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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

There is no man who reflects, however little, but must admit that we live in an eventful period. The signs of the times indicate that there is a Power working among the nations, of which the inhabitants of the earth seem to be entirely ignorant. From the east and the west, from the continents of the earth and the islands of the sea, come reports that tell how rapidly the world is moving on to a vast and important change. If the news is not so sensational in its character as it was some time ago, it is still exciting. Event follows event so rapidly that the news of yesterday is forgotten in that of to-day.

The chronicling of an earthquake on the Pacific coast is followed by the record of moral depravity among what are known as respectable women that is as degrading as revolting. The crushing out of the rebellion in the South is followed by the exciting situations brought about by the intricate nature of the problems to be solved; and in the middle comes a Fenian flash and a filibuster raid on Canada which has apparently collapsed at its inception, yet may give rise to some ebullitions of feeling, and knotty questions that may be as grave as the are unlooked for.

In the eastern hemisphere the cattle plague of the vast Russian steppes has found a temporary home in Britain, where as the rinderpest its ravages have been chronicled to an alarming extent. New diseases are appearing that baffle the medical skill of the age, of which the one called Trichina is perhaps the latest; while that terrible scourge, the cholera, is making slow but steady strides in its westward career of death; not yet so wide spread in the work of destruction as in previous visitations, but as the summer months advance the probability is strong that it will increase its area of mortality and the number of its victims. Disasters by sea and land have been more numerous and destructive, during the past winter and spring, than perhaps has ever been recorded in the same length of time before. Fires, whether by accident or the work of incendiarism, have destroyed property to an amount that would be scarcely credited were the figures placed on paper.

In the midst of all this, and much more that is unnamed, there seems to exist a rivalry between nations and cities, for notoriety in degradation and immorality, that is painful to read of or contemplate. The mere publication of the disgusting details of actual occurrences with which many papers are filled, would shock any virtuous, pure mind who might peruse them. Add to these war, past, present and prospective, and the picture is ominously significant.

The age claims to have made rapid strides in science and art, in inventions and the development of knowledge; and it has. Men can cross seas and oceans without sails and in the teeth of the wind. They can converse across continents, and bid fair to soon girdle the world with the electric wire. Not only can they ascend above the clouds, but we noticed lately an account of navigating in the air above the earth as ships

are navigated through the waters. Every mental faculty seems stimulated to an extraordinary degree of activity. Inventions and discoveries crowd upon each other. Mechanical contrivances are multiplied to an extraordinary extent. The age is prolific in them. Hidden sources of wealth are revealed. Gold is, in the prophetic language of scripture, becoming plentiful as brass. Other elements of wealth are being discovered daily. Petroleum has, comparatively speaking, sprung into notice in a day, and millions on millions of capital have been sunk in it and realized by it.

Yet, with all the increase of light in science, the faculty are no more successful in warding off "the ills that flesh is heir to" than they were half a century ago. If they have advanced in knowledge the ravages of the destroyer are manifested with more than equal rapidity. They are nonplussed and impotent before phases and forms of disease of which their experience and study give them no knowledge. Modern science in naval architecture pales before the storm and the tempest. Men are growing more heady and high-minded, more the slaves of passion and evil, with their rapidly acquired wealth. The inventive powers of the age seem to be devoted more especially to purposes of destruction. Instead of seeking to bless mankind, to promote peace, beautify the earth and garnish it with all manner of loveliness, physical, moral and social, the destruction of life and property, and the decadence of moral excellence are greater now than in the dark and barbarous days of medieval times.

In Europe a Peace Congress is talked of. The London *Punch* satirizes the idea, and hits at the governments to be represented and the questions to be discussed. It intimates that Russia, Austria, Prussia, France and Italy are willing to send their representatives if their pet objects are excluded from discussion. Or, in other words, if the questions which the Congress proposes to discuss are carefully avoided. A few theoretical and unpractical minds have the idea that they can calm the turbulent passions of nations, restrain the growing ambition of governments, settle vexed questions and allay old rivalries and antipathies by argument of words. But they cannot. They are impotent to turn back the rushing tide of a world's passions. The spirit of war is working among the nations, and the forces of destruction are gathering for the conflict.

If the scriptures were read and believed, it would be seen that they speak of a time like the present. They point out the signs of the times that shall indicate an approaching consummation, foretold for thousands of years. If the prophets, whose writings concerning the latter days are preserved, had lived in our own times, they could scarcely have declared in plainer or more unmistakable language the leading features of the age. When men calmly review for a moment, in the midst of the whirl and bustle of this turbulent, busy, stirring world, the present condition of mankind and the signs of the times, they involuntarily ask themselves, What do they portend? But they live in a whirlwind, and the great mass catch at the straws that are driven furiously around, fancying they tend towards a certain point. They are in uncertainty and doubt, full of vain expectancy; and hence the news is to them exciting. Anticipation is put on the stretch for what will next appear; and when it comes there is often disappointment and renewed expectancy.

How different the condition of those who having humbly received the light of truth mark the objects it illumines! They can see in all that passes the overruling hand of a Wise Providence,

whose objects and purposes are surely reaching consummation. The light of the gospel, with the holy calm and sense of safety which it bestows, is, at the present time, a blessing whose greatness mankind cannot comprehend. It enables those who possess it to see the way marks to the future, in the signs of the times.

WHAT THE "MORMONS" MEAN TO DO.

Some of our friends, and not a few who do not number themselves in the list, have been exercised considerably of late about what the "Mormons" are doing and mean to do. We wish to calmly and briefly tell them, and thereby set their minds at rest on the subject; if they will accept our open and candid statement.

A great many people are troubled, not so much about what we have done, or what we are doing, as about something which, from time to time, they imagine or fancy we are going to do. Every once in a while some inventive mind hunts around and finds a mare's nest, and proclaims that the "Mormons" have an ulterior and sinister object in view which they do not openly avow.

For over thirty-six years we have patiently, assiduously and, at an immense cost in time and labor, sought to preach the gospel to the inhabitants of the earth, and to practice its principles ourselves and develop in our lives and actions a higher and purer condition of existence. We have known, by years of experience, that the fruits of the gospel are peace and happiness, with blessings innumerable to all who will embody its principles in their lives. We know that the great Creator has given mankind an existence on this earth that they might be blessed, and attain to still greater blessings and a glorified exaltation in the future. As a people we have borne a faithful testimony by voice and pen, and by the exhibition of philanthropy and endurance unparalleled in the world, to the inhabitants of the earth, that the gospel which has been revealed from heaven and the revelations which the Lord has been pleased to give in this age, are given to do good to all men everywhere, and bring salvation to them, if they will obey His commandments. We have been scattered and peeled and driven, we have been mobbed and plundered and persecuted, for the gospel's sake; yet we have ever been found raising a warning voice, and willing to lead the honest from the path of evil to that of righteousness and truth.

Now, the "Mormons" intend to preach the gospel, to toil and labor, to gather the honest poor from the nations of the earth and plant them in a land consecrated to God and liberty, to cultivate and encourage everything that is good and ennobling, to learn truth and reduce it to practice as fast as they are able, and to do good to all men who will accept good at their hands. They mean to continue increasing in unity, for true union is of heavenly origin and is based on a knowledge of truth; they mean to increase in the possession of every excellence as fast as they can, to cultivate the earth and make it a habitation that God and angels will delight in, to turn the barren desert into a fruitful field and the wilderness into a place of beauty for man to inhabit.

To sum it up in brief, they mean to try, with the help of God, and live the gospel of life and salvation, which comprises everything that is good. By this means they expect to prosper and grow better and better daily, become rich in the elements of life and the comforts of existence, and extend the principles of truth from the river to the ends of the earth. That gospel will make those, who humbly and faithfully obey its laws, upright, honest, peace-loving, virtuous and noble, honorable in all

their actions, worthy of imitation, living exemplars of the truth and its effects upon mankind.

This is what we mean to do as a people; and though some may not keep up with the rest in the march of progress, the majority of those who are called "Mormons" have this in view, and are laboring for it. Is the object an unworthy or reprehensible one?

THE SITUATION IN EUROPE.

The latest news from Europe is of a very belligerent character. The proposed Peace Congress has been abandoned, and the neutral powers have concluded to let the hostile nations make their own arrangements, or go to war. The latter seems inevitable.

The prospective, if not present, war in Europe, induced by ostensibly very trivial causes, seems to be prepared for by the antagonistic nations on a gigantic scale. Ostensibly it is to commence about the two Duchies wrested from Denmark by Austria and Prussia; but there are, beyond doubt other causes, of which occasional mention is made, that will draw in Italy, it may be France, Russia and England. Italy is full of enthusiasm. In fact Austria, Prussia and Italy are in a war fever. But the last named nation appears to be eagerly anxious for the approaching war. The Italian army, with all its reserves called in, is estimated at 430,000 men under the command of Generals La Marmora, Cialdini, Della Rocca, Durando, Cucchiari, and others; and, as may be expected, Victor Emmanuel in person will be actively engaged in the war. Garibaldi is to take the field with twenty battalions of volunteers, who will be in fact soldiers for a year, but not restricted so closely as the regular troops. As early as the middle of May 200,000 men were in the field, distributed so as to be immediately available should hostilities commence. This force is supplied with artillery variously estimated at from 250 to 400 cannons, the lower number at least being certain. Altogether, Italy does not present such a very insignificant appearance as a belligerent in the threatened war.

When it is considered that Italy is the smallest of the three nations involved in the quarrel as principals, and that the other two are and have been for a length of time preparing, to the extent of their available resources, for the contest, it will be seen at a glance that the struggle cannot fail of being a terrible and tremendous one. The writer of a Vienna letter of May 13th says:—

"Every day I meet interminable lines of men, who were absent on leave, returning to their regiments; and yesterday, again, I passed hundreds of horses being brought in for the use of the army. All is in activity, and the preparations for the great game about to be played are progressing with the utmost possible speed. No one who has had an opportunity of judging of the Austrian army can doubt its thorough excellence. The spirit which animates the troops is not to be surpassed."

The Austrian armies consist, probably, of about 800,000 men, all really or declaredly thirsting for war. So with Prussia; over half-a-million of men are ready to dash into the conflict at the bidding of King William. The reserves of the regiments were rapidly concentrating at their respective headquarters, at latest dates, and the spirit of martial ardor was said to be burning strongly through the Prussian ranks.

Wars on as large a scale as this, like epidemics, are apt to be contagious. Other nations may hold themselves neutral; but it is more than probable that the conflicting powers will quickly be increased in numbers. Napoleon in his late declaration at Auxerre, that he detested the treaty of Vienna of 1815, only gave utterance to a sentiment which he could hardly help having always entertained. That treaty he