

# DESERET EVENING NEWS

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

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## YULE AND CHRISTMAS.

The celebration at this time of the year is traced back to the ancient days of Persia, Rome, it is believed, borrowed many of the observances of her Saturnalia from Persia, Egypt and Greece, and without doubt the Yule festivities of the ancient Saxons and Northern nations were an inheritance from the time they were living in the Asiatic countries.

Yuletide, as near as can be made out, dates back to the time when various heathen deities held sway in the minds of our ancestors. The idea prevailed that this time of the year, the wheel, or yule, of time rested after its yearly round. This suggested quietude. For three weeks, from the 11th of December to the 6th of January, all feuds were dropped. Quarrels were interrupted, and sacrifices were attended to for the fruitfulness of the soil, for success in war and peaceful pursuits. It was, moreover, a time, during which new resolutions were formed and solemnly uttered, in honor of Brage—the Northern god that has given to our language the significant word "brag."—It was a time devoted to the special honor of Thor on the so-called "Northern Night," as the progenitress of all other nights in the year.

Yuletide became Christmas, when in the prevalent church a "mas" in honor of Christ was instituted on the 25th of December, in the midst of the festivities celebrated almost universally in honor of pagan deities. This was not until 200 years after the birth of our Savior. When the Pope Julius in the year 400 of our era, fixed on the present date for Christmas, he did so undoubtedly with the idea of supplanting paganism to some extent with Christmas carols, Christmas hymns and Christmas sentiments. The knowledge of the true date of nativity had been lost, and the time of the winter solstice seemed appropriate to mark a most important event in the Christian epoch.

There has been much said, for and against, the practice of associating worship with symbolic days and emblems. The proneness of mankind to idolatry is seen, on all hands, but if the possibility of idolatry is to be avoided, worship itself must be abolished. The most devout worship is at some time or other symbolic.

The true danger is in the insincerity that confuses the religious sentiment to special symbolic days and emblems, and discards it in the every-day life. Whenever there arises among men a Prophet of the Lord, he is an iconoclast, to the extent that he smashes without pity the emblems or symbols, or idols, that are so worshipped—no matter whether they are the fetich of the African, the black stone of the Arabian, the household of the Northern, or the saint-images of modern churches. When people have come to the state of religious indifference, that they do not believe, but only believe that they believe, as Coleridge puts it, it is high time for a mighty one to come and crush the paraphernalia that once may have been good and useful, but now are no better than rubbish. Then is the time for the appearance of a Mohammed, a Luther, or still better, a prophet of the Lord, to call upon the people to repent from the hateful formalism, from cant and hypocrisy, and to worship in spirit and truth.

To tender this possible was the mission of the Son of God to this earth: it was the mission of all His true followers in all ages. It is the work of the Latter-day Saints among this generation.

## TOO PREVIOUS.

The New York (yellow) Journal has prepared beforehand, the report which is to be made by the special committee of the House on the Roberts case. It is of considerable length but disproportionate as to depth. The gist of it is that the Member for Utah is and has been since 1855 a polygamist, and still maintains polygamist relations with three wives; that "the Edmunds Act of 1852 provides that no bigamist or polygamist shall be permitted to hold office in any Territory of the United States or under the Federal Government;" that the Constitution requires a Representative to be a citizen of the United States and that this means citizenship in the fullest extent; that therefore "the committee will recommend his exclusion for infidelity."

If there is anything more conspicuous in the yellow Journal than its vicious malice, it is its deplorable ignorance. Both have been manifested to the full in its rabid attacks on Mr. Roberts and the "Mormon" Church, during all the months of the latest crusade. If the Taylor committee adopt anything like the nonsense of the Journal, it will be greeted with derision by Congress and excite the contempt of the whole country.

The idea that the provisions of a law specially enacted for a Territory, or place over which the United States have exclusive jurisdiction, is operative as to a sovereign State, is bad enough. But to confound citizenship and the suffrage is still worse. A person who has not the right to vote may be a citizen to the full extent. To talk

of half a citizen is even more foolish than to wish to own "half a dawg."

Women are citizens in every State of the Union, but only in two or three States do they have the elective franchise. A child born in the United States is a citizen, just as much when one year old as when twenty-one, but there are certain privileges which he cannot exercise until the latter age is reached. Citizenship comes by birth or naturalization, the right to vote and hold office is conferred by law. To be a Congressman a man must be twenty-five years of age. Hon. B. H. Roberts is a citizen of the proper age and that point was settled in the House before the committee on his case was appointed.

The Salt Lake paper which is the echo of the New York yellow article and of a similar tint, reveals over the rubbish of the Gotham paper and adds this morning:

"When a year ago the Tribune said that he would be excluded from Congress by the Edmunds law, it being in force in Washington, the News told its readers that the Edmunds law was dead in Utah, and that Mr. Roberts would go by the authority of a sovereign State. It seems Congress is too dull to catch the meaning of the News."

Oh no. The New York and Salt Lake yellow journals are not the Congress of the United States. That body has not yet fallen into the folly mapped out for it by those wonderfully wise editors. Perhaps they will recognize the late Senator Edmunds—the author of the law referred to, as some authority. He has declared emphatically, what the "News" explained long ago, that the law has no application to a State and that it was the State of Utah that elected Mr. Roberts as its Representative. But may be he was "too dull" to appreciate the legal learning or lucid logic of the New York Journal and the Salt Lake Tribune. Their "forecast" of the committee's report is a little "too previous."

## THE WAY OPENING.

Among our exchanges we find a big budget of papers from Maryland, West Virginia and other near-by States, containing fair reports of lectures and discourses delivered by Elder John M. Whitaker, of this city. He is taking advantage of the present public excitement and the evident turn of the tide, to present the "Mormon" side of the controversy. He has succeeded in arresting much attention and while giving the correct side of the Roberts' question, is preaching the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to many people who, but for the present agitation, would have been indifferent to such matters. The press in those parts also appear willing to give place to corrections of popular errors and the refutation of untruths promulgated by so-called Christian ministers.

Elder Whitaker's success in these particulars is an encouraging sign of the result that will come from the anti-"Mormon" crusade. It will provoke inquiry. Indifference to "Mormon" doctrines will be supplanted by eagerness to find out what they are. Openings will be made for the missionaries of the Church. And although it will take much more time and labor to refute falsehood than it has taken to spread it, the outcome will certainly be favorable to the truth, and to the triumph of the system which there has been so much effort to suppress.

We congratulate Elder Whitaker on the work he has been able to accomplish, and hope it will prove a stimulus and encouragement to other Elders in the field. We also appreciate the liberality displayed by so many newspapers, in opening their columns to the "Mormon" side of those subjects on which there has been so much misunderstanding, in consequence of the efforts of its religious enemies and the access to the public press of which they have had heretofore almost a monopoly.

## GEN. LAWTON'S FAMILY.

General Lawton, of whose inestimable services to the country an enthusiastic press cannot say too much, leaves, it seems, a widow and some small children in a rather embarrassing financial condition. He has saved little or nothing of that which he received for serving his country during the war. His wife is a California girl who owns, it is said, a home and an orange grove, but this property is encumbered. As a consequence a committee has been formed to raise some means for the benefit of the family, by private subscription.

Undoubtedly an appeal to the public will be responded to generously, as it ought to be. But the circumstance again calls to general attention the fact that it is hardly in keeping with the dignity of a great and wealthy nation to leave the families of fallen American heroes to the tender mercies of public charity. Relief should be sought through the national legislature. It should be obtained without delay, too, for the nation should be anxious to discharge its duty and pay off promptly an obligation which is indeed a debt of honor. Public subscription for such a purpose is but a reminder that there must be something not entirely right in the arrangement of the business of Uncle Sam.

## THE QUEEN'S ANXIETY.

The rumor of the anxiety and mental suffering of Queen Victoria, on account of the terrible slaughter of British soldiers on the field of battle, is pathetic in the extreme. She is now, for the time being, passing through the agony of the queen regent of Spain, when the latter received word of the destruction of the naval defenses of the nation and of the death of thousands in the waves, or on the battlefields. But there is this difference. The queen regent of Spain almost forced her cabinet to decide for war. She had listened with no feeling of pity to the moans of Cuban women and children dying of hunger, or old helpless men in Weyler's dungeons, but was determined to hold at any cost what she considered the property of her boy.

The British queen is in an entirely different position. She endeavored to ward off the war as long as possible. It was forced on her, as was the war with France on the then King William, by politicians who understood to give

their war of aggression every appearance of a war of defense. Queen Victoria, too, has had the misfortune of seeing her rule of peace interrupted by sanguinary wars. Her soldiers have slain their thousands and tens of thousands in Asia and Africa. But the present situation she feels, with the keen instinct of a woman, to be nothing short of a national calamity.

The thought that the reverses in South Africa in course of time must be turned into victories, is but a partial relief in the present agony. That cannot recall to this scene of action those who have been slain. Nor can it prevent the sad reflection that victory at all stages is to be bought at a most terrible sacrifice. The South African war must be a heavy blow to the aged queen, no matter from what point of view it is considered.

## PRESBYTERIAN FANATICS.

An exchange tells a somewhat remarkable story about a religious sect called Covenanters. This sect, it says, excluded, from its membership, all lawyers. The reason given is that this unfortunate class of citizens, before being admitted to practice law, are required to take an oath to support the Constitution and other laws of the country and State.

The Constitution, they hold, is an abominable instrument, because it contains no official recognition of God. The government they consider objectionable, too, because it allows divorces, Sunday mail service, and the sale of intoxicants. And thus the lawyers are, in their view, particularly excluded from the blessings of a "Christian" community.

We have heard of no other "Covenanters" than those with whom all readers of Scottish history are familiar, and who were the mighty champions of Presbyterianism, against popery and prelacy. But it is said that these American "Covenanters" are a branch of the reformed Presbyterian body.

The fact is of interest because Presbyterians are now, and have often been, busy charging the Latter-day Saints with disloyalty to the government. Is it true, that from their own body has sprung a branch—a division of the church, to which those who swear allegiance to the government are never admitted?

There is a form of hypocrisy that attacks others, to hide its own defects. It is often found among religionists and is then exceptionally hideous.

## SALT OF THE EARTH.

In the Westminster Gazette Mr. Edward Berdol gives the following interesting explanation of a familiar Scripture expression:

"In the recently published 'Memoirs of Lord Playfair' there is a most interesting note on the Biblical phrase 'the salt of the earth.' The great scientist says (p. 38): 'Natural petroleum has been used since the time of Cyrus, I believe that it was known in ancient Biblical history, where it is described as 'the salt of the earth.' When such salt loses its savor 'it is only fit to be trodden under foot' of men, because losing its volatile essence it becomes asphalt, which was used for pavements both in Nineveh and Babylon. Occasionally it is spoken of as 'thick water,' as in the remarkable chapter in Macbeth II. I, where it is described as being used in burnt offerings: 'And Neemia called this thing naphtha, which is as much as to say a cleansing.'"

Etymologically the word Nepht, familiar to Book of Mormon readers, may be presumed to be akin to this "naphtha," this "salt of the earth." The history of the Nephtites is, at all events, a striking illustration of the condition of that salt, when it loses its savor. However, we are of the opinion that Berdol's notion is to be taken, if at all, with several grains of salt.

## ROBERTS AN ISSUE.

Under this caption the Boston Herald of Dec. 18 thus comments on the Kentucky election:

There is to be an election to fill the vacancy in the 7th congressional district of Kentucky today, and the only issue between the two candidates appears to be Roberts of Utah. The Goebell Democrat nominated Mr. Gayle, and he has declared that, if he is elected and has a chance to vote on the Roberts matter, he will vote in favor of seating him. On the other hand, Mr. Owens, who is a Democrat and the anti-Goebel Democrat and the Republicans, has asserted that, if elected to Congress, he will vote against the Roberts matter. If the voters of the district are moved by popular clamor, rather than by a calm consideration of the merits of the real question involved, as was the case in the House, the chances would seem to be in favor of the anti-Roberts candidate. If this proves to be the decisive issue, the district, by the way, is the same as that which was divided on the Breckinridge scandal some time ago.

Mr. Gayle, as will be remembered, was elected. The fact is of interest, in view of one of the issues involved.

Thirteen is sometimes a lucky number, as in the case of the Braznell mine disaster, when thirteen men escaped alive.

There is talk of Fenian re-organization in this country. Any renewal of an effort to invade Canada would be very unhealthy exercise just now, on either side of the boundary line.

It is reported that Christmas sees a truce for one day in South Africa. No doubt the people are thankful for peace on earth for one day, at least, albeit it may be an enforced peace.

A statistician claims that 25 ordinary men utter 11,800,000 words in a year. That is terrible. How long would it take an ordinary man to undo the mischief done by such a multitude of words, most of which no doubt are idle, if not worse than that.

Three years' mission work in Tibet and not a single convert to Christianity, is the report of two missionaries of the Christian and Missionary alliance of New York. The white man's force of civilization has not made headway there yet.

The British public does not like to be deceived as to national preparedness to carry on war, hence the strong demand announced from London, that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain retire from the head of the colonial office, and the suggestion that Lord Rosebery take the responsible duties of the position of foreign minister.

The awful disaster at the Braznell mine, Pennsylvania, gives an opportunity

for salutary punishment of those, who, for money-making's sake, tamper with the lives of men. It was known there was gas in the mine, yet the law regulating working was openly and criminally disregarded, the result being the death of more than two-score men. There should be a vigorous prosecution of the culpable persons.

Bjornstjerne Bjornson, the famous Norwegian poet and politician, recently ordered removed a statue of him erected by admiring friends in front of the Christiania theater. He claims the statue is a libel on him. This shows the wisdom of the old rule not to commemorate in bronze those who live. Dead persons do not protect against the alleged art that sometimes is embodied in sculpture.

If Great Britain is wise she will not arouse an anti-British sentiment by seizing cargoes of flour shipped in American bottoms to Delagoa bay merchants. Such cargoes are as free to Portuguese territory as to England or Germany, and only consignments to hostile territory are liable. These cargoes are not so consigned. In the present state of affairs it would not be difficult to arouse an anti-British sentiment in this country, which would be quite unfortunate, in view of the recent past.

Gen. Gatacre has issued a reconcentration order in the neighborhood of his troops in Cape Colony. The method is rather dangerous, as it is liable to force into the enemy's ranks men who otherwise would be non-combatants. Besides, the reconcentration business was made so infamous by Gen. Weyler in Cuba, that its use in Cape Colony must be attended with great care, or it will prove as much of a blunder as did Gen. Gatacre's attempt to capture Stormberg.

A friend calls attention to the fact that during the recent Sunday school jubilee, in Farmers' ward no less than thirteen languages, or dialects, were represented during the polyglot recitation of the Articles of Faith, all by members of the ward. The United States, Great Britain, continental Europe, Scandinavia and the Islands of the sea were represented, and one of the Articles was said in ancient Greek, the language in which some of the first Apostles wrote and spoke.

The prediction of Prof. Andrews, superintendent of the public schools, that British success in South Africa would mean a war of continental Europe against Britain, may be the professor's judgment; but Europe is hardly likely to pounce on a successful military power. The failure, up to the present, of the British to score any considerable success against the Boers, even where the latter have been somewhat in the minority, would seem to offer the greater inducement to encourage unfriendly European powers to strike an entangled enemy.

## ANXIOUS FOR GREAT BRITAIN.

Worcester Spy.

"Is the British empire doomed?" That is the question anxiously asked by the British press and people this week. Will a succession of reverses in one quarter of the globe sever the strands of empire in other regions? Will the disease of disloyalty in one member of the vast organism called the British empire affect other portions of the system with the same fatal result? South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the rest?

The news of the increased war preparations of Great Britain, the summoning of Lord Roberts and Gen. Kitchener—the two favorite soldiers of the empire—to the scene of operations, the indications of a levy on the colonial forces, the gloom which has been cast over the Tugela river disaster, the consummation of a series of reverses. The British government is making ready to do what it must do. Those who insist that England will back down do not realize the necessities of the case nor the disposition of the British government when it really represents the British people. That disposition was set out in Nelson's England expects every man to do his duty."

New York Tribune.

Not merely South Africa, but the world-wide British empire is at stake. The fact was not realized as clearly before the war as it is now. At the present time it is seen by all as clearly as the noonday sun. If Great Britain were defeated, if the Boers were given out of South Africa altogether, and what then? Why, she would be a third-rate power. India would be lost in a twinkling.

Chicago Times-Herald.

It is the stupendous consequences, not only to the British empire but to the world, involved in the South African struggle that make it the all-absorbing feature of interest throughout the world. The Boers have kindled a conflagration which can only end in their overwhelming defeat or the disintegration of what Von Buelow the other day acknowledged was the greatest world power since the days of imperial Rome.

Chicago News.

Some time ago ex-President Harrison, fresh from the intimacies of the Venezuela commission and the enlightenment of a visit to the German court, was asked his opinion of the British South African trouble. He answered: "I breakers ahead for Great Britain." This penetrating forecast of the difficulties likely to arise during the course of the Transvaal campaign has received speedy fulfillment. Britain is among the breakers and the imperial vessel is in danger of foundering. An ambitious colonial secretary has apparently "steered too near the sands" to show his wit.

San Francisco Chronicle.

Some dispatches from London have intimated a probable reconstruction of the ministry, forced by public opinion as the result of the war in South Africa. The immediate attack seems to be directed against the war authorities for not having the armies equipped with cavalry and modern artillery. It is very likely that there will be any cabinet crisis at present. It is very certain that the authorities of war and the treasury would be able to get the Boers, and he is the one man who, although probably the most unpopular man in England today, the British people cannot now afford to throw overboard. He has got into a tight, and their blood is up, and they propose to fight the war to a successful issue.

## FINANCIAL FLEURY.

Chicago News.

It is difficult to treat temperately and with patience the monetary troubles which appeared in Boston last week,

# BEST HOLIDAY GOODS

Display in the City is now on view at Z. C. M. I. and everybody is invited. Our great DRY GOODS DEPARTMENT has the Choicest and Largest Stock ever exhibited in the West. All other departments are in unison with an extensive supply. Owing to having been able to make most of our purchases just before the recent advances, we are able to make OUR PRICES THE LOWEST.

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## FOOTSTOOLS AND OTTOMANS, A BEAUTIFUL ASSORTMENT.

# Z. C. M. I.

T. G. WEBBER, Supt.

because they are absolutely without justification or excuse. In a time of world-wide financial stress like 1893 a bank that is managed with entire honesty of intention if not with the best judgment in the world may find itself embarrassed, and while, finally, nothing excuses incompetence in bank management, judgment is tempered by the leniency granted to misguided honesty. But a metropolitan bank that gets on the shoals in times like the present deserves the severest condemnation. Almost every form and phase of commercial enterprise is on a sound, healthy, prosperous basis. There has been no general reverse except in pure speculation, and it is difficult to find any possible explanation of a bank's embarrassment outside of speculation.

Sacramento Record Union.

The flurry in banking and brokerage circles in New York does not indicate any real weakness in American finances, nor any lasting disturbance in representatives of real values. It is the expected outcome of gaining in stocks of the multitude of trusts, most of them either fictitiously or over capitalized. The shake-up under the assault of the bears proves, in our opinion, that the solid money interests of the country are wary of the trusts and the institution backing them for most part, and that these concerns with few exceptions will speedily find their proper level.

## GEN. LAWTON.

St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The death of Gen. Lawton slain by a rebel bullet while in front of his troops at San Mateo, is a deplorable incident of the closing days of a war which is just about culminating in the complete dissolution of the insurgent army and the restoration of peace and order under the American flag. To the triumph of the Republic, the death of Gen. Lawton is a loss which cannot be overestimated. He was one of the ablest and bravest of our army officers in the Philippines, and his death is a severe blow to the morale of the army. He was a man of great resources, a soldier of the highest caliber, and a military leader of genius.

Milwaukee Wisconsin.

The bullet which killed Maj. Gen. Lawton struck down one of the bravest and most efficient military officers who have taken part in the conflict that began with Spain and that is now hastening to a close in the Philippines. Since April, 1898, when he entered the service as a sergeant of volunteers, he has been ever ready in his country's hour of need to give the life which has at last been so suddenly taken when least expected. His fine qualities as a disciplinarian and his splendid dash and energy have made him especially useful in the Philippine campaign, and have attracted the admiration of his countrymen, who will be unexpressedly shocked by the sad news of his death. To millions of Americans who have never seen him but have eagerly followed his splendid career the news will convey a deep sense of personal loss.

## RUSSIA AND PERSIA.

St. Petersburg Rossija.

The increase of the Russian naval force on the Persian gulf does not indicate any offensive intention or desire to appropriate territory. At the same time there can be no doubt that Great Britain will scarcely dare to make any annexation in the presence of a Russian man-of-war. From many points of view the appearance of the Russian flag in the Indian ocean and in the Persian gulf, especially in the present state of affairs, must be welcomed gladly.

Tokyo Chuo.

If the attention of Great Britain is claimed to such an extent by the condition of affairs in South Africa that it cannot make its influence felt in the far east, then the equilibrium at present existing between the powers will be destroyed, and the inclination to make the most of the opportunity will not be confined to one or two powers. Will not Russia wish to snatch some coin of vantage on the Persian gulf? Will Russia not attempt to carry out its long-cherished project for constructing a railway to Peking? Will Germany find nothing which it can claim? A speedy victory for Great Britain in the Transvaal will be the best guarantee of the maintenance of peace and justice in the far east.

## BRITISH REVERSES.

New York Journal.

Again the British have suffered a serious reverse at the hands of the Boers. General Buller in attempting to cross the Tugela river with his entire force was driven back with heavy loss. This is the fifth severe engagement in which the Boers have been victorious. The moral effect of these victories on the Cape Colony Dutch, the savage tribes around the Transvaal and the nations of Europe cannot be overestimated.

San Francisco Chronicle.

Perhaps the most significant suggestion of the real gravity of the crisis is contained in Lord Rosebery's sudden resignation. For his own plans to join the Mediterranean fleet as second



## Christmas Shopping

Is over and what a busy, bustling week it's been. Sunday we rest. Monday we rest too. We hope you'll all have a Merry Christmas. Tuesday we'll be ready for business again, just as though nothing had happened between now and then. Maybe you'll want a Suit then. Maybe you'll want an Overcoat then. Maybe you'll want to exchange something that somebody bought for you here; if so come in.

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