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Moses Thatcher

IT IS most difficult to give a clear idea of what Moses Thatcher was in life, in a few lines in a newspaper. He was a most winsome man personally, a natural orator, a subtle thinker, a natural leader of men. He failed in his ambition when it was not right that he should fail, and our belief is that his natural sense of honor and the sincerity of his religious convictions were what closed his life when he was falsely assailed; when personal hate set the tongues to wagging, that he was exceeding his privileges under his religious obligation; that whatever the reasons given for pursuing him may have been, the real reason was the hate of one who knew how easy it would be for Mr. Thatcher to denounce him and give the reasons, but who trusted to Mr. Thatcher's loyalty to his church, to prevent his speaking. However this may be, in the supreme moment Mr. Thatcher failed and without plaint took up his burden and died with his lips still sealed.

Many times, thinking of him, there has come to mind the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, but the feet part of iron and part of clay. There was nothing wrong until the clay in the feet crumbled and the whole image was shattered.

The men of Logan will always hold his memory in deep reverence. He was a sterling man, he had the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, but his feet had with the iron a mixture of common clay and because of this his life's just ambitions were shattered. He was a natural American; he had an American's just ambition; we believe that above all else he desired to see this church and people in full accord with the Great Republic, and that he carried to his grave a vast regret that this cannot be. He was one of the foremost men who ever joined the Mormon church we believe he was sincere in that and that the regret of his life was that the institution would not come into perfect accord with the nation.

We also believe that when he became a candidate for senator his honest belief was that the promise of the church chiefs that they would no longer interfere in the politics of Utah, would be kept, and that the charge made against him that he was a candidate without permission, was trumped up to cover the personal hate of an enemy, high in the priesthood—for religion does not kill the natural fierce passions of men, even when they become high priests—who was determined that the high honor should never be Mr. Thatcher's; that the same influence deposed him from the Apostleship.

That he never denounced these enemies and made clear the real facts, was because of the vows he had taken, which vows bound him even when he saw the insincerity and wickedness of some who had taken the same obligations. He has at last found peace and he goes to his grave the foremost man of his creed in this generation.

Took a Risk

THE Argonaut half facetiously tells the people of Seattle that they took a big risk in erecting a colossal statue to J. J. Hill; that the only safe way is wait until a man is good and dead before taking any risk, in permanently honoring him. In a most serious sense this is true, there is no telling. It not only goes to the erec-

tion of monuments, but to the naming of children. For instance, we suspect there were 100 per cent more children named Theodore in 1903 than there were in 1908. There is danger, even after death, for it is a habit with many people to reverse the sentiments of their own countrymen every two or three generations. Indeed it is the way of the world, one generation burns a heretic at the stake; the descendants of those same executioners a little later build shrines and hail as a saint the martyr.

Then the wicked even come in for their innings if we only wait long enough. There is a society in Boston that every year meets and has a sort of memorial service for Charles of England, whom old matter-of-fact Cromwell thought beheading was good medicine for. The Borgias have their defenders, and one ingenious writer makes out a good case for Judas Iscariot, by showing first that he was the most trusted of the disciples, for it was given him to carry the sack. That is, he received the contributions and paid the bills, so when offered the thirty pieces of silver he took them, believing firmly that the Master could by a word paralyze the force that came to arrest him, and they would be the thirty pieces of silver ahead.

So it is not impossible, at least not quite impossible, to imagine a day in the future, when the Federal Bunch in Utah of today, will be singled out by some lunatic of a historian and pictured as strong men and true, who, at great personal sacrifice, held watch and ward over the politics of Utah and to keep bad men out of office, held the offices themselves.

We do not think the men of Seattle made any mistake in honoring a master spirit of industry, who linked their city in bands of steel to the great east, and by his ships made of their city a signal station, to lure the ships and trade of the orient and the islands of the sea to their port. But we agree with the Argonaut—they took a risk.

A Leaf of History

IN a current magazine, Mr. Forrester writes on the theme: "If You Were to Resign, Would You Be Elected?" In the course of the article he cites the case of Roscoe Conkling, the substance of the article being that Mr. Conkling, having quarreled with President Garfield about a matter of appointments, resigned the senatorship in a passion of resentment and appealed to his constituents in New York for vindication through a re-election; the legislature of New York owing almost everything to him; that his name was submitted and after much balloting he was defeated by a comparatively obscure man and died of a broken heart. The facts are these: Mr. Conkling tried to carry the Chicago convention and have General Grant nominated, but failed. John Sherman was the most prominent candidate and Mr. Garfield went to Chicago as his friend, placed him in nomination in a speech of great brilliancy, but when the balloting began, there was one vote for James G. Garfield. The second and third ballots were the same. Then the vote for Garfield began to grow, when the vote became so large as to be significant, Garfield made a speech, saying he could not accept the nomination if it were given him. A little later he received the needed votes and did accept. The Grant stalwarts were beaten, so was Sherman. Then the campaign began, and up to October everything presaged a Democratic victory. At that time Maine voted in October. Mr. Blaine and other prominent speak-

ers went there and did their best, only to be beaten, and returned baffled and discouraged.

Then Grant went to Conkling and said: "Come, we must try to save this election." They started west together and spoke in all the great central northern states. That is, Grant attended all the meetings and Conkling did the speaking. It was the most triumphant campaign ever made by any two men in any country. In a week the whole face of the campaign was changed. Mr. Garfield owed his election directly to Roscoe Conkling. After the inauguration, when spoken to about appointments for New York, Conkling made but one request, which was that a certain man should not be given the collectorship of New York.

One Sunday night the President sent for Conkling. Conkling went and had in his pocket a score of applications for office sent him by his New York friends.

The meeting lasted until midnight. When Conkling was leaving the President said to him, "When it comes to making New York nominations, I shall make none without consulting you." When the senate met on Tuesday noon, a list of New York appointments were sent in by the President, and heading them was the name of the man for collector of customs in New York which Conkling had especially asked should not be nominated.

Then Conkling said that to hold his place in the senate would bring down upon him the scorn of the men of New York who had placed their interests and hopes in his hands. He sent his resignation to the Governor of New York and gave as his reason that he had been outraged and his friends betrayed.

To go a little back, when Mr. Greeley was nominated by the Democrats in 1872, the New York Tribune, the Chicago Tribune, the Springfield Republican, all strong Republican papers, went over and tried to elect him. In 1881, when Conkling resigned, George Wm. Curtis, the editor of Harper's Weekly, joined with these and others to defeat Conkling. It has always been understood that it was Whitelaw Reid, working in his own and Mr. Blaine's interest, that caused the President to betray Mr. Conkling. The lies told by their journals opposing Conkling were never equalled; Conkling was defeated. He was of course chagrined, but not broken hearted. His friend, Judge Falger, was a candidate for governor and was beaten because the friends of the goodie goodies (the Tribune, Harper's Weekly et al) remained away from the polls and gave Mr. Cleveland the unparalleled majority which made him the logical candidate for president in 1884. In that year the friends of Conkling remained away from the polls which gave the electoral vote of New York to Cleveland. When Conkling was a candidate for re-election, he was called a spoilsman and boss. When the change in the control of the custom-house came it was found that there were just two men there who had obtained places through Mr. Conkling's influence—one was a crippled old soldier, the other a man who, in saving a young woman's life, was so crippled that he could not do any hard work. At the same time thirty-three healthy citizens were found there who had obtained their places through the influence of George William Curtis; never was a great statesman so shamefully used as was Roscoe Conkling; never did a state so disgrace itself as did New York when it refused to make his quarrel its own. He practiced his profession for several years and on the 18th of April, 1883, died from the effects of the great blizzard of a few days previous, and died without one stain on his high name.