

THE TEMPLE GROUNDS IN JACKSON COUNTY.

"Kansas City, April 1.—The two branches of the Mormon Church at Independence, Mo., known respectively as 'Hendrickites' and 'Reorganized Church,' are fighting for possession of Mount Zion, a low hill, about four acres in extent, which was selected by Joseph Smith as the place where all the elect will assemble on Judgment Day and from there be taken into heaven. The Mormons believe that the foundations of a magnificent temple were laid many years ago by the Angel Gabriel, and that his hosts will descend from heaven, uncover these foundations and in a single night erect a beautiful temple. The Hendrickites have a church on Mount Zion and the Reorganized Church is contesting the title. Last night the church building was completely wrecked. The Hendrickites claim the desecration was by the other faction."

The foregoing is a press dispatch which will be found in most of the leading papers of the United States. It was wired on an appropriate day. We do not know whether the church building belonging to the Hendrickites—not "Hendrickites"—was destroyed on All Fools Day, but we do know that the greater part of the dispatch is nonsensical falsehood.

The spot described was *not* selected as the place where all the elect will assemble on the Judgment Day; the "Mormons" do *not* believe that the foundations of a temple were laid on that spot by the Angel Gabriel; and they do *not* believe that a beautiful temple will be erected there or anywhere else in a single night.

The dispatch is a specimen of anti-"Mormon" news, which usually consists of about the same proportion of truth—a faint trace, scarcely distinguishable in the mass of falsehood of which the tale is composed. But it will be copied throughout the country, gravely commented upon by the editors who pose as educators of the people, and held up as a sample of the peculiar views of the ignorant "Mormons."

The land in litigation has long been possessed by the small body of believers in the Book of Mormon who are commonly called Hendrickites, after Granville Hendrick, their first leader, who held to the belief that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, but that he fell into error in later years. They are not and never were connected with the "Josephite" movement, but existed as a religious sect long before that movement was started.

They have acquired, chiefly by purchase, the title to the land described, and have been in possession of it for many years, their leading Elder and his successor in office being the Trustee-in-trust. Their headquarters are at Independence, and they erected upon the piece of land in question a small meeting house in

which they have held regular religious services. They are a peaceable, inoffensive, and devout people, and are disconnected with any other denomination. They do not agree with the Utah "Mormons" but concede that the latter are carrying out the doctrines and discipline given by Joseph Smith, more perfectly than any organization that has claimed to be the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They do not hold the Temple grounds for any speculative or selfish purpose, but believe that in due time the Lord will reveal to them what is to be its disposition.

A few years ago the "Reorganized" or "Josephite" sect erected a meeting house fronting on the Temple grounds but standing across the street. The leading spirits of the body commenced to lay plans to gain possession of the Temple land. A suit had been planted by that sect to secure the title to the Kirtland Temple, and it was not defended by the Church in Utah, but allowed to go by default. Emboldened by this, they thought they could lay hold of the land in Independence which was fixed upon years ago as the place for the Temple in Zion. But thus far they have not succeeded.

Now it may be that renewed attempts have been made to get the matter into the courts, and set up a claim for the land, hoping that the Hendrickites, who are few in number and not overburdened with this world's goods, will be unable to bear the expense of defending their title. If so, we hope they will not succeed, because we desire that justice shall prevail, and the possessors of the land have come to their possession honestly and with pure faith in the righteousness of their cause, while the invading party are seeking to oust them on technicalities and by the power of superior wealth and numbers.

We hope the wrecking of the building is only an April 1st report, in keeping with the rest of the dispatch. It would be a shameful reproach upon any sect or person claiming to be religious, if the meeting-house was destroyed to facilitate an effort to gain possession of the land upon which it stood.

Most of the ground selected as the gathering place in Missouri for the Latter-day Saints in early days is now occupied as residence property. But the land referred to in the telegram has remained vacant, with the exception of the small building mentioned, and that was erected in such a way that it could be readily removed when necessary. A neat fence surrounds the land and whatever may be the changes that

shall come upon it in the process of time, there will be "a beautiful Temple" reared there, on which the glory of God shall rest and on which the servants of the Most High will minister for the salvation of mankind.

But it will not be "built in a single night," nor in any but a natural and lawful way. And any party or individual that endeavors to seize it in the spirit of injustice and unrighteousness, will find that they will not prosper and their ungodly effects will bring upon them a curse instead of a blessing. We hope that further accounts will throw better light upon the affair so stupidly described in the press dispatch from Kansas City.

TOBACCO AS A KILLER OF CONSCIENCE.

RECENTLY Count Tolstol presented, in a leading magazine, an article on Wine Drinking and Tobacco Smoking. This eminent Russian ought to be an authority upon this subject. There are few men who have indulged more extensively in both practices than he. His views on this theme, being the result of experience and observation, ought to carry weight and be of some interest. He says:

"People drink and smoke, not merely for want of something better to do to while away the time, or to raise their spirits; not because of the pleasure they receive, but simply and solely in order to drown the warning voice of conscience."

He asks this question:

"To what extent can smoking stifle the voice of conscience? We have no need to seek for the materials for a solution of this question in exceptional cases of crime and remorse; it is amply sufficient to observe the behavior of the ordinary—one might almost say of any—smoker. Every smoker abandoning himself to his passion, loses sight of, or rides roughshod over, certain of the most elementary rules of social life, the observance of which he demands from others, and which he himself respects in all other cases, whenever his conscience is not completely silenced by tobacco. Every person of moderately good breeding in our social sphere holds it to be unseemly, ill-mannered, churlish, merely for his own pleasure to interfere with the peace and comfort of others, and *a fortiori* to injure their health. No one would take the liberty to flood with water a room in which people were sitting; to scream and yell in it; to turn on hot, cold or foetid air, or to perform any other act tending to disturb or injure others; and yet out of a thousand smokers scarcely one will hesitate to fill with noxious fumes a room, the atmosphere of which is being breathed by women and children who do not smoke."

The Count insists that the smoker is not only a nuisance to his neighbors, but that the indulgence is derogatory to his own spiritual and intellectual capacity. He expresses himself on this point thus:

"For the more a man stupifies himself with these stimulants and narcotics, the more stolid, quiescent, and stagnant he becomes intellectually and morally."