

wives, acknowledge and sustain them, and honorably care and provide for their offspring, it is all right with me, and with God, so far as I know and understand His law, with the Prophets and Apostles of old, with the Patriarchs and wise men of the East, to which quarter we look for light, natural and spiritual. But woe be unto him who, alone for guilty pleasure, corrupts himself—who, to gratify the lower passions, prostrates the fair temple of virtue, and turns the feet of the unwary and light-hearted female, by soft and flattering words, from the high road of honor, life, and immortality, to the shades of misery, shame, corruption, and death. A creature (not a gentleman), once said to me, “I found that she was corrupt, and hence no sin if I paid her; as, with the price of her shame and debauchery, she could supply herself with the means of a living.” “Ah!” thought I, “better die than live by such means. Had you given her aid with a word of kind reproof, and kept yourself free from her snare, you would not have patronized or encouraged her in her sin. Your behavior would have been that of a God and a Savior; but as it is, you have acted the part of a devil—joined hands with corruption, and identified yourself with the prostitute, and with the whore.” Let any man, however high or honorable he may wish to be thought, give evidence to this community that such is his moral caliber, he will be spurned from the domiciles and homes of the Saints (that are Saints) with that becoming indignation that God and angels will approve. But that man whose mind is unfortified by religious influence, yet who, from the force of moral principle and natural goodness and virtue, keeps himself free and unspotted from those vices, is more to be valued than the fine gold of Ophir, or the diamond that glitters in the monarch’s crown. He is as the shadow of a great rock in

a weary land, or like the oasis in the desert, which lures the weary wanderer to repose his brawny limbs on its verdant bed. He draws around him all that venerate genuine moral worth, and holds an influence that will not allow him, like a certain Judge, to fly the track and cry, “Mad dog,” when the hydrophobic virus is concealed under his own tongue.

It is our custom to receive all strangers, who come among us under the name and style of respectability, with kindness and cordiality, and yet with cautious reserve. We try to make them comfortable and happy. But if we discover that an advantage is sought to be taken of our generous good feeling, to practice what our religion, laws, and vital prejudices are strenuously opposed to, I mean that practice so common and popular in the world, sexual intercourse without respect or regard to the solemnities of the marriage vow, then the thread will be cut at once, and such characters dropped and despised by the virtuous and good. The armies of the world cannot force us or frighten us to honor or respect such persons. They will then question our patriotism, and send away all manner of reports, prejudicial to our religious and political standing. But they will be careful about reporting what they have done. They, of course, are the innocent ones! It is my candid and unqualified opinion, that but few, if any, persons living among us, and not of our Church, have ever sent or carried evil reports of us, who themselves have not met with some unexpected obstacle in their way to vice and criminal pleasure and indulgence, or to political ambition and advancement. This may serve as a key to many things. Because strong language is used in relation to such vile practices, it may be inferred that much corruption exists here. But the contrary is true. If licentiousness or illicit intercourse had gained the footing