

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TIMES.

It is desirable that the people of Utah shall become thoroughly acquainted with the science of civil government, and particularly with the doctrines of American republicanism. But while they ought to study politics, it is not desirable that they shall become politicians—that is to say, such scheming and unprincipled tricksters as the term politicians is popularly used to describe. In the higher and more correct sense of the word they should all be politicians—students of national affairs and of the principles advocated by political parties, and when they have sufficient understanding, advocates and promoters of such measures and parties as their judgment approves.

As to these, men may honestly differ, and yet be equally earnest in efforts to promote the common welfare. In this country all parties agree on most of the principles essential to the maintenance of Republican government. On minor points they divide. And it is natural to positive persons to magnify the importance of their peculiar opinions and to consider questions which may be left open without disaster to the public, of such moment as to demand immediate and practical solution.

This perhaps would work no great evil, if extreme partisans confined their zeal and efforts to the advocacy of principles and measures on their merits. But it is common for such politicians to "carry the war into Africa," and treat their party opponents as enemies of mankind, as seeking the downfall of the nation, as promoting schemes for the destruction of the country, and often as without sense. Some of them go so far as to misrepresent the position and objects of an opposing party and to vilify all who support it, descending even to scurrility, and raking from the gutters of vituperation the vilest epithets to hurl against those who differ from them.

All this is to be despised as well as deplored. "Mormon" politicians ought never to pattern after this sort of orators. They are of the pot-house order. They may sometimes raise a laugh, but they carry no weight with the thoughtful. Learners should not waste time in listening to such would-be teachers of politics. Facts and arguments are wanted rather than ridicule and denunciation.

In endeavoring to decide as to which party he shall join, the inquirer need not be influenced by stories about what this or that party has done or left undone. Nor should he be guided by

assertions that such a leading man is a Democrat and such a one a Republican. If any man becomes either a Democrat or a Republican let, it be by conviction. If he has no better guide than the assertion, or the fact, that some prominent person is a member of a given party, he had better wait until he learns something and knows for himself what he ought to do.

No man who has been a member of the People's party, when asked whether he is a Republican or a Democrat, need be ashamed to answer, "I don't know," or "I belong to neither party." He need not be neutral because he is independent. He may see that the claims of each party are about equal, the merits and defects of either evenly balancing those of the other. Or he may yet be insufficiently informed as to the actual and essential differences of the two. While he is halting between two opinions, or has made up his mind that he will not unite with either party, he can still exercise his influence as a citizen and support good measures and good men according to his best judgment as to their claims upon his suffrage.

This is a time for diligent inquiry and for calm reflection. And the advocates of the great national parties will find it better to approach the undecided with facts and figures, and lucid explanations of political doctrine, them with denunciation of the opposing party, predictions of disaster as the result of its dominance, exaggerations as to its doings and failures, or suggestive hints as to the party which some great or influential man belongs to.

Let us have light and logic, contrast and comparison, fairness and freedom. And let our discussions be conducted with courtesy and our arguments with strict regard for truth and the rights of others. And when we decide as to party, let us do so honestly and from individual conviction of what is best for Utah and for the country which is ours by birth or by adoption.

A BAD PRECEDENT.

The following editorial comments on the recent action for the confiscation of "Mormon" Church property is taken from *Every Sunday*, published at Tacoma, Washington. It will strike the general reader as fair, temperate and well-timed:

"By the final decree of the Supreme Court of the United States the Mormon Church property is to be distributed under the direction of the Supreme Court of Utah, among such charitable institutions and to such uses as may most nearly correspond to those which it was originally destined to be used for, unless Congress should otherwise order. This

disposal of church property is a new practice in American society, and is likely, if carried out, to become a dangerous precedent sometime in the future. Three of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, Gray, Brewer and Brown, dissented. The fact is that the Mormon church corporation has been dissolved by Congressional legislation and the rulings of the courts, its doctrines and practices being declared to be opposed to public policy and good morals. In the first quarter of the present century a feeling prevailed by Protestants against the Roman Catholic church on alleged patriotic grounds strong enough to have brought about a legal raid against that organization similar to that which has destroyed the Mormon church corporation, and there are still many theologians who would gladly call down the strong arm of the law to crush out Catholicism and drive it from the land. Of course the practice of polygamy has been the main excuse for the prosecution of the Mormons; but the doctrines of papal supremacy, the confessional, the convent system, and the opposition to public schools would afford whatever pretext became necessary for an anti-Catholic party to work out a destructive theory. It is one of the anomalies of the age that the United States Government should have been led, step by step, into this grave departure from its logical line of ideas and action, to establish a dangerous precedent."

A POLITICAL MATTER.

The *Logan Nation* in a fair and cogent article on the political change now taking place in the Territory, quotes from the *DESERET NEWS* and agrees with the views it expresses. But the *Nation* says:

"Since the *News* is the official organ of the Church it becomes a very important matter to know its leaning on this all important question."

If by this the *Nation* infers that because the *DESERET NEWS* is the organ of the Church, its utterances are Church declarations, it is greatly mistaken. The opinions of this paper must not be taken for the voice of the Church. When the Church has anything official to make public it will appear in the *DESERET NEWS* as its organ, but what we say is another thing entirely.

If the *Nation* means further, that the leaning of the Church on the all-important question of the hour is important to know, we will say that the Church can have no leaning either way, as the question is purely political.

The Church is not interfering in this matter at all. It is not a Church question. The People's party is and has been an association of citizens as such. The chief object of that association seems now to be passing away and hence the movement towards its dissolution. As citizens the members of that party are perfectly free, so far as the Church is concerned, to separate as a party or not, as they choose, and to unite with either of the great national parties or neither, as they choose.

The *Nation* speaks of what certain