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SECOND EDITORIAL

A BRAINLESS PULPITEER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

The Roberts episode is acting like a plow, cutting into old neglected soil, and throwing up skulls, crossbones and all manner of prehistoric matter.¹ The polluted society of to-day is all in a shiver about “Mormon Immorality.” Every capitalist adulterer, every “Seeley Diner,” every roué among our “Pillars of Society” is shocked at the idea of Congress being “desecrated” by a polygamist; professors are lecturing upon the “Mormon Evil”; and, last, but not least, the pulpiteers are thundering their best at the “taint of Mormonism.” Which of all these is laying bare his own ignorance more than any other it were difficult to say. And yet, one of these, “Rev. L.R. Foote, pastor of the Throop Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn,” as he signs himself, does seem to have reached the highest notch, or the deepest, in this respect.

He tells how it is part of the Mormon creed that a woman’s salvation depends upon her husband’s will; “if he wills it, she is damned.” Then he goes on to say that 1,500 or 2,000 apostles of this creed are going all over the land, “spreading their poison” and “making converts.”

The Rev. L.R. Foote, Pastor, etc., does not seem to realize either the

¹ [ROBERTS, BRIGHAM HENRY, (1857–1933) a Representative from Utah; born in Warrington, Lancashire, England, March 13, 1857; immigrated to the United States in 1866 with his parents, who settled in Bountiful, Davis County, Utah; attended the district schools; was graduated from Deseret University, Salt Lake City, in 1878; taught school for several years and later worked as associate and editor in chief of the *Salt Lake Herald*; member of the State constitutional convention which framed the organic law of Utah in 1894; unsuccessful Democratic candidate for election in 1895 to the Fifty-fifth Congress; presented credentials as a Democratic Member-elect to the Fifty-sixth Congress and served from March 4, 1899, to January 25, 1900, when the seat was declared vacant because Roberts was a polygamist; author of numerous historical, biographical, and doctrinal works; served on the State board of equalization tax department in 1916 and subsequently ordained as a minister of the gospel; during the First World War served as chaplain of the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Regiment, Field Artillery; served as president of the Eastern States Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Brooklyn, N.Y.; died in Salt Lake City, Utah, September 27, 1933; interment in Centerville Ward Cemetery, Centerville, Davis County, Utah.] (From Biographical Directory of the United States Congress)

contradiction to which his stupidity leads him, or the fact that his “reasoning” is brought up with a sharp turn by a stone wall of fact.

Is it not absurd to imagine that any woman, outside a lunatic asylum, would allow herself to be converted to a religion by which she can “be damned at the will of her husband?” Again, must not there be something more than mental weakness or depravity at bottom of the hard fact, attested to by the Rev. L.R. Foote, Pastor, etc., himself, that the Mormon missionaries DO make many converts, among women, at that?

The identical papers that are containing the intellectually ribald outpourings of the Rev.-L.-R.-Foote-Pastors, are publishing in almost parallel columns, articles upon “new fields for women,”—new fields that tell in language loud and clear enough that they are degrading resources to which womankind is flying for existence. What are these women flying from? They are flying before the prairie fire of the social system of production that the L.-R.-Foote-Pastors are upholding as divine. They are flying from the grind of Capitalism that strips their male relatives of a living, that flings them into the factories, and that there exposes them to indignities at low wages.

The Roberts episode is not a “cleaner”; it is not an event that calls attention to some existing wrongs that are thereupon done away with. It is a carbuncle that betrays the utter corruption of the blood in the body on which it breaks out.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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