

# THE CASPER WEEKLY

PIONEER PUBLICATION OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.

ESTABLISHED 1850. JUNE, 1850.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

NO. 26.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1890.

VOL. XLI.

## A CHRISTMAS GREETING.

A Merry Christmas, children all,  
Rich and poor, large and small,  
To north to south, to east, to west,  
In every land where Christ is guest,  
A Merry, Merry Christmas!

Now may we love our neighbors more,  
And may we give from out our store,  
That all may have a happy heart,  
And take a glad some, joyous part  
In our Merry, Merry Christmas!

For when dear Christmas Eve draws nigh,  
Be it the time when you and I  
Shall put away all wrong and sin,  
And bid the holy Christ Child in  
To bless our Merry Christmas!

—Youth's Companion.

## FALSE CHRISTS.

We take the following summary of religious deceptions which have occurred during the past three years from the columns of the *New York Sun*. These delusions have led away not only the unlearned and simple but many educated and experienced men and women. They should stand as warnings to the world:

"The Indian is not alone in his expectation of an early appearance of a new messiah, as numerous instances are on record where, within the last two or three years, the more civilized and better-educated white men and black men of America have professed to have received revelations, and in some cases to be the Christ Himself.

"It was only in the summer of 1888 that one Patterson of Tennessee went around preaching that a wonderful thing was to happen; and when he thought the times were ripe he declared that the second advent of Christ had come in the person of A. J. Brown, who had served as Patterson's assistant. These two fanatics secured a large following as they went forth preaching their new doctrine, promising to forgive sins and heal all diseases. It was finally announced that Brown must go up into the mountains and fast for forty days and nights in order that he might be fittingly prepared for the mission intrusted to his hands. He suddenly disappeared, and nothing was seen of him for many days. When the prescribed period had passed, on a

Sabbath morning in June, his followers went out toward the hills and suddenly he appeared before them clothed in white, with his hands uplifted. A great shout went up and the people rushed toward him, falling upon their knees and kissing his feet. Many who were ill declared themselves healed by his touch. So great was the fanaticism of these people that one girl declared she was ready to die to prove her faith, and the non-believers around the town of Soddy, where these things happened, became so fearful that human life would be sacrificed that they sent for the Sheriff, at Chattanooga, and it required all his power to compel Patterson and Brown to leave the neighborhood, that quiet might be restored.

A year later, in 1889, occurred that remarkable series of impositions upon the credulity of the colored people, where one man after another proclaimed himself as the Christ, promised miracles, drew crowds of excited men and women from their labors and created consternation in those portions of the South where their performances were carried on. In one case a man nearly white, who gave his name as Bell, went among the negroes who lived along the Savannah river and proclaimed himself as the returned Christ, crying out that those who hoped to be saved must give up everything and follow him. Hundreds believed him, left the cotton fields, the sawmills, and the turpentine stills, and followed Bell, obeying his lightest word and ready to fall down at his feet in worship. So great was the disturbance that the authorities were led to arrest Bell, and when he was taken his followers would have torn his captors to pieces and rescued him had he given the word. He told them to be patient, declaring that an angel would come to him and break his prison doors by night, and that he could not be harmed. As he had some money in his possession he was not held for vagrancy, and although thought not to be in his right mind was soon discharged from custody. He then continued his preaching, followed by even greater crowds than before; announced that the world would come to an end on Aug. 16; that all white

men would then turn black and all black men white, and that he could supply all who wished to ascend on the last day with wings at \$5 a pair.

"When Bell was finally sent to his proper place—an insane asylum—Edward James, a colored justice of the peace in the same neighborhood, announced himself as the Messiah and proceeded to put forward claims as extravagant as those of Bell. He repeated the declaration of Bell that the end of the world was coming Aug. 16, preached that money was no longer of any use in the world, and prevented the employers of labor in that section from obtaining needed help. James was finally arrested and sent to the State insane asylum at Milledgeville. Yet another negro appeared in Cherokee county with the same pretensions; another in Camden, and a woman in Brunswick attempted the performance of miracles. In each of these cases the excitement was short-lived, but fanatical ignorance was provided in sufficient portions to make trouble while it lasted.

"A very marked example of imposition upon the one side and blind credulity upon the other, the basis being a claim of the visible Christhood in the flesh, is furnished in the career of George J. Schweinfurth at Rockford, Ill. In the cases above cited the claimants were obscure and ignorant men, while the dupes were of the lowest among the freedmen, who were guided only by their emotions and had no help from culture and education either in themselves or in the community around them. Vastly different was the Rockford delusion, springing up in the most intelligent section of the West, at the behest of the wife of a Congregational minister, who preached that in her own person were the attributes of the risen Lord. It is some sixteen years since Mrs. Dora Beekman advanced this claim, and her followers were at first few in number, but they were strong in faith, and they located their church at Bryan, near Rockford, and went zealously to work. Mr. Beekman, not believing in the new doctrine, was torn by conflicting doctrines until he found relief in insanity and an asylum.