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SALT LAKE CITY, - FEB. 27, 1906.

"PETITIONS AGAINST SMOOT."

"The case of Senator Smoot drags its slow case along and a multitude of petitions are still being received against his admission, signed by women. A distinguished American preacher, well known for his advocacy of women's suffrage, once heard a woman make a long and rambling talk in his prayer meeting; and at the end of it he simply said: 'Yet I believe in woman's suffrage.' We recall his remark when we see these petitions. It is as improper to send petitions to the Senate as it is to send them to the Supreme Court in a case brought to it for decision. The action of the Senate in this case is purely judicial, not legislative. They are to decide on the law and constitution, whether he is properly a member, and no urgency by any one should have the least influence on a Senator. What we think, or what any other man or woman thinks, as to Mr. Smoot's right to a seat, should have no effect with a Senator. He must judge the constitutional matter himself, according to his best judgment, and should not in the least consider an acre of petitions from his State."

The foregoing is an editorial that appeared in the New York Independent on February 22. We need scarcely inform our readers that it is a standard religious magazine, which has a wide circulation, and is, as its name denotes, independent on all subjects on which it treats. The position which it takes in regard to petitions and their effect upon a legislative body, will be endorsed as rational and sound by all unbiased readers.

We have explained the situation many times, showing that the attempt of sectarian ministers to dictate to the Senate of the United States what that body shall do in reference to admitting or rejecting a member duly elected, is the height of impudence and an endeavor on the part of church people to dominate in state affairs.

The ladies who have been induced to sign the petitions have permitted their names to be used for something about which they know next to nothing. Not one in a thousand of the case before the Committee on privileges and elections, and the petition they have signed contains a number of untruths which the official record of the investigation plainly exposes.

The people who have formulated and subscribed to the petition for Senator Smoot's expulsion do not perceive that their course is premature, and in the nature of requesting judgment upon an accused person before the investigation into the charges against him has terminated. The independent rightly compares that piece of impertinence to an effort to prevail upon the Supreme Court to pass judgment while a case before it is pending, in order to force an adverse decision.

But the ministers of the different sects, who are the prime movers in that improper proceeding, do not appear in as bad a light as that which surrounds Senator Fred T. Dubois, one of the committee sitting as judges in the case, who has repeatedly given public utterance to his decision while the case was in progress, attacking Senator Smoot and the Church to which he belongs, and holding both up before the country for reprobation. By this course he has helped to evoke the prejudice and ill-feeling among religious people which have led to the framing and signing of the petitions that have been forwarded to Washington. That such a proceeding has not aroused the press of the country to just indignation would be marvelous, were it not for the fact that his animus and prejudice have been directed against an unpopular people, who themselves have been condemned without a fair hearing.

We wish once more to remind our contemporaries throughout the country, and people who have rashly made up their minds on a matter that rests with the Senate to decide, that the investigation is not yet concluded. It is still pending. Senator Smoot's side of the questions recently brought before the committee has not yet been heard. The leaping and vaulting at conclusions which disgrace many so-called religious publications cannot be considered decent, just or Christian.

If the Bible precept is correct that, "He that judgeth a matter before he heareth it is not wise," surely the preachers and people who have condemned Senator Smoot and his cause, and petitioned the United States Senate to pronounce judgment adversely upon him before any report has been made by the tribunal to which it has been referred, and even before all the testimony has been presented, cannot claim a very high place in public estimation for wisdom, fairness or consistency.

OLD AND IDLE TALES.

A Chicago Sunday paper imagines it has brought forth something "new under the sun" by resurrecting the old, exploded and half-forgotten canard about the Book of Mormon having originated in the miserable "Manuscript Found," written by Solomon Spaulding. More than half a century ago it did some service in sectarian pulpits, as an excuse for the failure of the preachers to find any rational account of the origin of the Book of

Mormon other than that given by its translator.

The Chicago paper echoes the common mistake of calling that book "the Mormon Bible." Everybody acquainted with the facts in the case knows that the "Mormons" do not call it a "Bible," but that they accept and use as a written standard, placed by them first on their list of scripture authorities, that version of the Bible commonly known as the King James' translation. They have no other Bible as a work of reference.

The Chicago paper conveys the idea that the Latter-day Saints or "Mormons" are merely a "body of poor, ignorant converts, annually brought over from the mining districts of England and Wales and from the peasantry of Scandinavia." The writer ignores the fact that the first converts to the doctrines of this Church, which was founded and built up in the United States, were chiefly descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers and other early colonists of this continent, and that even the people who have immigrated from European countries are by no means of the class he describes, but many of them are able to defend their faith in controversy with the most expert of the trained theologians of the different sects. How well his (who of an old libel and falsehood about the masses of the "Mormons") is maintained in other parts of his article, may be seen from such remarks as this:

"And yet the humble and every detail of it have been defended and supported by a mass of apologetics from the pens of really learned Latter-day Saints that not all the great biblical exegetes can surpass."

The article contains some quotations from "Mormon" works, which careful readers will not doubt give attention to, and which will have great weight upon inquiring minds. In that respect it is to be commended. But mingled with or appended to those citations, are the concoctions of anti-"Mormon" newspapers, which are entirely unreliable and positively untrue. We do not care to go into the bygone and disproved stories about Joseph Smith's parents and his boyhood's days, that really have nothing to do with the truth or falsity of his prophetic claims and mission, nor with the illustrations which accompany the article. We now merely touch upon it at the request of some subscribers to the Deseret News, who, while taking no stock in the nonsense spread out by our Chicago contemporary, think we ought to say something by way of reply.

We remind our readers, however, that all such ancient tales have been repeatedly refuted in "Mormon" works and in this paper, and our friends at a distance should not expect us to fill valuable space with repetitions of such stories or with arguments by way of reply.

DEVIL WORSHIP.

To most people, the assertion that devil-worship actually is practiced in our enlightened age, in the very centers of so-called Christian civilization, no doubt appears incredible, but Vance Thompson, in an article in Everybody's Magazine, says the evil powers are honored in scores of temples under different names. The writer says he knows a little "temple" in Bruges where the followers of Lucifer gather, and not far from the Pantheon in Paris there is an altar to Pandemon. He does not describe in detail the ceremonies he has witnessed in the devil chapel, but he says:

"A couple of years ago I visited one of the 'chapels,' it was in the rue Rochechouart. The Black Mass, which I have no desire to describe, was celebrated. It was Friday at three o'clock. Over the altar was a winged figure of Lucifer, amid flames he trampled under foot a crucifix—symbol of the church. A few days ago I found the chapel closed. Only after patient research did I find the new abode of the Satanists. Their chapel now is in a great apartment house, at No. 22 rue de Valenciennes, within the shadow of the cathedral or the Sacred Heart on Montmartre. As of old, Satan is worshipped; every Friday the Luciferians gather. I could name many of them—men not unknown in the learned professions. Some of them have influence enough to secure now and then a right of midnight entry to the catacombs; there amid skulls and bones, with orgies I do not care to describe, they have worshiped the spirit of evil—calling upon Baphomet, upon Lucifer and Beelzebub and Asherath and Moloch, with cries and wailing hysteria. This attempt to re-establish the worship of the Fallen Archangel is, I think, the most remarkable manifestation of modern occultism."

It is. But it is the perfectly logical sequence of the rejection of the authority of the God of heaven. Man must worship. It is his nature to do so. Even during the reign of terror, when religion was to be relegated to the past and "reason" was to reign supreme, men bowed in adoration before a frail woman. It is therefore not surprising to learn that the tendency of those who reject God is toward the worship of the devil.

There is a strange people inhabiting a corner of Kurdistan of which it is said that their religion is devil worship. They are known as "Yezidis," a word said to mean worshipers. Though they are devoted to the prince of darkness, they are not said to be wicked. On the contrary, their reputation is much better than that of the Kurds.

Travelers say that they do not worship the evil one because they love and admire him, but because they think that some day, he may again be restored to favor, and in that case they know he will befriend them. According to a description written in the 17th century, they argue thus:

"It is not our duty to rail, as the Turks and Christians do, against the devil, although he is exceedingly disobedient and rebellious against God, no more than it is our duty to curse any minister of the court who has fallen out of his prince's favor. Nay, on the contrary, we feel rather obliged to pray to him, because he may, perhaps, some day return to the favor of his prince."

According to this narrative the Yezidis never even pronounce the name of the fallen angel. They refer to him as, "he that you wet of," or, "he who is cursed by the foolish and ignorant."

The tribe has not fared well under the protection of the devil. It was, at one time large and powerful. Today

it is dwindled to about 50,000. It is believed that these strange people are a remnant of the ancient Assyrians, who have kept themselves free from inter-mixture with other nations. They worship the sun, too, and they seem to be impervious to missionary efforts.

Devil-worship may be expected to linger in the dark corners of the earth, where remnants from ancient ages still are concealed. For the evil powers were generally feared and revered throughout ancient paganism. But the re-appearance of that form of devotion in the centers of civilization is startling. The fact does not speak well for the soundness of that civilization.

SPEAKING OF CHINA.

It is quite possible that Wong Fong, the fellow who predicted a massacre of foreigners in China in the near future, is an alarmist, whose warning to Americans to leave China was merely intended as a sensation. But, it may be just as well to remember that the Boxer rising a few years ago came after certain predictions which were generally unheeded.

Wu Ting Fang, the former ambassador in Washington, says there is no danger of an anti-foreign demonstration, any further than the boycott on foreign goods. Chan Chee, one of the visiting Chinese delegates, expresses the same opinion. He ridicules the story of an impending "anti-foreign outbreak." The reform associations, he says, are without the means or power to conduct an uprising; and "if such a thing were brewing the government would have discovered it long ago, and put the conspirators under arrest."

It must be remembered, though, that both Wu Ting Fang and Chan Chee are diplomats, and it would be their business to deny the stories of hostility to foreigners, even if they were true. The attitude of the Chinese government is of more importance as indicating possible future events, than the protestations of diplomats. When the mob at Changpu destroyed the mission there, and made an attack upon the foreigners the government rushed troops to the spot, twelve of the rioters were killed, and order was restored. The Viceroy of Poochow has since been ordered to head the leader of the mob. There would seem to be no cause for doubting the good will and good faith of the Chinese government when it uses its well-disciplined modern army with such vigor to put down demonstrations against the foreign element.

But if it is true that the rising is President Roosevelt now is said to be suspicious of the good faith of the Chinese government. If this is true the Chinese situation must be critical indeed. Attention is called to the fact that the condition appears to be parallel to that which existed prior to the outbreak 1900, with this single and important difference, that the present unrest is not confined to two provinces in the north but prevails all over the empire. For that reason, the warning to the missionaries, to abandon the interior stations is timely, especially as the attacks upon the missions continue.

The darker view of the situation is taken by a traveler who has paid a long visit to China. He says an uprising is impending, that will affect the entire empire. The giant nation, he says, is awakening, and the very thought of this is turning things over, and millions of Chinese minds are busy with pictures of the future.

A Chinese uprising will have to be sat down upon.

Perhaps Mr. Minner sympathizes with the late Mr. Yerkes now.

General Grosvenor predicted his own defeat, but did he really figure on it?

Dr. Minor Morris hasn't got his public apology yet. Perhaps he didn't enclose a stamp.

The President has become suspicious of China's good faith. He must have been reading Bret Harte.

A tariff war between the United States and Germany has been averted. May it not be reverted?

"Mrs. Jack Gardner may consider Bourke Cochran a work of art," says the N. Y. Mail. No, for art is long and Bourke is short.

"They also serve who only stand and wait" is the peculiar predicament of those process-servers who are unable to find John D. Rockefeller.

John F. Wallace says that Panama canal accounts are first paid and then audited. Is not this locking the stable after the horse is gone?

Castro, it is said, has declared that he will drive all the foreigners out of Venezuela. Has he never read of Mrs. Partington's trying to sop up the Atlantic?

"That which I greatly feared has come upon me. Thomas has been re-nominated for postmaster in spite of all I have said and done."—A morning miser.

"The air is so pure in the polar regions, so free from harmful microbes, that throat and lung diseases are unknown there. That section is also entirely free from contagious maladies," says an exchange. It is also almost free from people.

"That there is a strong determination on the part of the Japanese to increase their stature is beyond question. By returning to the use of chairs, which were common a few hundred years ago, and even by reverting to the old custom of sitting with the legs crossed in front, the Japanese are consciously making every possible effort in that direction," says Sadazuchi Uchida, Japanese consul at New York. Why not use the Procrustean bed as well as chairs?

Germany is very conciliatory towards France, and is willing to make further concessions on the Moroccan question, provided the latter will yield some-

thing. But the emperor, replying to the congratulations extended by Prince Albrecht on behalf of the army and navy at the opening of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his marriage, said: "May God grant that war may not come, but should the cloud descend I am firmly convinced that the army will acquit itself as it did so nobly thirty-five years ago."

THE SPITTING HABIT.

Medical News.

In spite of the rather spasmodic enforcement of anti-spitting regulations, there are some valuable results of the agitation. Many spittores have been put to use themselves as others see them and have reformed to a certain extent. The promiscuous spitting that used to be common in cars and in public places is certainly lessened and the improvement is still progressing. A Rochester (N. Y.) paper says that the educational effect of the agitation has been marked in that vicinity. The work of the enactment, so far as they have been made, has been really educative, the few instances of their enforcement serving mostly to point a moral. There is a certain class of mankind to whom only penalties will appeal, but for the great mass of approximately decent people the agitation of the subject is constantly being more and more effective. The bad habit of spitting in public places bids fair to be before long a thing of the past.

MIND CONTROLS MATTER.

Harper's Weekly.

The physical effects of mental causes have had striking illustration within the last six months in the cases of several of our fellow townsmen. The heads of the chief insurance companies which were investigated went successively to bed as though they had been poisoned with a slow poison. Mr. Hyde is still young, and the vigor of youth brought him through all distresses without any obvious impairment of vitality, but it went hard with the older men. Mr. Alexander broke down completely under the strain, and his fellow presidents both in turn took sick, though they have since got better. So it has been with Justice Duell, who has been down before the exposure of the "Town Topics" trial as though he had been struck with a club. The thing line is not considered a healthy place, but it is plenty enough healthier to be there than to be the target.

THE PROBLEM OF THE UNFIT.

Brooklyn Eagle.

England is following our example in respect of narrowing her gates to the immigrant. She has deported several undesirable strangers who have sought to take residence in London—for in England, as here, the weak, the sickly, the criminal and the pauperized refuse to budge from the cities—and we may be sure that the new law, which forbids the importation of these unpleasant persons, will be enforced with a promptness and impartiality such as we, under a vote-carrying government, know nothing about.

JUST FOR FUN.

"Talking about nitrate kings, I know one. 'Who is he?' 'The cabman.'"

Baltimore American.

Our Curate (who is going to describe to us his little holiday in lovely Lucerne)—"My dear friends, will not call me 'Ladies and Gentlemen,' since I know you too well."—Punch.

Little Boy—"My mamma has so much money that she can buy everything she wants to." Little Girl—"That's nothing. My mamma is so rich she can buy all the things she doesn't want."—Puck.

Irate Wife—"I want to know, sir, what time it was when you got home last night?" Husband (meekly)—"A quarter of twelve, my dear." Irate Wife—"Twelve, nothing. The clock had just struck three, and—Husband (triumphantly)—"Well, ain't that a quarter of twelve?"—Judge.

"Good morning," he said to the rental agent, "you and me and my little places in the suburbs, where a man will have ground space enough to have a little garden and a chicken-yard?" "Yes, indeed," said the agent. "I have much struck three, and—Husband (triumphantly)—"Well, ain't that a quarter of twelve?"—Judge.

Inherited.

"Papa," said Willie, looking up from his book, "what is a linear foot?" "Why—er—a linear foot," stammered his father, "why—er—it's one that's hereditary of course. Didn't you ever hear tell of a linear descendant?"—Catholic Standard and Times.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

"Justice for the Russian Jew" is the title of a little book just published, containing a series of prominent men delivered at a mass meeting in Washington recently, which was called to protest against the murders of the Jews in Russia. The book deserves a wide circulation.—J. S. Ogilvie Pub. Co., New York.

The following is part of the interesting contents of Recreation for March: "Field Sports in the Army," Robert N. Reeves; "Photographing Marie Dore," Charles Turpin; "From the Delaware to Alaska," Waverly Keeling; "The Expert Trap Shot," Ralph Trimble; "Down the Saskatchewan," P. F. Wood; "The Visitor," verses, Stacey E. Baker; "The Idol of the Tireless Bike," Dr. C. E. Cummings; "Tribby," W. H. Martyn; "Hiking over the Mountains," James H. Sawyer; "The Ruffed Grouse and its Ways," L. B. Cooper; "The Mystery of the Blue Goose," Dan Beard; and "A Pipe Dream," verses, Myrtle Conger.—West Twenty-fourth Street, New York.

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- | | |
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