

provides for choosing what are popularly known as the congressional electors for President by congressional districts created for that purpose. The legislation was, of course, accompanied by a new congressional apportionment and the two statutes bring the electoral vote of the State under the influence of the gerrymander."

These are the words of the President. He fears the "gerrymander" as a probable development from the Michigan method, and recommends a constitutional amendment requiring the choice of electors on a general ticket. He went so far in his message as to give a general historical synopsis of the method of electing presidents in the past. Previous to 1832 there was no uniform system. In some States the choice was made by the Legislatures, in others by districts, but more generally by the voters of the whole State upon a general ticket. The last method finally prevailed in every State in the Union except South Carolina, which did not adopt it until after the war. This method President Harrison desires to be retained by Constitutional amendment, making it a strictly national system, but limiting the territorial districts to the States as already constituted.

For several years past this question of Presidential electors has been a good deal talked about. Debating clubs, reform societies, and politicians are in general more or less inclined to the system of electing a President by direct vote of the people at large as the nearest to the spirit of pure Democracy. In fact it was this public sentiment which impelled the present Democratic-Granger legislature of Michigan to adopt the Congressional district system. So far as the district goes, the people, under that system have a direct voice in electing that President. The elector chosen may be a Democrat, a Republican, or a Farmers' Alliance man, just as the majority or plurality determines.

But the President sees in this system, a probable abuse of it, in the way of "gerrymandering." If such is likely to prevail in the election of a President, why not in the election of members of Congress? Under any system, bootlery and spoil-seekers will do everything to help themselves into power, and perhaps the Michigan method is more susceptible to crooked trading between bosses than the prevailing State general election system. A boss may be able to control a district when he cannot control a State. However the suggestions of President Harrison on this issue are worthy of consideration.

### "A PROPOSED MORMON STATE."

THE New York *Press* has a long editorial on the subject of the admission of Arizona into the Union. We give it more than passing attention, because the "Mormon" question is made a leading feature of the article, and it is headed "A Proposed Mormon State."

On the general question of the admission of Territories the *Press* is sound. It says:

"The Territorial condition is not intended to be intended to be permanent in the case of any American community and the Territory should become a State whenever it is proved that a standard exists high enough and American enough to justify a State organization."

This is correct American doctrine but, unfortunately, in its application other ideas are permitted to take a more prominent place than this theory, and party politics often interfere and overbalance the "high standard" which a Territory has reached in all really essential respects.

As to the position which Arizona has acquired, the *Press* is willing to waive the objection that might be urged as to its Mexican population, because by treaty pledge they must be "treated as American citizens." But, we are told, "the population of Arizona is about 60,000 and of them more than 12,000 are Mormons."

Well, must not they also be "treated as American citizens?" If the *Press* will take the trouble to inquire, it will find that these "Mormon" settlers in Arizona are among the very best people of the Territory. To their industry, order and general good qualities as progressive citizens is due not only the present prosperity of the prospective State, but the very conditions which render feasible and proper its admission into the Union. What is there against them? Who can tell with any degree of directness and truth? The *Press* says:

"In Arizona the polygamous sect, with its despotic hierarchy and its dark secrets and methods, is flourishing and politically formidable. With the buttress of statehood raised to protect it from federal interference, Mormonism might well abandon Utah for a new dominion in Arizona, and there bid defiance to any interference."

What a pity it is that New York editors will try to write about affairs in the far West when they know nothing about them. Their talk puts one in mind of newly arrived sprigs of English aristocracy, who expect to see swaggering cowboys with big revolvers in the streets of Gotham, and to go outside of town a little way to hunt bear and buffalo. These "dark secrets," the "despotic hierarchy," the "polygamous sect" and all the rest of

the stuff that the *Press* associates with "Mormonism," are only bugaboos to scare eastern tenderfeet with.

Ask the prominent and best "Gentile" residents of Arizona as to the "Mormon" citizens of the Territory, and the answers received will be sufficient to dissipate all the alarms that disquiet people in the East, who have no reason for terror seeing they are thousands of miles from the imaginary danger. The *Press* says further:

"The convention which recently framed a State constitution for Arizona deliberately concluded to place no obstruction in the way of these Mormons gaining control of the State. The 'test oath' applied in Idaho to Mormons exercising the franchise was rejected in Arizona."

Well, ought not that to be sufficient to show the *Press* the folly of its own fears? If the people of Arizona, in convention assembled, decided to place no obstruction in the way of the "Mormons" whom they have among them, why should a New York editor, so far away, who has no part in the matter, want to raise an obstruction?

But, Arizona would not copy the Idaho test oath? Of course not. The convention showed its good sense, and its appreciation of the "Mormon" citizens of the Territory. There is no need of it. And it is a disgrace to Idaho; as its best citizens of both parties already concede. Arizona once tried it to please certain cheap and paltry politicians, but soon found out its error and swept the anomalous provision from its statutes. The absence of the blotch upon its constitution is one of the many claims that instrument has upon the admiration of true Americans of both parties.

The *Press* quotes the objection urged by an Arizona official who, by the by, has gained the execration of both Republicans and Democrats:

"Owing to the junction of Arizona with Utah it would be easy to so colonize the Territory with Mormons by either political party (which they might be inclined to favor) as to absolutely control the affairs of the State for a long time, and it is true that they do now hold the balance of political power in Arizona."

Now, will the *Press* just think long enough to grasp these simple facts: Wyoming joins Utah on the east, as Arizona does on the south. Wyoming is close to the populated portions of Utah, Arizona is remote from them. Wyoming contains a large proportion of "Mormons" in its population. It was claimed that they held "the balance of political power" there. Wyoming would have no test oath in her constitution. She is now a State in the Union. There is no attempt to "colonize" it with "Mormons." There is no change in its affairs in that respect. Everything goes on in Wyoming, so far as the "Mormons" are