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AS TO "CHURCH INFLUENCE."

The subject of Church influence in politics still seems to trouble some of the public journals. Of course this means "Mormon" Church influence. Anything that may be done by sectarian ministers, no matter of what denomination—unless it may be Catholic dignitaries—is not taken into account in this contention. It appears to be taken for granted that a "Mormon" Apostle or Elder endeavors to influence citizens to vote for the candidates whom he supports, unlawful or improper influence is thus exercised, and something ought to be done to check or destroy it.

It is both amusing and amazing to read the nonsense that appears on this matter, in papers supposed to be conducted by men of brains. A "Mormon" churchman is as much a citizen, with as many political rights and privileges, as one who does not belong to the same religious society or to any sect or association whatever. There is no law or regulation which forbids him to exercise his influence among his fellow citizens in behalf of a man or a measure that he thinks ought to succeed. Some people assert it would be better and show more good taste, if men prominent in church affairs abstained from actual participation in political affairs. Supposing that to be true or a popular view, it is then only a matter of opinion or of policy, it is not a question of actual right or wrong.

As the Deseret News has often declared, there might be just grounds for complaint, if an influential "Mormon" exercised coercion, in any degree or form upon citizens, compelling them by any means or power to vote contrary to their own convictions or desires. That is not even alleged by disaffected or defeated candidates for public office. But the notion appears to be entertained, that some un-American and unlawful act is perpetrated, when a "Mormon" Apostle, or Elder or Bishop, has tried to persuade people to support a party, or a ticket, or nominee for any official position.

In the late general election, it is claimed, the Republican ticket was successful through the exercise of that kind of influence. But not a single voter is named as one who was subjected to any force, or threat, or undue pressure. And the nearly 40,000 votes on the Democratic side, the large majority of which were cast by "Mormon" citizens, seem to be entirely ignored in the sweeping and senseless charges of Church influence, preferred as a sufficient manner of accounting for the political change in Utah, which also occurred in other States, where "Mormons" Church influence is nil.

We here append a sensible editorial from the *Malad Enterprise*, which we commend to all candid thinkers, and coming from a non-"Mormon" source it ought to have some weight with a certain class of complainants:

"Ever since election the local papers of this country have been saying a great deal about 'church influence,' and from the organs of both parties come charges that men who hold high positions in the 'Mormon' Church use their influence, as Church officials, to promote the interests of the political party to which they belong. Possibly these charges, to some extent, are right, but we believe that both parties are equally guilty, and we cannot see where anybody has any occasion to complain except those who were defeated. The managers of both parties did their level best to elect their ticket, and could they have done so by the exercise of church influence or most any other kind of influence, that influence would have been exercised. Since certain candidates on both tickets have met with defeat, it is our opinion that the leaders and papers of all political parties should either refrain from mentioning these things at all, or else make a clean breast of it and admit that all individuals are so equal in the eyes of the law, that they are all equally entitled to the exercise of their own influence, because they happen to hold some position in the church, while others are defended for doing the same things simply because they are only 'lay members.' This, it seems to us, is most inconsistent, for we firmly believe that the only way church influence can be exercised is by arousing sympathy for, or prejudice against certain candidates, and it makes but little difference whether that sympathy is aroused by an Apostle, a Bishop, or a counsellor or Elder. We do not believe that any man in the 'Mormon' Church has sufficient influence with the people to absolutely dictate to them what ticket they shall vote."

We will add the assertion, that it cannot be proved that any Church official has attempted to "dictate" voters "what ticket they should vote." We have never heard of a charge of this kind that could be supported by the slightest evidence. In the elections in this State there has never been a Church ticket. The Church authorities have not made any requirement of its members as to voting. Every one has been entirely free in this respect. If a prominent churchman has exercised his full privileges as a citizen, the use of free speech included, he has issued no order, decree, manifesto, or requisition upon any voter respecting a ticket or a candidate.

Now we are not arguing on the question of good taste, Church policy, or any other such matter of opinion, as to what high ecclesiastics should do or refrain from doing. That is something for them to decide, and it is nobody's business but theirs. What we contend for is the right of every citizen of this great nation to support or oppose any candidate for public office, and to use his influence, without force or coercion of any kind, to induce others to follow his example.

We reiterate the notion that when a citizen is clothed with Church authority he loses any right or privilege of citizenship. We deny the charge that the "Mormon" people are turned either or thither by the dictum of Church leaders. We assert most emphatically that the "Mormon" people are perfectly and entirely free in political affairs, and that they exercise that freedom as a matter of fact when they go to the polls.

The nonsense that appears in some papers, and that is uttered by some disappointed politicians to the contrary, is astonishing and positively absurd. It is time we had a rest from such ridiculous rhodomontades.

MONEY FOR FILIPINOS.

Among the measures to be considered by Congress is one for the facilitating of commerce among the Filipinos. At present much of the business is carried on by barter, money being too scarce for general circulation. The silver dollars are chiefly Mexican. Paper money is almost unknown, and what little gold there is, is hoarded in the sections where there is no disturbance. The plan is to create a special system of insular coinage, the unit of which is to be a silver dollar of about the same weight and fineness as the Mexican dollar. This coin is not to be legal tender in the United States, but will be guaranteed by a promise of this government to redeem it at the value of 50 cents in gold. The silver is to be bought, partly in the islands, and provision will be made for the redemption of the Mexican dollars. The greatest part of the silver needed for this coinage will, however, be bought from American mine owners, but the coinage will be done at Manila, by the government mint.

The supposition is that these new dollars will circulate in Hongkong, the Straits Settlements, China and Japan. The unsettled affairs in China are said to have greatly disturbed the exchange. Mexican dollars are becoming few in Manila, and a medium of trade is urgently needed. The plan suggested seems to be feasible. It aims at the establishment of better business methods among the Filipinos, and at the same time it creates further demand for the output of American silver mines.

THE BOERS STILL STRUGGLING.

The activity of the South African Boers at this time is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable surprises of a war that has furnished so many unexpected turns. Still, it cannot be supposed that these successes will be of any material and lasting benefit to the valiant burghers. They cannot even keep their captives, but are under the necessity of liberating them, as soon as they have taken their arms and ammunition. And thus the effects of their victories are almost nil. It is, to all appearance, a hopeless struggle, which they had better end without further sacrifice of life and property.

The prolongation of the war means a heavier ax to settle in the end. It is now conservatively estimated that the campaign costs Great Britain \$20,000,000 a month. There are 250,000 troops under arms in South Africa, many of these being colonial soldiers at exceptionally high rates of pay. All this will at some time have to come out of the resources of the country, by taxation, and when the products of the mines and the soil are to carry this financial burden, it may be that the present patriotic efforts of the Boer armies will be but little appreciated.

Great Britain is now pursuing in South Africa the storm policy for which Cromwell subdued Ireland; Turkey, Greece, Napoleon, Spain, and Germany the French provinces. It may be justly criticized, but in all probability it will be successful, measured by the standard of war.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Kruger is silent and as invariable as the Egyptian sphinx. If he has any further hopes he does not take the public into his confidence. His business now ought to be with the British government, if nothing can be obtained by a cessation of hostilities and an appeal to the magnanimity of the English people, the Boer republics are completely lost.

THE POPE'S TEMPORAL POWER.

Archbishop Ireland has recently, in a public address in Washington, prophesied that at no late day the Italian people and Christendom would give back to the papacy "its wonted dignity and liberty." It is supposed that the speaker meant that the temporal power of the head of the Roman church would be restored "at no late day." As reported, he argued thus on the question of the alleged divine right of the pontiff to sovereignty:

"The Catholic church is a divinely created organism, receiving directly from Christ its mission and all the rights which are needed that it may live and work; its life and mission are expressed in its supreme chief, the successor of Peter, and in him being in a preeminent manner all the rights inherent in the church, and whose possession is needed for fulfillment of its mission and work willed by Christ. Hence the pontiff's right to independence and as a consequence to temporal sovereignty."

THE POLYGAMY AMENDMENT.

The New York Mail and Express takes about a dead issue: "Complete suppression of polygamy through the agency of a constitutional amendment will not improve the country as so important a feature of the bill introduced into Congress by Representative Taylor, of Ohio, as that of securing by such an amendment the power to enact uniform marriage and divorce laws. There is a national statute against polygamy, and while the 'Mormon' religion itself seems to be gaining ground, the plural wives system is dying out in Utah under the operation of this law and of natural conditions. But the conflicting laws of the several States, by which, as Chairman Ray, of the House judiciary committee, remarks, 'a man may be lawfully married to a dozen different women residing respectively in a dozen different States,' present a form of polygamy which concerns the entire nation and for which no adequate remedy exists. Such a condition is the gravest of scandals and while it is allowed to continue, it throws just ground for the proposal that our American system has neglected to place the necessary safeguards about family life."

In that six-days bicycle so it seems that the race is to the strong alone, the weak ones falling out.

A London dispatch says that the latest form of trusts is that of polar dogs. Clearly another case of freeze-out.

Indiana has lynched two negro murderers. It seems about time for the Hoosier State to let the officers of the law have a turn at executing criminals.

The German Housewives' Society of New York has been distributing premiums to servant girls for long service. In Salt Lake servant girls are at a premium, and that for the shortest service.

A Chinese rebellion in progress has for its object the abolition of the "pig-tail." That surely would reduce the population of China. If the London Chronicle's assertion of the chief value of the queue is true.

A dispatch from Santiago de Cuba says the American ladies were not frightened by the earthquake there on Saturday night. It would take a great deal in Cuba to attain a result that a small mouse in America would accomplish.

Grasshoppers have taken the crops in several fertile valleys of Peru, until the people are left almost destitute. There are few people yet living in Utah who can remember how severe are the effects of a grasshopper plague.

Those who have to face a smallpox situation do not perform a public service by rushing to the board of health or the newspapers with exaggerated tales of disregard of quarantine. Wild stories that create a panic should be frowned down.

No wonder the British in South Africa admire Gen. Dewet. His courage and skill in breaking through their lines at Taba N'Chu after being beaten twice are of the stamp that brave men admire even in a foe they are trying to overcome.

Great Britain now wants to follow the American lead in compelling Turkey to pay up. Better wait till Jonathan has the cash, before deciding as to the utility of the scheme he adopted. The Turk is quite as slippery a politician at close quarters as at long range diplomacy.

Now there is talk of trouble between the United States and France over the latter's trying to secure South American territory. Worry is needless. French financiers can control the business of the territory referred to without risking anything on an invasion of the Monroe doctrine.

Cardinal Vaughan now charges that the political aggression of Russia and Germany is largely responsible for the anti-foreign attitude of the Chinese people. The statement is generally believed, but it is an unusual piece of work for a close representative of the Vatican to make the allegation against those powers just now.

The peril of those who "go down to the sea in ships" received another forcible illustration in the disaster to the German training ship at Malaga, Spain. How helpless even the life-boats were in the terrific storm is told in the fact that most of the men taken in during the heavier part of the gale were drowned.

The London Daily Mail Year Book solemnly declares that the United States have many able men but no one of conspicuous merit. The D. M. Y. B. will please remember that every American citizen is a sovereign, and that sovereigns above all men are conspicuous for their merits.

The announcement from South Africa that the British General Clements "retired in splendid order," sounds rather ironical in the face of the fact that recently Lord Roberts announced the war as practically over. No wonder the British public "grit their teeth," as a London dispatch says, and fail to see anything splendid for the British in Gen. Clements' stunning defeat.

A London report today says the Boers at Grange river have been "totally defeated." If the "total" feature had been omitted, the British would give greater credence to the dispatch. There has been too much confidence in the past in reporting the complete subjugation of the Boers, when in fact they were beaten only for the time being.

It is funny, yet pitiful to watch the gyrations and hysterical struggles of an erratic local contemporary, that either does not comprehend the rules of evidence or is oblivious to the verdict of its readers, and daily disproves its own assumptions, establishing the very opposite of that which it alleges. The asylum at Provo yawns for the reception of the unfortunate subject of chronic dementia.

Recently published vital statistics for France, for 1899, show a further shrinkage in the birthrate of that country. The births reported for that year were 847,627, which is 10,000 less than the average for the past decade. The excess of births over deaths was but 31,354. M. Bertillon, in an essay on these figures, says grimly that France

is in the position of a man dying under the influence of chloroform. Germany now has 55,000,000 inhabitants, and France but 38,000,000. It must be remembered, though, that this condition is not peculiar to France, though more pronounced there than in other countries. Throughout the civilized world, the shrinkage of the birthrate has been observed as a peculiar phenomenon.

A dumb girl in Boston has learned to talk. The hope of the man who prefers a silent wife seems to have been swept away at last. By the way, Boston cannot claim the lead in having a dumb person trained to speak. Salt Lake has a well-known citizen who acquired that accomplishment years ago, and makes such good use of it that all his companion workmen can understand him without difficulty.

It is a great improvement on the usual pabulum dealt out in the editorial columns of the Salt Lake Tribune, to copy from the Deseret News paragraphs containing irrefutable truths and undeniable facts. If the native vulgarity and venom of the Tribune editor were not conspicuous in ridiculous and vindictive comments, the readers of that paper would better appreciate that part of the Tribune containing the extracts from the "News" even though they are nearly a year old.

HAY-PAUNCEFOTE TREATY.

Although the Senate has discussed the Nicaragua canal project with closed doors in considering the Hay-Pauncefote treaty in executive session, enough is known of its proceedings to indicate very clearly the line of cleavage in debate. The line is so simple that it is none of Great Britain's business how we build the canal or where we build it, and that the world is ours, and that we will build it as we please, and that we will build it as we please, and that we will build it as we please.

Baltimore Sun.
An article in the London Times last week disparaged the Nicaragua canal project, and pointed out that British trade would still have an immense advantage in the use of the Suez canal for commerce with the Far East. The voyage to Calcutta, according to the Times, will be 6,000 miles farther by the Nicaragua route than by way of Suez. Hongkong is 4,000 miles nearer by Suez than by the Nicaragua canal. Yokohama 800 miles nearer, and Melbourne 1,400. In addition, the Times says, are far less than will be charged for the use of the Nicaragua canal route. British trade with South America, it is stated, is carried on mainly in sailing vessels, which, in the opinion of the Times, cannot use the Nicaragua canal, and a transfer to steam vessels is unlikely. "It is rather," concludes the Times, "to think that such a striking correction of nature may fall to pay its way, but these objections are serious and have not yet received all the attention they merit."

San Francisco Chronicle.
Senator Morgan is right. It is even doubtful whether it is desirable to take a step toward the building of the canal until entirely free from all entangling contracts with Europe in regard to it. That, by the way, is not Senator Morgan's view. He is for the canal, and he is for the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, with or without the Davis amendment. But the public is more and more coming to understand that the Hay-Pauncefote treaty virtually makes Great Britain our suzerain as to our relations with Central American states, and when once that indisputable fact comes to be thoroughly understood by the American people, it is to be feared that but a slight pretext would be required to plunge the nation into a war to get rid of that suzerainty. It is a dangerous matter. It is a national dishonor to concede the right of Great Britain to interfere in our relations with Central American states, and it is especially galling to a people who for generations have so stoutly maintained the Monroe doctrine, which is nullified by the acknowledgment of this alleged right of Great Britain.

Chicago Times-Herald.
There are many who believe that the isthmian water way is a question that should be left alone to be decided by thorough study and upon definite lines. Because the way now appears to be cleared for favorable consideration in Nicaragua, the United States is inclined to precipitate action. Better the loss of a year's time than a hastily considered makeshift which the nation will have occasion to regret in the future. The isthmian way will run away. It is there to stay.

Kansas City Star.
The creation of fortifications would be expensive and not be an adequate defense of themselves. Their presence would be a constant challenge to an attack on the canal in the event of war. It would be the most vulnerable point for a European power to hope to seize. Under the treaty, even as amended, the presumption would be that the neutrality of the canal would be respected. All considerations of ethical policy aside, the fortification of the water way would be a heavy expense of doubtful value. The Davis amendment recognizes this fact and at the same time is a concession to those who feared the Pacific coast would be too much exposed under the original treaty.

New York Mail and Express.
Assuming that there is to be no difficulty in making satisfactory arrangements with Central American republics that touch the banks of the San Juan river, which now seems to be assured, the only obstacle remaining is the old compact with Great Britain, embodied in the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and that can be easily and speedily got out of the way by a prompt ratification of the new Hay-Pauncefote agreement, which will have the further advantage of assuring the perpetual neutrality of the great commercial highway between the oceans, under the exclusive control of the United States.

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