

much exercised, as a class, about us, and they appear to be the most incapable of all classes to tell the truth concerning us; these pious people circulate all kinds of falsehood about us under the name of religion. I need not refer to those things, the fact is well known to you.

Is it then to be wondered at that people generally who do not comprehend the true situation should come to the conclusions they do about us? I think not. Should we feel angry at such a feeling? No. Should we feel angry at those falsifiers? No; they are to be pitied because they yield themselves to work iniquity; they, therefore, become subjects of compassion. What did the same class of persons say of Jesus? If he healed the sick, or opened the eyes of the blind, they persuaded the people to give God the glory for, said they, "we know this man is a sinner." If He cast out devils, this pious class said, He did it through Beelzebub the Prince of devils. And even when he was condemned to die and the people were asked whether He should be released or whether Barabbas, the thief, should be released, it was "the chief priests and elders," the pious clergy of that day, that led the popular clamor, that "persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus." The same spirit that moved upon the religious teachers of that day to incite the populace against Jesus and the Apostles, is moving upon the same class today to do the same towards us; and they are doing all they can do. They, notwithstanding their piety, are of their father the devil whose works they do. And what shall we do? "Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in

heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

Do we want to force the Gospel upon them? No. All religious classes, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Catholics, and all others have the right to worship God as they please, they have the right to either receive or reject the Gospel of Christ. If we had the power to force it upon them we would not do it; freedom of the mind, and the free exercise of the rights of men is part of our religious belief; therefore, we would not coerce them if we could. And if I would not coerce them in that I certainly would not crowd upon them the doctrine of plural marriage, for it is well known that after men join our Church they must prove themselves sometime before they are considered worthy of it.

When I reflect upon the terrible degradation that exists in the land, and the dens of vice and infamy that flourish and keep pace with our boasted enlightenment, I am not surprised that honorable people should feel horrified at the misrepresentations and lies that have gone forth concerning us. I received a letter not long ago from Brother Cannon, in which he states that he was approached on the subject by a gentleman, a member of Congress, who had visited here. He told Brother Cannon that when he was here he was told some very strange stories about the Mormon people, and he had made up his mind when he should meet Brother Cannon to speak to him about it. He said that a gentleman, or at least, a person that had the appearance of respectability, told him when he was here that doings akin to a Saturnalia were quite a common thing among the people—the promiscuous mixing