

DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - AUGUST 25, 1880.

RETURNING BOARD TRICKS.

THE New York Herald of August 12th says:

"Mormons have been learning returning board tricks. See dispatch from Salt Lake."

This is the dispatch referred to above:

"Salt Lake, Utah,
August 11th, 1880.

The Mormon returning board of Beaver County threw out the vote of the Gentile precincts of Frisco, Milford, Adamsville and Minersville, defeating the State sheriff elect on the Liberal ticket. The Gentile voters of Frisco have resolved to refuse to pay taxes in consequence of this disfranchisement."

There were no tricks whatever played by the "Mormons" at the Beaver election. The "tricks" were attempted by the "Liberals." We have published the particulars, and those who have investigated the matter are convinced that there was no wrong done by the canvassers, but even the "Liberals" admit that their associates in Beaver County wrought their own failure by illegalities. However, there are some who think that the canvassers need not have rejected the entire returns of the precincts thrown out, but might have simply discarded the unregistered votes. To show that this view is incorrect, we will briefly recur to the facts and the law.

At the precincts of Adamsville, Minersville, Milford and Grampion, ballots were received from persons whose names were not on the Registry List. They were sworn in by the judges of election. But the law requires every voter to be registered, and makes no provision for swearing in at the polls. The act was clearly illegal and the votes void. The canvassers, finding this irregularity and discrepancy in the returns, affecting the right of the candidates for the office of Sheriff, proceeded to investigate the returns, as required by law. But can any objector to their throwing out the whole vote of the precincts in which this "trick" was resorted to, explain by what process the canvassers could determine which votes to reject and which to retain? There is no mark permitted on the ballot, and therefore no method exists for its identification. The unregistered voter may have cast his ballot for either candidate. His ticket may have been the People's or the "Liberal's," who can decide? Clearly, then, as the canvassers are not permitted by law to accept returns unless "no irregularity or discrepancy occur therein," to reject those returns where "tricks" had been played was their only alternative.

We would be just as much opposed to such "tricks" as the "Liberals" attempted in Beaver County to override the majority, if they had been played by the "Mormons" there or in any other place. We wish it to be understood that we expect to prevail by righteousness, not fraud; to overcome the world by truth and godliness, not by patterning after the ways of the wicked nor following the devices of the devil. Our only hope is in the favor of God and the triumph of right, and therefore we must not condescend to the ways that are dark and the tricks that are vain, but keep on a higher plane than the level of plotting politicians, and in all our contests for our rights, social, religious or political, we must take that course that will be approved by our own consciences, and will gain the co-operation of the Higher Powers.

We assure the Herald that, in the Beaver county election, the "Mormons" took no leaf out of the dirty book of Radical returning boards in the Sunny South.

"LIBERAL" RACKET.

Those who have paid any attention to the periodical effusions of the Utah E. O. H.'s, particularly in their attempts at galvanizing the anti-Mormon elements into something like unity, must have noticed the everlasting repetition of their claim

to notice as "American citizens" and as "freemen." They assert themselves in this character with an assumption of originality and boldness which is truly ludicrous. Nobody has ever disputed the fact of their citizenship, and no one except those of their own clan has ever attempted to interfere with their freedom. "Something must be done to show that we are American citizens," "I stand here as an American citizen," "As an American citizen my first allegiance is to the American flag." Such sayings as these, with allusions to the American eagle, and vituperative remarks about "Priesthood," "polygamy" and the dominant Church, have formed the staple of the speeches at so-called "Liberal" gatherings ever since there has been an alleged organization exhibiting a little spasmodic appearance of vitality under that singularly inappropriate title.

Some of these persons, anxious to figure as agitators, seem to be very much troubled because most of the "Mormons" are also "American citizens," and one of the chief objects which these very "Liberal" individuals have in view is to procure "Mormon" disfranchisement. For what purpose? Why, if the "Mormons" were deprived of the voting power the local offices would be open to these very "Liberal" office-wanters, and the local treasury would be ready for rifling. Some of them expect to be shortly out of a job. The time is nearly up, even if the Republicans continue at the head of national affairs, and if the Democrats should get in, their prospects would indeed be dismal. What would be better, as a prospect to cheer their drooping spirits, than the possible control of local offices and finances? Then again if the "Mormons" were deprived of any voice in public affairs, there would be no reasons for blocking the march of Utah into the Union as a State, and who knows what chances might arise for congressional honors and emoluments.

These remarks apply to a few of the foremost in the "Liberal" mutual admiration and self-assertion club—it would be farcical to class it as a party. Others have no such anticipations, but merely join in with the others because they are whipped into line. Their vociferous claims to the title of freemen, are evoked by the sense of their slavish condition. While despising the whole concern, there are able men who lend it the support of their voice and presence because they are too cowardly to treat it with the contempt they feel. They fear the lash of a vulgar and abusive paper, the dreaded title of "Jack Mormon," the misrepresentation of their acts and sentiments which would follow their independence. While accusing the mass of the "Mormon" people with submission to the will of crafty leaders, they are themselves abject followers of men whom they despise but dare not repudiate. No wonder they try to cover their cowardice by the shout that they are "freemen."

Democrats have to join in with Republicans in an incompatible association, a vain attempt to harmonize discordant elements, a foolish scheme to combine positive incongruities, and for what? To make a great noise for nobody's possible benefit but the few hungry expectants of something to be evolved out of the hurly-burly for their advantage. And neither Democrats nor Republicans have courage to cast off the yoke. Oh! they are valiant "freemen!"

Somebody is anxious to gain a free ride to Washington to spend the coming winter, and the subscription list will be passed round to raise funds to feed him well at the Capital. And some of these "freemen" will let their names go down for so many dollars, while they will curse the "Liberal delegate" under their breath for a "bummer." Noble "freemen!"

But the vapors of these self-lauding and self-appointed standard bearers of the flag, against an enemy that have at least as much veneration for the principles which it symbolizes as they can possibly feel, have some significance to the People's Party of Utah. Without splitting the air with the shout "We are American citizens," the members of that party should thoroughly sense their position and the necessity for action in local politics.

The avowed object of the "Liberals" is to divide the People's Party. Their minority is so utterly hopeless that they have no possible chance of accomplishing anything except by

making division among the "Mormons." They will ridicule our calls for union, and denounce as pressure from the priesthood our endeavors to persuade all members of the People's Party to register and vote, and at the same time will prod and push and prevail upon Democrats and Republicans, apostates and half-hearted "Mormons," Tom, Dick Harry and the devil to fuse together, and by making lists of all the names they can get of persons likely to shrink under the lash, drive them to register and vote whether they feel any interest in the matter or not. This is down in their programme.

All that the People have to do is, quietly stand on their rights, avail themselves of the privileges and powers which they lawfully possess and are placed within their reach, and all the noise, abuse, buncombe, rallying, fusing, charging and political froth of these liberal "Liberals" will amount to nothing. Every alien who is entitled to citizenship by residence should obtain his naturalization papers; every citizen otherwise entitled to vote should register; every man and woman holding the suffrage should vote at all elections. These are duties as binding as revealed religious observances upon the Latter-day Saints, and if the "Mormon"-eaters tend to stir our people up to political activity, the good which Providence brings out of evil will accrue in this as in other instances to the People whom the efforts were intended to injure.

BEWARE OF IMPOSTORS.

LAST evening we briefly alluded to a "retired circus clown," who is now making the tour of this Territory and getting his living, with a margin for future rainy days, by lecturing and making himself agreeable to the people among whom he sejourns. There are many worse ways than his of living without labor, and our object in speaking of this again, is not to arouse any hostility to the individual, but to caution the people on general principles against receiving strangers on their verbal claims to the sanction and recommendation of the authorities.

This man, who goes by the name of Williamson, has stated in public, so we are reliably informed, that he is traveling under the recommendation and advice of Apostle C. C. Rich, and also as correspondent for the Ogden Junction and Logan Leader. A telegram from Elder Rich in answer to inquiries by Brother George Goddard contains the following:

"I did not authorize Mr. Williamson to lecture anywhere; he did lecture in this place without being authorized by me or anyone, so far as I know."

A letter from the "Junction Printing Association" states:

"We have no correspondent by the name of Williamson, and we wish it distinctly understood that Williamson, the circus clown, to whom you refer, has no connection whatever with the Ogden Junction, nor have we any knowledge that he is a correspondent of the Leader."

Bro. B. F. Cummings, Jr., editor of the Logan Leader, assures us that Williamson has not and never has had any connection whatever with that paper.

These communications settle the matter so far as the statements about his authority to lecture to Sunday Schools and his connection with Northern Utah papers are concerned. Of course any person has the right to travel and lecture or give entertainments, and if the people choose to patronize him and give him their money, no one can lawfully prevent him from receiving it. But no individual is justified in pretending to authority which he does not possess, and little confidence can be reposed in a man who tells falsehoods for the purpose of gaining influence with a credulous public.

We are very much surprised that this person has been countenanced so much in the settlements which he has visited. He has gathered many dollars and fared sumptuously in several counties we could mention, and all by consummate impudence and the free use of honored names. When any one is authorized or commissioned by those who have the right to counsel the Saints, he will always bear written authority or recommendation.

How is it that men of this stamp can impose upon the Latter-day

Saints and no one demand his credentials? If any unknown person pretends to belong to the Church and desires the use of meeting houses or any other favor, his "recommend" should be demanded. If he claims to be traveling by authority, let him be required to produce proof of that authority. This is a very simple rule, and if stringently carried out would save the people from much imposition. No one should be deprived of the rights of free travel and free speech, but impostors, however glib-tongued, flattering and agreeable, or however apparently favorable to the views of their hearers, should be given the cold shoulder and made to understand that they are reckoned at their true value. The people south of Salt Lake had better keep their eyes open.

WOMAN'S STATUS IN UTAH.

WE have received a letter from one of our Elders laboring in the State of Indiana asking the following questions on behalf of a lady connected with the Woman Suffrage Association, desiring an answer through the DESERET NEWS:

Does the Church hold any restriction over women, either married or single, in regard to property?

Does the "elective franchise" as enjoyed by the ladies of Utah give them the same privileges of holding property that it does the men?

Does the law, in case of the decease of the husband, give the wife the right to act as guardian for her children?

If you will be kind enough to answer these questions, also explain the privileges granted the ladies of Utah through the ballot box, at your earliest convenience, you will greatly oblige Mrs. B., who is a member of the suffrage platform. Also your brother in the gospel of peace.

L. G. HARDY.

We answer the first question emphatically in the negative.

To the second we reply, the elective franchise does not affect the rights of property. The act of our Legislative Assembly conferring upon woman the right to vote does not change their status in relation to holding property. It simply gives them the ballot equally with men, or as some view it, a little in advance of the men, as male citizens are required to be taxpayers in order to vote, while female citizens may vote without being taxpayers.

The property rights of women are secured in this Territory by other enactments. The statute of Feb. 16, 1872 provides:

"That all property owned by either spouse before marriage, and that afterwards acquired by gift, bequest, devise or descent, with the rents, issues and profits, thereof, is the separate property of that spouse by whom the same is so owned or acquired and separate property owned or acquired as specified above, may be held, managed, controlled, transferred and in any manner disposed of by the spouse so owning or acquiring it, without any limitation or restriction by reason of marriage."

Either spouse may sue or be sued, plead and be impleaded, or defend and be defended at law."

The Act of February 18, 1876, relating to the estates of decedents, provides:

Sec. 1. That any person of the age of eighteen years and of sound mind may dispose of his or her property, personal and real, to which he or she may be in any manner entitled, whether in possession or seized or not," etc.

Sec. 5. Any married woman may dispose of all her estate by will, and may alter and revoke the will," etc.

Thus it will be seen that while the woman suffrage act does not touch the subject of the property rights of women, those rights are amply secured by other statutes in this Territory.

The law in regard to the property rights of married persons contains one more section than those we have quoted; it is as follows:

"No right of dower shall exist or be allowed in this Territory."

This provision has caused a good deal of comment, particularly from those who have desired to misrepresent the condition of women in Utah. Those who understand the family relations existing here will see in this section of the statute a desire for justice to all the members of a family, rather than injustice to any one. In the case of a decedent

leaving more than one wife, each spouse having children to support, the right of dower would work great injustice to many. The law in relation to the division of the property of intestates makes fair provision for the surviving husband or wife, and for their issue, and as the courts do not acknowledge the legal status of plural wives and their offspring, it is specially provided that

"Every illegitimate child is in all cases an heir to its mother. It is also heir to its father when acknowledged by him."

Now as to the third question. By an Act of the Legislature, at its last session, in relation to Guardian and Ward, the Probate Courts of the Territory have power to appoint guardians of minor children unless already appointed by will or deed; and to govern the court appointing, the following rule is laid down in the law:

"Of persons equally entitled to the custody in other respects, preference shall be given as follows:

1. To a parent. 2. To one who was indicated by the wishes of a deceased parent. 3. To one who already stands in the position of a trustee of a fund to be applied to the child's support. 4. To a relative.

A guardian may be appointed under this law by the father, with the written consent of the mother, or by either parent, if the other be dead or incapable of consent; to take effect on the death of the parent appointing. In case of the Court appointing, it is further provided that:

"The father of the minor, if living, and in case of his decease, the mother, while she remains unmarried, being themselves respectively competent to transact their own business, and not otherwise unsuitable, shall be entitled to the guardianship of the minor."

Another provision, to meet cases of dispute between parents in case of divorce or otherwise, is that:

"If the child be of tender age, it should be given to the mother; if it be of an age to require education and preparation for labor or business, then to the father."

This we hope will be sufficient for the purpose of necessary information on this subject.

"The privileges enjoyed by the ladies of Utah through the ballot box" are, as we have stated, equal at least to those of the "lords of creation." They can vote at any election, whether it be in relation to schools or to precinct, county or territorial officers. This gives them a voice in all political matters. They attend the caucuses or primaries, are generally recognized on committees, and act as delegates in the conventions. Some of their number form portions of the county and territorial central committees, and their rights as citizens and integral parts of the body politic are fully recognized.

At the last session of the Legislature, an Act was passed by both Houses throwing down the barrier in the way to their holding office, expunging the word "male" from the statute defining the qualifications for official position. But the Governor ignored the bill, and therefore it did not become a law. This Territory is so much under the thralldom of the "one man power," that the person sent here without any consultation of the wishes of the people, to act as the Chief Executive, is enabled, by simply doing nothing, to render null and void the legislative labors of thirty-nine men, elected by the male and female citizens of the Territory to pass laws for their government.

This is the situation in Utah on the woman's rights question. The lady who seeks information on this subject, and those with whom she is associated, may be assured that so far as the "Mormons" have had the power, the political disabilities of women have been removed. That in Utah woman is free in the full sense of the word, except to hold office, and what she is denied in that particular is withheld not by the "Mormons," but by the arbitrary authority imposed upon them in accordance with United States law, but in utter and complete violation of the principles of American liberty and republican institutions.

There is no part of the world where woman's true rights are respected more than among the people called "Mormons," and all the fuss that has been made about the "down-trodden women of Utah," the "bondage of polygamy" and the