

## NON-RESISTANCE.

From the West Chester (Pa.) Register.

### The Latter Day Saints.

**Mr. Editor.**—Sir,—Inasmuch as many false rumors are abroad in the world concerning myself and the faith which I profess, and that my belief, with regard to earthly governments and laws, in general, may not be misinterpreted nor misunderstood, I have thought proper to present, at the close of this volume, my opinion concerning the same.

1st. I believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man, and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, either in making laws or administering them for the good and safety of society.

2d. I believe that no government can exist, in peace, except such laws as are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life.

3d. I believe that all governments necessarily require civil officers and magistrates to enforce the laws of the same, and that such as will administer the law in equity and justice, should be sought for and upheld by the voice of the people, (if a Republic) or the will of the sovereign.

4th. I believe that religion is instituted of God, and that men are amenable to him, and to him only, for the exercise of it, unless their religious opinion prompts them to infringe upon the rights and liberties of others; but I do not believe that human law has a right to interfere in prescribing rules of worship to bind the consciences of men, nor dictate forms for public or private devotion; that the civil magistrates should restrain crime but never control conscience; should punish guilt, but never suppress the freedom of the soul.

5th. I believe that all men are bound to sustain and uphold the respective governments in which they reside, while protected in their inherent and inalienable rights by the laws of such governments, and that sedition and rebellion are unbecoming every citizen thus protected, and should be punished accordingly; and that all governments have a right to enact such laws as in their own judgments are best calculated to secure the public interest; at the same time, however, holding sacred the freedom of conscience.

6th. I believe every man should be honored in his station; rulers and magistrates as such being placed for the protection of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty; and that to the laws all men owe respect and deference, as without them peace and harmony would be supplanted by anarchy and terror: human laws being instituted for the express purpose of regulating our interest as individuals and nations, between man and man, and divine laws, given of heaven, prescribing rules on spiritual concerns, for faith and worship, both to be answered by man to his Maker.

7th. I believe that rulers, states and governments, have a right, and are bound to enact laws for the protection of all citizens in the free exercise of their religious belief; but I do not believe that they have a right, in justice, to deprive citizens of this privilege, or proscribe them in their opinions, so long as a regard and reverence is shown to the laws, and such religious opinions do not justify sedition nor conspiracy.

8th. I believe that the commission of crime should be punished according to the nature of the offence; that murder, treason, robbery, theft, and the breach of the general peace, in all respects, should be punished according to their criminality, and their tendency to evil among men, by the laws of that government in which the offence is committed; and for the public peace and tranquillity, all men should step forward and use their ability in bringing offenders against good laws to punishment.

9th. I do not believe it just to mingle religious influence with civil Government, when one religious society is fostered and another proscribed in its spiritual privileges, and the individual rights of its members, as citizens, denied.

10th. I believe that all religious societies have a right to deal with their members for disorderly conduct, according to the rules and regulations of such societies, provided that such dealing be for fellowship and good standing; but I do not believe that any religious society has authority to try men on the right of property or life, to take from them this world's goods or put them in jeopardy, either life or limb, neither to inflict any physical punishment upon them; they can only excommunicate them from their society and withdraw from their fellowship.

11th. I believe that men should appeal to the civil law for redress of all wrongs and grievances, where personal abuse is inflicted, or the right of property or character infringed, where such laws exist as will protect the same; but I believe that all men are justified in defending themselves, their friends and property and the government, from the unlawful assaults and encroachments of all persons, in time of exigencies, where immediate appeal cannot be made to the laws, and relief afforded.

12th. I believe it just to preach the gospel to the nations of the earth, and warn the righteous to save themselves from the corruption of the world; but I do not believe it right to interfere with bond servants, neither preach the gospel to, nor baptize them contrary to the will and wish of their masters, nor to meddle with or influence them in the least to cause them to be dissatisfied with their situations in this life, thereby jeopardizing the lives of men; such interference I believe to be unlawful and unjust, and dangerous to the peace of every government allowing human beings to be held in servitude.

13th. It has been reported by some vicious or ungodly characters, that the church of Latter Day Saints, believe in having their property in common, and also, the leaders of said church control said property. This is a base fabrication, without the least shadow or coloring to make it out of, but on the contrary, no person's feelings can be more repugnant to such a principle than mine. Every person in this church has a right to control his own property, and is not required to do any thing, except by his free voluntary act, that he may impart to the poor according to the requirement of the gospel. 'Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.'—Matthew, 5th chapter, 42d verse.

I believe in living a virtuous, upright and holy life before God, and feel it my duty to persuade all men in my power to do the same, that they may cease to do evil and learn to do well, and break off their sins by righteousness.

I close this by subscribing myself your most obedient servant,  
JOSEPH SMITH, Jr.  
Jnn. 20, 1840.

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## LATEST FROM THE MORMONS.

It is known that these people, since their dispersion in Missouri, have collected in great numbers in and around Commerce, in this state, on the Mississippi river. The name of *Commerce*, as we have heretofore stated, they have changed to Nauvoo, from the Hebrew or Egyptian, though of the signification of the term we are ignorant. They hold two great conferences every year,—in the spring and fall; and that appointed for the present spring took place last week, commencing on the 6th and ending on the 9th inst. We learn that between 2000 and 3000 persons were present, and that considerable accessions were made to the church from the surrounding neighborhood.—Our informant states that the number was 74, all received by baptism, and that at the same time thirty of the ablest men were ordained to preach the gospel.

The preachers present were Joseph and Kiram Smith, John Page, Orson Hyde, and two others. Messrs. Page and Hyde, with ten others, (probably chosen elsewhere,) were commissioned to go to the Holy Land to preach the gospel to the Jews. They are to meet in Quincy next Sabbath, and from thence take their departure for Palestine.

About 300 houses have been put up in Nauvoo since last October. Some of them are neat frame buildings, but the greater portion are log cabins, designed for temporary habitations merely. The ground assigned to each is generally one acre, though to some there are five acres.

The increase of population by immigration is very great. Our informant states that several families arrive every day. A gentleman living on the road from Quincy to Nauvoo assured him that on some days at least 15 families passed his house, all bound to the latter place.—*Peoria Register.*