requesting him to report any cases of which he may have knowledge, or reasonable cause to believe, of parties who have entered into polygamy or bigamy, and while from a number of places reports have been made by Gentile registrars, giving names, times and places as nearly as practicable, not one case has ever been reported by a Mormon registrar, although it is sometimes strongly asserted, and generally believed, that the practice has been indulged in openly in some of their precincts.

Doubtless, many members of the Mormon Church never have practiced, and never intend to practice polygamy, and perhaps many of them, *per se*, do not believe in the practice, but from the standpoint of their faith and creed, they accept it as a revelation from God, through the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator Joseph Smith, ratified, confirmed, approved and practiced by their great president, Brigham Young, and their so-called apostles; believe that it is approved and sanctified by inspiration, and the unbroken and warm approval of the church and all its Saints and dignitaries, a majority of whom have practiced it for more than half a century; that it is permitted and justified by the Almighty and in the teachings of the Bible, and that whoever desires to do so should have the right to comply with this ordinance of the Church, as well as that of baptism or any other, and that the person who does so will attain a higher exaltation in heaven than he who contents himself with one wife.

While the individual member may not wish and will not take more than one wife, if his neighbor wishes two or more, he thinks it right for his neighbor to have them, and that he should not be molested in the enjoyment of the provision of what he regards as the "higher law," and if his neighbor for this be convicted of an offense against the laws of the land; he is, in his eyes, persecuted instead of prosecuted, and becomes one of the martyrs of the Church.

All laws forbidding the practice he pronounces unconstitutional, as an interference with religion, and he devoutly believes he is under no obligation to obey them, except under compulsion.

That some grounds exist for the belief so prevalent in Utah, that polygamy is still taught by the Church as a saving ordinance, and is secretly practiced by its devotees, is evidenced by public utterances of its leading authorities and teachers, and by publications in the printed organs of the Church. The instances of this which will be given are not selected from antiquarian documents nor from the utterances of obscure and unenlightened men, but are from the mouths of those in authority and are of today.

"AUTHORITIES" QUOTED.

The *Deseret News* is the official organ of the so-called "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," and of the People's Party of Utah. Wilford Woodruff is the President and official head of the Church, and George Q. Cannon, ex-Delegate to Congress, bears the title of President, Counselor, Apostle, and perhaps many others, and the "counsels" of both have great, if not controlling influence over the minds of their followers. They speak *ex cathedra*, and their slightest expressions have the weight of "thus saith the Lord."

The *Deseret News* of June 24th, 1889, contains "Remarks by President George Q. Cannon at a Priesthood meeting, held at Manti (Sanpete Stake Conference), May 19th, 1889, reported by A. Winter," in which the following appears:

"Every young man and every young woman should live so he or she can get a recommendation from the bishop to go to the Temple and be married according to the holy order which God has revealed."

In its issue of July 15th, 1889, are the remarks of the same distinguished teacher, delivered in the Tabernacle on the preceding day, Sunday, July 14th, from which extracts are given, which seem to teach that all the Church has taught is righteousness and not sin and that the prosecutions of the "Saints" for the crime of polygamy are "persecutions."

"The hold that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has taken upon the hearts of those who have embraced it in our day is due to the fact that the message was a true one, that the promises made were fulfilled, that those who obeyed had received the testimony according to the promise that had been given. If it had not been so these valleys would not now be peopled by Latter-day Saints, these settlements, extending north and south, east and west, would not have had an existence—this Tabernacle would have never been built—this Temple, so near its completion, would never have had a foundation stone laid. But because the message was from heaven and because heaven bestowed the gifts and blessings as the Elders had promised; therefore the Latter-day Saints have adhered together here; they have come from various lands, they have obeyed the voice of God, and have testified that through their obedience they