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SO FAR, SO GOOD.

The State Board of Health appears to have decided not to attempt to exceed its lawful powers in reference to compulsory vaccination. It has recommended the proper authorities of each town where smallpox exists to enact rules, compelling the vaccination of children before being allowed to enter the public schools, and also the vaccination of all other persons "whom they have reason to believe have been or may be directly exposed to the disease." That is very different to attempting to exercise powers with which that body is not legally endowed.

We are of the opinion that the authorities in those towns will be very careful as to adopting measures, for any such purpose, that will infringe upon the rights of American citizens. We would much rather trust the matter in their hands than in those of medical practitioners who are wedded to the notions which constitute present theories on the vaccination question.

We do not think there is very much danger of healthy school children, in many places in this State, being shut out of the public schools which they have a right to enter and which the law requires them to attend, simply because they have not been impregnated with a vile disease, transferred to them by putrid matter from an inoculated calf. Nor do we believe that many town councils will go to the length of enacting a rule that would compel persons to be vaccinated, "whom they have reason to believe have been or may be directly exposed to the disease" of smallpox. "May be" is a very vague expression, and what people "may believe" opens a tremendous field of conjecture. The advice of the Board of Health is within the limits of its lawful powers, but does not strike the public mind with its extraordinary comprehension of legislative authority.

The question of the benefits or otherwise of the vaccination practice, is one worthy the close attention of the medical faculty. We are aware that in the orthodox school of medicine it is considered a settled thing. Properly graduated doctors have been trained to view the matter in this light. They are like graduates in orthodox theology in this respect. The idea that these so-called settled theories are open to dispute, causes a satisfied smile upon their contented countenances. But the alleged "science" of medicine has been subject to so many radical changes, the experience of one age entirely upsetting the professed knowledge of previous periods, that progressive minds ought to be open to further light and be very careful not to be too tenacious as to the past.

We have received the following letter, to which we give place in this connection, and we echo the sentiment contained in its postcript. Let the debate come on!

Salt Lake City, Utah, Dec. 20, 1899.

To the Editor:

"Sir—I am more than pleased to see the stand that you have taken in regard to the vaccination question. Your position in the matter is the progressive and right one. Vaccination is a relic of barbarism, older than authentic medicine, and should be relegated to the shades of oblivion along with bleeding and salivation. The human family are already sadly afflicted with a multiplicity of diseases, and were they not held in submission to a domineering medical profession would banish the man or men who dared to add anything further to their miseries.

"Vaccination positively does not protect the persons vaccinated from smallpox, but rather lays them the more liable to disease. In vaccinating healthy human beings you have infected them with a loathsome disease intended by the Creator to afflict only the brute creation, and yet a misguided medical profession insist that the people must not only suffer with their own ills, but must take on those of the animals also.

"The average doctor is an honest individual and ordinarily works for the good of his patients, but too often he takes for granted that what his alma mater and the common authorities say is the truth and does not stop to investigate for himself the real facts in the case; if he had, the theory of vaccination would have been as dead as Caesar half a century ago.

"We are just now going through what England did some years ago, and when the doctors and the people are compelled to look up the subject and statistics for themselves, the same result will follow—vaccination will cease.

"G. W. HARVEY, M. D.

"P. S.—I should like very much to see some of our most prominent medical men who are advocates of vaccination attempt to reply to the challenge of N. Y. S. G. W. H."

A TERRIBLE BLUNDER.

A morning paper which is the local organ of the present anti-"Mormon" crusade, finds itself in a quandary on the question of the course pursued by the House of Representatives in the Roberts case. The sentiment now generally expressed by the leading papers of the country is that a grave mistake has been made and a great wrong perpetrated which, if it remains unrectified, will probably produce further dangerous evils to the country. So our contemporary, every now and again, endeavors to justify Congress and incidentally its own part in the infamous work that has been done. Here is its latest desperate effort:

"The Congress of the United States in deciding who shall sit as a member is sovereign. In its sovereign way it asked Mr. Roberts when he crossed the threshold of the august chamber a question. If he answers it one way he will be admitted without debate; if he refuses he will probably be shut out."

The only trouble with that reasoning is that it is not true. Congress is restricted and governed by the Supreme Law of the land. It has no power that is not constitutional. It is endowed with the right to judge of the qualifications of its members, but those qualifications are defined either by the Constitution itself or by laws that have been enacted in pursuance thereof. The House of Representatives has no right to require a new qualification as to membership until it has been duly enacted. That is a plain proposition, to which every person versed at all in the regulations that govern legislative bodies will assent. The action taken in the Roberts case was in violation of this simple principle and is so regarded by lawyers and leading editors.

When Mr. Roberts "crossed the threshold" he was not asked a question of any kind. That is a sheer invention. He stood there, lawfully and personally the peer of every man in the chamber. Objection was made to his being sworn in, because public opinion, which is unstable as the wind, had been aroused by preachers and politicians to such a pitch, that the majority of the members present were afraid of its probable effects if they failed to give way to it. They know now that they made a blunder. The error would be the same if they did not so regard it. The idea that either an excited populace or men who succumb to its clamor are infallible, is worthy only of the paper which expresses the sentiment. Here is what it says:

"When any man or paper says that ten to one of the members of Congress regardless of party voted for something, that is pretty nearly saying that the public sentiment of this nation was carried out."

That puts it in much milder form than it has heretofore been stated by the Tribune, but it conveys the same idea expressed by a noted anti-"Mormon" senator, who, when reminded that a certain measure he proposed was unconstitutional exclaimed: "The Constitution! Pshaw! The will of the people, that is our constitution." This is a heresy masking under the garb of truth. The will of the people of the United States is the supreme law, when it has been formulated and expressed in the manner agreed upon by the people and embodied in the National Constitution. Not until then is it anything more than opinion. It has no legal force. It should have no governing power.

Public sentiment is one thing today, a totally different thing tomorrow. It will crown a naval hero with the victor's wreath, load him with honors, furnish funds to buy him a home, and in a week or two cover him with obloquy, and denounce him for his manner of disposing of the home that was his own to do with as he pleased. It will demand with united voice a measure or a man which, in another breath, it will execrate and despise.

Whoever advocates the doctrine of fawning before a popular outburst and ignoring law and rule in obedience to a public demand of the moment, is an enemy to his country and a foe to its institutions. The adoption of such a policy would dethrone all constitutional authority and break into pieces the grand organism of this Republic. It is the false step in that direction in the Roberts case which we deplore. And that we are not alone in this, the numerous warnings that issue from the most influential portions of the American press clearly demonstrate. We have already published a number of articles of that kind, and have a great many more at hand for which we have not space at present. However, to meet the assertions of the Tribune, we will here append one or two quotations.

This is from the Baltimore Sun:

"The House had it in its power to expel Mr. Roberts in a perfectly orderly and legal manner. It has seen fit to substitute the process of lynch law. It succumbed to a sudden access of hysterical excitement. Although the regularly and lawfully elected representative of a sovereign State, duly accredited as such, and as much entitled prima facie to his seat as the Speaker himself, or any other member of Congress, the House resolves that he shall not be sworn in, and makes a mockery even of the semblance of a trial by referring his case to a tribunal already pledged to convict—every member of which had already voted for the resolution to exclude. In the vote which was taken no party lines were drawn. Republicans and Democrats tumbled over each other in their extreme eagerness to purge themselves of the slightest suspicion even of being willing to show Mr. Roberts ordinary fair play. Men prominent in public life, who were on record as having expressed themselves in published interviews within the past few weeks as in favor of a different and more orderly form of procedure, unblushingly ate their own words and voted against their own real convictions."

We take the annexed from a southern paper, the Alabama Age-Herald:

"If the case had been treated in accordance with precedents two things would have occurred that have not occurred and will not occur, namely, Roberts would have been seated because he holds a certificate of election. After he had been seated, his right to a seat might have been challenged, but so far as precedent goes the House should not say what kind of a representative a State shall send to Washington. These two things would have occurred if there had been no vote-getting, no demagoguery, in the treatment of the case.

"Utah is a State. She is also a State without representation in the House of Representatives. Polygamy is very bad; the Age-Herald has no excuse to offer for it; but the disfranchisement of a State is more dangerous than polygamy is; for if a State can be deprived of representation in one House of Congress it can be in both. If it can be deprived of representation on the ground of polygamy, it can be on any other ground. If a man can be kept out of a seat, before trial, before conviction of any sort, because he has three wives, he can be kept out because he has three toes, or is three feet high. * * *

"The entire course of the case at present is political. It is a grandstand play. It would not be serious, perhaps, were a State not disfranchised, and were it not a precedent that may be quoted in ages yet unborn in all sorts of cases when votes are to be sought, or some purpose to be served. As a precedent the refusal of a seat to Roberts is a menace to the Republic.

A FIGHTING PARSON.

The New York Evening Sun is authority for the statement that in the flourishing town of Royal Oak, a suburb of Detroit, Mich., a local minister had a rousing three-round "go" with a saloon-keeper, to settle a somewhat vexed reform question. It seems that the reverend gentleman has been waging a relentless war against the liquor-traffic of the place, and that in the course of the controversy some one had indiscreetly expressed doubts as to the physical courage of the man of the cloth, whereupon the latter challenged the liquor-dealer to an exhibition of muscular religion.

The result seems to have been a draw. The clergyman had a contusion on his face, but he had "scored a knock-down with a fierce uppercut," as the report put it. Further details of the interesting reform movement are not at hand.

It is stated, however, that the exponent of muscular "Christianity" won the admiration of a considerable number of the fair portion of his church, and that he immediately received a "call" from another church, as a token of appreciation of his novel reform methods.

This should be a valuable pointer to a number of "brethren" who but with difficulty maintain their positions as clergymen. If in addition to their regular course of theological studies, they could add a thorough course in "uppercuts," and "swings" and all the other elocutionary movements peculiar to the ring, they might have a much wider field of usefulness than they now have. Of course, this training would not belong properly to dogmatic theology, nor to exegesis, or ecclesiastical history; but it might, perhaps, be treated as a branch of "pastoral" theology, or even "higher criticism," now the usefulness of it has been demonstrated. True enough, the Master prohibited the use of the "sword even in his own behalf, but a modern minister need not hesitate at a useful reform, as long as it cannot be proved that the "fist" is the same as the "sword."

But after all, the principle is not new. There have at all times been in the world a number of professed exponents of religion, who seem to have mistaken their calling. They have gone forth as wolves among sheep, drenching themselves and the earth with blood. The Royal Oak method of reform has frequently been applied by those professing to be concerned about "Mormonism," with what result all the world knows. They have all along acted as if they were the black messengers of Baal or Moloch and not of Him, whose brilliant star shed gentle light over the midnight scene at Bethlehem.

THE NEGRO PROBLEM.

Mr. S. R. Scottron, a member of the Brooklyn school board and a leading colored citizen of that city, has issued a letter on the so-called negro problem.

He expresses doubt as to the existence of such a "problem." It was settled, he thinks, by the Constitution clothing the colored race with the full rights of freemen. The negro is a citizen, invested with the suffrage and all that remains is to adjust ourselves to the unalterable conditions. The elevation of the colored race from its previous condition is not discouraging to those who have lived long enough to comprehend the changes that have been wrought, and the remarkable advancement that has taken place since the proclamation of freedom.

Discussing the question of the colonization of the new American possessions by the colored race, Mr. Scottron takes the view that the Afro-Americans would certainly be valuable factors in the solution of that problem. The negroes, he points out, came to this country from the wilds of Africa, with no preconceived ideas of government or civilization. Their minds were blanks, as those of children, ready to receive new conceptions. In this respect they were unlike the Asiatic races, who have fixed ideas of long standing and are, therefore, not easy to instruct.

The Afro-American, moreover, knows of no home save America. He has no flag except the American flag; no land save America. The faith of the fathers is his faith. Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and Grant, are his highest conceptions of human greatness; Concord, Lexington and Bunker Hill the shrines of his patriotic pilgrimages. Christ is his only refuge in religion. The Sunday of the forefathers is his holy day, the Fourth of July his highest patriotic reverence. Christmas and Eastertide are his hours of holy reflection. The machinations, seditions and conspiracies of the socialist, communist and anarchist are his greatest aversion.

It follows that his home is wherever the American flag is unfurled and he will cheerfully give his whole self to the development of every inch of territory acquired by this government. And this is no mere surmise. Whenever his services were acquired for the defense of the flag, he has been among the foremost.

Mr. Scottron's contribution to the discussion of a great American problem presents many points worthy of attention, and all the more so, because the author writes from the point of view of one intimately interested in the matter.

THE BACON CASE.

If the statement of the comptroller of the currency, giving reasons why James H. Bacon should receive executive clemency, be correct, then it was a gross outrage to prosecute a man who, on the government's own showing now, had committed no "technical" or "moral wrong." The reasons for the pardon are a severe reflection on the federal prosecution and the court here, as stating a case of manifest judicial injustice.

But viewing the matter over the whole ground it looks more like a strong desire to relieve the accused of the consequences of a grave offense than a fair review of the decisions of the courts.

If the pardoned man can return and redeem his reputation by success in business so as to satisfy his creditors, the public will refrain from criticism of the courts and from the numerous sarcastic remarks which very naturally are now utterd, comparing the results of the commission of a huge offense and the perpetration of a small crime.

There's no soft snap about the present weather.

Spell it Puerto Rico, and pronounce it Poo-airto Ree-co.

Gen. Buller to Ladysmith—"Thou art so near, and yet so far."

The public has "called the bluff" on the vaccinate-you-whether-you-like-it-or-not-fellow.

The iron situation in the East is reported to be easier. Prices seem to be quite as hard as ever.

The panic in Wall Street is over till the money-lenders gather in the loose cash sent out to relieve the market.

It isn't exactly the man behind the gun who is winning victories nowadays; it's man and gun behind the boulder.

About all the present Congress is likely to do toward the proposed trans-isthmian water way is to present a canal bill.

Recent events in war have caused a revision of Gen. U. S. Grant's record, and it is found that in all of his battles he never lost a gun.

Milwaukee's hope of getting the national Democratic convention is based on the fact that the present weather there does not prevail in June.

Those who think a "gun play" can be made in fun frequently become a means of inflicting an almost unbearable sorrow upon the ones they love best.

Oom Paul is not a "peace-at-any-price" man, but says he is willing to make peace now on reasonable terms, and will leave it to a disinterested civilized power to decide what would be a proper arrangement.

An agricultural exchange asserts that "the asparagus bed is quite apt to be neglected at this season of the year." Yes; the feather-bed seems to display the most clinging affections on such frosty mornings.

The Berlin assertion that Germans are being hired by British agents to fight against the Boers recalls Hessians and the American Revolution. But the proof of alleged hiring is not yet conclusive.

The whereabouts of Aguinaldo is again announced from Manila. It is evident the rebel leader is somewhere in the Philippines, but that is the only certainty connected with the official attempts to locate him.

Commenting on the Georgia legislature's refusal to disfranchise the negroes, the New York Mail and Express says, "it is the unexpected that has happened." The unexpected to those so bitterly prejudiced as to think there was no good in Georgia.

The British press is becoming incandescent over the South African censorship which refuses to pass accounts of events that would give no advantage to the enemy, and are asking whether the present war with the Boers is "a private enterprise," in which the British public has no right to know what has been done, though it pays the bill.

In an attempt to make half an apology for McDaniel and half for the Herald, the Tribune speaks of the claim of one of the chief shareholders in Herald stock to half the honor, i. e., in the appointment of the manager. The whole half and half article and its reference to McDaniel in mind of the great subject of the Dawson dispute, over Pudd'nhead Wilson's motive in wanting to own "hafe a dawg."

The directors of the Great Southern railway of Argentina have formulated a scheme for the creation of a general pension fund, under which all employes who have served the company in a faithful and meritorious manner for not less than fifteen years, will at the age of 60 years be entitled to retire on a pension equal to one-third of the salary that they are then receiving. Now it will be in order for the "enterprising" railway manager to see to it that there are no employes over 59 years old on his railway.

The frequently reiterated charges of violations of rules of civilized warfare now going the rounds of newspapers, and referred to by American congressmen, may be true as to individual cases, but they are not true as to British official policy. In every war, men give way to feelings of insatiate revenge; and even Americans are no exception. But neither the British nor the American public lend their approval to instances of excesses, which are made all the more notable for condemnation because they are exceptions to the common and generally observed rule.

GEN. BULLER'S REVERSE.

Boston Transcript.

This latest reverse, with its heavy sacrifice of men, may cause in Buller's army a great loss of confidence. The blundering must be plain to hundreds of the younger officers, men who have at least studied modern military methods. These men will do all their duty, but it would not be passing strange if they thought that it today mainly consists in getting killed without having accomplished any advance. Some of them must be thinking of a British commander, now in idleness, who left nothing to chance that precaution could avert; who mingled tact with daring; who in Afghanistan was tireless in resource. That commander is Lord Roberts, in the opinion of continental Europe the foremost British soldier.

Boston Herald.

The real vital factor in the compaign is time, provided, of course, that, as time goes on, the English can prevent the Boers of Cape Colony and the natives both there and in other British possessions from rising in revolt. Assuming this latter success, each added day of campaigning sensibly weakens the resisting strength of the Boers They have every available man in the field, and decimated ranks cannot be filled up by recruits from within their own territory. All industries are paralyzed within the two republics, their governments using with no possibility of replenishment, the supplies that have been laid up in the past. There must be an end to this, and if the English adopt the policy that Gen. Grant followed when appointed to the command of our armies operating against Richmond, of simply exhausting the enemy by continuous conflicts, even though these are disproportionately costly to the aggressor, the Boers will be compelled before a great while to yield.

Denver Post.

While British hopes may not now find a grave in South Africa, as Bismarck once predicted, nevertheless the race has before it a struggle the magnitude of which is just being realized. To carry out the contract, which England must do to maintain her standing among the nations of the world, she must strain every energy and go to the very limit of her immediately available resources. She is operating in a country, hers in name, but honeycombed with disaffection. She must meet the Boers on their chosen ground and under circumstances in which they operate to the best and her troops to the least advantage. She must accomplish prodigies while her enemy may defend themselves with ordinary methods and at the least possible cost. We do not believe that England has yet heard the worst from South Africa.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The disaster is all the more keenly felt in England because Gen. Buller possessed the public confidence in a greater degree than any other officer in the service. He was believed to possess all the qualities of a great commander. He will lose prestige by his Tugela river performance. The British public believes only in the soldier who succeeds. It accepts no apologies for failure. By nothing now but a brilliant and decisive victory can he retrieve his reputation with that most relentless of critics, the British hero worshiper.

Chicago Record.

The forces thus far defeated are picked regiments of the British regular army. The determination to force the war at all costs will result in the sending of a seventh and an eighth division to reinforce the troops already in South Africa or en route. If, as is now hinted, Great Britain must go to the extent of calling upon the volunteers to enlist for foreign service, the British generals may have much less desirable material to work with. The open suggestion that the colonies be allowed to offer more regiments springs apparently from a feeling that the entire armed strength of Great Britain will be needed to continue the war without depleting dangerously the garrisons in India and at other vital points.

New York World.

Gen. Symons saved his reputation only by his gallant death. Gen. White lost his reputation in a sortie from Ladysmith. Gen. Gatacre was trapped and beaten by a greatly inferior force. Gen. Methuen was overwhelmed in a pitched battle of his own seeking, and overwhelmed, as today's news shows, by a republican army far smaller than his own. And now the general to whom Britain has looked as certain to turn the tide in her war of conquest has to confess that the generals of the republics have outgeneralled him and the soldiers of the republics have outfought his soldiers.

Springfield Republican.

It was to Buller that the British government had turned in the hope that he would speedily retrieve the disasters of the other generals. England needed a victory, but the commander-in-chief has given her the worst disaster of all. The loss of 10 modern guns to the Boers was equivalent to increasing their numbers in defensive warfare by 2,000 or 3,000 men. The retreat from the river under such circumstances, and at this time, cannot fail to excite still deeper apprehension in Great Britain, and it may make unbearable the tension which the Cape Colony Dutch have lately been feeling so keenly.

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