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THE AMENDED EDMUNDS
MONSTROSITY.

A synopsis of the new Edmunds bill as amended by the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives will be found in our Washington dispatches. It was to be reported to-day and will take its place on the calendar. Whether it will stay there to come up in its order, or be advanced so as to make its passage possible this session, remains to be seen. It is considered by many Members of Congress a harsh and extreme measure, and will no doubt meet with considerable opposition.

If the full text of the bill as it now stands were before us, it would be easier to comment upon than the summary which is given by telegraph. The changes in the opening sections of the bill as it came from the Senate are an improvement. The legal wife is to be a competent witness, but not be compelled to testify against the husband in polygamous cases, and attachments for witnesses are not to issue on the mere belief of an officer that they would not obey a subpoena. But under the present sway of the courts it would be very easy to get the affidavit of two deputies, as required, whose word would be taken, no matter how little it might be worthy of credence or if they were totally unacquainted with the parties. Scores of arrests have been made during the present raid, on the sworn statements of the Marshal as to parties whose existence he knew nothing about except by hearsay.

The striking out of the section which extended the limitation time for prosecutions to five years instead of three years after the offence was committed, is quite consistent and proper, for the extension would virtually make a bigamous marriage worse than the highest of crimes except murder. The expunging of the provision that would authorize searches for private papers, to discover records of marriages, is also wise and protective of personal rights; the proposition was a direct attack upon constitutional guarantees.

The abolition of woman suffrage is a most cowardly provision, and is not justified by anything that has come before the committee. It can only be viewed as an expedient to diminish the "Mormon" vote so as to aid the minority. There would be far more consistency in taking away the ballot from all "Mormon" voters alike, than in singling out the fair sex and attempting to rob them of rights, which they have exercised for nearly sixteen years. The only reason that can be advanced for this oppression is that the women will not vote for the minority. But as this objection is equally urged against male voters, its special application to women voters is not visible with the most powerful legal or political microscope.

The rejection of the clause appointing trustees to manage the property of the "Mormon" Church shows good sense and regard for religious rights. But the committee, while sound on this question, seem to have lost their heads further on, when they make provision for the holding of real estate to a vast extent by religious denominations in the Territory, for whom they give the county courts power to appoint trustees "to hold church property." This is just as much a violation of religious rights, in principle, as the appointment of trustees by Congress or the President. The church or association of people that own the property should have the right to appoint their own trustees to hold it. The objection which the committee observed against the twelfth section of the original bill, they have overlooked and actually endorsed in the section which they have added in their amendments. The dissolution of the Church corporation and the Perpetual Emigration Fund corporation will have no perceptible effects other than such as may arise from litigation that may be attempted by apostate malcontents. But this cannot have any other results than some trouble to all parties and fees to lawyers, without any gain to the assailable. The provision to pay the debts and dispose of the property of the P. E. Fund is amusing to those who understand the matter, and shows that the committee are as ignorant of it as were Mr. Edmunds and the Senators who supported the bill. We would like to get a sight at the "property of the P. E. Fund," and would like to know what are its debts. If the notes of people who have been assisted to emigrate, the majority of which are outlawed, could be counted as "property," the Attorney General would have

a nice time in collecting them, and the process would simply be the harassing and oppression of a number of poor people struggling to obtain a home.

Polygamy and polygamous cohabitation or association are classed together, and a continuance of polygamous association after indictment is to be deemed a new offense. This looks as though the segregating business would be stopped and the penalty for "polygamous cohabitation"—a change in the term, be made the same as for polygamous marriage.

The abolition of the office of Territorial Superintendent of District Schools and the creation of an equivalent office, to be filled by appointment, is another mark of misapprehension by the committee of the exact situation of educational affairs in the Territory. So with the next provision. It proposes to annul laws and abolish privileges that have no existence.

The committee have been deceived by the wilful misrepresentations of R. N. Baskin, who deliberately told them that the Legislative Assembly had given grants of land and water rights to certain individuals for personal and ecclesiastical benefit, in violation of the land laws. At the same time the perverter of the truth knew that the grants of which he spoke were simply provisions that were necessary for the public good before the land in Utah was surveyed by the Government; that when the land laws came into operation those grants expired, and that all such provisions have long since disappeared from our statute books. Even if there were any such remaining, the committee ought to have known that the operation of the land laws would render them null, and that the section they have introduced is so much surplusage and nonsense.

The section in regard to the militia is also the result of a lack of knowledge of the facts, and the granting of authority to the Legislature to pass a militia law is laughable in the extreme, for that authority is already vested in the Assembly by the Organic Act. The provision restoring the right of dower, which was in the original bill, is in answer to a senseless clamor, and will have no other effect, if it becomes law, than to complicate transactions in real estate. It is a relic of old common law nonsense that denied the legal identity of married women, and will have about as much effect on polygamy as depriving our women of the ballot will have upon their summer fashions.

The enlargement of the amnesty powers of the President in regard to offenses under the new act is fair and generous, considering its other harsh provisions.

The section making the Council of the Legislative Assembly appointive is one of the worse features of the amended bill. It is strange that any Democrat would give his vote to such a measure. It strikes at the very root of the democratic principle. It is a blow at the foundation of local self-government. That the people should elect the men who make laws for their local control is an axiom in democratic politics. The object of the proposed change is clearly exposed. It is to give the one man power, now bestowed to more than a monarchical extent on the Executive in Utah, still further autocratic authority at the expense of the citizens who are to be correspondingly robbed of rights both natural and acquired.

It is in accord with the further proposition to give the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, power to appoint probate judges, selectmen and other county officers, and the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Council, to appoint the justices of the peace, constables and other precinct officers, all of whom are now elected by the people. The necessity for any thing of this kind is not apparent. It is attempted for the purpose of enlarging the appointing power and diminishing the electing power, of building up arbitrary authority and silencing the popular voice. It is in the direction of stamping out and utterly obliterating free government in the Territory of Utah.

The oath required to be taken by every male citizen in the Territory is framed in the same spirit. It is cunningly devised to catch members of the "Mormon Church" on a political pinhook. While keeping all religious entanglements out of sight, it aims to prevent men who believe in the rightfulness of certain religious ordinances from holding any office in the Territory. The language is arranged so that belief is not mentioned, but the meaning is that faith in "Mormon" doctrines on marriage shall exclude the holders from political rights.

The amendments contain the chief elements of the Woodburn bill, the Legislative Commission scheme and other drastic measures which have been introduced for the purpose of giving Utah into the political control of a small minority of its inhabitants. It is in the interest of the political adventurers who have been working for personal ends for years. It has small bearing on the polygamy question. Yet it will be reported and urged under the plea that it is for the suppression of polygamy, that it may have the advantage of the prejudice existing in the public mind on that subject. Probably Mr. Tucker and other gentlemen delude themselves with the idea that they are doing something vigorous in that direction, while all the time they are simply aiding a few conspirators to capture a Territory which they expect

to pluck to their hearts content, and, while they shout "polygamy" to be laughing at their dopes and feathering their nests at the expense of the people whom they have maligned.

It depends upon the disposition of Congress as to the "Mormon" question whether this measure can be considered during the present session. Unless this is in lively form, the bill can hardly be brought up from its regular place on the calendar, and, some of its provisions are so utterly opposed to the principles which enter into the very life of the republic, that unless some furor arises to make men oblivious to principle and propriety, it is not probable it can pass even the House of Representatives, while it is more than likely to run against heavy snags in the Senate. Its prospects at present are not flattering, and we do not think that any true friend to his country will seriously desire to see it on the statute books of the United States.

A HUGE ANTI-"MORMON"
SHAM.

What an age this is for humbug! Here is a proposition before Congress to give a little knot of schemers in Utah a hundred thousand dollars, to establish a school and home for "escaped" polygamous wives. It will not be surprising if it is given to the plotters to spend as they please. It is asked for under the pretence that it will aid in the suppression of polygamy. Such an institution, even if the cash remaining after expenses, offering nice pickings for some of the females engaged in the project, are paid, is devoted to the object proposed, would have about as much effect in the suppression of polygamy, as one of Judge Zane's windy nomies from the bench of the Third District Court.

The committee, of which Senator Blair is chairman, which made the report recommending the appropriation, were led away by the stories told by an experienced religious subscription circulator. Her name is Augie E. Newman. Her home is in Nebraska, she is an adept in gathering in dollars and dimes for sectarian purposes, and she claims to speak on this subject from knowledge as a resident of Utah. The truth is that she has paid some visits to this city, and knows nothing of the Territory generally nor its people but that which has been told her by others. And, unfortunately for her, her chief associations in Utah have been with bitter anti-"Mormons" and a few watery-eyed apostates, whose tears flow at command, and who have filled her up with sorrowful tales till her heart has ached with sympathy and her mind has been worked up to do something desperate. These half a dozen angry and exaggerating females who pose as "victims," represent, in her eyes, hosts of despairing women anxious to be liberated from imaginary bondage.

She is a capable and tonguey advocate, and managed to impress upon the committee the notions that she has imbibed. She has read "Mormon" books and papers, and anti-"Mormon" works as well, has swallowed the stories told and written by an inventive female who has swindled more store-keepers, landlords, hired girls, peddlers and others, than any score of "confidence" people who ever infested the Territory, and has worked up some truth with much error into a startling hodge-podge, with which she regaled the committee as genuine "Mormon" doctrine and actual Utah facts. She made her point and got the recommendation, and unless some clear-headed members see through the farce and blow daylight through the bubble, a hundred thousand dollars of the people's money will be misappropriated and thrown away, so far as the interest in bestowing the money will have a remote chance of being realized.

Those who understand the people of Utah and their faith and condition, know that the plural wives are as tenacious of their faith and as much opposed to measures against it as any male "Mormon" can possibly be. That if any of them have cause to leave their husbands, they can obtain much more permanent pecuniary assistance through the medium of Church influence, and the provision their husbands would afford, than anything they would gain through a charity such as that proposed. That such women are about as likely to flock to an institution of that character as they would to the penitentiary. That instead of women yearning to escape from plural family relations, there are large numbers more ready to embrace them than there are men with the courage and the means to meet them halfway. That the reported bondage of the "Mormon" women is a patent lie, and that the scheme to get this money, if it is not a fraud is a baroque and a sham.

We have no objection to the expenditure of such portion of the funds as would be used for the proposed purpose in buildings and their fittings in this Territory. It would be that much money put in circulation. It would be a benefit to workmen employed. But it would be much more of a profit to certain impecunious persons who have been figuring to flog a portion of it, and to others who lend their aid to the scheme. And we object to the falsehoods by which its appropriation has been rendered possible and to

the deception which has been practised upon the Committee, and through them upon the country, that this project of a few cunning people in Utah—endorsed by some estimable but misinformed persons, and a coterie of pious but hoodwinked women in Ohio, might receive congressional support and national money, while all the time it is a notional and gigantic humbug.

SUBVERSION OF DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNMENT.

The system of government devised by the fathers of our country contemplated a Union of Independent States, each an autonomy and all joined for mutual protection and defense and for the perpetuity of the principles of democratic republicanism. The will of the people in each locality, as expressed at the polls, was recognized as the supreme law therein. Local affairs were in the control of the people's elected representatives and officers, national affairs in the hands of men chosen from all the parts of the nation. The territorial system which has grown upon the body politic is an excrescence. It is foreign in its nature to the theory of popular government, and is more oppressive than anything pertaining even to a limited monarchy.

That some form of government had to be devised for communities outside of State lines must be admitted. That all the privileges of Statehood should not be accorded to them until they arrive at the stature, dignity and self-responsibility of Statehood cannot be denied. But under a republican government it is not consistent that the very fundamental principles of republicanism should be violated, simply because a body of people are too small in numbers to take an equal part with larger commonwealths in the politics of the nation.

Local self-government cannot be denied to an inchoate State, without doing violence to the principles upon which the whole American system is founded. If the people who compose the small community are citizens, they should have the rights of citizens pertaining to their own welfare and the conduct of their own affairs. They may be kept from taking part in national concerns until they receive recognition as a State, but unless they have some voice in all that immediately concerns them in their own locality, they are subject to the very oppression which the United States were established to resist and prevent. All just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed. When officials, then, are forced upon a people who have no voice in their appointment nor in the election of those who appoint them, an outrage is committed on that people and upon the principles on which this great government is founded.

The policy established in relation to these political organizations known as Territories, was full of error in the beginning, because it fostered upon their officials by arbitrary power, giving them no influence, directly or indirectly, over those appointments, and by superior might controlling them without their consent. It was not in accord with republicanism. It was inspired by the spirit of monarchism, and fashioned after the despotic methods from which the country had escaped after a desperate struggle.

But this undemocratic arrangement was only designed to be temporary. As soon as the so-called Territories were strong enough to bear their own burdens, and populous enough to stand side by side with the original States to take part in national affairs, they were to be admitted into the Union on a footing of equality with the older commonwealths. Thus, in the midst of their comparative vassalage, they could look forward to the enjoyment of that liberty guaranteed by the Constitution and comprehended in the term American citizenship. Party exigencies however, have interfered considerably with the execution of the design, and some States have been admitted before attaining proper growth, while Territories fully developed have been excluded. This is all wrong and contrary to the principles of true republicanism as well as disgraceful to the national integrity.

The course pursued toward Utah has been exceptionally unjust and unrepugnant. The imposition of officials without regard to the wishes of her citizens, and the arbitrary control by the national power of the executive and judicial branches of her local government, were supplemented by the additional outrage of the absolute veto power vested in the Governor. But she has grown and flourished notwithstanding the obstacles in the way, and has exhibited to the world all the capabilities in, an eminent degree, for assuming the full powers and responsibilities of independent Statehood. She has knocked repeatedly at the door of the nation, presented a constitution for a strictly republican form of government—the only qualification required by the Constitution of the United States, and has respectfully asked admission. But not only has this appeal been ignored, but as the Territory has advanced in power and ability to exercise the full liberty of a free commonwealth, encroachments have been made upon her rights and privileges, and they have been curtailed instead of extended.

And now it is proposed to still further deprive her citizens of

the simplest political powers. It is seriously advocated by men calling themselves Democrats, that half of her legislative powers be wrested from her and vested in the national authorities, and that by a cunningly devised test oath, the majority of her citizens shall be deprived of the ballot in order that a small minority may obtain the supremacy. Instead of enlarging the powers of the people over their own affairs, such as they possess are to be diminished, and the principle of local self-government is to be almost entirely obliterated within her borders. And this anti-republican, anti-democratic anti-American course, is approved by persons supposed to be statesmen and to be supporters of the principles which are thus trampled upon and defiled.

But what is the alleged reason for this special degradation of an inchoate but vigorous commonwealth? It is this: A portion of the people of Utah have entered into marriage relations which the majority of people in other parts of the country dislike. True, those relations only affect the individuals engaged in them, and to the utmost only the community in which they live. But a great outcry has been made about a very small matter, and people a long way off are trouble greatly over an imaginary evil in the distance, oblivious to real and gigantic evils in their own immediate vicinity. So they neglect their own concerns in trying to meddle with the affairs of a remote and smaller society.

The marriage of more than one woman to one man afflicts sorely the good people of the East, who can tolerate without a snarl of displeasure the illicit relations of their immediate neighbors and can see no wrong in a system which permits and promotes corruption that is unfashionable to mention, but so widespread as to be alarming to a pure and thoughtful mind. "If these 'Mormons' would not marry the women who choose to live with them, but 'be like the rest of us' in this respect, it would not matter," so say many of the discreet creatures who are agitated over the Utah question.

But the national government has gone to the length of taking away all political power from those persons, male and female, who are engaged in the practice of plural marriage in this Territory so that "polygamy" really cuts no figure now in the local government. Also laws the most stringent are enforced in a manner most vindictive against those who are accused of the offense. Why then should these extreme measures be advanced against other citizens? Why, indeed. It is admitted that in all other respects the people of Utah are good citizens, except that they will not vote for the men who plot against their liberties. And this seems now to be the great cause for the proposal of further oppressions. The great majority of the citizens here are to be robbed of the rights of freemen, and the Territory is to be deprived of the simplest privileges of self-government, because the many will not pick their offices from the few. Because they prefer their friends to their enemies. Because they will not put a knife in the hands of unprincipled adventurers, wherewith to cut out the heart of their limited liberties.

"But," it is claimed, "if the majority do not practice polygamy, they believe in it." Quite possible. And if this is true, are industrious, sober, thrifty, intelligent citizens to be robbed of their simplest rights because of their belief? Yes, it appears this is the point to which the anti-"Mormon" politicians are drifting. While they avoid this in word and avowal, they are pressing towards it all the same. And because the people of Utah, who have made this Territory and rendered possible the redemption of the region around them, hold a belief different to that of others in regard to a matter of domestic concern, this great nation is asked to endorse measures to deprive them of all political power and relegate them to the position of serfs and pariahs.

This infamy may not immediately be perpetrated. But the power of prejudice is so great and the self-righteousness of the latter-day Pharisees is so strong, that this iniquity may be consummated and the seal of the nation may be stamped upon the unspeakable wrong. If so, as the Lord lives He will decree a just vengeance. And while it will be the duty of His people to bear with patience all the injuries that may be the consequence of devotion to principles revealed from Him, they will wait with patience that vindication which is sure to come, and for the sake of posterity maintain their religious liberties as best they may, without faltering and without retreat.

No government can afford to violate the principles upon which it is founded in order to oppress the weak or indulge in the exercise of conscious strength. Jehovah is the God of nations as well as of individuals, and retribution is an eternal principle that cannot be subverted. Let the patriots of America pause and reflect. And let men who think to gain a little brief applause by pandering to the prejudices of the uninformed, beware of that unerring justice which is sure to come at last. Our destiny is in the hands of Omnipotence, and whatever awaits us, we must abide His law and stand by His divine decrees.

It is stated that Parliament will be dissolved on the 24th inst., and writs for new elections will be issued on the 25th.