

EDITORIALS.

COMMON SENSE VIEWS BY A GERMAN PAPER.

OCCASIONALLY, amid the profound ignorance that prevails upon "Mormon" affairs, a little intelligence is exhibited by journals that undertake to discuss them. Among the papers that appear to have looked into the subject somewhat, is the *Chicago Staats Zeitung*, a German paper of note, which has come to the conclusion that "the extirpation of polygamy will hardly progress as rapidly as has been imagined by those people who believe in the omnipotence of legislation." From some of our exchanges we learn that there is an impression abroad that the whole "Mormon" system is being "squashed" under the operations of the Edmunds law. No doubt the Republicans want to make it so appear, as they will take considerable credit during the coming campaign for what they call "efficient legislation against the Mormons."

Some of the public journals, however, blow hot and cold almost in the same breath on this question. But they find fault with the "Mormons" all the same. One day they demand "the cessation of polygamy." Next day they complain that "the Mormons are seeking to evade the legislation against them by putting away all their wives but one." There is no suiting them any way. If the "Mormons" keep their plural families as before the recent legislation, they are accused of "stubborn resistance to the law;" and if they are reported as retaining only one wife and separating from the rest, they are charged with "a wily and subtle effort to avoid the penalties of the law."

Is there anything that the "Mormons" could possibly do that would please their persecutor? Why if they were to commit suicide, by wholesale and get out of the way of their detractors, their self-destruction would be pointed out as convincing evidence of their depravity. The *Staats Zeitung* asks "what then can be done to them?"—we clip from its article as copied by the *Ogden Herald*—and puts the situation in this way:

To kill all their wives but one—is a demand hardly to be exacted from them. Just as little can it be expected that they should discard their wives and abandon them to starvation. Right, equity, and humanity require that the husbands should care, and provide for their wives after as before. At the same time they will go about to look after their welfare, visiting them from time to time to look after their condition and provide for their wants. Neither will any authority on earth prevent them from regarding these women as their wives. No more will it be possible to prevent them from bequeathing to their plural wives and their offspring whatever portions they please of their estate, as this country does not recognize the hereditary laws of Germany and France by which a testator is restrained and restricted in the free choice of his bequests.

In regard to the supposed general division of plural families in Utah, that paper makes some comments, and adds:

"In short, these 'Mormons' who have been living openly in honest plural marriage, may possibly reduce the appearance of their multifarious marital connections. But in that they will still compare most favorably with those numerous pious hypocritical 'Christians' who are keeping mistresses besides and unknown to their legal monogamic spouses. They at least (the 'Mormons') were able to acknowledge to one wife their relationship to another, which the pious moral 'Christians' will take very great and often expensive care not to do."

This is plain and undeniable truth, but it always makes angry the good "Christians" who wink at home iniquity, but are zealous to extirpate plural marriage away in Utah. Concerning the threatened punishments of the Edmunds law, the *Staats Zeitung* says:

"As they cannot be convicted of living in plural marriage, there-with all the penalties threatened by the Federal law fall to the ground. There is no reason to deprive them either of the right of election or the privilege of eligibility, and they will exercise the same

power they ever did before. And, at last, who is or was hurt by it? If the women were satisfied, several of them, only to have one husband, whose business was it anyhow?"

These are questions to which the pretended Puritans will find intelligent answers very difficult. In regard to the moral aspect of this question, we further quote the following:

"To the hackneyed objection that plural marriage tends to undermine morality, the Mormons are prepared to give an answer which settles it. This answer consists in referring to the indubitable fact that in the countries which possess Christian monogamy, prostitution has at all times been a most hideous reverse of the medal, and they (the Mormons) can well assert that prostitution does not exist with or of them."

We have never claimed any affinity between "Mormon" marriage and "Christian" social vices, as is claimed when we mention them in contrast, but with the *Staats Zeitung* we think that when the question of morality is discussed, it is only fair to give the "Mormons" the right to show up the evils that abound in monogamous nations, and contrast them with the purer moral effects that grow out of or exist in connection with the "Mormon" practice of a plurality of wives. The common-sense views expressed by the paper from which we have quoted are commended to the consideration of the American press.

ILLITERATE VOTERS.

If a statement said to be deduced from the census, and made quite recently in the National Educational Convention, be true, there are over two millions of voters in this great and glorious country who cannot write their own names, or even read the names of the men they vote for on the ballots which they cast at an election. This is a very serious thing in a government "of the people by the people and for the people," in which it is necessary that all should have an intelligent comprehension of public affairs because all are supposed to take some part in the administration thereof.

An educational qualification would thin out the voting strength of the country somewhat, unless the sex disqualification were removed from citizens. And it is a question worthy of general consideration why educated women capable of exercising the suffrage, with an understanding of political principles and public requirements, should be excluded from the polls, while ignorant men, white and colored, are permitted to the full privileges of citizenship, vast numbers of them unable to decipher the printed words on the tickets which they deposit in the ballot box.

There is a great deal of foolish talk about the lack of education in Utah. Reliable figures will show that the voting population of this Territory in their educational status are away far ahead of the general average of the country.

If there is any qualification that might be imposed on the right of suffrage it should, in our opinion, be in the direction of securing an intelligent exercise of the voting power. Two millions of totally illiterate voters is a bad showing for the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

WHERE'S THE CONNECTION?

"The Mormons of Utah have their missionaries scattered over Europe, and we hear of them in various States of the Union. This shows that the Saints think the action of Congress was only a little flurry, and will soon blow over. They will find themselves mistaken."

The foregoing is from the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*. It is similar to remarks on this subject in other papers. It reveals amazing stupidity on the part of public journalists. What has the preaching of "Mormon" missionaries to do with the action of Congress? Or to reverse the question, what has the action of Congress to do with the preaching of "Mormon" missionaries? There is no necessary connection between them. Congress has no rightful powers over religious preaching of any kind. And the "Mormons of Utah" have just as much right to send their missionaries to "Europe

and various States of the Union" as the Methodists or any other religious people have to send their missionaries to Timbuctoo, Van Diemens Land or Ocean Grove.

"The Mormons of Utah" have been sending their missionaries to various parts of the world ever since they have been established in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. And "the action of Congress" has never affected this either one way or the other. A dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to them, and they do not shrink from its duties. They are required to send "the Gospel of the kingdom," as "a witness to all nations" of the approaching change in mundane affairs, to every part of the habitable globe. They do not think it is the business of Congress to interfere with them in the discharge of this divine obligation. The action of that legislative body on any question does not affect in the least their right and their duty in this respect. And we are of the opinion that it is not exactly in the line of the *Inter-Ocean's* business to meddle with the "Mormon" propaganda any more than with the missionary system of any other religious body.

That paper might with as great propriety have drawn attention to the fact that the Methodists were holding camp meetings as usual, notwithstanding the President's veto of the river and harbor bill. There would be just about as much connection between the two actions in one case as in the other. Why is it that even influential journals lose their common sense as soon as they undertake to "pitch into the Mormons?"

TELEGRAPH RULE DECLARED VOID.

TELEGRAPH companies inform the public by a rule printed on forms supplied for dispatches, that they will not be responsible for mistakes in the transmission of messages unless each message is repeated at the cost of the sender. But there are two sides to every question and patrons have rights as well as the companies they patronize. The United States Circuit Court at Leavenworth, Kansas, has rendered a decision which sets aside the rule requiring repetition. The gist of the ruling is as follows:

"Any rule or regulation of the company which seems to relieve it from performing its duty belonging to the employment with integrity, skill and diligence, contravenes public policy as well as the law, and under it the party at fault cannot seek refuge. If it becomes necessary for the company in transmitting messages with integrity, skill and diligence to have said message repeated to secure accuracy, then the law devolves upon them that duty."

According to this, telegraph companies may be held responsible for any mistakes that occur in sending messages that they accept from the sender; which is simply justice as well as good law.

COMMISSIONER RAMSAY INTERVIEWED.

A REPORTER of the *Omaha Herald* interviewed ex-Secretary of War Ramsay, chairman of the Utah Commission, during his brief stay in that city, and this is the *Herald's* account of the conversation. It exhibits a good common-sense view of the situation:

"How do you expect, Mr. Ramsay, this will be met by the Mormons?" was asked.

"I think that they will accept the rulings of the law. If they do not they will simply make a judicial question of it and carry it up from court to court."

"You do not expect any trouble, then, any resistance at elections by force?"

"Oh, no. They are too sensible out there to attempt anything of that kind in the face of the nation. They know now what the law requires and they will not wilfully attempt to evade it."

"How will the commission prove that these men are married and how much they are married?"

"I cannot say," answered the governor, laughing, how we will get at that. They are honest; perhaps they'll confess. Now, wouldn't you confess?"

The reporter protested that he had

never been in position to realize such a situation.

"The committee has no power, has it, to investigate the records of the endowment house?"

"None at all, sir; we must simply rely on what we can ourselves discover."

"Can the delegate to congress this fall then, elected under such circumstances, be a Mormon?"

"He may be a Mormon, but not a polygamist. Why, not over ten per cent. of the Mormons are polygamists. We don't care how many Mormons vote, we cannot interfere with their religion, but they must not be polygamists if they want to vote."

"But do you expect that one of those much-married men will sacrifice his wives for his franchise?"

"Young man," answered the jolly chairman, "would you?"

The young man again bashfully protested that he really didn't know anything about it, as he hadn't even one wife yet.

"The truth is," continued Mr. Ramsay, seriously and vigorously, "The Gentiles would have run the Mormons out of Utah long ago if it had been a state worth settling. It is not much of a state. It is irrigated a little, but has no good farming districts like Nebraska and Kansas and Iowa and—Minnesota," (with a merry twinkle), "and no state can be solid without that. Its mines are its only greatness, and I fear they do more harm than good to a country."

JOSEPH SMITH, PRESIDENCY AND PLURAL MARRIAGE.

It is well known that Joseph Smith of Plano, Illinois, the leader of the sect commonly called Josephites, has endeavored and still endeavors to make it appear that the doctrine of celestial marriage, including a plurality of wives, was not taught or practised by his father, Joseph Smith the Prophet, but is an invention of Brigham Young's. Yet positive proofs have been given to him, not only that his father proclaimed the fact that God revealed to him that doctrine, but that he married wives who are still living, some of them having personally testified to him of their marriage to his father. Of these things he cannot be in ignorance, therefore his attempts to deceive his followers and others in relation to them are despicable and hypocritical, and his open union with men who consented to the shedding of his father's blood, in order to assist in bringing trouble if not destruction upon the people who show their faith in the Prophet's teachings by putting them into practice, classes him with his father's enemies, and the enemies of the truths revealed from heaven in the latter days.

We make these remarks to preface a communication on this subject from L. W. Porter, of Porterville, Morgan County, dated August 16, 1882, who in company with Elder John R. Stewart, had an interview with Isaac Sheen, which is related as follows:

"It was on the 14th day of April, 1869, that we arrived in Plano, Ills., finding that the Smith brothers had not returned, (on account of the death of Joseph's wife) from their conference held at St. Louis, Mo., we inquired for the business manager of their printing establishment and were directed to Father Sheen. Finding him at home we introduced ourselves as being from Salt Lake, and that we were seeking after truth, and as we had heard different statements as to how young Joseph received his authority to lead the Church, we would be glad to find some one that could give us a true statement of the facts. He said:

"I expect I know as much about it as any man in our church, as I was a member of the council and assisted in reorganizing the church. You see, after the church was broken up at Nauvoo, and scattered by our enemies, Brigham led a portion of the saints out to Salt Lake, and claimed to be the successor of Joseph the Martyr. But he had no authority, consequently the church was in a disorganized condition. Some four or five years after the church was broken up, old Father Marks, myself, and a few others of the old Nauvoo members, got together, and came to the conclusion that the church ought to be reorganized, and in accordance with

this view, a council was called, at which brother Marks was called to preside. After making a partial organization it was thought that young Joseph, of right should take the leadership of the reorganized church, as it was his right by lineage. A delegation was sent to Joseph, informing him of this conclusion, and invited him to attend a conference with us, so that we might ordain and set him apart to that office and calling, if he would accept. His answer was 'when the Lord wants anything of me, He will let me know as He did my father.' He did not come to our meeting at that time. We, however, through urgent requests succeeded in getting him to attend one of our meetings. After some consultation in regard to the matter, he remarked that the Lord had not made it known to him that he was to take lead of the church. On being asked if the Lord would make it manifest to that meeting that it was His will that he (Joseph) should take the Presidency if he would accept. He replied that he was willing to do the will of the Lord if he only knew what it was and would accept if it was made known. Thereupon we fasted and prayed to the Lord, that He would make it manifest, and on the third day the will of the Lord was made manifest through Father Marks, to the conference, saying 'it is my will saith the Lord that my servant Joseph, should be ordained and set apart to Preside over my church' etc etc. Bro. Joseph then stated if as Bro. Marks said, it was the will of the Lord, he was willing to comply with their wishes. After the council had borne testimony to what Bro. Marks had said Bro. Joseph came forward, and, Father Marks, assisted by two or three others ordained and set him apart to the Presidency, and he was upheld and sustained by vote of the conference.

This is the substance of the statement in regard to Joseph being called to preside, we then asked Father Sheen the following questions:

Do the authorities of your Church, believe that the Prophet Joseph Smith received the revelation on Celestial Marriage, or polygamy as it is called. His answer was, "No we do not believe it; We know he did and practised it." Why, said he, "Bro. Marks living over there, (pointing across the block) sealed one of the first women to him that he ever had sealed to him. But said he: "Joseph received the revelation, from an angel of darkness, and was deceived, and by practising it, he transgressed, and the Lord suffered him to be killed on account of his transgression."

These are the exact words used by Father Sheen, as to what they know about the Prophet Joseph, and his connection with the revelation; Emma's last testimony, their publications, and positive assertions to the contrary, notwithstanding. I have conversed with several of their traveling Elders, and they invariably acknowledge that Bro. Sheen must have known whereof he spoke, as he knew as much about such matters as any man in their church, and could be relied upon.

Now, after their publishing to the world and preaching to people as they have from the beginning of their organization as a church, that the Prophet Joseph Smith did not receive that revelation, and knowing as they did, and do know, according to Father Sheen's statement, and other incontrovertible evidence, that he did receive and practise it, I would ask, does that not show the cloven foot of hypocrisy?

Again, when they assert that the Lord suffered him to be killed on account of transgression, it is simply saying justice was only done him, (God always acting upon the principle of justice) thereby virtually consenting to the shedding of his blood.

If the Josephites, or anyone else wish to know the situation those that are in apostasy and join with the enemy, and cry transgression and swear falsely against the Saints that they might bring them into bondage and death, let them read a prayer and prophecy written by Joseph the Seer while in Liberty jail, Clay County, Missouri, March 20th, 1839; it will be found on page 383, Sec. cxxi; also a revelation given in Kirtland, Ohio, November 27th, 1832, on page 275, Revised Edition Doctrine and Covenants. In fact they can find that God has pronounced particular cursings on that class from the days of Adam until the latest generation. And further, the claims that they set up