

EDITORIALS.

IN RELATION TO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS.

THE season affording special opportunities for self-culture has arrived. The best methods for attaining the desired end should be carefully considered. We have endeavored to ascertain, by observation and otherwise, the general status of the mutual improvement associations in this regard. Truth should be the chief pursuit of all, and this is no time in our history to cover it up with the glamour of qualification. We are therefore free to state our conclusion in relation to these organizations. In plain terms it is, in substance, that they come far short of the mark.

It is in order to state some of the reasons for having arrived at this position. In this regard we wish to be credited with the admission that there are doubtless numbers of exceptions to what we understand to be the rule. To such the weaknesses to which we take the liberty of pointing have no reference.

Those societies, whose title applies more to what they ought to be than what they are, exhibit (1) An apparent lack of object; (2) a corresponding lack of method; (3) an absence of thoroughness; (4) a like deficiency of process.

The presumed object is the intellectual, moral and religious advancement of the participants. Judging from the comparative absence of internal organization it seems there is an impression that the result can be attained without the classification of students. Where the attendance is large such a system must be practically futile, because but few can possibly participate in the exercises. It may be laid down as an incontrovertible proposition that the advancement of the members will depend a thousand times more upon what they do themselves than what they see or hear others do. A lecture, treatise or other exercise will do the person producing it a great deal more substantial good than those who listen to it. The preparation of the subject has fixed the facts it contains upon his mind. Hence the division of the members into grades or classes—with competent instructors who will simply and intelligently direct the studies and labors of those within their jurisdiction—is an indispensable condition to advancement.

There is too much of a predilection for mixing amusement with other exercises of a more solid character. In some associations the concert business predominates to the exclusion of that which is more intellectually, morally and religiously progressive. It is not practically clear that listening to the thrumming of a guitar, an organ solo, or a comic song will tend extensively to the development of morality, intellectuality or religion. The explanation of this is that if there were not an admixture of amusement, many who now attend would absent themselves, and the meetings as they now exist have the effect of keeping them off the streets. This objection could be obviated by providing periodical sessions for amusement apart from the usual meetings and admitting all who attend the ordinary gatherings free of charge. This would afford all the relief necessary. It is against the principles of mental philosophy to presume that people can oscillate in brief intervals of perhaps a few minutes duration, between what is amusing and that which engages the moral, religious and intellectual faculties and make any particular progress in developing the higher phases of the mind. Boys should be taught, theoretically and practically, that there is "no excellence without labor," and that if they ever become what they have the capacities for attaining to, it will never be by floating like a cork on the ocean of life.

Thoroughness is indispensable. Transitory glimpses of intelligence that flash momentarily upon the mind, like fragmentary rays of light from a lantern as it passes a window, disappearing as quickly as they come, are measurably useless. Lines of study should be taken up and pursued persistently, until the roots of the subjects are embedded in the mental soil, to be fed with the sap of intelligence and the growth of the strong comely tree encouraged.

A good deal of theoretical talk is indulged in regarding the young people obtaining testimonies of the divine character of the work established through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith. This object is best attained by solid instruction, through personal effort, in the principles unfolded by that great man. A testimony of the truth must be based on a comprehension of it. It may not exist in its solid form, separate and apart from "pure intelligence," which is the "glory of God."

There is a system in some societies of members reporting how many verses or chapters of the scriptures have been read by them. A record of this exercise is kept, and reports made, supposed to be exhibits of progress attained. Apply this analogously to physical matters and its quality will be observed by the comparison. If, as a test of physical progress, it should be required of a given number of young people to report the quantity of mush and milk they had each consumed in a specified time? An investigation would probably show that the most

weakly among them had appropriated the most. It is not unlikely that in the desire to be at the head of the list the digestive organs had been markedly impaired. This may be taken as a comparative figure of the mental effect in the other direction. If it could be ascertained how much the reader had become enlightened by what he had read, there would be some reason in the rule, as with the amount of food digested and assimilated by the physical system. If it be urged that the method under consideration is an inducement for the young to read, it may be questioned whether reading without grasping the subject matter, when quantity is a consideration, does more harm than good, by inducing the pernicious habit of thoughtless or slovenly reading.

Energetic, intelligent, solid systematic work, it appears to us, should be kept constantly in the foreground.

PORK AS FOOD.

THE communication in our columns yesterday upon the subject of pork as an article of diet, was, in a peculiar way, quite impressive. The writer is a gentleman of this city whose veracity we have no reason to doubt, and the facts stated therein came within his own observation. His subject was a nauseating one, through no fault of his, but the intellects of some people can be reached through their stomachs more easily than by argument; and it is in this way that the communication under consideration was impressive. The stomach that could contemplate, without a qualm, a fry from a hog's liver, diseased as our correspondent declares many of those organs of the hundred hogs he saw killed were; or that could receive with relish a roast from the ribs of an animal that was dying of tuberculous consumption, must be of a "copper-lined" order.

That a relation of cause and effect exists between a person's sins and the diseases he is suffering from, is a doctrine worthy of wider and firmer credence than it has ever received, at least in modern times; though among the Jews anciently it appears to have been generally and more or less intelligently believed. While not by any means all of the sickness from which any given individual may suffer can be traced to his personal infringements of the law of nature, it remains a fact that disease is the result of the violation of law, either upon the part of the sufferer, or of some one else whose acts have affected him. These violations may consist in a departure from the rules laid down in revelation, or taught by nature, for our guidance; and while mankind have not generally attributed, in any marked degree, a moral quality to acts that merely injure the health of the body, a higher conception of the truth in relation to this subject teaches that those acts are sinful in the same sense in which violations of the moral law are.

What we shall eat and drink, and the treatment we shall give to the tabernacles that clothe the immortal part of us, thus becomes a matter of righteousness or sin; a matter of purity and holiness, or of iniquity and consequent chastisement. In the light of these conclusions, what is the moral condition of that father who feeds himself and family upon such food as was described by our correspondent? Or of that household who devour such vile stuff while congratulating themselves upon having a nice, "home-raised article" to eat?

Had our correspondent told of sights witnessed by him in the shambles of some eastern pork-packing city, our readers here in Utah probably would not have been deeply affected thereby; as each purchaser of an eastern ham or piece of imported bacon could have laid to his soul the flattering unctious that there was no evidence that the particular piece of swine's flesh purchased by him was diseased. But when one of our citizens, intelligent, observing and truthful, rises up and narrates such a tale about the pork we at home are producing and eating, it ought to check the consumption of that article in our midst.

Science and experience confirm what the Lord has already taught the Latter-day Saints by revelation, namely, that a meat diet does not tend to health nor longevity. But if meat must be eaten, let that which is healthful be chosen, and the ulcerous, tuberculous, unspeakably filthy stuff described by our correspondent be shunned with abhorrence.

NECESSITY OF GRADUATION.

ON Thursday last we offered some comments upon mutual improvement societies, making a few strictures regarding the condition of quite a number of them, as we understand it. The chief reason for the lack of system and thoroughness characteristic of not a few of these organizations is owing to the instructions of the general superintendency and their aids having been more or less ignored. Where they have been most closely adhered to, the beneficial effects are apparent. A closer application of them will produce a more general advancement.

Those associations should, to a large extent, prepare young men to receive and intelligently discharge the duties of the Priesthood. In that direction they occupy the position of aids to that body, and can lay the foundation for graduation in its offices.

The Gospel is a science, and its principles can only be grasped and its duties and obligations effectively discharged by degrees. It is inconsistent to presume that a person can leap into a manipulation of the higher branches of mathematics who has not yet grasped the fundamental principles of arithmetic. So it is absurd to presume that young men can vault suddenly from a position of crudity, for want of experience and depth of understanding, into the higher offices of an organization established by Divine command. This proposition, based upon sound philosophy, makes it imperative that young men should, unless it be in exceptional cases, graduate in the Gospel school. To suddenly confer the offices of the Higher Priesthood upon youths who have never occupied any previous and lesser responsibility, is the antipodes of the grading system, which should be the rule and not the exception.

A strong effort was made some years ago by the First Presidency and Twelve to have this idea thoroughly acted upon. Large numbers of youths were ordained Deacons, and quorums of that grade of the Lesser Priesthood were organized, in accordance with revelation on the subject. In many instances, however, these organizations are practically dead, and the duties of Deaconship are performed by men of advanced years, by appointment. The reason assigned, in some instances, for this practical abolition of the Deacon, has been that it has been difficult to get the young men to perform the necessary labor, and the meetings of the Deacons' quorums have fallen into disuse.

In such cases the reasons for the falling away should be ascertained, with a view of providing a remedy. If the young men are left to glide along without receiving any special care or attention, their slackness is easily accounted for. Where the Bishops and other leading men take a careful and fatherly interest in their meetings and labors it will be found that the organizations are alive and efficient.

In the quorums the Lord has provided a system for mutual improvement that is not excelled by any other organization under heaven. If the meetings are not appropriated to that purpose and the transaction of needless business, they are not being devoted to the use for which the Lord intended they should be. Not only should they be made the means of obtaining information regarding the duties, obligations and responsibilities of the Priesthood, but also of the "laws and customs of nations," and all subjects of profit and enlightenment. The studies, conversation, reflections and interchange of thought need not be confined, in their religious bearing, to the duties of the particular grade which the quorum occupies, but to the Priesthood as a whole, in all its phases.

In meetings of newly organized young Deacons' quorums, those composing them are apt to be at sea, for lack of experience, in relation to how they should proceed. If proper care is taken to have them instructed, put to work and directed in proper channels of thought and research under the direction of the Bishops, by men of intelligence and experience, the probability is that they will become interested and active. Otherwise they will lag; the quorums will sicken and languish.

We repeat that the quorums of every grade can be made a wonderful power in the direction of advancement in intelligence and practical utility in carrying forward every branch of the work of God. A good deal of progress has been made in that line of late years. How much it can be increased is an important consideration. The end is not to be achieved by devoting the meetings to mere desultory expressions of sentiment. It will be found that when such a course is pursued a very few members, more valuable than the rest, appropriate—sometimes in a way far from profitable—an extremely heavy portion of the time. Definite lines of thought, study and conversation are much more preferable and efficient. It is also a good plan to have always on hand books, which come in good place for reading and reference. Let it be kept in mind that the gifts of the Gospel and its powers are not separate from effort, and that the pursuit of pure intelligence is the noblest object of existence; especially when the ultimatum is its application for the amelioration of the race.

Returning to the necessity for graduation in religious matters, it may be accepted as correct that those who go upon the lower rounds of the ladder of progress are in a position to be familiar with all the details connected with the path they have trodden. In going below all things, like the Great Master, when a higher point is reached all things under that degree of elevation are comprehended. He who skips suddenly to a great official altitude is not likely to be in possession of that experience which enables him to direct intelligently all things legitimately within the scope of his extended jurisdiction.

The principle of graduation more liberally applied will obviate the necessity for the more violent processes of evolution. There must needs be, in the dealings of the Almighty in regard

to His work, an evolving operation in unison with the eternal fitness of things. It may proceed slowly, but its progress will be as unerring as the workings of the law of gravitation and attraction. If stumbling-blocks in the path of the progress of the work of redemption are not removed in one way they will be in some other, and every intelligent being will, in course of time, or at least in eternity, find his proper position.

TUESDAY'S ELECTION.

As the time of the election for a Delegate to represent the people of Utah in the 60th Congress approaches, a few words by way of reminder may not be amiss. Those who constitute a great majority of the community are too apt to rely upon that strength *per se*, and lie supinely upon their backs expecting their unused strength to accomplish the same result it has usually done. They thus place a negative power in the hands of their opponents. No ballots are counted unless they are cast in accordance with law, and if the members of the People's party expect their ability to cast a greater vote than that of their opponents to pull them safely through the contest, they will be deceived. There must be an expression—an earnest and decided expression—of their will recorded in the tallies of the election judges, and this will not be done unless they resort to the perhaps temporary inconvenience of going to the polling places and depositing their ballots. Majorities become minorities through the failure to do that very thing, and supremacy can only be maintained through resolution and action.

The people of Utah would do well to remember how, one by one, the rights they are entitled to by the Great Charter, have been frittered away until at last there is but the semblance—the mere skeleton of a Republican form of government left in our midst. The right to elect anyone is apparently dissolving as rapidly as those whose business it is to misrepresent that they may gain and to slander that they may prosper can advance such a condition: We have still left the right to choose whom we will have to serve us in the National Legislature, and the more pronounced and emphatic that choice shall be, the more unequivocal and positive will be the announcement to our would-be masters that we will end the contest, if we must end it, with "harness on our backs" and our face to the foe. Let them understand that they cannot occupy an uncontested field, no matter what they may gain through chicanery, deception and trickery; and let the reader see to it that not only himself, but his neighbors and friends, go to the polls on Tuesday next and exercise so much of the liberty as was bequeathed to us by the authors of our institutions and to be held until it is wrested from us by force.

Go to the polls, all who are registered, and vote the People's ticket.

THE CASE AGAINST ELDER TAYLOR.

WE publish to-day the text of the indictment against Apostle John W. Taylor which was found by the Grand Jury at Blackfoot, Idaho, on Thursday, October 28th. The charge preferred is for inciting to rebellion against the laws of the United States. The statute under which the prosecution is being conducted is section 534 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, which reads as follows:

"Every citizen who incites, sets on foot, assists, or engages in any rebellion against the authority of the United States, or the laws thereof, or gives aid or comfort thereto, shall be punished by imprisonment not more than ten years, or by a fine of not more than ten thousand dollars, or by both of such punishments; and shall, moreover, be incapable of holding any office under the United States."

The alleged facts relied upon in this prosecution are that the defendant, in a discourse delivered last August at Oxford, Idaho, counseled and advised three hundred people there assembled to practice polygamy and unlawful cohabitation. It does not yet appear, if the allegation is correct, how this advice or counsel would be in the nature of an incitement to a rebellion or insurrection. It is not claimed that any insurrection or rebellion, such as is contemplated in the Statute, either took place or was contemplated or promoted.

In a report of the meeting published in the *Tribune* of this city, and understood to have been furnished by the chief agent in the proceedings against the defendant, all he was accused of saying on the polygamy question was, "I am the son of a polygamist and mean to practice it, too." The chief causes of offense were understood at the time to be some remarks made by the speaker in regard to the course of several persons who had been cut off the Church and had joined the Josephites, and some advice to monogamous citizens to vote at the coming election and test their right to

the suffrage in the highest courts of the land. The remarks about the sins that had been committed enraged the apostates and the advice about voting exasperated the Republicans.

It is a religious-political conspiracy that moves in the prosecution against Elder Taylor. The person who swore out the complaint—H. W. Bennett, is a Republican candidate for office who cannot be elected if the "Mormon" citizens of Blugham County vote against him. The two witnesses who appeared before the grand jury—R. J. Anthony and John E. Harris are "Josephites," bitter as gall and over-running with hatred against the defendant and the cause of which he is a representative. Anthony wrote an account of the meeting, at the time of its occurrence, to the "Josephite" *Herald*, substantially the same as that published in the *Tribune*. All that he reported as coming from Brother Taylor on the polygamy question was that he declared, "I am the son of a polygamist and mean to practice it, too."

These are very thin foundations on which to base a criminal action. We have said nothing about the actual facts of the discourse. We simply give the statements of those who have made the complaint and urged the prosecution. If it were not for the state of public feeling, wrought up against everything bearing the name of "Mormon," in the Idaho election, we would not think it possible to find an indictment on such grounds as are alleged against the defendant. But with the hostility that prevails in the region where the trial is to be conducted, there is little chance of any fairness or justice to the accused.

The whole movement is in the nature of a muzzle on free speech. It is conceded by all fairminded people that in America, a citizen has the right to believe what seems right to him and to express his views on any subject, no matter how unorthodox they may be. Of course no man has the right to incite to the commission of crime; or, if he does so, he is amenable to the law. But every man has the right to express his dissent to any law and proclaim his faith in any doctrine. Only overt acts can be legally punished. A man may publicly announce his belief that polygamy is right, and even declare that he means to practice it. There is nothing criminal either in that belief or that announcement. It is only when he carries his belief or his declaration into actual violation of the law, that he can be proceeded against under the laws and Constitution of the country.

The malignant course of the Josephite accusers is indicative of the spirit of the cause which they advocate. It is of the adversary and comes from beneath. It is the same spirit which slew Joseph the Martyr, and which has waged war against the Saints from the beginning. Those who are possessed by it may bring some sorrow and distress upon the objects of their wrath by their diabolism, but they will in the end be the greater sufferers. They are to be pitied, for they will surely reap the reward of their own doings.

The proceedings against Elder J. W. Taylor form one more chapter in the history of the crusade against the Latter-day Saints, because of their faith in the revelations of Almighty God. And they still further tend to show that the enemies of "Mormonism" are utterly unprincipled, and that in warring against the system which has come down out of heaven to earth, its enemies, in order to make any headway, have to violate established principles of truth and equity. And while they invent new methods in jurisprudence and new rules of legal interpretation, they run full in the face of the most sacred guarantees of the Constitution which courts and officers as well as private individuals are under obligations to regard as the supreme law of the land.

UNPRECEDENTED PROCEEDINGS.

THE present crusade against the Latter-day Saints presents more peculiar and unprecedented features, perhaps, than any other onslaught upon the unorthodox in any age of the world. The proceedings in the courts afford new illustrations of this almost every day. Among the freaks of official persons in their treatment of the "Mormons," those of the singular piece of perverted humanity who has been selected to occupy the position of United States Commissioner in Cache County are quite remarkable. The duties of our own McKay, which render him the laughing stock of the bar and the aversion of every decent citizen who is compelled to endure his presence, particularly the ladies, pass into the background when Cache Valley Goodwin commences to perform.

We have related some of the particulars of the case of Joel Ricks when before that pompous functionary, who in the absence of any evidence whatever tending to inculpate the defendant, informed the latter that if he would produce a witness whom the prosecution had been unable to find and prove his innocence he would release him, but otherwise he should hold him under bonds to await the action of the grand jury. But there is another feature in this case that has not been given prominence.