

EDITORIALS.

OUTRAGEOUS CONDUCT OF AN ANTI-"MORMON."

CONSIDERING the reception given to the Governor in the Opera House building on Friday as a matter of no special significance, we have said little or nothing about it. When a number of people so disposed get together in a mutual admiration capacity it is a matter of but little moment. The wind-crank is vigorously turned and people go to work puffing each other and abusing their neighbors. As a general rule the parties who are puffed need the performance of that operation to enable them to make anything like a showing, and doubtless these exchanges of flattery place the persons to whom the sweetened dough is directed on good terms with themselves. And certainly the outside parties who are the objects of the complimentary part of proceedings can stand any amount of that kind of medicine.

However, it is difficult to conceive of a public assembly having any claim to decency who would suffer the perpetration of so gross an impropriety as occurred at the admiration bee of Friday. Mr. S. A. Kenner, who does not belong to the Governor's party, was invited to address the meeting, and responded. He had no sooner begun than Mr. Charles Read stood directly in front of and applied an opprobrious remark to him. Mr. Kenner at once, and very properly, seized his hat and left the stand, but was prevailed upon by some gentlemen present to return. The insult was repeated, and he finally left the hall.

This gross indignity was not only participated in by Mr. Read, but the assembly were virtually parties to the affront, their responsibility lying in the fact that they failed to protect their guest, for that was the capacity in which Mr. Kenner stood from the moment he was invited to take part in the proceedings. Such an occurrence showed beyond doubt that the gathering, like every other at which anti-"Mormon" feeling is exhibited, was utterly devoid of dignity.

After the affair broke up the same gentleman who offered the indignity to Mr. Kenner approached an unoffending citizen on the side-walk, near the Opera House, and asked him if he was a "Mormon." On being answered in the affirmative he, without the slightest provocation, struck the man a violent blow upon the face. Fortunately for Mr. Read he selected a mild mannered man on whom to make this inexcusable and vindictive assault. The person who was subjected to this brutal attack did not retaliate. Very likely had Mr. Read selected a man of another temper he would have been disabled from ever perpetrating a similar outrage any more.

Mr. Read belongs to the Liberal party, who are seeking to wrest the power of self-government from the majority of the people. His sentiment, so indelicately expressed, is a sample of what might be expected from men of his class had they the power. Although, doubtless, numbers who participated in the reception deprecated his conduct, it appears this sentiment was so diluted, and the sympathy with him so strong, that a guest of the occasion could not obtain the protection from insult which would probably have been instantly accorded him in almost any other gathering of people claiming to be civilized.

BUSINESS INACTIVITY SOUTHWARD.

FROM gentlemen lately arrived from Southern Utah, we learn that business has not been so sluggish for years as it is now in that direction. The produce markets are practically closed. Silver Reef, which used to be an active mining town, is virtually dead. Flour is selling there at \$2.50 a hundred pounds and other produce proportionately. Farmers in Sanpete and other parts load up with produce and convey it there without first ascertaining the state of the market, the result being that they have either to "sell for a song" or return home with their loads. The hands of the Christie mine, the only one of any consequence that has been operating for some time, were paid off on Thursday last in paper convertible into cash at sixty days from date. The workmen are thus left to await its maturity and consume the amounts in expenses or sell it out at a liberal discount.

Throughout all the settlements a general dullness is felt, but the people have an abundance of materials on which to subsist, the only inconvenience felt being from the extreme tightness of the money market. Among other mining camps that have become all but extinct is Pioche, Nevada, over the Utah line, formerly one of the liveliest towns in that section of the country. It is now all but defunct. It used to be a good market for Utah products, but is now all but totally closed.

EFFECTS OF THE FREIGHT QUESTION.

It was wired all over the country on Friday that the old freight rates on the lines running between the East and

Utah had been restored to the old figure. It appears that this sudden increase looked like a splendid chance or some of the merchants of this city to make a good deal of money by raising the price of staples to the figures at which they were sold before the cut occurred. A number of them, evidently with a mutual understanding, decided to take advantage of the situation. But a lion stood in the path. Z. C. M. I. did not increase prices. To remove this obstacle the Institution was plied with large orders for goods of that class, but refused to comply.

It so happens, however, that the U. P. directory declined to endorse the action of their representative at the Chicago conference of competing lines, the result being that the twenty-five cent rate still prevails, and the restoration action taken at Chicago is knocked to pieces.

We make mention of the local mercantile move in connection with the freight question as another evidence of the position of Z. C. M. I. as a protector of the people from combinations for the maintenance of high prices on goods and against the establishment of "corners" in trade, which enable merchants and others to haul in money in enormous quantities at the expense of the helpless consumers.

We are informed that negotiations for the resumption of the old rates will be recommenced, and it is not improbable that they will soon prevail.

THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATURE.

In another part of this paper we give, in full, the message of Governor Eli H. Murray to the Legislative Assembly. It is a carefully prepared document and contains some good suggestions. But it is disfigured with several errors and some positive untruths. That it has been written more for outside effect than for practical adoption, must be evident to every one acquainted with the situation in Utah and the questions which are treated upon in the message.

The Governor commences with the recommendation that the Legislature "write a code of laws in harmony with the requirements of constitutional law," and says: "I do not believe a Legislature should write doubtful sentences in statutes or permit laws that may be misunderstood to remain equivocal." The present Assembly is not required or expected to "write a code of laws," but only to add to the existing code such statutes as are necessary to the welfare of the Territory. The remarks that are attached to the recommendation convey the idea that doubtful and equivocal sentences are common to our statutes, and that laws are upon our statute books that are not in harmony with constitutional law. If this is what he means he should have stated so, in so many words, pointing out these equivocal and doubtful sentences, and not have been content with mere insinuation in doubtful and equivocal language, thus departing in practice from that which he advances in theory. We deny that there are any such laws in the statute books of Utah; and if he had pointed out any equivocal or doubtful sentences therein we would have been pleased to endorse a measure looking to a change of phraseology.

The Governor next presumes that "organic differences exist between Utah and the parent government." This is an error. Such differences as exist are not organic. They have been created and fostered by persons like himself who have misrepresented facts, procured legislation and urged extreme measures that are entirely uncalled for. Were it not for such individuals and their schemes and agitations, Utah and the General Government would have had no dispute, but each would have moved along in its own sphere in perfect harmony.

The Governor says "It has been charged before the country and Congress that an ecclesiastical power established by territorial statutes and held by many as sovereign, would not permit a Legislature to pass certain laws intended to be effective and in harmony with national law." It is also pretty well known that he made the charge and that it has not been sustained. We say that it is untrue, because it is untrue. There is no ecclesiastical power here "established by territorial statutes." All the churches that exist in Utah were organized and are independent of any territorial or other statute. And the statement that any such religious authority prevents or compels the Legislature in any way is a mere assertion that cannot be proven, and is made with the purpose of bolstering up the falsehoods put forth from the same source but in a different shape, for the purpose of affecting public opinion unfavorable to the majority of the people of Utah. It has also another object. That is, to provoke the Legislature to conform to his views in their legislation lest it may be inferred, if they do not, that they have been "prevented" by an ecclesiastical authority. In our opinion if such authority were a fact instead of one of his fictions, it would be preferable to the dictation and compulsion of the one-man-power which he has exercised and seeks to exercise.

He remarks: "The men who see in the Government or in those who differ with them an enemy, are unwise." Here again he is insinuating and equi-

voc. Neither the people of Utah nor their representatives in the Legislature look upon the Government as their enemy. And the only reason why Eli H. Murray is looked upon as their enemy is because he has openly placed himself in that position. He has done all that lay in his power towards the destruction of the body he is addressing. He has urged the abolition of the Legislative Assembly. He has pleaded for the disfranchisement of every citizen of Utah and the establishment of an anti-republican and oppressive government subversive of natural and constitutional rights. Is he not an enemy to the people and the Legislature? Yet he says "The greatest good to the greatest number, is the true rule of action." How does this theory comport with his own rule of action? He is seeking to place the vast majority of the people here under the heels of a hostile and numerically insignificant minority. He is glib with good theories but utterly inconsistent with them in his deeds.

Coming down to business he recommends the "repeal of all statutes which conflict with Section 7 of the Organic Act," and states that "the Supreme Court of the Territory has decided this question and presents the fact that there are not now and have not been for years any *de jure* territorial officers." We deny that there are any statutes which conflict with the Organic Act, and we ask for the decision of the Supreme Court establishing the nonsense which he utters. Why did he not cite the ruling or quote from the decision? And why does he ignore the fact that the Supreme Court of the United States in the Englebrecht case, and also the case of the Attorney General of Utah reported in 18 Wallace, decided to the very reverse of his position on this matter. If it were true that the Supreme Court of the Territory had implied that we have had no *de jure* Territorial officers, the ruling of the higher court would set aside the implication of the lower court. Is it not pitiful to see the Executive of the Territory condescend to this miserable pettifoggery to make a point for public effect?

He further asks the repeal of the law incorporating the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company, on the ground that it places the whole system of immigration under the control of church authority. This is another absurdity, and the request is made to sustain his false statements made to the Secretary of the Interior, in which he cited laws that have no existence, but have been for years expunged from our statute book. The idea that the incorporation of one emigration company prevents the organization of another, is too ridiculous to talk about, and we should have thought too absurd even for Governor Murray.

The paragraph on Church Incorporation is of the same character and contains a falsehood as foolish as it is vile, for the act to which he refers conveys its own refutation of his untruth. It distinctly states that the authority of the Church, thus incorporated for the purpose of transacting its own business legally, extends only to such things as "relate to fellowship according to church covenants," and its rights are such as it has "in common with all civil and religious communities." It does not vest ecclesiastical courts with the authority held by the civil courts, and we would like him to show what authority civil courts have to interfere with matters of "fellowship and church covenants." And we would like to know further, if it is true that Congress has disapproved of this law of incorporation, what value it is whether on the statute book or in any other place? Governor Murray knows as well as we do that Congress merely disapproved of so much of that law as countenanced bigamy or polygamy, and we will defy him to point out wherein the Act does this in any shape or form. He has stated another untruth with the same unworthy motive that inspired the other falsehoods to which we have drawn attention.

We have not space to-day to comment upon all the points in the message, nor do we think it needful to do so, but will touch upon one or two more. The subject of polygamy occupies considerable space, and the powers of Congress in regard to the Territory is lengthily argued. Supposing his arguments to be sound (which we do not admit, for Judge Black, from whom he quotes, actually refutes the very things he brings forward to support his position,) what does it amount to? Why, that Congress has the right and has exercised the power to pass laws directly for this Territory on the subject of polygamy. And yet he wants the Assembly to do that which Congress has already performed. Why should the lesser body tamper with that which the higher body has acted upon? Of what greater validity would anti-polygamy laws be upon the Utah statute book than on those of the United States? And what virtue would there be in any laws passed by the Assembly which were not in exact accordance with the laws of the United States that already exist. In the exercise of the power that Governor Murray claims for Congress, that body has taken this matter out of the hands of the local Legislature, and it would be presumption in the lesser body to attempt to take it out of such august and powerful hands.

One remark made by the Governor on this subject is as foolish as uncalled for. Addressing men who had just taken an oath that they are not bigamists or polygamists, he said "I beg to say to you, you cannot break lawlessly over the Constitution, because it con-

fines you to limits inconveniently narrow." Comment is unnecessary. On the general subject of marriage he wants a statute defining it a civil contract. Perhaps he is not aware that the common law makes it so and that the provisions of common law are extended over this Territory. But he says "should individuals, denominations or associations desire to impose any other and additional requirements or solemnities upon such civil contracts, they should be regarded as religious obligations only and not to be enforced or annulled by process of civil law." That is the position taken by the Latter-day Saints in regard to their marriages, whether monogamous or plural. Those marriages are religious and they do not ask the sanction of the civil law, nor regard its annulment thereof as of any value whatever. We are pleased to agree with the Governor on one point, though perhaps he will not admire this application of his principle.

We agree with him also in the suggestion in regard to some amendment to the registration law, so that when a blunder is made like that of the Commissioners in regard to the coming municipal election, it may not work hardship to unregistered voters who are eligible to the franchise. There are some other things of minor importance that the Governor suggests on good grounds. But his remarks on the subject of education should have been addressed to Congress instead of the Utah Legislature, while his reflections upon our public schools are entirely improper because they are false without doubt. Sectarian tenets are not taught in the public schools, and the schoolhouses are all built upon public property and are vested in trustees elected by the people, and not in the Church.

It is a matter of regret that Governor Murray has allowed himself to become the tool of a clique which is bitterly hostile to the great majority of the citizens of the Territory of which he is the Executive. It places him in an improper attitude towards the people, and makes him the official utterer of statements that are unworthy any honorable man. With such a genial disposition and so fair a record as a soldier, he ought to have held himself aloof from the influences which have degraded him to their level. But he has made himself the enemy of the Territory, the slanderer of its citizens, and the instrument of vile men for the overthrow of constitutional government in Utah, and his message, which we publish to-day, establishes him without remedy in that most unenviable position.

A STALE SLANDER REVIVED.

THE Denver Inter-Ocean keeps up its pop-gun fusillade against the "Mormon" Church, and reproduces the old stories that were told years ago till they became too stale for repetition, and seems to be under the impression that it is bringing forth something novel and startling. It appears to be conducted without any conscientious scruples. In its January 12th issue it contains what it claims to be a pictorial illustration of "Mormon" blood atonement, in which a woman is represented as being sacrificed under the knife of the executioner in presence of her husband and children.

A more brutal and atrocious slander could scarcely be conceived, and men who will publish such horrible fabrications must have corrupt hearts and depraved natures. It is such as they who have in times past aroused the fires of prejudice against the Latter-day Saints in the breasts of the ignorant, causing mobs to be arrayed against the innocent, and in some instances the blood of unoffending people to be shed.

Accompanying the sensational woodcut is an equally sensational attempt in words to show that such scenes have been and are still enacted in the "Mormon" Church, and the Inter-Ocean editorially explains that "the Atonement by Blood is the slaughter of apostates."

It would seem as though there would be no need to say that this is entirely untrue. But there are persons ignorant enough of the facts to believe anything, however outrageous, about the people of Utah, who have been persistently and continuously maligned for many years, and have been denied a hearing in their own behalf by that portion of the press which has aided in slandering them.

The Latter-day Saints believe in blood atonement. That is, they believe in the atonement wrought out by Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. They also believe that capital crime should be met with capital punishment, inflicted by the legally appointed executioner, and that the only atonement men can make for such crime is the shedding of their blood. But they do not advocate the killing of apostates nor encourage, endorse or condone murder in any way, shape or form. On this point we quote from an article by President John Taylor in the *North American Review* for the present month:

"No denial can be worded too strongly to express our detestation of the shedding of innocent blood; and we hold, further, that all culprits worthy of death—and we believe some crimes can only be atoned for by the life of the guilty party—should be executed by the proper civil officer, not by any exercise of the *lex talionis* or the intervention of ecclesiastical authority."

President Taylor's utterances are authoritative, and should be sufficient to refute the falsehoods of evil-minded

persons and the sensational utterances of unscrupulous scribes. It is claimed that our Church tribunals pass judgments affecting the lives and liberties of Church members. This also is incorrect. We quote further from the article by President Taylor:

"The decisions of the Church courts carry no penalties of a civil character; all they can do is to withdraw the fellowship of the Church from wrong-doers."

We see no need to pursue this subject further. We do not expect the Denver paper to retract its falsehoods or seek to repair the wrong it has done. It will no doubt keep firing away its paper pellets, and fishing up old dirty and decaying rubbish from the slimy pool of ancient slander, to throw at a people whose doctrines cannot be disproven by argument and whose position cannot be assailed by anything but falsehood. We make these explanations for decent people only who may have been misled by the nonsense now treated again as a veritable reality.

THE THREATS OF THE GOVERNOR.

ONE of the objectionable features of the Governor's message to the Legislature is its attempt to terrorize that newly elected and chiefly inexperienced body of lawmakers. These gentlemen, chosen by the people to enact such laws as they need, for the well being of the community of which they are members, are threatened by the Governor with certain dire and dreadful things, if they do not pass such enactments as he considers necessary, and in addition to these threats he insinuates that if they fail to carry out his high behests, their omission or refusal will be construed as submission to some mysterious power of an ecclesiastical nature, the existence of which he has assumed.

The Governor has a perfect right to present his views to the Legislature, and recommend the passage of any measure or measures which from his own standpoint appear to be required. It is also his duty to do this. No matter how much he may be at variance with the members of the Legislature in his views and policy, it is his right to express them officially, and he should be listened to, as he was, with due respect to his position. But he has no right, and it was in very bad taste, to threaten the Assembly in any way or to insinuate that which he could not possibly sustain with evidence.

From what we know of the members of either house we do not think there is any likelihood that any of them will be affected in the least degree by those gubernatorial threats and innuendoes. We consider it was a cowardly act to make them and that it would be cowardly to be compelled by them. Our legislators, we have no doubt, will quietly go about their business, attend to the duties which THE PEOPLE elected them to perform, and bear in mind that it is to the people they are responsible, and not to the one-man-power which the Governor desires to establish in this Territory.

The effect upon the country which the Governor desires to produce and for which the message was prepared, will not among sensible people and true Republicans or Democrats, be such as he has endeavored to create. Those who cannot see the demagogue and the defamer behind the threats, insinuations and untruthful and unsupported assertions of the message, must be very defective in political eyesight.

A PERTINENT QUESTION.

THE Chicago News asks the following very pertinent question:

Can anyone tell why it is that society allows a man to place his arm around a young lady's waist during the progress of a dance and yet shrieks with the wildest horror and dismay if by chance he is caught in a similar position when the pair is standing still.

"Society" does a good many strange things. But that which is called "Society" should not be the guide to people who have regard to what is right instead of what is fashionable. There are many things that are proper which "Society" pretends to be shocked at, and many things that are wrong which it allows and sanctions. If a man were to put his arm around another man's wife and embrace her as closely as is common in the waltz, when no music was playing, there would be a rumpus in a hurry; but the sound of a fiddle changes the situation in a moment, and makes the impropriety proper, and the wrong all right.

The leading minds among the Latter-day Saints are not alone in their opposition to what is denominated "round dancing." It is forbidden in Catholic circles, and a good many wise people condemn it in strong language. Young folks who innocently indulge in the pastime without thought of wrong may wonder why it should be prohibited. But there are some things which to the pure are harmless and to the impure are opportunities for evil. And there is no rule in a dance by which the tainted mind can be picked out and excluded, nor by which the unsophisticated can be kept free from contact with the designing.

"Society" winks at many gross evils, and turns up its nose at people and principles which are too good for its comprehension. Sensible people will do what is right and avoid what is wrong, maugre the verdict of "Society."