

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

FARMERS, SAVE YOUR CROPS!

The people of Utah were never addicted, and are not now, to rejoicing over another's misfortune. That most odious form of selfishness which sees in another's need an opportunity for personal gain and aggrandizement has ever been as foreign to the people living in Utah's valleys as it is to the religion which brought most of them here. They have rejoiced in the welfare of their neighbors to right and left, and would be glad at any time to know that prosperity was the portion of the whole human family, and that peace and plenty brooded calmly over the entire earth.

And yet since there are varying seasons of abundance and famine, of health and plague, of prosperity and distress, it behooves us, as a community, as it does every rational individual, to acquaint ourselves with the conditions around us, so that we may intelligently consider how far and in which direction we may most effectively contribute of any probable surplus toward the relieving of any imminent deficiency. This duty relates not only to ourselves, as governing our own action in its aspects of trust and profit, but to those with whom we may thus deal, as an assurance of what and how much they may expect from us and on what terms.

Now, the grain, fruit, forage and vegetable crop prospects in Utah are most flattering. The season has been propitious. Kindly rains have made every growing thing look promising; much snow held back in the mountains guarantees sufficient water to supply the absence of the later storms, and a large acreage of agricultural land has been brought under the plow. Happily, the recent low prices of farm products have not deterred our land-owners from essaying once more the making of a living from the soil; and so far as concerns food in plenty for man and beast, there is every assurance of well-filled granaries, cellars and barns.

From California, on the other hand, come dismal reports of parched fields—a prospect of heavy shortage in wheat, necessitating importation, and in hay, requiring purchases from abroad or the sacrifice of stock. And already, in sagacious regard for this condition, agents of the western railroad have been seeking information in various Utah counties as to the amount of these necessities that can be spared for the Golden state. They want to buy our surplus, and anticipate no difficulty in finding an active market for all we can supply.

Circumstances promising so favorable a change in the returns for labor expended in agricultural pursuits ought not to be overlooked or forgotten by the farmers of this Territory. Those who make it part of their business to subscribe for and read a reliable newspaper will hardly need any warning from us against trading off prematurely and without adequate compensation their prospective crops. The path of business wisdom and foresight lies in holding on for the present to all

they have or expect to have for their season's work. There is likely to be a strong demand for all not needed for home consumption, and with demand will come of course better prices. As it is, the hard times have affected the thrifty farmer less than any other class in the community; the prospect now is that his line of business is likely to experience a genuine boom.

GOD IN ALL.

In his account of the fire by which the big Brooklyn tabernacle was destroyed on May 13, Dr. DeWitt Talmage is quoted as saying among other things:

Personally, I feel not the least item of disheartenment nor less faith in God, nor less hope for the future. This long procession of disasters is inexplicable—like what occurs in a family, four or five dying from scarlet fever. We must simply accept the fact. Our tabernacle has been burned three times and it has always been burned on a Sunday. It is a mystery which I adjourn until the next world shall let us know. It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth good in His sight.

Commenting on the last statement a cotemporary takes occasion to say that the Lord is not concerned in such affairs; when children die from scarlet fever it is because men have neglected the sanitary arrangements, for which the Almighty is not to blame; and so the burning of the tabernacle was the natural result of imperfect construction or the work of an incendiary. "The Lord does not go around burning churches on the Sabbath day."

The question here raised is one of much interest, involving as it does the true relation of the Almighty to His children on earth, as shown in His providence. It must be admitted that there has been in the religious world too much tendency manifested to ascribe everything to the Lord, giving but little room for the exercise of the free agency of man. Thus calamities have often come as the immediate result of the violation of natural laws either through wilful disobedience or ignorance; for which man himself is responsible. But this is not all there is to it. It would indeed be sad to have to think that human beings were left entirely to their own sagacity or to chance to find a way through a world, so full of seemingly unfathomable mysteries, so dangerously stormy, so impossible to control by mere human force. Had man no better theology than that he would be doomed to wander about in a labyrinth without the guiding thread of an Ariadne to lead him out to light, freedom and happiness.

Holy writ and human experience concur in the testimony that there is a Divine providence overruling in a general way all the affairs of the universe, great and small. Bible writers are unanimous in representing God as the originator and the sustainer of creation. He formed the world in the

beginning, and His work is continued from age to age. In the same way God is seen in history. The sacred writers view the revolutions among nations, no less than the progress of kingdoms and republics, as part of the government of the Lord. And not only that, but individual lives are said to be the subjects of His fatherly care. Peculiarly expressive is the language of our Savior on this subject when He says: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Whatever construction may be put on this metaphorical language, it certainly conveys the truth that there is a Providence to which no human affairs are too insignificant.

On this great truth faith rests. Were there no such Providence faith would have no foundation. It would sink into nothingness and with it religion, the superstructure reared on that first and all-powerful principle.

That the Almighty works by means of natural laws does not change or modify in the least the truth set forth. God never did anything except on natural principles, some of which are understood by man and therefore not considered wonderful, while others are not known and consequently called miraculous. Were we to reason that the hand of God cannot be traced in a case of sickness and death or a conflagration, because the former came as a result of imperfect sanitary regulations and the latter was caused by electricity, then the reasoning is equally sound that the great deluge was not the work of the Almighty; nor indeed creation itself, for it cannot be denied that the infinitude of worlds and systems of worlds, strewn throughout the immense space like dust exist and are regulated according to laws as natural as that which causes the falling of a leaf in autumn and the renewed verdure of the field in spring. If the power of God is manifest anywhere, it is everywhere.

In the revelations given to the Saints upon this subject, the true relationship between God and His children is set forth in clearness as never before perhaps in the history of man. As God represents Himself as the Father, a parallel is suggested. Any wise father would educate his children as far as in his power lies with a view to rendering them in every respect capable of coping with the problems of life. To attain this end he would give their developing faculties full liberty, and yet all the time guide the efforts in the right direction. The child is all the time working its own way onward toward perfection, and yet never without the guiding control of the educator. Both these factors are equally necessary.

In a similar position is the child of the Eternal Father placed. He is laboring to obtain an understanding of the principles that govern the universe and the knowledge which brings life eternal, but he is not left to himself in this effort. The Father's guiding hand he can see and feel throughout life. Sometimes he fails, or errs or goes astray; sometimes afflictions are necessary to bring him to realize his duties,