

HON. B. H. ROBERTS DEFENDS HIMSELF

Full Text of His Answer as Written by His Own Hand for the New York Times, and Published by That Paper.

To Refuse a Representative a Seat Where He Has Been Legally Elected is a Proceeding Utterly Without Precedent—As to Expulsion, No Member Has Ever Been Expelled by the House for an Alleged Defect of Moral Character—Those Who are Responsible for the Present Agitation to Encompass Expulsion, Says Mr. Roberts, are Aware of the Weakness of Their Position, and are Taxing Their Ingenuity to Have the House Act Without Regard to Precedents or Legal Rights.

The Associated Press on Sunday last conveyed to the country the synopsis of an article written by Congressman B. H. Roberts for the New York Times, and published in that journal on that date. The article in question is a review and statement of facts concerning the controversy occasioned by Mr. Roberts' election and is published in full in the "News" for the information of its readers. It is as follows:

INTRODUCTORY.

Those engaged in working up a public sentiment against the representative from Utah demand of the House of Representatives either that he be not allowed to take his seat, to which it is claimed that he was legally elected, or, after being admitted, that he be expelled. That the House can do either of these two things is extremely doubtful. To refuse a representative his seat is a proceeding without precedent and without authority. To expel a member after he has been legally elected is a proceeding without precedent and without authority. As to the proposition to expel the member from Utah after seating him, while it is conceded that the House has the power to do so, it is not a proceeding without precedent and without authority. It is perfectly safe to say that it never yet has expelled a member for an alleged defect of moral character. The clause of the Constitution that grants to the House the power to expel a member is as follows: "Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member." May it expel him for disorderly conduct? Evidently for disorderly conduct of a more aggravated kind, by which the house is disturbed, in business interrupted, or its dignity is injured. Certainly not for an alleged misdemeanor which, if committed at all, was committed before the said member's election, was well known to his constituents, was charged against him during the campaign in which he was elected and punished, and was a blot on the State from which he comes. I think those who are at the bottom of the present agitation to encompass the expulsion of the member from Utah are aware of the weakness of their position. They are elected by the people of Utah, and are seeking by all the means their ingenuity can invent to induce the House of Representatives to act without regard to precedents or the legal rights involved, and to that end they have started a campaign of calumny and misrepresentation. They are seeking to induce the House of Representatives to act without regard to precedents or the legal rights involved, and to that end they have started a campaign of calumny and misrepresentation. They are seeking to induce the House of Representatives to act without regard to precedents or the legal rights involved, and to that end they have started a campaign of calumny and misrepresentation.

I. FAITH HAS NOT BEEN BROKEN.

It is falsely charged that the Mormon Church has broken faith with the government of the United States in reference to polygamy; that is, it is charged that the practice of polygamous marriages has been resumed by the Church. In the first place, it must be remembered that no compact exists between the "Mormon" Church and the government of the United States. The compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah, is the compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah.

II. NOT A CHURCH MATTER.

It is falsely charged that the "Mormon" Church has broken faith with the government of the United States in reference to polygamy; that is, it is charged that the practice of polygamous marriages has been resumed by the Church. In the first place, it must be remembered that no compact exists between the "Mormon" Church and the government of the United States. The compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah, is the compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah.



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I refrain from any effort to express the contempt one naturally feels for those who like to deceive, and bear false witness against their neighbors. A contempt increased by the recollection that for the most part this despicable agitation is a misrepresentation and supported by falsehood, is the work of men posing as ministers of the gospel of Jesus and sent out to Utah, forthwith, to convert the Mormons from the error of their ways!

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NO TEST OF AMERICAN SENTIMENT.

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NOT BRIGHAM YOUNG'S PREDICTION.

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DOES NOT REPRESENT POLYGAMY.

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SEASONABLE HINTS.

A change from warm to cold is always attended with more danger to man from a cold to a warm temperature, hence the greater mortality from lung and throat diseases at this season of the year as compared with spring. The best protection against such colds is to wear extra clothing as in good digestion.

"THE AMERICAN HOME."

It is falsely charged that the "Mormon" Church has broken faith with the government of the United States in reference to polygamy; that is, it is charged that the practice of polygamous marriages has been resumed by the Church. In the first place, it must be remembered that no compact exists between the "Mormon" Church and the government of the United States. The compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah, is the compact of the United States, which is the only compact that exists between the United States and the people of Utah.

ing of polygamous marriages, notwithstanding the Utah Constitutional prohibition of such marriages.

The only evidence adduced in support of the charge is a quotation from a magazine article written some two years ago by him in response to inquiries of a number of gentlemen in New York, who asked on what grounds the "Mormon" Church in the past had justified the doctrine of plural marriage. The question was presented in such form that it involved the consideration of whether or not the Utah Constitution was a violation of the rights of the "Mormon" Church in the past. The question is now so misrepresented as to make it appear that I am an advocate of polygamy in the sense of advocating plural marriages now, whereas every word I stand committed to support the settlement of that question as fixed by the terms of the Utah Constitution forever prohibiting plural marriages; and my article merely explained the grounds on which the "Mormon" Church in the past had justified the doctrine of plural marriage. Would the men trying to unseat the representative from Utah hold that one may not make an explanation of past conditions without offense? Are these sectarian ministers who are at the bottom of this agitation the greatest enemies to the Rev. Dr. Newman against Dr. Pratt, or their own little popgun arguments on the same subject—are they so sensitive on this matter that they can bear no explanation of this past controversy without stinging their fingers in their ears and running through the nation screaming, "The Mormons are advocating polygamy, the Mormons are threatening the American home!" It would be interesting to learn what views these gentlemen entertain on the freedom of opinion and freedom of speech. Where were they reared? In Spain or Russia, or some petty despotism of the Orient? Surely they never breathed the free air of the great Republic of America, and they down from the ninth, or the thirteenth century? Surely they do not belong to the close of the nineteenth century!

I pass by the many other falsehoods that have been uttered and to myself in this present agitation, knowing that the time is near when those who uttered them and myself will be face to face. I can then answer to the charges accusing me of being guilty of a misdemeanor in the State of Utah, I can answer to the House of Representatives—the first parliamentary body in the world—if it can consent to so far forget its dignity as to resolve itself into a police court to ascertain if one of its members is guilty of a misdemeanor alleged to have been committed in a distant State and punishable there. I could have answered to the accusation a year ago, if it is more than that length of time since the clamor about a "Mormon" representative in the House of Representatives, and I have answered them in some justice of the peace court in Utah if the complaint had been made before such a magistrate instead of before the whole American people. But to so lay the complaint did not suit the start-up of this present agitation, and as they were upon an anti-"Mormon" crusade. It could not have been made to appear by proceeding so that the "American home," enshrined as it is in the hearts of 80,000,000 of people, protected by the force of a "Christian" civilization, and shielded by American law, including the Utah Constitution, it could not have been made to appear that this American home was in danger if this man had been haled before a justice of the peace and his guilt or innocence quietly ascertained. No, they must use this case for agitation purposes, to show the great republic what danger it is really in. I pass by all this, but the misrepresentation and falsehoods on which the agitation against the congressman from Utah and the people of that State is based, and by reason of which many worthy people of this great nation, bent as they join in a hue and cry over a question, the real merits of which they know little or nothing.

The danger to the American home, in the protection of which this present agitation is involved, which is urged as its justification, does not lurk in the sun-blessed valleys of Utah, filled with farming villages, where domestic peace and happiness reign every day to greet the morn and crown the hours with quietude. The good people of New York City and other cities can find it much nearer home. In this city where I am writing—the city of Helen Gould—I and I mention that lady's name with a profound respect and admiration for her good works, her high character, and her broad-mindedness, and only regret that she has been misled in relation to conditions in Utah—but here in the city of her home within four or five miles of New York, where the struggle for tolerance of the plural marriage system, running through half a century, attended as it was with the suffering inflicted upon the "Mormon" people under special legislation and vindictive crusades; with its enforced exiles, and its banishment of those who out of an honest thought believed they were but doing God's will—all this, and much more, is not forgotten. The "Mormon" people know the views of the people of the United States on the subject of polygamy, and I again. There never was a more puerile suggestion than that the representative from Utah was elected to make such a test. It is too silly to require refutation.

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