

EDITORIALS

A HIGHLY COLORED PICTURE.

A GENTLEMAN who is a regular reader of the DESERET NEWS, writes to us from Rhode Island asking some particulars in relation to an amusing letter to the Lowell (Mass.) Mail by a visitor to this city, who speaks of what the "Mormon" farmers do on "supply day," and draws a highly colored caricature of life in this city. Our correspondent wants to know what "supply day" is, and whether Z. C. M. I. has a regular rum-drinking saloon or grog shop, as represented.

Perhaps before replying it will be well to quote a little from the letter in the Mail. The writer says:

"They bring their wives into town in dead axle wagons, and fill in the vacant room with children who look fully as bad as their mothers, if not worse. Many of them are lame and hump-backed, and all look sickly and ill-clad. Two out of every three women on the streets yesterday had nursing infants on their arms, and four out of five of the children are said to be girls. One of the saints has thirteen wives and ninety-four children; another has nine wives and five nursing babies, which he exhibits with all the pride I should take in a lot of fine horses. I never realized the infernal nature of the institution, nor its effect upon society as I do now. The sooner our government crushes it out the better for humanity. It is a blot upon the face of the earth, particularly in this lovely valley, so green and beautiful, with apple, peach, pear and plum trees in full blossom—grass waving in the wind, bees humming and birds singing, like our July weather, while just beyond all this, in the background, are the mountain tops covered with snow. It is the prettiest sight I ever saw, and one which I never shall forget."

There is no necessity for comment on this to any one who has been in this city, and who has not drawn on his imagination, or submitted to the stuffing process applied by certain waggish and wicked loafers here to soft-headed travelers on the look out for sensations. We have fine looking children in Utah as can be found anywhere on the face of the earth, and while we have not so many millionaires as live sumptuously in other places, wealth is more evenly distributed, and more people live in their own houses and ride in their own vehicles in proportion to the population, than in any other spot on the globe that we know anything about, and our travels in both hemispheres have been by no means unextensive.

The writer of the above extract probably saw the fine picture of fruit and grain and grass and flowers, and either imagined the other part, or received impressions from those yarn spinners who tell all sorts of things to open-mouthed tourists. But there is one thing that he (or she, we rather incline to the belief that the flippant advocate of the crushing process is a female) does not seem to have taken into account, and that is, that the pleasant things which make up the scene of beauty here described, were chiefly the work of these same "Mormons" whom the Government is stupidly implored to "crush." They found the place a silent desert; they have transformed it by labor and skill into its present loveliness and source of sustenance for thousands. And yet the silly tourist who beheld the fruits of "Mormon" labor, and saw a city where quietness and order reign; where no half-naked children cry in vain for bread; where drunkenness is the rare exception; where the streets are not infested by fallen women plying the most loathsome of unnameable vocations; and where a Police Court would be almost like a fifth wheel to a coach if it were not for the influences of what is called "Christian civilization;" can go back to the cities of the east where ragged urchins rake the gutters and pick out of swill-barrels bits of garbage to satiate their hunger; where robbery and riot and licentiousness are so common that they attract little notice; where thousands of Cyprians swarm in the streets; where foul disease gnaws the bones and vitals of unnumbered victims of the basest passions; where fraud and swindling and vice and corruption abound, and ignorance and depravity and hell hold carnival; and there talk of

society in Utah and call upon the Government to crush it out. Verily, anti-"Mormonism" is a species of insanity!

One thing seems to have troubled the Massachusetts writer seriously—the sight of "two out of every three women in the streets with nursing infants in their arms." And, horror of horrors! "four out of every five of the children are said to be girls!" No wonder the Government is adjured to "crush out" this business. An Act of Congress should be passed at the next session prohibiting this large family increase, inflicting a penalty for nursing infants or carrying them in the streets, and requiring the population to be so regulated that at least an equal number of boys as girls shall be propagated. What actually occurs and exists added to what is said to be, would make up a very startling romance. But which is really the worst? Society where women take pride in their offspring, nurse their own infants and carry them in their arms, and where men are pleased at the number of their children, or society where it is the custom to limit natural increase by unnatural means, to prevent the birth of more than one or two children to a family, to shift the nursing and care of these to other persons than the mothers, and to view maternity as a curse and large families as a burden grievous to be borne and to be avoided at any hazard? We are afraid that our Massachusetts censor, accustomed to the latter condition, moving in circles where the native Americans are gradually running out because of the devilish practices of monogamic "Christianity," and surprised at the number of children here, was led to exaggerate the latter and to forget the scriptural idea of the blessedness of a numerous posterity.

We assure our correspondent that we know nothing about any special "supply day" in Utah. Saturday is generally a kind of market day in this city, when more business is done in the stores probably than on other days in the week. But most of our farming people raise their own living with the exception of groceries, and do not live from hand to mouth as folks do in the cities; therefore their supply days are in harvest time, when they reap the fruits of their summer labors. Z. C. M. I. has no rum saloon and never has kept one. At the drug store belonging to that institution wines and liquors have been and are kept for medicinal purposes, but are not sold by the drink.

In Salt Lake City we have people of all kinds, and there are many things here that good men and women deplore, but which cannot be prevented in a mixed population and with courts that conflict, the Federal courts forced upon us by the Government frequently overruling the efforts of the local courts to control or suppress those evils. But we confidently invite comparison between the social condition of this or any other city in Utah; with cities of the same size and population in any part of this broad and "Christian land, and advise our correspondent not to give much credence to hasty accounts of Utah affairs, written by people who spend a day or two at Salt Lake and view all things "Mormon" through tinted anti-"Mormon" spectacles.

ANOTHER MARK OF SHAME.

THIS nation appears to be very slow to learn a lesson from its experience in the treatment of the Indians. Good faith seems to be expected of the red men and a strict adherence to any agreement on their part, while the promises made to them are broken with impunity. The violation of treaties, the alteration of arrangements positively entered into, not only without the consent of the savages but against their remonstrances, have been so frequent and flagrant that they are commonly known and now are generally condemned by the press of the country. Scarcely an Indian outbreak has occurred without the cause being traceable to white fraud or devilry of some kind. A great deal is said and written about "the Indian Problem." But it would never have assumed its puzzling proportions if the government had treated the red skins as though they had some rights that should not be subverted, and had kept its own contracts and agreements in violation.

The Yellowstone Journal is responsible for the annexed account of a new breach of faith toward the

aborigines. Spotted Eagle and his tribe have been removed from Fort Keogh to Fort Yates although the chief went to the commanding officer and, with tears streaming down his face, pleaded that his people might not be removed after the promises made to them that they should remain on the ground they had been tilling. The paper referred to is published at Miles City, Montana, and says:

"The Indians, when they surrendered to Gen. Miles, were promised that they should remain in this neighborhood, and the Indians consequently at once became contented and happy. Ground was allotted them and crops were planted, although the Government did not furnish sufficient farming utensils. So eager were the Indians—who a few months ago were hostile—to adopt the white man's ways of livelihood, that in their enthusiasm the squaws planted the corn in ground prepared with knives instead of hoes, and with their hands scraped and dug up the earth to cultivate the growing plants. Their chiefs, under the promises of Gen. Miles, went to the country lying between Powder and the Little Missouri and staked themselves out a reservation, where they should not be troubled by the whites. Their ponies were taken and sold at public auction, and the proceeds thereof invested in cattle and given to them. All this and much more has been done to make the Indians contented. Now, just as they are beginning to understand how to live, and their stock is increasing, they are told that they must go to another part of the country; leave their gardens and crops, farms and cattle, and embark on a steamboat—which they dread with a most superstitious fear—to be taken to Standing Rock. All of the chiefs have protested against this high-handed outrage to all promises made to them by Gen. Miles, but have concluded to accept the inevitable and allow themselves to be taken away from their homes."

If news comes of another of those terrible outbreaks, attended with atrocities that curdle the blood with horror—for the Indian is merciless when he once gives way to the rage that is provoked by a sense of flagrant injury—let this new instance of violation of agreement with the natives be remembered and marked down as its direct cause, and as one more shameful mark of dishonor against the nation that so misuses its power over the unfortunate aborigines.

WOMAN'S POLITICAL FREEDOM.

THREE of the prominent ladies in the woman suffrage cause have prepared and published a book giving the history of the movement, commencing with an account of the first Woman's Rights Convention, which was held in 1848. The work takes up the question of woman suffrage and presents the main arguments in its favor and those that have been urged against it, refuting the latter and thoroughly disposing of many silly objections which are frequently urged, more in a spirit of ridicule than from any real convictions on the subject. The book is the joint production of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Miss Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Matilda Joselyn Gage. We have not seen the work, but it is attracting considerable attention and receiving numerous comments.

Notwithstanding the many obstacles in the way and the frequent rebuffs that the leaders of the woman's right movement have met with, the progress of the cause cannot but be encouraging to its friends. One by one the shackles are falling that have kept women confined to certain conventionalities and specified spheres of action, and the world is beginning to perceive that ability to act in many useful callings once reserved to masculine effort, is not confined to the masculine mind. College exclusiveness is melting down; the medical profession is open to the gentler sex; women act as clerks, telegraphers, bookkeepers, postmistresses, school trustees and superintendents, and in many callings for which they are adapted but from which they were once debarred not only by public opinion but also by prohibitory laws. In Indiana the Governor is gallant enough to make some women notaries public, while the President of the United States has given to several ladies the position of postmistress.

In a great many places women

vote on local matters, particularly on school affairs, and in no instances have the absurd predictions uttered as to the certain consequence of such an innovation been fulfilled in the slightest degree. And our friends in Utah who think women ought to be allowed to vote but not to hold any office whatever, should mark this fact: That wherever the right of women to vote has been conferred in any degree, to the same degree the right to hold office has been also accorded. The two political powers are correlative.

In Utah women have held the right to vote, but not to hold office, for over eleven years. No real friend to popular suffrage and the welfare of the entire people will assert that they have not used the power conferred upon them well, or that any evils have grown out of the bestowal of that power. In Wyoming, woman suffrage has existed about the same time, while our neighboring Territory has been more liberal than Utah, the right to hold office being there, consistently, the companion to the other right. There has been some inquiry in the East lately into the workings of the law in Wyoming. Letters addressed to the newspapers in that Territory have invariably elicited favorable replies. The Cheyenne Leader declared:

"Wyoming is satisfied with woman suffrage and the law conferring the right will never be repealed, in all human probability. It is an established institution, and belongs to the very foundation of the Territory. Wyoming has heard and considered all of the arguments advanced against woman suffrage, and her answer is that they are all wrong, and the best proof is eleven years of trial. Practical demonstration surpasses theory over and over. Having demonstrated the utility and value of woman suffrage, Wyoming is ready to recommend it to her sister States and Territories."

The Laramie Sentinel concluded an article on this question in these words:

"We here in Wyoming look with but feelings of pity and contempt upon the petty jealousy and tyranny with which the men in surrounding States and Territories regard and treat the women and are disgusted with the silly, childish futile arguments with which they attempt to justify their meanness."

In addition to these journalistic commendations here is the confession of Hon. C. B. Colby, who was thrice elected to the Legislature, and was twice chosen Speaker of the House:

"I frankly acknowledge that under all my observation it has worked well and been productive of much good in our Territory, and no evil that I have been able to discern. I am thoroughly convinced that it is the only true, consistent and honest method of exercising the right of franchise under our representative form of government, where we boast so much of intelligent freedom for the people. The only wonder to me is why the States of the Union have not adopted it long ago."

A leading eastern journal, commenting on this says:

"The popular assertion of theorists that the exercise of their rights by women would result in the neglect of domestic affairs, create domestic discord, and, what is worse, degrade and demoralize them, has proven to be without foundation in fact."

The Providence Star says:

"We shall have better schools for the assistance of women in their active management, and our politics will be cleaner, and our politicians more respectable and self-respecting when women take an active part in all public affairs, as we have no doubt they will do in a few years."

Here is a paragraph from another influential paper:

"But while these are the statements of observing and reliable persons who, above all others, are competent judges of the results of woman suffrage, it must not be supposed that the men who, in every age, presume to teach before they have learned, will cease to be heard. They will not 'down,' but will continue to be heard in every corner of the land, airing their prejudices and blowing their five-cent tin trumpets with much ado, in opposition to any measure that might tend to bring about the political equality of man and woman."

The chief argument(?) now urged against female suffrage is that the majority of the women don't want it. The truth of this has never yet

been satisfactorily determined. But granting that the majority of women do not manifest any anxiety on the subject, what has that to do with the main question? Woman is declared by law to be a citizen, the same as man. If she owns property it must be taxed. Taxation without representation is acknowledged to be a violation of common right. Woman, whether married or single, is a separate entity. As a citizen she should have a voice in all that concerns citizens. The statutory provisions which debar her from this solely on account of sex, are contrary to the spirit and letter of the fundamental principles of our system of Government. No law ought to exist which prevents the exercise of human rights. Whether women generally are awake to their political rights or not does not affect the question. If it is right that women should be politically free, their acquaintance with or ignorance of the fact does not affect it. If it is wrong to give women any political power, it would not be right if every woman in the land clamored for and insisted upon it. If political freedom were fully accorded to women, and most of them should refrain from exercising it, that would not alter in the least degree the rightfulness of that freedom, nor does the small number of those who demand it lessen the wrongfulness of withholding it. Those who recognize their rights and seek to obtain them, ought not to be refused because others seem to have no anxiety on the subject.

The same arguments that apply to the removal of the word "male" from the qualifications of voters, apply to its ejection from those to hold office. Here we shall be met with objections similar to those against woman suffrage. There is nothing in them. People of intelligence should not confound the removal of a political disability with the conferring of some office which is only thereby made possible. By no means follows, if a very vicious distinction against the women of Utah were stricken from our statute book, that any woman would be clamoring for office, or that the people would elect her. The two ideas are separate and distinct. And it is at once amusing and plausible to see otherwise intelligent people excited in argument against one idea and thinking they are helping the other, with which it has no necessary connection. The question here is not shall we confer office upon women, but shall we allow word to remain in our laws which is a standing assertion of woman's inferiority?

We refer to this matter because it is connected with the question woman's political rights, and because it has been so greatly misunderstood. That word "male" which would have been removed from a statute defining the qualifications for voting and holding office if the late Governor had silently ignored the bill, is a glaring inconsistency. It declares that woman cannot vote in Utah, while later law says that she may. But kept there it is not only a contradiction of the woman suffrage Act, but it places woman before the law on this particular on a level with idle paupers, criminals and insane sons. It says in effect that a woman cannot hold the office of clerk, notary, trustee, director, superintendent, or any position whatever that is an office under the law, is even against a woman's holding the office of postmistress, but being in the gift of the President territorial law is not prevented. Expunging that word, let it be remembered, is not conferring any office upon any woman under the sun, it is merely removing a disability, it confers nothing, but it strikes from woman a political fetter. It does not say she shall hold office, but takes away that which says she shall not. It imposes no obligation upon woman, but merely makes her politically free.

These subjects should be considered intelligently and calmly, not the mist and haze of prejudice and custom, but in the light of reason and progress. And as sure as truth will win its way and right will triumph, every chain that binds souls of men and women will be melted, and political as well as social freedom will be universal while all matured persons either sex who have not forfeited their rights by violation of law, take part in the affairs of human government and be at perfect liberty to use all their powers for the benefit of their race and country. Everything that stands in the way of this grand consummation will surely be swept from the earth.