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## THEATRES.

For various reasons, I have felt to make public my views respecting Theatres and theatrical performances. It is well known that we have a Theatre here in our city, which has been erected for the purpose of representing the drama, and portraying upon the stage, in mimic form, such representations of human life and character and the world around us as would instruct and please those who might frequent it to spend an evening. I recognize in the Theatre an institution that, under judicious guidance, can be used with very happy effects for the benefit of the people. There are wants of our common nature which he, who would seek the happiness and enjoyment of his fellow-beings, and to govern them properly, would not do wisely to ignore. One of these is the desire for and necessity of recreation. Bigots and sectarians may scout the idea of such a desire of our nature needing gratification—they may denounce its indulgence as something improper and highly reprehensible, especially under, as they would say, the higher law of the gospel; but despite of all these reasonings, and the repression which is not unfrequently practiced to carry them into effect, the great fact still remains unaltered, that man is so constituted that, in order to enjoy perfect health and a happy existence, he should have recreation and relaxation—he should have the opportunity occasionally afforded unto him of unbending and dismissing from his mind those cares of business, which, if continually indulged in, might, as he is now constituted, prove oppressive to him. If the people cannot gratify this desire or want legitimately, and in accordance with the recognized usages of the society with which they may be associated, many will seek its gratification illegitimately, and in violation of, and in opposition to, those usages. In this way many persons are driven into open opposition to the views of society, or if not into open opposition, they are frequently made hypocrites by doing that in secret which the fear of the disfavor of their fellows would deter them from doing openly. Thus, through a misconception of man's wants and the will of Deity respecting him, thousands of persons in the world are led into sin, and indulge in reckless practices, who, if they were properly trained, might become useful and honored members of society.

With the light which has been revealed unto us, as Latter-day-Saints, respecting the will of our God concerning man, and also respecting man's own organization and nature, we cannot blindly shut our eyes and pass these things by as matters of no importance. It is the duty and the privilege of the Priesthood to teach the people what is right upon these points, and how they can enjoy innocent amusements without sinning, and also point out unto them any and every danger which may menace them in this direction. It is their privilege to take the initiative in all these matters, not holding themselves aloof from the people over whom they are appointed teachers and shepherds, but joining with them in their recreations and restraining by their example, influence and presence every-

thing that is improper or that would have an evil tendency.

It has been with these views that I have encouraged the representation of plays among us. We found ourselves here in the midst of these mountains. Our history gives to the world the reasons of our being here. When we reached here, we were far removed from civilization, (so-called,) and were thrown upon our own resources. We have had to form our own society, and to depend upon ourselves for our own amusements. The Theatre in this city has been built for the sole purpose of furnishing recreation and amusement for the citizens of Great Salt Lake City and this Territory. In erecting it, this object was expressly kept in view. Neither the Theatre itself, nor the representations on its boards, were intended for any other purpose. It was desirable that a suitable place might be provided where the laboring classes—those whose bodies and brains were wearied with toil and close application to business—could enjoy a few hours, occasionally, in innocent amusement. Such a place this Theatre was intended to be—a place in every respect suitable for Saints to visit, and where good thoughts would be inspired, and where nothing would be seen or heard that could shock or wound the feelings of the most chaste and delicate man, woman or child—a place, in fact, where holy angels could be, and where the Spirit of God would reign, and its influence be felt by every person who should enter it. With us the Theatre should be kept as pure, and as completely free from every thing that could defile it, as our home sanctuaries. No impropriety of language or gesture, nothing wicked, or that would be likely to lead to wickedness, should ever be permitted there or countenanced in the least; but the actors should be pure in heart—men and women who, in all their representations, would use proper language. All such expressions as “I swear,” or “By Heavens,” and the name of the Deity, and every other sacred word, should be carefully omitted in plays, and other words be substituted in their stead. The distortion of the muscles of the face and body, and everything that would not produce pleasurable emotions in the minds of the audience, should also be studiously avoided upon the Stage. Such unnatural contortions, and ranting and raving, are painful to witness, and are not true to nature, and afford no correct idea of the characters represented; for it is not to be supposed, for a moment, that persons in real life would be such exaggerations of everything human.

On this account, I have ever felt a strong repugnance to the employment of men and women upon our stage who have been in the practice of following the customs or common habits of the civilized world, and; also, to the representation of plays in which murder and the exhibition of the evil passions and the display of villainy form a prominent part. The representations of plays of this character do not convey pleasure, life or animation to those who witness them, especially to the youthful mind; but have a directly opposite effect, and arouse feelings which should never be called into being—a sense of gratification at the sight of murder and the execution of revenge.

In having our brethren and sisters act upon the stage, I have had in view their development in native refinement and grace, and in those qualities which would improve themselves and give zest to their performances and have an elevating and pleasurable effect upon their audiences. If with a Theatre conducted upon this plan, using and developing the talent which we have in our midst, there is not sufficient attraction for our citizens, then the object for which the Theatre was erected has not

been accomplished. It is plain, that with our knowledge and clearly-defined views upon these subjects, we cannot take any other course than this, and be justified. We cannot descend to the level of the wicked world, and copy after their fashions, and escape sin. When our actors perform in that spirit which they should ever have, their performances will always be pleasing and interesting to true Latter-day Saints, and their acting will be attractive to every well-disposed man and woman of correct taste. It is true that if their performances were to be measured by the standard of acting in the world, they might not bear close criticism; but is that standard a correct one? Is it not possible for our performers to develop a taste which shall be peculiar to us and be in conformity with our views respecting the stage and its influences? We know that there are plays, which are not objectionable when put on the stage in some communities, that would be unsuitable for representation here. The moral sense of our community should be shocked by witnessing the performance of certain classes of plays; and if such were persistently put upon the boards, either the people should discontinue their attendance, or they would gradually become demoralized. A style of acting, also, that in other places would meet with commendation and applause should not experience such a reception here.

The addresses of our Elders to the people, when judged by the world's standard, are not accepted as specimens of oratory; yet they have an effect upon the hearts of the people which the most finished oratory, unaccompanied by the Spirit which pervades and attends them, fails to have. So also with our efforts to instruct, please and amuse one another by means of the stage, and in all our other social amusements and pleasures; though we may not conform to the standard of the world, it is our privilege, nevertheless, to have that Spirit with us that will cause light and peace and joy and a feeling of satisfaction to fill our bosoms; and the honest stranger, when he joins with us in our recreations, and witnesses the performances of our actors, will be so pleased with the Spirit which he will feel that he will not stop to notice the faults or to criticize unfavorably the acting. This has been the case in the past, and it will continue to be so, if we act according to our knowledge.

BRIGHAM YOUNG.

## HOME ITEMS.

**SABBATH MEETINGS.**—Elder Ezra T. Benson addressed the congregation in the forenoon of Sunday, setting forth the privileges and blessings enjoyed by Latter-day Saints in having committed to them the fulness of the everlasting gospel, with its priesthood, gifts and graces. He reasoned upon the happy feelings of the Saints when they could look back upon their past lives with a consciousness of having lived according to the light that was in them, and performed every required duty. He considered it the duty of the Saints to occasionally look over their past lives and see if they could not improve and do better in the future. It was a joy, he remarked, to every true Saint to look over the revelations given to Joseph the Prophet, for they shed forth the light of Heaven into the soul and enlighten the mind. The revelations contained in the Bible and Book of Mormon likewise call for the attention of the Saints, for, he observed, they are full of good instruction and back up the testimony of the servants of God. Brother Benson then commented upon the desire of the Ancients to see our day, the fulfillment of many of the revelations given in this generation to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the certainty of all the rest being fulfilled in the due time of the Lord. Made some observations on the rage of the Adversary, caused by the unity and faith of the people of God; but as “there must needs be opposition in all things,” according to the word of the Lord through Nephi, he believed all these things to be necessary. In speaking of the Almighty, he stated that if we were to see him divested of his glory we should not know him. Elder Benson then asked a number of questions, which President Brigham Young very clearly answered in the afternoon, as will be seen when the sermon is printed.

AFTERNOON.

President Brigham Young preached about an

hour upon the impossibility of human beings receiving a great amount of intelligence at any one time, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the character of God, and the necessity of devils while man is in a state of probation. All these subjects were handled by the President in his usual plain and forcible manner—every argument carrying with it the evidence of inspired origin. The sermon will be printed, which will be better to the Saints than any comments that we could now make upon it.

**PROBATE COURT.**—Samuel M. Butcher, was again put upon his trial on Tuesday the 3d, and was convicted. The Jury assessed his punishment at \$300 fine and three years imprisonment in the Penitentiary at hard labor.

On Wednesday morning the assistant prosecutor called up the other indictment against Butcher, and entered a *nolle prosequi*.—Butcher was brought in Court and sentenced in accordance with the verdict of the Jury in both cases for which he had been tried.

Thursday afternoon, the Sheriff took Butcher and three others to the Penitentiary, making an increase of seven that have, during this term of Court, become boarders with Col. Rockwood.

The Court has been engaged on the civil docket since disposing of Butcher. Yesterday the special grand jury called for, a few days ago, appeared in Court and were sworn and charged.

**COME AT LAST.**—Marshal Gibbs has received the funds to pay the expenses of the last spring's term of the United States Court for the Third Judicial District. Jurors, witnesses, and all concerned go to Mr. Leonard I. Smith's, to-morrow, and the Marshal will pay you what you ought to have had last April.

**THEATRICAL.**—“Macbeth” was performed to a large audience on Wednesday evening, and drew an immense house on Saturday night—the last of the engagement of Mr. Pauncefort. Considering the short time that intervened between the production of “Macbeth” and the presentation of a play with so much stage business as “Belphegor,” indefatigable exertions must have been made to produce the former in so highly creditable a manner as it was done. Though it is a play with which, personally, we have no sympathy, it is but just to say that the performance was highly creditable, all sustaining their characters with care and ability.

The getting up of the choruses reflect much credit on Professor Thomas and the musical talent assisting him. Mr. Teasdale deserves special notice for his able rendering of the solos committed to his care on very brief notice. The witch scenes, particularly that at the close of the third act, and the cauldron scene, were very effective.

At the close of the performance, Mr. Pauncefort and Mr. McKenzie were both called before the curtain, and appeared, tendering their thanks to the audience.

On Saturday night, “White Lies” and “Barney the Baron” will form a pleasing change—neat drama and rollicking farce combined. “White Lies” is a new drama, presented here for the first time, both affecting and amusing in its working out. Barney was played once before and created a vast amount of fun. Dunbar is at home in it.

**LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS.**—Since the re-assembling of our law-making department, a good deal of business has been done. Bills in the hands of committees have been returned, and some of them acted upon by both branches of the Assembly; the Territorial Road Commissioner's report has been received and printed; a special call has been made by the Warden for means to supply additional guard at the Penitentiary; the Territorial Marshal's bill has been presented. The Memorials to Congress, which passed the lower house in the second week of the session, relative to increase of per diem of members and officers of the Assembly, and attaching a portion of Arizona Territory to Utah; An Act in relation to butchering and meat markets, and an act changing the boundary line of Tooele city, have passed both branches of the Assembly.

Petitions asking for appropriations for roads, bridges, etc., have come in from all parts of the Territory. On Monday the House in addition to other matters, had under consideration a bill to incorporate Logan city in Cache county which, after a good deal of debate, was amended and passed. A bill to incorporate Tooele Library and Reading Room Association, also passed the House.

F. A. MITCHELL will receive orders to purchase in and freight from San Francisco, and

W. DALLEN will attend to like orders for the Eastern markets.

THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER has an advertisement for subscribers in Utah; we are not aware that it has ever indulged in any Billingsgate in reference to our citizens.

MR. H. LIVINGSTON is prepared to freight North, South and West with reliability and promptness.

W. J. SMITH will make chairs on short notice. J. MCGHIE is on hand to weave good cloth for those who are encouraging home-manufacture. For further particulars see their advertisements and business cards elsewhere in our columns.

**BE PUNCTUAL.**—The Directors of the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, meet this evening in the Legislative Council Hall.