

Now, then, seeing there is a secret ballot, and nobody can tell how a person votes, where can the coercion be? How are you going to find out how this man or that woman voted, or how they did not vote? You cannot do it. The fact remains, then, that there can be no coercion in voting, even if it was desired. I refer to these things this afternoon, in connection with the subject of our liberty, the liberty which the people called Latter-day Saints claim, to worship God or not worship Him; to perform any religious duty, or not perform it; to do anything that is required of them, or to do the contrary; we claim that liberty in church and in state, and in all things.

Now, some people have an idea that in this Church women are compelled to be married! Just think of it for a moment, will you? How are you going to manage that? How are you going to compel a woman to do anything that she does not want to do? Such an idea as that must have sprung up in the mind of someone who does not understand female nature. It is preposterous. There is no such thing in this Church. This Church is a church of liberty; that is, within the lines of the law. If people take the liberty to do wrong, to transgress the laws of God, to do that which is impure, they can be disfellowshipped—cut off the Church; and that is the full extent of the power of penalty in this Church—the power of excommunication, withdrawing fellowship, making a person not a member; that is the extreme penalty of the laws of the Church of Christ—excommunication. I think sometimes we have a little too much liberty in this Church. People are allowed sometimes to go on doing that which is wrong a little too long.

People are allowed to speak evil of their brethren too much. People are allowed to find fault with men that are striving to do them good, and to do the world good. I think sometimes when I look around and see what transpires in this city, that there is a little too much liberty; not that I would infringe upon the rights of any man or any woman; I would give every man and every woman the privilege of doing that which they pleased, so long as they did not interfere with my rights and the rights of others. We do not feel at liberty to interfere with the rights of our neighbors, nor to infringe upon the rights of anybody, nor do we believe that anybody has a right to infringe upon our rights. If they are infringed upon, we will stand up in self-defense and seek legal redress. But our friends (?) on the outside, think we ought not to be allowed that liberty. They say it is treason for us to go into court to test the validity of a law passed against our liberties! They claim this liberty themselves, but they are not willing to accord the same liberty to us.

Again, we hear a great deal about a one-man power. Brother Goss remarked some of the people where he has been laboring, were afraid to investigate our principles themselves—they must first go and consult with the priest. Well, we are not obliged to do that. We can investigate anything we please on our own responsibility. But I must admit that in Utah we have a one-man power, that is of the most irksome character. We have in this Territory a Governor sent by the authority of the powers that be at Washington, appointed by the President of the United States by and with the consent of the Senate. Now, in the first place we have no