

some to be the work that Joseph Smith copied the Book of Mormon from, is among the archives of Oberlin college. He says the belief about the Book of Mormon being copied from the Spaulding manuscript is absurd. He says there is absolutely no similarity in the two documents.

THAT MYTHICAL "JUNTA."

The periodicity of the anti-Mormon outburst on the part of local politicians and preachers cannot be quite so regularly and accurately calculated as the invasion of seven-year locusts, but it is considerably more frequent, more absolutely certain and just about equally mysterious as to its causes and effects. Just now the bubbling-over grows out of the pique and disappointment of a few parties with reference to the work of the late Legislature upon certain proposed bills. For some days before the end of the session dark hints and suspicions were given forth by one or two members that a malign and dreadful influence was being used to compass the defeat or postponement of certain measures. This "influence" was claimed to be nothing more nor less than the mailed and heavy hand of the Mormon Church, which was alleged to have selected an industrious lobby with the special business of commanding legislators to vote down, or the Governor to veto, every bill that the said lobby had not passed upon approvingly. As stated, these insinuations were only whispered or hinted at during the session itself. But when at the recent General Conference of the Church an important rule of discipline and conduct as applied to high positions in the Priesthood was re-asserted, explained and accepted by the people, the mutterings of the malcontents grew louder, and at last one of them, Representative Critchlow, has come out with a letter in which he makes a specific charge as to the existence and labors of a "Mormon committee of junta" to pass upon and approve or veto pending legislation. He has scared one paper into sounding a call upon young Utah to come out and assert its freedom from ecclesiastical domination, and has with inexplicable ease caused quite a number of nervous people to think there is a burning need for a new declaration of political independence.

There is hardly anything serious enough in all this to deserve explanation. And yet the News feels anxious at all times to do its part toward removing fear, promoting confidence and correcting misunderstanding. In this instance the matter ought to be easy, for a very plain tale can put the whole hideous, fearful nightmare to flight.

Here are the facts: Legislators, business men, lawyers, editors, mining men, all classes of the community in fact, felt that there was danger of the first State Legislature attempting to cover too much ground. Most of its members were untired in law-making, yet all were zealous and patriotic. But new conditions existed; new burdens had come upon the people; new laws and methods of procedure were a necessity—and there was an almost universal feeling that the danger was not in doing too little

but in experimenting with too much. The News took this ground as early as the opening of the Constitutional Convention a year ago, and never ceased to argue and defend it up to the very close of the recent legislative session. We do not hesitate to say further that not only have we in these columns antagonized many proposed laws because of the reasons above given, but the present writer has repeatedly used personal persuasion or influence in the same direction. Others have chosen to do likewise, by resolution, by petition, by employed advocates before committees, by personal effort. Anything un-American, servile, improper in all this?

Now, it happens that some of the oldest and best-known citizens of the State, men whose whole lives have been spent in the interest and welfare of the people, and who have their present and future prosperity and welfare as closely at heart as any men possibly can have, have been asked to give their views upon or use their influence for or against particular bills which seemed to be in the nature of an unnecessary or inopportune innovation. This request, we repeat, came not only from legislators themselves, but from others of different parties and of different forms of religious belief. As citizens they had the right to comply with such request. As tried and honored members of the community it was perhaps their duty to take a personal interest in it. But they were busy men, occupied from early morning till late at night with labors of another character. They were also leading Mormons, and they might have known, and did know, what a furore would be raised if anybody dared to ask them to say a word for or against anybody's pet bill. So, when asked to bestow attention upon matters with which they were unfamiliar, and which they had no time to inform themselves upon, they invariably replied that there were in the community many men of experience in legislation who knew the needs and the financial condition of the people; and that if suggestions upon any particular point were needed, such men would be in a better position to offer them. In this there was no more thought of dictating or coercing or dominating than this paper has of terrifying the czar of Russia; they merely desired that they themselves be let alone on subjects which they had no time to consider.

Behold, out of this suggestion has grown the idea that they had appointed and set apart a special committee to scrutinize, amend, approve or condemn every bill, and that any Mormon legislator who disregarded their dictum would be dealt with ecclesiastically—that in short the Church was in the saddle and was using its lash with the most alarming vigor. This is what the News is happy to pronounce hush, nonsense and false. No threats were or could be made by anybody who had any right to make them, or at least any power to enforce them; no bill was sought for to take particular care of Mormon interests; no measure was opposed because it might hurt Mormons, no coercion was used or attempted in any way and nothing more was tried or accomplished than any citizen in

the exercise of his rights as an American could with perfect propriety try. Sometimes one or two, sometimes three or four, sometimes this man, sometimes some other man, would be willing to examine and give their or his opinion of bills proposed; many were invited to do so or to attend meetings of legislative committees who had to decline on account of other business; but we have not heard either where the invitation was accepted or declined that in any case was there anything but the most cordial feeling and the best of motives shown. Of the men who are spoken of as having been most prominent in this work, two have been Presidents of former legislative Councils, two have been Speakers of former legislative Houses, and others were for years members of former legislative Assemblies. How many more have been consulted by legislators and the friends or opponents of any particular bill, we have no means of knowing and we do not believe anybody can tell.

In conclusion we can only say that it was to the credit of the Legislature that it was not ashamed to listen to men who on special subjects knew more than most of the members did—the writer takes some honor to himself for assistance of this kind rendered in more than one instance. None of them need be ashamed by reason of anything that disappointed or trouble-breeding politicians may now say. There was on the part of the Mormon legislators no servility or cringing, no loss of independence, no lack of manhood. And on the part of the Mormon leaders there was not, either in act, or word, or thought, any attempt to use improper influence in any improper way or to do anything but what when truly understood, could be safely submitted to the intelligence of any honest man, and to the fullest light of day.

DR. ILIFF'S ANTI-MORMONISM.

Rev. T. C. Iliff of the Methodist church is going east on an anti-Mormon preaching tour; at least that is the effect of his announcement in the M. E. church when he stated that he would leave on Monday to speak in a number of large cities with reference to the outlook in Utah. He professed that he did not want to say anything that would militate against the new State, and intended to be guarded in his expressions, but felt that he should speak plainly before he went so that he could get "credit for speaking here the same as there." At the same time he made a speech which we are given to understand is an intimation of what he will do in the East. And this speech cannot be construed otherwise than as a direct assault upon the Mormon people.

Dr. Iliff is a good talker, but many times his talking is not good, as the News and its readers have frequently found out. We do not know whether he will be less careful in his expressions before eastern audiences than he was here—he will hardly feel it necessary to be more so. But his statements here are sufficient to give an idea of the lines he is operating on. And while we are sorry he left his speech until the day immediately preceding his