

EDITORIALS.

COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

Among the numerous comments of the newspapers on the work of the Constitutional Convention, we select the following as an indication of the spirit that moves upon the more reasonable portion of the public press.

The *Sacramento Record-Union* of June 29th said:

"If the Constitution to be submitted, in unequivocal English is made to condemn, prohibit and provide the punishment of polygamy, it might be accepted. Such a Constitution would not at least be open to the objection that it recognized an evil by silence, which the laws of the nation place in the category of crimes. The only fear is that the Mormons may be able to persuade Democratic weaklings to come to their view, by the promise of a Democratic State. They will not, certainly, put express condemnation of plural marriage into their Constitution."

The *Austin, Texas, Dispatch* of the same date remarked:

"The Mormon element of Utah territory are making a determined effort to acquire statehood. Just what objection there should be to the admission of Utah as a state, provided the constitutional requirements were complied with in advance, is not apparent. Statehood would certainly solve the polygamy problem, for under no consideration would Congress invest her with the rights of a state unless all claims of the Latter-day Saints were explicitly annulled in her constitution. There may be political, but certainly no practical reasons for denying the requested privilege."

The *Lockport, N. Y., Journal*, of July 6th, copied in full the sections of the Constitution relating to bigamy and polygamy and added:

"The theory upon which these sections rest is that polygamy having been declared unlawful, and there being no recognition of religious bodies under our system of government, the question is a purely political one, and while the government cannot treat with a Mormon religious body, Congress may as a political measure make concessions in view of an established condition of society where local legislation recognizes it."

The *Philadelphia Press* of July 6 had the following editorial:

"The Mormons of Utah have been asking vainly for a quarter of a century to have their Territory admitted into the Union as a State in which polygamy is lawful. Though their plea has found favor with Democratic leaders, it has been so strongly opposed by the Republicans and by decent people generally without regard to party that the Mormon chiefs have at last given up the fight. They see that they must either abandon polygamy, in form at least, or give up the hope of making Utah a state. As the Edmunds law and its supplements have made polygamy an expensive and troublesome luxury, the more astute of the Mormons are willing to place it under the ban of the Constitution if thereby their beloved Deseret may become a state and be released in its domestic matters from further federal control."

The anti-polygamy clause which it is proposed to put into the Constitution is as strong as anyone could wish for. Had it been adopted long ago, and Congress been persuaded that it was the intention of the people of Utah to live up to its provisions, that territory might have been enjoyed the rights of a state for nearly a generation. Should the convention now sitting in Salt Lake City adopt the proposed anti-polygamy provision, and it is endorsed by the voters of the Territory, Utah will come before Congress as an applicant for admission with at least a good prima facie case. It has sufficient population for a state, the only difficulty in the way will be the doubt whether a formal renunciation of polygamy is indeed its abandonment. The proposed anti-polygamy provision making polygamy a crime punishable with fine and imprisonment must be given effect, if at all, by the new state's courts. Will Mormon judges and Mormon juries enforce such a law against Mormon polygamists?

This latest departure in Utah looks as though it was engineered from the outside, with the view to create a new Democratic state. It is perceived that Dakota can not much longer be kept out of the Union, and if Utah can be coupled with it the relative strength of the parties in the Senate and the Electoral College will not be changed. With the admission of Utah to statehood the federal laws against polygamy cease to be applicable there. We question very much whether Republicans will ever consent under any condition to turn over to the Mormons themselves the task of suppressing polygamy."

This is from the *Baltimore Sun* of July 7th:

"The convention of the people of Utah, assembled for the purpose of forming a constitution and getting the Territory admitted to the Union as a State, has had reported for consideration an article forbidding polygamy and fixing penalties to violation of the prohibition. This, too, though the convention is made up almost wholly of Mormons. The reporting of

such an article, even if it is not adopted, marks a step of progress in Utah. If it is adopted Utah will have strong claims to Statehood, being a much more live community than Nevada."

The *Trenton, N. J. Times* of July 7th has these editorial comments:

"The determined attitude of the Government with respect to the suppression of polygamy and the recent legislation designed to stamp out the evil are now bearing fruit. It seems, in the very stronghold of Mormonism."

At the present time a Constitutional Convention is in session in Salt Lake City. The most important step yet taken in this convention was made on Tuesday, when the appropriate committee reported the following sections:

[Prohibitory sections given in full.] "It seems that the Mormons who favor the above sections have experienced a change of heart. In order to let themselves down easily they represent that all government comprehends and implies concessions at some popular rights and privileges; that this question belongs to the local instead of the national government; that it is political and not religious, and that government cannot treat with or make agreements with religious bodies; that polygamy has already been pronounced an offense against the law, and these provisions make no new offense, but recognize something already established."

So long as the Mormons agree to obey the law and surrender their cherished institution of polygamy, the people of the United States will find no fault with the style of reasoning adopted by the Saints to reach this end. The people are interested more in the abolition of polygamy than in the means adopted to abolish it."

We take the annexed from the *Cincinnati Gazette* of July 7th:

"The Mormon movement toward reform in abolishing polygamy should not be discouraged at the start by denouncing it as a fraud and sham. The Church, fostering a base institution, as we look at it, has been sorely scourged in this country, but has lasted and flourished for some time. Persecution has developed the courage, inflamed the zeal and hardened the determination of its leaders, as it has before this time stimulated the chieftains and intensified the loyalty of followers in more holy causes, and glorified them with martyrdom. Men may be more easily led than driven. And in this well known truth our Prohibition friends in their reform have something to learn."

The world has been full of evil since Adam's fall and the combat against it has been long. The best reformers are those who look at things considerately, with malice towards none and charity for all, recognizing that all people are not alike in dispositions and desires, and that there would be no saints without sinners. So the best reforms are conservative in their course, gathering force by degrees, and satisfied with wise means towards desired ends, though those means be temperate action and patient bearing."

The Mormon power in Utah has not been harmed by howling against the evil, organizing a third party and helping the Democrats into control. Neither can the Prohibitionists in Ohio hope to make any headway against their pet enemy by becoming cranky in their insane hatred, and seeking to disarm the only element of good government."

The *Manchester, New Hampshire, Union*, thus speaks editorially:

"It would be of interest to know how much of the opposition directed toward Utah is by reason of hostility to polygamy and how much is due simply to hostility to the Mormons merely as Mormons. It is difficult to see on what just ground Utah could be excluded, if the Constitution of the proposed State should positively prohibit polygamy, the Constitution thus being in accord with the laws of the United States governing the Territories. With the particular religious belief field by any community the government has nothing to do, and if assurance is given that the authority of the government shall be respected, it will be a delicate matter to distinguish between intolerance and an honest conviction that the Mormon doctrines are among the most abominable that ever swayed the minds of men. If the opposition against Utah as a State is based solely upon polygamous practices, it is evident that opposition must fall when polygamy ceases."

The *Washington Critic* of July 7 tersely remarks:

"Not much stock is to be taken in the clamor of the Salt Lake politicians against the Mormon Constitutional Convention. The Gentiles of all parties and creeds were invited to take part in the movement, but stubbornly kept aloof, and the prospect now is that they will get left in the make-up of the new State. There is no reason to believe that the Convention is a 'fraud and a sham,' as stated by the *Salt Lake Tribune*. It is moving right along toward the formation of a constitution with polygamy left out, and the question of its adoption is to be submitted to the people at the August election, with a certainty of being carried if the anti-polygamists of the Territory do their duty."

Considering how small a tooth is, it is astonishing how much ache it can hold. No wonder the man wrote a book and called it "Ten Acres Enough."

AN INHERENT RIGHT.

THE *Omaha Herald* has passed into other and different hands since the valiant and clever Dr. Miller parted with his interest in that strong and pungent journal. The friendship felt by that paper for the "Mormon" people—apart from their marriage institutions—is not exhibited to the same extent as formerly, but its editors do not fall into the extreme and senseless spirit of many of the public journals on the "Mormon" question. On the Statehood movement the *Herald* has the following to say:

"It is evident that the Utah question will demand as much attention in the next Congress as in the last, although in a totally different shape. The Utah Commission has decided to permit the submission of the Constitution adopted by the late convention to a vote at the general election to be held August 1, next. This has been protested against by the Gentiles as being without authority of law and outside the powers of the Commission. They have taken steps to send a strong remonstrance to the President, but it is probable that he will not interfere. The question was settled in the case of Kansas more than thirty years ago, that the people of a Territory were entitled to a fair vote on a Constitution when they chose to ask it. In the case of Utah, all the voting machinery and all the supervision of elections are in the hands of a federal commission, but that does not necessarily deprive the people of their right to vote. As the Constitution to be submitted is the work of Mormons, it will undoubtedly be carried."

With the representation of this Constitution in Congress next December, the discussion of Mormon affairs will be reopened and its range will undoubtedly be comprehensive, as its treatment will be exhaustive. It will be strongly opposed in the Senate on the ground that the Mormons cannot be trusted. But as Dakota will be there with renewed persistence, it is not improbable that compromise and not merit will decide both questions by the creation of two new states."

As the *Herald* pointed out a few days since, the Constitution adopted in Utah provides that the section forbidding polygamy shall not be changed except by consent of Congress and the President. Should the Mormons, after gaining power as a State, disregard this compact, there still would be recourse to the United States Supreme Court, under that clause of the national Constitution which guarantees to every State a republican form of government, and doubtless that court would hold that polygamy was not in consonance with republican institutions."

The *Herald* takes no stock in the puerile objection about amending the Constitution after admission, and concedes the right of the people of a Territory to vote on a Constitution of their own framing. All the talk about irregularity and the need of legislative sanction or an enabling act is mere twaddle. The people have inherent rights which cannot be taken from them, and one of them is the right to peaceably assemble, appeal to the government for redress of grievances, and take measures to secure political rights and privileges. It requires no legislation to establish this right. It is natural and indisputable. And, moreover, it is recognized in the national Constitution and cannot be infringed."

A legislative body may provide the form and manner by which the will of the people shall be expressed, so as to secure order and uniformity and a full and free manifestation of the popular wish, but it can only do that by virtue of power springing from the people and as giving form to an undoubted inherent authority in the people themselves. Any attempt to make the action of the people inoperative on the ground taken by its adversaries, will prove abortive, because both the great national parties and every statesman and lawyer in the land know that it is a settled question."

There is no established method indispensable to our system of government, by which the People are required to regulate themselves in taking steps to secure admission into the Union as a State. It is clear that a Constitution must be framed, that it must provide for a republican form of government, that it must be submitted to the people who must have a fair opportunity of voting for or against it, and that it must be submitted to the Congress of the United States. But any methods by which these objects can be attained without violating the law are in themselves lawful and proper, and the right to use them belongs irrevocably to the people. The Utah Constitution cannot be assailed on its merits, that is why its opponents resort to quibbles, conjectures and groundless prognostications."

AN ENCOURAGING STATEMENT.

THE following encouraging statement in relation to Mesa, Arizona, is from a letter written at that place and dated the 10th inst., by P. M. Coleman:

I left my old home near Springville,

St. Clair Co., Ala., on the 21st of April last, in company with my little family, bound for this place. We had a fine time traveling, and reached Mesa on the 26th, all safe and sound. We found it to be a beautiful place and as a general thing filled with good Latter-day Saints, who received us gladly and extended great kindness to us."

This city is a flourishing place, abounding with plenty. The country is a great farming section, well adapted to small grain, such as wheat, oats, barely and all kinds of garden vegetables. Lucern hay is a great success. The people gather six crops from the same ground in one year, and as we have brethren in Alabama who are reading the *Deseret News*, I wish to say to them that they would do well to hasten to this (Maricopa) State of Zion, where they will find room among the Saints."

THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT.

QUITE recently we have observed in several of our exchanges statements that read about as follows:

"The myth of the 'Great American Desert' has finally disappeared from contemporaneous history. Its last refuge was in the noble Territory of Montana; but the rapid development of that region shows conclusively that there is no desert there. On the contrary, Montana, enthroned among the mountains like a queen, beckons the advancing pioneer and smiles a welcome to all who with industry and energy and honest purpose will demand from her the treasures which she has hidden for centuries in her bosom. The enchanted princess has slept for many years, but now the true prince, the hardy American son of toil, has come to lay his kiss upon her lips and bid her awaken to the realization of a new life and a new hope."

The foregoing in substance first appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and makes very pleasant reading, but unfortunately it conflicts forcibly with some very hard facts that, like Banquo's ghost, "will not down." If the "hardy American son of toil" is still anxious to kiss the enchanted lips of the desert referred to, and wake it up to new life, by taking a bee-line west from Salt Lake City he can strike a portion of it embracing 6,000 square miles of sand, to say nothing of large areas of the same nature further south. It is freely admitted that the waste places are being rapidly reclaimed, but, as thousands of travelers can testify, it will take several years of very vigorous kissing to wipe out the last vestige of the American Desert."

THE HOT WEATHER.

If the telegraph wires could be wrought up to the heated condition of the weather in the east by conveying such reports of it as they have for three days past, they would be very close to the melting point and it would be uncomfortable to go near them."

Such a heated term has not been known within the recollection of middle-aged people, and the deaths and casualties resulting therefrom are correspondingly severe, the list already running up an enormous figure. One hundred degrees in the shade is more than the average human animal indigeanous to the temperate zone can stand for a great length of time and retain both life and reason; but this does not nearly represent the mercury's highest flight in some places, 100 to 105 being quite common, 110 frequent and on one or two occasions 120 being recorded, all these in the shade. The number of sunstrokes and prostrations grows larger and the area in which they occur becomes wider day after day, so that the heat assumes the character of a veritable pestilence."

The sun is not altogether responsible for this, nor are geographical locations, though both of course enter more largely into the cause of existing conditions than any other thing; in Cincinnati, for instance, it is as hot every summer as it is in New Orleans or Galveston, in the extreme southern part of the Southern States, the Ohio metropolis being several hundred miles north of them. This is of course attributable largely to the soil of the latter place, its characteristics partaking greatly of sand or other retaining and reflecting mediums of heat, and to the absence of that topographical arrangement by means of which currents of air are formulated and placed in such motion as measurably counteracts the caloric condition evolved by the joint operation of the sun and the soil; it may also number amongst its causes insufficient vegetation, foliage, etc., because of which not only is the earth but meagerly shaded, but that never-ceasing aquatic performance of live plants and trees by which moisture is drawn from the depths of nature and forced by the process of capillary attraction to their extremities above the earth is too limited to accomplish great benefits."

In Utah generally we have warm summers, but nothing approaching what is going on in the east. It has seldom touched 100 here, and in only two places, we believe, has the mercury risen so high as 110, and these occasions have been rare and owing to the immense deposits of mineral lying so close to the surface everywhere and the absence of breezes at those particular times. There have

been but few deaths from excessive heat, or sunstroke as it is improperly called, since the Territory was settled. The lakes so generously distributed throughout the country have a tendency to preserve a tolerably fair degree of humidity, which, with the numerous air currents generated in the mountains, the rapidly increasing arborae and the more frequent recurrence of rains make our temperature perhaps as even as any within the same isothermal belt; at least the heat is not so distressing and the nights are generally delightfully cool, this being an invigorant somewhat in the nature of a recuperative and helping to keep the system in good condition all the time."

PERSECUTION AND MISREPRESENTATION.

A GREAT deal is being said just now by the press of the country about the Elders engaged in missionary work in the Southern States—more especially in Georgia and South Carolina. The way in which the facts in relation to their doings are distorted is but a repetition of the ordinary treatment received by Latter-day Saints peacefully engaged in the performance of what they understand to be their divinely enjoined duty."

One of the most palpably absurd charges in relation to the persecution of the Elders is the late statement that Elder Joseph Thorup was the aggressor in the use of violence. It has been telegraphed broadcast over the country that he, while surrounded by converts, made an assault upon a Methodist preacher. A straightforward statement of the whole affair, obtained from the Elder himself, who has since returned home, appeared in the *News* of Saturday. Brother Thorup, who was at the time of the trouble afflicted with a fever, was the victim of maltreatment and vindictiveness throughout, as is universally the case in affairs of this character."

A letter in this issue, from Elder Spencer, gives some particulars of similar events in Georgia which have, through the press of the country, been subjected to the same process of misrepresentation."

Most of the journals which treat upon such occurrences appear to be careful to thrust before the public an unmitigated falsehood. They keep on reiterating the conspicuous untruth that the Elders direct their principal efforts toward the conversion of young women. It is unnecessary to state the effect of such assertions upon the popular mind, and they are evidently made for the purpose of creating it."

The proclamation of the Gospel carried by the Elders is confined to no sex, age or nation. It is to all people in every part of the habitable globe without distinction. They are simply engaged in preaching the Gospel of preparation as a witness to all the world before the advent of the Redeemer. They give the strongest evidence of sincerity and devotion to that labor that can be given by mortals. They take their lives in their hands, suffer contumely, buffeting, slander and vilification of the vilest sort, without hope of earthly reward for their self-denial."

In the midst of the abuse to which they are often subjected, the Elders are not only sustained by the spirit of their callings, but also by the success of their labors. Persecution raises up for them friends and not infrequently causes converts to flock around them. This appears to have been the case of late both in Georgia and South Carolina."

While many journals do not openly applaud the application of mob violence to the "Mormon" missionaries, numbers of them appear to be only too ready to wink at it and apologize for all those who resort to it. The *Chicago Times* appears to be an exception in this regard. In commenting upon recent events in South Carolina and Georgia, that paper condemns the conduct of the mobocrats, and offers a novel suggestion to take the place of violence against the Elders. It facetiously suggests that the Chicago denominational preachers take a summer holiday excursion to the South and lift up their voices in an effort to convert the people."

No "Mormon" Elders would be found raising a protest against the practical carrying out of such a suggestion. It is much more pleasant in every way for them to engage in polemic warfare than that kind of contest in which shot-guns and clubs are used, with the weapons wielded exclusively by one side. In the first kind of struggle they have a fair show, and invariably come off best, especially if the Bible is adhered to as the standard weapon wielded by the contestants. But the *Times* was, evidently pointing a joke at the preachers of the great city of Chicago, knowing full well that a summer holiday excursion of the kind it suggests would involve too much hard work to be acceptable, with no hope of success even if their best efforts were put forth."

A London letter says "the British barmald stands alone." That is more than her customers are able to do after they have patronized her bar for a short time."