

outcry in some quarters against the slowness of American justice.

#### RAMIE IN NEW ZEALAND.

Many of our readers will remember that, in May last, the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, colonial treasurer of New Zealand, visited this city and renewed a boyhood acquaintance with Bishop Isaac Barton of the Nineteenth ward, and his brother, Mr. W. B. Barton, of the Eighteenth ward, who extended some courtesies to him. He appreciated their good will very much apparently, and he has sent them papers, etc., occasionally since his return home. A few days ago Mr. W. B. Barton received from him a copy of the "Financial Statement" prepared by Mr. Seddon for submission to the colonial parliament. It is a document of much interest and makes a complete presentation of the financial affairs of the colony, accompanied by his recommendations.

He submits some facts and suggestions relative to the beet sugar industry that are probably in some degree the outgrowth of his observations in Utah. Relative to the culture of rhea or ramie, a subject that has been discussed to some extent in the western part of the United States, he says:

"It is probable that New Zealand will be found especially suitable to the production of the valuable rhea, or ramie plant. Although its field of cultivation has been hitherto in warm countries, the most valuable variety grows best in a temperate climate. It is exceedingly hardy and thrives in almost any description of soil; indeed, it was formerly looked upon as a troublesome and ineradicable weed. Quite recently, the gum, which had hitherto defied the efforts of inventors to extract, has been mastered by a new process, and the plant now bids fair to become one of the most useful textile materials ever brought into the service of mankind. It can supply the place of both hemp and flax, of cotton, and, to some degree, silk. In its coarser form it makes good rope, cordage, etc., while the finer material can be woven into damasks, flannelettes, velvets, etc., of beautiful appearance and brilliant hue.

"The land of the North Island of New Zealand (especially of the parts having volcanic soil) are especially suitable for raising crops of this plant. It is propagated in several ways—by seed, by cuttings, and by division of roots—so that rapid extension of cultivation is possible. Roots were obtained last year, and a further supply a few months ago. These are being propagated at Momohaki experimental station, and a distribution will be made from there next year, in order that further tests may be applied. The price of the fibre is at present about £30 per ton. The average cost of production is about £4 per acre, to produce about 2,800 pounds of fibre. This is about five or six times the yield that cotton gives under the most favorable circumstances. Representatives of the company holding the patent rights for the cleansing process waited upon me when in England, and wished to know whether the New Zealand government were prepared to encourage the introduction of this plant into the colony and set apart land for the company for the purpose. The company also gave me to understand that they were prepared to treat, with any one undertaking to cultivate the plant, for the purchase of the raw material. An interesting pamphlet on the subject, together with samples, will be laid on the table for the information and inspection of honorable members."

Utah farmers will do well to look into the merits of ramie. The introduction of lucerne into these valleys has yielded millions of dollars to the people. In fact, but for this plant, vast areas now profitably cultivated would have remained desert. Who knows that ramie will not be a blessing of equal magnitude? The indications justify the hope, if not the assurance, that it may. If the abundance of industrious and skilled labor in these mountains had cheap raw material out of which to manufacture such fabrics as can be made from ramie, its earnings would be enormous as soon as the industry became fairly established. This matter should be looked into.

#### RUSSIANS PREFERRED.

Germany may endeavor to get hold of a slice of Chinese territory, in imitation of Russia, and perhaps as an offset to the advance of the Russians on the northern border of the "celestial" empire, but Germans will never be welcomed by the Mongolians as have the Russians been nearly everywhere in Asia.

The reason for this is apparent. Whenever the Germans go among less civilized nations, they emphasize their superiority in every way. They endeavor to imprint their own customs and habits on the natives and often crush by force the least indication of opposition. The proceedings in east Africa in recent years prove this assertion. The Russians, on the other hand nearly always manage to live on intimate terms with the Asiatics whose territory they have occupied. They become popular with the natives who naturally respect the authority of the great czar, whose mandates the Russians themselves implicitly obey. There is kinship between the Russians and the Asiatic nations and this gives the former a decided advantage over the Germans.

Russia's policy in Asia has always been a wise one. The native languages are not suppressed, and the religious rites are never interfered with and in countries where robbery and poverty used to prevail, peace and prosperity generally follow the establishment of Russian protection. All these circumstances tend to give Russia prestige where other European nations are barely tolerated, or are even regarded as barbarous oppressors.

#### AN ATTACK ON THE CHURCH.

The Saints' Herald, the official organ of the so-called Reorganized church, in its issue of Nov. 24, contains a lengthy article under the caption, "Abominable Teachings of Utah Mormonism." As the heading suggests, it is animated throughout by a spirit of bitterness comparable only to that which in years gone by used to inspire the attacks on the Saints by mobs. It is remarkable, moreover, because indirectly it proclaims the position of the Reorganized church relative to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on some important points of doctrine. This by way of apology for noticing the philippic in these columns.

Among the propositions laid down by the Herald is this, that "They [the Saints in Utah] are not the true but false Latter-day Saints," and that the Reorganized church is "the true church in succession." And in support of this statement we are told:

"Courts of the land have decided the Reorganized church so to be—the lawful continuation of the original Church;

also that the Utah Church is a departure and an apostasy therefrom."

Can a poorer argument on such a point be conceived? Need we say that no civil court has jurisdiction in the matter? That the most profound knowledge of civil law does not qualify a person to decide a purely theological question any more than does the study of astronomy, or the skill in driving horses? Can it be possible that the spokesmen of the Reorganized church are willing to rest their claims on a Missouri court decision? Look at the history of the Church in all ages. The Prophets of old were generally condemned by the courts. The Son of God was pronounced a blasphemer and a traitor by the courts of the land. So were the first Apostles and an almost innumerable host of martyrs, including the heralds of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this age. We are content to be numbered among these, and leave to our friends of the Reorganized church the consolation of being endorsed by a court. It is the endorsement of the Lord that is of value to us.

The Herald next charges the Utah Elders with blasphemy:

"Not even the name of the Almighty Himself, nor that of the Christ, the anointed of God, escapes the darkness and evil that has proceeded from the apostasy that prevails in Utah."

This invective is called forth by an article in the Provo Enquirer by Elder Partridge, in which the author takes occasion to speak of two questions, which have sometimes been the subject of speculation both in Utah and elsewhere. One refers to the relationship of our Savior to the loving women that administered to His wants and attended Him in the supreme hour of trial; the other, to the probability or improbability of the female element being represented in the Deity. Elder Partridge says as to the first of these questions that he is not prepared to say how far Jesus may or may not have entered into that holy relationship, and adds that he considers it only a matter of speculation, not profitable to teach as doctrine. That is to say, he declares he has formed no opinion on the subject either way, because he has never regarded it as a profitable subject for public teaching. Is that blasphemy? Is it blasphemy not to hold a decided view on a purely speculative question? If it is, who can escape the terrible charge, except those who think they are carrying around the whole ocean of knowledge in their little vest pocket and whose views, consequently, are worth absolutely nothing?

In regard to the other question Elder Partridge reverently says:

"I cannot conceive of a father in the nature that we understand Him to be the Father of our spirits without associating with Him a mother also, as is so beautifully portrayed by one of the most popular hymns composed by Sister Eliza R. Snow. Further than that I am not prepared to go at present."

Is that blasphemy? If so, the author of Genesis was a blasphemer when employing a noun in the female gender (Ruach) to represent the holy Spirit, brooding over chaos to bring forth life and order. He must have blasphemed again when stating that man, male and female, constitute the image of the Deity.

In all ages the human mind has endeavored to grasp to some extent the mysteries of the divine nature, and perhaps never more earnestly than in the first centuries of our era. Different views resulted. The Gnostics, the Manichaeans, the Monarchians the Arians, and in later centuries the Unitarians and the