

THE IDAHO BILL.

Washington, April 2.—The debate on the Idaho bill today had the effect of filling the galleries with crowds of interested spectators who sat patiently through the four hours' debate, occasionally punctuating the remarks of the different speakers with hearty bursts of applause according as the latter's sentiments found a corresponding echo in their own hearts.

In the discussion this afternoon the Democrats bore off the honors. The Republicans put forward none of their first-class talent, and the affirmative side of the question was argued by such second-rate men as Dorsey, of Nebraska; Dubois, of Idaho; and Peters, of Kansas. The Democrats on the other hand were such brilliant orators as Mansur, of Missouri; Chipman, of Michigan; and Smith, of Arizona. No better evidence of the relative interest felt in the debate could be seen than in the rapid thinning out of the galleries while the republicans were speaking, and the speediness with which it filled up again when those giants of debate, Mansur and Chipman, took the floor.

Mr. Mansur spoke for an hour. He began by saying that while he had no sympathy, nor did he believe that any person on that side of the House had any sympathy, with the institution of bigamy or polygamy, yet "we find in this bill there is a mode of striking at these offenses that is in violation of all the best of our doctrines and tenets of liberty as we have universally understood and enforced them in all times past to the present time." Mr. Mansur then sketched, at some length, the injustice done to the Mormons in Idaho in the pending bill. It is stated that the reason the Mormons are to be disfranchised is because they vote the democratic ticket. Continuing, he said: "Just pass across the line, an imaginary one, as that into Wyoming territory, which you admitted as a State the other day, and while there are not so many Mormons there as in Idaho, yet they are nearly all republicans, and because of the well-understood fact that every Mormon there votes the republican ticket you let them vote, and not merely that, but you provided the other day that their wives should have the right to vote, thus giving to every Mormon and wife in Wyoming two votes, while in Idaho you deny the right to vote even to Mormon men. Let those things be understood as we go along. Let it be understood that it is not a question of principle anywhere but is in every instance a question of expediency alone for the republican party. Let it be further understood from forty-eight hours after the republicans began to think that they had carried the presidential election of 1888 the whole political world of the United States was filled with rumors of the new programme to be inaugurated by that party. One feature of the programme was the admission of the new states to strengthen the party in the Senate. It was also reported and published that there was to be a revolutionizing of the rules of par-

liamentary proceedings; that there was to be the unseating of divers members on the democratic side, and that the republicans were to fortify themselves in this Congress and pass such bills as they deemed, from their standpoint, necessary to be passed, and if new Territories were admitted as States, the republican party, being thus strengthened in the Senate, it would be many years before, under any circumstances, the legislation of this Congress could be repealed or done away with. These are the circumstances that lead us to the admission of the youngest Territories, certainly the smallest in population, and not the best equipped in financial ability to maintain statehood. "If the Mormons," Mr. Mansur said, "were black, they would be protected under the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution. But," he added impressively, "they are white and democrats, and so they are your victims."

Quoting Judge Wilson, the speaker showed that out of 5000 Mormon voters in Idaho, not more than 2½ per cent were bigamists or polygamists, and that of the total of 25,000 Mormons in the Territory, bigamists and polygamists were scarcely one-half of one per cent. Mr. Mansur next quoted Judge Carlton, of the Utah Commission; Dr. Miller, the editor of the Omaha Herald; Representative Struble, of Iowa; Bayard Taylor; Chief Justice Waite and others, to show the thrift, industry, and general morality of the Mormon people. He then proceeded to ask the questions, "Why on account of the few men who are engaged in the practice of bigamy or polygamy, whether the number be one hundred and twenty-five, as Mr. Wilson estimates in the whole Territory of Idaho, or whether it should be greater, should we insert the penalty of disfranchisement upon every male adult of that church, merely because he is a Mormon? And why should we refuse him even the poor, pitiful right of purging himself by an oath in which he shall swear that he does not thus believe? For, gentlemen, please observe that in said Section 3, which it is sought to engraft into the constitution of Idaho, there are quite a number of provisions whereby a man is declared to have the right of trial by jury and shall not suffer the penalty of disfranchisement until after his conviction, whereas offenses connected with the Mormon Church are taken outside of the list of ordinary offenses and a man cannot purge himself by his own oath that he does not believe in bigamous or polygamous practices, does not countenance them, and does not assist in their perpetration. When that is done, he cannot complain if he be deprived of his privileges if convicted. That is the universal law in all the States, and it is correct. I have been at the trouble of collecting the law from all the several States and there is not to be found in one of the States of the Union any different law than that they must be first convicted of crime before you can degrade a man, or deprive him of the inestimable rights, the right to

vote, the right to serve on a jury, the right to hold an office. In no State of the Union can such rights be taken from him without conviction for crime first being made.

I ask each and every gentleman on the other side, if you vote to strike down these men without parting you go home and the men in your district ask you how you could deprive citizens of Idaho of these privileges without a hearing, what would your answer be when you know the people universally in your own State believe in a different doctrine and decreed that it should become a part of the fundamental constitution of each and every one of your States? How, I repeat, will you answer your own people when they put that question to you?"

Mr. Mansur then referred to the recent creation in the city of Boston of the Committee of One Hundred. "The committee," he said, "has issued a pamphlet reviewing the last encyclical letter of the Pope and taking the position that according to the encyclical no man can be an obedient and loyal Catholic and at the same time be a lawful citizen of the United States. This pamphlet takes the position that the relation of Catholics towards our government is similar to that of Mormons who have taken the oath of the endowment house, and then declares 'No ballot for the man who takes his politics from the Vatican.' This is a remarkable length for such an organization to go, and it shows the extent to which some citizens are aroused over the attitude of the Catholic authorities towards the public schools."

Mr. Mansur quoted at length from the pamphlet, one of the paragraphs being as follows: "We have no hesitation in affirming that the oath of allegiance to our government taken by Romanists and by which they have obtained the rights of the ballot, of citizenship, and of office amounts to nothing if they are good Romanists and has no binding obligation where the church of the pontiff requires it to be disregarded. We do not hesitate to say, as a measure for the nation's self-protection, that no man who confesses allegiance to the pontiff should be allowed to participate as a citizen in either holding an office or casting a ballot. The United States Supreme Court has decided that the law of one of our States disfranchising Mormons is constitutional, on the theory that the man who takes the oath the Mormons are required to take cannot be a good citizen. Why should not this principle be applied to those who confess allegiance to the papal hierarchy?"

Continuing, the speaker said: "This is the address now being issued by a committee of 100 citizens of Boston. I think I can fairly say to the Catholics that if the Mormons are stricken down, if this bill is to be carried into effect in this way, thus emboldening the dominant majority, it will not be long before we shall find certain denominations and certain classes of people in this country inaugurating a crusade against the Catholic because he is a Catholic." A vote will be reached on the bill at 8 o'clock tomorrow afternoon.—Herald.