

THE MCKEE RANKIN COMPANY.

The following appeared in the San Francisco Post of Feb. 28th:

The Mormon Church organ in Salt Lake made a vicious attempt to boycott McKee Rankin, who was billed to appear at the Mormon Theatre recently in "Notice to Quit" and "Still Waters Run Deep." His offense was the production in this country and Great Britain of "The Danites," which the *Deseret News* calls "an infamous piece, whose gross and inexcusable misrepresentations are calculated to inflame popular prejudices against the Latter Day Saints."

E. D. Price, agent for the Rankin company, was seen yesterday. He had just received the Salt Lake papers, which were full of the matter. "I am surprised at the attack," said Mr. Price. "When I was in Salt Lake last week there was not a word uttered against Mr. Rankin. We were booked at the Mormon Theatre, and my business brought me in intimate contact with persons high in the church of Latter-day Saints. They were excessively polite, and some of them even expressed regret that 'The Danites' was not to be given. I expressed the belief that its production might excite bad feeling. 'Not at all,' said the Mormon with whom I was conversing. 'Three or four years ago it would have been hazardous, but it could be played now without exciting even a hiss or a groan of disapproval. Our people probably wouldn't like it, but they are anxious to see it.' The row began with a card signed Joseph Bull and David James in the *Deseret News* of last Monday. They appealed to Mormons to stay away from the theatre during the Rankin engagement, and their card concluded: 'Rankin's course has been such as to endanger the lives of innocent persons, and, so far as we are concerned, we would not on any account enter the theatre during his engagement.' The church paper indorsed this card editorially, and scored Rankin as a man who had 'been the means of creating bitter animosity by a scandalous drama against the Latter-day Saints.'"

"Of course, the anti-Mormon press came to the rescue."

"Oh, of course. The *Tribune* suggests that players are not reformers, but seize upon any topic of interest or prominence, and urge that, aside from any sectarian question, it is the duty of every good citizen to strive to banish such petty provincialism from public sentiment, and to cultivate a more cosmopolitan spirit."

"What was the result?"

"Unfortunately, the company was wrecked, storm bound for three days on the Union Pacific, and lost their Salt Lake opening. Whether they got there in time to play last night I have not been advised. On Wednesday they were storm bound at Rawlins, Wyoming, and I've heard nothing from them since. Of course, they will get here all right for Monday's opening at the Bush street."

"You can play Salt Lake going back."

"Oh, yes; we are booked there April 6th, 7th and 8th, the time of the big Mormon conference, when delegates come from all over the territory. An actor said to me to-day that he had played in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' all through Texas, but he would not do 'The Danites' in Salt Lake for \$5,000. He is, evidently, afraid of destroying angels. In my opinion, the production of 'The Danites' in the Mormon theatre would be simply a question of good taste, and not one of personal safety."

In addition to the foregoing it is appropriate to state that the company were billed to appear to-night (March 5th) at the Bush Street Theatre in "The Danites." The amount of patronage that should be given the company by Latter-day Saints on their appearance here during Conference should now be more definitely determined than ever by the people who are foully slandered by the infamous drama referred to.

SOMEWHAT RAW AND OTHERWISE FAULTY.

WHEN Mr. Ben Sheeks speaks he frequently gets off some good things. At the meeting of the alleged young Democracy at Ogden the other evening he is credited with treating the several political divisions of Utah to some sturdy blows. He had a thump for every faction except the meagre fragment with which he has lately connected himself. Some of the cuffs he administered were merited, in regard to others this is more than doubtful.

While acting in the role of oratorical political iconoclast, he smashed the Republican figure head by asserting, in so many words, that so far as Utah was concerned, that party favored government by importation.

The organization that poses as a self-constituted Democratic central committee he intimated was a sort of despotic arrangement which imagined its behests should be obeyed without question. Mr. Sheeks doesn't appear to be of that opinion.

The "Liberal" party did not seem to have attracted a large share of his affection, because their object has been to abolish local government in any shape and substitute for it a sort of political abortion.

The People's Party has not en-

couraged his esteem because he asserted it to be in favor of local government but not of local self-government.

These are pretty strongly drawn pictures, and are not particularly flattering to the subjects. Mr. Sheeks is to be complimented for giving the People's Party the credit of being closer to the genuine democratic article than any of the other political divisions to which he devoted his attention, whether he intended it or not.

It would take a subtle and analytical operation to define the precise color of the infinitesimal political particle to which Mr. Sheeks has attached himself. It has had a couple of public displays, at which endeavors have been made to exhibit its complexion, but the presentations were so heterogeneous that the views expressed were calculated to puzzle the auditor. With the exception of one or two gentlemen who have taken part in those exhibitions, each of the orators have uttered arguments that have conflicted with their own propositions, and presented ideas that have been the antipodes of each other, while the positions taken by the different professed exponents of genuine democratic principles have been so grotesquely contradictory as to give the entire proceedings a remarkably chaotic appearance.

If all were as clear as Mr. Sheeks and Mr. Rawlins the spectacles presented by the young Utah Redemptionists would not be quite so perplexing to the person wishing to ascertain the status of the movement, for however much they may be mistaken, their utterances have the merit of intelligibility. No person wishing to tell the truth would be likely to claim that quality for the speaking of most of the others.

It has happened in the world more or less frequently that young men have taken positions and delivered enunciations that would have done credit to people with older heads. This has occurred when the comparative lack of age and experience, which bring maturity of thought and consistency of action, has been more than compensated for by superior natural endowments. But with all due respect to the generality of the members of this movement, such cannot be honestly said concerning them. Their proceedings thus far have been suggestive of a number of changes, one of which is an alteration of title. If it be held that it be democratic in any sense, would not Raw Democracy be more appropriate than the present name?

A gentleman who came from Ogden on the train that bore the company on the homeward trip, has just called in and informed us of some proceedings that occurred on the journey. Some of the prominent members of the incipient political party were passing whiskey bottles around, and the result was uproarious hilarity. Some songs were vociferously sung, among them, "Good bye, my lover, good bye," and then a proposal to sing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," was boisterously and sacrilegiously responded to.

Such doings are disgraceful, although it is only fair to state that the gentlemen named in this article, and a number of others took no part in them.

While the organization includes a few intelligent thinkers and respectable citizens, even the most hopeful regarding the movement must doubt its success under such frowning auspices as are contained within itself. Solid young Utah will not flock to such a standard to any appreciable extent.

THE ARIZONA ANTI-"MORMON" OUTRAGES.

PUBLIC interest has been revived in the cases of the three brethren who are now serving sentence in the Detroit House of Correction for polygamy, by their having come up on appeal before the Supreme Court of Arizona last Friday. The result is looked forward to with considerable anxiety. Arguments were offered and the cases taken under advisement, but no decision has yet been reached.

It may not be amiss at this juncture to review some of the outrageous proceedings connected with these prosecutions, as some of the facts were not fully shown up through the press at the time the convictions were obtained.

In August last warrants were served upon six Latter-day Saints, residents of Apache County, they having been indicted by the grand jury in Prescott on the charges of polygamy and unlawful cohabitation. They offered no resistance, nor any attempt to avoid being arrested, although they might easily have done so. On the contrary, they quietly submitted to arrest, and were taken to Prescott, a distance of 275 miles, where they gave bonds in the sum of \$2,000 each, before Chief Justice Sumner Howard, for their appearance at the November term of the U. S. District Court in Prescott, for trial.

There could have been no other object in requiring them to go that distance except to make a bill against the United States for officers' services, mileage, etc., and to subject the accused to the hardship of returning at their own expense, for there was a U. S. Commissioner living in St. Johns, before whom the bonds could just as well have been given without the expense or trouble of traveling at all. To make the desire for big fees still more apparent, the Deputy U. S. Marshals

made separate trips to Apache County for each of the brethren, a also for each witness required, when, if it had really been necessary for them to go to Prescott at all before they appeared there for trial they might just as well have been taken all at once, for it was known, even by parties not connected with the Court, that the whole of the indictments were found before any arrests were made.

In due time the accused appeared for trial. They had been indicted under the Edmunds Act, and naturally supposed they would be tried in accordance with its provisions, in which case they had nothing to fear, for whatever marriages had been contracted by any of them were barred by the statute of limitation.

The trials were conducted before Judge Sumner Howard, Prosecuting Attorney Zabriskie and Edward Wells, Esq., appearing for the prosecution, and Judge Rush and John Hearndon, Esq., for the defense.

There was no evidence whatever of a marriage having been contracted contrary to the provisions of the Edmunds law in any one of these cases; nor was there any proof of unlawful cohabitation. As evidence of this latter fact, the charge of unlawful cohabitation was ignored in every one of the cases. But though indicted under a U. S. statute, a Territorial law against bigamy was wrested and made to apply to their cases, that an excuse of some kind might be had for their conviction, which, indeed, was a foregone conclusion with the court from the first. This was apparent to every person about the court, and the lawyers asserted that it was perfectly useless to attempt a defense before such a judge or jury, for the fact of a man being a "Mormon" was sufficient to insure his conviction on any accusation brought against him.

The Territorial statute alluded to provides that if a man cohabit continuously with a woman for two years and introduce her as his wife, it shall be deemed proof of marriage, and if he have a wife in addition to her he shall be liable to prosecution for bigamy.

According to the provisions of this statute the Judge declared that bigamy was polygamy, and though, as stated, proof of cohabitation was not obtainable, witnesses were brought forward who testified in the cases of two or three of the prisoners that they had introduced more than one woman as their wives, and this was accepted as evidence of marriage, and hence of polygamy.

In one case at least—that of C. I. Kempe—proof was offered that there had been no cohabitation with the second wife for more than three years past, but the census roll was brought forward to prove that the second family went by his name, and so he was convicted. The Judge in sentencing him said that in consideration of his age and poverty he should be disposed to show him some leniency, but, inasmuch as the jury had brought in a verdict of guilty against him, they must have some evidence of his having perjured himself in testifying that he had not cohabited, hence he gave him the same severe sentence accorded to his fellows.

While the trials were in progress, some of those who were investigating the prosecutions and acting as witnesses against the brethren visited them at their lodgings about midnight, and advised Brothers Flake and Skusen to plead guilty, promising them that if they would do so they should not receive more than six months' imprisonment, and that in the Territorial Penitentiary, while the others would be sent to Detroit. They asserted that they had just talked with Prosecuting Attorney Zabriskie, who informed them that Judge Howard had agreed to that. They were led to interest themselves specially in behalf of these prisoners because of personal friendship, and the fact that the Judge was a party to this transaction was apparent from his sentence agreeing with it, though he could not forego the chance of imposing a \$500 fine upon each as well.

The officers of the court and the Apache ring, who were associated with them in working up the cases against the Latter-day Saints, held nightly meetings while the trials were in progress to consult in regard to the mode of procedure and arrange their plans.

The witnesses who appeared for the prosecution, a number of whom were Apache County officials, were among the most notorious libertines in the country, and many of them unblushingly boasted of their immoral acts, knowing that they had nothing to fear in the shape of prosecution before the courts of that Territory therefor.

As is well known, five of the brethren indicted were convicted, three of them being sent to Detroit and two to the Territorial Penitentiary. The last of the number—Bishop David K. Udall, awaited his trial in Prescott for about five weeks, being under heavy expense in the meantime, and then the Prosecuting Attorney moved that his case be continued until next June, assigning as a reason, that a witness, said to be in Apache County could not be found, although it was well known that she was in the county when the deputy marshals were there subpoenaing other witnesses, and could have been had if they had really wanted her. The injustice of the suit against him, and that it was persecution instead of prosecution that was aimed at his case, were evident from the fact that all the witnesses who testified against him at the time the indictment was found, were present in Prescott during the

whole of the time he was detained there, and although the evidence was considered sufficient to indict him, the prosecution was not satisfied to try him upon their testimony.

The ignominy and suffering the convicted brethren were subjected to before being sent off to Detroit and Yuma deserve mention also. As fast as they were convicted they were denied bail and thrust into the county prison, to associate with two convicted murderers, three men who were imprisoned for grand larceny, one for petty larceny, three Chinamen and one lunatic. They were not allowed to go out of the prison on any consideration, and the stench of the place was almost unbearable. Brother Tenney, the first one convicted, was kept in this place nine days.

There are some ten or fifteen brethren of Maricopa County now under indictment on similar charges, and under bonds to appear for trial at the June term of court. What their chances are for obtaining a fair trial under the present regime may be inferred from the foregoing. In none of their cases have dissatisfied wives, or, in fact, any member of their families been complaining witnesses. Indeed, in the cases of those already convicted no interested party testified against them before the grand jury or was subpoenaed as a witness at the time of their trial; the testimony of a clique of corrupt, unscrupulous, "Mormon"-hating officers and land-jumpers, who, for the most part, were comparative strangers to the accused, was all that was required to convict them upon.

A more flagrant travesty upon justice and a greater outrage in the shape of trials has not been perpetrated in this generation than in the cases which we have mentioned, and had the victims belonged to any other class than the despised "Mormons," the indignation of the whole nation would be aroused over them.

PRESIDENT SMOOT ON THE LOCAL SITUATION.

At Provo, on Sunday, February 22nd, the congregation which convened at the Tabernacle of that town, was addressed by President A. O. Smoot. A synopsis of his remarks appeared in the *Enquirer*, and they were so apropos to the existing situation, that we here reproduce the condensed report, trusting that they will be duly weighed and considered by the Latter-day Saints as they certainly should be:

"I avail myself of the opportunity to talk to my brethren and sisters upon the subjects that immediately concern us—the subjects of the hour. I am often inquired of as to why the Lord suffers His people to be persecuted by the enemies of righteousness. The reasons are so numerous that it would require more than one discourse to portray them. It is understood that at present there is an organized crusade against us, having its origin at the head of our government. I can recollect about one half century ago, from the time I accepted the gospel until the present time, that the enemy has been in our wake, taking advantage of every opportunity to persecute us, and God has promised us protection only through obedience to His laws. In the early rise of this Church, God several times commanded His people to build a temple, but they were so poor they found excuses and began to speculate and acquire means, heeding not the commandments of God. The result was, that they were driven from their homes at the sacrifice of property enough to build a temple. Several times were the Saints driven from their homes for not heeding the words of the Lord and for acting according to their own will.

"At Nauvoo the Saints built a temple and a few entered therein and took upon them the sacred ordinances of the house of God.

Joseph Smith, in obedience to revelation, organized a company to journey to the valleys of the Rocky Mountains. He and his followers took up their march, but some followed him and upbraided him for leaving the Church and he was taken back to the slaughter. But the project was not forgotten, and it was left to Brigham Young to fill the programme. He led us to these mountains. Perhaps many are familiar with the early settlement of this country. Then we had been whipped and driven and were humble, hence the Lord prospered us. Many times things looked dark, but the Lord always provided us with food and raiment. He has since blessed us. He fostered us in our weakness. He has sustained us as a community. How grateful have we been? Are we obedient and faithful in keeping the commandments of God? If so, all is well. If not, we will be brought by persecution to a knowledge of the fact. God signified to Brigham Young that we should cooperate and sustain one another, to build up those who would build up Zion, to deal with those who would sustain Zion. This was observed by the people for a while, but how is it to-day, and why are we persecuted? Why are we persecuted on the right and on the left by our enemies. These are important questions. Who have fostered and sustained our enemies? The Latter-day Saints. They have acted of their own will, and ignored, to a certain extent, co-operation, and, as it were, have placed the sword in the hands of our enemies to cut our throats with.

"Before Brigham Young died he laid down some rules as to how we should exercise for recreation. The people must needs see all that Babylon sees, and our stages were crowded with the plays of Babylon. Our dancing regulations have been violated and lately the Council of the Twelve have taken this up. The number of round dances in one evening has been reduced to two, and I am conscience smitten when I see the rules of the party violated. We carry our dancing to an extreme, and this is a growing evil in Zion. This being displeasing to God, He may suffer us to be scourged, but just how we do not know. The object of our enemies is to scatter the shepherds of our flock. Polygamy is the text in all places—from the drinking saloon to the President's Cabinet, but polygamy is not the reason for our being persecuted. The reason is, to a certain extent, because we have done wrong, and if we persist in our evil, God will let loose the dogs of war, and purify us, even if He has scourge us. Will the Elders, who have so important a mission to perform, demoralize the Spirit of God by their wrong doings? If so, God will punish them. These words of warning I feel it my duty to give to Israel."

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