

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

### THE GRAND SECRET.

The life and prosperity of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the face of so-called wounds and troubles that would have been popularly supposed to be fatal to it, forms one of the real marvels of the latter days. One acute observer, a paper that has been none too friendly to the Saints in times past, recently devotes a long article to the subject; and, noting that a great many missionaries of the Church are being sent out, and that the remotest bounds of the earth and the distant isles of the sea are not overlooked by the zealous ambassadors of the Gospel tidings, it calmly concludes that "there is a great revival in Mormonism, and it is one of the most conspicuous religious signs of the times." The renewal of missionary activity in commented upon with many friendly words for the self-sacrificing spirit and the diligence of the Elders, and this it is which, regarded as a sample of the faith of the whole people, explains away, in large measure, the mystery that although seemingly fatally injured at several times in its career, the Church still pursues its successful way. Not every religious organization, this friendly critic observes, could have withstood in the days of its infancy the murder of its founder and leader; not every sect could have survived the loss of so forceful and indispensable a chieftain as that founder's successor, Brigham Young; not every religious body could have emerged unscathed from the wars against its power, the assaults upon its tenets, and all the enginery of villification and malice that have been the Mormons' constant portion; not every church made up of "peculiar people" and entertaining peculiar views would have escaped injury through the prosperity of those of its believers who have built up Utah—"it is not every religion that can stand up under the affluence of its adherents."

To the world all this may seem something of a miracle. To the Saints it is nothing but the fulfillment of the grand plan. Some have faltered and fallen under each of the opposing influences above enumerated. But the faithful expect and must be prepared to be tried in all things. And each new ordeal only strengthens their courage, in showing to them, as it should show those not of them, that "if the work be of man it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it."

### A NEW SECT.

A new religious movement—and if reports are true, the most peculiar of the many offshoots of the main Christian bodies, has recently been started in St. Louis. A paper published in that place gives an interesting account of the aims of its promoters as well as the means they propose to employ.

The name is the World's Missionary Association and it is formed for the

purpose of offering salvation to every soul in every land. The members preach holiness and social purity, the necessity of recognizing the influence of the Holy Ghost, healing by faith, the tithing system, the equality of the sexes as to ordination for ecclesiastical offices and the duty to preach without salary.

This last point is one which is attracting much attention. The president of the association, Mr. C. S. Hanley, says ministers should live only on what voluntary contributions they can receive. If they are hungry or need clothing, they ought to have faith enough to present the matter to the Almighty in prayer, and they shall obtain what they absolutely need. But in order to be in a position to pray with perfect confidence their needs must be reduced to a minimum. All sorts of ornaments are superfluous and cannot be the subject of prayers. What he calls "Apostolic simplicity" must be the rule in everything. Their separation from the world must include such things as intemperance, the use of tobacco, the wearing of gold, pearls and all sorts of jewelry, as well as clothes made of costly material. Church sociables, theaters, concerts, corsets, bangs, feathers, ruffles, lace, plug hats, mustaches and fancy hair dressing are especially and severely condemned.

The founder of this association was formerly a Free Methodist clergyman, but his aggressive doctrines rendered him distasteful to the church and he parted company with his associates, as General Booth had to do when the Salvation Army was inaugurated. It numbers at present only thirty members in St. Louis, but has branches in a few other places. They are fond of referring to it as the Pentecostal movement, anticipating for it world wide success.

This new religious sect is hardly sufficiently known as yet to allow of an extensive criticism of its tenets and methods. Its advocacy of faith as an all powerful principle is certainly correct as is its condemnation of the prevailing custom to handle the word of life as merchandise to be bought and sold at so much a year. The word of God in all ages sustains this position most emphatically. But the anxiety to avoid all worldly appearance even in clothing seems to be fostered by a misapprehension of the root of the evil against which their efforts are directed as well as ignorance of the proper remedy. Yet the stand taken by them in this respect will be mildly criticized when it is remembered to what almost criminal extravagance many professed Christians have allowed themselves to drift, and how they are drawing others with them in the current that has proved destructive to vast numbers. Extremes are always near; but a step separates one from the other, and the reaction which these, let us hope, honest souls have caused in earnest is as natural as a sensation of chill in a fever.

Nevertheless, it is well to remember

that asceticism is not a mark of holiness. The fact is that the Heavenly Father never prohibited His children from cultivating a taste for what is beautiful. Ornaments adorned His Temples of old and the clothes of those who officiated therein. Our Savior, Himself, wore a piece of clothing so precious that even the rude soldiers at the cross perceived that to cut it to pieces would be to spoil it. The absence of jewels and ointments and so on is spoken of by ancient prophets as a calamity to Israel, to overtake them on account of their sins, but when they were in favor with God, these things were never alluded to in depreciating terms. Clearly a people can serve God acceptably and yet bestow such care on their personal appearance as is consistent with good, moral customs.

The evil comes in when enjoyment and luxury are made the aim of life; when such things are sought after in the first place and the Kingdom of God in the second, or what is more frequent, not at all; or when people seek only their own enjoyment forgetting the poor sufferer at the door. What the world needs is not to be jostled from one extremity to another, but it needs a teacher who can point out the true path of salvation and teach it how to serve God in all things, including the right use of such things as God has provided for the use of His children and which are so abundant in the world in which we are placed.

### THE SEIGNIORAGE VETO.

The President's veto of the bill to provide for the coinage of the silver seigniorage was not much of a surprise to those who seriously thought of his attitude on the financial question; nor can it be much of a disappointment to the most ardent of those who, forgetful of his past attitude, hoped he might be prevailed upon to approve the bill as a sort of compromise with the free silver element of his party. Indeed, the chief wonder is that a measure so unimportant in its results and so inconsiderable in its benefits, should have aroused such interest and activity on the respective parts of its friends and its enemies. It was at best a half-way measure, satisfactory to neither side in the controversy, and altogether unworthy the gigantic efforts of those who have championed it, as well as the extreme pressure its foes have brought against it. Its enactment would in no sense have warranted the claim that silver's rights were at last about to be fully recognized; its defeat is not to be regarded as an evidence that the gold idea is making headway as against the white metal. The only real benefit its friends might have expected if success had crowned their labors would have been the moral effect and victory—and this would have been largely sentimental; as to any material aid to the cause of free silver or bimetalism, the bill was simply nil.

In stating his objections, the President criticizes unsparingly the language as well as the spirit of the bill. His references to the former smack much of the pleading of the advocate, because weak technicalities are digni-