

should refrain from water as well as food, we may say that the occasional fasts designated are usually expected to be of that character. These do not continue for long, nor are they frequent. The fast requires a measure of sacrifice, and in the half-day, or the occasional full-day fasts appointed for the Saints there is not an unreasonable amount of self denial in the requirement to refrain from food and drink.

That the term fasting has a wide scope in its meaning in the Scriptures, both ancient and modern, may be learned by reference thereto. For instance, it is said in Isaiah chapter 58, verses 5, 6 and 7.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

In the Doctrine and Covenants, section 59, with reference to the keeping of the Lord's day, it is said in verses 13 and 14:

And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full. Verily, this is fasting and prayer; or, in other words, rejoicing and prayer.

In these references a fast is referred to that includes the partaking of food. There are other fasts which require abstinence from food; all being appointed in their order and for special purposes as shall be given in the word of the Lord, by His voice and through the instructions of those whom He has appointed to declare His will to the people.

THE INDIAN DIFFICULTIES.

The latest reports from the scene of Indian troubles in northwestern Wyoming give assurance of an early settlement of the difficulties which have existed. These reports, coming from authentic sources in the immediate vicinity of the disturbance, confirm the idea formerly expressed by the News that there was much exaggeration on the part of excited or designing white men, which tended to increase the alarm awakened by the real danger known to exist.

The situation as described in these accounts does not show that all trouble is past. There yet may be hostile demonstrations and even bloodshed if there be any rashness or inconsiderate action on the part of white settlers. At the same time the indications are that by the exercise of a moderate amount of caution and tact the whole business can be settled without the loss of another life. The Indians are very sore at what they conceive to be an injustice in driving them from hunting grounds they have enjoyed so long; they are imbued with a desire for vengeance upon those who have slain some of the aborigines, including squaws and pap-

pooses. But the Indians are drawing a distinction which formerly they did not make in cases of this kind; they are not seeking revenge upon any white person who may appear, but manifest a kindly disposition towards white settlers who are known not to have arranged themselves in opposition to the red man.

In this aspect of the case there is good reason to believe that the worst is past. The fact that the Indians have sent word to settlements that they need not be alarmed, as no harm is intended, cannot be construed as the ruse of an enemy. In the situation there, it is an act of friendship which means that the officials, military or otherwise, will be able to hold consultations with the Indian chiefs, and no doubt will induce the hostiles to abandon the warpath. Hence further news of an alarming character is merely a possibility; the probability is that white-winged peace will soon settle down in Jackson's Hole country and vicinity.

GET THE STORY STRAIGHT.

"One story is good till the other is told," is an old saying that has many illustrations in human experience.

The remark may have direct application to the oft repeated assertion made by those unfriendly to the Mormon people that the calling of the Mormon Battalion was intended as an act of kindness to the Saints just expelled from Nauvoo, and was a response to their request. This kind of a story may seem plausible to many upon a partial statement of the events of 1846, but when the whole facts are made known it will be found to be thoroughly at variance therewith. Even among residents of Utah there appears to be some misinformation on this subject, as may be seen in the following letter:

HOOPER, Utah, July 25, 1895.—The forty-eighth anniversary of the settlement of Utah was properly observed at Syracuse, Davis County. The orator of the day made the statement that while the Mormon people were outcasts in Iowa in 1846, the United States made a demand upon them for 500 able bodied men to serve in the war with Mexico. At the noon recess, a controversy arose between the writer and his old friends, the orator, Bishop David Cook, and others whom I have known since 1861. We mutually agreed to submit the question to the DESERET NEWS, and ask in the cause of truth and justice, that you reply through your non-partisan paper.

The question is this: Did the U. S. government make the demand upon these persecuted outcasts in hopes that the old men, women and children might perish by the Indians or starvation?

My contention is that Col Jesse C. Little, etc., as agent of the Mormon community, went to Washington, D. C., and proposed to the President of the United States to furnish thousands of men to protect the Pacific coast, if the United States would arm, equip and pay them as enrolled soldiers of the United States. The large number of men offered caused suspicion to arise. The President and cabinet, knowing that the Mormons had them not in this land, concluded they would only accept five hundred men.

Truth is truth wherever found,
On heathen or on Christian ground.

According to promise, I have stated the question fairly and briefly.

As a matter of fact it is almost immaterial to the writer, as like the noble Pioneers our toes will soon all be turned to the stars. But in the interest of the future, and the rising generation, and thousands who have come to manhood in these mountains, it is time this historical fact, or fiction, was settled beyond controversy.

Yours respectfully,
EDWARD F. MUNN.

HOOPER, Utah, July 25, 1895.

The main questions involved in the foregoing communication may be briefly stated and replied to as follows:

1. While the Mormon people were outcasts in Iowa, did the government demand 500 men to serve in the war with Mexico? Yes.

2. Did the Mormons offer men if the government would fit them out and pay them as soldiers? No.

As to whether there was a hope that the old men, women and children might perish, that must be judged by the circumstances and expressions of the time. The government did not officially state such a hope, and many leading government officials would have abhorred the idea had it been presented to them in that form; but there were others, and those the designing ones, who had no such scruples.

There was an offer made on behalf of the Mormon people. Col. Little requested government aid for the people to get to the west, and it was thought the national authorities might wish to employ the Mormons in freighting provisions and naval stores to Oregon and the Pacific coast. This was before the war broke out. There was no uttering of thousands of men in a way to create suspicion, and none existed such as suggested. Col. Little stated the number of Mormons already on the way; he also stated the number wishing to gather from the British isle; and he pledged his honor that it, in their new home, that territory should be invaded, they would hold it for the United States and against the enemy.

This offer was not accepted, nor was anything akin to it, although President Polk expressed himself as friendly. Pending the proceedings, war broke out. President Polk and cabinet assented to a proposition that was acceptable to the Mormons when that inveterate foe to the driven and persecuted Saints, Senator Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri, interposed, and by his influence the whole plan was changed into the demand that was a tremendous burden on the exiles instead of the aid they had been led to expect. The Mormons were startled, almost dismayed. There had been threats relative to disarming and dispersing the Saints, and subsequent information that Senator Benton had obtained from the President a pledge that if the Mormons refused to respond to the call United States troops would be sent to disarm and disperse them. The very fact that Senator Benton thought the Mormons might refuse shows that he well knew that the call made was the opposite to that which had been sought by Col. Little.

Further detailed and accurate information may be gained on this subject in Whitney's History of Utah, if our correspondent cares to pursue the subject farther. But from what has been stated he can readily see that