

BRILLIANT VIEWS.

LOOKING towards the West in the evening one sees a star of unusual splendor, brilliancy and beauty. Of this E. M. Converse speaks in the *Boston Herald* as follows:

"Venus is evening star. She makes her last appearance in the western evening sky, but takes on one of her most interesting aspects as she bids farewell to the celestial dome where she has reigned for many months with constantly increasing splendor. A change in her course occurred on the 2nd, at noonday, when she reached her period of greatest brilliancy as evening star, 27 days before her inferior conjunction. She was then 39 degrees east of the sun, and one-quarter of her disc was illuminated. She has reached the culmination of her power to shine, is visible at noonday, as a small spot of intense whiteness cast a shadow, and wins a tribute of admiration from every beholder. Her light number, or comparative brilliancy, is at its highest point, being 183.7, against 44.6 at the close of the month.

"But planetary queens, as well as earthly potentates, cannot remain on the heights forever, and observers are not unwilling to behold a change. After June 2 the lustre of Venus lessened, her stay above the horizon grows shorter, and she seemingly approaches the sun. 'Things are not always what they seem' among our celestial neighbors as we look upon them from the earth. Venus in reality is nearly stationary, and the great sun himself approaches the planet as if unable to withstand her attractive power.

"The question of greatest interest at present concerning Venus relates to the time of her axial rotation. Schiaparelli, who sees farther into the depths of space than any other living astronomer, asserts that she turns once on her axis in 225 days, one side of the planet, like the moon, being always turned toward the sun. Perrotin, another famous astronomer, has a different view, believing that the axial rotation of Venus is nearly the same as that of the earth."

CIVIC CHANGES.

THE appointment of a presiding officer of the City Council on the retirement of the Mayor from that body is not understood by many of our citizens. It is consequent upon a law passed by the last session of the Legislative Assembly giving the mayors of cities of the first and second class the power of veto, and requiring the City Councils of such cities to appoint one of the members to preside at its meetings. The official title of this office is "President of the City Council."

On Tuesday evening in compliance with this statute the City Council appointed Councilor Loofbourow, Councilors Morau, Beardsley and Horn being also nominated, either of whom are qualified for the post. Judge Loofbourow, we have no doubt, will make a good presiding officer and conduct the business of the Council with becoming dignity.

We wish to say a good word for Mayor Baskin on his retirement from the presidency of the Council. He has occupied the place with credit and with a due regard for the rights of the members and the dignity of the office. Of course he continues to be Mayor of the city, and will now have more time to attend

to executive business. He can veto any measure passed by the City Council, but that body can pass it over his veto by a two-thirds vote. And an ordinance, resolution or contract passed by the Council, if not returned with his signature within five days after its passage, will become valid as if it had been approved and signed by the Mayor.

FROM "PROFESSIONAL COURTESY."

OUR attention has been called to some ill-natured remarks in our evening contemporary. We seldom see it and must not be expected to notice always what it may choose to say of the *DESERET NEWS*. But as it takes on an aggrieved tone, we will give it brief attention. The *NEWS* is accused of uttering a "miserable falsehood." Saturday evening the term used was, "a base, miserable lie, without the shadow of a pretext even for it." After hurling these choice aspersions, the hope is expressed that the *NEWS* is "an honest paper, and was led into the error unwittingly," and it was urged that the *NEWS* "retract the statement." Now we are twitted with a lack of "professional courtesy" because we took no notice of this coarse and petulant and contradictory attack.

The occasion of it all was a complaint we entered that information concerning a suit planted by Powers and Hiles in the Third District Court, was withheld from our reporter by the deputy clerk, on the ground that the attorney filing it objected to giving it to the press, and yet it appeared in the other evening paper, whereupon we said:

"It is understood that Boss Powers is financially interested in the paper to which this item was given. Now, if he is allowed to dictate to the deputy clerk what items shall be given or not given to the press, it is probable that the *DESERET NEWS* will be prevented from obtaining considerable information."

Judge Powers subsequently informed our reporter that he had no desire to keep anything from the *DESERET NEWS*, and also that he did not hold a dollar of capital stock in the paper referred to. The "base, miserable lie," which with such "professional courtesy" is charged up to us, then, is the statement that it is understood that Boss Powers was "financially interested" in that "courteous" sheet.

Now, we had too much regard for Judge Powers' well known sharpness and shrewdness to think for a moment that he had invested money in that concern, but we had information that when it started it was through his influence and offices that money was obtained to help to start it. That was what we meant by his being financially interested in it. If that is a "base, miserable lie" we are not responsible for it. It came to us from one of the staff of the *Times*, and it is well "understood" among local newspaper men. So the *Times* can swallow its own "miserable falsehood" if it pleases, and we merely mention the matter out of the "professional courtesy" of which that paper proves itself to be such a brilliant exemplar.

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.

THE *Literary Digest* of June 4th publishes a condensation of an article from the pen of Arnold White, which appeared in the May number of the *London Contemporary Review*. The caption of Mr. White's paper was "The Truth About the Russian Jew." He presents his views in relation to the Russian reasons for the anti-Semitic measures which have attracted the attention of the civilized world. The treatment of the Hebrews in Russia seems, from the standpoint of Mr. White, to be an involuntary tribute to the superior intellectuality and individual force of the Hebrew, as compared with the Muscovite. Repression is resorted to in sheer self-defense, because in its absence eight years would not pass before every important post in the empire would be filled by Jews. This is the idea of the intelligent or governing classes of Russians on the subject, while the stupid and self-indulgent masses readily join in the anti-semitic movement from race antipathy and prejudice.

The *Digest* presents the following condensed statement from statistical tables embodied in the *Review* article:

"The writer here fabricates an array of official figures which go to show that there is more material progress, less arrears of land tax, fewer deaths from drunkenness, fewer houses of ill-fame, fewer incendiary fires, etc., within the Jewish pale, than in any other provinces of equal population, the figures being, in some cases, enormously in favor of the Jewish provinces. The criminal statistics, too, make a similarly favorable showing for the Jews. Under the head of commerce, too, is shown that within the pale, the Jews hold 47.1 per cent. of the capital engaged in trade, run 67 per cent. of the retail stores, 89 per cent. of the brandy stores, 37.7 per cent. of the retail brandy stores, 55 per cent. of the brandy distilleries, and 55 per cent. of the mercantile establishments. From these figures the writer easily passes on to the conclusion that the withdrawal of the Jewish mass would result in complete industrial disorganization."

The amount of annual revenue paid by the Jews to the State is 100,000,000 roubles, while the direct and indirect tax combined reaches yearly 200,000,000 roubles. Mr. White correctly states that, in the event of a general exodus of the Jews, it is, according to this showing, difficult to understand how Russia could longer be ranked among the solvent states of the world. According to the best authority the Jews in Russia number 5,250,000. The grand total of the population is estimated at 114,873,000.

SOMETHING ABOUT POLITICAL CONVENTIONS.

A POLITICAL philosopher who has been diving into the musty records of convention history has discovered that Chicago holds the palm for success. That city had in all so far in its history nine political national conventions and scored five successes. In 1860 Lincoln was nominated there, Grant in 1868, Garfield in 1880, Cleveland in 1884 and Harrison in 1888. It should be noted, however, that two of the conventions mentioned in the nine