

right reverend bishops and other distinguished divines who indorsed this call, lived in Idaho, while holding such views they could neither vote, hold office, nor serve as jurors. If Rev. Mr. Somerville was a citizen of that State under this constitution he would not only be disfranchised but would be liable to prosecution for conspiracy, in that he teaches and advises that God must be recognized above the chief executive of American Governments. His audacity in presuming to place the Supreme Being above his excellency the governor of Idaho would not only be condemned but severely punished.

Under this clause of the Constitution no Roman Catholic would be entitled to vote, serve as a juror, or hold any civil office, because he is a member of an order, organization, association, corporation, or society which teaches or advises that the laws of the "State prescribing rules of civil conduct are not the supreme laws of the State." Pope Leo XIII, in his encyclical of January 10 last, in treating of the civil duties of Catholics, makes the following declaration:

But if the laws of the State are in open contradiction with the divine law, if they command anything prejudicial to the church, or are hostile to the duties imposed by religion, or violate, in the person of the supreme pontiff the authority of Jesus Christ, then, indeed, it is a duty to resist them, and a crime to obey them—a crime fraught with injury to the State itself.

The same pontiff, in a papal decree issued in 1886, declares that—

The judicial functionaries must refuse obedience to the State and to the laws of the country which are in contradiction with Roman Catholic precepts.

It will be interesting to watch events in Idaho, and see if Roman Catholics holding to these teachings of the Pope, which must be accepted as the rule of faith of all good Catholics, will be permitted to exercise the elective franchise in the new State. If they are, it will be in direct violation of the constitution.

The gentleman from Idaho, however, has been candid enough to admit that the disfranchisement clause under consideration was intended only for the members of the Mormon Church. Why, then, was it not so stated in this constitution? Why was the word "church" carefully omitted? Why was there no mention of any "religious" society or organization? The answer is plain: The object was to deceive; to cover up and accomplish by circumlocution and indirection what they deemed it impolitic to declare bluntly and directly, namely: That "all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are hereby excluded from voting and holding office in the State of Idaho." This was avoided, however, evidently for the reason that it was thought that all euphemistic presentation of an odious principle would avoid sounding the alarm to the friends of religious liberty and toleration. But this scheme, like most contrivances for fraud and deceit, turns out, to the dismay of its projectors, to be a bungling invention, and may be used to harass, oppress, and disfranchise other religious denominations besides the

Mormons, as has been plainly demonstrated in this discussion.

As to the gentlemen who composed the Idaho constitutional convention, it is probable that most of them will suffer no personal inconvenience by this or any other religious test, as it is likely that they have no use for the name of God except to supply the expletives of profanity. But it may be that some of them in that far-off mountain region still have sweet memories of the angelus bells heard in childhood; and some others may remember the words of the Westminster and catechism, and the time may come when they and their friends will be "hoist by their own petard," and compelled to drink of the poisoned chalice which they have prepared for the Mormons.

Mr. Speaker, as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the Mormon Church, has been spoken of during this discussion as a criminal organization, and its members having been frequently accused here and elsewhere of entertaining and practicing the doctrine of blood atonement, of having taken disloyal oaths against the Government while passing through the ceremonies of the endowment, and that the Church favored a union of church and state, to refute this and similar charges I present and place on record a statement recently issued by the leading authorities of that Church.

The speaker here read the "Official Declaration" signed by the First Presidency and Twelve Apostles of the Church, which was called forth in consequence of the results of the investigation before Judge Anderson.

Mr. Speaker, it has been more than intimated by gentlemen on the other side that those members of this House who have sought to eliminate the un-American and monstrous disfranchisement clause from the constitution of Idaho will feel a little mean when they come to face their constituents at home. This insinuation is not only gratuitous and unjust, but also insulting and offensive; insulting to their peers on this floor, and offensive to the good taste and good sense of all those who despise the pharisaical cant, the assumption of "I am purer and holier than thou." This is an old trick, exposed and laid bare long ago, of assuming all the virtue and all the intelligence, and on proposing extreme, unreasonable, and unconstitutional measures for alleged evils, to denounce all those who oppose them as sympathizers with crime and immorality.

Religious bigotry, like a cold snake coiled on the human heart, poisoning every noble and generous emotion, is hardly more odious than that narrow partisanship which, with brazen cheek and unctuous smile, with indecorous hilarity and heartless gusto strikes a fallen foe, in violation of the law of chivalry as well as the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, and all this for a mean and temporary partisan advantage. On the other hand, the gentlemen on this side of the House, can proudly say to their constitu-

ents: "We made a manly effort to save a proposed State of this Union from the reproach of religious persecution and intolerance; we were unwilling to punish by disfranchisement 25,000 free Americans on account of their religious belief, and their membership in a Christian church. We agree that polygamy and bigamy shall be punished with severe penalties, to the end that they may be prohibited and extirpated; but we are unwilling that 25,000 people shall be punished for offenses committed by only 125 men."

The judge who gives the prisoner the benefit of the law and the safeguards of the Constitution is sometimes, in cases of popular excitement, traduced by the mean and vulgar, as if he was *particeps criminis*, shielding his partner in guilt from merited punishment. But what shall be said of enlightened gentlemen on this floor, kind, generous, and humane in their private relations, who at the behest of party exigency are not only willing to strike down the monuments of religious freedom as guaranteed by the Constitution, but would if they could cover with obloquy all those who oppose their schemes?

To show how cruel, unjust, and unnecessary the proposed disfranchisement is, I will call to the attention of the House the progress already made in the discontinuance of the practice of polygamy among the Mormons. From official reports on file in the Department of the Interior and from the evidence before the Senate and House committees on Territories it appears that from 75 to 90 per cent of the adult Mormons are not and never have been in the polygamous relation, and of these the great mass have taken the test oath of registration required by the Edmunds-Tucker act of March 3, 1887, swearing (among other things) that they will obey the laws of the United States with reference to bigamy and polygamy and unlawful cohabitation, and that they will not aid, abet, countenance, or advise any person to commit any of the offenses named in those laws.

In June of that year the people formed a constitution prohibiting and punishing polygamy, which constitution was ratified at the next August election, at least 95 per cent. of the Mormon electors voting in its favor. Again, in 1888, the Legislative Assembly enacted a law declaring certain marriages to be unlawful, among them plural marriages, and providing severe penalties against any clerk of a probate court who shall issue a license in such cases; and also against any minister, preacher of the gospel, or other person who shall assist in the solemnization of such unlawful marriages. The same Legislature adopted a concurrent resolution in favor of the prosecution of polygamous offenses as other offenses are prosecuted in the Territory.

Such are some of the means which the Mormons of Utah have voluntarily adopted for the discontinuance of polygamy, and I do not hesitate to declare that polygamous or bigamous marriages among the Mormons in Utah and Idaho now are, and