



GEORGE Q. CANNON.....EDITOR

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THE "IGNORANCE, ERROR AND BIGOTRY" OF THE "MORMONS."

"J. S. W.," in a recent number of the *San Francisco Occident*, expatiates in the usual orthodox style upon "Salt Lake City and the Mormons." He is candid enough to admit that there are some things not bad even in Utah, but he indulges in the usual amount of prate about social degradation,—especially of the women,—and ignorance, superstition, &c., &c., *ad infinitum*.

The general features of our city, its streets, shade trees, streams of water, fine stores, business places and public buildings evidently do not meet with his disapproval. Then again he says there is a place of worship in each of the twenty wards of the city, and, in addition, there is the Tabernacle—"a central audience room"—capable of holding "10,000 worshippers," and other things which indicate "industry, frugality and perseverance;" but, oh, dear! in the midst of all this he can not but deplore the "ignorance, error and bigotry which degrade and enslave the masses" among our citizens, especially the women, who, he says, by one fell swoop are degraded from the elevation to which eighteen centuries of labor had exalted them.

This is the old story as related by these sensation-mongers, whose delight it ever is to prate about the degradation of the people of Utah. How ridiculous such correspondents as "J. S. W." make themselves! They come to Salt Lake City, stay here for a few days, see, and are constrained to admire our beautiful metropolis, and to admit the evidences, that everywhere present themselves, of the unflagging industry of the people who have built it; they will tell also of the absence of rowdiness, profanity and that squalor and social wretchedness that are so abundant in almost every city within the purview of Christendom and yet they must sing the everlasting song of the degradation, bondage, ignorance, etc., that exist among the Latter-day Saints.

Now, when such writers visit the Shakers, and other communities of a similar character that are to be found in various parts of the States, they cannot be too loud in their praises of the morality, sobriety and good order that there prevail; and such a condition of things among these various bodies, instead of being looked upon as furnishing proofs of degradation, ignorance and fanaticism, are attributed to directly opposite causes. But among the Latter-day Saints, where morality, sobriety and good order prevail to a much greater extent than in any other community, and where no unnatural restraints, such as the compulsory separation of the sexes, are enforced, the only foundation and cause, are "ignorance and superstition."

As for the female degradation, said to be so fearfully prevalent in our community, by these panderers to sectarian bigotry, where is it to be found? Take an equal number of people of all classes, in any other portion of the world, and we are at the defiance of all men to prove the existence of so small an amount of female degradation as here. Go through any one large city in Britain, the United States, or any other portion of Christendom, so called, and the evidence of female degradation will be infinitely greater than in our whole Territory. There on every hand are the harlot and prostitute, the victim of the seducer's wiles, and the gin-drinking, squalid and neglected wife. But this being an integral part of their social system, is thought nothing of even by those who are loudest in their denunciations of "Mormon degradation."

What consistency is this! If the philanthropy and benevolence of such men as "J. S. W." are really moved on account of woman's degradation, they have a much more promising field for their exercise in the very heart of their "glorious gospel centres" than among the people of Utah.

As for us, we are amply satisfied with the workings of our system. We have tried "civilization," and have witnessed its fruits, and infinitely prefer the morality, sobriety, peace and security, which prevail in Zion. And if the latter be the result of ignorance, superstition and degradation, we would to God that all the human family were in that condition!

FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

In one of our eastern exchanges we notice a report of the holding of a convention in Boston, the object of which is the advancement of the cause of the extension of the right of suffrage to women. The convention was an unexpected success, if its success were to be gauged by the number of people attending it. Some idea of the increased interest there is now being felt upon this subject may be gathered from the fact that four or five years ago no gathering for the same purpose would have attracted a quarter of the crowd.

This question of Female Suffrage threatens to become an important one, in some quarters at least. Its advocates are voluble and they are untiring in their efforts. They are determined to make themselves heard, and there is such a show of fairness in some of their arguments that a certain class is attracted by them. Those who accept and proclaim the now popular doctrine of universal equality, can not consistently deny that there is some justice in women claiming the right of suffrage.

There was a time when, in many of the States in our own country, the right to vote depended not upon years or intelligence, but upon property. The principle of property was the qualification of a voter. By persistent agitation for long years this distinction was at length abolished. For some time past another subject of a kindred character has been on the tapis. The question as to why a freeman, to be an elector, should be a property holder having been practically answered by the admission of the citizen to the polls without regard to his property, another question presents itself: why should the color of the skin or the kink of the hair prevent a man from exercising the elective franchise? This question is agitated with tireless pertinacity, and the prospect is that before long color will cease to be an objection against a citizen voting.

As this last question is now pretty nearly settled, the ladies and their advocates step forward, and propound some interesting questions to the country: If property and color are no longer political qualifications, but every male citizen above the age of twenty-one years is likely to soon have the right of suffrage, why debar a person because of sex? Why confine the suffrage to males? If intelligence in them is not regarded as a qualification for a voter, surely no objection can be urged against women on this ground—woman is intelligent. Women, it may be said, are weak and easily influenced and controlled by others; but are there not thousands of men against whom the same objection can be brought? In fact, there is scarcely an argument of this character that can be urged against women having the right of suffrage, that cannot with equal consistency be applied to men. It is conceded that women are entitled to hold property and engage in business as men do; and that married women can acquire and hold property in their own name, and do business in their own name independent of their husbands. As stockholders, also, they can vote in every incorporated company of which they are members. Why not, then, have the right, in common with their fathers, brothers and sons, and the lately enfranchised negro, of voting at the polls?

Some public men and journalists confess they can see no reason, in justice, why this right should be withheld from them. So, we think, that before long, probably in Massachusetts at any rate, they will have the privilege granted to them. Will not the ladies think this delightful? Already one-fourth of the members of the Massachusetts Legislature have voted in favor of an immediate grant of the ballot to the gentler sex! This is an age of progress, and with the continued agitation of the subject the remaining three-fourths may be converted to the views of their gallant colleagues.

Among the Latter-day Saints this question has been decided years ago. In our conferences, from the first organization of the Church in these days until the present, the right of woman to vote side by side with man has been practically recognized. At all political meetings, where the ladies have been

present, they have had the right to vote accorded them without question. Under a properly organized government, where the people are qualified by education and training to act intelligently, there can be no danger in the exercise of the right of suffrage—men, women and children should be able to vote without apprehensions as to the result. There has never been a day in this Territory, from the organization of the Provisional State of Deseret, directly after the settlement was made here, until this day when there would have been the least fear entertained respecting the votes of men, women or children. The entire question of qualifications for voters, whether property, color or sex, has long been practically settled among the people of this Territory.

A PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER ON MODERN CHRISTIANITY.

At a Soiree of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand a Mr. Fitzgerald has been making a speech, in which he told his hearers some very pointed truths. They are worth repeating, as they are true and are evidently the result of deep thought. They differ also very much from the vapid nonsense and fulsome self-flattery usually dealt out on such occasions, and are, therefore, very refreshing. In dealing with the subject of Christianity he is led to draw a contrast between modern and primitive Christianity—between the impotency of the one and the vigor of the other.

He says:

"Compare the history of the spread of Christianity in the first few centuries after Christ, with its efforts during later ages. I venture to say there is no one who has honestly thought upon this subject, whose mind has not been filled with doubt and perplexity at the contrast; no one who does not ask himself, Why is it that the religion of Christ seems powerless in these later ages to war against the heathen world? How is it that for so many centuries the star of Bethlehem has paled before the crescent of Mahomet? How is it that Christianity has striven in vain to penetrate among the countless millions of the human family, who, during the past eighteen centuries, have lived and died on the vast continent of Asia?"

He can offer no solution of this great mystery, he says; but he perceives one cause which may have helped to bring about the evils, which, he is forced to admit, exist. The early church was one, while the so-called Christianity of later ages has been torn into sects, which have hated and persecuted each other as cordially and cruelly as their common foes could have done. Those who claim most loudly to be followers of Christ in these days are not marshaled, as were His followers of early days, under one faith, one hope and one baptism; but they have many faiths, numerous hopes and several kinds of baptisms.

As we read his utterances we are surprised that a Presbyterian church could listen to them without being startled. Mr. Fitzgerald is evidently a man who thinks for himself, and is not afraid to express his thoughts. He says:

"When we look at the social and political attitude of Christian Europe at the present hour, are we not sometimes compelled to ask in a feeling akin to despair—What has become of Christianity? When I see the millions of men who are abstracted from the sacred duty and wholesome discipline of productive labor, who are kept in idleness at the expense of their toiling fellow-men; countless hosts, bristling with arms, glaring upon one another with menacing aspect, ready to precipitate the world into deadly strife, to gratify the will of the despot, the ambitious schemes of a statesman, or the more dangerous and deadly passions of a misguided people; when I think of the enormous mass of human labor, and the vast hoards of wealth, and the inestimable riches of scientific knowledge and inventive ingenuity and mechanical skill, which, instead of ministering to the progress and happiness of man, are at this moment unceasingly, year after year, more and more, being devoted to the production of implements for the destruction of human life by land and sea;—and when I think that this is the outcome of well nigh nineteen centuries of the teaching of him who, with his latest breath on earth, bequeathed to mankind the heritage of peace,—I seem staggering in amazement and wonder at the mystery of so strange a spectacle, as if I were living in the midst of one of those fanciful tales of Oriental romance, in which the form of the beneficent genius of human destiny had been borrowed and simulated by some hideous and malignant demon; and as if

under the external semblance of Christ, the destinies of the Christian world were being ruled by the genius of a destroying angel."

After such a masterly description of the condition of the professedly Christian nations, who among his hearers could refrain from joining with him in asking the question: "What has become of Christianity?" No unprejudiced, thinking man can contemplate the scenes that are being enacted on the earth, and among nations which profess to be governed by the precepts of Christ, without having the same question forced upon him. For lack of ability to answer it thousands of men have been driven into infidelity. Yet with all these facts before their eyes, men will cry out that the Latter-day Saints are imposters because they declare that God has spoken from the heavens and restored primitive Christianity to the earth with all its original graces, gifts and powers! Such interposition on His part is declared to be unnecessary, while at the same time mankind are groaning under evils of the most horrible description, warranting the assertion, quoted above, that it seems "as if the destinies of the Christian world were being ruled by the genius of a destroying angel!"

NEW BRITISH PREMIER.

YESTERDAY'S dispatches informed us that Mr. Gladstone had gone to Windsor. From to-day's we learn that he had an audience with the Queen, and formally accepted the appointment of Prime Minister. So Mr. Gladstone has reached the summit of an English statesman's ambition. He deserves this honor, his perseverance, ability and accomplishments making him the most prominent and eligible man of his party. We may not admire him on all occasions; like many orators, and men who talk a great deal and pride themselves upon their brilliant powers, he has made remarks that would have been better left unsaid, and which have given his colleagues some trouble to explain. Experience has, however, taught him many lessons on these points, and the grave responsibilities of his new position will, doubtless, make him more cautious in his utterances. He will have every opportunity of carrying out his policy, as he goes into office with a heavy majority in the Commons.

Mr. Disraeli has taken the right step in resigning. It saves himself and party from the mortification which they must have experienced had he continued to hold office until the meeting of Parliament; and it relieves the Queen from all embarrassment and leaves her free to choose a new Prime Minister.

There has been a rumor of an intrigue on the part of the old Whig families to form a Conservative Ministry under the premiership of the Earl of Granville. But if such an attempt was made, it has fallen through. Mr. Gladstone is the ablest and is acknowledged as the most fitting exponent of liberal principles. The party would not have been content with any man more conservative than he; and to have made the Earl of Granville Premier because of his being a noble and well-connected, and thus kept Mr. Gladstone from the position which he had fairly won, would have aroused the indignation of the country.

The progress of liberal ideas in England, as shown during the recent election, is remarkable. This is not viewed without apprehension by the Tories and Conservatives. They dread the growing power of the people, and the elevation to office of the party which advocates extended suffrage. There is every prospect that the next few years will witness important changes in Great Britain. "Revolutions never go backward." The leaven of democracy is working, and the perpetuity of the power of the aristocracy and of the time-honored institutions of the kingdom are seriously menaced by the growing spirit of liberalism which prevades the masses of the people.

TRIAL OF JEFF. DAVIS.

SINCE the close of the rebellion telegraphic dispatches have been circulated every few months all over the country respecting the trial of Jefferson Davis. For a time there was considerable interest felt in the matter; but the public have heard so much about it, and known of so little being done that they have begun to look upon the whole proceeding as a farce; and believing that it was a foregone conclusion that, after the excitement had died away respecting him, he was to be discharged, they have ceased to take interest in what was done with him. If he had only died, it would