

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

MORMONS AS AGRICULTURISTS.

On the 11th instant the fortnightly meeting of the farmers in Boston, Mass., was held at the office of The Ploughman, and Utah furnished the theme. In giving a report of the meeting the Boston Transcript makes the announcement that the marvelous prosperity of the Mormon people is "due to their persistent tilling of the soil." The assemblage of farmers paid close attention to the addresses, as the subject under consideration was considerable of a novelty to them. The first speaker was Benjamin P. Ware, of Clinton, who spoke on "Mormonism and its relation to the development of agriculture in Utah." The Transcript says:

He first gave an interesting history of Utah and its people, from the time—1847—when Brigham Young planted the American flag where now sits the city of Salt Lake; the very same spot where there was afterward dedicated a magnificent Temple, costing \$3,500,000. There Mr. Young and his followers built their log cabins, and after ten years of tremendously hard work, during which period many farmers were on the verge of despair, they raised a most promising crop, which gave them renewed hope that they had really found "the promised land." Agriculture was the foundation on which they built their Tabernacle and Temple; through agriculture they established the immigration fund which enabled the earliest inhabitants of the State to send for numerous friends. Everybody gave one-tenth of his earnings to the Church, and as all strive to lead in donations, they are very attentive to the cultivation of the soil. Today their city is equipped with all modern improvements, such as electric lights and electric cars, and their house of worship is lighted with electricity and heated by a system of hot water.

When Mr. Ware had concluded, ex-Governor Emery, of Utah, who made many staunch friends during his sojourn here, was called upon, and, after confirming the statements of the former speaker, he said that some of the most-respected families in Massachusetts, and even right in Boston, have representatives among the Mormons; a thing not talked of very frequently, but nevertheless a fact. Without proper cultivation, he said, the State of Utah would not be more productive than any other place, but as a result of a vast amount of work, it is now one of the most prosperous in the whole land.

Thus "the fruits" of Utah's inhabitants are being made to appear in all their delightfulness to the vision of the people elsewhere, many of whom have not been proud in the past of acknowledging acquaintance with or relation to the founders of this State, but who are changing their ideas with a better knowledge of those who dwell here. The recognition of the fact that much good cometh from Utah is becoming a common theme; but there is still an important lesson—the chief in connection with this subject—that people yet have to learn. It is that the marvellous prosperity of the Mor-

mons is not primarily due to their persistent tilling of the soil, or to irrigation, or anything of that kind, but to the religion they have espoused, which teaches them the use of these agencies, and offers to all a plan to attain the highest condition of prosperity in both temporal and spiritual affairs within the possibilities of man's development. The virtue and potency of Mormonism for the welfare of its adherents is in the Divine authorship of the system—that of pure Christianity.

EUROPE AND THE TURK.

There is likely to be more than mere rumor in the statement that an offensive and defensive alliance has been arranged between Russia and Turkey, by which the former will have access for her navy to the Mediterranean and will be able to enforce reforms in Armenia and other Turkish territory by means of the czar's troops. Russia could not be averse to such arrangement, since it would be another step in the national policy, followed with religious persistence, of bringing Constantinople within Russian control; and Turkey is perfectly willing to have the understanding in effect, whether or not there is a formal treaty, since it would be a means of paying off the old score against England for setting Turkey into the trouble of 1878. The agreement, however, hardly can be given the extreme construction placed on it by the Pall Mall Gazette, that of making Turkey a vassal of Russia; for the Turk is too shrewd a politician to throw away his opportunities in that fashion—he is figuring on a longer lease of national life.

All the recent events in Europe have combined to place Great Britain in a peculiarly isolated position. While combinations have been going on with other nations, Britain has been content to pull the wires, hoping thereby to maintain the balance of power in her own behalf; but European diplomats have not relished that situation and have succeeded in establishing a common understanding of antagonism to England in order to deliver themselves from her influence. As matters now stand, the hand of every great European power is against England in some form or other. In arriving at that point all treaty obligations have been disregarded, until every nation now has a *casus belli*, and each can go to war upon the ground of violated contracts if it so desires—but none seem in a hurry.

The rivalry against England is manifest in the progress of commercial matters. Of late years her manufactures have not increased to any great extent, and her markets for home goods have been restricted. Her position is approaching that of a carrier and dealer in the wares of others rather than in her own. As suggestive of the trend of affairs, in this regard it may be noted that German manufacturers have been pounding away at England on every side. The Teuton has driven the Briton from the Danube, and, in aid of the Austrian and

Italian, from the markets of Italy and Austria; and he is holding his own in the commerce of Africa. Other European nations are following German leadership in this direction.

Connected with the Eastern question, there is no nation outside of Britain that can combine with the Turk except Russia. When the latter enters into such compact, others may protest, but will not attempt to prevent it by force; for all have learned in the history of several centuries that the power which assails the Muscovite in his own land always wishes it had not done so; they may beat him, but he is always the best off when the fight is over. He feels that his destiny is to extend his southern territorial line to the Mediterranean by way of the Dardanelles, and he is doing it. This program is sure to bring about a vast change in European affairs, and under present conditions is a menace to Britain, who is virtually without an ally in any protest against such encroachments.

But while there is an apparent development from Russia into the Ottoman empire, there is a not less important evolution from the standpoint of British destiny. The Colossus of the North may gain his point with Turkey, and make the Moslem a subject of the Romanoff dynasty; but the English will not be left out in the cold in any change that may take place in the Orient. Britain has vital interests there, and there is not the slightest suggestion in all her past or her present that intimates their relinquishment, although their maintenance in a new form is a possibility or even probability.

Whatever view we may take of a possible but extremely improbable conflict between England and the United States, wherein the former would be overmatched by a country superior in resources and situation, and in the physical strength of practically the same race of people, the relation between Britain and other European powers on war matters is unmistakable. Great Britain has the brains, the money, the resources, the courage and energy which hold her in the lead. No two nations combined can overcome her on her own soil, and against all others she will maintain her autonomy so long as her people are united; and as far as aggressive warfare is concerned, she is a very uncomfortable antagonist against any other European nation in its own borders. With Russia alone would she fail in making bad worse, and even there she would leave a lasting impression in a conflict at arms; this condition will remain so long as Russia is practically a land-locked nation.

Let it be supposed that that which now appears a possibility will come to pass, and Turkey be permanently arrayed against Britain. This would mean a great conflict in which British mastery of the seas on the coasts of the eastern hemisphere at least would play an important part. Her navy can overwhelm the combined navies of Europe on the Mediterranean, and in any readjustment of territorial lines there she will take her share. Her way to India by that route must be kept open. In the event of trouble that threatened interference therewith, she would blaze the way with such unmistakable signs as would be sufficient warning to