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EXTRA-JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS.

OUR readers will doubtless be interested in perusing the letter of our Blackfoot correspondent which appears in this issue. It seems that Col. Thomas E. Ricks, of Rexburg, has been a special object of judicial animus. Indictments have been piled up against him, but have been wiped out because, for substantial reasons, they would not hold.

Our correspondent states that the grand jury came into court, reported that there was no more business before them and asked that they be discharged. Instead of the court complying with this request, it granted a motion of the District Attorney for the dismissal of an old indictment against Mr. Ricks, and sent the jury back to their quarters, for the sole benefit of the last named gentleman. They speedily returned with another indictment against him, for unlawful cohabitation. On this presentment he was forced to immediate trial, the request of his counsel for time to prepare being ignored. There was not a peg of evidence upon which to hang a conviction, yet he was convicted. Had he not been, the jury would have gone in the face of the instructions of the court in charging them.

The judge is alleged to have overridden every rule and precedent that stood in the path of the attainment of the object in view—the conviction of the defendant. Among the impediments swept aside were various rulings of the Supreme Court of the United States. We understand from private sources that the judge, who—after the flames of anti-"Mormon" prejudice have subsided somewhat—doubtless sees how deeply he has put his foot into a judicial quagmire, is engaged in revising and correcting his charge to the jury before it reaches the general public. He cannot, however, very well wipe out the facts of extraordinary proceedings in this case.

The cause of this extra-judicial operation is touched upon by our correspondent—the defendant is President of a Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It appears that, in the absence of competent evidence, this fact was sufficient to warrant his conviction, even if the forms, rules and principles of law had to be ignored and set aside in order to accomplish it.

Such instances of flagrant injustice as this should close the mouths of any class disposed to assert that the "Mormon" people have no good cause to complain of wickedly unjust treatment at the hands of prejudiced officials. What they want and all they ask is that they receive equal justice under the law with all other people of this Republic. To that they are entitled, and they will not cease to complain against flagrant instances of departure from this essential element of just government.

NO PUNISHMENT FOR BELIEF.

THE New York *Times*, which is intensely anti-"Mormon," has recently shown a disposition to draw its line of attack upon practical violators of the Edmunds law, leaving all others to believe what seems right to them without interference. The *Times* has the following, on the recent bigoted suggestions of the Governor of Arizona, in its issue of October 23rd:

"The new Governor of Arizona is much exercised about the Mormons he has found in his province. A year or two ago Arizona had a Territorial law resembling that of Idaho, which disfranchises all members of the Mormon Church, even if they had never practiced polygamy. Nevada had such a a law, and it was declared to be unconstitutional. The Arizona law was repealed by the Territorial Legislature last year. Gov. Wolfley says: "I request and urge that Congress repeal the repealing act and re establish the law." But he does not say that the Mormons in Arizona are practicing polygamy or otherwise violating the laws. If any of them are polygamists in practice the anti-polygamy laws that are used in Utah are in force also in Arizona, and the guilty persons can be prosecuted under them. Four or five Mormons of Arizona were prosecuted under these laws three or four years ago and convicted, and as there have been no prosecutions since that time an impression has prevailed that the evil practice had been given up. No resident of Arizona should be punished for a mere matter of belief, but if any resident violates the anti-polygamy laws he should be prosecuted to conviction, and should suffer the full penalty."

THE STATUS OF FORMER POLYGAMISTS.

THE decision of Judge Zane in the Bennett case has given great offense to the "Liberal" plotters, who counted on the obstruction of a number of legal voters of the People's Party, but have failed in their nefarious project. A synopsis of the decision appeared in our issue of November 2nd, and in this paper will be found the full text thereof.

The position taken by Judge Zane is exactly the ground we assumed when the case was first opened. It is the only common sense position that can be found. It is not a new point of argument. And the Judge's views, as expressed on this occasion, are consistent with those he has held on previous occasions. It is also in strict accordance with the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Murphy vs. Ramsay. So the Judge can afford to be at outs with the rabid portion of his own party, and can smile at the arrant nonsense voided by their organ.

The only question at issue was, the status of a man who, having at one time been a polygamist, had severed his relations with his plural wife and no longer recognized her as such or associated with her in family relations. Is he a polygamist when he has only one wife? Common reason answers, no. But what does the law say? Is there any statute or rule of law, or judicial decision, which would give color to the notion that a man at present having but one wife is now a polygamist. We do not know of anything of the kind, and nothing of the sort has been cited during the case at issue.

The question has been asked many times during the legal discussion of the polygamy problem, how is a man who has married a plural wife to effect a legal dissolution of the relationship. It has never been answered, because it cannot be. The fact that the marriage is not recognized as legal, precludes any legal action for divorce. In the Snow case Mr. F. S. Richards desired the counsel for the government to show how this relationship could be extinguished, but failed to obtain a satisfactory reply. The Court also pressed the question in vain. Mr. Richards said, in his argument:

"A great deal has been said during this discussion about putting an end to the relationship existing between these parties, and opposing counsel