



ALBERT CARRINGTON.....EDITOR.

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THE UNSOCIABILITY OF THE SAINTS.

Against the Latter-Day Saints, there is a stereotyped charge of unsociability, and possibly persons entitled to respect and to consideration among us, and persons who have passed through our city have, we doubt not, actually thought so. For the riff-raff of society, of high as well as of low estate, we care nothing, nor do we in reality care much about any person's opinion, yet, in the absence of anything specially claiming our attention, the subjects of sociability and unsociability suggest themselves as not undeserving of a little examination.

The people of Utah are, in many respects, not much like the rest of mankind, and in other particulars, many of them, resemble much their neighbors; but we think the difference more to their credit than the resemblance. We have lived too long in the world to make much distinction between men because of their professions of faith; the life of man is what we look at—his faith is to him personal, between him and his Maker. We are willing to avow, and care not who knows it, that we have a higher regard for an honorable unbeliever than we have for a dishonest, canting, hypocritical, prating professional Saint, yet we would be glad to see all men of the true faith, and these are, as far as we have any knowledge, the sentiments of every true Latter-Day Saint. We deplore the unbelief of honest, fair-dealing, upright men, and wish that it were otherwise; but as it is their matter exclusively and not ours, we go no further. We have no sympathy with heretic and witch burning operations. Nature never made us for that business, and "Mormonism" would have sent us still further away from it, had such been required.

Our experience and satisfaction with "Mormonism," then, have taught us humility, reverence and gratitude, and we think that we best exhibit our obligations to the Almighty by the best efforts in our power to extend a knowledge of the principles of life and salvation to others. Naturally and professionally, therefore, the Latter Day Saint has no disposition to be unsociable with other men. Our Elders when sent on missions, leave their homes and families cheerfully, to go to distant nations to seek out the "honest in heart" and the pure among men; but could the nations be brought to them here, they would, we presume, be better pleased to teach them at their firesides than to wander so far from home: yet they do not speak to every person they meet abroad, neither can they do so at home. Many years ago it might have suited some missionary's notions of obligations of duty to rush up to persons in the public street, shake them by the shoulder, and sound in tones of thunder in their ears that they were in error and going headlong to the Devil; but those most entitled to confidence among us, for wisdom, prudence and fidelity have preferred to let the Lord open the way to any work He had to accomplish. When any man has a mission like unto that of Jonah to Nineveh, of course, he will perform it, singular as might appear his course and disagreeable his task; but when not so instructed the faithful missionary is likely enough to think of the parable of the sower and govern himself accordingly. At home it is the same thing. When opportunity presents itself, and it is suggested to speak, to bear witness of experience in the Kingdom of God, no true man will shrink from the discharge of his duty; but when it is not his duty to speak, he can as well be silent here, as in the thronged streets of distant nations. At home and abroad, he walks where duty points the way and treats all men with courtesy and respect when reprehensible conduct does not release from the obligation. As a people, then, we are disposed to be sociable with mankind at large; we

know not but such intercourse may be ordained for good; but we are under as great obligation to shun evil, as when we are wholly devoted to preaching.

The unsociability of the Mormons, if persons choose to characterize the "mind your own business" faith by that name, is natural, right, proper and not reprehensible. Our profession of faith is known; we aim at building up, raising up, a people who will seek after right, truth and justice, a people who will acknowledge God in all their ways. If others entertain different views, or follow the Prodigal, spend their substance in riotous living with harlots and come to the inevitable husks, we choose not to do so, and as there is no affinity of disposition or no similarity of purpose, we can do no other than live apart—with that aim we came here. Men of high, social, character see this as we do: they see no consistency in anything less.

But, says the stranger, feeling himself free from the charge of evil habits and evil intent, we are deprived of social intercourse with your families. That is really so; but that is not the result of exclusive teaching. No teaching from mortals will ever effect this—for evidence of which look around to-day. In spite of every warning that is expected in a moral community against corruption, are all free from it? Alas! No. Far different, and how comes it? There may be some instances of distempered mortality in the community who have freely followed their own wayward passions and unrestrainedly have drank of the cup of death; but they are very few in number. The others who have cause to repent and to drink of the bitter cup of misery, could without difficulty trace their fall to the bland insinuations of assumed politeness and professions of friendship—covering the prodigal and unprincipled libertine. We will not harrow the wounded hearts of parents by any nearer application of past and present history; but we much mistake if some do not regret the too great facility they have had of intercourse with a certain class of strangers.

No sensible person will construe the foregoing to mean more than it says; and the point we have sought, in our own way to gain, is simply that the Saints can have no intercourse with evil and gain the prize they started for. They know that, feel it and so act. Bad men have deceived, corrupted, and led astray, and, it is here as elsewhere—intimacy with better men is a work of longer time. We need not point to the high regard the community has shown for moral men of other faiths to free us from the charge of bigotry, exclusiveness and unsociability. We have an aim in life, we steadily pursue it, and have time and disposition to be courteous and respectful to all good men, when we know them; but we are in a general way far too much occupied to find leisure for much more. This is no easy country to live in with idle habits, and while much of the life of men and women elsewhere is passed away in idle frivolity and dissipation we are wedded to the other course. For good men, we have nothing but the kindest feelings; for the others, we have nothing but supreme indifference. The former, on reflection, credit us with commendable discretion, and in the same circumstances would act as we do; the latter prate eternally, of unsociability, and following the suggestions of the basest passions become blinded to their position, and seem not to be aware that in the very charge they prefer and in their whole lives they furnish the justification of our course. No gentleman would ever stoop to acknowledge that he was debased from respectable society, were it even so; it is not difficult, then, to place the other.

THE CONFERENCE.

The Thirty-fourth annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convenes this morning at 10 o'clock in the Tabernacle of this city.

The recurring Conference naturally leads the mind back to the organization of the Church, in 1830, and instinctively the leading incidents of its past history pass in review. We look back upon the past with a satisfaction that is difficult to express in language, and feel daily increasing satisfaction in looking forward to the future.

The steady increase of numbers is naturally a matter of rejoicing to the true Saint; but that is the least of our obligations of gratitude to the Almighty who has borne witness to the testimony of His faithful Elders. The

overruling Providence of the Most High in the affairs of the kingdom at home and abroad has ever been visible to those who have lived in purity, and squared their lives and directed their actions, in conformity with the revelations of heaven. Wisdom more than human has directed and controlled for the good of the Saints, and the wickedness and folly of the enemies of righteousness have led them from bad to worse till infamy and disgrace have finished their inglorious career. The hand that has helped Israel has been strengthened, and the hand uplifted against Israel has been paralyzed. As it has been in the past so shall it be in the future. It is the decree of the Gods, that "Israel must prevail."

FOURTEENTH WARD SCHOOL EXAMINATION.—On Friday forenoon we passed an hour at the examination of the scholars of the Fourteenth Ward School, and were very much gratified with the advancement of Mr. Tripp's pupils. We saw there a number of ladies interested in the education of the young, and the Hons. Geo. A. Smith, W. Woodruff, Z. Snow, and, Robt. L. Campbell, Esq., Superintendent of Common Schools. The exercises were in every branch of education taught in the school, and were highly creditable to both the teacher and the taught. We learned that there were over 200 scholars from the ages of 6 to 18 years. Mr. T. is assisted in teaching by Mrs. Tripp and Miss Porter.

A DISASTROUS SNOW SLIDE.—On the 1st inst., between 10 and 11 o'clock a.m., as Thomas Pierce—son of Robert Pierce of this city—Edmund Ellsworth, Jr., Frederick Crompton, John Bowen and Robert Spurgeon were going to their work, Indian file on a snow trail across some small ravines near the top of the mountain, and running into the main ravine which opens into Mill Creek from the south at br. E. Ellsworth's saw mill, they perceived that the snow was breaking right at their feet. Bowen caught the limb of a tree, held to it and escaped. Crompton was far enough behind to be just out of reach of the slide. The other three were resistlessly swept with the rush of snow, br. E. Ellsworth, Jr., fortunately striking a tree in such manner that he was held and escaped with but trifling injury, while br. Pierce was so much crushed against another tree that he only lived some half to three-quarters of an hour, but was perfectly rational up to the time of his death. Spurgeon was so buried in the avalanche that his body has not been recovered at date of going to press, April 5, 12 noon; and the snow is so deep and wide that it is impossible to find him until it melts away.

THEATRICAL.—But for the very stormy weather of Saturday, there is no doubt that every seat and standing place in the Theatre would have been occupied that evening to witness the first representation of "The Colleen Bawn," and to testify to the ladies of the Association, on the occasion for their benefit, the public appreciation of their efforts to assist in the establishment of the Drama in the Mountains. As it was, the house was unexpectedly well filled, and we expect the benefactors were satisfied.

"The Colleen Bawn" is decidedly among the very best pieces that have yet been presented at this Theatre, and the *mise en scene* was highly creditable to the management and to the machinists of the establishment. Throughout the play, there was the pretty general characteristic of a "first night"—drag and prompting; but, as a whole, we expect it gave general satisfaction. After Mrs. Irwin, Mr. McKenzie had the principal role in the representation of "Danny Mann," the "foster brother" to "Hardress Cregan," and played with his usual ability, of which the confession and death bed scene was the most marked and highly artistic. On the introductory of Danny Mann's career, it is difficult to see "the end from the beginning." Possibly the author intended to keep the auditors in suspense and bewilderment, and if he so intended, he has been successful, for the representation on Saturday evening left it very questionable, if Danny was really the affectionate friend of Hardress, that the language asserted, or whether he was not a deep designing vindictive scoundrel who was willing to play even the murderer for the purpose of avenging his broken back and distorted figure. A more marked evidence of affection in style would settle that, and the language admits it. The other gentlemen had nothing very specially attractive to represent, but what was

of their parts, we thought, was very well played. Mr. Caine, from the usage of managers, readily accepts the representative of ungenial characters, and comes in for a small share of popular sympathy—which is decidedly a compliment to both himself and the auditors—his playing, however, on Saturday evening was very much to our notion of the character of Hardress Cregan. Mr. Irwin in characters like Myles na Coppaleen is always sure of the audience. The patrons of a general theatre are fond of wit, and applaud lustily honest sentiments and manly courage wherever manifest—even in men of doubtful standing in society. The most was made of a small part by Mr. Dunbar. Mr. Simmons was particularly easy and at home in Kyrle Daly, and Mr. Sloan makes an excellent Father Tom.

Mrs. Gibson played with marked freedom and ease. Mrs. Bowring was good, but much too young a lady for the mother of Hardress, and Mrs. Clawson, we think, was unequalled in the Irish vernacular. Her Irish in Green Bushes established that conclusion in our mind then, and on Saturday evening it was more than confirmed.

The Widow's Victim—as the farce of last Saturday evening, was not equal to that play on former occasions, though the parts were well sustained. The curtain was late in rising, Colleen Bawn was lengthy, there was nothing particularly local to mimic and everybody had enough for their money before it commenced. The burlesque throughout, by Mr. Margetts and Mrs. Clawson was exceedingly well played, and the other characters were well sustained; but had it been possible for the management to have concluded, after Dunbar's popular songs, the probabilities were that everybody would have been satisfied. Of course we know that the management had to carry out the programme.

The Lady of Lyons and the Frisky Cobbler will be presented on Thursday evening.

Colleen Bawn is reserved for Saturday evening, on the occasion for the benefit of the gentlemen of the Association, which is also announced "the last night of the season." There will no doubt be a great crowd.

For Saturday evening, we understand that, the curtain rises precisely at 7 o'clock. The length of the performances demand the change. That's right.

THE BENEFIT ON SATURDAY EVENING.—It would seem wanting in courtesy to preserve silence on the fine entertainment on Saturday evening for the Benefit of the gentlemen connected with the Deseret Dramatic Association. It is a deserved compliment, and a play of the attraction of "Colleen Bawn," with an afterpiece like the "Mountain Sylph," and that too on the last night of the season, is too strong a combination of circumstances to require even the most delicate touch of the lever to fill the house to overflowing. For the gentlemen amateurs we have unqualified respect; we have known them for many years and have many times found relaxation and entertainment from their labors when they had less to cheer them in their efforts than they have now. To their taste, perseverance and toil we are chiefly indebted for the drama and the fine Theatre that adorns the city.

It would be invidious to speak here of individuals, and to notice the advancement of the one or the other; we are pleased with our friends, and wish them not only a crowded house on Saturday evening, but we wish them much prosperity and pleasure in their private lives as well as honors in their public labors.

ORCHESTRAL.—We were pleased to hear the Overture—from the *Caliph de Bagdad*—on Saturday, between the first and second acts of the play. The usual moving and talking between plays prevented the audience from hearing the commencement; but the silence which eventually ensued and the applause that followed demonstrates the soundness of our critic's judgment on the wishes and tastes of the people. Professor Thomas has reason to be satisfied with the progress of his orchestra and the public. The first have made astonishing progress and the latter are never backward in its exhibition of appreciation.

ELMER E. T. BENSON wrote from San Francisco, March 12th, that himself and company, Elders Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith, Wm. W. Cluff and Alma L. Smith arrived there on the 9th, making the trip in 7 days. They were all well, and expected to sail for the Sandwich Islands on the barque Onward, Capt. Hempstead, March 13th.