

DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - Dec. 22, 1875.

THE SALT LAKE METHODIST PREACHERS' POLITICAL CAUCUS.

THE Methodists preachers of Utah, or of this part of Utah, appear to be a very curious set of people, and not quite so consistent as they might be. They had a political caucus the other day, at the First M. E. Church in this city, and for a very strange purpose. It appears that this political caucus grew out of the political caucus held by a number of Methodist preachers in Boston, Mass., a short time previous, in which Boston caucus Bishop Haven was instrumental in having President Grant nominated for a third term. This wise Salt Lake Methodist preachers' caucus was for the purpose of protesting against the Boston Methodist preachers or any body of ministers holding a political caucus and placing anybody in nomination for the presidency of the United States, also of repudiating the action of Bishop Haven's Boston Methodist caucus and declaring plainly and emphatically that the Salt Lake Methodist preachers would not consider themselves bound or in any wise committed by the action of their Boston brethren.

This was all very well, so far. The Methodist preachers of Salt Lake had a perfect right to meet in council and protest against what they might consider the impropriety of Methodist preachers, or any other religious preachers, mixing things mundane with things extraordinary, and especially of holding a political caucus, or sort of religious-political primary, for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the presidency of the United States, and not only that, but also of taking a more audacious step and nominating President Grant for a third term, the first third term in the history of the nation, a proceeding which no purely political caucus, we believe, has yet done, and to do which is generally considered an act of particular political daring and hardihood, if not of bravado, and of defiance of the general present political sentiments and certainly of political precedents, and of the venerated political traditions of the country at large.

If the Salt Lake Methodist preachers had done this and rested, they would have done well, very well indeed for them. But they were not satisfied to rest with this. They had not sufficient common sense to let well alone. They must needs do more, utterly spoiling what they had already done, and exhibiting one more remarkable instance of human, Methodist and ministerial inconsistency. It was very unwise of them to do it, but they could not see the unwisdom of their further steps. That is the characteristic of unwise people. Indeed they are so deluded as to believe that their unwisdom is the height of wisdom itself. Hence the proverb—"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," a proverb verified in this instance, for we do not think for one moment, if a number of angels had met and made such a protest and repudiation as we have seen that these Salt Lake Methodist preachers did, that those same angels would have continued their meeting and done what these preachers did.

What did these preachers further proceed to do? After protesting against the Boston Methodist preachers or any religious preachers holding a political caucus and putting anybody in nomination for the presidency of the United States, these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, to show the extremeness of their protest against and repudiation of their Boston brethren, did actually continue their own political caucus and put President Grant out of nomination for the presidency! What strange inconsistency, to be sure! To lecture brother preachers on their inconsistency in holding a political caucus, and the worthy lecturers at the same time

to exhibit the very same kind of inconsistency in holding a political caucus themselves, the difference in the two caucuses being that one voted "yea" and the other "nay," upon the one identical subject. The Boston Methodist preachers' caucus voted "for Grant," and the Salt Lake Methodist preachers' caucus voted "not for Grant." The Salt Lake caucus did absolutely vote against Grant, but did not vote absolutely for anybody else. However, if they did not vote actually "yea" for anybody, they took good care to indicate very plainly their preference. Who would guess the name of that preferred individual? It was none other than the amiable and immaculate McKean, the once chief justice, but unbench in administrative disgust at his gross perversion of law and justice, his rank and passionate prejudices, and his rabid vindictiveness.

Not only did these Salt Lake Methodists, in political caucus assembled, declare that Grant should not have their vote, but they were kind enough also to assert that he ought not to have the nomination or support of any religious body, and the powerful reasons given for this opposition to the present incumbent of the presidential chair were that President Grant had taken a weak and vacillating course in dealing with "Mormonism," had summarily removed the sainted McKean, and other federal officials affiliated with the Salt Lake ring, and appointed to office men more in harmony with the policy of the administration; and had otherwise indicated the dissatisfaction of the administration with certain other high-handed proceedings of certain ringite federal officials in Utah. In brief, these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, declared against Grant for re-election to the presidency of the United States because he would not recklessly override the constitution and become a fierce and relentless persecutor of the "Mormons" unto the death. He had not shown that he was ready to become a Claverhouse, a Gessler, an Alva, a Nero, or a Caligula. If Grant had manifested himself a ruler of some such stamp, these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, would have supported him tooth and toe; would have accepted him gladly, third term and all; would have applauded to the echo the action of their Boston brethren, in political caucus assembled; and would have announced to all the world that Grant was not only eminently worthy of re-election, but eminently worthy of the nomination and support of every religious body, the "Mormons" alone not to be included, because their fate would have been to be killed off, exterminated, and that speedily and summarily.

In the resolutions of these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, there is much said of the old stereotyped kind, slanderous and abounding with rabid prejudices, concerning the "Mormons." All this we shall pass by without further comment at this time.

Rather let us return to our subject proper. The application of such epithets as weak and vacillating to President Grant will strike most people as singularly inappropriate, as in the light of a new discovery, for if he has earned a character for anything, in the public estimation, it is for firmness and steadfastness, to an extraordinary degree, in the line of policy or course of action which he may have chosen. Mrs. Grant herself, and she ought to know, says he is a very "obstinate" man. The trouble with some federal officials in Utah appears to have been that they have not really understood what has been the policy of the President and the administration towards Utah, but have mistaken therefor their own thick prejudices and rabid action, and consequently have suddenly run ruinously against a snag, to their own utter discomfiture, astonishment, and dismay. Such was the fate of the ring belauded and Salt Lake Methodist preachers' political caucus belauded McKean, and he can't see it to this day, for his violent prejudices have made him mentally as blind as a bat in many things.

We may not agree with President Grant in everything that he does, but nevertheless we think he ought not to be needlessly and unjustly assailed. We may not consider that he is the best candidate that

could possibly be chosen for election for the next presidential term, but at the same time we may fearlessly assert that it would be easy to find a great deal worse candidate, and we may also fearlessly assert that the characterization which these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, have been pleased to put upon his Utah policy, is not in accordance with the facts in the case, and that consequently it really does President Grant an injustice, which the Salt Lake Methodist preachers should be the last people on earth to do, even though they be in political caucus assembled, and for the purpose of protesting against preachers' political caucuses. Political caucuses, even when composed of Methodist preachers, should at least aim at truth and justice, and the more bungling marksmen they are, the more careful aim they should consider themselves bound to take.

One thing in the action of these Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, will strike many people with astonishment, and that is the evident preference manifested for McKean over Grant. The President has done a good deal for his country, his party, and his friends, and we do not like to see so distinguished a man shabbily treated by his whilom friends, even though they be Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled. As the General-in-Chief of the Army of the Union, Grant put down the civil war and restored peace and comparative prosperity to the distracted and desolated country, and he has nearly served two full terms as Chief Magistrate besides, without any further war and with a very material reduction of the public debt contracted during and in consequence of that civil war.

Now what has McKean done to entitle him to the gratitude or respectful consideration of the nation, or any material part of it? Before he came here, he had no record worth particular note. All his notable record has been made in Utah, and what a record! A succession of little else than blunders, ending with summary removal and disgrace! Bitter and needless attacks upon the people of the Territory, resulting in their insuperable aversion to and emphatic alienation from him, and detestation of his name! If he meant well, then was he one of the most unfortunate men in the world in illustrating good intentions by bad actions. Yet such is the man so plainly and ostentatiously preferred before President Grant, by the Salt Lake Methodist Episcopal preachers, in political caucus assembled.

The repudiation and abuse of Grant was bad enough, but this marked preference of such a man as McKean to him "was the most unkindest cut of all." To take a man not fit to sit upon a territorial judgment seat, and prefer him before a double term chief magistrate of the Union, the mighty soldier who put to flight the armies of the aliens, or would-be aliens! This was too much, even for Methodist Episcopal preachers to indulge in, if they were in political caucus assembled.

Well might the bard exclaim—

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Here is President Grant, the great successful general of the Union, the Chief Magistrate of the Union for two terms and possibly for three, a Republican and by some looked upon as the only salvation of that party, a Methodist in membership or attendance, his excellent wife an exemplary member of the Methodist church, and himself heretofore supposed to be fully supported by the Methodist fraternity generally, and in whose favor they have said so much, and now the Salt Lake Methodist preachers, in political caucus assembled, incontinently turn their backs upon him and denounce him in no mincing terms! Really, this is too bad! It is shameful!! It is scandalous! It is outrageous! We protest against all such false friendship, such black-hearted ingratitude; we repudiate it and desire it to be distinctly understood that we will not stand or sit committed to the sanction of or sympathy with any such unworthy proceedings.

Lastly, since the Salt Lake Methodist Episcopal preachers, in

political caucus assembled, have repudiated and denounced Grant and the third term, the public at large for granted that the third term theory is irrecoverably exploded and that Grant as a candidate for re-election has not the ghost of a chance.

Dancing Parties.

The Winter is the proper time of the year for indoor recreation and amusements to be engaged in by those who wish to do so, and the most prominent among the means used to pass some of the long evenings of the season pleasantly is the social dancing party. We have a few suggestions to offer upon the subject of parties of this kind, directed especially to the Latter-day Saints. To begin with, dancing, though perhaps intrinsically harmless in itself, does not form any part of the religion of the Latter-day Saints, but is permitted simply for their amusement and recreation.

We do not esteem attendance at dancing parties the most appropriate way for members of the Church to spend their evenings. We much prefer to hear of the organization of improvement societies, literary institutes and kindred institutions, with which are associated the delivery of lectures on religious, scientific and other subjects, which will have a direct tendency to improve the minds of the hearers. Certainly we have no objection to well regulated dancing parties for those who have little to do and need exercise, for bodily exercise is beneficial to health.

All parties of this as well, in fact, as of any other kind, should be conducted in accordance with the rules of the strictest propriety, though without unnecessary affectation or restraint, that the utmost decorum may prevail. Reform is or should be the order of the day among the Saints, and this progressive and reformatory spirit should extend to the conducting of our dancing parties as well as anything else, for the need of an improvement in that regard must be self-evident to all who claim to be Saints. In the first place there should be something like a definite rule regarding the more common-sense and decorous times for opening and closing such parties, which rule has been of late conspicuous for its absence. So far as this matter is concerned, circumstances sometimes alter cases, as, for instance, in the various settlements of the Territory there appears to be no valid existing reason against dancing parties commencing at such hour in the afternoon or evening as to allow plenty of time for those engaging in the pastime to have as much of this recreation as is good for them, and close never later, but as much earlier as desired, than ten o'clock at night. In this city, however, the circumstances are somewhat different, many people who may wish to attend parties of this nature being engaged in business of various kinds and unable to leave their avocations till late in the evening, yet under no consideration whatever should such parties be kept open after eleven o'clock, and they should close earlier when reasonably practicable. The keeping of late hours is not conducive to the moral, physical, or intellectual health of individuals or communities, but decidedly deteriorating in those respects, and should therefore be discouraged by the Latter-day Saints. The keeping of late hours is also a direct breach of the revelation in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, in which the Lord commands his disciples to retire to rest early and to arise early in the morning.

A very important matter in connection with dancing parties is to adopt rules so as to exclude from them all objectionable characters, on moral grounds; this being especially necessary in view of the number of individuals who evince an insatiable desire to corrupt the morals of the young people of the community.

The next and not the least important thing to be considered in this connection is the kind of dancing that should be engaged in at those parties, there being some kinds that are becoming, while others are decidedly the opposite. Of the latter class are those generally denominated "round dances," to which there should be unqualified objection, if only on the ground that the position generally occupied

by parties engaged in them is at least indecorous, not to say vulgar. Mr. Dio Lewis, in writing against "round dances," states that all a sensible person needs to convince him of the indelicate, not to say indecent, character of such dances is to imagine a couple standing upon the floor, without whirling around, in the attitude or relative position of persons engaged in dancing of that description. It may be urged that there is only evil in a matter when evil is made of it, and that thousands of people engage in round dances who have not the shadow of an evil thought in their minds, but we are now talking to Latter-day Saints, whose duty it is, according to the nature of their religion, to "shun the very appearance of evil."

In a conversation in the President's office, Dec. 4th, 1875, with Bishops Layton and Smith, on the subject of dancing, President Young said that it was his mind that dances should commence from one to two in the afternoon, and dismiss from 9 to 10. That was the plan he had adopted in this city in the early days of the Territory, and which he wished to see adopted by the bishops in the settlements. He had led out in this way himself from the commencement of the settlement of the Territory, and set the example in his own practice, and his mind was still unchanged.

Dancing was no part of our religion, but when we attended to it for our amusement, we did it in the name of the Lord, just as we should attend to any other business.

With regard to round dances, he was opposed to them, from beginning to end, from top to bottom. Round dances were first commenced in and still continue brothel house dances.

GEORGE REYNOLDS.

(Clerk to Pres. Young.)

I endorse the above statement.

(Signed) BRIGHAM YOUNG.

New Music.—"Parted From Our Dear Ones," song and duet.

"Dear Heart, We're Growing Old," song and chorus; and an answer to the above—"Tis True Dear Heart We're Fading," decidedly one of the most beautiful, both words and music, of all the popular songs of the day, and sure of immense popularity.

All the above are published by Geo. W. Richardson & Co., Boston, have only just been received by Calder & Careless, and are for sale at their music store, Main St.

Brainard's Musical World.—The December number of this popular musical monthly closes its twelfth yearly volume. The *Musical World* is not only the oldest and largest musical monthly in the country, but it is by far the best, cheapest and most popular. Each number contains thirty-six pages of the choicest new music, both vocal and instrumental, and original, interesting and instructive musical reading matter, edited by Karl Merz, the well-known musical writer. The publishers have with business liberality reduced the price to only \$1.50 per annum, postpaid, and give each subscriber either a copy of Karl Merz' "Musical Hints for the Million," a book of 216 pages, invaluable to any one interested in music,—or two portraits of musical celebrities, which can be selected from a list of forty-eight. A valuable list of premiums is also offered for clubs.

For sale at Calder and Careless.

The British Mission.—The following is from the *Millennial Star*—

"Merthyr, Sept. 23, 1875. — The Saints throughout this Conference are in excellent feelings, more especially where they have taken to outdoor preaching, which, by the by, is quite general throughout this Conference. We have baptized twelve persons recently, and there is more than that number who have given in their names to be baptized at an early date.

"As the out-door season is drawing to a close in this part of the country, on account of the wet season setting in, I intend to order, at an early date, a few thousand tracts, and to start the local priesthood distributing them in their respective circles.—W. J. LEWIS."