

that the Chief Justice regards his action as a good political move, and has the presidential bee in his bonnet."

"This is an insult to the three dissenting justices, and to the Supreme Court, for which there is not the slightest excuse, nor is there the slightest foundation in the premise which the *Union* formulates to give some sort of plausible color to its imputation upon the honesty of purpose of the three dissenting justices. If it did not know the facts in the case it ought to be ashamed of its ignorance as well as of its insult, and if it did know the facts and wilfully perverted them in order to make an opportunity to insult the court, it ought to be despised by all fair-minded men both for its lie and for its insult.

"The justices who dissented from the decision of the majority did not dissent because they wished to protect or perpetuate the Mormon Church, but because they believed the confiscation of the funds of a corporation an act specially forbidden by the Constitution. The minority opinion says:

Congress unquestionably has power to suppress polygamy, and it is immaterial whether the crime was committed in the name of religion. But Congress has no power to seize and confiscate the property of corporations because they may have been guilty of crime. In the judgment of the minority the diversion of the fund contemplated by Congress is in contravention of the specific limitations of the Constitution.

"The minority opinion agrees that polygamy may be suppressed by Congress, although the *Union* pictures the justices who signed it as supporters of the Mormon Church, and as dissenting from the decision signed by the majority of the court because they are Democrats and because they believed such a course would promote the chances of one of their number to be considered a presidential candidate.

"We do not remember to have known a more contemptible exhibition of ignorant partizanship than this."

The *Chicago Times*, which has always been a strong anti-"Mormon" paper, but has advanced argument instead of the common abuse, says in its issue of the 21st inst:

"Another derision of the Supreme Court is something of a surprise, except in the fact that the Chief Justice and Associates Field and Lamar present a strong dissenting opinion. It was sought under the Edmunds law to dissolve the Mormon Church corporation, annul its charter, direct the appointment of a receiver to wind up its affairs, and escheat to the United States all the real estate owned by the Church in excess of \$50,000 which was not at the date of the Edmunds act held for purpose of burial or worship. The excuse of this drastic enactment was the practice of polygamy by certain Mormons who justified this barbarism as a tenet of their religion. To punish individual polygamists is one thing, to apply the doctrine of escheat to a religious corporation in a State tolerant of all forms of religious worship is quite another. It amounts practically to a denial of the liberty of conscience, which is so beneficent and so politic a principle that under no circumstances ought to be interposed upon. A tenet of the Quaker's faith adjures him to abhor war. The individual Quaker, owing allegiance to a state which to the exercise of its sovereign power carries on a war, may be drafted and compelled to serve in the army of his country, just as the individual Mormon who is a polygamist may be tried, convicted, sentenced and imprisoned, for the penalty of plural marriages, no matter how loudly he may proclaim that in offending against the civil he is obeying a religious law. But to confiscate to the public the property of Quaker religious corporations because Quakers oppose warfare

and the nation makes war would be monstrous. All male Quakers abhor war. Comparatively few male Mormons practice polygamy. The property of Quaker corporations is safe. The Supreme Court decides that all but a morsel of the property of Mormon corporations shall escheat to the United States.

The mighty power of the nation is thus exerted against a small sect, which may or may not thereby be crushed out of existence. But we have raised up a ghost which we may not be able to lay. If thus the Latter-day Saint may be struck down in a republic which is forbidden in its fundamental law to prohibit the free exercise of religion why may not interest, prejudice, partizanship, a passing wave of bigotry employ the same power to destroy a more powerful and more ancient sect? Once light the baleful fires of religious intolerance and where may they not burn and blight?

The dissenting justices, each a democrat and therefore a champion of religious liberty, are to be honored and applauded for their declaration that Congress unquestionably has power to suppress polygamy and it is immaterial whether the crime was committed to the name of religion. But Congress has no power to seize and confiscate the property of corporations because they may have been guilty of crimes.

The same journal has also the subjoined editorial which is worthy of perusal:

"The Mormon is under the ban, legislative and judicial. The Supreme Court approves the confiscation of the property of the church. For answer to this an organ of the faith declares that 'while Mormons hoped to retain their property they have all the time been prepared to lose it; hence they will not be affected by the decision. A few persons will revel in the plunder that this big steal invites and permits, the government will not be the gainer, and the Mormons will continue to be hopeful, industrious, hard working Mormons.'"

Under the present law the governor, secretary, judges, commissioners, marshals, auditor, treasurer, probate judges, and superintendent of district schools of Utah are appointed directly or indirectly by the President of the United States, the People of the Territory having no choice in the matter. It is proposed in Edmunds' new bill that the right to elect a great variety of local officers shall be taken from the people and lodged with the executive. These include county clerks, selectmen, assessors, recorders, and county superintendents of schools. Since the Gentiles have obtained the upperhand in Salt Lake City this method of destroying all or nearly all chance of popular choice of local officers does not seem as inviting as formerly. Indeed, the local Gentile who is responsible for raising the spirit of persecution is alarmed at the evil he has wrought.

The decision of the Supreme Court is only part of the general and, it may be said, indiscriminate assault upon Mormonism. Polygamy has become the pretext only for attacking this sect that, polygamy aside, has much in common with other religious denominations and possesses a membership of pre-eminently industrious and frugal people. The House has approved the constitution proposed for the State of Idaho, containing a sweeping clause, an unjust and dangerous clause as the *Times* believes, disfranchising all Mormons merely because they are Mormons and wholly without reference to polygamous practice on their part. New York might with equal propriety forbid hakers to vote. Minnesota might just as reasonably place Menomonees under the ban or Indiana deny all political rights to the Campbellites. But the Idaho proceeding is not singular in its attack upon religious freedom. Edmunds has presented to a Republican Congress a further drastic measure. "Citizens of Illinois, Stewart of Vermont, and Struble of Iowa, have each presented bills for the total disfranchisement of all Mormons in Utah. This narrow, vicious and bigoted proposition excites alarm among the best Gentiles in Salt Lake City. They have united in a protest against these bills, giving as their reason that there has been a successful effort to bury the difference of creed and unite the business men of Utah in various enterprises for mutual material benefits. Mormons and non-Mormons have acted in unity, and to disfranchise one class will revive old antagonisms, and work disaster to the interests of the Territory. If a Mormon is not a polygamist they see no reason why he should be politically ostracized. And they ask that

instead of ignorant passing any such measure as these bills contemplate, Congress send a committee to Utah to inquire into the present state of the Territory and learn how unjust would be the action thoughtlessly proposed.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. The Mormon organ, inviting attention to the so-called prophecy of Joseph Smith that the church would suffer persecution, declares with some spirit that 'it is the duty of the people unjustly discriminated against lawfully to contend against the deprivation of their rights and demand redress of wrongs from those who have the power to adjust them, that the Lord may be justified when He shall take part in the controversy on the side of the oppressed.'"

"The god of battles is invoked on all sides of a controversy. Wholly without reference to the aid which the pious Mormon expects, the United States ought to be true under all circumstances to its cardinal principle of religious freedom. Let the polygamist, Mormon or other be punished, but let one sect have equal chance with another, whatever his creed. The anti-Mormon zeal, craftily promoted by greed of power, by partisan interest, by the spirit of intolerance, is overstepping all bounds and in its headlong progress is breaking down useful barriers. Sixty million Americans asserting that the crime of polygamy shall not be cloaked by religion have nothing to fear from a handful of Latter-day Saints relatively few of whom are polygamists."

A GNAT SNUBBED.

At a session of the City Council, held May 27th, an individual of the name of J. B. Walden, whose only importance consists of his being city treasurer, made his native smallness conspicuous by offering the following resolution:

I respectfully request your honorable body to institute a spring cleaning process in your council room, and that you remove from the walls some of its present decorations, which, in my opinion, are not in keeping with its present surroundings.

We suggest to the formulator of this resolution that the council chamber can never be properly cleaned so long as he retains a seat in it. If he were removed from his present position, and given one suited to his calibre, he probably would be laboring in a subordinate capacity under Mr. Showell.

There is no mistaking the decorations to which Mr. Walden referred. They were, doubtless, the portraits of Brigham Young—the chief pioneer of this immense western region—and of the ex-mayors of this city. The mental capacity of this great man (Brigham Young) is acknowledged in every quarter of the civilized globe, and it is not consistent that a person of such a make-up as that of the present treasurer of the city corporation should feel comfortable in the presence of even his shadow. The elephant and mosquitos are constructed on bases so different that they are not suited to each other's society.

It is creditable to the council that they properly tabled the resolution. If Walden had received his just deserts he would have been similarly treated at the February election. As it was, the best element of his own