

about town. This system of supervision would be intolerably irksome to the mothers and guardians of the girls, if marriage were not arranged for them at a very early age. At 13 or 14 a Cubana is supposed to be ready for marriage, and a match is made for her by her parents as soon as possible. Meanwhile, during the transition stage, she is not allowed to make any male acquaintances—unless it be at a long range, through the medium of fan and handkerchief communication. But though kept under guard during six days of the week, on Sunday she is trotted out and exhibited to all comers. The whole town goes to see the show, and for hours all the unmarried women tramp up and down, displaying their charms set off in choicest gaud and gear; while hundreds of young men join the procession and exchange glances and signals, if not words with them, and the mothers and chaperons complacently overlook the scene from the side benches. This is the Cuban Vanity Fair. Girls of 13 and 14 are the belles of the walk and the great concourse of carefully dressed, profusely powdered, perfumed and tooth-pick-toed men watch them with eager interest.

FANNIE BRIGHAM WARD.

IN BEAR LAKE VALLEY.

Our weather? delightful! Appearance of our lovely land? enchanting! Trees in full leaf—flowers a blooming—grasses growing and the general aspect of the country such that ought to cause the stoniest heart to rejoice and be thankful that the Lord and all nature favors Zion, notably the Bear Lake Stake thereof.

Along the lake shore come visitors from all points of the compass, and "come once" means come annually, as the Bear Lakers, merchants not excepted, are adepts at treating the stranger within their gates royally right.

Elder Wm. Budge, president of the Stake, and Counselor J. C. Hart, with Bishop W. Clark and Elder Robert S. Spence, met with our Lake Town people on Friday night last and as a matter of course gave instructions replete with wisdom and for the benefit and present blessing of, all. From here the brethren repaired to Bear River Valley, where they had the pleasure of meeting with and being addressed by Elders John Henry Smith, Heber J. Grant, Abraham O. Woodruff and Matthias Cowley of the Council of Apostles. Also on this occasion a new Woodruff Stake of Zion was organized with Bishop John M. Baxter and Elders Byron H. Session and Kingston. The new president has a record as a Sunday school and Church officer; as an employe, merchant, and civil officer that perhaps could not very easily be excelled and absolutely above reproach. He is one "Young Utah," if you please, of the genuine brand, that our young men will do well to emulate.

Bear Lake Stake looses a community of hardy and God-fearing pioneers, who had a hard row to hoe, but hoed it well and by the blessing of God and indefatigable industry, against fearful odds from a natural standpoint, have made the country very desirable, progressive and prosperous. Where before the Latter-day Saints settled there was regarded as one of the most forbidding of the intermountain regions. May the Divine blessings continue and increase upon this worthy community. Elder Budge and his co-laborers still have a large field for the exercise of their ministry.

Our Stake conference convenes at Paris. Prospects favor the assertion that there will be a large attendance, and all are hoping to meet with and

listen to leaders from Zion's chief city during its sessions.

Elders John M. Knight and Brigham Solomon of your city met with and briefly discoursed to our people here on Sunday last.

Time was when the editor's correspondents and preachers used to use pen, pencil, pen and tongue endeavoring to convince the people of Utah of the patriotic and religious duty of sustaining home industries. That really need not now be mentioned. They should sell and find favor in the eyes of this intermountain portion of the great American public on their merits, on the proposition that price and quality considered, Utah goods are better for the prices asked than the imported articles.

Our people's health generally good, but have had some sad exceptions this spring to this rule.

Crop prospects very encouraging. Sheep shearing in full blast, and the financial interests of our country will soon be greatly enhanced thereby.

Yours as of yore,

JOSEPH IRWIN.

Lake Town, Utah, June 8, 1898.

A MARE'S NEST.

The accompanying article was sent to the Kinsman by me with a request to publish it. The editor in charge declined, saying: "It is not what people have been or are, but what they ought to be and the truth which makes to that end," that is the "position of the Kinsman." I suppose that my article might be declined by the "News" on the same ground. Yet I see not how the truth that makes for righteousness is ever to be learned without discussion of what passes for truth. I believe the Kinsman assumes the ground that discussion is unnecessary and that Mr. Schroeder and itself are infallible. That is to deny history and make progress impossible. I offer the article for publication.

CHARLES ELLIS.

I have been reading the record of A. T. Schroeder's discoveries concerning "Polygamy and Inspired Lies," and sundry other communications from the same author, in your paper. Kindly insert in your next issue these considerations upon that writer's criticisms.

Mr. Schroeder's "lies," are admitted as discrepancies or even lies, if he likes that word better, and his efforts result only in raking old straws from the mare's nest in which the world has not the slightest interest. There never was a theological system established on earth in the name of religion that did not indulge in what Mr. Schroeder could call "inspired lies" with as much appropriateness as there is in his application of the terms to what he has found in Mormon literature. If he were to say that the revelation given to Joseph Smith authorizing polygamy were an inspired lie I should admit the probable truth of his allegation and follow it up with the assertion that the statement that an allperfect God gave one of His favorites another man's wives as a mark of His favor is also an inspired lie. That is, if polygamy is now contrary to the will and command of God it has always been so, or God has undergone a mental and moral growth. If He has thus changed that is evidence of the genuineness and authenticity of Mormonism, for one of its claims is that God is a progressive being.

If we turn to the life of Jesus as shown in the literature of the years covering the life of His Apostles and their cotemporaries and immediate successors we find more inspired lies than can be gathered from Mormon

literature. If it is said they were not "inspired" it follows that none of the New Testament writings were inspired, for they all come from followers of the Nazarene, and the dogma of inspiration was not determined in favor of any of the writings for several hundred years after the death of the writers. Therefore I hold that the so-called Apocrypha of the New Testament is just as much or just as little inspired as were the writings now accepted as "the word of God." The fact is that Jesus never established a theology or a church. The statement put into His mouth that Peter was the rock upon which He would build His church bears internal evidence of posthumous origin. Jesus was not a punster. His ministry was too sober, the burden upon Him too great to admit of playfulness. Besides the question of church was not raised until long after his death. I believe, too, that the closest manuscripts do not contain the passage to which I have referred.

But suppose God ever did or does now choose human beings to be His agents in conveying His will to the world of man, it follows that the intelligence so conveyed must be modified by the agency through which it passes. As water is impregnated by the solubles through which it flows, so is the thought of God modified by the agency through which it becomes speech in the ears of mankind. It takes a God to convey the mind of God and in so far as the human mind is less than the mind of God, by just so much is it possible that even a Prophet chosen by God may err in conveying His will. I do not believe that God ever did or ever will lay down a law through the agency of the human mind under which any person will be damned for neglecting its requirements. But if He has done so then I hold that the imperfections of His agents are so great that none can be condemned for calling the law in question. For instance, God cannot condemn me if in my conception of His greatness and justice I see such imperfections in His scheme of redemption as presented in Christian theology as make it repugnant to my idea of God. Therefore, I hold that even if He chose one or many "prophets" in the past they were all human and so equally liable to err as all men. Hence, supposing Mormonism to have been the work of God, as is said, we should expect to find it full of the imperfections and inconsistencies and discrepancies that are common to imperfect humanity.

It will be said in reply that agencies so chosen have the gift of the holy spirit and that they cannot err. That is, however, impossible. You cannot draw a string through a slobbering pipe-stem without soiling it with nicotine. No more can the holy spirit strain its thought through a human mind without taking up the conditions of that mind. If, then, God does use men and women to convey His will we may expect that will to become more and more clearly expressed as the human mind becomes more and more competent to receive and proclaim the divine will without conscious or unconscious modification. If Mormonism is true it should be growing more and more Godlike from year to year. The same is true of every system of theology that claims God as its author. Mr. Schroeder has made no discovery in proclaiming the vagaries of early Mormonism as inspired lies. He could find inconsistencies and absurdities in any theology on earth, in any religion professed by men. The question to be considered is—do the people still accept the crudities of their early faith as the will of God. If they do then to that extent their faith is an injury. But if they outgrow the