

## EDITORIALS.

## EDMUNDS' PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BILL.

The most important measure that has been discussed in the United States Senate during its present sitting, is Senator Edmunds' bill relating to Presidential elections. Blaine's resolution in reference to elections in the South, has perhaps attracted more attention, because it is a party measure, naturally calculated to stir up party feelings and, by the animosities it revives, to cause a livelier general interest than legislation which involves no sectional antagonism or personal acrimony. Edmunds' bill has its advocates among Democrats as well as Republicans, and its opponents are also numbered among both political organizations.

This bill was introduced last May and passed through two readings, and has been recently considered in Committee of the Whole. It is designed to amend the Revised Statutes relating to presidential elections, and to prevent the recurrence of the difficulties which arose at the last election for President and Vice-President. It provides, chiefly, for the settlement of disputed elections for those officers, in the States where they occur, so as to avoid bringing the contest before Congress. To effect this, it changes the time for the appointment of electors in each State, from the first Tuesday in November to the first Tuesday in October, and the time for the electors to meet and cast their votes, from the first Wednesday in December to the second Monday in the following January. This gives a longer interval by more than two months between the appointment of the electors and the giving of their votes, than is allowed under the existing law. It then authorizes each State, by a law enacted beforehand, to provide for the trial and determination of any dispute that may arise concerning the legal choice of an elector, which trial and decision must be had during the above named interval, so that when the electors meet there may be no conflict as to their rights, such settlement being made conclusive evidence of the lawful title of the electors so determined.

For the counting of votes it provides that both Houses of Congress shall meet, in the House of Representatives, at one o'clock on the second Monday in the February succeeding the time of the meeting of the electors, the President of the Senate presiding, places being appointed for two tellers on the part of the Senate and two on the part of the House. The certificates are to be opened by the President of the Senate, handed to the tellers and read and acted upon in alphabetical order. Objections are to be called for at each presentation. If any, they must be made in writing, stating the ground thereof, without argument, and signed by at least one Senator and one Representative. Each House is to consider the objections separately. If there is but one return from a State it can only be rejected by the concurrent vote of both Houses. In case of two sets of electors or two electoral tribunals in any State, or of the failure of a State to make a determination of a dispute, the matter cannot be decided except by the concurrent action of both Houses, voting separately. No recess is to be taken unless for the consideration of objections, and a recess of either House acting on such questions may only be taken till the next day at 10 a.m. During debate on the question in each House no speaker may occupy more than five minutes, and at the expiration of two hours the question is to be put without further debate. The two Houses are to meet again immediately after the vote is given. No recess is to be taken after the fifth day succeeding the first joint meeting.

The bill also provides for a special election in case of a vacancy in the offices of President and Vice-President, a contingency now left without a remedy. A difficulty arises in this regulation, in consequence of the rule laid down in the Constitution, that those officials shall hold their positions "during the term of four years." Thus, if a vacancy should occur in both offices

during the first year of being filled by any incumbents, the term of the newly-elected officers would run one year over the time of the expiration of the regular term. This is unavoidable, however, and is an inconvenience that is not likely often to occur. There are a few other minor changes from the present law which need not be particularized.

The great difficulty in framing a bill for this purpose was to meet the evils which the last presidential election developed, and at the same time keep within the provisions of the Constitution, the Twelfth Amendment to which makes certain provisions which of course had to be maintained. The bill does not make it obligatory upon the States to appoint these electoral tribunals, as indeed it could not do without stepping beyond the constitutional powers of Congress. It is not likely that, if the bill should pass, any State would neglect to avail itself of the powers and opportunities it affords them of regulating and controlling its own electoral votes.

It is doubtful whether the bill will become a law. There are many who favor the direct voting of the people for President and Vice-President who are opposed to any change which retains the Electoral College system, and who will consequently vote against the measure, preferring to do nothing with this question until a more radical alteration can be effected. This can only be done by an amendment to the Constitution, which is impracticable before the next presidential election, as there is not sufficient time for such a measure to pass both Houses of Congress and be ratified by the people.

As the next Senate as well as the next House will in all probability be Democratic, it is evident that Senator Edmunds' bill is not framed from a Republican standpoint, but is designed for the good of the country. It is, perhaps, as wise and consistent a measure as can be adopted at the present time, and it is certain that something is necessary to prevent a repetition of the scenes of the last Presidential election, which have done more to bring reproach upon the institutions of this Republic, than anything that has occurred since the day of its organization.

## DOUBLE MINDED.

THE *Home Missionary* contains a communication from the Salt Lake City clergyman, of the Plymouth Church school of piety, who advocated the use of the knife in dealing with the "Mormon" question, and who so miscondacted himself on a certain occasion, in a religious meeting, as to attract general observation and inspire general disgust. He seems very much exercised over the proposition to admit Utah as a State in the Union, and predicts a "bloody revolution" as the consequence of such admission. He thinks that there is a change of sentiment going on among the "Mormons," and that there are agencies now at work here sufficient to solve this vexed "Mormon" problem correctly in time, if Utah can a few years longer be kept a Territory. Most of the leaders, he represents, are "lukewarm in the faith." The talk of the preachers sounds hollow. The ring of sincerity is gone. There are none to fill the places of the present leaders when they are gone. The young men feel no interest in Mormonism as a system of religion; polygamy is especially offensive to them. In Salt Lake City but few polygamous marriages now take place, and ere long the Mormons will themselves reject polygamy.

Isn't it amusing to see these fussy, uneasy, anti-"Mormon" fanatics veering round like weather-cocks and telling totally opposite stories of the situation, as the humor guides them. First, they try to stir up the whole nation with the alarming intelligence that the "Mormons" are solemnizing more polygamous marriages than ever before; that they are multiplying their Temples; that they are spreading into adjacent Territories; and that the country is in danger of having polygamy "forced upon it as a national institution." When this kind of a sensation has run for a time, then they turn completely round and boldly assert that the whole system of "Mormenism" is

dying out; that its leaders have lost their vim; that the young people are opposed to polygamy; and that before long it will be a thing of nought.

Only a few weeks ago this writer to the *Home Missionary* was so excited over that which he now intimates is growing "smaller by degrees, and beautifully less," that he publicly declared he "wouldn't stand it any longer," and vehemently called for heroic measures for its suppression. The knife was wanted then, now all that is necessary is to keep Utah from becoming a State.

Well, let those who want to keep this Territory out of the Union content themselves. There is as little probability of the Statehood of Utah now as at any former period. There is less agitation on the matter. The people here have met repeatedly in Convention, framed as liberal Constitutions as were ever drafted in any part of the United States, made their applications for Statehood, and urged their claims with sound argument and irrefutable logic. But their petitions have been treated with coldness and neglect, and just now there is no particular effort being made in this direction except the excitement which certain rabid opponents are trying to create.

But they may blow hot, or blow cold; fabricate exciting stories of "Mormon" extension or ridiculous predictions of its speedy collapse; it will make no difference. The people of Utah will pursue the even tenor of their way, build their sanctuaries to the God of Israel as means and opportunities make possible, preach the gospel as a witness to the nations, gather the elect from the four winds, practise their religion according to the commands of God and the dictates of conscience, labor for the salvation of the living and the dead, prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man, and leave their defamers and double-minded enemies, who work in the interest of the "father of lies," to fill the cup of their iniquity, reap the reward of their labors, and receive from a Just Judge the measure they meet out to us, "pressed down and running over."

## A REMARKABLE VOYAGE.

MORE than a year ago, Professor A. E. Nordenskjöld, a Swedish navigator, proposed to his Government to make a voyage unparalleled in the annals of northern exploration. He offered to lead an expedition through the Siberian and Polar Seas to Behring Strait, returning home by way of the Suez Canal. This bold scheme occasioned much comment at the time, and like all innovations, the Swedish sailor's plan met with ridicule. But the Government listened favorably to his proposal and explanations, and placed under his direction the steamship *Vega*, duly officered and manned, and provisioned for two years.

The voyages of Captain Wiggins, of England, who demonstrated that the mouth of the Siberian river Yenisei was only a fifteen day's trip from London in an open season, tended to assist in making Professor Nordenskjöld's project appear feasible. Two or three voyages had been made through the Sea of Kara, but no vessel had penetrated eastward farther than Cape Sterlegoff.

Professor Nordenskjöld started last July with the steamship *Vega*, a wooden vessel, with 23 inch oak sides, and the *Lena*, an iron steamer. The expedition proceeded by way of Matotschkin Sound, which divides the island of Nova Zembla, into the Karian Sea and safely made Dickson's port at the mouth of the Jenisey, or, as it appears on the maps, the Yenisei. From this point the voyagers started on the 10th of August and found the charts of the coast east of that point altogether incorrect. They were hindered by heavy fogs and floating ice, but overcame the latter by putting on heavy steam, the wooden *Vega* taking the lead, as it was better calculated to stand the brunt of the ice than the smaller though iron sided *Lena*.

On the 19th of August they reached a little bay on the west side of the North Cape of Asia, called Cheljuskin, after a Russian of that name, who reached that point by

land in 1879. Next day they reached the northern point of the Cape—the first vessels known to have sailed around it from the west. Lieut. Hovgaard, one of the Professor's staff thus relates the incident in a letter which went to Berlin, and came from that city to the *N. Y. Herald*:

"Who can describe the feelings of triumphant joy with which we at last drew near the long sought goal!"

"With all flags waving and greeting the time honored northern point of the Old World with five salutes, the *Vega* steamed proudly into the harbor, while the sun, as if to give additional lustre to the festive occasion, dispelled the clouds, showing a range of high snow-covered hills in the background. From the top of a large promontory a bear stared inquiringly at his unexpected guests, but after receiving a few shots deemed it prudent to retire to the shelter of the hills. Continuing our observations the next day we erected a cairn, in which we deposited a document telling of our expedition and future plans. At one p.m. on the 20th of August we weighed anchor and steered eastward. After battling amid fog and ice we attained the narrow coast of the Taimur peninsula and had then the luck to meet almost open water. The coast is about fifty English miles more to the west than noted down on the chart."

He also refers to a glimpse they had of the midnight sun, as follows:

"A wonderful panorama spread around us. To the south lay the Taimur land, glittering fiery red in the rays of the midnight sun, appearing, by refraction high above the northern horizon, while the ice reflecting in the air assumed fantastic forms. Upon the glassy surface of the sea the two steamers glided smoothly onward, passing many little fjords with ice-fringed coasts. An unfortunate bear, incautious enough to swim too near the *Lena*, had to atone with his life for his temerity. This Arctic splendor was not of long duration: the next day we were again obliged to resume our usual manoeuvring between the drifting ice."

After making scientific observations they steamed onward and reached the mouth of the river *Lena*, in Asiatic Siberia. Here the *Lena* stayed to sail down the river as far as Yakutsk (in some maps Yakutsk) to return next year, while the *Vega* continued its journey towards Behring Straits to sail southward and halt at Japan. All the probabilities are in favor of the complete success of the expedition, and we may reasonably expect to hear of Professor Nordenskjöld's return to his native country by way of the Suez canal, having finished with honors a journey which no other navigator has ever accomplished.

The benefits which will result, among others, from the voyage of the *Vega* and *Lena* are these: It has been demonstrated that vessels can reach the northern coast of Asiatic as well as European Siberia. Several islands in that region hitherto unknown have been discovered and their location established. The actual geography and condition of the northern coast have been ascertained. It has been proven that marine access can be had from Europe to the interior of Asiatic Siberia from whence overland communication is had with the great Chinese Empire. And the issue may be an opening for regular Oriental trade by a route hitherto unknown. This would effect in no insignificant degree the business of the world.

We shall look with interest for the completion of the Swedish traveler's great voyage and the full account of his remarkable achievement, which will place his name on the list of the world's celebrated navigators and explorers.

## A WOMAN'S WORK.

"On the Plains and among the Peaks" is the title of a book just received at the Desert Museum. We are accustomed to notice the interesting collection of Rocky Mountain animals and birds on exhibition in that institution, and to regard them as evidences of great skill on the part of our brethren. We have seen one or two specimens of our native birds, that were

presented by Mrs. M. A. Maxwell during her short stay in this city, a few years ago. But it was hardly expected then, that a large and wonderful collection of panthers, lynxes, wolves, foxes, bears, elks, and almost every important animal of these mountains, as well as eagles, owls, swans, humming birds, wax-wings, and orioles, with almost every bird met with in these regions, would be captured, preserved and set up for observation to the gaze of the world, at the great exhibition of Philadelphia, in 1876, and that by a woman, but it has been done. That unobtrusive lady, we have named, accomplished all this, and more than can be told here. The account of how this was done, and the names of the various fauna of Colorado, which includes largely that of our valleys, has been chronicled by another lady, Mrs. Dartt, who is eminently gifted in scientific knowledge and literary ability. Her work is written in a very pleasing style, and presents the labors, courage, taste and skill of Mrs. Maxwell, in their true light before the public. Those who visited the Centennial Exhibition, no doubt saw and admired her collection, but few know anything of the means by which it was obtained. "On the Plains and among the Peaks" tells the story. The book will be preserved in the Museum.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Onions, whether cooked or raw, are said to be of great benefit to sufferers from chronic rheumatism. They are endorsed with strong recommendations.

England consumes 114,043,940 tons of coal annually, and yet she is not under the necessity of sending for fuel to Coalville or Sanpete.

Many large ship-building establishments on the Clyde, in Scotland, are now idle and the depression in the trade seems to get worse. All tranches of industry appear to be suffering in Great Britain.

It has been estimated that fifty thousand typhus germs will live and move and have their being and get along quite comfortably, within a space up larger than a pin-head. That beats the Chinese, hollow.

There is no accounting for taste. A tribe of Indians in South America have holes made in the middle of their noses, into which they insert bunches of red feathers that stick out on either side like a flaming, exaggerated moustache. Nothing like "style."

Good sanitary regulations and a system of adequate water supply have vastly reduced the death-rate of Chicago, once a very unhealthy city. These are the chief causes of the healthiness of the British Metropolis. Like causes under like conditions produce like effects in all ages and all localities.

A diamond weighing 244 carats has been found in the Dutoitspan fields in South Africa. This is the second largest gem ever found in that region, the biggest being the "Spaulding," which weighed 285½ carats. Several very fine stones of 50 carats each have also been discovered, which has made the fields newly attractive to the searchers.

The Holyoke News would be a good paper not to inquire of for scriptural information. It speaks of a son of a certain Hebrew patriarch who "sold out for a mess of pottage." We always thought that Jacob walked round about the truth pretty freely in that Esau transaction, but did not think he pursued such an alkali-en course as the Holyokean indicates.

Stories of Woman's forgiveness of, and pleading for, the man who has injured her, are common, but it is not often that the husband figures as the wounded and forgiving party. However, a case in a New York police court a few days ago, gave a striking illustration of woman's wickedness and man's charity. A woman was arrested for drunkenness and frightfully cutting her husband's head and face with some crockery. He appeared in court next morning, bandaged up, plead for his wife's release, forgave her in court, and took her home in triumph, as she promised with a flood of tears, to quit drinking. There are more cases of man's patience with woman's folly than ever appear in print.