

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

### THE PRESBYTERIAN MANIFESTO.

The Presbyterian church in Utah has issued a manifesto. It is not exactly of the kind of manifestos that have received attention in other quarters of late years, for these have had the consistency of being directed at the members of the Church which issued them, and to save instead of destroy. This Presbyterian affair is more like a bull of excommunication, and that it is a "bull" in another sense will be quickly recognized by every true Christian. The document is given in full in a morning paper, with the explanation that it is the report of a committee and was adopted April 6 at the recent session of the Utah Presbytery at Spanish Fork. Practically it is a decree excommunicating all Mormons or members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from the fellowship of Christians.

The "bull" presents ten alleged reasons for this extraordinary course. In these it makes certain statements regarding the Mormon Church. Some of them are partly true and some are wholly untrue. There is probably not one of them that is strictly accurate in its full expression. The opening one, for instance, says "the Mormon Church a churches all Christians." Of course there is not a word of truth in that, for the Mormons recognize the right of all men to worship as they please and the fact that many men have organized churches of their own; the Mormons even comprehend that the devil has a church, and they do not attempt to meddle with the business of or fulminate decrees against any of these. The Mormon Church never has "unchurched" a Christian; in fact it is the Christian Church, organized by the authority of Christ Himself. As a conclusion to its findings, the document bars the Mormon Church from having anything in common with Christians.

Of course we expect the Mormons to survive the shock, if any there be, and to rest secure in the knowledge that God is just and will reward them for their allegiance to His will—that He will save them from the awful woes of the perdition to which this arrogant, unmerciful, unchristian "bull" would consign them, along with the millions of innocent children that would come within the scope of the "infant damnation" doctrine but that the mercy, justice and power of God are not narrowed to the views of sectarian bigots. According to the reasoning of this "bull," Christ Himself was unchristian; and the Mormons can easily stand being classed with Him—that is what they are earnestly seeking.

### A GIRL PREDICTS WAR.

Mlle. Couesdon is the name of a young girl who at present is causing considerable stir in Paris. She claims to be in communication with the angel

Gabriel and there is, according to all accounts, such a rush to see her that the street in front of her house is crowded and a special service of policemen is needed to keep order.

Her psychological condition is a puzzle to physicians. Two years ago she commenced to foretell with astonishing accuracy, it is said, things that were to befall her friends. But now her divination, or whatever it is, comprises the political field. She predicts the approaching fall of the Bourgeois ministry and says a European conflict is at hand, to be followed by a universal war. She predicts the defeat of England, and says France is to be partitioned and Paris destroyed by fire. Naturally the opinions as to her sincerity are divided. A great many believe that in her ecstatic condition she receives correct impressions of future events, while others view her in the light of a clever deceiver.

With regard to her predictions of war, it is clear enough that they may be only an echo of the war-blaze that have been sounded in every key since the last German-French outbreak, but which never have been more audible than at the present time. Statesmen recognize the perils of the position. Great Britain must sooner or later be forced to assert her hitherto undisturbed enjoyment of supremacy in maritime and industrial affairs, or lose it. Russia, in order to retain her power must seek new fields for expansion. Germany is not without ambition to set up a world empire of her own. Even without the aid of visitors from another world, it is therefore plain that a catastrophe is unavoidable, and it is by no means improbable that France will be one of the scenes of great suffering and destruction.

The appearance at this time in Paris of a herald of calamities probably will remind many readers of history of the fact that notable national events have often been preceded by predictions of the nature attributed to Mlle. Couesdon. The fall of the ancient capital of Judea and its capture by the Romans is a well known instance from ancient history. The French revolution with all its horrors was similarly foretold a few years before it took place, and that by a person who previously had laid no claim to prophetic gifts. Physicians and theologians may be puzzled over the psychological condition that enables some individuals to receive clear impressions of events that throw their shadows before them, but no doubt there is an explanation easy enough to the reflecting mind conversant to some extent with the true nature of man and his destiny on this earth.

### THE CHURCH AND PATRIOTISM.

If the subject did not take a very serious turn because of the specious manner in which it is handled, it would be quite amusing to observe the efforts of certain classes of people to establish an exclusive claim to Americanism, or patriotic support of

the United States government, for themselves, especially against the Mormons acting in Church capacity. These efforts have received considerable prominence of late, and in them has been the uniform assumption that the Church of necessity must be unpatriotic and antagonistic to the interests of the State. The truth is that, so far as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is concerned, the very opposite is the fact.

We recall a remark of Hon. J. N. Croes, of New York, one of the emigration commissioners sent to Europe by the United States in 1891. In reference to the Latter-day Saints he said: "The Mormon Church is the most patriotic of all churches so far as the United States is concerned. It is Americanism in the fullest sense in its belief that the Constitution is a revelation from God, and that the United States is the land of Zion where the beautiful city is to be built." Judge Croes had made a thorough investigation, and arrived at a conclusion which every intelligent and broadminded man would reach on the facts that exist.

There has been considerable said in this locality of late about obedience to the Priesthood as being "contrary to the genius of the government of the United States and anti-scriptural," and "in violation of the Doctrine and Covenants of the Mormon Church." Yet with a strange inconsistency advocates of that position quote from the Bible the Savior's teaching that the things of Cæsar should be rendered to Cæsar, and from the Doctrine and Covenants regarding the obligation of men to earthly governments and to their Maker; and they add that these references "deny the jurisdiction of the Priesthood on anything but spiritual concerns." The conclusion thus arrived at is wholly at variance with the facts, particularly when "spiritual concerns" are interpreted as being apart from temporal actions.

The doctrine enunciated by the Savior in the reference made, and reasserted in the Doctrine and Covenants, is an emphatic claim for the Priesthood to direct in spiritual and temporal affairs. The Priesthood, as we mean it here, is the authority of Jesus Christ, exercised either in His person or by those whom He has called to act. In the words attributed to Him in the scripture He assumes not only to direct the people in "spiritual concerns," but to command them as to what they shall do in their relation to earthly matters. On the occasion referred to in Judea, He commanded the people to be obedient to the law then in force, notwithstanding the fact that it was exceedingly distasteful to the Jews, upon whom it was oppressive. The Savior's attitude there effectually disposes of the claim that obedience to the Priesthood is unscriptural, and establishes the contrary.

Now as to later times, and the allegation that such obedience is contrary to the genius of the United States government, or to the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints; this allegation is completely overturned, so far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned, by the fact that they recognize that the Constitution of the United States is inspired of