

## EDITORIALS

## CHRISTIANITY IN ANCIENT AMERICA.

THE Catholic World revives an old tradition in Mexico, that the Apostle Thomas visited America after passing through India and planting Christianity in that land. He is supposed to have reached North America by some means not explained, traveled southward to Mexico, and thence to Peru. It is stated that

"When the Spaniards conquered Mexico they found among the natives religious customs resembling the Christian sacraments, especially the eucharist administered as now with bread and wine and partaken of as now by the adults with great veneration. The most notable personage in Mexican mythology was Quetzalchouati, who was described as a white man with a flowing beard, a staff and a mantle adorned with crosses. He came from the north, they said, and was the prophet of a new and pure religion. This name signifies 'the peacock serpent.' The peacock was the emblem of royalty and the serpent represents 'the twin.' So that the esoteric meaning of the name is the illustrious twin Didymus. The serpent was supposed to produce always two young ones at a birth. Similar emblems are found on the tomb of St. Thomas at Mellapore, India, but there the peacock holds a cross in its bill. The cross was revered by the native Mexicans and Peruvians at and before the Spanish conquest; water baptism by immersion and effusion was practised, and the Lenten fast of forty days was rigidly observed by them as by the Spaniards themselves and at the same season. The tradition is a curious one, and is used to illustrate what was probably the fact that the apostles accepted the Lord's command literally, and went to teach all nations and to be Christ's witnesses even to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Apostle Paul writing to the Colossians speaks of the Gospel as having been then preached to every creature which is under heaven; and writing to the Romans he quotes Psalm xix as applicable to the heralds of salvation whose sound had gone out into all the earth and their words into the ends of the world."

The conjectures about Thomas are of the vaguest and most unsatisfactory character. There is no evidence to show that either of the ancient Apostles knew anything whatever about the great western continent. The remarks of Paul concerning the preaching of the gospel to every creature under heaven were made according to the geographical knowledge which he possessed. And that these remarks did not refer to any other lands than those within a limited circle of Palestine is evident from the context, Paul declaring that he himself was a witness thereof. It is certain that Paul never crossed the great deep to this land, for his life, labors and death are known incidents in history, and they are circumscribed within narrow bounds.

The existence of Christian emblems and the celebration of Christian rites among the people who inhabited the land when first discovered by the whites, is, however, undeniable. The question is, how did a knowledge of Christian principles reach the people of this land, then unknown to the eastern world? The answer is given in the Book of Mormon. Jesus, after His resurrection, appeared to the people on this continent and established His Church among them with the same order of ministry, ordinances, rites, gifts, blessings and spirit as those of the Church organized in Jerusalem. This was in fulfillment of His own words: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; they also must I bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." That these sayings did not refer to the Gentiles, as some suppose is clear from His further avowal, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel."

The Book of Mormon shows that this land was peopled by a branch of the House of Israel, descendants of Joseph (not the ten tribes) and gives particulars of the introduction of the gospel to them and the reason they fell away into barbarism and degradation. It is the only key to the mysteries concerning ancient America, which are a puzzle to anti-

quarians and archaeologists and will remain so until they cast aside their unbelief and hardness of heart, and receive the knowledge which has come from heaven and has sprung out of the earth, under the direction and revelation of the God and Father of us all.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Is there any gentleman by the name of Jones in this country? There is a large estate in England at the disposal of somebody by that name, who is supposed to be in America.

Murders and other atrocious crimes have been unusually numerous during the holidays. What is the cause? Human depravity developed abnormally by strong drink. What is the moral? "Touch not, taste not, handle not."

The recent exploration party of Colonel Mercer up the Spanish River, in the province of Ontario, is said to have discovered vast pine forests, containing upward of 24,000,000,000 feet of a superior quality of pine lumber, with facilities for getting it to market equal to the best.

A boat destined to be propelled solely by electricity has just been completed in France. The owner, M. Tellier, intends to launch it at Boulogne, and to cross in it to Folkestone, in company with a friend. The boat is about 18 feet long by about 4½ feet wide.

It does not appear that Moody and Sankey have repeated their triumphs in England. Their audiences have been comparatively small, and the clergy do not, as before, countenance their revivalism. The London Times says that nearly all of the converts made during their first visit are now backsliders.

Slickens has played the dickens with the Sacramento River, and a big law suit is the result. Slickens is the refuse or debris from the mines which is run into the river at various points, gradually filling it up and changing the channel. Since 1871 sea-going vessels have not been able to navigate the Sacramento. It is a remarkable fact that in one place this debris has formed a bar eight or nine miles in length.

M. Armand Gautier has made a series of analyses on the presence of lead in foods and liquids, and presented the results to the Paris Academic des Sciences. He finds lead in preserved fruits and vegetables packed in "tin" boxes, a minute proportion being absorbed from the solder of the boxes. Prepared sardines, and particularly the oil in which they are packed, contains a still larger proportion, and the longer sardines have been kept, the greater is the proportion of lead.

Australia is taking steps to prevent the destruction of her forests. It is proposed in South Australia that a block of 200,000 acres be reserved for systematic tree planting, and that in the first year \$70,000 be expended on it, and in each of the eleven following years \$32,500, a total expense of \$650,000. After the first five years there would be, it is estimated, a revenue from periodical thinnings of \$175,000, and in 21 years they would possess 310 square miles of forest.

A trial of glass making with the sand and natural alkali of Morrison, not far from Denver, Col., has been successful. In that place there is a ridge of sand two miles long, which is of most excellent quality; also deposits of alkali and lime covering an area of 240 acres, with all the materials at hand for the production of fine glass. Experiments made with these materials resulted in the production of an unusually clear and colorless glass. Pottery clay of superior quality is also reported in the same vicinity.

In the opinion of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in Commonwealth vs. Gloucester Ferry Company, a corporation has no natural rights; it is a legal entity, an artificial person, and its rights spring either from legislative enactment or from comity; within the state of its creation it has no powers but those conferred upon it by the legislative act which called it into being, and whether it shall or shall not perform any of its functions in a foreign state depends wholly upon the wish of such state, expressed either by statute or implied under that general law known as international comity; and as a condition of doing business in the foreign state its legislature may put a tax on it.

An expedition, headed by Paolo Mantegazza, has left Italy for India to make anthropological studies of the Indian races, and to collect bones and bones for the museum at Florence. Signor Mantegazza is interested in the races of the Himalaya, and it is to this region that the attention of himself and his companions will be especially devoted. Among other tribes the travellers will visit that of the Todas in the south of India, one of the strongest and most intelligent that exists. These people are polyandrists—that is the members of one family collectively marry some one woman, and so the female infants that exceed the proportionate number of males are killed. The people are shepherds, worship the sun, and believe in a life after death. Their origin is unknown, and their language has nothing in common with the known Indo-Oriental tongues.

## STAKE CONFERENCE.

The regular Semi-annual Conference of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion, convened at 10 o'clock this morning.

There were present on the stand, of the Twelve Apostles John Henry Smith.

Of the Presidency of the Stake, Angus M. Cannon and Joseph E. Taylor.

William W. Taylor, of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies.

President Elias Smith and Counselor Edward Snelgrove of the High Priests Quorum.

Meeting was opened by singing:

Awake ye Saints of God awake.

Prayer was offered by Elder Edward W. Davis.

Singing:

Though nations rise and men conspire.

The roll was called. There were 12 Presidents of Seventies present.

The 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th and 16th Elders Quorums were represented.

All the Wards of the Stake were represented by presiding authorities excepting the 5th, 14th, 19th, Mill Creek, Big Cottonwood, South Cottonwood, Granite and South Jordan.

The Priests of the South Cottonwood, Union, Draperville and West Jordan Wards, the Teachers of the 15th, Mill Creek and Brighton Wards, and the Deacons of the 3rd, 11th, 19th and Herriman Wards were represented.

The following reports were read:

A statistical report of the Stake for the quarter ending November 30th, 1881; reports from the 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 12th, 14th and 15th Elder's Quorums. A report of the Temple donations of the Stake for the four years, ending Sept. 30th, 1881, and a report of the Y. M. M. I. Associations for the quarter.

President A. M. Cannon made some explanations regarding the report of Temple offerings, and urged the importance of the Saints being alive to this work, that the labors for the living and the dead might not be impeded by our neglect. He was shocked at the prevalence of the habit of smoking among the young, and felt that it would be well for the Priesthood to take up a labor with persons addicted to it. President Young had said that those who assisted in building the Centre Stake of Zion would have to observe the "Word of Wisdom" sacredly.

Apostle John Henry Smith said that it was becoming a habit in some Stakes for the people to pay but little attention to the meetings of their conference on Saturdays, and he felt that it would have a good effect to make the services of that day more interesting, and leave the statistics and other business for the day when the most people would be present to pass upon the business brought before the Conference. He referred to the prevalence of smoking and other evils among the young, who were thus forming habits and appetites that would enslave them when older. Fathers and mothers were not so solicitous for the welfare of their children as they should be, he was satisfied, as he had frequently seen numbers of small boys upon the public streets at night, in some instances even under the influence of strong drink, who should have been home and in bed hours before. It was a disgrace that such things should exist among us, but as long as men with no other ambition in life than to make money no matter at what expense, were sustained in their damnable traffic by those in authority, we must avail ourselves of such means as we have at our command to stem the tide of iniquity, and in this connection he

urged the importance of Teachers—and were too high to act as teachers—inquiring critically into the condition of the families they visited and of laboring kindly with the erring, with a view of showing them the consequences of an evil course and of prevailing upon them to repent and follow after the ways of the Lord. He related several instances in his own experience of the happy results of this course.

President A. M. Cannon read the following:

"Extract from minutes of a session of the High Council, Dec. 23, 1881.

It was moved that it be the sense of this Council that Presidents of Quorums are not justified in sustaining men in the Holy Priesthood who keep saloons for the sale of intoxicating beverages. Carried.

It was also moved that it be the sense of this Council that Presidents of Quorums are not justified in sustaining men in the Holy Priesthood who frequent saloons to partake of intoxicating beverages. Carried.

It was decided to present the above resolutions to the Stake Conference for endorsement."

On motion of Bishop Thomas Taylor, the foregoing action of the High Council was endorsed by unanimous vote of the Conference.

Adjourned to meet at 2 p.m.

Singing—

Guide us, O thou great Jehovah.

Benediction by Bishop Alexander McRae.

Conference re-assembled at 2 p.m.

The choir sang, "The Time is Nigh."

Prayer was offered by Elder Horace S. Eldredge.

Singing, "My soul is full of Joy and Peace."

President Joseph E. Taylor spoke of the great responsibilities devolving upon the Priesthood. The organization of the Melchisedec Priesthood was very complete in the Stake, but the Quorums of the Lesser Priesthood were not as general as could be desired. There being but two quorums of Priests and four quorums of Teachers in the Stake, whereas it was desirable to have one of each of these quorums in every ward as far as their numbers would justify it. Deacons quorums were generally organized in the wards of the Stake, but he feared there was not that interest in them by the Bishops in the young men ordained to this calling that there should be.

He urged the importance of infusing a spirit of life into these boys, for if they were set on the right road in their early youth the experience they would thus gain would be a blessing to themselves and the Saints in after years.

While the Bishops of this Stake were not called upon to handle the tithing of the people it was their duty to inquire of those under their jurisdiction as to whether the amount paid was a full tithe, and if not what proportion of it was of their tithing and a list of all who should pay tithing should be reported up with the amounts each had paid, if anything, opposite their names. He was satisfied that it would have a good effect if Bishops would visit the Saints at their homes, thus becoming familiar with them and drawing the people nearer to them, and had been attended with excellent results wherever practised. He thought that where children from eight to fourteen years of age were using tobacco and other stimulants, it was an evidence of the neglect of mothers, for they should be under their direct supervision at that age. It was lamentable that constitutions of the young should be degraded by the vices of the world through the neglect of those whose duty it was to direct their minds in proper channels.

Elder A. K. Thurber spoke of the importance of teaching the young to be industrious, for if industrious they would be likely to be honest, and if honest and industrious they would be prepared to withstand temptation. Notwithstanding the many temptations to which they were subject, he was pleased to state that there was a great improvement among the youth in the vicinity from which he came.

Elder J. R. Murdock said, there was only one way of salvation, and each would receive a reward according to his own acts. The Latter-day Saints could not plead ignorance in extenuation of evil conduct, for we had access to the revelations of God, both ancient and modern. Those who found themselves unworthy of the positions they were called to fill should step aside and not act as stumbling blocks. Men could not be saved in ignorance or sin, hence the importance of learning and performing our duties.

President Elias Smith advocated a more strict surveillance of the

young by their parents. If boys were allowed to be out at all hours of the night they felt free from restraint and were likely to be led into temptation. The High Priests' quorum was composed of "boys" from 50 to 90 years of age. They were generally good men, but if any gave way to indulgence in intoxicating liquors, they would be dealt with, as he did not feel to sustain such men in the Priesthood. In conclusion, he referred to the growing scarcity of men who had passed through the early scenes of the Church.

Adjourned, to meet on Sunday, January 8th, at 10 a.m.

Singing—

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath.

Benediction by Patriarch John Smith.

Sunday, Jan. 8.

Conference assembled at 10 a.m.

Singing:

Softly beams the sacred dawning.

Prayer was offered by Elder Canute Peterson.

Singing:

Arise, O glorious Zion.

The authorities of the Church were then presented and sustained as at the last General Conference.

The authorities of the Stake were presented and sustained as at the preceding Stake Conference, with the following exceptions:

The name of Millen Attwood was omitted from the list of High Councilors and that of John T. Caine, the first on the list of alternate Councilors, was added to fill the vacancy thus occasioned.

Edward E. Brain was sustained as assistant Clerk and Reporter of the Stake, in place of John R. Irvine, absent in Washington.

Bros. Wm. Draper and Lars Jensen were sustained as Patriarchs in this Stake, in addition to those previously sustained.

The following names were omitted from the Home Missionary list: Millen Attwood, chosen Bishop; Nelson A. Empey, Bishop's Counselor; Wm. Draper, ordained a Patriarch, and Wm. C. Staines and Robert Pixton, deceased.

The following names were added to the list of Home Missionaries: Peter Reid, Henry Tuckett, James H. Moyle, Archibald Buchanan, Joseph R. Matthews, Gronway Parry, Henry Dean, Thomas C. Griggs, Francis Cope and Edward E. Brain.

Joseph R. Matthews was sustained as President of the Seventh Quorum of Elders, and Andrew Kimball and James B. Watson as his Counselors.

Millen Attwood as Bishop of the 13th Ward, in place of Edwin D. Woolley, deceased, and Nelson A. Empey and Francis Platt as his Counselors.

The name of Sister Serepta L. Heywood was omitted as a Counselor to Sister M. L. Horne, President of Relief Societies, she having departed this life.

Prest. A. M. Cannon said he was gratified to announce that the building committee had succeeded in raising sufficient money to pay off the debts on this building, and it would be dedicated this afternoon.

On motion of Prest. Jos. E. Taylor, the building committee of the Assembly Hall were released with the thanks of the Conference for their efficient labors.

Elder A. O. Smoot said that the year 1882 opened with unusual promises to the Latter-day Saints and he hoped these promises would be realized by all through the faithful performance of their duties as individuals. There was no question as to the ultimate triumph of the work of God but it would be more rapidly developed if the Saints sought to magnify their callings. The spirit of opposition to the Saints was an evidence that they were drawing near unto the Lord, though there were many who were not what they should be. In his experience of 40 years in the Church, he had never seen a more promising time for the cause of Zion than the present.

Elder William B. Preston said we were here to work out the "Mormon problem." The way to accomplish this was for the Saints to be united and devote themselves to the establishment of God's kingdom and the furtherance of His purposes in the earth. We could not take any of the things pertaining to this world with us to the next, and hence he was a wise financier who would so invest his time and means and talent that he would be entitled to the riches of eternity.

Elder H. J. Grant said the Saints