

THE DESERET NEWS.

ELIAS SMITH, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Wednesday....December 21, 1859.

Inefficiency of Federal Authorities.

The corresponding secretaries of some of the Mourning Associations in Great Salt Lake City and at Camp Floyd have been very assiduous, for several months past, in the discharge of the duties assigned to, or assumed by them in writing lamentations about the state of affairs in Utah, and especially about the imbecility of the federal judiciary and the inefficiency of the army stationed in the Territory, alleging that the former could not enforce the laws, nor the latter protect the lives and property of American citizens on American soil.

Some of the direful effusions of these scribblers, which have found their way into certain journals devoted to the dissemination of whatever may be considered prejudicial to the people of Utah, contain so much of what is not altogether untrue, that it is marvelous that they were ever published to the world, as they contain more truth than fiction, and strongly remind us of an assertion made by a Methodist divine, who, in speaking of the teachings of his satanic majesty said, that he always told two truths to one lie, in order to make mankind believe that he was an angel of light.

A lamentation, purporting to have been written at Camp Floyd on the 23d of September last, and published in the *Bulletin* (San Francisco), contains some items of sorrow, not usually referred to by that class of correspondents, for after mourning over the crimes committed and the impotency of the federal judiciary and army to protect the innocent and punish the guilty in Utah Territory, alleging that the former could not get any persons but Mormons "to execute their written warrants," and that the latter was not permitted by the Government to exercise judicial functions, an awful state of things to be sure, and about which many a tear has been shed, the writer alludes in the most plaintive manner to the depredations of the savages and painted natives, in the region of country immediately north of this Territory, during the past summer, and wails over the inefficiency of the army to protect the lives and property of emigrants, who pass that way in going to California and Oregon, from the Atlantic side of the continent, a fact that has long been known to those bands of outlaws, and which has emboldened them to commit more murders in one year than were ever committed by white men in Utah up to the time that the army entered its borders.

In speaking of the depredations and murders of the natives in that section of country, the writer says:

"On the northern California and Oregon road, Indian depredations might be punished; but such as those committed in Washington Territory this year can scarcely ever be prevented, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts and watchfulness of the army however strong. With white men (painted when in action) to aid them, and to indicate the position of troops, and to mislead the latter, a small body of Indians can slip in between any two detachments and take advantage of the careless and straggling emigrant."

From the South Pass to the Sink of Humboldt, some eight hundred miles, many places favor an ambuscade—so many that an enormous army would be required to guard them and patrol the country. This year many emigrant trains carried no arms, and by their carelessness invited attacks from Indians and highway robbers. This body of Indians was a small band of outlaws from the Bannacks and Snakes, whose knowledge of the country enabled them—with the aid of white men—to appear suddenly at different points of the roads, to attack parties who were known to be unable to resist them. In most cases, when trains were robbed, wagons were searched and money, jewelry, etc., only taken. Unless emigrants band together in parties of twenty or more men, armed and always on their guard, no force on the road can secure them from attack, unless they could be united in bodies of such size that all could be escorted by troops."

What induced the writer, who from his style, must have been in some way connected either with the army or the judiciary to make so many admissions, about the inability of the army to protect emigrants, in the region of country to which he refers, against the attack of "a small band of outlaws," we cannot conjecture, unless it was to exculpate the force that was sent thither to punish the natives and prevent them from committing further depredations, from the blame that has and will be attached for the ineffective manner in which that duty was seemingly performed.

In Utah every dereliction of duty on the part of the federal judiciary, as a matter of

course, is always attributed to the influence or interference of the Mormons, who invariably find some way, as is alleged, to thwart them in their endeavors to discharge severally the duties of their office, and since the army has been inhibited from interfering in the administration of law, the Government has been severely blamed for its arbitrary interference to prevent them from doing that which they wished to perform; but the idea of complaining so bitterly about the impotency of the army outside of the Mormon settlements is something new.

The fact that white men would assume the habiliments of Indians, and that when acting in concert with them, or under a separate organization, they were more cruel and relentless in war and more resembled demons than human beings in all their actions when thus disguised, has long been known, and what is exceedingly strange, when they thus band together and murder, rob, and plunder, there has never been any sufficient power at hand to prevent them from doing whatever they desired, nor to punish them for their unlawful deeds. The authority of States has been too feeble, their military forces too defective and their judicial tribunals too impotent to bring them to justice, and the federal arm has been too short or too impotent to interfere in those matters and to protect the lives and property of citizens of the Republic from their murderous and outlandish depredations for many years.

We have seen thousands of "painted" natives in Missouri and Illinois, murdering and plundering wherever they went, and no efforts were made, not even an inefficient army was ordered out to put an end to their deeds of rapine, and there is no doubt but that there are hundreds of such characters prowling along the national thoroughfares leading across the continent, every year committing depredations whenever opportunity presents. Neither is there any doubt of the inefficiency of the U. S. army, as is alleged, under present regulations, to successfully protect the passing emigrants from their murderous assaults; but we did not expect that a person weeping over the inefficiency of the federal judges in Utah and their inability to perform their duties, would in the same lamentation mourn that the army could not conquer a few Indians and self made natives roaming over the plains. It is truly a lamentable state of affairs, and if we thought that it would do any good, we would mourn too, not only over that, but over many other things that exist or have transpired in this inland portion of the Union during the last two years.

It is certainly a matter of grief that a small number of hostile Indians are permitted to murder men engaged in transporting the mails of the United States between this city and California, drive off their stock and do whatever they please, and no notice whatever is taken of such outrages, and that too when they are committed within a comparatively short distance of the Head Quarters of the army in Utah, said to be the largest division of troops stationed at any one point in the United States. If that is the protection extended by American troops, it is certainly worse than none, and the money that is annually expended to keep up and sustain armies in this country, is so much paid for naught, and might as well be appropriated directly to speculators or thrown into the sea.

It is a matter of grief that so many murders have been committed within the last fifteen months in Great Salt Lake City and in the vicinity of Camp Floyd, and that for the want of energy and exertion on the part of those who claim exclusive jurisdiction of such matters, only one of the murderers has been arrested, tried and punished.

It is a matter of grief that when so many deeds of violence have been committed as alleged by the citizens of Utah, before the introduction of civilization, and the establishment of law and order among them (?) that no legal steps have been taken by those who were expected to "cleanse the land from blood," to inquire into those alleged offences, not even the "mountain meadow massacre," and the "painted natives" who have been accused of participating in that murderous transaction still enjoy the same liberty that other natives, disguised with lamp black or soot, enjoyed after committing similar acts in Missouri and in Illinois, and that the natives "painted with Vermillion" enjoy, that infest the plains intervening between the frontiers of the eastern States and the Pacific coast.

The increase of crime in this Territory since the termination of the "Utah war" is another cause of grief. Not only has the soil been deeply crimsoned with human blood, but felonies without number have been committed, and when efforts have been made, to punish any of those engaged in their perpetration according to the laws of Utah, the question of jurisdiction has been raised by those who will not or do not execute the laws themselves, and are unwilling that those whose duty it is according to the statutes in such case made and provided, to inquire into such matters, should exercise that right; which in effect under the system that has been pursued has had a direct tendency as is well known, to encourage the violation of the laws which have been provided for the good order of society and for the protection of the persons and property of the citizens, from the assaults and depredations of such as have no regard for the rights of their fellow men.

We could refer to many other items that cause thinking men to mourn, for which there seemingly is no remedy, but we will let them pass unnoticed for the present, hoping that matters in general will assume a more pleasing aspect ere long; that complaints about the inefficiency of the army and judiciary cannot be made in truth, and that murderers, thieves and robbers will be punished according to law and not be permitted to escape because there is no power in existence sufficiently strong to arrest them and bring them to justice.

Legislative Matters.

The wheels of Legislation do not seem to have got fairly in motion, though the several committees in both Houses have been very busy, as we are informed, in preparing bills for presentation at an early day and soon, we have no doubt, there will be an opportunity for those who wish to display their oratorical powers, and unbottle some of the "thunder" they may have prepared for specific purposes.

There are several new members in the Council and also in the House who will, of course, not be mutes and sit there day after day without making an effort to discharge the duties that may have been required of them by their constituents in a manner creditable to themselves and satisfactory to those whom they represent and, at the same time, ensure to themselves a continuance of popular favor.

The subjects of legislation at this session will unquestionably be somewhat diversified. The Governor, in his message, calls the attention of the Assembly to several matters among which is the penitentiary system as applied to this Territory, which, he very justly remarks, is unfitted for the purposes for which it was intended; and we trust the system will be abolished at once and some plan devised for the punishment of criminals that will be more effective and less expressive to the Territory.

The administration of the laws of Utah and the punishment of crime under present arrangements and influences amount to a nullity very nearly, and unless some change is made in those matters so that when crimes are committed, the accused can be arrested, tried and punished, if found guilty, with some dispatch and degree of certainty, the criminal code had better be repealed. If, when felonious acts are committed, they could be promptly punished at the expense of those who commit them, instead of having the law honored by incarcerating them in prison, at the expense of the Territory or of the county in which the acts are perpetrated, there would soon be less crime committed and property would be far more safe than at present. Those suggestions of his excellency are timely, and should meet with the approval of the Legislature and acted upon accordingly.

Every obstruction to the effectual administration of the laws should be removed, so far as the action of the Legislative Assembly can do so, under the peculiar circumstances that exist in this Territory, and the abolition of the penitentiary system, and the substitution of labor on the public highways as a punishment for crime will go far, if rightly applied, towards bringing about a more effective and salutary order of things than now exists.

The subject of education, also referred to in the Governor's message, will unquestionably be taken into consideration, and many other things of importance to the people of this isolated Territory. A lively session is anticipated. We shall endeavor to keep our readers advised of all matters that come up for action during the session, that may be considered of general interest to the people of the Territory, but we cannot publish the proceedings in detail.

House Committees.

The following are the names of the Standing committees for the House of Representatives, now in session, which were crowded out last week:

In the House of Representatives the Speaker announced the following Standing Committees:

Judiciary:—Hosea Stout, J. C. Wright, S. M. Blair, Isaac Bullock, John Brown.

Claims and Appropriations:—Hiram B. Clawson, E. D. Woolley, A. P. Rockwood.

Petitions and Memorials:—David Candland, Joseph A. Young, C. W. Wandell.

Revenue:—J. C. Wright, Bernard Snow, C. W. West.

Elections:—Joseph Holbrook, Thomas Grover, Wm. Crosby.

Counties:—Silas S. Smith, Thos. R. King, Isaac Bullock.

Road, Bridges, Ferries and Kanyons:—John D. Chase, Crandall Dunn, Evan M. Greepe.

Education:—J. A. Young, C. W. Wandell, A. K. Thurber.

Engrossing:—D. Candland, B. Snow, C. W. Wandell.

Militia:—A. P. Rockwood, C. W. West, S. S. Smith.

Agriculture, Trade, and Manufactures:—E. D. Woolley, A. P. Rockwood, J. Holbrook, C. W. West, Wm. Crosby.

Printing:—E. D. Woolley, John M. Moody.

Incorporations:—E. M. Greene, W. Crosby, John Brown, A. K. Thurber, T. Grover.

Library:—C. Dunn, S. S. Smith, J. D. Chase, C. W. Wandell.

Public Domain and School Lands:—C. W. West, A. K. Thurber, T. R. King.

Penitentiary:—A. P. Rockwood, E. D. Woolley, J. C. Wright.

STREET BRAWLING.—If some of those who are in the habit of yelling and whooping like savages, as they pass through the streets on their nocturnal excursions in sleighs, on horseback, or gratify their pedestrian propensities, were made to answer therefor, they might learn a lesson that would be beneficial to them in after life, even if it did not have a tendency to cure them at once of brawling in the streets when riding or on promenade.

No one should be deprived of the privilege of enjoying themselves in sleigh riding, nor be debarred from participating in any other innocent amusement that will afford them pleasure, but hallooing and yelling like Indians, or howling like beasts of prey in the streets, at any time, cannot be indulged in without infringing upon the rights of others and disturbing the peace and quiet of the city, to prevent which certain municipal rules and regulations have been provided, and if they are not enforced, they had better be expunged from the city code at once.

The mayor and aldermen, no doubt, deal justly with offenders when brought before them and when complaints are made of the violation of any city ordinance, measures are unquestionably taken without delay to arrest the persons complained of; but as the police force now on duty is small, and there is but little or no assistance rendered to them by the citizens in preserving peace and good order, from the mistaken notion, no doubt, that it is exclusively the duty of policemen to attend to such matters, and notice is therefore seldom taken of the breach of a city ordinance that occurs in those portions of the city not patrolled by those preservers of the peace.

The city has been comparatively very quiet during the fall, but of late there have been some out-breakings which should be checked before they become of too frequent occurrence to be easily controlled.

Who the individuals are who indulge so freely in whooping in the streets occasionally we do not know, but they are not boys, and bad whisky seems to have some agency in the matter.

FROZEN TO DEATH.—James McCann, a young man about 17 years old, whose father, as we are informed, resides in St. Louis, Mo., was frozen to death in Weber kanyon on Monday the 5th instant.

He was on his way from this city to Mr. T. J. Thurston's, who resides twelve miles up the Weber above the mouth of the kanyon, and on arriving at Mr. Peterson's, five miles below Thurston's, sometime in the afternoon he was advised to stay there till the next morning as it was so very cold. He refused the kind offer and proceeded on his way. His body was afterward found within sight of Mr. Thurston's house, where he had perished.

WHEN may be expected the wood and the other GOOD things that are coming from Tooele?