

# DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHARLES W. PENROSE, EDITOR.

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## A BASE FALSEHOOD.

THE *Democrat* of this city has lately contained a number of statements in regard to local affairs that are not only incorrect but bear the impress of a malicious hand, bent on misrepresentation. Some of these have been noticed in our city news columns. There is one that appeared on Friday evening last which we believed to be false when we read it, and we have taken some pains to learn whether there was any excuse for the libel, before undertaking to refute it. It is an attempt to array against each other Angus M. Cannon and John Sharp.

The *Democrat*, under sarcastic headings, relates that President Cannon, in a recent "red hot sermon," dwelt with "demoniacal vehemence" upon John Sharp's case, and that "he stated he, with others, had received while at the Pen new spring mattress with the compliments of Bishop Sharp;" that he "had enjoyed its excellent comfort immensely," until he found it had come from one who had "violated the most sacred of covenants," when he "returned to his former hard and undesirable couch which now had become a paradise compared with the gift of dishonor." There is more of the story in the same strain, with sundry comments and epithets that we will not repeat.

Now the story is a falsehood. Angus M. Cannon never used the language attributed to him, nor said he had received a mattress from John Sharp, nor that he had rejected such a gift. As a matter of fact, as Mr. Sharp knows, no such gift was sent to Mr. Cannon. He purchased the mattress which he occupied at the penitentiary and it came from Henry Dinwoodey's. He received other favors such as fine fruit, which, with the rest of the brethren in bondage, he highly appreciated, and which came from John Sharp's own garden, and was grateful for the kindness thus displayed and in the visits he paid to the pen.

It is one thing to dissent from a man's policy in a given case, and another thing to reject his professed kindness and speak disparagingly of his character. From the personal knowledge of the writer, Hon. John Sharp, among his many close associates has no warmer or truer friend than President Angus M. Cannon.

## THEY ARE ALL DOWN ON HIM.

THE nonsense uttered by Gen. Dement, or some dispatch fiend who has worked it up from something dropped by the Surveyor General, has made quite a breeze among the F. O. H.'s in this city. If he had confined his Munchausenisms to the "Mormons" it would have been considered quite legitimate. A Federal appointee who has not yet been confirmed may work the "Mormon"-hating dodge for all it is worth to effect his confirmation. But when it comes to imputing fraud to the whole fraternity of officials in Utah, that is taking a long step too far.

If Dement has adopted this course for the purpose of securing his position, he has only followed the lead of others. Judges have been known to exceed their duty and go beyond all precedent and settled constructions of law in order to convict prominent "Mormons," for the very same purpose as that alleged against Dement. The only difference is that the Surveyor General has included in one broad sweep both the "Mormons" and their local enemies. Therefore while the former have been applauded the latter is condemned.

When General Dement first arrived he dealt out several yards of taffy through an obscure evening journal, and the F. O. H.'s were a little dubious because he announced himself free from prejudice and determined to ignore religious and sectional differences. At Fort Douglas, though, at a reception of the Federal officials here, after the liquid inspiration had begun to take effect, he let himself loose on the local question and ranged himself on the side of those who "knew no party" in their war upon the "Mormons." The organ of the F. O. H.'s then patted him on the back and he was waxed and lettered as one of the right sort. But now the *Tribune* calls him an "impractical egotist determined to make a sensation," "a sorry ass," says "it is not worth while to call him a liar," but does say that he is "a sorry fool." And the *Democrat*, which published his self-laudatory effusions, in a milder way as is its wont, expresses similar contempt for the general accuser without descending to the low language of its morning associate.

If Gen. Dement's story is tested before Gen. Dement is confirmed, we are of the opinion that he will not be known as the Surveyor-General for Utah. He will be sent to survey the wreck of his ruined hopes and to search for that "documentary evidence" with which he was going to prove how Senators and Representatives had been bought by the "Mormons."

Since the foregoing was in type dispatches have come to hand announcing that the pretended interview is a canard, for which Surveyor General Dement repudiates all responsibility; in fact, claims that it was concocted for his injury. We are pleased to record his denial.

## A DEFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

THE *San Bernardino Weekly Times*, edited and published by John Isaac who was once a resident of this city, has the following to say upon the past and prospective anti-"Mormon" legislation and the probable effect of the same. Anything in the defense of the rights of the Latter-day Saints from an outside source is so rare at the present time that such manly sentiments as are here expressed by one who has no sympathy for our creed, but has the courage to stand up for principle, are doubly appreciable:

The annual anti-Mormon agitation is once more under full headway, and Congress is dealing at the present time with a most remarkable bill for the handling of this question. The Edmunds bill is the most outrageous measure that was ever attempted to pass Congress for any purpose whatever. If a man be guilty of breaking the laws, whether Mormon or otherwise, he should pay the penalty, but this only after a fair trial and conviction. But our laws and rules of evidence are all reversed in order to reach this peculiar people, and to punish them because they are peculiar. An anti-polygamy law is in force, which is being vigorously enforced; but not content with punishing the men who have been guilty of violating the law, it is now sought to punish the whole people for this belief; a belief, too, for which the Bible gives ample authority. A man has the God-given right to believe in anything. He may believe in polygamy, robbery, murder, or any other statute crime, and so long as he does not attempt to put the belief into practice he cannot be punished. It would have been a strange thing had we in California hanged Kearney because he believed in and advocated the murder of certain men. He was not only allowed the freedom of his belief, but the liberty to mouth it. But an effort is making to punish the Mormons, not for what they have done, but for what they believe.

It is a theory of our common law that a man shall be considered innocent until he is proven guilty; and that the burden of proof is thrown upon his accuser. A law is now in force in Utah which reverses this, and assumes that a Mormon shall be considered guilty, and the burden of proof of innocence is thrown upon him. He is punished by disfranchisement, until by oath before a commission he establishes his innocence. Suppose the same rule applied to California, and that every man before he was allowed to vote had to prove that he had never been guilty of highway robbery, committed burglary or other crime. Yet the one case is fair as the other. The Edmunds bill is *ex post facto*, in that it provides for punishing Mormons for offenses committed before there was any law applicable to them, and is, of course, special legislation, as it is designed to crush them out because they are unpopular. It provides for a congressional committee to take charge of the affairs of the Mormon church and administer them. Apply the same rule to every church in the land. If fair in one instance, it is fair in all. It provides for a committee to wind up the affairs of the Immigration Fund and appropriate its means. Apply the same rule to every incorporated town in the United States. It provides that husband or wife can be put upon the witness stand and made to testify against the other. Let the same rule apply in every court in the country. We believe that even a Mormon has some rights that should be respected, especially when an infringement of those rights may establish a precedent that will some day be turned against ourselves. Let Congress appoint a committee to take charge of the Mormon Church and California may follow suit and take charge of the Catholic or the Methodist or any other church, and rob them of their property, as it is now proposed to do with the Mormons. If Congress has this power over a church in the Territories then each State has the same authority within its domain.

The Mormon question is one that is not generally understood. These people are not being opposed simply because they are disobeying the laws of the Union, for the number of polygamists among the Mormons is very small in proportion to their membership, but the trouble is a political one embittered by religious prejudices, and aided by the double government, Territorial and Federal. The Mormons, being largely in the majority, of course fill all the Territorial offices; the Gentiles are

much in the minority, want them, and to this end are working to disfranchise the entire Mormon people. The Federal offices are filled by Gentiles, and here is a leverage for persecution given them. There is a perpetual conflict between the two, in which continual incursions and reprisals on each other occur. A feeling of bitterness, more intense than can be found elsewhere in America, has been the result, and nothing that will tend to bring them into disfavor in the nation is omitted. The Mormon question has hence become more odorous on account of this continued ferment than it would have been, and has assumed false proportions. The best way to handle it is to strictly enforce the laws now in force, and leave the Mormons in the enjoyment of the rights of other American citizens, for it is an outrage to attempt other; and the measures proposed by the Edmunds bill are such as threaten every other sect and corporation in our land."

## AN EVIL THAT SHOULD BE ABATED.

As we suggested when the news first arrived here of the sensational statements credited to General Dement, the dispatch fiend is responsible for much of the nonsense that has appeared in the papers in regard to alleged frauds in Utah. Gen. Dement's denial, however, appears a little too sweeping. It is hardly to be supposed that the enterprising reporter has manufactured the entire fabric of the stories sent over the wires. We believe Dement has given a few threads into the hands of some ingenious interviewer, who has colored them with his own dye and woven them into the glaring garment of falsehood which has been exhibited to the country.

The story has served one purpose, though. It has tended to show the manner in which certain journalists that praised Dement when he uttered sentences which could be construed into hostility against the "Mormons," turned round and abused him with vehement scurrility when he was supposed to have said something severe about the "Gentiles." The truth or falsehood of his words cut no figure in either case; he was a fine fellow with a "broad grasp of the situation," in one case, and a "sorry ass" and "impractical egotist" in the other, simply because in the latter case he did not confine his ebullitions of spleen to the "Mormons."

The ordinary interview is frequently little but the imaginings of a versatile Bohemian. It is an unreliable but taking piece of journalistic "enterprise." It seldom conveys the ideas of the victim who is "interviewed," and scarcely ever presents them in their naked originality, being dressed up to suit the reporter without regard to the feelings or wishes of the speaker. It is one of the modes of reckless lying that is common to many newspapers, and it ought to be checked by the power of the law.

It should be made a criminal offense to misrepresent any person in the way in which Gen. Dement is said to have been injured through the public prints. A reporter who will put words into a man's mouth that he never uttered, and have them spread abroad to make him appear either a knave or a fool in the eyes of the world, ought to be severely punished. These frequent deceptions that are practiced under the name of interviews, are a disgrace to journalism, and it is time something should be done to protect public men from being scandalized in this way, and the community from being imposed upon.

Still more criminal and despicable are the libels which unprincipled papers publish with impunity, such as those about Joseph W. McMurrin, which have appeared in the *Tribune* and *Democrat* of this city. They are all the more cowardly and contemptible because the writers think they are in no danger of saying what they please about a man in his situation. We refer to his case merely as a sample of the personal scandals in which some sheets indulge, and to show the necessity of a remedy against the evil. The bogus interviewer and the libelous reporter are both public nuisances, and the sooner they are abated the better it will be for respectable journalism and a deceived and suffering public.

## MORE EXECUTIVE ANTICS.

THE Governor has vetoed the bill for the compilation of the laws of Utah. Of course. If he cannot dictate he will obstruct. If the Assembly will not enact just such laws as "I, Eli H. Murray," think useful, they shan't pass any. All this shows the tremendous power and the infinitesimal magnanimity of the peacock Executive of this afflicted Territory.

The pretense that certain officers whose position he does not wish to recognize will have to handle \$10,000 of public funds, is ridiculous. The Treasurer will hold that money if it is not disbursed; and both he and the Auditor were solid enough to hold and disburse money in which the Governor had a personal interest, and more in the disposition of which he had a voice as an Insane Asylum Director. The laws which he pretends are in

conflict with acts of Congress are merely these providing for the election of those officers, while he wants to appoint them, and he takes this opportunity of parading his pretended loyalty to the United States, for the purpose of making a false impression on the country as to the laws of Utah. It is infinitely mean but highly characteristic.

There are now five books containing laws, many of which are in conflict because of amendments and repeals, and at the close of the present session one more book will be added to increase the muddle and play into the hands of pettifoggers. A compilation is needed and ought to be accomplished without delay. But never mind, the public can endure it for a little while, and when the present obstructionist, like others, has returned to his normal obscurity, they will be able to smile at his antics, while they despise the spirit in which he stood in the way of the interests of the Territory. "Every dog has his day," and the evening shades of the day of the obstructionist will very soon appear.

## THE PRESIDENT AND THE SENATE.

THE conflict between the President and the Senate over the removal from office of a number of Republicans to make way for Democrats threatens to be serious, but it will not probably be attended with any disastrous results. There is really no reason why there should be any great difficulty. The right of the President to make the changes that he has attempted is undeniable. It is also the right of the Senate to refuse to confirm the appointments.

There ought to be harmony between the President and the Senate, but this is hardly to be expected when the majority of the upper House are the political opponents of the Executive. The Senate may ask for the reasons of the President for the removals, but it cannot compel their production.

The President, however, has given a little advantage to Republican Senators by his announcement at his inauguration that officials would not be removed except for cause, and that Republicans would not be ejected for party reasons unless they had used their offices for party purposes. Now they naturally want to find out whether the President has acted upon the policy which he himself defined. He has positively refused to accede to the request to furnish the information desired in certain cases, and the probability is that the Senate will so treat him as to vote for the President's nominees.

This will only be serious for the appointees, and if the President chooses to stand by their appointment it will not be fatal to them, for he can renew it at the close of the session, and have his way in spite of factious opposition.

The Democratic Senators approve of the action of the President in refusing to give his reasons for making the official changes he deems necessary for the public good, and the question now is, what are the Republican Senators going to do about it? Being in the majority they can prevent the confirmation of the appointments, but if they do this simply because the President exercises an undeniable right they will place themselves in a bad position before the country, and their course will be considered as partisan obstruction. The advantages are on the side of the Executive and the Senate will no doubt see the point.

## PONDER A LITTLE.

THE *Washington Critic* says:

In the opinion of the *DESERET NEWS*, the leading Mormon newspaper at Salt Lake, the new Edmunds bill for the extinction of polygamy and other purposes, is "a monstrous and dishonest measure." There are many newspapers outside of Zion that think about the same way, and they are not advocates of polygamy either. There are features of the Edmunds bill which an American Congress should ponder well before endorsing. The opinion is quite general that the Senate didn't ponder over them long enough."

"Ponder" is good. If Congress would ponder over the "Mormon" question long enough to understand it, we should have no such "monstrous and dishonest measures" as that which is designed to plunder a Church and ruin it by national interference—a union of State and Church.

It was because neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives would stop to ponder upon the question, that the Edmunds law was enacted, in wild confusion and stoppage of debate. It is because editors will not ponder long enough on this question that they print such rubbish about "Mormonism" and endorse the most shameful means to do violence to the Constitution and the rights of man. It is because the people of the United States do not ponder over this matter, that they are worked up by sectarian hirelings and raging fanatics into burning hostility against a creed about which they know nothing, and a people whose virtues should outweigh the supposed evil which prejudice and ignorance have magnified into such huge proportions.

Some day the nation and the world will get over its madness enough to

ponder a little, and people will find out what fools they have made of themselves over a system designed for the permanent benefit of the whole human race.

## THE GOVERNOR'S DESIGN.

THE course of Governor Murray from the opening of the present session of the Legislature, indicates very plainly the object he has in view. The desire of his heart is to bring this Territory under control of an oligarchy with himself at the head. The opportunities this would afford would throw the facilities of a Kentucky Marshalship completely into the shade.

Everything would be cast into confusion. Old laws could be repealed, new ones fixed up to suit the schemes of the framers, taxes could be imposed, to be gathered and manipulated by persons in cahoots with their appointees, offices and funds would be at the disposal of the Commission and their chief, and who could calculate the cost to the Territory or the profits to the plunderers?

The Governor is evidently determined to block the wheels of local government by vetoing bills that are necessary to its maintenance. His senseless excuse for refusing to sign the compilation bill exposes his purpose. He will not endorse the handling of \$10,000 by men who have handled over \$400,000 during the past two years, on the same authority and bonds which he says are invalid. Yet he acknowledges they are *de facto* officers, and thus virtually admits their official competency for the purpose required by the bill.

Those officers were "legal" enough to handle the \$2,000 which the Governor drew for his own use, and the \$51,697.49 drawn and expended under the direction of the Insane Asylum directors, of whom he was one. They had no more authority and no less than they have now, or will have if they continue in office for two years longer.

And here comes in an important query. How does the Governor know that those officials, whom he judicially announces are not "legal officers," will have the handling of the public funds during the next two years? Is he not rather "previous" in his assumption? He has made some nominations, which have not yet been acted upon by the Council, and until that body reports on the nominations how does he know what will be the result? Is he conscious of the unfitness of the persons he recommended? Did he know beforehand that they were such as the Council were not likely to endorse? Did he choose names purposely that would be sure to be rejected by the appointing body? If not, how does he know officially, and so certainly as to use it as an excuse for vetoing an important measure, that the present incumbents will be continued in office for the ensuing two years?

The whole veto message is a paltry piece of clap-trap, made up for effect at Washington. It affords an opportunity to repeat the deceptive chestnut that a number of Utah statutes are "in direct conflict with the laws of Congress," a fabrication which he knows many will swallow without examination. By arresting the progress of the Territory, by cutting off the financial fluid that keeps in motion the local machinery, he thinks to bring about a crisis that will result in the establishment of a Legislative Commission headed by the Governor. That is his little project, and to it all his small plottings and paltry Jeremy-diddlings tend.

He wants to play the tyrant. He does it now to the extent of his power. We shall see how much success he will achieve. He can plant himself in the way of needed legislation, but the Territory can live without it. He may gain what he is working for, but we doubt it. In any case, the people can endure whatever befalls them, and will live and flourish when his kind are so politically dead and damned that no earthly power can bring them out of limbo.

Let the Legislature go on and enact such bills as the people who elected them desire, and if there are no funds for use for public purposes, let the responsibility fall upon an obstructing Executive and not upon a working Assembly.

## PERPETUAL SUCCESSION.

THE bottle-scarred scribe of the lockers' organ has been let loose again, and his ravings occupy considerable space in contrast to respectable articles. Much of the froth that he mouths at the *News* requires no notice; it is only evidence of his degenerate condition. But why the *Tribune* prints such long effusions without point is a mystery. The only thing that is worthy of passing comment in all this morning's ebullitions, is the repetition of the error that when a man is not re-elected to office he is "bounced," or "dropped," or "fired out."

On this rule the scribe himself was bounced from the office, which is now filled by a fitter person, and of course he was not "fired out" for nothing. Every Congressman who is succeeded by another is "dropped," every Federal official whose term expires and who is not re-appointed is fired out; and