

design of Congress; that the Edmunds law was a blow aimed at the Mormon system of marriage, or to use Judge Zane's term, the habit and repute of marriage, or the "holding out," to use another favorite phrase, of two or more women as wives of one husband—that the whole and only object of the third section of the Edmunds law relating to unlawful cohabitation, as well as all other anti-polygamy acts of Congress was against the institution of marriage. Finding, however, it difficult to prove marriages because of the disinclination of people to testify, and because of the difficulty of reaching any record evidence of these marriages, it was thought necessary to take high grounds and assume this: that the Mormons are known to be a virtuous people, are known to condemn in strong terms and by every influence in their power every form of sexual sin, and that they do not indulge in intercourse with the sexes to any extent only in the marriage relation. This was the well known and established character of the Mormon people, and was the result of their teachings and practice for a generation past. Hence wherever children were found in Mormon families, they are the result of marriage. If a woman is found pregnant, she must be looked upon as a wife, and the officers are justified in seizing her and bringing her before a commissioner, or a jury or judge, and compelling her to give the name of the father of her child, and that is deemed sufficient proof that he is guilty of polygamy, or if two or more women live in close proximity to a man, and he is seen visiting them, and especially if the children call him father, it is sufficient proof on which the jury may indict for polygamy or unlawful cohabitation, as the case may be. Consequently

they have taken this high ground that it is no longer necessary to prove even the first or second marriage, nor is it any longer necessary to prove sexual intercourse in order to establish unlawful cohabitation, but the common habit and repute of marriage and the appearance of marriage is all sufficient. Thus the ordinary rules of evidence are set aside, and the mask of hypocrisy which governed the Christian world when they were urging the passage of this Edmunds law through Congress is thrown aside. A bold and important testimony is given to the world through our persecutors to the morality of the Mormon people being so far in excess of the rest of the world of mankind, and to our integrity to the marriage relation. We wish indeed that all that is said in this respect were strictly true, that there were no irregularities among us. We cannot quite say that, but we do rejoice and thank God for the general good testimony which has been given of us in truth in this behalf. Not long since President Smoot and myself and some others were congratulating ourselves, and President Taylor was congratulating himself, and many others of our aged fathers, in having placed themselves in a condition to escape the operation of the third section of the Edmunds law by confining themselves to one woman. I said to some of my brethren in a Priesthood meeting in St. George, one time when they were very badly agitated and not knowing whom the lightning—or the Edmunds act would strike next—I said to them, you old grey-headed men whose wives have grown old with you and are past bearing children, if you choose now to agree among yourselves that you will live within the third section of the Edmunds law