POLYGAMY.

Mass Meeting of Mormon Women in Salt Lake City.

The Proposed Resistance to the Suspression of Polygamy.

A Host of Sister Saints Proclaim in Favor of Plurality.

Their Condition Not So Bad As Represented.

The Great Men of the Nation Degenerating.

The Oppression of the Mormons a Blow at Freedom.

SALT LAKE CITY, Jan. 13, 1870.

The anticipated action of Congress for the suppression of polygamy is creating great excitement in Salt Lake. The Prophet himself, apostles, elders and bishops all openly assert that they will not obey any law for the suppression of polygamy which Congress may enact. Renewed and powerful efforts are now being made by the leaders to inflame the minds of the masses of the Mormons against the government and people of the United States. Treason is preached as the command of God. Officers of the government, civil and military, are sneered at, and the whole army of the United States is practically defied. All this is done, they say, in obedience to the mandates of the Lord. They believe that their system is divine, that being so He is on their side, and hence that no power on earth can finally prevail against them. They see that there is an "irrepressible conflict" between the civilization of the age and polygamy; that all which has been done to build up this earthly Zion should not go for naught, and that every effort which the Church can possibly put forth must now be made in an attempt to save the system. They are anxious to have Utah admitted into the Union as a State, in order that they may elect Mormon officers and thus take all Mormon matters out of the control of Congress. I have assured them that Utah never can come into the Union with polygamy; that the government is determined to abolish it; and in reply they say that rather than submit to the enforcement of any law against it they will burn their property and shed their blood, and all in defence of their religion. They imagine that a powerful demonstration of the women in its favor might tend to perpetuate polygamy. The old Tabernacle was this afternoon the scene of such a demonstration. A call had been made for the women to meet *en masse* to denounce the Cullom bill and show how much they loved the peculiar system. One o'clock was the hour appointed for the meeting, and from noon the women were wending their way towards the Tabernacle. Wagon loads of wives, with their babies, came in from the country. It was a singular sight to see some three thousand infatuated females assembled to speak and vote in favor of a system which women of finer feelings tell you is repugnant to them. There were quite a number in the audience who evidently went simply to witness the novel spectacle of this first mass meeting of Mormon women; for when the resolutions were put to vote, although they were carried by a large majority, there were many who did not raise their hands either in their favor or against them. The time has not yet arrived when women here who are known to be opposed to polygamy feel free to give such public expression to their sentiments. One peculiar feature of the scene was the number of infants in arms, whose squalling caused a temporary interruption to the proceedings. Another was the noticeable absence of young girls—most of those who were present were wives and widows—for many of the Mormon maidens of the present generation, having had an opportunity of seeing the practical working of the system, while they do not assume to say that polygamy is absolutely wrong, because it is a part of a religion which they have been educated in, do not hesitate to say that it would never be agreeable to them. The meeting was altogether different from ordinary public assemblages of ladies in this, that its purpose was to advocate not the "rights" of women so much as the "rights" of men.

Sister Eliza R. Snow, who is known as the Mormon poetess, and as one of the wives of the founder of the system, Joseph Smith, but who has been "sealed" to Brigham Young for this present life, called her sister saints to order, and nominated Sister Sarah N. Kimball to preside over the meeting. Sarah, though bearing a similar surname, is no relation to Heber C., who was Brigham Young's first counsellor, and who died about a year ago. Sarah is a widow. Her husband was killed a few years ago by an explosion on a steamer on which he was a sailing on a mission. The sisters by a show of hands selected Sarah to preside. Sister Lydia D. Alder was chosen secretary in a similar manner. Lydia is the wife of a Mormon merchant.

SISTER ZINA'S SUPPLICATION.

The meeting was opened by a long prayer by Sister Zina D. Young. Zina is one of Brigham's wives. She prayed that the "assembled body of sisters and daughters of Eve" might be surrounded by "divine angels, and that the Holy Ghost might dwell in each heart to sustain the cause of virtue and integrity in this land of liberty that the Lord has bequeathed to the seed of Joseph in these latter days;" that He would smile on their cause "in behalf of our beloved constitution, and of the rising generation, that they may go into the world perfect, and ready to do the work which God would delight to own and bless." She prayed that they might be enabled to return to build up Zion in Jackson county, Missouri; that man might be redeemed from the curse and women from the fall. "May kind angels," she said, "watch over us, and let the just rejoice because of the integrity of the hearts of the daughters of Zion. May the wicked and those who seek our destruction find no resting place in our land, but may they go to their own place. Let us devote every principle of our souls to this blessed organization (polygamy) which Thou hast permitted to be established again upon the earth. Bless the labors of the holy priesthood. We dedicate ourselves to Thee in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Amen."

SISTER SARAH KIMBALL'S OPENING ORATION.

Sister Sarah N. Kimball then came forward and said:—

SISTERS—I ask you to raise a secret prayer to Heaven that I may be qualified to preside over this meeting. I will endeavor to state its objects as well as possible. We have come together to express our feelings in relation to the government of the United States in which we live. We are here upon the soil of the United States. Our grandfathers fought in the Revolutionary war, and many of them suffered and bled. Mine did; hence I feel with you that I have a right to speak of the institutions of the government under which we live. We have thought much and we have suffered much. We have been driven, outcasts, almost, from the nation that gave us birth and under whose banner we should have been protected, and inasmuch as we have conducted ourselves properly we should have been honored. Have we transgressed any law of the United States of America? I would ask you, my sisters, have we? (Voices—"No.") Then why are we here in these mountains to-day? Did we not leave the comforts and elegances of civilized and enlightened life and traverse the desert plains? And were we not previous to that driven from place to place? And why? When we arrive at mature years the question will arise, why? The immediate object of this call has been the introduction of a bill before Congress—called the Cullom bill—which proposes to disinherit the citizens of Utah Territory if they cling to the principles of their religion; to take from them every right of American citizens, every right that is sacred to man. And here I might say we have not come to defend women's rights, as many honorable ladies are doing throughout the United States and other countries; but we are here to-day to advocate man's rights—man's rights to an inheritance upon the soil of this United States territory. They did not allow us to be a State. Why? This bill would deprive not only our fathers, friends and sons but it would even deprive us of the privilege of of their inheritance, and from being landowners, selecting our own husbands. Against this we rebel. This is my feeling, and, as far as I understand, it is the feeling of the sisters around me and before me. The object of this meeting is to give expression to our feelings. We have felt a long time, and why not express our feelings? It now becomes our duty to draft resolutions expressive of the feelings of the ladies of this city.

THE COMMITTEE OF SISTER SAINTS ON RESOLUTIONS.

A committee on resolutions was then selected. It consisted of

Sister Margaret Smoot, one of the wives of the former Mayor.

Sister Rachel Grant, one of Jedediah's widows, and who subsequently married his brother George, from whom she has since been separated.

Sister Merinda Hyde, one of the wives of Orson, who is one of the twelve apostles.

Sister Isabella M. Horn, who has borne fifteen children to her husband, who has several other wives.

Sister Priscilla Staines, formerly one of the wives of Tom Williams, who was killed by Indians some seventeen years ago, but now one of the wives of an energetic agent of the Church.

Sister Mary N. Leaver, presidentress of one of the ward female relief societies.

Sister Elizabeth McLellan, a wife of one of the ward bishops.

When the names had been announced the sisters were requested to retire to prepare the resolutions—which, however, had already been prepared. They retired, however, and remained absent a long while, during which several sisters spoke or read their speeches.

Sister Lizzie Snow was the first in order, but she asked to be allowed to wait a while until her voice, which was not just then in trim, should be more recovered.

SPEECH OF SISTER BATHSHEBA SMITH.

The speech of Sister Bathsheba Smith, one of the wives of George A. Smith, who is cousin to the former prophet Joseph, first Counsellor to the present prophet Brigham, historian of the Church and next in authority to Young himself, was then read by sister Hannah T. King, a poetess, as follows:—

BELOVED SISTERS AND FRIENDS—It is with no ordinary feelings that I meet with you on the present occasion. From my early youth I have been identified with the Latter Day Saints; hence I have been an eye and ear witness to many of the scenes that have been inflicted upon our people by a spirit of intolerant persecution. I watched by the bedside of the first apostle, David W. Patten, who fell a martyr in the Church. He was a noble soul. He was shot by a mob while defending the saints in Ray county, State of Missouri, on the 25th of October, 1838. As Brother Patten's lifeblood oozed away I stood by and heard his dying testimony to the truth of our holy religion; declaring himself to be a friend to all mankind, he sacrificed his life purely to defend the innocent. He had no feelings of hostility to his race, but labored to exalt them. His last words addressed to his wife were:—"Whatever you do, oh! do not deny the faith." This circumstance made a lasting impression upon my youthful mind. In Missouri mobs were burning houses and killing the saints, when an army was sent by Governor Boggs which, we supposed, had come to protect us. But, alas! time proved that it came to continue the same dreadful work, reducing the whole people from competence to extreme poverty, sending them forth under an exterminating order, in mid-winter, 200 miles across the bleak prairies among strangers in a strange State, leaving their homes and property to be possessed by their persecutors. I was intimately acquainted with the life and ministry of our beloved prophet and patriarch, Joseph and Hyram Smith. I know that they were pure men, who labored for the redemption of the human family. For six years I heard their public and private teachings. It was from their lips that I heard taught the principle of celestial marriage, and when I saw their mangled forms cold in death, having been slain for the testimony of Jesus by the hands of cruel bigots, in defiance of law, justice and executive pledges; and although this was a scene of barbarous cruelty, which can never be erased from the minds of those who heard the heart-rending cries of widows and orphans, and mingled their tears with those of thousands of witnesses of the mournful occasion, the memories of which I hardly feel willing to awaken, yet I realize that they had sealed their ministry with their blood, and that their testimony was in force. On the 9th of February, 1846—the middle of a cold and bleak winter—my husband just rising from a bed of sickness, in company with thousands of the saints, I was driven again from my comfortable home, the accumulation of six years' industry and prudence, and, with two little children, commenced a long and weary journey, through wilderness, over prairies, deserts and mountains, to seek another home for a wicked mob had decreed we must leave. Governor Ford, of Illinois, said the laws were powerless to protect us. Exposed to the cold of winter and the storms of spring, we continued our journey, amid want and exposure, burying by the wayside a dear mother and son and many kind friends and relatives. We reached the Missouri river in July. Here our country thought proper to make a requisition for a battalion to defend our flag in the war pending with Mexico. We responded promptly, many of my kindred stepping forward and performing a journey characterized by their commanding officer as "unparalleled in history." With most of our youth and middle aged men gone we could not proceed; hence we were compelled to make another home, which, though humble, approaching winter made very desirable. In 1847-48 all who were able, through selling their surplus property, proceeded; we who remained were told by an unfeeling Indian agent that we must vacate our houses and recross the Missouri river, as the laws would not permit us to remain on Indian lands. We obeyed, and again made a new home, though only a few miles distant. This latter home we abandoned in 1849 for the purpose of joining our co-religionists in the then far-off region denominated on the maps "the Great Desert," and by some later geographers as "Eastern Upper California." In this isolated country we made new homes, and for a time contended with the crickets for a scanty subsistence. The rude, ignorant and almost nude Indians were a heavy tax upon us while struggling again to make comfortable homes and improvements; yet we bore it all without complaint, for we were buoyed up with the happy reflections that we were at peace and had found an asylum in such an undesirable country as to strengthen us in the hope that our houses would not be coveted, and that should we, through the blessing of God, succeed in planting our own vine and fig tree, no one would feel heartless enough to withhold from us that religious liberty which we had sought in vain among our former neighbors. Without recapitulating our recent history, the development of a people whose industry and morality have extracted eulogy from their most bitter traducers, I cannot help expressing my surprise, mingled with regret and indignation, at the recent proceeding of those who, ignorant of our real condition and bigotted, and led on by the Vice President, would aid reckless speculators who seek for proscription and plunder, and who feel willing to rob the inhabitants of these valleys of their hard earned possessions and, what is dearer, the constitutional boon of religious liberty. (Applause.)

SPEECH OF SISTER RITER.

Sister Riter, who has been long a mother in Israel, then spoke as follows:—

In rising before this vast assembly and considering the importance of this meeting my heart is filled with gratitude which words cannot express. We have not met here, my beloved sisters, as women of other States and Territories meet, to complain of the wrongs and abuses inflicted upon us by our husbands, our fathers and our sons; but we are happy and proud to state that we have no such afflictions and abuses to complain of. Neither do we ask for the right of franchise; nor do we ask for more law, more liberty or more rights from our husbands and brothers, for there is no spot on this wide earth where kindness and affection are more bestowed upon women and her rights so sacredly defended. We are here to express our love for each other and to exhibit to the world our devotion to God our Heavenly Father, and our willingness to comply with the requirements of the Gospel; and as the law of celestial marriage is one of the requirements we are resolved to honor, teach and practice the same. May God grant us strength to do so! (Amen! from the assembly,) and that we may continue to enjoy freedom and civil and religious liberty, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. (Another amen.)

SPEECH OF ONE OF BRIGHAM'S WIVES.

Sister Harriet Cook Young, one of Brigham's wives, then came forward and read her speech as follows:—

In rising to address this meeting delicacy prompts me to explain the chief motives which dictated our present action. We, the ladies of Salt Lake City, have assembled here to-day not for the purpose of assuming any particular political power, nor to claim any special prerogative which may or may not belong to our sex, but to express our indignation at the unhallowing efforts of men, who, regardless of every principle of manhood, justice and constitutional liberty, would force upon a religious community, by a direct issue, either the curse of apostacy, or the bitter alternative of fire and sword. Surely the instinct of self preservation, the love of liberty and happiness and the right to worship God, are dear to our sex as well as to the other. And when these most sacred of all the rights are thus wickedly assailed, it becomes absolutely our duty to defend them. The mission of the Latter Day Saints is to reform abuses which have for ages corrupted the world and to establish an era of peace and righteousness. The Most High is the founder of this mission, and in order to its establishment His providences have so shaped the world's history that on this Continent, blest above all other lands, a free and enlightened government has been instituted, guaranteeing to all social, political and religious liberty. The constitution of our country is, therefore, hallowed to us, and we view with a jealous eye every infringement upon its great principles, and demand in the sacred name of liberty that the man who would trample it under his feet, by depriving a hundred thousand American citizens of every vestige of liberty, should be anathematized throughout the length and breadth of the land as a traitor to God and his country. It is not strange that among the bigoted and corrupt such a man and such a measure should have originated; but it will be strange, indeed, if such a measure find favor with the honorable and high-minded men who wield the destinies of the nation. Let this seal of ruin be attached to the archives of our country, and terrible must be the results. Woe will wait upon her steps and sorrow and desolation will stalk through the land; peace and liberty will seek another clime, while anarchy, lawlessness and bloody strife hold high carnival around the general wreck. God forbid that wicked men work such evil to the nation. It is true that a corrupt press and an equally corrupt priestcraft are leagued against us—that they have pandered to the ignorance of the masses and vilified our institutions to that degree that it has become popular to believe the Latter Day Saints are unworthy to live; but it is also true that there are many, very many, right-thinking men who are not without influence in the nation, and to such we do now solemnly and earnestly appeal. Let the united voice of this assembly give the lie to the popular clamor that the Mormon women of Utah are oppressed and held in bondage. Let the world know that the women of Utah comprehend this, and prefer virtue to vice and the home of an honorable wife to the gilded pageantry of fashionable temples of sin. Transitory allurements, glaring to the senses as the flame is to the moth, but short lived and cruel in their results, possess no charms for us. Every woman in Utah may have her husband—the husband of her choice. Here we are taught not to destroy our children, but to preserve them; for they, reared in the path of virtue and trained to righteousness, constitute our true glory. It is with no wish to accuse our sisters who are not of our faith that I refer to these things; but we are dealing with facts as they exist. Wherever monogamy reigns adultery, prostitution, free love and foticide, directly or indirectly, are its concomitants. It is not enough to say that the virtuous and the high-minded frown upon these evils; we believe they do; but frowning does not cure them; it does not even check their rapid growth. Either the remedy is too weak or the disease is too strong. The women of Utah comprehend this, and they see in the principle of plurality of wives the only safeguard against adultery, prostitution, free love and reckless waste of prenatal life practised throughout the land. It is as co-workers in the great mission of universal reform, not only in our own behalf, but also by precept and example, to aid in the emancipation of our sex generally, that we accept in our heart of hearts what we know to be a divine commandment, and here and now, boldly and publicly, we do assert our right not only to believe in this holy commandment, but to practice what we believe. While these are our views every attempt to force that obnoxious measure upon us must of necessity be an attempt to coerce us in our religious and moral convictions, against which did we not most solemnly protest we would be unworthy the name of American women. (Applause.)

THE RESOLUTIONS.

The committee of sisters now returned, and Sister Eliza Snow read the resolutions, as follows:—

Resolved, That we, the ladies of Salt Lake City, in mass meeting assembled, do manifest our indignation and protest against the bill known as the Cullom bill, also the one known as the Cragin bill, and also all similar bills, expressions and manifestoes.

Resolved, That we consider the above named bills foul blots on our national escutcheon—absurd documents—atrocious insults to the honorable Executives of the United States government, and malicious attempts to subvert the rights of civil and religious liberty.

Resolved, That we do hold sacred the constitution bequeathed us by our forefathers, and ignore, with laudable womanly jealousy, every act of those men to whom the responsibilities of government have been entrusted which is calculated to destroy its efficacy.

Resolved, That we unitedly exercise every moral power and every right which we inherit as the daughters of American citizens, to prevent the passage of such bills; knowing that they would inevitably cast a stigma on our republican government by jeopardizing the liberty and lives of its most loyal and peaceable citizens.

Resolved, That in our candid opinion the presentation of the aforesaid bills indicates a manifest degeneracy of the great men of our nation; and their adoption would presage a speedy downfall and ultimate extinction of the glorious pedestal of freedom, protection and equal rights established by our noble ancestors.

Resolved, That we acknowledge the institutions of the Church of Jesus Christ of latter day saints as the only reliable safeguard of female virtue and innocence; and the only sure protection against the fearful sin of prostitution and its attendant evils, now prevalent abroad; and, as such, we are and shall be united with our brethren in sustaining them against each and every encroachment.

Resolved, That we consider the originators of the aforesaid bills disloyal to the constitution and unworthy of any position of trust in any office which involves the interests of our nation.

Resolved, That in case the bills in question should pass both houses of Congress and become a law by which we shall be disfranchised as a Territory, we, the ladies of Salt Lake City, shall exert all our power and influence to aid in the support of our own State government.

Applause followed the reading of these resolutions, which were then put to vote, and a couple of thousand gentle, saintly hands were raised in favor of them and against the government. And so the resolutions were adopted.

SISTER SMITH ON PERSECUTIONS.

Sister SMITH, who has been a professing saint for nearly forty years, moved some of her sister saints to tears when she related the persecutions of her family, as follows:—

SISTERS—As I sat upon my seat listening it seemed as though if I held my peace the stones of the streets would cry out. With your prayers aiding me I will try and make a few remarks. I obeyed the Gospel the 1st day of April, 1831, almost thirty-nine years ago. I have been in the midst of this people ever since. I have seen their travels, their persecutions, their sorrows, their afflictions. I have seen the mourning and sorrow of this people in their calamities, and many is the time my heart has been pained at the scenes I have witnessed. I moved to Kirtland, Ohio, with my husband—a good man and a faithful elder in the Church. He moved his family to Kirtland, but he could not live there for our persecutors said we must not stay. So we sold our dwelling for a song, and we had to sing it ourselves. We travelled to Missouri. Our teams were poor, and we had hardly enough to keep soul and body together, having been robbed of nearly all we had. We landed in Caldwell county, near Hann's mill, nine wagons of us in company. Two days before we landed there we were taken prisoners by an armed mob that demanded all the ammunition and every weapon we had. We surrendered them; gave up all. They know, for they searched our wagons. We went on and a few miles further came to Hann's Mill, the scene of the awful murder that was enacted. My husband pitched his tent near a blacksmith shop. Brother David Evans had made a treaty with the mob not to molest us; and he came and told us. He called the company into the blacksmith shop, and they knelt in prayer. I sat in my tent and saw the mob coming, the same that had taken the arms away. They came like so many demons, or Indians. Before I could get to the blacksmith shop door to tell those inside the bullets came whistling among them. Among those who were killed were my husband and one son; and one beautiful boy, now here, a man in your midst, was wounded worse than death. I was obliged to sit all that awful night on the ground to take care of my poor children. Another sister, who had a son wounded, sat there all night with me. The scene was terrible beyond description. The wounded and dying were lying moaning around; and we sat there that fearful night, knowing the mob was not far off, and might return upon us any moment. Next morning Brother Joseph Young came to see what could be done. He said there was no time to bury the bodies, for the mob was close at hand, nor were there men to dig the graves, and asked what should be done. I said, "anything rather than leave the dead to the fiends who had murdered them." There was a dry, deep well close by, and into that the bodies were put, seventeen in number, and we moved away. And this was in America, the land of liberty and freedom, that boasts of the rights guaranteed to its citizens. We are here to-day to express ourselves as American citizens. Let us stand to the truth if we die for it. This is my prayer. (Applause.)

SISTER EAST'S DISCOURSE ON LIBERTY AND POLYGAMY.

Sister WILMARTH EAST briefly discoursed on liberty and plurality as follows:—

It is with feelings of pleasure, mingled with indignation, that I appear before you, my sisters, to express my feelings with regard to the Cullom bill now before Congress. The constitution which our forefathers bled and died to bequeath to us guarantees the right of religious liberty, to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. Does the Cullom bill give us this right? Compare it with the constitution. Where is the liberty bequeathed us by our fathers?—the richest boon ever given to man or woman, except eternal life or the Gospel of the Son of God. I am an American by birth, and have lived above the laws. I claim the right to worship God according to my conscience and the commandments of God. The constitution guarantees to me "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." What is life to me if I see the galling yoke of oppression placed upon the necks of my husband, brothers and sons? That Mr. Cullom would do. I am proud to say to you that I am not only a citizen of the United States of America but a citizen of the kingdom of God; and the laws of His kingdom I am willing to sustain and defend by example and precept. I am thankful to-day that I have the privilege of living the religion of Jesus, our Saviour, and that I have the honored privilege of being the recipient of one of the greatest principles ever revealed to man for his redemption and exaltation in the kingdom of God, namely, plurality of wives; and I am thankful to-day that I know God is at the helm and will defend his people.

SISTER KIMBALL WANTS GENERAL GRANT TO BE A MORMON.

Sister SARAH KIMBALL here chimed in and said:—

We are loyal citizens of the United States. We have been faithful and true to the standard raised for our liberties. We are faithful to the constitution. My grandfathers fought in the Revolution. My great uncle was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. I pray that the principles and the Spirit of God that is with us may be extended to Washington, that our Chief Magistrate may feel the spirit of this audience and of our disgust and contempt of the movement made for our destruction. I hope we will soon become a free and independent State, when we will elect our own government and officers and not be trampled upon as we are at present.

WASHINGTON A CELESTIAL MORMON.

Sister McMINN, an aged saint among the audience, rose and said:—"I am an American citizen. My father fought all through the American Revolution and lost all his property; and I am proud that I have a name among the Latter Day Saints. I rejoice in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I could not keep my seat any longer. My father fought beside General Washington."

"How old are you, Sister McMinn?" asked Sister Kimball, and the answer was, "eighty-four."

"I would observe," resumed Sister Kimball, "that General Washington is a member of this Church and kingdom. I was present when Judge Adams, of Springfield, was baptized for Washington.

SILVER-SAVAGE STRAINS OF SISTER SNOW.

Sister ELIZA SNOW, the poetess, who was now in better voice, then came forward and read her set speech, as follows:—

My sisters, in addressing you at this time, I realize that the occasion is a peculiar and interesting one. We are living in a land of freedom, under a constitution that guarantees civil and religious liberty to all, black and white, Christians, Jews, Mohammedans and pagans, and how strange it is that such considerations should exist as those which have called us together this afternoon! Under the proud banner which now waves from ocean to ocean, strange as it may seem, we, who have ever been loyal citizens, have been persecuted from time to time and driven from place to place, until at last, beyond the bounds of civilization, under the guidance of President Young, we found an asylum of peace in the midst of these mountains. There are, at times, small and apparently trivial events in the lives of individuals with which every other event naturally associates. There are circumstances in the history of nations which seem as centres, around which everything else revolves. The entrance of our brave pioneers and the settlement of the Latter Day Saints in these mountain vales, which then were only barren, savage wilds, are incidents with which not only our future, but the future of the whole world, is deeply associated. Here they struggled with more than mortal energy, for their hearts and hands were nerved by the spirit of the Most High, and through His blessing they succeeded in drawing sustenance from the arid soil; and here they erected the standard on which the Star Spangled Banner waved its salutations of welcome to the nations of the earth; and, although it had been stained with the blood of innocence, here it has been rescued from the withering touch of tyranny and oppression; here it has been honored and respected, and here it will be bequeathed unsullied to future generations. Yes, that "dear old flag," which in my girlhood I always contemplated with joyous pride, and to which the patriotic strains of my earliest muse were chanted, here floats triumphantly on the mountain breeze. Our numbers, small at first, have increased, until now we number 150,000, and yet we are allowed only a Territorial government. Year after year we have petitioned Congress for what it was our inalienable right to claim—a State government—and year after year our petitions have been treated with contempt. Such treatment as we have received is almost without a parallel in history. But now, instead of granting us our rights as American citizens, bills are being presented to Congress which are a disgrace to men in responsible stations and claiming to possess honor and magnanimity; bills which, if carried into effect, would destroy us as a people. But there is too much virtue yet existing in the nation; and, above all, there is a God in heaven whose protecting care is over us and who takes cognizance of the acts of the children of men. We have met to-day to manifest our views and opinions concerning the oppressive policy threatened to be exercised towards us by our republican government. Aside from all local and personal feelings, to me it is a source of deep regret that the standard of American liberty should have so far swayed from its original towering position as to have given rise to circumstances which not only rendered such a meeting opportune, but absolutely necessary. Therefore, while detraction and ridicule have been poured forth in almost every form that malice could invent, while we have been misrepresented by speech and press, and exhibited in every shade but our true light, the ladies of Utah, as a general thing, have remained silent. Had not our aims been of the most noble and exalted character, and had we not known that we occupied a standpoint far above our traducers, we might have returned volley for volley; but we have all the time realized that to contradict such egregious absurdities would be a great stoop of condescension, far beneath the dignity of those who profess to be saints of the living God, and we very unassumingly applied to ourselves a saying of an ancient apostle, in writing to the Corinthians, "Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing that yourselves are wise." But there is a point at which silence is no longer a virtue, and in my humble opinion we have reached it. Shall we, ought we to be silent when every right of citizenship, every vestige of civil and religious liberty is at stake? When our husbands and sons, our fathers and brothers are threatened with being either restrained in their obedience to the commands of God or incarcerated year after year in the dreary confines of a prison, will it be thought presumptuous for us to speak? Are not our interests one with our brethren? Ladies, this subject as deeply interests us as them. In the kingdom of God woman has no interests separate from those of man—all are mutual. Our enemies pretend that in Utah woman is held in a state of vassalage; that she does not act from choice, but by coercion; that we would even prefer life elsewhere were it possible for us to make our escape. What nonsense. We all know that if we wished we could leave at any time, either to go singly or we could rise *en masse*, and there is no power here that could or would even wish to prevent us; and that little stronghold, Camp Douglas, where men have nothing to do but eat, drink and smoke at the expense of the national treasury, would be no more in preventing our escape than a whiff from one of their cigars. I will now ask this intelligent assemblage of ladies, Do you know of any place on the face of the earth where woman has more liberty and where she enjoys such high and glorious privileges as she does here as a Latter Day Saint? (Voices, "No.") The very idea of woman here being in a state of slavery is a burlesque on good common sense. The history of this people, with a very little reflection would instruct outsiders on this point; it would show at once that the part which woman has acted in it could never have been performed against her will. Amid the many distressing scenes through which we have passed, the privations and hardships consequent on our expulsions from State to State, and our location in an isolated, barren wilderness, the women in this Church have performed and suffered what could never have been borne and accomplished by slaves. And now, after all that has transpired, can our opponents expect us to look on with silent indifference and see every vestige of that liberty for which many of our patriotic grandsires fought and bled that they might bequeath to us, their children, the precious boon of national freedom, wrested from our grasp? They must be very dull in estimating the energy of female character who can persuade themselves that women, who, for the sake of their religion, left their homes, crossed the plains with handcarts, or, as many had previously done, drove ox, mule and horse teams, from Nauvoo and from other points, when their husbands and sons went at their country's call to fight her battles in Mexico—yes, that very country that had refused us protection and from which we were then struggling to make our escape—I say, that those who think that such women and the daughters of such women do not possess too much energy of character to remain passive and mute under existing circumstances are "reckoning bills without their host." To suppose that we should not be aroused when our brethren are threatened with fines and imprisonment for their faith in and obedience to the laws of God is an insult to our womanly natures. Were we the stupid, degraded, heartbroken things that we have been represented, silence might better become us; but as women of God; women filling high and responsible positions, performing sacred duties; women who stand, not as dictators, but as counsellors to their husbands, and who in the purest, noblest sense of refined womanhood, being truly their helpmates, we not only speak because we have the right, but justice and humanity demand that we should. Instead of being lorded over by tyrannical husbands we, the ladies of Utah, are already in possession of a privilege which many intelligent and high-aiming ladies in the States are earnestly seeking—the right to vote. Although, as yet, we have not been admitted to the common ballot box, to us the right of suffrage is extended in matters of far greater importance. This we say truthfully, not boastingly; and we may say further, that if those sensitive persons who profess to pity the condition of the women of Utah will secure unto us those rights and privileges which a just and equitable administration of the laws of the constitution of the United States guarantees to every loyal citizen, they may reserve their sympathy for objects more appreciative. My sisters, inasmuch as we are free to do all that love and duty prompt, let us be brave and unfaltering in sustaining our brethren. Woman's faith can accomplish wonders. Let us, like the devout and steadfast Miriam, sustain our brethren as she upheld the hands of Moses. Like the loving Josephine, whose firm yet gentle influence animated and soothed the heart of Napoleon, we will encourage and assist the servants of God in establishing righteousness; but, unlike Josephine, never will political inducements, threats or persecutions prevail on us to relinquish our matrimonial ties; they were formed by the authority of the holy priesthood, the efficiency of which extends into eternity. But "to the law and to the testimony." Those obnoxious, fratricidal bills! I feel indignant at the thought that such documents should disgrace the federal capital. The same spirit that prompted Herod to seek the life of Jesus, the same that drove our Pilgrim Fathers to this Continent, and the same that urged the English government to the system of unrepresented taxation which resulted in the independence of the American colonies, is conspicuous in those bills. If such measures are persisted in they will produce serious results. They not only threaten extirpation to us, but they augur destruction to the government. The authors of those bills would tear the constitution to shreds. They are sapping the foundations of American freedom; they would obliterate every vestige of the dearest right of man—liberty of conscience—and reduce our once happy country to a state of anarchy. Our trust is in God; He that led Israel forth from the land of Egypt, who preserved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, who rescued Daniel from the jaws of hungry lions and directed Brigham Young to these mountain vales; He lives and overrules the destinies of men and nations. He will make the wrath of man praise Him; and His purposes will move steadily forward until wickedness shall be swept from the earth, and truth, love and righteousness reign triumphantly. (Applause.)

THE SQUALLING BABIES.

At the conclusion of Sister Snow's address "The women in the audience whose babies are troublesome," said Sister Kimball, "will take them out."

SISTER KING ON CULLOM AND HIS BILL.

Sister KING now read her sentiments as follows:—

MY DEAR SISTERS—I wish I had the language I feel I need at the present moment to truly express the indignant feelings of my heart and brain on reading last evening a string of thirty "sections," headed by the words, "A bill in aid of the execution of the laws in Utah, and for other purposes." The "other purposes" contained the pith of the matter; and the adamantine chains with which the author seeks to bind the people of Utah exceed anything the feudal times of England or the serfdom of Russia ever laid upon human beings. Are we really in America, the world-renowned land of liberty, of freedom, of equal rights? The land of which I dreamed in my youth as almost an earthly elysium, where freedom of thought and religious liberty were enjoyed by all? The land that Columbus wore his noble life out to discover? The land that God Himself aided him in discovering, and which Isabella, a queen—a woman—declared she would pawn her jewels and her crown of Castile to procure the means needed by him? For something whispered to her he was called of God for the purpose. The land of Washington, the "Father of his Country," and a host of noble spirits, too numerous to mention. The land to which the Mayflower bore the Pilgrim Fathers as they bade their native land "Good night," that they might worship God in a purer and holier faith in America, so long synonymous with liberty and freedom? Yes, sisters, this is America; but how changed! Who or what is the creature that framed this incomparable document? Is he an Esquimaux, or what isolated land produced him? What ideas he must have of woman! Had he ever a mother or a sister or a wife? In what seminary was he tutored, or to what school does he belong, that he should so coolly and systematically command the women of this people to turn traitors to their husbands and brothers? Short-sighted man of sections and the bill! Let us, the sisterhood of Utah, tell him to defer the bill until he has studied the character of woman such as God intended she should be. Then he will discover that devotion, veneration and faithfulness are her peculiar attributes; that God is her refuge and His servants her oracles; and that the women of Utah have paid too high a price for their present position, their light and knowledge and their future to succumb to so mean and foul a thing as this Cullom bill. Let him know that they are heart and hand with the brotherhood of Utah; that God is their father and their friend; that into his hands they commit their cause, and on their standard have emblazoned as their motto, "God and my right." (Applause.)

SISTER PRATT'S INDIGNATION AT THE BILL.

Sister ELEANOR N. PRATT, widow of Parley P. Pratt, then alluded briefly to her sufferings for the Gospel and to the "shedding of innocent blood." She had longed to see the women of Utah rise as they had risen to-day. "Our enemies," she said, "have learned that the women and the saints do not fear death, because it perpetuates our institutions. Our enemies feel this, and the men who write these contemptible bills feel it too. Contempt and indignation are too good for them. It is trash. I wish the Deseret alphabet had something more expressive in it than 'indignation' and 'contempt.' I am willing that my blood shall flow in the cause against these men and the government who seek to persecute the saints."

A BLAST FROM SISTER HORN.

Sister HORN, who embraced the faith in 1835, said she hoped all her sister saints would be united against the bill. "I am proud," she said, "that I preach and practise plurality of wives, and I always expect to do so. We are all in the hands of God, and he overrules everything. Whether they pass the bill or not, it will all be right; for they cannot accomplish anything except the Lord will let them. If they still persist in persecuting the saints and if they pass this bill I think the Lord will utterly waste the nation, unless they repent."

SISTER PHEBE UPON "SEALING."

Sister PHEBE WOODRUFF then thus spoke of the constitution, "sealing" and oppressive laws:—

Ladies of Utah, I rise to express my views upon the important subject which has called us together to-day. I am happy to be one of your number here. I am proud that I am a citizen of Utah and a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I have been a member of this Church for thirty-six years, and have had the privilege of living in the days of the prophet Joseph Smith and of hearing his teachings for many years. He ever counselled us to honor, obey and maintain the principles of the noble constitution for which our fathers fought and which many of them sacrificed their lives to establish. President Brigham Young has always taught the same principles. This glorious legacy of our fathers—the constitution of the United States—guarantees to all citizens of this great republic the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, for it expressly says "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Cullom's bill is in direct violation of this declaration of the constitution; and I think it our duty to do all in our power, by our voices and influence, to thwart its passage, for it commits a violent outrage upon our rights and the rights of our fathers, husbands and sons, and whatever may be the final result of the action of Congress in passing or enforcing oppressive laws, for the sake of our religion upon the noble men who have subdued these deserts, it is our duty to stand by them and support them by our faith, prayers and works through every dark hour unto the end, and trust in God to defend us and all who are called to suffer for keeping the commandments of God. Shall we, as wives and mothers, sit still and see our husbands and sons, who we know are obeying the behest of Heaven, suffer for their religion without exerting ourselves to the extent of our power for their deliverance? No! verily no! God has revealed unto us the law of the patriarchal order of marriage and has commanded us to obey it. We are sealed to our husbands for time and eternity, that we may dwell with them and our children in the world to come, which guarantees unto us the greatest blessing for which we are created. If the rulers of our nation will so far depart from the spirit and letter of our glorious constitution as to deprive our prophets, apostles and elders of citizenship and imprison them for obeying this law, let them grant us this last request—to make their prisons large enough to hold their wives, for where they go we will go also. (Applause.)

CONCLUDING SPEECH OF SISTER SNOW.

Sister SNOW made the final speech, extemporaneously, as follows:—At the time we were first threatened with mobs I heard Joseph Smith say if the people were driven by mobs, and the authorities countenanced it, the mobocratic spirit would increase until they had mobs to their hearts' content. I heard him say the time would come when this nation would so far depart from its original purity, its glory and its love for freedom, and its protection of civil and religious liberty, that the constitution of our country would hang, as it were, by a thread; and he said also that this people, the Sons of Zion, would rise up and save the constitution and bear it off triumphantly. I wish to say to my sisters, to the mothers in Israel and to the sisters, cultivate in your bosoms the spirit of liberty and freedom which has been bequeathed us by our fathers, or grandfathers, I should say. My grandfather fought in the Revolution. He was taken prisoner and long lay in a filthy prison with a companion that was taken with him, and fed on such scanty allowance as would scarcely support life. His companion died, and for the sake of saving his allowance he covered him up in bed and kept him just as long as he could bear to stay with a decaying body. The spirit of freedom and liberty is what we should always cultivate, and what the mothers should cultivate in the breasts of their sons that they may grow up brave and honorable, and defenders of that constitution which has been bequeathed to us. Let mothers cultivate that spirit in their own bosoms, and let them manifest their own bravery and cherish a spirit of encountering difficulties, for they have to be met more or less in every situation in life; and those who have fortitude and nobility of soul within themselves will transmit it to their children. Their sons will grow up noble defenders of truth and righteousness and heralds of salvation to the nations of the earth, prepared to fill high and responsible positions in judicial, civil and executive, as well as in religious conditions. I consider this essent