

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

SLANDEROUS HISTORY.

Mr. Wilson Odell of Hominy Falls, Nicholas county, West Virginia, sends to the "News" on article written by one Arthur M'Lean and printed in the Methodist Episcopal Advocate of Sutton, in that state, which deals with Mormonism and its founder, the Prophet Joseph Smith. Mr. Odell states that he is not a Mormon but that Mormon missionaries have often been at his house, and that he regards them as perfect gentlemen. He suggests that the "News" reply to the clipping.

Mr. M'Lean's article begins abruptly with this sentence: "Among the greatest stains on America's history is Mormonism." This declaration is a sufficient index of what follows, which embraces some sarcastic remarks about the people who become converted to Mormonism, and the reiterated assertion that the Elders who convert them are ignorant and illiterate. If Mr. M'Lean were to make such statements and misrepresentations as are contained in his article, on his own responsibility and alleged information, it would be an easy matter to dispose of him and his utterances to the satisfaction of candid persons. But he supports his assertions, and his characterization of the Mormon people, by a lengthy quotations from the Eclectic History of the United States.

The work named purports to give a condensed narrative of the early rise and progress of the Mormon Church, and a brief biography of its prophet-founder. It is a crime in any historian to pervert truth and falsify history in the manner in which these things were done by the author of the work quoted by Mr. M'Lean. He has made himself a deceiver of multitudes respecting sacred things, and has placed upon an innocent people the burden of proving to the world that they and their leaders are not guilty of the things with which he charges them.

But such a crime brings its own punishment. In this age of free discussion and an omniscient and omnipotent press, the truths of modern and current history cannot be suppressed nor perverted permanently; and the writer who, in the semi-sacred character of a historian, in a record designed for the instruction of posterity, deliberately characterizes a people as lacking the very virtues that comprise their most prominent traits, will, as certainly as the sun continues on his course in the heavens, be convicted of the calumny he has perpetrated; his writings will be distrusted, his memory will be detested, and he will be consigned to the contempt and oblivion he deserves.

The account of Mormonism given by the work relied upon by Mr. M'Lean may be briefly disposed of by simply remarking that it was written from the standpoint of a reckless enemy, rather than of a painstaking and impartial investigator, and with a view to popularity rather than the presentation of historical truth. This description, with more or less modification, will fit a vast mass of literature, purporting to give the truth about Mormon history and doctrine, which has issued from the press, particularly in the United States, during the lifetime of the religious society that has been the subject matter. That society was long regarded with almost universal prejudice, and it was a rare thing for an author not a member of it to display courage enough to tell the truth about it. This fact should be remembered in connection with the axiom that a man's friends rather than his

foes should be applied to for correct information concerning him.

In the early history of Christianity there were two classes of historians, one of whom held that Jesus was an impostor, a false teacher, a blasphemer and a traitor to the state, and that His followers imitated His crimes; while the other declared that He was the embodiment of all that was pure and good, and the very Son of God, while His followers taught and practiced a system of religion far in advance of any other known among men. The people of that age were left to choose which records and witnesses they would believe.

It is so in this age in the case of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his followers. Those who care nothing for the truth, can easily read and hear about the Mormons an unlimited quantity of stuff that is false and slanderous, much of which purports to be dignified and authentic history; while those who really desire to know the truth, can easily find it. God has so arranged the matter for purposes dictated by His own infinite wisdom.

A SENSATIONAL PREACHER.

In the person of Rev. Sherman Hill, Butte has a preacher who seems to be somewhat given to sensationalism. On Sunday evening last he preached a sermon on "Manhood or Mammon?" and undertook to show that in America mammon was getting away with manhood. He cited many illustrations of this idea by showing that greed for gold was becoming the chief characteristic of Americans, and that they would engage in many vocations and lines of business that were sinful, for the sake of the money to be made out of them. He cited particularly the saloon, the sensational newspaper and the lobbyist. In the course of his sermon, as printed in the Butte Miner, appears this paragraph:

"When important legislation against Mormonism—a standing shame to American decency—was pending, certain merchants in New York—America's example of Mammonism—telegraphed certain members of Congress: 'New York sold \$13,000,000 worth of goods to Utah last year. Hands off!'"

So anti-Mormon legislation pending in Congress was opposed by New York merchants who claimed to have sold thirteen million dollars' worth of goods in Utah in one year. This is news to the parties that were chiefly interested at the time. It is doubtful if that much merchandise was ever imported into Utah in any single year prior to the end of the "raid," from all outside points put together, to say nothing of the single city of New York.

There were merchants in New York who favored the anti-Mormon legislation that was passed by Congress, and there were other merchants in that city who opposed it. But the opposition to it couldn't swing in Utah a thirteen million dollar annual trade, nor more than a small fraction of that amount; nor was it strong enough in any place or direction to prevent Congress from passing harsh and cruel laws, notably the act confiscating and escheating private property, which the sober judgment of that body afterwards condemned and repealed, and for the enforcement of which it made partial restitution.

If the service of mammon to the extent of shielding the Mormon people from adverse legislation is the most devoted service the merchants of New

York have ever rendered to the deceitful god, their lot in a future state will be much more agreeable than a great many people expect that it will be.

THE CAUCUS RULES.

The Democratic organ this morning has the following announcement in relation to the City Council's proceedings last evening:

"In harmony with the plan adopted in caucus by the majority of the City Council, the committee on sewerage decided last evening to defer reporting upon the appointment of Frank C. Kelsey to succeed himself as city engineer. Councilman Wallace wanted a favorable report agreed to, but Howe, Robertson and Margetts felt in duty bound to hold up the appointment for a time, at least. Buckle did not vote either way.

"Like Fire Chief Devine, whose appointment is still in midair, Engineer Kelsey will have to await the rising of a lucky star or the acceding by the Mayor of some of the just demands of the Council majority before he can say that he has crossed the quicksands."

The citizens and taxpayers thus have placed before them an offensively frank avowal—with whatever force it may have coming from such a source—of the fixed and deliberate purpose of that portion of the City Council which constitutes the working parts of what is fast assuming the nature of a carefully constructed political machine. The Mayor has sent to the Council nominations for the heads of three city departments, namely, police, fire and engineer's; and he has also named a lady for the position of police matron. Pursuant to the determination of the caucus, these appointments are to be hung up until the Mayor accedes to "some of the just demands of the Council majority." It has been pointedly intimated by the Democratic organ that the Mayor's alleged choice for head of the waterworks department will be treated in the same way as soon as sent in.

In other words a deadlock is on unless the Mayor, who represents non-partisanship, surrenders to the caucus, which comprises the working parts of the machine. It is not of much consequence who manipulates the wires and levers that control this machine; the issue is one of law and principle rather than of men. The purpose of the machine and its manipulators is to destroy non-partisanship in this city, and to enthrone, securely and permanently, the political boss and his satellite, the ward heeler. Political conspiracies and not business principles are to prevail in the management of municipal affairs.

The problem of better, purer and cheaper government for Utah's capital is being worked out beautifully. Every session of the City Council conveys to the overburdened taxpayers and all sensible and patriotic citizens the most vivid object lessons that show the necessity of creating, at the next election, a City Council from which every vestige of partisan politics shall be eliminated, and choosing men for official position who owe their power and their highest allegiance to the people and not to the party. Every session of the city solons makes it plainer and plainer that the objections urged against one after another of the heads of departments chosen by the Mayor, are utterly dishonest and hypocritical, and that the real objection to confirming his appointments is that they will, if confirmed, strengthen the non-partisan cause and correspondingly weaken that of the political boss and heeler.

The caucus proposes to compel the