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Charles W. Penrose - - - - -Editor.
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"LIKE THE WORLD."

The influences that are at work to break down the distinction between the Latter-day Saints and "the world," that is, the opposite of "the kingdom of heaven," are potent and insidious. They are at times open and hostile, aggressive and boastful. They are then less dangerous than when they are under a friendly guise. They are recognized by all as arrayed against the system which stands for principles revealed from on high. It is when they move with noiseless march and work along pleasant lines, that they are likely to effect their purpose among the inexperienced and weak. A very timely signed editorial appears in the Improvement Era for August, by President Joseph F. Smith, which goes to the root of this matter, and we copy it here in its entirety for the benefit of the readers of the Deseret News and particularly for the consideration of our young people:

"There are a thousand influences at work among the young Latter-day Saints, urging them to be like the people of the world. It has been a characteristic of the Saints that they were unlike the world, having been brought out of Babylon, to serve God in his appointed way. As people mingle with us, it is natural that each side is influenced by the other; as far as right is concerned, it is well that we learn by contact, but aside from this, there are many things which we would better never adopt, but rather use our strength to impress our superior view upon the lives of our friends.

"One of the evils that residents of the cities are falling into is what may be called the tenement house life. Under this system every convenience is furnished to the renter—heat, light, cooking, and comforts of all classes. Young people start life in this fashion, and dislike changing for a place of their own, or else get into such extravagant habits that they are unable to save enough means to ever obtain one. Their whole time is given to themselves, and their social pleasures, instead of being partly given to the building of a home. In order to continue in this line, there must be no children, for they are a menace to tenement life, society and pleasure. So one evil brings on another greatly worse than the first.

"Another evil that residents of large cities are almost compelled to fall into is the living in rented houses. In eastern cities there are miles of beautiful residences owned by landlords, and tenanted by people who perhaps have never known what it is to own a building of their own. That same condition is obtaining in our Utah cities to a greater or less extent, and it is rapidly becoming the rule in some of them. All this is detrimental to the best interests of home life. It was early the rule among the Latter-day Saints to have the lands so divided that every family could have a spot of ground which could be called theirs; and it has been the proud boast of this people that among them were more home owners than among any other people of like numbers. This condition has a good tendency, and whatever men said of us, the home among this people was a first consideration. It is this love of home that has made the Saints famous as colonizers, builders of settlements, and redeemers of the deserts. But in the cities there appears now to be coming into vogue the idea that renting is the thing. Of course, it may be necessary as a temporary makeshift, but no young couple should ever settle down with the idea that such a condition, as far as they are concerned, shall be permanent. Every young man should have an ambition to possess his own home. It is better for him, for his family, for society, for the state, and for the Church. Nothing so engenders stability, strength, power, patriotism, fidelity to country and to God, as the owning of a home—a spot of earth that you and your children can call yours. And besides, there are so many tender virtues that grow with such ownership that the government of a family is made doubly easy thereby.

"Let us continue, as a people, to be unlike the world in this regard. I hope the Saints will ever be a home-owning people, and never become roamers, roomers and renters. We should use more follow the prevailing notions in this than in some other things. The people of Zion have a higher destiny than being led by the nose, as it were, by the prevailing whims. We do not propose being led by evil tendencies, but rather glory in being leaders ourselves in all that makes for the welfare and happiness of the home, the advancement of the Church, the prosperity of the state.

"The Church as a church can not tie itself to the policies of alleged friends who demand that it be like the churches of the world—it has a mission of its own, and is governed by the inspiration of God to His servants, not by political schemers, alleged friends, and popular sentiment.

"The individual members of the

Church have their free agency, but should not be governed by the prevailing fashions and fads—least of all by the fatal fallacy: no family and no home. Such a course means disruption and death to the best institutions with which a man may identify himself—the home and the church; and with these with their influences and teachings gone, the state is in danger of destruction from moral degeneration."

JOSEPH F. SMITH.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

No office within the gift of the people of the United States is really unimportant. All are designed to serve some important purpose in the body politic, as the various members of the human organism. And this is especially true of the vice presidency. The tendency to belittle it originates in thoughtlessness. The original idea of our government was, that the man receiving the largest number of votes in the electoral college, provided he secured a majority, should be president and the man receiving the next highest number should be vice president. So the vice presidency might be the reward of the defeated presidential candidate, as it was in 1796 when Adams was elected President and Jefferson, his great opponent, vice president. In most instances the vice presidency has been awarded to a minority faction. The importance, however, of having a vice president who, if the emergency arises, is sure to carry out the policy of the dominant party, is fully recognized.

Of the men elected to the vice presidency, eight have served as presidents, three by election, and five by the death of the president. The three who secured the chief magistracy by election belonged to the earlier history of the republic. Of the others, Tyler succeeded Harrison in 1841, Fillmore took Taylor's place nine years later, Johnson was Lincoln's successor in 1865, Arthur followed Garfield in 1881 and Roosevelt was elevated by McKinley's death in 1901.

THE JULY WEATHER.

In the latter part of June W. W. March, "the Winton Place prophet," predicted eccentric weather for the month of July. He said there would be heavy heat, storms, cyclones, and severe rainfall, causing damage in many places. He said in particular that damaging storms and hurricane winds would sweep the entire Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida. Heat waves would be followed by hurricane winds and damaging storms, rain and lightning, covering the greater portion of the east, over the eastern and New England States. They would be severe at Washington, D. C., New York, Boston, Baltimore, Md., and cover a greater portion of Maryland, New York, Maine and Connecticut.

In view of these forecasts it is not without interest to read this weather complaint in the New York Mail:

"If some Titan had opened a great gap in the Appalachian barrier, the phenomenal freakishness of the weather in the northern Atlantic States this summer might be more readily understood. The 'western invasion' of 1904 is a meteorological one. We read of a waterspout in the Hudson; of deaths by lightning almost daily; of thunderstorms so severe and winds so high that the victims are tempted to believe that the worst of tornadoes was never half so bad. Past good conduct will not serve to excuse the winds and clouds for this misconduct. Sun spots are not so numerous as to be a justification, and there has been no earthquake or volcanic convulsion to explain the wild western way in which the elements have been treating us. If our climate is changing, and some scientists so contend, so much the worse for us. We want no waterspouts or funnel-shaped 'twisters' in this neighborhood."

The weather prophets miss the mark so often that you cannot help noticing when they hit a reasonable distance from the bull's-eye.

SUICIDE STATISTICS.

The New York Evening Sun in a recent number presented some statistics of suicides in that great city, and proved that the tendency to self-destruction is growing yearly. The first quarter of the current year, no less than 208 persons met death at their own hands. It is estimated that the number of suicides during the first six months of the year was over 450, while 264 unfortunates made unsuccessful attempts to take their own lives. It is reckoned that this year's total of suicides will be in excess of 900, as against 806 last year, 772 in 1902, 678 in 1901 and 743 in 1900.

This increase is not accounted for entirely by the increase of the population. For the statistics show that the actual ratio of suicides to population is rising also. Thus this year 224 out of 1,000,000 put an end to themselves. The preceding annual percentages have been 215, 187, 206 and 195. This, as the Sun remarks, denotes plainly an increase in tendency as well as in number.

About 75 per cent of the total of unfortunates are said to be of foreign extraction, which would perhaps prove that a great number of those who come to these shores, in the hope of bettering their circumstances, find themselves unable to cope with the new conditions that surround them, and end their earthly existence in despair. Were they in a position to go out into the country, build homes, no matter how humble, and feel that they were not lost in the maelstrom of human competition, they would probably not take their own lives.

When the time comes that those who are strong feel willing to help the weak in carrying their burdens; when the question no longer is asked: "Am I my brother's keeper?" philanthropy will find a way to relieve our overcrowded cities of the many that are struggling for existence against fearful odds. Man, without prospects in this life, and without faith in the next, naturally turns to the grave, in the hope of obtaining oblivion. Those are the causes that lead to self-destruction. If they are removed, suicides will be few.

BELIEVES IN "WITCHCRAFT."

Professor Stetson of Kalamazoo College is said to believe in sorcery. If correctly quoted, he thinks that "many persons are ruled by person-

ties other than their own," and that "it is impossible for these victims to disenthrall themselves. They grow away from their own selves by sheer force of sinister and occult influences over which they have no control. This kind of witchcraft has reached dangerous proportions, and it is one of the most important problems with which science has to deal today. These 'possessions' of demons will never cease until mankind comes to perfect conditions."

In older times it was generally believed that human beings sometimes came under the control of strong influences other than human. According to Plutarch, there are wicked and malignant demons, who envy good men, and endeavor to hinder them in the pursuit of virtue, lest men should be partakers of greater happiness than they enjoy. Josephus explained that demons are "the spirits of the wicked, that enter into men and kill them, unless they can obtain some help against them." In the New Testament the reality of "demoniacs" is very clearly set forth. The demons are "cast out." They are spoken to, as persons; they are said to have knowledge; fear, desires, etc.

During the middle ages, superstition ran riot and many natural phenomena were ascribed to supernatural beings, and to witchcraft and sorcery. If an animal died, witchcraft was suspected. If a child was sick, it was "bewitched." Almost any kind of misfortune was by the superstitious ascribed to the sorcery of an enemy, or a malignant person. The consequence was the numerous imprisonments, tortures, and burnings at the stake that make portions of the history of the middle ages read like lurid descriptions of hell. The reality of such demoniacal influences was established by judicial investigations in every country in Europe, but in spite of this, public opinion finally demanded a step to the prosecutions.

Since then, the idea that the visible world is all there is, has taken strong hold of the public. The credulity of superstition was followed by the credulity of unbelief. The world likes to wobble between extremes. The Kalamazoo professor will be criticized for his belief in unseen influences, but it is time to return to the rational and biblical philosophy, that the contest of man for eternal progress toward perfection is not only with "flesh and blood," but with "principalities" and "powers," and the "rulers of the darkness of this world," and that the conflict is of such a nature that unless it is waged in the power of truth, it will be lost.

No more lurid tales from the Red Sea.

The Russian Army always falls back, never forward.

What a world of trouble the labor world is having!

"The army never retreats; it retreats"—Kuropatkin.

Kuropatkin no longer "regrets to report," he just retreats.

The San Francisco flower ring is dead, Lay flowers on its grave.

Panama is loaning money on New York real estate. Fortunate little Panama.

Imagine, if thou canst, Tennyson writing a poem on "Once there was a man."

There are many strong candidates in the field; not one so strong as Samson was.

Kuroki has got Kuropatkin "going," and will probably "finish" him in another round.

The volunteer fleet has withdrawn from the Red sea. It was getting too hot for it there.

What of the short weight and short measure fiends? Have all complied with the law and are none backsliding?

The Czar has been receiving some alarming news. When did he receive any other kind since the war began?

"Should we mourn for Plevne?" asks the Springfield Republican. If our contemporary is so minded no one will interpose any objection.

"Is baseball unfit for the young person?" asks a Boston exchange. It depends entirely upon what the young person is to be fitted for.

Mr. Bryan has sent word to Judge Parker that he is for the ticket. Still is well to beware the Greeks when the come bearing gifts.

Hon. Oscar S. Straus is for President Roosevelt. Once upon a time he was for Mr. Cleveland. Straus tells which way the wind blows, say some.

Mont Cenis has just been crossed by an automobile. If Hannibal had only waited until now how much easier might have been his task of crossing the Alps.

The Russians have deserted and blown up one of their gunboats. Were they getting impatient at the slowness of the Japanese in annihilating their navy?

The international secretary of the butchers' organization says the meat trust has been broken. That may be, but what the public want is that the meat trust shall be "busted wide open."

Senator Fairbanks had a good deal more of a spread when he was notified of his nomination than President Roosevelt did when he was notified. But then he had heard inklings of it and was somewhat prepared, while the Colonel was taken by surprise.

SPEAKING OF VON PLEVNE.

Boston Herald.

On general principles it can be said that the assassination of a ruler or a high public officer is an act for which justification can rarely, if ever, be found. But if justification for this class of murder is possible, it seems to us that it would be found in Russia,

where it is impossible in any other way to satisfy the human cravings for just retribution. The murderers of American Presidents, Booth, Galtzoff and Czolgosz, were each of them unquestionably insane, if for no other reason because of the employment by them of means which would have not the least effect in the attainment of their ends. In the long run the great mass of American people determine the policy of this nation, and it is hopeless for an assassin to undertake the work either by killing this majority, or changing by the murder of any one man a policy which must ultimately be determined by this majority. In Russia, however, the case is different.

New York Globe.

The present assassination, following so close upon that of the governor of Finland and the deputy governor of Trans-Caucasia, lets another plumb into the state of Russia. The imagination, despite the censorship which rigidly keeps this majority access to ordinary means of information, has no difficulty in picturing what are in its depths. Russia, gravely menaced from without, and even more gravely menaced from within, seems on the threshold of a crisis. In the custody of a weak czar the autocracy is not only oppressive—which autocracies often have been and have yet survived—but, what is more fatal, has become ineffective.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The recent murder of the governor of Finland—which may or may not have had connection with the plot against the life of Von Plevne—did not relax the purpose to completely Russinize Finland by violating the solemn agreements made when it became part of the Russian empire. The removal of the reactionary minister of the interior by the bomb of the assassin may work some change in the fortunes of Russia, but the immediate effect will hardly be in the direction of liberalizing its domestic policy.

Los Angeles Express.

The last two years of Von Plevne's political life were marked by intense rivalry between the Minister of the Interior and M. Witte, former Minister of Finance and now president of the Committee of Ministers. The desperate efforts made to destroy or at least diminish Von Plevne's standing in the Cabinet have been notably unsuccessful. On the contrary, he steadily increased his power and extended his influence until he reached a position from which death alone was able to remove him.

Cincinnati Enquirer.

While the civilized world will unite in condemning the crime, it can hardly fail to see the handwriting on the wall. The day for such a system of government as exists in Russia has gone by. Today she is like a quiet ship tossed on a stormy sea with no one at the helm. If M. Witte, who is a strong man with liberal ideas, again comes to power, he may right the ship and bring her to port, and then, with peace within her borders, Russia may enter on a new era with a representative government as its goal.

New York World.

Neither the bomb nor the bullet of the Nihilist can blaze a pathway for Russian liberty. The experiment has often been made, and has never failed to result disastrously. A popular revolution might possibly accomplish something for human freedom, but it is certain nothing can be gained by murdering individuals. The assassination of Alexander II prevented the promulgation of a Russian constitution and set back the clock of Russian political progress a century. Each subsequent attempt to achieve freedom by means of the bomb has spelled a further reaction. One Tolstol is worth more to the cause of Russian liberty than all the Nihilists that ever plotted against human life. One letter from his pen carries more liberalizing power than all the bombs and bullets that the Nihilistic propaganda can command. The murder of the Minister of the Interior is only another act of stupendous folly in an infamous program.

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