

THE DESERET NEWS.

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"MERRY CHRISTMAS."

The twenty fifth day of December, this year coming on Sunday, the celebration or observance of that Catholic and Protestant holiday, commonly called "Merry Christmas," was not particularly confined to that day as some of the rites and ceremonies, usually considered appropriate to and indispensable on such occasions, are not generally deemed as fitting to be performed on the Sabbath as on a week day; consequently some of the people who were not inclined to dispense with the momentary pleasure derived therefrom, performed those ceremonies beforehand, and some afterwards, each who were thus inclined, exercising their judgment and freedom in the choice of the time most appropriate for the occasion.

On Friday and Saturday—the days of preparation, the city presented an unusually lively appearance. The streets were thronged, and the stores, shops and market places were filled with customers, buying, selling and exchanging, plainly indicating that something more than common was inciting them to action. There was also no inconsiderable display made by some of the vendors in East Temple street, to please the eye and attract the attention of those who might be in search of something to supply the wants of the outer or inner man.

If we should say what mercantile firm in our opinion took the lead in those matters it might give offence to some, so those who were eye witnesses will have to decide that matter each for themselves, and if in their judgment any benefit can accrue to those interested, they will of course give publicity to their decisions.

The markets and provision stores were well supplied with the comforts of life—the best that could be obtained in the country, and we hazard nothing in saying that Mr. Jennings as heretofore was not surpassed by any other similar establishment in his decorations, nor in the amount, quality and variety of meats and provisions displayed and on sale at his market place, where those who wish can at all times purchase anything in his line that can be found or obtained in the Territory, and there are other markets in the city, which in that respect are not far inferior.

So far as our knowledge extends, with a few exceptions, matters and things have moved along thus far as quietly as could have been expected under existing circumstances. To be sure many of the christians, dissenters, and other outsiders, with some who profess better things have tarried too long "at the wine," or made too free use of "mountain dew," a propensity which men seem to have that cannot be as easily overcome as some other things with which they have to contend.

Music and dancing has been more in vogue the past week than during the same time last year, but if any particular good or benefit has accrued to the community or to those who have gone forth in the dance, the public have not been advised in the premises.

On Monday, Ballo's Brass Band was out "on promenade" and cheered the citizens in various parts of the city with "music sweet" from early in the morning till late at night.

Thus ended the "Christmas ceremonies" in this city for the year eighteen hundred and fifty-nine and, if all are not satisfied with the doings on the occasion, they will have to wait for the return of Christmas in eighteen hundred and sixty, which may possibly be celebrated in Utah under more favorable circumstances by those who are fond of amusements.

WEBER COAL MINE.—A good specimen of coal from Weber mine has been exhibited in our office by Messrs. Kimball and Spriggs, who report that they have extended the tunnel, which they commenced at the base of the mountain one hundred and thirty feet passing through some four or five veins of coal of various thicknesses, and have reached one that is some four feet thick and of a quality superior to any that has heretofore been found in the Territory.

By the report of Mr. Fox made to the Legislative Council on the 20th inst., it is made to appear that the distance from the Council House to the coal mine by way of Parley's Park is about fifty one and a quarter miles,

and that by making a road down Silver creek from the crossing to the Weber, the distance can be shortened some three miles, making it only forty-eight miles to the coal bed by that route.

The Legislature will no doubt take some action in relation to a matter of so much importance to the people in this part of the Territory, and if coal exists there in such quantities as represented, of which there can be but little doubt, some measures should be taken to make it easy of access by improving the roads over which it will have to be transported to this city and other cities and settlements in Great Salt Lake Valley.

Legislative Proceedings.

On Tuesday the 20th, in the Council, Mr. Smith presented a memorial for daily mail service from Omaha, Nebraska, via Great Salt Lake City to San Francisco, which was referred to the committee on Petitions and Memorials.

A report from J. W. Fox, Territorial Surveyor General, in relation to the Weber coal mine, distances from this city, etc., was received, read and referred to the committee on Agriculture, Trade and Manufactures.

In the House a Bill was reported, entitled "an act to incorporate the Deseret Historical Society"; read and ordered to be printed; and also a Bill entitled "an act to create the office of County Road Commissioners for the several counties."

Mr. Stout presented a Bill concerning tenants holding over and the unlawful detention of lands, &c., which was referred to the committee on Public domain.

Most of the day was taken up in the consideration in joint session of the code of laws, prepared by the code committee created at the last session of the Legislative Assembly, without making much progress.

Wednesday the 21st was also principally taken up in considering the "Code" in the same way as on Tuesday, which, according to the report of the proceedings, resulted unfavorably "to its adoption as a whole."

In the Council, Mr. Smith chairman of the committee on Agriculture, Trade and Manufactures presented a report on the culture of cotton, and recommended the passage of "an act for the encouragement of cotton culture."

In the House there was but little done, the only thing of interest being a report of the committee on revenue to whom had been referred a portion of the Governor's Message relating to the raising a revenue for school purposes from the tithing fund, which was read and accepted.

After a short session on Thursday 22d both Houses adjourned till Monday the 27th, to give the members an opportunity of enjoying themselves by participating, if they chose, in the celebration of "Merry Christmas."

The proceedings on Monday and Tuesday were not very important and in our opinion there will not be much done till after New Year's and as usual most of the business of the session will be transacted near its close.

As we were locking up last evening, five pack mules loaded with mail matter passed our office. The postmaster being absent, we got no papers till late.

"Ossawatimie" Brown was executed on December 2d, according to the sentence of the law.

Another Shooting Affray.

On Sunday afternoon, shortly after the close of the services at the Tabernacle, there was one of the most disgusting and disgraceful affrays that ever transpired in this city, the origin of which we have been unable to ascertain.

Some report as many as fifty shots fired by both parties, one of which was seemingly led by Lot Huntington and the other by W. A. Hickman, both of whom were wounded, the latter severely.

The shooting was commenced near Townsend's Hotel, and a running street fire kept up from thence up the street about one fourth of a mile—Huntington, who was on the retreat, then taking shelter in a house, the further effusion of blood was prevented by the interference of Gen. Grant and other citizens.

There were some eight or ten persons engaged in the combat, several of whom were closely visited with leaden balls, but none badly hurt excepting the two leaders and a man named Butcher, who as reported, was either wounded in the affray or by the accidental discharge of his own pistol after it had ended.

GOING AHEAD.—Messrs. Staines, Needham & Co., have, within the last few days, as we are informed, purchased the entire stock of goods imported last summer by Mr. Merrit L. Young, thereby making an extensive addition to their former well selected stock of merchandise.

Although we are decidedly in favor of home manufactures, we are no enemy to those who deal in imported fabrics, when they do so upon fair principles and, if Staines, Needham & Co., will not deal honorably with their customers, let those who have the cash to exchange for merchandize, trade where they can get the most for their money.

However, in our humble opinion those who give them a call will not go away dissatisfied.

MULTIPLICITY OF DOGS.—The "ordinance in relation to dogs" has not been very rigidly enforced of late, judging from the rapid increase of their numbers in this city.

If the tax of one dollar had been collected on every animal belonging to the canine race the past summer the city Treasury would have been in a healthy condition, and dogs, especially those of inferior breeds, would not have been as numerous as they are now in and about the city.

Why men value dogs so highly, that are of an inferior breed, "good for nothing," as a Frenchman said, but "to bark and howl like de wolf," very few can tell. There are comparatively few persons who have an ear for such music, and those who have and wish to gratify their taste by keeping a pack of such animals or even one, should pay well for the privilege. One dollar is not enough, it ought not to be less than five dollars a head yearly. That would thin them out a little.

BY CALIFORNIA MAIL.

The Western mail arrived late on Tuesday evening last, by which we received San Francisco dates to Dec. 2d. but no regular files of our exchanges came to hand, from some cause better understood out west than it is here.

Rumor says that General Scott did not succeed in arranging affairs at San Juan satisfactorily and was on his return to Washington.

Not having received a regular file of exchanges, we have been unable to ascertain at what time the old Hero and pacificator arrived at San Francisco on his return; nor how long he remained there before he took his departure for home, which according to the *Herald*, was on the 1st of December, taking passage on the mail steamer John L. Stephens.

There was a severe storm at San Francisco on the night of the 24th of November, thanksgiving day, which did much damage to the shipping and wharves, and also to houses and other erections in the city. The cellars on Front, Battery, Davis and Sansome streets were filled with water, and much valuable merchandize was destroyed.

Sacramento was also visited by the storm and considerable damage was done to buildings and other property. It extended throughout Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys and the San Joaquin river rose to an unusual height.

At twenty minutes past 7 o'clock, on the evening of Dec. 1st, San Francisco was revisited by a slight shock of earthquake. The duration was very short, probably not more than two or three seconds. The oscillation was from northeast to southwest. It was so slight that comparatively few persons were aware of the fact.

A duel was fought near Shasta, on the 28th Nov., between R. T. Miller, County Judge and James Gallagher, late District Attorney of Trinity county, both residents of Weaver-ville. One shot was fired by each party. Miller was shot through both legs, just below the knee. The small effusion of blood satisfied both parties.

THE KANSAS CIVIL WAR—Fruits of the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise.—A Commission has been at work in Kansas to ascertain the amount of damage resulting to private property during the civil war there. It was composed of three persons, one appointed by Gov. Medary, and one by each branch of the Legislature. The following is a summary of the results arrived at:

Number of claimants	492
Amount of claims	\$676,029
Amount of Awards	\$412,678
Value of crops destroyed	\$37,198
Houses destroyed	78
Horses stolen	368
Cattle stolen	538
Property of pro-slavery men	\$77,164
Property of free-state men	\$335,776
Destroyed by pro-slavery men	\$318,718
Destroyed by free-state men	\$94,259

The persons killed amount to 150; wounded to 300.

CLIPPINGS.

The receipts at the United States Branch Mint, at San Francisco during one week, was 10,790 ounces of gold dust, and the coinage during the same time was \$117,000.

—A woman, called Mina Heninghi, doing business as a sole trader in San Francisco, has applied for the benefit of the insolvent law—liabilities near \$13,000; assets, nominally, \$5,000. She is evidently a business woman and "pretty much understands" the credit system.

—A letter received in San Francisco by the *Golden Gate*, states that a lady in the second cabin of the 'Uncle Sam,' on her down passage, cut her throat with a jack-knife, when four days out from San Francisco, and although living when at Acapulco, was not expected to recover. Her name is suppressed.

—One-half of an orchard of fifty acres, eight years old, lately sold in Oregon for \$20,000. The fruit of Oregon is said to be superior to that of California.

—Upwards of five thousand letters were sent by the Southern Overland Mail on the 14th inst. The number forwarded by each mail has steadily increased for the last six months.

—It is estimated that there are from five to seven thousand Welchmen scattered over the hills and valleys of California.

—The scarlet fever is prevalent in the town and neighborhood of Shasta.

—The *Hongkong Press* of Sept. 6th says that there is a dried specimen of a real mermaid in that city. It is about two feet long, has a head like a monkey, with hair on it, arms and fingers also like a monkey. The back is scaly and the tail precisely that of a fish. It was brought from Japan. Savans who have examined it, say there is no mistake about it.

—The sale of Rufus Choate's library, just completed by auction, will realize to his family about \$15,000.

—Twenty years ago the number of colored men in Canada West was 3,400; now there are more than 40,000. In four months after the passage of the fugitive slave law 10,000 poured into the country.

—Twenty million of wooden sleepers are replaced, annually, in England, useless from decay. This item alone requires the felling of three hundred thousand trees occupying five thousand acres of land.

—It is proposed, says the *Liverpool Albion*, to construct an iron tube or tunnel, with separate passages for carriages, foot passengers, and a railway, for the purpose of connecting the shores of the Mersey, by a subaqueous communication. This tunnel will be launched on the river, and when it is placed in proper position it will be sunk to the bottom, and the proper approaches made at either end.

—The Museum of the late Hugh Miller has been purchased by the city of Edinburg for the sum of one thousand pounds sterling (\$4,850).

—An English missionary, now in Sumatra, lately wrote home that he had "the melancholy satisfaction of examining the oven in which his predecessor was cooked."

—The subscription towards the erection of a monument to Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, is proceeding favorably. A list has been obtained, amounting to nearly £300, and the Duke of Buccleuch—besides a subscription of £10 10s.—has gratuitously supplied a suitable block of freestone for the figure, which is to be executed by Mr. Currie, sculptor, Dornick, at the cost of £400.

—Austrian finances have fallen lower than ever. To the dismay of all capitalists, it has just transpired that after having brought out a national loan of \$250,000,000 in 1854, she has fraudulently increased the issue to 305,000,000—or \$55,000,000 in excess.

—Some pack mules which had been driven to Eureka Mills, Sierra county, Cal., and back to La Porte in a train, during the late severe weather, died from the exposure.

—The *Sac. Union* says that it appears from the papers that the boys in the sharp town of Sonora imagined that the young Lord Grosvenor was green, and waked him up at his hotel in order to try him at cards. He played with them at poker, whist, seven-up, euchre and other games, they seeking all the time to get him intoxicated; but it turned out that he beat them fairly with their own weapons, and in the morning was the only sober man in the crowd. He is now popular in that locality, and the boys will fight for him. His early education was attended to.