

But they say fifty millions have declared against us. I do not take any stock in this assumption on the part of a few that fifty millions have condemned us—have said that we are wrong, and that we must go. There are those who have been throwing dust in the eyes of the fifty millions who say so. But let me tell you how it can very readily be discovered whether we are wrong or not. We have petitioned, we have plead with the powers of this government to send among us a commission of honorable men to investigate the situation here, and to let all the world know what the great error and crime is that we are accused of.

The kind of commission we want is this: We want the government—if it is possible in all this land of enlightenment, among all these people that are offended at the immorality of the “Mormons”—to select a commission of men who are perfectly true to their marital relations, who are virtuous, and we challenge the commission of men to prove us an immoral people. Let them go into our homes and what will we show them there? We will show them respect of husbands for wives, wives for husbands, parents for children, children for parents and for each other. We will show them faith; we will show them virtue, and we challenge them to deny the truth of our showing to the American people. Then if we are not immoral, why this hue and cry raised against us? Can you answer who have passed laws to send men, whose lives are above reproach, into prison, and to scatter their families? Can you who have passed such wicked laws answer if we prove that we are a moral people?

They may say that we are independent. Well, I thank God for one

that I trace my lineage back through a race of independent men, who had the courage over 200 years ago to stand up in the face of inimical laws against their religion and say, “My conscience is my own. If need be I will leave my native land that I may serve my God.” And they did so, and helped to form a government upon this land that God in His infinite mercy and wisdom had held in reserve for many ages for a people that would accord to his sons and daughters the right to worship and honor Him according to the light that was in them. We do not see, unless “there is something rotten in Denmark,” why the American people should fear the independence of the “Mormons.” I do not see why there should be any dread at giving us our equal rights—the privilege to elect our officers and administer the laws according to the wisdom that is in us. God knows, our fellow men know, these hypocrites and liars who are misrepresenting us to the world know we are capable of self-government, and of instituting and preserving the securerest and safest government, and the most economical of any people in this land. I say that without boasting. But we would not have that reputation if we elected our vili-fiers to the offices, and I do not think we will do it. I cannot see, my heart cannot conceive, my understanding is not broad enough to fathom the reason why we should not, because of our religion, be accorded equal rights with our fellowcitizens of this country. We have the stability of commerce and society; we have the wealth; we have the population; we have every requisite qualification for self-government, and in the light of freedom I have yet to hear a reason assigned for withholding from us our rights. The nearest thing to a