

tion; and "if" simple, evenhanded justice were extended to the people of Utah in common with other citizens of this republic, there would be no "Mormon" problem to solve. "Polygamy" would be relegated to its proper sphere of discussion and cease to be a national question. Utah would soon be admitted into the Union on the same principles as govern the admission of other States, and the country would be strengthened and enriched by the addition of a loyal, thrifty, temperate and progressive commonwealth, which would become as much a glory and a pride to the Union as falsehood and unfair treatment has made of this Territory a trouble and a vexation.

FLATBUSH AND UTAH.

"The attention of the Rev. Mr. Talmage and other persons who desire to exterminate the Mormons because they are polygamists, who marry several simultaneous wives, instead of divorcing the old ones before marrying the new ones, as is the custom in more civilized communities, is called that peculiar institution the 'church sociable.' If they will read the testimony in the Higgle-Vaughan case they will learn that kissing is the chief occupation of the frequenters of these sociables although occasionally a mockery of the marriage sacrament is performed, in order, perhaps, to add a new zeal to the kissing. Practices such as these cannot be made decent by pretending that they are religious practices, sanctioned by the 'church sociables,' any more than polygamy in Utah can be excused on the ground that it is a religious practice and is sanctioned by a so-called church.

It is evident that the Flatbush 'church sociable' is a terribly demoralizing affair, and the promiscuous and constant kissing in which its members indulge is simply sickening. We must wipe out this blot upon our civilization at all hazards. This is pre-eminently a case in which 'troops' are required. Let us send Phil Sheridan to Flatbush at the head of an army, with instructions to put every member of the 'church sociable' to the sword. Mr. Talmage is doubtless ready to march with the troops, and to urge them on in their bloody work. Flatbush is much nearer than Utah, and for that reason will be a better place in which to begin the work of extermination in the cause of purity."

The foregoing is from the New York Times. Flatbush is a town in King's County, New York, containing a population that is considered quite select, and is very religious in the popular sense of that term. It has many fashionable churches and is a hightoned sort of a community. A case of supposed mock marriage, which turned out to have all the essentials to a real matrimonial ceremony, has found its way into court, the young man who figured as the bridegroom being charged by the bride with desertion, the main object of the charge being to determine whether or not the alleged marriage is legal.

In the course of the trial most astonishing details were brought out, showing the loose condition of society in Flatbush, and the great liberties indulged in by young people connected with leading families and fashionable, religious societies. Indiscriminate kissing appears to have been very common, given and returned by both sexes, and mock weddings in which the most sacred forms and names in the marriage service, followed by the pairing off of the mock-married parties in hammocks or retreating to shady nooks in gardens and woods, were among the diversions of these "respectable" young ladies and gentlemen.

As the Times intimates, Flatbush is a better place for the disciples of surface morality to begin their work than Utah, because it is so much nearer their home. But this is the great objection in their eyes. Distance gives enhancement to the view. Supposed iniquity away off is so much more popular to tackle than vice and infamy close by. Utah is over twenty-five hundred miles from Brooklyn, while Flatbush is only four miles from Falmagne's Tabernacle, and the difference in guilt increases in ratio as the square of the distance. Imaginary evil becomes a terrible phantom when viewed afar off, while actual irregularities and palpable vices fade into unreality when they desert themselves under the nose of the popular declaimer. And investigation would disclose that all the demoralization

of so called "church sociables" is not confined to the fashionable circles of Flatbush, neither is all the polygamy practiced in Utah. When the things done in secret are revealed upon the housetops, what a shaking there will be in sanctimonious circles and among howling anti-"Mormon" hypocrites.

A "CHRISTIAN" ALTERNATIVE.

A GENTLEMAN well known in commercial circles who has just returned from the East, being asked as to the public feeling in reference to the "Mormons," replied that there was no general expression of hostility except among the "Christians," that is, the professors of religion. This is in the main correct. The preacher stir up their congregations, and they make considerable noise which is echoed by the press, and thus many Congressmen are imbued with the idea that something stringent and desperate is necessary "to save the nation"—which will do for an ostensible motive, and to please their noisy constituents which is the real object in view.

In support of the idea that the religious professors are active in the hue and cry against the "Mormons," we notice that the *Christian Union* has something to say frequently, to swell the tumult. Commenting, in its issue of December 18th, on the President's message, it considers the suggestion for the repeal of the act conferring on the people of Utah Territorial powers, is one of the most important among his recommendations, and lays down the proposition that "there is now but one alternative; either admit Utah as a State, let her people work out their problem for themselves and maintain their hierarchy and their polygamy till they get tired of it," or take away all self-government from the "Mormons." The Union asserts that "there are serious objections to either course, but there is no middle way." That paper frankly admits that the Commission advised by the President would be inconsistent with the general principles of our Government, and yet prefers this "with all the evils it might entail" to "admitting a polygamist hierarchy to partnership on equal terms with the other States in the Union."

Is this view of the case correct? We think not. Utah has managed to get along very well as a Territory. If she has been any trouble to the Federal Government it has been because religious people and political agitators have stirred up the trouble. Utah has made none herself. She has endeavored to mind her own business and attend to her own domestic affairs in her own way, and they have not necessarily created any difficulty with her neighbors. It is because other folks want to regulate concerns with which they have no right to meddle that there has been any difficulty. If this nation is so moral and pure that it cannot endure the admission into the Union of a State in which a few of the citizens have more wives than one, it does not follow that all the people therein must be deprived of self-government and placed at the mercy of a few individuals irresponsible to the governed. "All the evils that would entail," count nothing with the *Christian Union* in its pious anxiety to overcome a religious society with which it is not in accord. A territorial government, much as it limits the rights and common privileges of citizens and maintains elements antagonistic to republicanism, has some features that help to make political existence endurable, and keeps up some show of respect to the principles which enter into the life of our system of government. And this can be as well maintained in Utah as in any other Territory of the United States.

If the *Christian Union* will take he pains to inquire, it will find out that Utah has been from the beginning until the present a peaceable, well-ordered, law-abiding Territory. That she has exhibited in an eminent degree all the qualities that entitle any people to the right of self-government. That the statements of her enemies on which such despotic measures as the Union supports are predicated, are founded in falsehood and spring from interested and unworthy motives, and that there is no reason whatever, if Utah is not to be clothed with the garments of Statehood, why she should not be permitted to

enjoy the limited liberty now accorded her.

These facts should be borne in mind: All the laws passed by our Legislature require the signature of an Executive appointed by the General Government, and over whose veto the Assembly has no power by a two-thirds or even a unanimous vote. After such laws are signed by the Governor they are subject to the approval of Congress, which body can annul them at will. The whole machinery of the Courts is in the hands of officers appointed by the National authorities. Polygamists, including all who at any time have been connected with the practice of plural marriage, male and female, are excluded from voting and office-holding. Polygamy does not enter into the political system of the Territory. All the local officers who are elected by popular vote and all the voters are monogamists in practice. Take out the polygamist feature of the "Mormon" faith from a consideration of this question, and it is generally admitted that the "Mormon" people are law abiding and without superiors in all that goes to constitute a well ordered community.

Why, then, this alternative, laid down by a paper supposed to represent advanced Christian thought? If Utah cannot be a State—though no tangible reason has ever been advanced against her Statehood—why does it follow that she must be reduced to absolute serfdom and given up to the domination of a few designing men? And, to present a more important query, in what way is such an anti-republican, anti-Christian method of treatment—to "solve the Mormon problem," or have any effect whatever upon the system which seems to trouble religious professors so much? This has never yet been explained, and we do not believe it susceptible of an explanation. The Statehood of Utah would "solve the problem" by taking the question out of national politics; its political abnegation would do nothing of the kind. As sure as truth lives and falsehood will perish, that course will only lead to further difficulties and more perplexing complications.

AN ANTI SECRET SOCIETY LEAGUE.

We have several times treated upon the terrible state of society as exhibited by the multiplication and power of secret societies. We have pointed out the revelations which predicted their establishment in this age, and their fearful consequences providing they were not abolished.

We are pleased to note the fact that thoughtful people in other places are being awakened to the threatened evils sure to be the outgrowth of those sources of dark conspiracy. A "Christian Convention" has met in Philadelphia and formed an Anti-Secret Society League. The organization is based upon the proposition that the various secret combinations so startlingly numerous in these times are subversive of free institutions and opposed to the Christian religion.

The groundwork of the association is correct, but how it will effect a reformation or operate as a factor to turn the tide of secret conspiracy is a question rather difficult of solution. How can it reach the evil? The institutions against which it is pitted are operated out of public view, and can therefore only be combated under cover of darkness. Any other mode of opposition would be like a man in the open daylight fighting an enemy who was securely secreted. His shots would be delivered at random, and while he thus aimlessly expended his ammunition his ambushed antagonist could pick him off with ease and safety.

The only hope of effecting any reformatory work by counter-action would be by the assumption by the attacking party of the secretive policy which constitutes the chief advantage of the enemy. But this could not be done, as the Anti-Secret Society League would have itself, to carry out effective tactics, to become an association under the same heading as those whose abatement it desires. It would be in the position of an institution of a character in direct opposition to its professed aims.

The most appalling feature of the secret society phenomenon is the advocacy and prevalence of the doctrine of assassination. This social heresy is moving over the world

and accumulating in force as well as proportions as it rolls. It betokens the approach of a reign of terror and chaotic anarchy. It threatens the peace of the whole earth and forebodes the darkest page of its history.

Gradually men are becoming the arbiters of human life. Every hour the gleam of the dagger is seen and the ring of the pistol shot and detonation of the dynamite explosion heard—indications of the general decay of law, order and government and the steady growth of individual vengeance. Such fearful conditions grow and fatten on what they feed upon. If a society whose purpose is organized murder and destruction, can commission and dispatch emissaries to reduce a building to ruins or assassinate an obnoxious individual, other associations can be formed by the classes who are the objects of attack as a matter of protection, and thus would the safeguards of life, liberty and property be thrown down and trampled under foot.

THE HOLIDAY "CONTRIBUTOR."

THE holiday number of the *Contributor* is before us. To simply call it good would fall short of our estimate. It is brilliant, and throws the majority of its predecessors into comparative shadow. We do not say this because they have not also been excellent, as they were, but to note the evidence of the progressive character of this home magazine.

Among the more novel features of the number may be named the exceedingly interesting prize Christmas story, "Angela," by Augusta J. Crocheron. It took the prize offered by the editor and publisher for the best tale. There is another very neatly and ingeniously written tale by Susan Y. Gates, entitled "Two Christmas Eves." Among the many attractive articles is one from the pen of Apostle Moses Thatcher, being a graphic description of the "Falls of the Yellowstone."

But the palm, so far as the contributions to this number are concerned, is carried away by Mr. O. F. Whitney. His poem, "A Christmas Idyl," eclipses, in our opinion, every other production of his prolific pen. The composition is excellent, and the poem teems with sublime thoughts and imagery, grandly portrayed. This emanation possesses so much poetic merit that it alone is a sufficient base upon which to found Mr. Whitney's reputation as a poet of marked ability.

Other papers than those named, which appear in the *Contributor* for the holidays, are more or less notable for excellence, but we have simply made mention of those specially conspicuous for novelty as well as the ability displayed by their authors.

EASTERN ARIZONA STAKE CONFERENCE.

The Quarterly Conference of the Eastern Arizona Stake of Zion, was held at St. Johns, on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 8 and 9, 1883.

Saturday, 10 a.m.

There were present on the stand, Presidents Jesse N. Smith and L. H. Hatch, and most of the Bishops and Presiding Elders of the Stake.

The speakers were Presidents Jesse N. Smith and L. H. Hatch, who spoke on several subjects of interest to the Saints, the main points being upon the effects of fault-finding, the word of wisdom, our duty to perfect ourselves, and the folly of retaining the fashions of the world.

2 p.m.

Bishop D. K. Udall, Elders J. Bloomfield and E. Wakefield, Bishops P. Isaacson, P. J. Christofferson, A. N. Holden and Elder Jacob Hamblin, made reports of the St. Johns, Navajo, Erastus, Meadow, Omer, Amity and Pleasanton Wards. The reports showed a little but a general increase in the faith and prosperity of the Saints. Pres. Jesse N. Smith spoke, showing the evils of Saints coming into the country and going to different places to settle without consulting the local authorities.

Sunday, 10 a.m.

Bishops B. Noble, E. A. Noble, Geo. C. Williams and J. H. Standfield made reports of the Nutrioso,

Alpine, Grant and Taylor wards, which showed an increase of faith and good works among the Saints. The word of wisdom was being more fully observed in all the wards.

Presidents Jesse N. Smith and L. H. Hatch made reports of Snowflake, Woodruff and Forest Dal wards, which showed them to be in good condition, and the Saints to the increase in faith and works.

The statistical reports of the Stake were read, and the general and local authorities were presented and sustained by vote of the conference.

2 p.m.

Presidents Jesse N. Smith and L. H. Hatch, occupied the time, speaking upon several subjects of interest to the Saints, the principal one being the fulfillment of prophecy, preaching the Gospel to all nations, persecution of the Saints and educating our children.

There was a Priesthood meeting on the evening of the 8th, at which much valuable instruction was given in relation to our children, their training, education, etc. The Saints seemed to be greatly blessed by the instructions, together with those recently given by Apostles Young and H. J. Grant.

Conference adjourned to meet at Taylor on the second Saturday, March, 1884.

JOSEPH FISH, Clerk.

The large framed photograph himself, bearing his autograph, presented by the Emperor of Germany last week to Miss Minnie Haw Wartegg, as a token of his special grace, is the first such distinction ever conferred upon an artist.

AYER'S PILLS

A large proportion of the diseases which cause human suffering result from derangement of the stomach, bowels, and liver. AYER'S CATHARTIC PILLS act directly upon these organs, and are especially designed to cure the diseases caused by their derangement, including Constipation, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Headache, Dysentery, and a host of other ailments, for all which they are a safe, sure, prompt, and pleasant remedy. The extensive use of the PILLS by eminent physicians in regular practice, shows unmistakably the estimation in which they are held by the medical profession.

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W. L. PAGE, of W. L. Page & Bro., Franklin St., Richmond, Va., June 3, 1883.

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J. T. MAYES, Mexico, Texas, June 17, 1882.

The REV. FRANCIS B. HARLOWE, writing from Atlanta, Ga., says: "For some years past I have been subject to constipation from which, in spite of the use of a variety of various kinds, I suffered much inconvenience, until some months ago I began taking AYER'S PILLS. They entirely corrected the constipation, and have vastly improved my general health."

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