

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

## AN OPPONENT OF MORMONISM.

Elder Mark Y. Cannon, now laboring as a missionary in Kentucky, forwards to the "News" the following, which he clipped from the Christian Leader, published at Cincinnati. It is a personal communication from a preacher who seems to be operating in the vicinity of the localities named in it, but the sect to which he belongs is not indicated:

"The Mormons are again pressing matters in the mountain field. It is my information that their influence has checked our work in building at Upper Wilson. We had the site, the lumber, and the foundation was laid, and the brethren were determined to have 'Neal's Chapel,' as they will name the house, ready for me to preach in this month. As site and house were to be deeded to the officers of the Church at Grayson, same as the one at Beech Grove, our lawyer Elder went out to have the deed acknowledged. The owner of the land refused to deed it or sell the land to the Church. Bear in mind the Mormons have a house of worship partly up in this community. There is no other house of worship there—never has been. It is a thickly settled community and a promising field, hence the Mormons will contest it hotly. It is the only place in this county where they have got a foothold. They have simply delayed my work in time, that's all. In fact, this small-potato intriguing against us has made my movement stronger. By the middle of this month we will have another site and all the hosts of Utah could not beg, buy, or scare the parties into submission to their wishes.

"By the way, I want and need Mormon literature. Would like a copy of the 'Book of Mormon,' Joe Smith's 'Inspired Translation of the Bible,' some of Orson Pratt's works—in fact, anything pro or con on the subject. I make this statement publicly, in hope that some brother may have such books lying idle, who will dispose of them to me cheap for active service.

"Mormons use tracts freely. I know of nothing to antidote these tracts in print. To meet the need as best I can, I am preparing a series of anti-Mormon tracts. Now have my first one in the hands of a friend for a brief introduction before it is handed to the printer. The subject is: 'Was Joe Smith a Prophet?' It is evident to all that Mormonism stands or falls with the answer to this question. Those to whom I submitted my manuscript for careful, earnest criticism, decided that my tract was conclusive, and are pressingly urgent for me to speed its printing.

"With Mormonism, I urge a black-flag warfare. There is no compromise on either side. In fact, if either side sought it, there is no room for compromise. Brethren who have never met Mormons and know only newspaper and tradition reports about the system, know nothing of the strong battle these men can make or of their influence in any field if not intelligently combatted. The man who meets a Mormon polemic must understand his business or he will 'hear something drop,' and it won't be a Mormon, either.

R. B. NEAL."

Upper Wilson is in Carter county, Kentucky, and Elder Cannon says there is a good branch of the Church there. The inference from what Rev. Mr. Neal says is that the conversion to Mormonism of some of the citizens of the place has interfered with the erection of "Neal's chapel;" but it does not ap-

pear that any law was thereby violated, nor any good reason given why Mr. Neal should engage in a "black-flag warfare" on the Mormons, a policy which he urges. He professes to be a Christian, and to make the Scriptures the rule of his life. Can he find in them any warrant for engaging in a "black-flag warfare" on any religious society? He certainly cannot; and his advocacy of such a thing demonstrates that he is no true follower of the meek and lowly Nazarene.

Some portions of Rev. Neal's communication are quite amusing. His call for literature with which to fight "Mormonism" is couched in terms which suggest that he regards the case as urgent; while the assurance with which he announces that he has written a tract which is "conclusive" in showing that Joseph Smith was not a Prophet is quite inconsistent with his evident anxiety in reference to the subject.

The candor with which he speaks of the "strong battle these men can make," meaning the Mormon missionaries, has with it an element of regret akin to pathos, and suggests that he "has been there," and "heard something drop." The naivete of his closing sentence provokes a smile.

It is Rev. Neal's privilege to oppose "Mormonism" by proper means, if he feels called upon to engage in that sort of thing. But a "black-flag warfare," if the phrase is to receive a reasonable interpretation, involves violence, which may even lead to the shedding of innocent blood. Does Mr. Neal wish to be understood as advocating murder as a means of checking the spread of Mormonism? How a man can pose as a Christian minister and at the same time advocate a "black-flag warfare" on some of his fellow citizens merely because they differ from him in religious views, is one of the phenomena and inconsistencies of human nature that are most difficult to account for; yet it is a trait that religious leaders have manifested in all ages of the world from the days of righteous Abel until now.

## PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION.

Rev. Dr. Charles Lamson in an address, last Sunday, Jan. 16, before the Chicago Congregational club, speaking of the tendencies manifest in the development of the denomination to which he belongs, stated that one of these is toward the union of church and state. "The church," he said, "has a great opportunity to assert its love for the land and to become patriotic. The time is coming when we shall place the obligations of citizenship in the forefront of our principles and inculcate them on all sides in the church work." The utterance has attracted a great deal of attention. Will it be generally endorsed by the representatives of the religious bodies in this country, or will it encounter opposition? His entire audience, according to the published report, hushed forth into cheers. Is this to be regarded as indicative of a popular sentiment?

The expression "union of church and state," even if modified to mean "religion and state," has a ring strange to all who firmly believe in the specifically American principle that the two are sovereign, each in its own sphere. It suggests a condition which, wherever existing in the world, has had a tendency to create intolerance, strife and persecution. Union of church and state, unless the term be employed in some rather unusual sense, means an

alliance between the two for mutual protection. In countries where they are joined together the state undertakes to defend, by legal enactments, the dogmas and rites of the church and to guarantee its expenses, and the church upholds by all means in its power the institutions of the state. The arrangement is always prejudicial to full liberty of conscience, since necessarily the benefits of it go to one denomination, to the exclusion of all others. It is the opposite of democracy, which places all members of the state upon an equal level, and can consequently find no footing in this country without a radical change in the foundations of the government.

But it may be that the speaker merely meant to state that the tendency among the church members is to take a more serious view of their obligations to the state and to exercise their duties as citizens in a spirit consistent with their religious teachings. In this sense, the proposition is true, for lately the voice of a great many representative men, of various faiths, has been lifted for a change in political methods. But this is, properly speaking, not a "union" of church and state. It does not involve an alliance of the two, nor that one assumes any functions of the other. It is simply a recognition of the fact that the field of the church is the world and that its mission is to be a power for good in that which pertains to the relations of human beings to one another as well as to their Creator, since the church properly is the exponent of the great fundamental principle on which "the Law and the Prophets" rest.

## THE PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND.

A few days ago Bishop Isaac Barton of this city received a souvenir of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. It is a handsomely printed folder, on one page of which is reproduced a photograph of a very interesting group of distinguished personages. The photograph was taken on July 10, 1897, on the grounds of Hawarden castle, the residence of England's greatest living statesman, Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, and includes him, Mrs. Gladstone, Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Right Hon. Lord Carrington, Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, Right Hon. G. H. Reid and Sir Louis Davies.

The sender of the souvenir is the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, premier of New Zealand, who is also postmaster general and treasurer of that colony, and minister of the governmental department that has charge of the interests of the natives, the Maoris. Our readers will recall the circumstance of Mr. Seddon's visit to this city last summer, when he renewed a boyhood acquaintance with Bishop Barton and some of his brothers, who were natives of the same town as himself, namely, St. Helens, Lancashire, England, but whom he had not seen for thirty odd years.

If the whole truth could be clearly shown, it would probably appear that the New Zealand premier is one of the ablest, as he certainly is one of the most philanthropic statesmen of the time, and that the chief reason why he has not been internationally famous is because his sphere of action is comprised of a remote island colony instead of some populous and powerful country. He is a born leader of men, possesses a big brain and a gigantic physique; grasps his surroundings at a glance, instantly recognizes the merits of leading men, is a grand financier, and comprehends by intuition the laws of human nature, and the right means for controlling and elevating the masses.

Grasping speculators had robbed the Maoris of their lands until the abuse