UTAH STUDENTS.

One of Them Writes of What They are Doing at Ann Arbor.

THE UTONIANS NUMBER FIFTY.

How the Eastern Press Regards the Building and Dedication of the Great Temple.

Correspondence Deseret News.

ANN ARBOR, Mich., April 8.—During last autumn remarks similar to these were frequently directed to me. "Pardon me, sir, but you are from Utah, are you not?" "Yes." "Well, can you tell me anything about the Mormons—are there any of them left in Utah?"

After giving them what little information I possessed—with a sort of I-don't-believe-you look, another question would be ventured. "Why, I understood since they had been *compelled to give up their religion* that they were all going to *Mexico*?" "No, not all are going to Mexico—the "Stakes of Zion" are only being extended, reaching as they do today from Canada to Mexico. This statement is almost too much for the average "down easter," who for the past decade has been educated in all the lore of anti-Mormon history. One good young man from Maryland (a prospective lawyer) wished to know if half the people in Utah were civilized. I cannot say whether I succeeded in changing his mind, for you will readily understand from his query that it would be no easy task. For sixty-three years, throughout our land, the Gospel of Christ has been proclaimed by the Mormons. Missionaries have labored in every state in the Union, papers have been published and books and tracts spread broadcast, and still there are thousands of people today in the United States who do not possess one correct idea relative to the history or doctrines of the Latter-day Saints. I met a gentleman a few days ago from the noted Missouri; he is just completing a four years' course in the Michigan university. He reads Hebrew, Latin and Greek, is versed in all the old legends and mythological teachings of antiquity. Mark my surprise when he asked if the Mormons believed in the Bible? Perhaps it would not have seemed so strange had he not been raised in the state that took a special delight in banishing this same people about fifty years ago. Irving in his History of New York, in speaking of "banishment" says "It is a concise manner of answering unwelcome doctrine and much resorted to in ancient times." My friend seemed to be oblivious of the fact that his state had adopted this ancient method of argument, in attempting to silence the new defenders of the faith of Christ and those who proclaimed the fulfilment of God's word as contained in Holy Writ.

These few illustrations will tend to show the ignorance that is so prevalent regarding the "peculiar people of the Rockies." Still we can not wonder at the false ideas entertained, for no people since the Apostolic days have been so maligned and misrepresented. To three agencies, more than all others, is this condition due. Papers, preachers and politicians.

The press has indulged in extravagant portrayals, not at all times wilful, but simply to answer the demands of the populace by furnishing sensational stories, even if it had to be done at the expense of truth and the falsifying of an honest people. Preachers, from the very day that Joseph Smith first announced that he had received a revelation (and especially since the organization of the Church in 1830), have been in arms, waging an unceasing warfare against whom they termed the impostor of the nineteenth century. Why? Because he came proclaiming truth and denouncing error. Because he announced the restoration of the "Gospel"—the opening of a new dispensation—that God had again "spoken from on high." These teachings aimed at the root of so-called Christianity, and meant the overthrow of all false systems and creeds. To retard the progress of this work, Biblical argument was resorted to (but soon abandoned), reason and logic was brought into requisition, but failed to produce the desired effect and being in extremes, recourse was had to the old cry—false prophet—impostor—slander and calumny. Pulpits, for the time being, seemed to lose their former significance, in place thereof, giving forth the most wilful and uncharitable utterances, prejudicing the weak and unsuspecting.

Politicians to create excitement, to agitate the populace and to further their personal aims found a fruitful field in the cause of the unpopular denomination, and from 1835 until 1890, national and state political would-be reformers have gloried in the cause that had few champions but many opponents, knowing they would have no opposition but would revel in the plaudits of the many.

Apropos the old adage "Truth is mighty and will prevail" and "Time rights all things." These sayings were never more appropriate, for after half a century of unprecedented advancement, the mists of falsehood are vanishing before the light of incontrovertible facts, while Time in his unceasing progress is tracing to its very source the injustice of an honest people and revealing to an enlightened world the truths respecting Mormonism.

But while prejudice is rapidly disappearing, it still finds lodgement in the minds of some intelligent, but mostly fanatical persons. An apt instance of this transpired a few days ago. Mr. J. Jensen, of Parowan, is at Ypsilanti attending the Michigan State Normal school. His class in rhetoric was required to write a biographical sketch, each member being allowed to make his own selection. Mr. Jensen wrote upon the life of Joseph Smith. The sketch was handed to his professor, (Mr. F. A. Barbour, a very learned gentleman) who after criticising it, had Mr. Jensen read it in his class, at the conclusion of the reading, Prof. Barbour complimented him on his composition, but continuing said, "But it is absurd—nothing could be more absurd. It is a sacrilegious expression to say that Joseph Smith, a low degraded man had visions. Beware of false prophets. The days of revelation are over and modern scientific men are lead to explain in their inventions, it is just as God designed it should be." At last becoming excited and very emphatic in his gesticulations, he cried out, "Mr. Jensen, do you believe he was a prophet?" The young man arose and in a very dignified manner replied: "Taking the Bible and reason for my standard, I do most certainly believe him a prophet." "Well," continued the professor, "if you do you are hopelessly lost and totally gone, and my advice to you would be to turn from such ideas." Again came the reply, "Professor, I have never met in my little experience, a fair minded person who has studied the Mormon question but what their strong opinions were modified, and you told me *yesterday* that you had not studied the question and therefore you are not competent to judge much less to advise on the subject." This last remark rather discomfited the professor, and to recover he adopted the old method and delivered a dissertation on polygamy, but as this subject (or, in fact, any doctrinal question) had not been referred to, the class failed to see its application. After about fifteen minutes had been utilized in his tirade he concluded, but with this challenge to his face: "Professor, of course all this venom has been thrown at me, and as you have asked my opinion relative to Joseph Smith, to show you that I am not prejudiced, permit me to say, that if you or any member of this class can show me where I am in the wrong, I'd willingly acknowledge my error." It is needless to say his proposition was not accepted; but, to show the learned gentleman's honest tenacity, I will record his reply: "Why, bless your soul (forgetting his advice), we do not wish to change your opinion."

This little circumstance made our Mormon boy the hero of the school, and he is now doing effective mission work. Similar incidents might be related from the experience of the students at this place, but as Utah has a colony of about fifty located here, the results are being manifest, and false ideas are disappearing. The influence of fifty (in a college of about three thousand students) all exercised in one direction cannot be overlooked, and during the past winter the Utah and the Mormon questions have been debated and discussed in every form and before every society in the university, and long and loud have been sung the praises and virtues of the Territory and its people, until today its demands are being recognized and its representatives being respected. One of Salt Lake's sons, Mr. R. A. Sulpp (who will graduate in June from the literary and the law departments) entered an oratorical contest not long since. His subject was "Utah;" he was successful in the preliminary contest and so had the privilege of delivering it in "University hall," before members of the faculty and the students. He was not victorious in the final contest (he did not expect to be with his subject) but he felt happy and repaid for his labors, to be able to proclaim himself to his classmates and to record a few words for the land of his birth. His effort was able, commendable and well received. Many circumstances during the past few years have attracted the eyes of the whole world to fair Utah, but none of them have caused such a general discussion as the grand event that has just transpired—"The dedication of the Salt Lake Temple." All classes, and creeds, all people cannot but wonder and reflect with amazement upon its meaning and its purport. Thousands and tens of thousands of people who have been led to believe that Mormonism was dead, that the "fanatical zeal" (as they have been pleased to call it) had cooled off and that no more would be heard of the sect "that is everywhere spoken against," Yet when they least expected it, comes the announcement of "A great temple dedication to God." The good results and wonderful benefits that will follow this cannot be estimated. The reports that have been sent out concerning its erection, its dimensions, its unsurpassed grandeur and magnificence are startling even to me who has been reared almost under the shadow of its walls. Never in the history of the Church have such favorable reports flashed across this continent. Every newspaper in the land published long descriptive articles, many written days before by special correspondents, and accompanied by cuts of the Temple and the portraits of many of the church authorities. The fact that from 60,000 to 80,000 persons will visit this beautiful building before the dedicatory services are concluded announces to the world the progress and advancement of this "peculiar people" and that there must be some underlying principle and virtue that attracts men from all lands and climes, leading them to testify of the truth of the cause they have espoused. This is incomprehensible to the average sectarian mind, for when they deny God's power, how can they expect to comprehend his purposes? But they seeing the good works of others may be led to a contemplation of God's teachings and to an investigation of the causes of the sincerity and the unceasing labors of that despised denomination, who proclaims the restoration of the everlasting Gospel. Already are inquiries being made and attention being concentrated on the land of Zion." I have perused papers from Alabama, Chicago, Kansas City, New York and from all parts of Michigan, and with the exception of one or two instances it would be impossible to improve on the accounts given of the Temple and the circumstances under which it has been erected. Surely "God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," for who would have imagined the enemies of the Latter-day Saints heralding *that* praise and commendation of their sincerity and integrity; publishing to the world their triumphs over adversity; and proclaiming the celebration of the most glorious event in their history, the successful termination of forty years' toil and expectancy; an event commemorated by two weeks' rejoicing and thanksgiving for the blessings of an Allwise Father. The world will have no further excuse for asking "Are there any Mormons left in Utah? Have they given up their religion? Have they all gone to Mexico?"

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