

THE DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

BAD HABITS.

Continued.

THERE were some points connected with the subject of yesterday's leader that want of space and time prevented us from alluding to; but which call for correction as loudly as any others. From the hour that the doors of our Theatre open until they close young men are constantly lounging on the steps and platform in front of the building. This is more noticeable when the weather is fine and the performance is an attractive one than upon other occasions. But it has grown into a perfect nuisance and a remedy should be provided for it. It is especially disagreeable to the ladies, who have to undergo a fusillade of sharp and frequently impudent glances, while passing up the steps and crossing the platform to the doors of the Theatre, from those who are standing on the steps and platform and leaning against the pillars. On some occasions it is almost difficult, there are so many standing in this manner, to elbow one's way through the crowd to the door.

Persons who are in this habit should be told that the front of the Theatre is not the place to smoke and spit and lounge, and if they will not discontinue then, the police should take the matter in hand, and remove them. The passage ways should be kept open that all may have free ingress without being stared at until they are out of countenance. We feel confident that this rule, if enforced, will add greatly to the pleasure of those who visit our Theatre.

Another "crying" evil is that of taking children in arms to the Tabernacle and Theatre, and other places of public meeting. Much as we love children and their society, there are times and places where their presence is not desirable. Were the same degree of silence observed in our New Tabernacle that is enforced in places of worship throughout the world, there would be fewer complaints on the part of the public of their not being able to hear. Children in arms, who are incapable of understanding the speaker, and who keep the mothers, attention so occupied that they do not hear nor pay attention to perhaps a half that is said, delightful as they may be in the nursery or at home are certainly not so delightful in such places. They make noise, and to try to stop them is often cruel—a cruelty which they rebel against by increasing the noise. Multiply the sounds so made, and add to it the coughing, shuffling of feet, and sometimes whispers heard in public meetings, and you have an aggregate of sounds which the voice and lungs of a stentor alone would be able to rise above, so as to make an audience hear plainly and distinctly in a hall as large as the new or even the old Tabernacle. In the Theatre, as the actors reach perhaps the most interesting part of the play, when the audience are absorbed in the language and delineation, it is not by any means pleasant to hear the vocal organs of an infant begin to sound. The illusion is instantly dispelled, and a certain amount of chagrin and irritability is felt by most of those who hear it.

Mothers with young children may, no doubt, say that they should not be deprived of the privilege of going to meeting nor of enjoying a theatrical performance. This we think is reasonable. But do they *enjoy* a theatrical performance, or even a meeting, with an infant in arms that may be sleepy, cross, or restless? It is very questionable. And there are so many facilities here for mothers to have their children well taken care of, during their absence at such places, even when they would not like to trust them in charge of a girl, that there really seems no reasonable excuse for a mother taking her infant with her when going to a meeting or to the Theatre. We hope there will be an improvement in these as well as in the other matters to which we have alluded.

DEFENCE OF THE DRAMA.

A NUMBER of Chicago clergymen who have organized themselves into a "Ministerial Union" lately adopted a series of resolutions denunciatory of the opera and the drama, condemning both of these institutions in unqualified terms. Another Chicago minister, Robert Laird Collier, pastor of a church in that city, has taken up the cudgels in the defence of the stage, and in a sermon on

"Popular Amusements," which he delivered on the 8th inst., boldly expressed his views on the subject. In the course of this sermon he said:

"The drama is as ancient as the race. Furthermore, much of the finished literature, in spirit and in its form, is dramatic. I am not quite sure but that the very first chapters in Genesis are dramatic. I am quite sure that Job is dramatic; that Ruth is; that Esther is dramatic. Shakspeare, the peerless poet of centuries, had had no function in the world, and no name left to history, had it not been for the dramatic instinct and aptitude. So with Milton. The grandest poets that God has given to the world have been its dramatic poets. And, furthermore, dramatic character has the highest representation in the drama. I confess that I never saw such power. I never remarked such nature in any Christian pulpits that it was ever my privilege to sit under as in Joseph Jefferson's "Rip Van Winkle." It is nature, not art. So simple; so true; so beautiful; so moral. No sermon scarcely written in the world, except that of Christ when he stood with the adulterous women, ever illustrated the power of love to conquer evil, and to win the wanderer, as that beautiful little piece, so perfectly rendered by this genius whom God has given us to illustrate in the drama of the power of love over the sins of the race. I wonder who among the Ministerial Union ever saw Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle." Let us give to these friends the advantage of our judgment of their ignorance. Ristori, Rachel, Booth and Murdoch, especially, Davenport, Jefferson, are all God's gifts to man. So I say that the legitimate drama is to be endorsed. It is an educator. It is in nowise to be apologized for. And in regard to the Opera I need only. I think, say, that so far as the legitimate opera is concerned, any one who objects to it, on moral grounds, must either be ignorant of it—I think for the most part that those who object to the opera are—or, there must be a moral weakness in the nature of such objectors. To say that the opera is corrupting is to say the most irrational and most foolish thing that human lips are capable of. I say that a man must be ignorant of what the opera is; must have been wholly without knowledge of it, or else brought to its hearing a lascivious nature to begin with. I admit that very many excellent persons do not enjoy the opera. Not only excellent people morally, but cultivated people intellectually, do not enjoy the opera. Many of our finest minds go to the opera and come away, feeling that it was a waste of time, and we who can enjoy it in any wise, be it never so little, ought to feel a profound sorrow for such people, because they do not know the infinite lights and joys of which, by their lack of musical culture, they are deprived. But it is their duty, simply, to say they do not like it. It is a sorry religion that rejects it on the sour grape principle; because they cannot they won't let anybody else."

He thinks the opera is also an educator, and that it elevates and refines the taste and spirit. He adds:

"I really don't know but that it would be a very sensible thing if our congregations would make it a stipulation, when they engage their ministers, that they would accept a season ticket once a year to the opera, to cultivate their taste in musical matters."

While we do not endorse all that Mr. Collier says in relation to the drama and its representation on the stage, still there is much to be commended in the liberal spirit with which he treats the subject. Much that is evil and objectionable connected with theatres has its origin in the unwise course pursued by such men as compose the Chicago "Ministerial Union" in tabooing and denouncing theatrical representations. By standing aloof they abandon a very excellent institution—and one, too, that can be used with powerful effect in educating the people—to whatever evil influences may cluster around it. If, instead of standing aloof and lifting up their hands and eyes in affected horror at theatrical representations, they would take them under their patronage and use their influence to elevate and purify the drama, they would bring about results that would, in a very little while, surprise themselves. But it is rank folly for any man, or body of men, to stifle the desire in human beings for relaxation and amusement. It is a legitimate want of our natures, and he who ignores it betrays ignorance.

Whenever we think about our Theatre in this city we feel thankful for the inspiration which prompted its erection. Performances there may have their

faults; but we are convinced that the opening of that building as a place of amusement has had a most beneficial effect upon the people. With such a magnificent place in our city as it is for the performance of the drama, there has been but little inducement for adventurers to open mean and disreputable places of amusement with the hope of getting patronage. We hope yet to see a great improvement in many things connected with our Theatre. These will come along naturally as the taste of the people improves. At the present time its managers frequently are compelled to waive their own wishes in deference to those of the public. Still, there are no theatrical performances in any place of amusement on the continent so free from everything objectionable as those which appear upon the boards of the Theatre in this city. When tragedy shall be entirely banished from its stage many of its well-wishers will rejoice; but there is a class of persons whom this would not suit. They have been educated to derive pleasure from a blood-curdling, soul-stirring tragedy, and any performance that does not have some of these elements in it, is pronounced tame and spiritless. Now, we frankly say that we consider this bad taste, and we hope that the time is not far distant when a better taste will prevail.

Our managers scarcely bring a piece upon the stage without using the pencil freely in scoring out objectionable words and passages. There have been some, probably, who would have had these left in. Such people like broad effects. There should never be any relaxation permitted in this critical care in expunging every thing from plays that the most sensitively delicate could object to; and the same care should be exercised in the selection of suitable pieces for representation. Then the stage becomes indeed an educator, and those who perform become the exponents of good to their fellow-creatures, and deservedly rank as ministers of a true civilization.

AN ANSWER

TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE HISTORY AND DOCTRINE OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS AND THE SETTLEMENT AND PROGRESS OF UTAH TERRITORY.

[BY GEO. A. SMITH.]

(Continued.)

The battalion were discharged at Los Angeles, one year from the date of their enlistment without means to enable them to return to their families. At the request of the military commander in California, who feared a Spanish revolt, one company re-enlisted for six months, which service was performed in a highly satisfactory manner, both to the officers and the people of San Diego where they were stationed.

WINTER QUARTERS.

After the departure of the battalion from Council Bluffs, Prest. Young gathered up the scattering companies and established a town called Winter Quarters, where 700 log cabins and 150 dug-outs (cabins half underground) were built during the Fall and Winter, upon the site of what is now known as Florence, Nebraska. At this point the Saints suffered extremely from sickness, exposure and the want of the necessities of life. Several thousand wagons were also encamped in various localities on the east side of the Missouri river, where the Saints began to build up a place, subsequently named Kanessville, in honor of Thomas L. Kane of Philadelphia, whose kindness had endeared him to them.

EXPULSION FROM NAUVOO.

When it became known in Illinois that the flower of the camp had enlisted in the service of the United States, the mob assembled with redoubled fury, formed a military encampment, provided with artillery, in the neighborhood of Nauvoo, which now contained the poor, the helpless, the sick and infirm, as all who were able to leave, on any terms, had done so during the Spring and Summer.

The mob under command of Rev. Thomas S. Brockman increased their force to about 1800 men, made several unsuccessful attacks upon the city, (which could barely muster 123 men) killing several men and wounding a number of others and battering down many buildings. They finally succeeded, on the 17th day of September, after several days' siege, and three days' bombardment, in driving the people, helpless, and destitute of everything that could make earth desirable, across the river into Iowa. Here many must have perished from starvation had not the kind Creator fed them by sending upon their camps flocks of quails so tame that

the women caught them with their hands. In this place they lay exposed to the storms of autumn, right in view of a thousand empty houses belonging to themselves and friends, until teams were sent back from the camps to remove the survivors, many having died. To crown their victory the mob subsequently set fire to the Temple of Nauvoo, which was the most beautiful building in the Western States. It was the first specimen of a new order of architecture, introduced by President Joseph Smith, and had cost a million dollars. The light of its fire was visible thirty miles.

Very little real estate had been sold though the improvements, property and buildings of the Saints in Illinois were among the best in the Western States. Such a vast amount of property exposed for sale in Hancock and the adjoining counties, had a tendency to glut the market, which together with the hostile influence of our enemies, prevented sales even at low rates. Fortunately oxen were cheap, and companies continued leaving till late in the summer making the new route a grand encampment for 300 miles, as wagons were to be seen at every watering place.

PIONEERING JOURNEY.

In the spring of 1847, President B. Young, with 143 pioneers, started in search of a place of settlement. He was led by the inspiration of the Almighty, (for no one of the company knew anything of the country) directly to Great Salt Lake Valley, where he and company arrived on the 24th day of July, having sought out and made a new road 650 miles, and traveled a trappers trail nearly 400 miles. On the 29th of July the pioneers received additional strength by the arrival of Capt. James Brown and a detachment of the battalion, and a company of Saints from the Mississippi, who wintered with the detachment on the Arkansas river. Seven of the detachment died on the route.

SALT LAKE CITY.

The population, being now about four hundred, the building of Salt Lake City was commenced.

The arrival of the Pioneers and this detachment of the Battalion, all armed and carrying the flag of the United States, the commencement to build a fort and the hoisting of the stars and stripes (although this country at the time belonged to Mexico,) had a tendency to impress the wild tribes of the mountains with respect, and made it comparatively easy to promote friendly relations with them.

The Twelve Apostles organized Salt Lake City into a Stake of Zion and appointed John Smith, President; Charles C. Rich and John Young his counselors; Tarlton Lewis, Bishop; and a High Council. This organization went into effect on the arrival of the immigrant companies in the Fall of 1847, when about 700 wagons laden with families arrived on the site of Salt Lake City.

The whole basin was so barren as to produce little besides a species of bunch grass, and the ground was covered with myriads of large black crickets, which were the food of the Indians. In this desert place the site of Salt Lake City was surveyed.

Not a single person in the whole company had a full supply of provisions, but all were on half rations. About one hundred, who had served in the "Mormon" Battalion, found their way here from California, in the Winter, without any provisions.

RETURN OF THE PIONEERS.

On the 25th of August, 1847, President Brigham Young and about seventy others started on their return to Winter Quarters. At the South Pass the Sioux Indians stole part of their animals, which compelled them to walk most of the way to the Missouri river, depending mostly upon such game as they could obtain by the way, and being without suitable horses for chasing the buffalo, the few obtained were generally old bulls, whose flesh was of very poor quality, and not sufficient in quantity to supply their wants.

In 1848, President Young arrived again in Salt Lake valley with about eight hundred wagons.

The crickets, during the season of 1848, came down from the mountains in myriads and destroyed a great portion of the scanty crops; and, notwithstanding every effort was made to drive them off by means of bushes, long rods, &c., whole families and neighborhoods turning out *en masse* until almost exhausted, the whole would have been destroyed had not the Almighty in His kindness sent gulls in vast numbers, covering every field, driving the crickets from the crops into the streams and even into door yards, and devouring