

the marriage rather than in the cohabitation; following the old English statutes of the New England States on the subject of bigamy, classing our system of marriage with that which was made criminal by the English statutes and by the statutes of the Northern States; when in reality there was very little, if any, similarity. The bigamy of England and the American States consists in crime and deception, the betraying and wronging of two innocent and unsuspecting women. While the corrupt, lying, deceiving, unprincipled husband was feigning virtue and integrity, both violating their confidence by lying and deception, and by violating all the duties and obligations of marriage—the duties that the father owes to the wife and children and also to the State. But the fact that our lawmakers took this view of our social system when they passed this law, shows how poorly and ill they comprehended the system of marriage as taught by the Latter-day Saints. The republican party had this view of the case, no doubt, when they first announced this noted plank. Further experience and knowledge among the people of the United States has, in some measure, changed their view upon this subject, and they have attempted to shape their legislation accordingly; and in the recent law of Congress, known as the Edmunds law, they have especially, in the amendment they have adopted to the law of 1862, classed polygamy with bigamy and enacted penalties against both. And still further, they made it a continuous offense, by providing penalties for cohabitation as well as for the marriage; for cohabitation, however, the penalties consist of light fines and short imprisonment, but for marriage, heavy fines and long im-

prisonment. This is the view taken by our Christian Statesmen in relation to the moral aspect of this question.

Anciently, when God's laws provided a government for ancient Israel, marriage was honorable both plural and single, as all students of the Bible know full well. At the same time adultery was punished by death. From the days that King Abimelech attempted intimacy with Sarah, whom he supposed to be eligible to marry, but afterwards found her to be the wife of Abraham, from the time that the angel of the Lord warned him that he would be a dead man if he persisted, from that time to the coming of the Savior, adultery was punishable by death, while marriage both single and plural was honorable, ordained and appointed of God, and provision was made for the protection and rights of each wife and her offspring. But our Christian statesmen are offering premiums for licentiousness, and are seeking to make odious the honor and purity of marriage. This is all wrong. They are in error in the view they take of it. If their bishops, priests, potentates and religious teachers would betake themselves to the task of first seeking the light of heaven upon this question, and would then strive to enlighten our statesmen and the people of the United States, pertaining to social ethics and the purposes of heaven in the union of the sexes, and seek to encourage honorable marriage and honorable increase in the earth, instead of encouraging licentiousness and child murder, they would thereby secure the favor of Heaven and the perpetuity of His blessings upon them as a nation and people.

The Prophet Joseph Smith, the year before he was slain, testified