DESERET EVENING NEWS

Organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

LORENZO SNOW, TRUSTEE-IN-TRUST.

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Charles W. Penrose, - - - Editor
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POLYGAMY AND UNLAWFUL COHABITATION.

From the reading of the various editorials and articles of the public press it is evident that there is much misconstruction and misunderstanding as to the present attitude of our Church respecting the subjects of polygamy and unlawful cohabitation; and, believing that many good and conscientious people have been misled and much adverse criticism occasioned thereby, I feel it but just to both "Mormons" and non-"Mormons" to state that, in accordance with the manifesto of the late President Wilford Woodruff, dated September 25th, 1890, which was presented to and unanimously accepted by our General Conference on the 6th of October, 1890, the Church has positively abandoned the practice of polygamy, or the solemnization of plural marriages, in this and every other State, and that no member or officer thereof has any authority whatever to perform a plural marriage or enter into such a relation. Nor does the Church advise or encourage unlawful cohabitation on the part of any of its members. If, therefore, any member disobeys the law, either as to polygamy or unlawful cohabitation, he must bear his own burden; or in other words, be answerable to the tribunals of the land for his own action pertaining thereto.

With a sincere desire that the position of our Church as to polygamy and unlawful cohabitation may be better understood, and with best wishes for the welfare and happiness of all, this statement is made, and is respectfully commended to the careful consideration of the public generally.

LORENZO SNOW.
President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
Salt Lake City, Jan. 8, 1900.

PREST. SNOW'S DECLARATION.

The foregoing announcement from the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is entitled to respectful consideration. Not only should it be heeded by members of the Church, but by all people, everywhere. Its promulgation is necessary in view of the charges that are made that the "Mormon" Church seeks to become "a law unto itself" and sets itself above the civil government. It is not expected that it will have any particular effect on persons who desire, wilfully, to misrepresent the Church and its authorities, its doctrines and its purposes. But there are hosts of good people who have been deceived by false reports, and it is for their information as well as to place the Church in its true position before the world that this official declaration is made.

The President's statement is gratifying to us because it authoritatively asserts what the Deseret News has advanced editorially. The Church teaches obedience to secular law. It does not advise nor encourage any species of lawlessness. It supports the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Utah and all laws passed in pursuance thereof. It has its own sphere, which is ecclesiastical. While it gives counsel and promulges rules for the guidance of its members as to individual conduct in all the affairs of life, it does not interfere in any way with the free agency of men and women, dictate to them how they shall vote or to which political party they shall belong, or hinder them in any lawful course as to business or other personal affairs.

There are persons in all religious bodies who act contrary to the faith they profess. The church or society with which they are connected is not accused of such derelictions by just and sensible people; they are charged only to the erring individuals.

The Latter-day Saints should ponder well this declaration from the President. It is of great importance. If there is any deviation from the path which he defines, it will be on the personal responsibility of the individual that pursues that way, and he must take the consequences whatever they may be. The Church must not be burdened by the weight of anything that is contrary to its teachings.

We believe the permanent, reasonable residents of this State, "Mormon" and non-"Mormon," will be pleased with President Snow's announcement, and will accept it in the spirit that prompted its publication. And we hope that it will aid in the establishment of that abiding peace that is necessary to the harmonious action of all classes, creeds and parties, without which Utah cannot achieve the success as a commonwealth that its best people desire to secure.

SCHOOL BOARD LOGIC.

We publish below a letter on the prevailing local topic. It is from a practicing physician. It furnishes a good answer to the dogmatic assertions of a health officer, that "vaccination is a certain preventive of smallpox," and that it is only the "ignorant" and "obstinate" who oppose vaccination. In reply to the latter bit of professional egotism, we have to say that the "ignorance" is on the part of medical men who simply float with the current of orthodoxy, and take for granted the statistics quoted or manufactured by the faculty for business purposes, without investigating the proofs furnished by opposing physicians and health officers, who have become thoroughly convinced that vaccination is an error and a fraud.

Passing that by for the moment, we wish to direct attention to the course taken by the Board of Education in this city. The schools are to be closed for one week—the regularly appointed vacation having ceased, in order to "allay the panicky feeling of a smallpox epidemic," as one member put it. It was also decided to exclude from the schools all children who cannot show "signs of recent, successful vaccination."

The wisdom and the logic in those resolutions may be perceptible with a mental microscopic examination, but even then a pronounced bias will be a necessary adjunct. If the closing of the schools because of an alleged smallpox epidemic will not add to the "panicky feeling," and to the public advertisement of the exaggerated rumor, then natural causes will have acquired a reverse action. The notion is only equalled by the dictum, that all healthy children should be excluded from the public schools, and only those showing "signs of recent" disease shall be admitted!

Vaccination produces disease; to-wit, cow-pox. Diseased children and they only may be admitted. Children whose blood is in such a pure condition that even vaccination will not poison it and produce inflamed pustules as evidence of disease, are to be kept out of school. What for? Because they will infect the diseased children? How can they injure anybody if healthy themselves? And why should there be any danger from the healthy children to the diseased ones, if vaccination is a certain preventive?

It seems as though some of our excited and despotic city would-be masters have lost their common sense. The legislature of the State after discussing this question, decided against compulsory vaccination. But a body that has no legislative powers decides to enforce it by a trick. The law requires children of given ages to attend school. The board of education (by a majority of one only) decides to prevent the operation of that law to a considerable extent, by making an unlawful requirement as a condition-precedent to admission. That is the position of the five members who voted for the lawless and arbitrary resolution.

We shall see how it works. Will the sagacious five take legal action to compel the attendance of the children who do not conform to their tyrannical rule? We do not believe they will attempt it, or if they do that they will meet with anything but failure. And we are of the opinion that if they pursue the present ridiculous policy, the election for the borrowing of $20,000 for school purposes will not secure an overwhelming majority. People who are compelled to pay school taxes want some of the school benefits, and they have rights which they will take proper steps to maintain.

Following is the letter on the merits of vaccination:

Salt Lake City, Jan. 7, 1900.

To the Editor:

Dear Sir—Since we now have compulsory vaccination practically in our schools I thought it best to give you some statistics of what vaccination has done in the past as well as the best means of protection against the disease.

To begin with, every U. S. soldier that has been recruited into the Philippine service was vaccinated before leaving home, and every death reported coming from the commander in charge here is evidence that vaccination does not protect against smallpox, because many of them have died from this disease. Every man that has served in the French army for the past thirty years or more has been vaccinated, and during the Franco-Prussian war there were 23,469 cases of smallpox in the French army.

In 1853 England made vaccination compulsory, and since that time they have had three smallpox epidemics. The first in 1857-59, when 14,244 vaccinated people died from smallpox. The third in 1870-72, when 40,840 people died from small-pox. In this last epidemic there were over 122,000 vaccinated people that had smallpox with a death rate of a little more than 33⅓ per cent.

It may be well to note that the increase of population between the first and second epidemics was only 7 per cent, while the increase in smallpox was 120 per cent. Official returns from the German government show that during the period of but fifteen years there were one million people who had been vaccinated that died from smallpox in that country.

Strict sanitary cleanliness, pure blood and right living are a better safeguard a thousand fold than vaccination. The people who live largely on shell fish and butcher's meat, drink alcoholic liquors, beer or wine in any form or quantity, have their food highly seasoned and consequently their blood in an impure condition, are the ones to look out for smallpox, vaccination or no vaccination; while those who live plainly, in clean surroundings and have pure blood in clean healthy bodies, are safer a thousand fold in any event than those who are vaccinated. Parents who have pure and healthy children should think twice before having them inoculated with the poison virus from a diseased cow, or human either for that matter.

There are two things that offer some, if not the very best protection against smallpox, and as one of them is very simple, I give it to you: Let any one exposed to smallpox take good cider vinegar and drink a teaspoonful in half a glass of water three times a day until he feels that he is safe from the disease, and he will find that he has been better protected than if he had been vaccinated. There is another remedy that has given some wonderful results, but as it is not known to the average druggist, I will not mention it here.

Respectfully,
G. W. HARVEY, M. D.

FRIENDS OR FOES?

The Rev. gentlemen who now take pains to explain that their part in the "crusade" has been taken only through a "conviction of duty," and not through animosity to the "Mormon" Church, are either insincere, or ignorant as to the nature of their own motives, or, to speak more correctly, the motives of the power operating through them. The fact is that they were banded together in this work before that election, which, though the Church was not involved, gave them an excuse for the attack on the Church.

As the gentlemen themselves should know, their hope was, through a gigantic agitation to throw odium on the Church and all her representatives, in order to arrest her progress in the missionary fields at home and abroad. They hoped to accomplish by means of low strategy, what was impossible to do by such straightforward means as were at their command. This is perfectly clear to the people of Utah, and in time it will be plain to others too.

When the reverend gentlemen come back from the hunt and endeavor to impress upon the people their friendliness and conscientiousness, they remind one in some respects of Joab, who with one hand took Amasa by the beard to kiss him, and in the other held the sword intended for his heart. But the Saints are not deceived by such tactics.

LOSSES IN THE WAR.

A pamphlet has just been issued by the Adjutant General's office, entitled, "Statistical exhibit of the strength of the Volunteer forces called into service during the war with Spain, with losses from all causes." It shows that the Volunteers consisted of 10,017 officers and 213,218 men, a total of 223,235. The deaths numbered 148 officers and 4,356 men, a truly remarkably low percentage.

The authentic record further shows that during the war 14 Volunteer officers and 4 officers of the regular army holding Volunteer commissions were killed in action; 3 died from wounds, 119 from disease and 8 from other causes, including suicides. Of the enlisted, 19 were killed in action, 78 others died from wounds received and 3,729 from disease. There were further 159 deaths of enlisted men from various causes, 97 of whom died from accidents, 21 were drowned, 11 were suicides, and 30 were victims of murder or homicide. Desertions from the ranks numbered 3,069. The total losses in the Volunteer forces were 1,718 officers, including 8 dimissed, besides resignations and discharges, and 30,588 men, including 23,363 discharged for disability by court martial and by order.

Kansas and South Dakota lead in the list of officers killed in action. Of enlisted men killed in action Nebraska leads with 32. In the total of deaths from all causes New York leads with 417; then come Illinois, 281; Massachusetts, 274; Pennsylvania, 239; Ohio, 225, and Michigan, 205. Nevada lost but one man.

As to desertions New York is charged with 514, or about 2¼ per cent, while North Dakota and the District of Columbia had none, and Utah had but one. Tennessee had 249 out of a total of about 6,000, about 4 per cent. One desertion is charged to "general officers and staff."

Utah's record is in every respect as clear and bright as that of any State in the Union, and surpassing that of many which would fain sit in judgment upon their sister State.

THE ATTACK ON LADYSMITH.

The telegraphic news from South Africa is of a decidedly exciting nature. It seems that the Boers, taking advantage of the condition of the Tugela river, which prevents Gen. Buller from crossing it and sending relief to Ladysmith, have made a serious effort at capturing that position. Gen. White's messages indicate the gravity of the situation and much anxiety is felt before definite news from the scene of battle can be received.

Ladysmith has been besieged since the first days of November. On the 9th of that month the Boers made a desperate attempt to carry the position. The failure, after the expenditure of an immense amount of ammunition, no doubt, convinced them that the city could not be taken until its defenders were exhausted by sickness and lack of provisions. So far, all the reports from the British camp went to prove that an excellent spirit prevailed; that the provisions were plentiful and that there was no thought of surrender.

When the siege commenced General White had about 10,000 men, of which 9,000 were in good fighting order. The food supply was estimated to be sufficient for three months, and there were thirty-six field guns, besides the naval guns, with about 300 rounds to each gun. General White should, then, be in a position to defend himself, unless sickness has made more inroad among his troops than the outside world is aware of.

Since this was written word has been received that the Boers were repulsed by General White. This, if confirmed, as it probably will be, leaves room for the hope that the beleaguered city will be able to hold out until relieved by General Buller, or by Lord Roberts, who, before long, is expected to take charge of the South African campaign.

British suspense is not so great today as yesterday. Ladysmith holds out successfully.

The health authorities in Honolulu are trying to fight the plague with fire. Burning buildings is an expensive method, but it may be a necessity.

The reports of European finances are not altogether reassuring, there being an evident effort to make them appear within the sphere of safety from threatened panic.

Now every British general in the field knows how it is to experience defeat from the Boers. Even Gen. French's men were beaten by a Boer bugle blast.

The fall of snow early this morning was light in the valleys but there was enough on the mountains to make people feel thankful and wish for further similar favors.

The British post of Kuruman, Bechuanaland, has surrendered to the Transvaal army. There is no mistaking the fact that the English made a very hard fight of it before they were overpowered by superior force.

Those who believe Lieut. J. C. Gillmore's story of barbarous treatment by the Filipinos will not find therein any argument in favor of the alleged ability of Filipinos to govern themselves as a civilized nation.

A British warship has seized a third German steamer. This one is said to have ambulances for the Boers. Surely Britain will not claim that hospital supplies for sick and wounded are contraband of war.

It is clear in the issue involved in the Pittsburg diphtheria cases that if Christian Science fails to cure and medicine succeeds in saving the lives of the afflicted persons, then it is true religion to adopt the saving method.

The shotgun quarantine described as inaugurated at Honolulu may keep the plague within the prescribed district, but the crowding of poor people therein without supplies is barbarity. Quarantine does not necessarily imply starvation there.

When Gen. White sent word to Gen. Buller that he was hard pressed, it may be set down that he did not overstate the case. If the Boers had only known of the desperate situation the British felt themselves in, they would have pressed harder still.

It is to be hoped the merchants can agree upon a plan whereby the credit system will be more restricted than it has been. As a rule it is of no benefit to the public. The temptation to run into debt should be to some extent removed by the merchants themselves.

Here is the way the Bountiful Clipper tells of counterfeit dollars in circulation: "While settling tithing on Wednesday, some one handed in a counterfeit dollar, so if that was a home product and an honest tithing, there must be nine more in circulation somewhere. We mention this so our readers can keep on the lookout for them."

Chinese officials are displaying signs of happiness, and a grateful feeling toward the United States. They feel that the "open-door" commercial policy secured by this government in its negotiations with European powers closes the door to any threatened invasion or division of China among the European nations.

The Boers have learned how hard it is to take a defensive position, and had to give up at Ladysmith. Gen. White seems to have had a very close call, and was probably aided in his success by the necessity of the enemy keeping Gen. Buller at bay. The capture and recapture of some of the entrenchments tells a tale of desperate fighting that must be attended with heavy losses to both sides, but naturally the greater burden falls on the attacking party.

It seems almost useless to tell the public that anonymous communications will not be printed. The cry is, still they come. "A daily subscriber" or simple initials will not do. Friends, if you want your letters published or answered send the name and address of the writer, which will be kept secret if desired. But you waste your time and ours in sending unsigned communications. This is the thousand-and-oneth warning.

PANAMA OR NICARAGUA?

Chicago Democrat.

If the Panama canal scheme is pushed to success the people will find themselves at the mercy of money grabbers. The freight rates will not be materially reduced for the transcontinental railroad managers will also manage the canal. The government will be at the mercy of these freebooters. First of all, let the government build a canal, make it free for the use of the people and let the people foot the bill in return for the benefits and protection they receive. Then if a syndicate wants to build a canal—all right. The more the merrier, but don't allow the rich robbers to strangle competition by grasping the transportation facilities across the isthmus.

Boston Transcript.

The incorporation of the Panama Canal company of America, under the laws of New Jersey, with a capital of $30,000,000, which may be increased at any time, looks like business, and it also looks like a setback for the Nicaragua scheme, which has been pushed in some quarters with an ardor, suspiciously out of proportion to the practical advantages that have been even theoretically established. We have believed for a long time that the best interests of this country lay in an acquisition of controlling rights in the Panama canal, and this belief has been based on the expert testimony of some of the world's best engineers, our own country being prominently represented, and also upon the fact that the Panama scheme is so far advanced that the canal would be much sooner available than anything that could be constructed by the Nicaragua route, even under the most favorable conditions possible.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

From New York and our Atlantic coast, Greytown and Panama are practically equidistant. From New Orleans, Panama is about 225 miles farther away than Greytown, but to partially counterbalance this is the fact that the passage of the Nicaragua route is estimated at 44 hours and that at Panama at 14 hours, their respective lengths being 174 and 46 miles. To the vessel that can't run 225 knots in this 30 hours' difference, time will not be essential. Consequently comparative distances from our own ports may be eliminated. Strategically considered the Nicaraguan route in war against any West Indian power would probably be easier to defend, though for purposes of communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific squadrons, the Panama route, consuming less time in transit at low speed, would be much the more advantageous.

Baltimore Sun.

The many private interests enlisted in support of the Nicaragua canal job are depressed by indications at Washington that the Isthmian Canal bill may, after all, not be passed at this session of Congress. There are various obstacles. To begin with, the commission authorized by the last Congress to investigate both the Nicaragua and Panama route will not be able, it is stated, to report in time for action by this Congress. Advocates of the Nicaragua job wish to go ahead "anyhow" and appropriate some $120,000,000 to begin work. They are afraid that the Panama route may be reported upon favorably by the commission, and so wish to prejudge the matter.

Chicago Times-Herald.

The report that American capitalists will attempt the completion of the Panama Canal should admonish the Fifty-sixth Congress that further delay in the matter of announcing a definite policy with reference to an isthmian water way may result in complications that will embarrass the government in its efforts to control the connecting link between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Whether the company which has filed incorporation papers in New Jersey means business or not, it is certain to attract the attention of congressmen to an examination of the advantages offered by the Panama route. In fact, there is a possibility that if the present Congress decides to wait for the report of the new canal commission, which may not be forthcoming for three years or more, the Panama Canal may be completed and in operation before the government takes up the water way project.

Kansas City Star.

As to the merits of the Panama project it has been shown, by the work of a special correspondent who was sent by the Star to investigate the enterprise, that, while the Panama canal is probably possible, its cost would exceed many times the amount claimed by the Panama promoters, and that, after the canal was built under the proposed lock system, the difficulties in the matter of water supply and control for the upper levels might render the whole enterprise of questionable value. The Nicaragua project has always been more of an American idea, and the splendid deep water lake which covers many miles of the proposed route at its highest level gives it an enormous engineering advantage over its isthmian rival.

San Francisco Call.

In the meantime the press, so far as it is controlled or influenced by the advocates of the Panama scheme, has been set to work on a campaign of education. The cry is one of strenuous objection to any action at this session. Some of the arguments are utterly unfair. For example, no less a paper than the Boston Herald in commenting upon the determination of the two leaders to bring up the question at once says: "We have no wish to accuse Messrs. Morgan and Hepburn of interested motives, but it must be evident to any one that if they were financially concerned in the purchase by the United States government of such alleged rights and equities as the Nicaragua Canal company possessed this would be precisely the way in which they would be likely to act."

Troy Press.

It will be a reproach to the nineteenth century if no steps are taken for the inauguration of a great and beneficent ship waterway project which shall connect Duluth with the Atlantic at New York. It is vastly more important to this country than the Nicaragua canal scheme, which would involve foreign complications and the spending of a hundred millions or more far from our shores experimentally. Study the figures given by Ainslee and contribute your active influence, good reader, in promoting a ship canal between the Great Lakes and the sea.

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