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## The Happiest Season.

BY ELDER W. G. MILLS.

A happy group, at a festive board,  
Where sat both old and young,  
Were eager to be with knowledge stored,  
And improve as time passed along.

A question was raised for friendly strife,  
And warmly discussed with reason;  
"Of all the changes of human life,  
Which is the happiest season?"

Opinions were offered by all in turn,  
But they did not agree, it appears;  
And the answer deferred to the host who had  
borne  
The burden of fourscore years.

The old man smiled, and essayed to please,  
As his bosom with feelings was swelling;  
He enquired had they seen a grove of trees  
That grew before his dwelling.

"When the Spring arrives, and many a bud  
On the trees are blossoming  
In the soft light air, I think how good  
And beautiful is Spring!"

"When Summer comes, and rich foliage there  
Decks the trees, and each feathered comer  
Sings on the branches, I think how fair,  
How beautiful is Summer!"

"When Autumn their golden fruit displays  
And their leaves bear its gorgeous hue,  
I think, and I feel it while I gaze,  
Autumn is beautiful too!"

"And it is sere Winter, both branch and bough  
Of foliage and fruit are bare;  
I look up through the trees, which I could  
not till now,  
And I see the stars shining there!"

Thus the Spring time of Life has its charms  
and joys;  
To Summer are beauties given;  
In Autumn its wholesome fruit we prize;  
And in Winter we look to Heaven!

G. S. L. City, Oct. 1855.

## COTTON AND ITS CULTURE IN UTAH.

Having recently visited the cotton-growing districts of Southern Utah, and having gleaned from the most reliable sources, some information on this subject, the result, chiefly, of personal observation and experience in this Territory, I cheerfully present it for consideration.

The first efforts to raise cotton in Utah were made at Fort Clara, on the Santa Clara river, upwards of 300 miles south of Great Salt Lake City, in the year 1855. About three quarts of old seed were obtained from various quarters, most of which, upon the recommendation of a gentleman professing a knowledge of cotton-growing, was soaked in new milk. Of this not one seed came up. Of that which was not milk-soaked, about 100 plants grew, from which were raised 75 lbs. seed cotton.

In 1856 the Santa Clara colonist renewed their efforts, planting one and a half bushels seed in five acres of ground. From this they realized but about 200 lbs. seed cotton.

Not greatly disheartened, they determined, if possible, the next year, to do something in cotton-raising, and planted fifty acres, which was almost a total failure thro' bad seed, lack of water, the river having become dry, and bad management; the whole crop yielding only 650 lbs. seed cotton.

The present year (1858) at the same locality, they have planted nearly 20 acres in cotton and their crop was reported at about half a stand. This is a decided improvement, and, if the anticipations of the planters are realized, will throw into our hands the handsome quantity of 12,000 pounds of seed cotton.

In the meantime, efforts to raise cotton have been made in other sections.

At Washington, the present season, 130 acres of cotton were reported, and this quantity considered a fair stand, which, if realized, will yield 156,000 lbs. seed cotton. It must not be understood, however, that these figures represent the whole number of acres of cotton planted at this settlement; such success would be too flattering. Probably there have been in the region of four hundred acres planted. More than two thirds, as has been shown, is a failure, and this chiefly from salt and other mineral in the soil. However, if they can raise even one third of a crop, the planters of Utah feel more than satisfied.

At Heberville, a pioneer colony organized last spring, under the superintendence of Dr. Jos. Horne, and sustained by Prests. B. Young,

H. C. Kimball, D. H. Wells; G. D. Grant, A. Carrington and Feramor Little, located on the Rio Virgin, 9 miles south of Ft. Clara, there are 33 acres in cotton, for which half a stand was considered a safe estimate, which would give an aggregate of about 19,200 lbs. seed cotton.

Toquerville is another settlement formed this spring, lying in the narrow bottom of Ash creek, about three miles above its junction with the Rio Virgin and nearly 20 miles south east of Harmony. Here they planted eight acres in cotton, which bade fair for a good yield, but, by a hail storm in June, it was mostly cut down and, tho' stunted and ragged looking, appeared more regular in the rows than any elsewhere noticed.

This, in connection with the fact that the Rio Virgin has its source to the eastward of of Toquerville and continues nearly westward till it passes Heberville and, being sheltered by high mountains immediately on the north and open to the south, is one indication that all the arable land on or near its banks, where water can be conducted, as far up as the stream will justify, can be made available for raising cotton.

A tract of about 300 acres has been discovered some six miles above the mouth of Ash creek, to which it is said to be impossible to construct a wagon road.

It is thought that the nauseous, if not poisonous qualities of the Rio Virgin have influence in causing the mineral in the soil to be more destructive on vegetation. If this should be true, a plantation to the eastward will succeed best; for it has been ascertained that, about five miles above the mouth of Ash creek, there are poisonous springs emptying into the Virgin, above which the water, so ill-tasted below, is more wholesome.

The settlers at Heberville, for a long time, were compelled to drink this nauseous water. They dug a well, but, unhappily, found no better water. Finally, in the latter part of the season, their only relief was in finding a spring of better water in the dry bed of the Santa Clara, which they were under the necessity of hauling about three miles.

It will be seen that there are many serious obstacles to oppose cotton-growing in Utah; but, when we consider the disastrous failures that have attended similar attempts in other countries, as also in this Territory in raising other crops, we cannot but congratulate ourselves, thus far, upon our success.

I saw about 1½ acres of cotton at Washington, on the upland, for which the owner told me he would not accept one thousand pounds of ginned cotton.

About the middle of July the plants were in nearly every stage; some blossom-pods just forming, some in white (first day's blossom) some in red, (second day) others with bolls forming, half formed, full size and hard.

Cotton commences ripening about the first of September and continues till frost comes. The seed comes up best when planted not more than two inches deep, care being taken to have sufficient of moisture in the soil to bring it up. The seed should be planted from April 1st to the middle of May. The rows should be three feet apart, each seed about one foot apart. Its average height, when mature, is from two to four feet. This, however, need not be considered any detriment, for the finest article grows on the smaller sized plants. Extremely large plants yield a coarse cotton and frequently yield nothing.

The Green seed variety has superseded all others, experience as yet having proved that it is best adapted to our climate and soil.

At Heberville it is estimated that there are about 600 acres of land suitable for cotton, besides that already under cultivation.

The plant when young is extremely tender, does not require much water and is often injured by too early and too frequent irrigation. The water should not be applied, in the opening of the season, till the plants show they need it, and then care should be taken to keep it from the stems; by so doing, not only will the plant escape injury from water, but it will be less liable to be injured by its worst enemy, the mineral.

I have observed, on land where there is considerable mineral, that when water is applied so that it reaches the stem of the plant, its effects are disastrous; but, in rows ridged so that the water could soak to the roots without touching the stem, the plant was healthy and strong.

In some places, upon the application of water, the surface was changed into a cement, caused by a superabundance of lime in the soil.

Cool nights and parching winds have been somewhat detrimental.

Two or three times hoeing is beneficial, but, while the plants are young, too great caution cannot be used lest they should be cut or bruised with the hoe. Wounds produced by the hoe are called "Sore Shins," by which the plants are permanently injured.

Some species of cotton are perennial and all varieties are very hardy after the plants are half grown,

The construction of durable dams is of great importance. By a slight rise in the river a dam at Heberville, that cost \$1000, was swept away, in the season when irrigation was most needed, thus periling a whole season's labors. At Washington two or three dams have been destroyed by a similar cause.

The common enemies and diseases to which cotton is subject in the Southern States have caused little or no alarm here. Our chief enemy, thus far, has been the mineral in the soil, which, by the adoption of modes of culture suited to the soil, may to some extent, be overcome. In spots where the plants have been destroyed by mineral, the present season, let there be planted some of the esculent roots impervious to the effects of mineral; by such a course the land most impregnated may be made suitable for cotton. Then, by planting the seed on low ridges, where the water will not reach the stem of the plant, the surety of the crop may be much increased.

As near as I am able to determine, the under strata in this section of country is of temporary formations of a loose conglomerate, the soil itself being composed of sand, the washings of the river at high water.

The standard price for ginned cotton has been 75 cents pr. lb. The yield of seed cotton pr. acre may be set down at 1200 lbs. The seed is said to average two thirds of the whole weight.

The cost of preparing it for market is trifling, probably \$10 or \$15 pr. 100 lbs.

A very small water-power roller gin at Ft. Clara cleans 200 lbs. pr. day. A larger one is in progress at Washington.

I may here add that, in all these settlements, the Sorghum Sucre succeeds well. At Washington I saw several kinds of tobacco bidding fair for a good crop. A variety brought by Mr. Moore from New Zealand appeared very fine.

Cotton is by some entitled "King." Shall not Utah share in its benefits, even tho' its cultivation is attended with so many disadvantages and losses?

JAMES McKNIGHT.

G. S. L. City, Oct. 1, 1858.

[From the St. Louis Democrat, August 24, 1858.]

## The Utah Army Contracts.

To-morrow, or the day after, a Court of Inquiry, by order of the Secretary of War, will meet at Fort Leavenworth, to investigate the conduct of Capt. Van Vliet, Quarter-Master at that post, for alleged disobedience of instructions in the matter of mule purchases. The Court will consist of three superior officers, and the investigation, it is thought, will be conducted with open doors. The public, on hearing for the first time of the proceedings about to be instituted at Fort Leavenworth, would probably suppose that the Quarter-Master is suspected by the Department at Washington of having acted in collusion with the mule contractors, to the detriment of the public service and the national exchequer, as well as to his own standing as an officer in the military service.

Vague surmises of his playing fast and loose with Uncle Sam's pocket, in conjunction with the mule men, would naturally follow the reading of the dispatch ordering the Court of Inquiry. It happens, however, that such a supposition or surmise is diametrically opposite the facts. The issue between the Secretary of War and the Quarter-Master, is that the latter has been too exacting in his dealings with the contractors; that in several cases he rejected mules which they allege came up to the specifications of the Department, and that the price he set on those which he accepted was below their market value.

He is also accused of partiality to a few of the contractors, but the gravamen of the charges against him is that he refused, as the agent of the government, to accept all the mules which were offered to him by some contractors, and also abused the discretionary power with which he was invested by paying them prices, which, though in reality exorbitant, were below the calculations of their cupidity, and the promises of those politicians in Washington who procured for them the patronage of Secretary Floyd.

Our readers may now perceive that it is not for the laxity, but the rigor of his conduct that Van Vliet is brought to the bar. He drove too hard in a bargain with these injured innocents, the mule men. He had no thorough appreciation of the necessities, the liberality and munificence of a government which subsists by the judicious distribution of spoils, and which has spoils to the amount of ninety millions to distribute. He was unsophisticated enough to think that the doctrine of equivalents should be maintained to some extent in transactions between the government and individuals.—Hence, if the mule was below the standard height, under or over the required age, broken down, diseased or otherwise radically defective, he refused to purchase it; and if it passed inspection in all particulars, he bought it, together with the rest of the drove at a price which left only some twenty or thirty dollars a head net profit to the contrac-

tors. Out of these injuries inflicted upon those worthy men—the contractors—have sprung the Court of Inquiry. They are fitly represented by Senator Jim Green. He has been mixed up with this mule business from the first day. He attended closely to it in Washington last winter, and succeeded in procuring large favors, or large orders from the War department, ostensibly for his friends. His brother is concerned in these contracts, and we feel warranted in saying that the Senator himself must be a participator in their profits. He was the agent of the parties who received the orders to furnish the mules; it was through his solicitations the orders were granted, and he is now the attorney before the Court of Inquiry for these parties; he was chiefly instrumental in getting that Court appointed, and all the facts warrant the assertion that he is one of the silent partners of that great stock-jobbing concern which inflated that monstrous bubble, the Mormon war, and which has made ten millions of dollars by it. So much for Green's connection with the Leavenworth investigation.

We have no doubt that Van Vliet has disregarded the spirit of his instructions, however carefully he may have observed the letter. He must have grievously disappointed the Secretary of War, who had him stationed at Leavenworth because he was supposed to be less rigid than the others. But military discipline hardens character, and of all human clay old soldiers are the most intractable in the hands of the potter. Van Vliet disappointed expectations, and became an eye sore and a stumbling block to the contractors; and as the whole object of the second year's war against the Mormons—the buying or rewarding of Leavenworth influences—could not be allowed to be marred in any degree by the stolidity of a captain of Infantry, the salesman of Fort Snelling ordered an investigation.

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."

The contractors for the Utah army had a friend at court, whose power was as high as his sympathies were deep. He stood up for the cause—their cause and his own. The constitution must be maintained. Is says that no private property shall be taken by the government, except on condition that full compensation is made. Secretary Floyd and Senator Green have rallied once more in defense of the constitution. It may not be generally known how these mule contracts were jobbed out. In the first place there were no formal contracts entered into between the War Department and the mule traders. The whole business was taken away from Gen. Jessup, to whose department it appertains, by Secretary Floyd, who could have no legitimate connection with it in its executive aspect. Such business has always been transacted by the Quarter-Master General, who is the responsible person. The Secretary having rendered Gen. Jessup a nullity, by arrogating to himself the powers previously exercised by that officer, proceeded to carry out the duties of Quarter-Master General on a new plan. Hints were dropped to the Leavenworth men in Congress, that it was in the power of the Secretary to oblige some of their friends in the country.

These country friends, the Leavenworth Democrats, speedily summoned to the capitol. Jim Green's client soon appeared in response to the summons. Vice President Breckenridge's friends sped there too. The kith and kin of the Secretary himself were not hindmost in the race. The Pennsylvania clique had also its candidates on the ground.—The Secretary gave orders to them all to supply so many mules—the number put down in the order being in proportion to the Congressional influence exerted in behalf of the recipient. No price was fixed, but the Secretary sent autograph letters to the Quarter-Master at Fort Leavenworth, telling him indirectly to allow a large per centage on the outlay of the contractors. In fact, authority was given under-handed to the Quarter-Master to give any price he chose; and it was because he did not avail himself of this authority to the utmost extent, that he is arraigned before the Court. He evidently misunderstood the spirit of his instructions, or he refused to lend himself to the robbing of the Treasury.

These facts are undeniable. The rule adopted made the contractors indifferent to the prime cost of the mules, because their profits were to be in proportion to the outlay of capital. In fact, the dearer they bought, the more they made; and if they paid higher prices than they might have paid in the first instance, who can blame them? Between Uncle Sam and the owners of a few mules here and there in the country, why should they not act in a liberal spirit? We are not prepared to say the contractors are much to blame—we mean the recognized contractors—for there are many prominent men connected with these contracts whose names do not appear, but who share largely in the proceeds. The mode adopted by Secretary Floyd not only permitted but encouraged the recipients of his orders for supplying mules to give high prices, and if the