

IDAHO INDEPENDENTS.

THE *Herald*, in commenting on the political situation in Idaho, scores several good points. But in defining the political leaning of the "Mormons" in the State, prior to their disfranchisement through the notorious test oath law, it has not, we think, taken into account one fact. That is, there were a large number of the "Mormons" in the then Territory, who organized as "Independents," in consequence of the attitude of leading men in both the great political parties on their question. The Independent party of Idaho had no affiliation with either of those parties and therefore are not bound now by any party ties to the Democrats more than the Republicans.

It is perfectly true that principle should guide voters in their choice of party adherence. They ought not to be swayed from one side to another by any such influences as are sometimes brought to bear in favor of or against a party movement. People who can be Democrats today and Republicans tomorrow, or vice versa as interest or whim shall guide, are not stable citizens, and have but a poor idea of the responsibility of the franchise.

But in calculating the prospects of either party in Idaho allowance must be made, as in Utah, for quite a number of citizens who are not committed either way, and who should be just as free to become Republicans as Democrats, and Democrats as Republicans, and could not be fairly condemned in either event. We hope that in their choice they will be governed by what appears to them to be right, leaving the past where it belongs and acting in the living present with due regard for the probable future.

STATUS OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

If the British soldier is at all sensitive he will not be elated at the somewhat accurate descriptions of himself recently given by a special committee, appointed to inquire into his status. The average infantryman is delineated by the Duke of Cambridge as only a few degrees removed from a physical imbecile. He declares that he could not possibly mobilize the forces on short notice, if an emergency demanded such a step. Half of the troops at the Aldershot encampment are unfit—because of youth and general incapacity—for a day's active service. It was ironically admitted, however, that the troops stationed at home would, in the event of invasion, be a slight percentage better than nothing. Lord Wolseley compares the army to a squeezed lemon, so it cannot be conspicuously juicy.

Observing people in Great Britain have for years been commenting upon the changed condition of the British troops. Those who visit the country after an absence of years are still more forcibly struck with the difference in the caliber of the men now in the service compared with the British soldiers of fifteen, twenty and twenty-five years ago. Then they were, as a rule, robust, muscular, active and matured. Now an observer is impressed with

the boyish and inferior aspect of the rank and file of the infantry. As a rule they do not present a soldierly appearance, and especially lack the strong features indicative of hardihood and determination formerly characteristic of British soldiers. There are, of course, a few crack regiments of infantry, such as the 79th, that are up to the old standard, but the rule is the other way.

The military authorities are waking up to the situation, and early reforms which will induce a more stalwart class of men to enlist, will be inaugurated. The status of the cavalry is still creditable, although that branch of the army is not altogether as strong, so far as relates to the caliber of the men, as it was a quarter of a century since.

A NEW LINE TO THE PACIFIC.

ACCORDING to the San Francisco *Chronicle* thirty California capitalists, among whom are Alvinza Hayward, W. S. Hobart, James G. Fair, James Phelan, Adam Grant, Joseph Donoghue, Henry Sountag and J. B. Stetson, have taken the preliminary steps towards building a railroad between Salt Lake and San Francisco. The agreements entered into by these gentlemen stipulate that the new enterprise shall be "a real competing line" to be operated independently of traffic associations, pools, trusts or combines of any kind.

It is anticipated that emphatic opposition to the floating of the bonds of this corporation will be experienced from railroad interests already established. This the projectors have provided for. Each of the thirty capitalists subscribes \$100,000, making a cash beginning of \$3,000,000. This is the best endorsement that could be given to the project, and there is little fear that with such a commencement the promoters will have any difficulty in floating their bonds, which will then be regarded as gilt-edged.

Some papers treat this affair as a mere railroad on paper. It is possible that it is only a scheme to force the existing corporations to buy off the projectors of the new organization. But it has the appearance of starting out "for keeps." Competition in traffic to the coast would certainly be a boon to this intermountain region.

THE NEGRO QUESTION.

In the *North American Review* for April, Thomas Nelson Page, a Southern man, has an article on the negro question. It seems to have been inspired by one last December from the pen of Prof. James Bryce of Great Britain. The Britisher in his article dwelt on the seriousness of the negro question, and the general tenor of his argument was that the colored man ought to have a fair chance socially, politically and industrially.

Mr. Page, echoing the Southern view, says that it is a great race question "on the correct solution of which depends not only the present salvation of the South, but the future of the nation." He quotes the saying of Senator Hoar that persons at present living will see 50,000,000 negroes in the

United States. He dwells on the utterance to show the obtuseness of men who see the growing power of the negro, and yet want to invest him with political authority. Let the negro dominate the South, and it is only a question of time when he will also dominate the North.

The contention on the part of the South against political supremacy for the colored race is partly ethnological and partly social. It is claimed that the inferiority of the negro does not arise because he was a slave, but because he does not possess the faculties to raise himself above a position of servitude. "He has not exhibited the qualities of any race which has advanced civilization or shown capacity to be greatly advanced." Since the dawn of history, in Egypt, in Phoenicia, Rome and elsewhere, he has been in contact with civilization, and for the past 200 years he has been under the influence of the Caucasian race on this continent; in New Zealand he has had his freedom for over one hundred years, and yet there is no perceptible advance in his character.

Liberia, Hayti, and several of the Southern States which for a few years after the war were dominated by negroes, are taken as illustrations to demonstrate how little general, political or intellectual ability there is in the negro. The trend of Mr. Page's argument is that the colored race was destined by the Creator to occupy an inferior position in the social and political economies of civilization.

THE FUTURE UNVEILED.

AMONG the data we obtained with regard to the life of Elder Jacob Gates was an account of a vision, and some notes of travel showing its fulfillment. The statement was written by his own hand, and as it was not, on account of limited space, included in the biographical sketch published in yesterday's issue, we give it place today, believing that it will be perused with pleasure by many of our readers.

After the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred on the 27th of June, 1844, the spirit of mobocracy raged to such an extent that it was deemed advisable to send the Elders into the surrounding country to allay the excitement as far as possible. I was dispatched to Fountain Green, a place known to be very bitter toward the Latter-day Saints. I held one meeting in company with Charles Bird, my companion. We had a large audience, and the spirit of the enemy had been wrought to the highest pitch; but the better spirit prevailed and the meeting passed off quietly. Then we returned to Nauvoo. In the fall and winter of 1844, work upon the Temple was pushed forward, so that in the latter part of 1845 the people commenced to receive their blessings. That same fall I had my full endowments, together with my two wives, Mary M. and Caroline Elizabeth. During the winter and spring of 1846 we were preparing to leave Nauvoo. As we passed over the Mississippi River into Iowa, where I had once lived, I was reminded of a dream, or night vision, which was as follows: