

The Daily Tribune.

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Friday, March 4, 1904. President Smith's reputation for truth and frankness is sustained.

The people of Utah, also, are getting some news from the committee room at Washington.

And, besides, faith in the completeness of the Salt Lake birth record will be greatly shaken.

Looking at his revelations, even the most prejudiced must now admit that President Smith is, indeed, a revelator.

Mayor Morris seems anxious to accomplish something, if it is nothing more than to keep workmen out of their pay.

And yet people once thought that the Roberts record, consisting merely of a pair of twins, was something worth talking about.

It appears that Apostle Teasdale innocently took a plural, having absent-mindedly overlooked the fact that he had another wife.

Since the manifesto was issued President Smith has carefully refrained from taking any more wives, though he has had but five.

The czar has forbidden the Russians to celebrate imaginary victories, and the Mikado will strive to keep them from celebrating the other kind.

The war in the Far East must excite the people of Utah if they do not take great interest in it while the fight at Washington is going on.

Perhaps Apostle Teasdale felt that he could not do the committee any good at Washington, when his memory is so poor that he once forgot that he had a wife.

That Congressmen can put aside partisanship when some great measure appeals to them, may be seen in their general admiration for the bill to increase their pay.

The man who has been victimizing people by personating an assessor and asking to be shown their property evidently did not find among their possessions any cut eyeteeth.

Train loads of colonists are beginning to pass through, to the Coast. When will colonists, traveling on proportionate rates, begin pouring into Utah and Idaho?

The improvements on foot for this valley by way of suburban transportation this year will be of great value and a pleasant convenience to this city as well as to the county communities.

Russia is said now to desire the friendship of the United States. This is either news or a change of heart.

Ex-President Cleveland denies that the colored man, C. H. J. Taylor, took lunch with him at the White House, and Representative Scott of Kansas, who said that he did, withdraws the statement, with apologies to Mr. Cleveland.

Secretary Shaw evidently expects the payments on Panama Canal accounts both to the French Canal Company and to the Government of Panama to be made on or about the 25th of this month, three weeks from now.

lions out of the Treasury surplus. It will be an enriching flood to the impoverished isthmus, which for more than half a century has been systematically plundered by the political leeches at Bogota.

PRESIDENT SMITH'S TESTIMONY.

It was an epoch-making occasion yesterday in Washington when President Joseph F. Smith of the Mormon church delivered his testimony. He admitted the facts of his marital relations as they are known here, and was commendably frank as to the polygamous relations and living of other high church officials.

For this frankness and candor President Smith is emphatically to be commended. By his testimony on these points he shows himself to be an honest man, mindful of the obligations of his oath. His testimony as to the number of his wives, his continuous polygamous living with them, regardless of the law, the children they have borne to him since the manifesto, was all of the most open character.

It is decidedly refreshing to see such testimony as this, giving the exact truth. It comports with the dignity of the occasion, and of the high body which will eventually be called upon to pass upon its bearing on the case in controversy. That President Smith has personally made a favorable impression upon the committee, as well as upon the public in the frankness of his admission, cannot be doubted.

We confess that the testimony so given is a complete surprise to us. It is in direct contrast in clearness and lack of effort to conceal or evade, with the sort of testimony that has usually been given in the courts of Utah when matters of this kind have been under investigation. In such cases the lack of memory, the awful disavowals of knowledge, the indifference to the most patent facts, have been soul-sickening.

The cases where women would swear that they did not know the father of their children, where fathers would swear that they didn't know whether their daughters were married or not, and though there were children in the house, didn't know whose they were, have been repeated so often in the courts here that nothing else than such refusal to tell the facts has come to be expected.

But in his testimony President Smith shows his disapproval of all that sort of testimony. His clear and deliberate statements of facts constitute a caustic rebuke to all who have allowed themselves to commit the oft-perjured and despicable tactics that have been employed so much here, to the disgust of all right-thinking people. We rejoice to see that President Smith has so strongly arrayed himself in condemnation of all that evil work, which sapped the moral fiber of the people.

As a sample of the sort of testimony that President Smith so emphatically shows by his example should not be given, we recall the scandalous case of a Federal official who was afterward removed from office by President McKinley, and who escaped the penalty of his misdeeds by such awful testimony as made the flesh creep. It was the high water mark of atrociousness in the way of evidence ever given in any court.

That such dreadful testimony is given a crushing rebuke by the admirable candor and good faith of President Smith's evidence in Washington yesterday is clear. It will be a good thing for Utah to have it made permanent that henceforth in cases involving polygamy and unlawful cohabitation, the rule is that the truth must be told.

We repeat, President Smith has done a great work for Utah and for his church by giving this truthful, candid testimony. He makes it unnecessary to bring on the vast mass of evidence that was in reserve, and acquits himself like a man.

But what will be the effect? In Utah, good undoubtedly. In Washington, a respect will be had for the man which otherwise would have been quite impossible. If others follow in the same vein, the country will know the facts, and though these may not be relished, at least the public will see that the churchmen have the courage of their convictions, a thing of which the evidence has been sadly lacking hitherto.

But what will be the effect on Senator Smoot, of this exceedingly frank testimony? That remains to be seen. Certainly it will not be more damaging than if the things admitted had been otherwise proved. And as to the parallel case of (then) Apostle Thatcher, who was a candidate without the consent of his quorum, compared with that of Apostle Smoot, who was a candidate with such consent, and the effect on each candidate's prospects in each case, we really think that the committee must have Mr. Thatcher's testimony in order to get at the true meaning and bearing of the points involved.

It is noteworthy that President Smith in his testimony makes no claim of any understanding that men should be permitted to live with their plural wives. There was no such understanding. On the contrary, he expressly says that after the hearing before the master in chancery (on the suit for the Temple lot at Independence) he understood that "we should abstain from relations with our plural families, and that rule was observed up to the time the enabling act went into effect, admitting Utah as a State." And this unlawful cohabitation was resumed merely because it was not mentioned in that act. A technicality to which, the committee will unquestionably give all the weight which is due to it.

There is another portion of President Smith's testimony also, as to which the committee will need further light. We refer to his declaration that he understood he was violating the law, and was

prepared to answer for it. The natural query will be, Why, then, as the facts in his case were generally known, was he not made to answer for his transgression of the law?

To a resident of Utah who understands the situation here, the answer is easy. It would be quite impossible to convict President Smith of polygamous living, or unlawful cohabitation as it is called, in any court here, unless he himself voluntarily confessed the offense. The public attorney who prosecuted too vigorously would never be elected to any office again; the judge who might be too severe might as well never be a candidate again, the Mormon juror who consented to a verdict that was resisted by the accused would likely be defellowshipped and perhaps ruined; the witness too zealous would be under the ban.

Under these circumstances, well known to President Smith, for he would know to the one from whom all the penalties possible would come, he knew that he was perfectly safe from prosecution for his violation of the law. And in making his declaration on this point before the committee, he left the explanation of his immunity for further testimony, which the committee should certainly secure.

But it was a great day for President Smith. He afforded the sensation of the day, which was literally a lightning one, and in no place in the country will its importance and significance be so fully appreciated as in Utah.

SHOULD HAVE AN EVEN SHOW.

The evil effect of the refusal to pay a bill rendered by a doctor for services in an emergency case came prominently to the surface in connection with the case of Marion Kesler, who while under arrest, suffered for two hours with a broken arm, before receiving relief. The City Physician could not be found for a time, and a physician who was summoned declined to have to do with the case because his bill rendered previously in such a case had been refused payment.

Let us see how this sort of thing would work if applied similarly in another direction. There is a City Attorney, as there is a City Physician. If the former has an urgent case, there has never been any hesitation in employing outside counsel to assist him; if he has more than he thinks he can do comfortably, he always gets help; and he has constantly an assistant.

But when the City Physician is over-taxed, when he is expected to be in two, three or half a dozen places at once, how is it? Is there a proposition to aid him, or even to give him an assistant? Not a whisper of it; and if a doctor is by urgency asked to perform a public service when the City Physician is engaged elsewhere, the bill is disallowed.

There is never a disallowance of an attorney's bill, however, under like circumstances. Nor do we argue that there should be a disallowance. But the City Physician should be treated fairly, and reasonable help should be afforded him, especially in emergency cases. It is no more than fair, and the doctor who renders the aid should be paid. The same treatment should, in some degree at least, be given to the City Physician that is given to the City Attorney in similar urgencies, and the public would be the gainer by a rule which treated the one as well as the other.

PORTO RICAN PRETENSIONS.

Commerce between Porto Rico and the United States is growing amazingly. In 1897, the year before the Spanish war and the annexation of the island, the total value of its commerce with the country was \$4,162,912, while during the calendar year 1902 it amounted to \$21,411,695. Of this total, more than five times as great as the total in 1897, the sum of \$11,424,313 was domestic products of the United States shipped to Porto Rico, and \$9,986,782 was domestic products of Porto Rico shipped to the United States. To other parts of the world Porto Rico sent domestic products to the value of \$4,267,310, and imported goods to the value of \$2,119,523.

It will thus be seen that Porto Rican trade is almost entirely with the United States, and that Porto Rico is in a flourishing condition. And yet, when the Porto Rican assembly adopts a resolution demanding Statehood or independence, there is no doubt that it is rushing the season, and asking impossibilities.

The czar looked with much favor for a time upon the meetings in support of the war, and for the purpose of sending forth patriotic demonstrations. But now he has signed an order to M. de Plehve, Minister of the Interior, forbidding such meetings and demonstrations. The reason is easy to see. The nihilists, the revolutionists, the socialists, the reformers, all seized the occasion of these meetings for their own purposes. Their meetings have been forbidden and put down. But if they could hold them under color of a patriotic demonstration, it was as good a thing as they wanted. The "patriotism" wouldn't count and they could do their work. And the Russian Government is afraid of it; so much afraid that it prefers to suppress all demonstrations, even those of well-meant loyalty, rather than give the internal enemy the advantage which these meetings offer. It is a black commentary on the spirit and the methods of the czar's despotic rule.

How quickly a real sensation eclipses one that merely is an imitation! The biggest kind of a battle on the Yalu between Russians and Japanese wouldn't have been in it yesterday with the surprising and deeply engrossing testimony of President Smith.

LIVING A CENTURY.

From the New York World. Many miles are laid down by which to accomplish the feat of living a century. Some of these come from people who have rounded out the one hundred years. Each deems his method the only reliable one, although the methods are various and conflicting. The abstemious ascribe longevity to temperance. The antique soak is certain that for him the boom of old age was pickled in alcohol; life enjoyable while it is lasting.

Among the Mexicans and Indians of Southern California have been a number of the most remarkable examples of longevity. The Mexicans smoke cigarettes from the time they are tall enough to toddle, drink mescal, which is worse than whisky, and violate every sanitary law known to mortal. Indians are filthy in all their habits, will eat meat an ordinary dog would reject, get drunk when they can obtain "fire-water," and they vie with Mexicans in lingering long.

It is of more importance to learn how to live, than to know how to die. A normal span than how to snatch an extension of time. The last twenty years of anybody's century is bound to be a lonely and usually a profitless season.

FACETIOUS SENATORS.

From the Washington Post. Senators were facetious yesterday at the expense of Mr. Heyburn of Idaho who was trying to protect people against the sales of fruit trees that are not what they purport to be. "Why, if we are going into that kind of business," asserted Mr. Lodge, who aggressively opposed Mr. Heyburn's proposition, "we might just as well undertake to protect the public against book agents and lightning rod agents."

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