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THE CHURCH AND THE "NEWS."

"There are a great many people in this city and state who have an impression that vaccination is contrary to the teachings of Mormonism and that its practice is condemned by the head of the dominant Church."

That is the opening sentence of an editorial in the Salt Lake Herald. As our contemporary presents this question in a courteous manner, we respond to its invitation to correct the impression which it avers is prevalent. It is a little singular that no such intimation reached the Deseret News until it was mentioned by the Herald. Usually when our people wish to obtain information in reference to the doctrines and teachings of the Church through a newspaper, they apply to the Church organ. No one has done so on this question.

The authorities of the Church have given no official declaration or opinion on the subject of vaccination. The written standards of the Church are silent concerning it. We have reason to believe that the leading spirits, to whom the people look for guidance in doctrine, have refrained from touching on the benefits or otherwise of vaccination. They have not interfered with any public officer or board of officers in the discharge of duty, or in the exercise of official authority, legitimate or assumed.

The Deseret News, in opposing the exclusion of healthy children from the public schools simply because they have not been vaccinated, voices the sentiments of a large majority of the people of this city and state. Among them are people of all shades of opinion in religion and politics. Anti-compulsion is not to be classed as a "Mormon" movement, by any means. The Anti-Vaccination society which has been organized, is a fair sample of the various elements that are uniting against the despotism attempted by a few public officials. "Mormons" and non-"Mormons" are joined in that society.

The Deseret News touches on various public questions as a newspaper with all the rights and liberties that belong to journalism. It is responsible for its utterances, in the same way that any publication of the kind is responsible. When Church doctrine is enunciated or explained in its columns, the "News" quotes its authority, and its readers understand the difference between such teachings and the publication of news and views on secular subjects.

The doctrines of the Church include directions to promote bodily health. They are to be found in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, and have been quoted from frequently in these columns. If people would govern themselves accordingly there would be much less sickness and liability to disease. The doctrine of healing by faith is set forth in great plainness in that book, and has been discussed in this paper. Vaccination is nowhere treated of in that volume.

Some of the most prominent Elders of the Church believe that vaccination is a preventive, to some extent at least, of smallpox. Others do not take the same view, and still others are in the position of thousands of intelligent people, who are in doubt because of the contradictory evidences offered on either side. But most of them are opposed to the compulsion which is attempted upon people who strongly object to submit their children to something abhorrent to their feelings and opinions.

There has been no official Church direction, that we are aware of, to influence people to resist directions or edicts from any board or public officer in this city or state. The Church does not engage in that kind of interference. Every member of the Church, however, is as free to exercise the rights and liberties of a citizen as any non-"Mormon" may lay claim to be.

The Herald rightly remarks that, "It is very coarse and unreasonable to assume that anti-vaccinationists are fools, as a certain newspaper is in the habit of doing." We might add that the same remark would not be inapplicable to the Herald's own implication that such persons are to be classed as "kicking mules." It is the treatment of the important subject of the liberty of the citizen in that spirit that has provoked a great deal of the controversy which has arisen. Many of the very best and most intelligent ladies and gentlemen in this state, while divided on the merits or demerits of vaccination, resent with all the fervor of their nature, and all the independence that is guaranteed in a republican form of government, the assumption of a coterie of persons clothed with a little brief authority, to force upon children a surgical operation against the will of their parents.

When those officials arrogate to themselves authority not given to them by law, and at the same time denounce all who oppose their tyranny as "ignorant," "obstinate," and "without reputation," they but confirm the opposition in the righteousness of the cause. Just so with the attempts made by doctors who know absolutely nothing of smallpox but what they have read in

books, nor about vaccination, except on one side of the question, when they ridicule and abuse people who have studied the matter from both sides, and are just as capable as those doctors are to reach an intelligent conclusion. They simply disgust sensible people by their arrogance and self-conceit, and stir up contention and strife to a higher pitch.

The names of a number of the foremost thinkers in the world, of eminent physicians, of professors in medical colleges, of gentlemen holding the highest degrees in the universities and institutions of learning in the world, have been published in the Deseret News as among those who are not only opposed to compulsory vaccination, but who have probed the whole question to its very roots and have become convinced, beyond a doubt, that vaccination is not and cannot be on scientific principles a preventive of smallpox.

But this paper has not of itself attempted to decide a question on which some of the most enlightened and careful professional men are divided. On this point it has pleaded for fairness and decency in the discussion of the question. There are medical gentlemen in this city whose opinions on such subjects are worthy of the highest respect. There are others whose training has been simply on one side and they know absolutely nothing on the other side. They are the most dogmatic and arrogant, qualities which frequently accompany ignorance or a smattering of knowledge. Few indeed among them have ever seen cases of smallpox, and some of them had to be taken to the pest house to see what was alleged to be that disease, so that they might know it when they saw it in others. When such persons pose as the sole depositories and exponents of medical wisdom, and denounce those who differ with them as ignoramuses, the thoughtful portion of the public are led to the conclusion that many professional pretensions are but a bubble.

It is on the assertion of just such wonderful authority that the Herald bases its assertion that there are five hundred cases of smallpox in this state. We believe it is greatly mistaken. We have no doubt that in a large number of instances that which has been taken for smallpox is another and different disease. Doctors differ materially in relation to them. The exaggerations which have been made public do no good but they have effected a great deal of harm. The statement from Eureka in another column is indicative of the injury that has come in this city to business, to education, and to the peace of the public through the scares that have been fostered and magnified.

We do not wish, in making these remarks, to oppose the maintenance of lawful sanitary regulations, to favor any relaxation in the proper efforts of public officers to prevent the spread of contagion, or to even offer a suggestion which would in any way tend to make people less cautious and careful in preserving their own health and that of the public. We oppose lawless force. We contend against despotism. We stand for the liberty of the individual within the lines of rational and constitutional law. At the same time, we advocate obedience to all wholesome and proper regulations in order to secure cleanliness, health, and order for the common good.

NOT MISQUOTED.

President Herzer of Concordia Lutheran College has hurried into print with the statement that Mr. Roberts misquotes Luther, when he refers to the Reformer as tolerating a plurality of marriages.

Will the learned Lutheran deny that the expressed desire of the Landgrave Philip of Hesse to take another wife caused Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, Zuinglius and others to come together in solemn conclave at Wittenberg, for the purpose of considering the question whether "for a man to have two wives at once, was contrary to the divine law?" Will he deny the historical statement that these Reformers unanimously arrived at the negative conclusion, and that the Landgrave on that authority took to himself another wife? The exact language of the council, quoted in History and Philosophy of Marriage, is this: "The gospel hath neither recalled nor forbid what was permitted in the Law of Moses with respect to marriage."

If Mr. Herzer is prepared to deny the testimony of history, he will perhaps also deny the fact that in the Protestant world, high personages at various times are said to have entered upon morganatic marriages, similar to the one contracted by the Landgrave after consultation with the Reformers.

We need not add, that this is not written in defense of an illegal practice, but merely in justice to the gentleman who is said to have taken undue liberty with Luther. The fact is that Luther was one of the greatest iconoclasts the world ever saw. He flew in the face of both custom and religion by inducing a nun to break her vows and become his wife. His decision in the famous Landgrave case was but another gigantic blow to the enemy he was combating.

CHRISTIAN JOURNALISM.

The experiment of Rev. Charles M. Sheldon to run the Topeka, Kan., Daily Capital, as a "Christian" newspaper for one week, is sure to be watched with intense interest all over the country, and to start a discussion as to what constitutes a "Christian" newspaper.

The ground now taken generally is that the church is but an ordinary body in the state, an association with its peculiar interests. It is one among many. The secular newspaper does not claim to be a church paper, but it gives due attention to church news. Notices of revivals find a place as well as news of prize-fights, murder-trials and fashion-plates. Sermons lend variety to the more or less readable matter that is offered a reading public.

A different field entirely is occupied by the denominational journals. They give special attention to dogmas and the activity of the churches, but they also comment on current political topics and give such general news as is

deemed suitable. Can either of this class of journals be termed "Christian"? Mr. Sheldon thinks not, and is going to show by actual demonstration what "Christian" journalism is.

It cannot be denied that with very few exceptions, the journals of this country endeavor to stand for the so-called "Christian" civilization, and "Christian" ethics, as popularly understood. Financial considerations prompt this attitude. The real test would come, should this system of ethics become unpopular. What position would the majority of newspapers then take?

As applied to an individual, to be a "Christian" is not merely to defend the faith of Christ as long as it is popular and profitable to do so. It is to be permeated by that faith, until it becomes the power within that influences not only our actions and words, but our most deeply felt sentiments and motives. A "Christian" is one whose life, in the smallest details, is no longer molded by common impulses, selfish considerations, or the promptings of the world—one who "lives by" faith and stands up for it in the face of opposition, prison, and death. If the same standard is to be applied to journalism, there will be very few "Christian" papers in this country, or anywhere else in the world.

SPIONKOP TAKEN.

The announcement that General Warren has occupied Spionkop should indicate that General Buller is about to carry out successfully the campaign he planned for the relief of Ladysmith. The object of the attack, as explained to the British war office a few days ago, was to cut the enemy in half, and make it possible for General White to co-operate with him. Brakfontein seems to be another point of great strategic importance. The second line of Boer defenses extend from Spionkop to Brakfontein, and thence to the hills around Ladysmith and south to Colenso. If General Warren has occupied Spionkop, and General Lytton succeeds in carrying Brakfontein, the British forces must be driving the enemy back, and opening the way out for the beleaguered garrison.

Further details must be received, however, before an opinion can be formed as to the importance of General Warren's reported success. It seems that he encountered but a small force of Boers at Spionkop, and this would indicate that the strategic value of the point has perhaps been overestimated by the British generals. Before long the dispatches from the front should show whether the plan General Buller has so carefully prepared is successful, or whether the Boers have another surprise to be sprung at the proper moment.

One thing is clear. The British have learnt that their tactics, however technically correct, had to be changed, owing to the peculiar mode of warfare of the Boers, as well as the formation of the country. Their mistakes have already cost them over 8,000 men. With new tactics, Buller will before many more hours have either established himself as the greatest general of the British army, or have suffered a crushing defeat, from which he will but late recover.

RATS AND THE PLAGUE.

In a lecture on the plague, Dr. Manson, a scientist of high reputation, is said to have declared that that epidemic is to be feared more than a devastating war. He evidently has no confidence in the assertion that the unwelcome guest is not likely to visit the centers of western civilization, for he advises a war of extermination on rats and mice, as a precaution against the spread of the disease. On this point he is quoted as follows:

"At the present juncture, were I the responsible sanitary head of any town in Europe, in anticipation of a possibility, compared to which in horror and in destructiveness a general European war would be a trifle, I would do my utmost to have every rat and, if possible, every mouse in my district promptly exterminated. This done, I would contemplate the approach of plague with equanimity. It seems to me that the present measures of plague prevention are like bolting the window against a thief whilst the front door is left wide open; moreover, they are exceedingly expensive, exceedingly irksome, exceedingly unpopular and to the least of them the destruction of rats would be a cheap measure. In the carrying of it out no one except the rat-catcher need be seriously put about. Efficiently carried out, it would certainly enormously diminish the risk of an introduced plague becoming a pestilence. If ever a sanitary measure was indicated by common sense, it is the destruction of rats in anticipation of threatened plague. It requires considerable courage to speak of so insignificant a creature as a rat in connection with the diseases and dangers of so dignified a creature as man. Those who think and speak as I have done expose themselves to the ridicule of the irresponsible smart writer and such like."

Common sense, which often is the most sound philosophy, suggests the wisdom of adopting measures of prevention in times of danger. All contagious diseases spread in places where filth accumulates. Clean houses, pure air, good water, sufficient clothing and nourishment, and ample exercise are the antidotes of all kinds of plagues.

The Sacramento Bee calls attention to the fact that an ordinance has recently been passed in that city, forbidding the Chinese laundrymen to spray the clothes with water blown from the mouth. The ordinance is sensible. It stands to reason that if the laundryman is a victim of some disease the water ejected from his mouth will carry disease germs to the clothes.

Boards of health that understand their duties will see to it in the first place that all conditions favorable to the cultivation of microbes, and their communication from place to place are removed, if possible. When they have done that conscientiously and to the best of their ability, they need not expend energy on maintaining a panic.

The iron trade is said to be at a deadlock. As the metal is good luck material it may be some time before there is a break.

The Transvaal state secretary refers to Rudyard Kipling as Medway Piping. There certainly is considerable "mud" in Kipling's writings wherein

he refers to people who do not worship at the same shrine with him.

Already the woes of the intending visitor to the Paris exposition have begun. Steamship lines are refusing to book large excursions.

Gen. Warren is on Spion Kop, one of the Boer "mosquito posts"—an advance position held by a small body of troops. The British public is worrying already as to how he will get off.

If the Topeka Capital's proposition to give the country a Christian daily for one week should result in publishing a really Christian paper for that length of time, it will be a boon to the country as well as a boom for the Capital.

The success of Dr. Hedder's invention to remove the objectionable features attending the administration of chloroform will be eagerly desired by the leading men of the medical profession, as well as by those who fill the place of patients.

After a while the Filipino insurgent leaders will recognize that the only way for them to meet a civil commission from the American administration, is by abandoning their own methods which call for the use of the military arm of the service.

Berlin military experts say Gen. Buller's line of retreat is endangered. The British commander said there was no line of retreat when he made the announcement to his troops that he would not turn back. We will soon learn which is the better judge of the situation on the Tugela.

The "day of prayer" in Kentucky does not seem to have had the desired effect, since the assembling of more than a thousand armed men in the state capital today looks like a continuance of Kentucky's humiliation in the eyes of more peaceably inclined commonwealths.

Thinking men who are members of Congress will recognize at once the fact that Representative Wilson knows something of the "Mormon" people. Recognizing that, the measure they must perform apply to Representative Landis' knowledge and veracity will not place the Indian in high esteem among decent men.

There is a paper which, when anybody denounces Utah and heaps abuse upon its people and leading citizens, comes to the rescue with the base declaration that such conduct is pleading for law and decency. At other times the same paper poses as the friend of Utah, and pleads for public confidence and patronage. The question is respectfully submitted to Mr. Sheldon, whether such journalism is "Christian" or pagan.

"Vaccination is an almost certain assurance that if the disease is encountered, it will be in a light and comparatively harmless form." From this statement by a contemporary two conclusions are possible. Either the soldiers reported dead of smallpox by General Otis had been forgotten when the physician vaccinated the boys; or death from smallpox is "light and comparatively harmless." To be sure, there is a third possibility, remote of course, that the paper quoted is deliberately making a misstatement. The public is the best judge as to that.

Gen. Buller has reported the capture of Spion Kop. The announcement that the garrison was but small, and fled on the entrance of the British, would make it appear that the Boers did not attach great importance to the place, or a stronger effort would have been made to hold it. Gen. Buller's bulletin further contradicts the many British estimates of a big force of Boers, and shows that the latter are not numerous. A third feature is that the slow progress of the advancing force in five days' fighting from Wednesday last indicates that the relief of Ladysmith is still a severe task.

It was quite refreshing to note the unanimity of the City Council on the question of maintaining the rights of the municipality in the water dispute which is to come into the courts. There was no party fight over that matter. We respectfully suggest that the people of Salt Lake City will feel much better satisfied with the doings of the members of the Council, if party contests over public questions which do not properly relate to political squabbles were made conspicuous by their absence from public debates. Both parties in that body should view subjects presented entirely without party spectacles. If a measure is good, it should prevail, no matter who presents it. If it is bad, it should be voted down, and no party exigency or partisan sentiment should enter into its investigation. The public welfare should be the chief consideration.

GEN. BULLER'S ADVANCE.

Boston Herald.

Sir Redvers began his turning movement on Wednesday of last week, and marched in a rather leisurely manner to the northwest for a distance of some fifteen miles, crossing the Little Tugela and then turning northward to Potgieters' drift, or ford, on the main stream. Gen. Warren's division advanced on a parallel line to Treacher's drift, a ford about five miles above Potgieters'. This long march was made without any molestation from the Boers, a surprise so unlike the enterprise which the mounted infantry of the burghers have displayed on other occasions that we can account for it only on the supposition that Gen. Joubert was unwilling to extend his right flank so far. It was certainly not for lack of a fair opportunity that Joubert refrained from striking, for the British transport train offered a tempting mark, extending, as it did, for several miles and containing no fewer than 5,000 vehicles, some of which, doubtless, carried supplies of provisions for the beleaguered garrison of Ladysmith.

Chicago News.

Gen. Buller, on the eve of moving his troops against the Boers for the relief of Ladysmith—an enterprise the result of which the civilized world is expectantly waiting—telegraphed a member of his family: "I don't know whether this thing can be done, but if I can I mean to do it." These are memorable words—the utterance of a brave, cool-headed man face to face with a gigantic and perilous undertaking.

Boston Transcript.

To concentrate an available force against Buller, whose extreme left ad-

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Z. C. M. I. T. G. WEBBER, Supt.

vance is now within a few miles of Tintwa Pass. Joubert must relax his pressure on Sir George White's army at Ladysmith, thus affording the latter an opportunity to sail out and get in touch with the relieving force. Should Buller keep up the energy he now displays, Joubert may find himself compelled to make a hurried retreat, for he may be unequal in strength to fighting both the relieving army and the Ladysmith garrison. Of course it is possible that Buller may neglect the task for the moment, and swinging sharply northeastward from Acton Homes, march directly for Ladysmith. In which event Joubert would have to look both ways while fighting. From Acton Homes to Ladysmith in a right line is thirty miles, a fact which suggests rather a long turning movement than a straightaway march from that point to Ladysmith.

Chicago Record.

It is possible, of course, that the advance of Lord Dundonald's force is merely part of a flanking movement which will not threaten the Boer communications, and it is a question whether the British are for once taking the aggressive in a well-considered plan of action which is very likely to maneuver the Boers out of their trenches.

BUBONIC PLAGUE.

Chicago News.

Bubonic plague, the terror of the orient, has made its appearance almost simultaneously at Manila, Adelaide and Honolulu. In the Philippines, in Australia and in Hawaii, fortunately, energy and intelligence are in command and every precaution possible will be taken not only to limit the plague but to stamp it out at once. In Manila the military government has already inaugurated an effective quarantine. Vigilant efforts are especially necessary, as there is no sewerage in the capital of the Philippines. In Honolulu drastic measures have been resorted to in the burning of the Chinese quarter of the city, where the deadly disease had affected a lodgment. With energetic action it is to be hoped the plague may be stayed.

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