

EDITORIALS.

RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE AND THE CIVIL LAW.

SOME comments of the DESERET NEWS on that part of President Arthur's message relating to Utah, have been telegraphed east and west, and have been produced in many papers, with remarks calculated to mislead the public as to their true meaning. Given without the context and interpreted or construed according to the desire of the dispatcher or editor adding the comments, the paragraph from this paper has done service for those who wish to convey the impression that the "Mormons" are defiant and ready to resist the laws and the Government.

We find in the Chicago Times, however, a truthful presentation of the much quoted remarks of the News with a common sense fair and able dissertation on their plain meaning and intent. We clip the following from a leading editorial of the Times reviewing the failures of the various attempts made to solve what is called "the Mormon problem."

Polygamous Mormons do not seem to regard the presidential plan of solving the polygamy problem as an "heroic remedy" of that amazing efficacy which some persons who are not Saints impute to it. A Mormon paper says very rationally: "It is not shown in what way the destruction of our local government would affect the question of polygamy. The plural marriages of the Mormons are not sustained or recognized by the territorial laws and could not be dissolved by commissions, by edicts, by armies, nor by any other earthly powers." Why? "Because they are ecclesiastical, perpetual, eternal, unless Mormons become recreant to their faith with heaven." In other words (more appropriate to the expression of ideas that appertain to this world) they are affairs of religion and not of politics; of ecclesiastical polity and not of civil polity; of a superstitious faith and not of a rational understanding.

Nearly all systems of religion comprehend notions, practices, and rites of some sort respecting the marital relation. This is especially the case with all the religions that rest on or accept the inspiration theory of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. The Roman and Greek churches regard civil marriages as no less than an unsanctified state of adultery, and the Anglican church is hardly different to them in that respect. All of them, and most of the non-apostolic sectaries, too, treat marriage as a religious sacrament, valid only in the sight of heaven when celebrated by the Lord's anointed. While the civil power may legally separate those "whom God hath joined together," the orthodox Christian notion is that God only can dejoin whom they say God hath joined.

The Mormon religious notion is not different to the most generally accepted Christian notion on the subject. The "celestial marriage" system asserts the sanction and authority of Jehovah in the ministry of an ecclesiastical agency of Jehovah, precisely as the Christian marriage system asserts the same sanction and authority through a like ministry, whose spiritual accountability is not to any establishment of civil government. The civil law may decree that such religious marriages may not be legal, may denounce them as immoral, may sanction severe punishment upon any who practice them, and the ministers of the civil law may inflict such punishments if they can convict the offenders by "due course of law." But all that would not dissolve the celestial marriages, nor change the relations of the celestially married in any way. How, then, can a particular form of civil government, a particular code of civil laws, or a particular establishment of civil administration, solve the polygamy problem or "dig up polygamy by the roots?"

Evidently, there is no potency in any form or device of official government that can perform such a miracle. Because the roots of the thing it is proposed to dig up are not within the jurisdiction or the reach of any civil power, any more than are the roots of any other mode of superstition or idolatry.

How, then, shall the "polygamy problem" be solved? There is only

one way, and that is, to eradicate the religious superstition in which polygamy exists. The civil power cannot do that. It can be done only by spiritual power, acting upon the moral nature of men and women, disabusing them of an absurd religious superstition, of a tyrannical and pestilent faith. Those who can most effectively exert that spiritual power are not preachers of a somewhat different faith resting on the same foundation, like Parson Newman, but preachers of no faith at all in theories of the supernatural, like Mr. "Bob" Ingersoll. For Ingersoll there is in Utah a grand mission and a great work in the preaching of unbelief. It is the solution of the "polygamy problem."

Putting aside the factions suggestion of the Times in regard to the eloquent apostle of modern infidelity, it presents the views of this paper couched in the paragraph that has been misinterpreted by our enemies, and shows their bearing upon the subject which seems to agitate so many minds throughout the country. The vigorous and sensible utterances of the Times are in marked contrast to the twistings and perversions of those persons and papers that have tried to evolve from our remarks an avowal of hostility to the Government of the United States.

Celestial marriage is marriage for eternity under rules, ceremonies and covenants revealed by the Almighty, with the promise that what is sealed by the authority thus divinely given on earth shall be sealed in heaven, and be of full force and effect in this world and in the world to come. Objectors may say "we do not believe it." But that is not the question. We do believe it, and it is that faith which leads us to say that there is no earthly power which can dissolve such marriages. Commissions, courts, armies, nations may bring trouble to the individuals and the community, and may even go to the extent of destroying their lives. But this would have no effect upon the eternal nature of their marriage covenants, because those covenants are beyond the reach of any power but that of Jehovah, unless it be the individual parties thereto, who may render their covenants void by iniquity. Bonds, imprisonments, penalties of any kind, even death itself, would not change or destroy them, because as we have said, they are divine, perpetual, eternal.

As the Times clearly shows, the civil government has, properly, no jurisdiction over that which is ecclesiastical. Marriage, as a religious ordinance, is outside of the domain of the civil law. That matrimony is a matter of religion has been recognized in all ages, and that it is so considered to-day by many millions of people in Europe and America cannot be denied. "Mormon" marriage is essentially a religious ordinance, and that it is in some respects different to other religious marriages does not affect the question of its relation to the civil law. If the government feels called upon to enact laws against it, let those laws be put in force in a lawful and republican manner. To use the frequent language of our malignant enemies: "Let the laws be enforced in Utah as in other parts of the Union." And this would exclude extraordinary methods, violations of the established rules of jurisprudence, bills of attainder, *ex post facto* legislation and most of the unprecedented and irrational schemes devised against the Latter-day Saints to prevent the "free exercise" of their religion.

This whole "Mormon question" has been exaggerated, misrepresented and worked up into a political issue, as a cry for demagogues and a text for professional preachers, while in and of itself it is a matter that ought to be left to the sphere of polemics, and if it had not been so thrust to the front, advertised throughout the world and made prominent by its adversaries, would have formed no occasion for excitement and no national issue to puzzle statesmen and perplex the politicians.

A PROTECTIVE MOVEMENT.

YESTERDAY, arrangements were perfected with the D. & R. G. R. R. Company—through the good offices of the Cache County branch of Zion's Board of Trade—that will doubtless result in considerable material benefit to the people of that section of Utah. The transaction is

in the nature of an agreement on the part of the railroad named to ship coal to Ogden and Corinne on easy terms, and from those two points it will be hauled to Logan and other parts of Cache by teams. The Cache Valley grangers have found a market for their produce along the line of the D. & R. G., and will come to Corinne and Ogden loaded with that kind of freight, making the home trip carrying coal, which, by this means, the people will probably be enabled to obtain at but little above the rates that prevail in this city, those doing the hauling at the same time making fair wages.

This is a protective movement against unjust railroad discrimination, the people of Logan having, for instance, to pay \$8.50 and \$9 a ton for coal that can be had in this city for \$6.50, while the carrying distance to the respective points is scarce appreciable, about the only real ground for any increase of price being upon the necessity of transfer from broad to narrow gauge, making but a trifling difference.

In addition to the high price which the good people of Cache have been compelled to pay for coal (when they could get it) they have not been properly supplied. Thus, in addition to the chagrin of being compelled to warm themselves at fires inordinately expensive, their misery has been varied by being compelled to suffer in the cold of an occasional coal famine.

The disadvantages under which the people of Cache have been placed by this species of treatment has not been confined to coal. In fact the fuel question has not figured near so conspicuously as the tremendous unjust discrimination in relation to farm products. It is the old, old story of the crushing process peculiar to soulless corporations when they are free from the presence of competitors. In this instance the ox and the mule are placed in the field and pitted against the iron horse and iron-hearted railroad owners and operators. Of course the contest is unequal and the ox and the mule "must go." The rates will be reduced, as the company who now "hold the Fort" will not surrender to such comparatively feeble foes.

Another railroad is the solution of the difficulty, and the only one that could give permanent relief from imposition, for "they all do it," when they get the opportunity.

It is now pertinent to ask what has become of the proposed Utah and Wyoming railroad which was to run from the Mammoth coal beds in the last named Territory, down Blacksmith's Fork and through Cache to a point on the O. P. line. Is that project defunct, or does it still maintain any degree of vitality? Even if it is near the expiring point, surely the present emergency should fan the smallest spark of life into a flame and bring about reencantation. The Mammoth beds are practically inexhaustible, and a road that would give their products transportation would, we should think, on account of the advantageous position of the mines, have a paying trade in the coal business alone.

Where is Mr. Negus?

THE POLITICAL OBJECT.

WE observe that quite a few of the leading journals of the country take precisely the same view of the object of the anti-"Mormon" crusade as has already been expressed by us. Among these is the Detroit News, a very ably conducted paper. We extract from one of its recent articles:

"Senator Edmunds seems to have taken the suppression of polygamy to himself as an especial and personal vocation, remembering, probably, that the founder of the system came from his own State. His last bill having failed to make any impression, he bobbed up serenely with another on Tuesday last. When this fails he will probably furnish another, and so on ad infinitum.

In his capacity as the brains of the Republican party it is not essential that any of his bills should really be effective in suppressing polygamy. Indeed, if we were to make a guess at all at the shrewd old Vermonter's real purpose, we should say that the extirpation of polygamy is the last thing he desires. There is not a man in either house who knows better than Senator Edmunds what can and what can't be done by legislation, and

what is likely to be the effect of any particular law proposed. Many senators told him when he had his last measure under way that it wouldn't have the slightest effect upon polygamy. He knew it better than any one of them. He didn't intend it to have any effect upon polygamy. He aims it at the head of the democratic party. It answered his purpose in that respect perfectly. It gave the party of God and morality the party of all the virtues, another chance to get up a howl about other people's vices. If it suppressed polygamy, the chance would have been gone.

After stating that the party had exercised its self-righteous efforts in the direction of intemperance, which, however, acted as a boomerang, the News says:

That crusade was dropped, and Senator Edmunds happily turned to polygamy. Republicans, like democrats, as a rule have but one wife apiece—at a time—whom the recognize. Therefore it was perfectly safe to attack polygamy without losing any republican votes. Besides, Edmunds knew perfectly well that no amount of oratory or law making would extirpate it, and congratulated himself on finding something that would furnish good fighting for a generation or so, and offer a lasting foil for the superfluous moral indignation of the chaste and virtuous republican masses.

His first bill was offered to a Republican House and Senate, and served its purpose in enabling the party to point with pride to another holy work it had undertaken. All the pulpits and all the papers cried out, "Lo, the great party has again buckled on its armor in the cause of God, and even as it slew the Goliath of slavery, it is now about to drive out the devil of polygamy." But the bill don't kill polygamy or even hurt it.

That was the especial beauty of the bill as a piece of party policy, and that is the especial beauty of polygamy as a political issue. The healthy survival of polygamy gave Mr. Edmunds another chance to put his party before the people as the champion of morality. And this time he has the added advantage of the presence of a Democratic House which may antagonize or ignore his bill; when he will be able not only to point with pride to his own party's championship of morality, but to set all the pulpits of the land—with the exception of Beecher's—railing at the Democracy as the defender and upholder of sin.

On the other hand, if the democrats let his bill pass, on the principle that it pleases the republicans and doesn't hurt them, Edmunds knows perfectly well that it will have no more effect on polygamy than the other one had—and there will be the "Twin Relief" still, a perpetual and handy red rag with which to arouse republican virtue to an annual frenzy of moral indignation and enthusiasm.

His new bill is pretty drastic, as it abolishes female suffrage, officially decapitates every officer in the Territory, and gives the commission power to supply their places by appointment. But Edmunds knows that polygamy will still remain, and that nothing short of the sword or the surgeon's knife will ever deprive him of his darling great moral question.

Edmunds is a shrewd old fellow.

A BREACH IN THE TRIUMVIRATE.

IN our local columns to-day appears an affidavit of a peculiar character, connected with the notorious Rev. G. M. Pierce bankruptcy affair, that has created so broad a scandal in the community. The other day we gave an explanation of a number of crooked transactions performed by a trio of interested persons—G. M. Pierce, T. C. Griffiths and M. M. Bane. The maze of moral and financial twistedness maintains its apparently interminable character.

The Rev. Mr. Pierce states under oath that his assignee, Mr. T. C. Griffiths is—well we consider the word that would flatly designate it too vulgar and will put it in English parliamentary parlance—guilty of a "conspicuous inexactitude." When it is considered that the purpose of perpetrating so flagrant a departure from the truth was to defraud one of Mr. Pierce's legitimate creditors of his rights, the enormity and dishonest character of the falsification are intensified.

When this crookedness is combined with Mr. Griffiths' connivance with General M. M. Bane, in allowing the latter, on a bill of sale obtained from the defaulting clergyman, to carry away a large amount of property after the assignment was made, a more unfit person to be entrusted with the property rights of a large number of people could scarcely be conceived.

The sworn denunciation by the Rev. Pierce of Mr. Griffiths, looks like a cheering scintillation of light in the midst of the most deplorable turpitude and gloom. It has the appearance of a ray of repentance from the reverend gentleman. We hail it as something refreshing and, we must confess, rather unexpected. We hope he will keep on in that line, for none is so far gone but he may retrace his steps.

There is one bleak spot in Mr. Pierce's affidavit transactions, however. In view of his past career, it is a question with the public whether he can be safely believed under oath.

So far as General Bane and Mr. Griffiths are concerned we are not even so hopeful as of him. They may, however, be still very useful in their way. It is to be hoped they will not cease their connection with the anti-"Mormon" crusaders who advocate the political dismemberment of Utah. They are admirably adapted for campaign work of that character, in which they have so conspicuously figured. In that capacity reliability is at a discount, the chief qualification consisting of sufficient ingenuity and unscrupulousness to falsify the "Mormons" without stint or limit.

In all probability the Pierce-Griffiths-Bane triumvirate is no longer a unit. Doubtless the soulful affidavit of the first of the trio, has isolated him from the other two. They can no longer remain as three "souls with but a single thought, three hearts that beat as one," in a scandalously crooked financial game of catch-all-kill-you-can, irrespective of the rights of others. The Rev. Pierce must now stand off in frigid isolation, while Messrs. Griffiths and Bane doubtless still continue to fall on each others necks and weep at the diminution of the prospects of getting away with any more Bible, encyclopedias and gold pens.

LAPHAM'S LEGISLATION.

OUR readers will perhaps remember that among the foolish plans proposed in Congress a year or two ago, was one by Senator Lapham, and known as the "Altamont" bill. He is now moving again in its interest, and his measure is thus described by the Washington correspondent of the Denver Tribune:

"It provides that no married man having more than one wife shall be a lawful voter, and a man who has been convicted of bigamy shall be disfranchised.

It provides that it shall be the duty of the first Legislative Assembly which shall be convened after this act shall have taken effect to repeal all the statutes or parts of statutes of the Territory which authorize or sanction plural or polygamous marriages; and in view of the manifold sorrows and miseries which that unwholesome practice in the Territory has entailed upon ignorant and deluded women and helpless and suffering children, that the said Legislative Assembly endeavor to provide by some law for the support during the remainder of their lives of the homeless and destitute female victims of polygamy and their helpless children. For that purpose the said Legislative Assembly is hereby authorized and empowered to erect and build one or more houses of refuge and protection for such victims, and to levy on the real and personal property of the inhabitants of the Territory to defray the expense of the erection and maintenance of the said charities. To the end that the male parents of destitute children, and minors born of women in polygamous relations, may be required to fulfill the natural paternal obligations, the said Legislative Assembly is authorized and enjoined to enact suitable laws for the enforcement of that paternal obligation against fathers who have the means to respond to it.

The future marriages in the said Territory, in order to deserve public respect, shall be publicly solemnized in some building or place other than any Mormon endowment cloister, in the presence of two or more dis-