

DESERET EVENING NEWS

Organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

PUBLISHED EVERY EVENING.
(except on Sundays and holidays.)
Corner of South Temple and East Temple Streets,
Salt Lake City, Utah.

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICES:
One Year, in advance, \$2.00
Six Months, " " 1.25
Three Months, " " .75
One Month, " " .25
Single Copies, 5c
Entered as Second-Class Matter, July 17, 1903.
Post Office at Salt Lake City, Utah.
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

NEW YORK OFFICE:
In charge of B. F. Cummings, Manager Foreign Advertising, from our Home Office, 117 Park Row Building, New York.

SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE:
In charge of T. J. Cooper, 91 Geary St.

Correspondence and other reading matter for publication should be addressed to the EDITOR.
Address all business communications to THE DESERET NEWS, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Printed at the Post Office of Salt Lake City as second class matter according to the Act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

SALT LAKE CITY, - JULY 17, 1903.

RELIGIOUS ERROR IN LAW.

The recent rejection by the British Parliament of the oft-revived bill to permit a man's marriage with his deceased wife's sister, is a sign of the prejudice and ignorance with which this question has been treated. Time and again a bill to abolish the senseless restriction in the marriage laws of Great Britain has been introduced, only to receive defeat at the hands of the dignitaries of the "Church of England" as by law established, and their followers. These ecclesiastics have direct votes in the House of Lords, and indirect influence in the House of Commons.

We place the blame with the churchmen, because the question, though a matter of civil law, arises from a dogma of religion. Singular to say, too, it is traceable directly to the Old Testament. It is not found anywhere in the New. It cannot be fairly construed as a part of Christianity, as promulgated by Christ or His Apostles or any New Testament writer. It springs from a strange perversion of a provision in the Mosaic code. The text is that which became proverbial in this region through the famous debate between Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman of Washington, D. C., and Elder Orson Pratt of Salt Lake City, Utah; namely, "Leviticus xviii, 18."

How this can be rationally construed to prohibit a man from marrying his widow's sister, seems past ordinary comprehension. Whatever of restriction the command contains relates only to the "life time" of the wife. That even then it was permissible, under the law of Moses, for a man to marry his wife's sister with the consent of both, cannot be disputed by the scripture. If it did not "vex her," it was not forbidden at all. Jacob's marriage of sisters is not denounced. True, it occurred before the Mosaic code was revealed, but it is evident that the example was followed subsequently. In Israel, and the inhibition in the text was clearly to prevent trouble between blood sisters, likely to arise in some instances, if married to the same man.

Whatever differences of opinion may be entertained on this one point, it is clear that there is nothing in the text considered that forbids a man marrying his wife's sister, after the wife's death. It is only "in her life time" that he must not do that, "to vex her." Turn it and twist it as theologians and linguists may, that is all that can be fairly made out of its wording and evident meaning.

It will be remembered by people who have read the discussion here-mentioned, that Dr. Newman made a strenuous effort to attach to the text the meaning given in a marginal reference to be found in some Bibles; that is, "Neither shall thou take one wife to another to vex her," etc. But Elder Pratt presented the Hebrew words with such clearness and force, that every scholar saw the fallacy of the Newman plagiarism, and the twister was laughed at for his pains.

But if we take the interpretation the pulpits or adopted, that will not help in the least the opponents of the marriage of a man to his dead wife's sister. Neither the text as it stands in the regular version, nor as it is construed in the marginal reference, bears in the least against such a marriage. Indeed, the latter interpretation actually knocks out all reference to a "sister," and if construed as desired by the fighters of the bill, would make it improper for a widower to marry at all.

The whole contention shows the power of prejudice, and the determination of ecclesiastics to force their notions upon society and infuse them into the civil law. They will gather money by the millions to print and publish the Bible to all nations, and then vehemently fight against many things that Book contains, and place themselves in direct hostility to its plain precepts, or turn them completely away from their evident import. No wonder that infidelity increases so much in educated circles, and that skepticism permeates even the atmosphere of the churches.

These remarks are not intended to apply as argument in favor of Mosaic customs, or the revival of ancient rules or observances. They are simply advanced to show the error on which a stupid provision of English law is founded, and the endeavors of prejudiced exponents to foster their notions upon the world and even crowd them into the civil law, in place of the plain declarations of the Book from which they profess to take all their doctrines and instructions and authority. The laws of nations are to be observed by those who live under their power and protection, but thought is free and the liberty of expressing it should prevail within the limits of propriety and of decency, even though it may come into violent contact with prevalent opinions and established theories.

THE HEBREW PETITION.

Our government seems to have finally ascertained that the Russian authorities will refuse to receive any petition from Hebrews in this country, regarding the Kishineff massacres, even if the petition is forwarded through the usual diplomatic channels. This treatment of the matter is more blunt than absolutely necessary. The czar's representatives might, in the spirit of amiability, have received the document and torn it to pieces, with the assurance that the fullest liberty compatible with Russian law would now be given to the Hebrews, or some such phrase without any special meaning, and then the impolite refusal to look at the document offered. Still, it was from the beginning decided that the United States should be asked to mind their own business. The manner of doing it is of no special importance.

Russia offers an explanation of her conduct that she regards the affair as an internal matter, in which no one outside of Russia can have any possible interest. But this reasoning is only partly true. America has some interest in the matter. As was stated by a speaker at the Jewish Chautauque at Atlantic City a few days ago, "We cannot look with unconcern upon the arrival of the thousands of hunted, terror-stricken human beings, who come to us crushed in spirit and impoverished in substance, to enter into competition with our respected and self-respecting labor. Neither is it an answer to say that we have the remedy in our hands by closing our ports against these people. That would violate every instinct of humanity, and would war against the policy which has made this country great and prosperous, and which will continue to add to our progress and prosperity if immigration is confined to normal cases alone. The abnormal immigration from Russia is due to the laws and methods of that country, and this gives us a legal and moral right to object."

The interests of the various members of the great family of nations are so closely interwoven with one another, that what transpires in one is of concern to others. Each nation is under obligation to prevent occurrences within its own boundaries, that will annoy, or injure other nations. In the same way, occupants of rooms in the same building are not at liberty to do, in their own apartments, that which they know will interfere with the comfort of their neighbors. The obligation of nations is not different from that, as Spain found out, to her cost.

The Washington dispatches indicate that the matter is now ended as far as our government is concerned. And this is just as well, for nothing would come of such a petition. The only practical way of dealing with the Hebrew problem, is to call an international conference to discuss it and offer the only possible solution.

ALL BEGINNING IS DIFFICULT

Mr. Balfour some time ago said Great Britain would be willing to join a movement for naval disarmament, or rather for a decrease of the naval equipments, provided some other power would make a beginning in that direction. Other powers, we presume, would be willing to join the movement, provided Great Britain would take the first step. The difficulty is in the beginning. After the first step is taken, the others would follow, naturally.

This talk of disarmament, arbitration, and peace, in government circles is one of the encouraging signs of the progress of that cause among the children of men. Its full realization may be distant yet, but the fact that it occupies the interest of statesmen proves that the peace idea has become part of the sub-conscious thought of mankind, and that it is forcing its way forward.

Every time the subject is discussed it becomes clearer. The force of the thought becomes stronger. Some time, public opinion will be so decidedly in favor of the settlement of all differences by peaceful means, that armaments will become superfluous. As yet the principle of violence has too many advocates among the children of men. A great battle seems to be raging between Lucifer and the Son of God, and sometimes to human eye the outcome seems doubtful. But it is not. The turn in the tide is likely to come suddenly. That is often the case on stubbornly contested battlefields. From the time of the first waving of the battalions, to the complete rout is often but a moment, after the fight has been raging perhaps for hours. Similarly, the principles of peace will suddenly triumph, when the time comes.

ABOUT THE GRAND JURY.

Quite a number of contemporaries are now commenting on the report of the late Utah Grand Jury. The Cleveland Plain Dealer observes:

"A special grand jury reports that there has been no polygamy in Utah since the territory became a State. This will have a tendency to rob a good many well-meaning people of one of their choicest bugbears."

The Boston Transcript hits the nail on the head, as follows:

"At all events the special grand jury that has been investigating social conditions in Utah would probably have been justified in finding that there is no more polygamy in the Mormon State than in some great eastern commonwealths."

MOHAMMEDANISM SPREADING.

Statistics on the spread of Mohammedanism are startling to those who have perhaps supposed that religious faith to be stagnant. It appears that the followers of Mohammed in India, for instance, are increasing rapidly. In 1881 there were 49,562,791 of them; in 1891 this number had increased to 57,081,746. An increase of over seven million disciples in ten years must be considered phenomenal. Some observers of the conditions of India are of the opinion that in course of time, Mohammedanism will be the official religion in the Indian peninsula.

But India is not the only country

where this religion makes great strides. In Burma, during the decade between 1881 and 1891, the number of Mohammedans increased, we are told, from 168,851 to 210,049, representing nearly 25 per cent of the population. In the Malay archipelago the number of Mohammedans is reckoned at 31,000,000 out of 44,000,000 inhabitants. In China, also, that religion has made steady progress. And in Africa, Mohammedanism competes successfully with so-called Christian missions for supremacy. For instance, in the beginning of the year 1870 Islamism was entirely unknown in Sierra Leone and Lagos, the two chief English settlements, while now about a third of the entire population profess the religion of Mohammedanism.

It is claimed that Africa now has 10,000,000 Mohammedans of its 200,000,000 inhabitants, and this leads a student of the situation to this observation: "It is hardly too much to say that one-half of the whole of Africa is already dominated by Islam, while, of the remaining half, one-quarter is leavened and another threatened by it." Those interested in "Christian" missions are, of course, alarmed at the progress of this system. But the Africans who embrace Mohammedanism certainly are thereby considerably elevated. They are taught to abhor cannibalism and human sacrifices. They are taught cleanliness and punctuality, by the observance of frequent ablutions and prayers. They build schools and mosques, and learn to read, and even to write. All that is a great advancement, and runs does not go with it, for the Mohammedans, unlike "Christian" merchants, are total abstainers.

Mohammedanism is evidently well adapted to the minds of Oriental peoples. When the light of true Christianity had been taken away from Asia Minor and eastern Africa, the lesser light substituted by the Arabian prophet, seemed to be the thing needed for the diseased condition in which the people were left. And ever since, Mohammedanism has appealed strongly to the peoples that are unable to endure the full light of truth. Mohammed's religion adapts itself to circumstances. It has but few set rules and ordinances. That is one reason why it is easily adopted. But its growth suggests that in all probability the "Christian" world will some day face a "Mohammedan problem" in addition to others. For its followers have not given up the hope of a world conquest. If some time among them appear military leaders, such as they have had in the past, they would be capable of making trouble once more.

The baseball fans also stormed yesterday.

There was a good deal of noise for so little rain.

A warm, long lane and a shoemaker will turn out last.

The leeman's ice may be melted but his heart, never.

The dentist filed at the florist just because he was hot.

Get-rich-concerns double their money by folding their bills.

General Heat appears to be in charge of the weather bureau.

If he keeps on getting more, Uncle Sam may yet have islands to burn.

The walking delegate's work might very properly be called killed labor.

At Oyster Bay they are singing: Save our bones from "Mother" Jones.

The water in Lamb's canyon behaved yesterday more like a roaring lion than a lamb.

The Ryan mystery is still unsolved. So are several others that are of much older date.

Thanks to American diplomacy the latch string to the Manchurian door is to hang out.

So far as the Pope's doctors are concerned the s's have it—Mazzoni, Lapponi, Rossoni.

It begins to look as though the Pope were going to outlive all predictions and contemporaries.

New York is to have a great flower market. Those who have seen the plans say it will be a day's delay.

"Stolen waters are sweet," appears to be the motto of those who water their gardens from the city mains.

In Alabama the white man's burden consists largely of concealing schemes for placing the negro in bondage again.

The Manchurian question has been settled so far as this country is concerned. It is to be hoped that it will remain silent.

"Doubtless Boston can learn quite as much from the visiting teachers as the teachers can learn from Boston," says the Boston Globe, Jamaica!

The President, though a military man himself, declines to receive "Mother" Jones and her "army." Anaxorons seemingly are not to his liking.

In the matter of the Kishineff petition, Russia pursued Buck Fauschaw methods. She declined to receive or consider it before it was presented.

So eager are they for education in New England that during the sessions of the National Educational association in Boston, there were great schools of mackerel along the entire New England coast.

Should those islands off the coast of Eorneo over which the American flag has been raised cause an estrangement between the United States and Great Britain, they would be anything but the Isles of the Blest.

SOBRS AND LAW.

Chicago Chronicle.

The authorities and people of Evansville have learned at fearful cost the folly of temporizing with a mob.

Kansas City Journal.

Mobs have no right to complain when they are shut down in attempts to override the law and kill human beings.

Louisville Courier-Journal.

If we could eliminate the "innocent

bystanders" from the ranks of rioters we should not only avoid casualties among them, but greatly reduce the number of riots. It is the bystanders who make so many riots possible.

Philadelphia Public Ledger.
The supreme need of the hour is the burning into the realization of the lawless—if it be necessary, with the impressiveness of death for the delinquents of law—a sense that authority still exists and is prepared to vindicate itself.

New York Herald.
But whatever other and momentous lessons are impressed upon the public mind by this awful tragedy in Indiana, its supreme lesson is that the sacred majesty of law and order must be inviolably preserved. Better that the trial of 100 guilty prisoners should be delayed than that the law should be overthrown.

Springfield Republican.

They (the rioters) had a killing, but not in their own way. They got all the blood they wanted, but it proved to be their own and not the negro's blood that they wallowed in. Most fit is it that this given to the Evansville mob would end this particular manifestation of anarchy which is sweeping over the country. Nothing else will.

Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Did the soldiers and guards at Evansville do right to fire upon the mob? As surely so as that soldiers in battle do right to fire upon the enemy. They would have been cowards and traitors if they had done otherwise. They were put there to defend the jail, and they were in duty bound to shoot and resist until the mob was repulsed or until they were overpowered. It will not do in such an emergency to temporize with the mob.

New York Sun.

Evansville goes mad from the contagion of the lynching madness elsewhere. Are the Americans losing their instinct of self-control and self-government? Are they indeed "a violent people," as Mr. Hazard once called them to their great indignation? Brave governors and sheriffs and Gatling guns can do something to keep down these outbreaks of savagery. But what disgrace is put upon Americans almost every day! The disorders are not sporadic. "The mob is becoming almost the regular executioner of negroes. If this is a government of law, the mob must be cowed or shot down."

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No. 8 5:30 p.m. No. 7 7:15 p.m.
No. 10 9:40 a.m. No. 9 8:30 p.m.
No. 12 9:45 p.m. No. 11 11:30 p.m.
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