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THE DEPARTING YEAR.

THE year 1890 in a few hours more will be numbered with the past. The mountain winds are already chanting its requiem. It has been a memorable year in every respect. But perhaps in politics it stands out as the most historic of any in the past decade. The all but destruction of the Republican party is one of its most significant features. The growth and activity of the Farmers' Alliance is another.

It is in the partial paralysis of the Republican party and in the demands of the Alliance that the political student will find food for contemplation. The Alliance is more or less a secret, oathbound party; it demands an independent United States Treasury with open warehouses and loan offices to circulate money at 2 per cent per annum. This party further wants railroads and telegraphs under government control. It also wants free silver coinage, increase of paper currency and repudiation of all mortgage indebtedness.

The Alliance is flourishing in the West and South. It is tearing old parties asunder. It will have twenty-four members in the next Congress. It owes Kansas and South Carolina. It is difficult to conjecture what this young party may yet accomplish; but in any way that it is looked at, its birth, growth and demands are significant and may form an important epoch in American history.

In railroad accidents, meteorological disasters and other calamities, the year has a copious and mournful record.

The revelations in science are startling. Dr. Koch's consumption cure, if it brings what is claimed for it, will form a marking point in science almost emphatic enough to date medical events from.

Next in importance in the mechanical world is the projected "flying machine," or rather "Air Ship." Though the practicability

of this has not yet been fully demonstrated, yet the best opinion of the age deems it a probable solution of the problem of aerial navigation.

In religion, perhaps the most significant development appears in the history of what the world calls "Mormonism." The decision of the United States Supreme Court sustaining the Idaho Test Oath is one which must occasion regret to those patriotic Americans who revere the principle of religious freedom. The decision was a strained construction of the constitution, exhibiting a desire to ignore the spirit and put a technical and intolerant interpretation upon each of its provisions as were intended to protect instead of curtail religious rights and liberties. The victims of that decision do not, like the Farmers' Alliance and other new parties, denounce and demand the abolition of the Supreme Court, but the disfranchised citizens of Idaho do hope that the court may be blessed with a spirit of liberality, patriotism, justice and enlightenment, and that its future decisions may redound to the benefit, preservation and splendor of our glorious Republic.

The court has exhibited a different disposition in its latest ruling affecting the "Mormon" question. In reversing the decision of the Utah courts and settling the question that a legal wife's evidence cannot be admitted as against her husband in a polygamy case, the court has maintained for the "Mormons" the same rule that is applied to the "Gentiles," and has governed the jurisprudence of the civilized world for centuries.

What is denominated the "Messiah craze" among the Indians is also an important event in the religious history of the year. That this craze has its foundation in religion is beyond a doubt, but its origin and development are involved in some degree of mystery. It is to be deplored that it should lead to the extermination of the Indians, for as matters now stand that is practically what the government and the people in the vicinity of the Indians demand.

That foul play was practised towards the Indian is unquestioned; and that this religious frenzy was made a pretext for aggravating the Indians and driving them into discontent is also a fact beyond dispute. The whole affair will make a dark chapter in the story of the Caucasian race in its dealings with the original native Americans.

One of the most important religious events of the year is the action taken by the President and Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in relation to plural marriage. This is as striking an evidence of the regard of the "Mormon" people for the laws of the land when declared constitutional by the court of last earthly resort, as could possibly be given to the world. Its bearing upon the community will greatly affect their future, and it will offer a test to the nation as to the sincerity of its alleged antipathy to the Saints solely on account of their adherence to polygamy.

The religious question has entered actively into politics in many States of the Union. In Wisconsin the issues in this year's campaign were entirely religious. The German Lutherans and the Roman Catholics of all nationalities combined and formed a political party sustaining parochial and private schools free from State interference. The Democratic party endorsed the demands of the religious people, and the result was in Wisconsin an overwhelming victory for the Democratic party. It is well known that the attitude of Republican politicians and newspapers towards Utah had something to do in stimulating this politico-religious controversy in the East. The absolutism of government officials in Utah is not unknown in Wisconsin and in Illinois. All Republicans, however, do not endorse the Utah satraps. And the fact is that among the officials who have disregarded the American Constitution in Utah, are old-time Democrats, some of them ex-rebels. But that only makes matters worse in the opinion of Eastern religionists. It is believed that one of Utah's Judges has trampled on established rules to exclude Englishmen and Scotchmen from citizenship, while admitting brigands from Sicily and cannibals from Hungary, in order to retain his position. It is this view of the case which moves the Lutherans of Illinois, for the same process could be carried out there that is carried out in Utah, and the fate of their religion be placed in the hands of some party heeler whom accident or expediency might make a United States Judge.

In legislation the McKinley bill, the Silver bill, the Customs Administration bill and others are important enactments.

Great developments in trade and