

DESERET EVENING NEWS

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AGENTS: Salt Lake City, June 7, 1900. A LAKE HISTORIC TRUTHS.

Half the editorial space in the Salt Lake Tribune of this morning is occupied with a rebash of scraps of history relating to the "Mormon" Battalion.

"We have given space to this in the hope that at least some Mormons will read it and get a new realization of how utterly false and shameful the Deseret News can be when it trenches in the least upon Mormon history."

The funny part of the Tribune's lengthy effort is, that all the real history in its numerous quotations corroborates exactly what the Deseret News related. Let any sane and unbiased person read the article in the "News" of Tuesday evening, and that in the Tribune of this morning, and he will see that there is not any conflict between them, except that which comes from the absurd and vicious remarks of the editor of the Tribune.

Our remarks on this subject were called forth by a letter of inquiry as to the truth of assertions made by the Tribune, which is in the habit, whenever an opportunity can be obtained, of misrepresenting and belittling the service performed by the Mormon Battalion to the United States in the war with Mexico.

This the Tribune writer calls "an out and out misrepresentation," and adds as a supposed clincher: "The truth is that California was their destination."

The Battalion made its awful march to San Diego. The Pioneers and the Saints who followed them, came to the spot which is now included in Utah. At that time California embraced all the territory now known as Utah and Nevada. The destination of the Saints was westward to the "Great Basin."

The valley of the Great Salt Lake was in California, and so was San Diego; but will anybody, even in these days of rapid travel and easy transportation, have the hardihood to say that two companies of people, starting from the Missouri river, one for San Diego and the other to Salt Lake, were each bound for the same place and where the other wanted to go?

When President John Taylor sang of "The Upper California, O! that's the land for me," he vaguely described it in the words, "It lies between the mountains and the great Pacific sea." It then embraced a vast section of the Pacific slope, Utah but a small portion of the great tract that then belonged to Mexico.

We have devoted so much space to this subject, for the benefit of a number of our readers who may need some points of history, wherewith to meet the errors and falsehoods that are sent forth from the chief source of anti-"Mormon" slander in this city, and repeated in the pulpit and the press of other parts of this great country. It is not profitable to continue this discussion, but these few truths should be clearly understood:

The "Mormon" Battalion was organized in the spirit of unselfish patriotism. It was an immense sacrifice on the part of the "Mormon" people. Whatever may have been the purpose of its projectors, the Saints believed it was intended for their injury. But they listened to the voice of their inspired leader, and yielded up the strength of their camps to engage in the service of their country at a time of need.

The service performed was a grand and heroic exhibition of fortitude and fidelity to the nation that had failed to protect the Saints from their murderous enemies. Every attempt to belittle that exhibition of loyalty, courage and devotion to the right, will utterly fail when exposed to the searchlight of history, and confronted with the stern facts which are becoming better known as time advances. We can only entertain pity for a mind so warped with hatred and a soul so soured with disappointed desires, that it can find no other solace than in distorting truth and trying to deceive mankind.

JAPAN AND RUSSIA. According to the dispatches, it now looks as if the long predicted conflict between Japan and Russia were about to commence. True, the political sky often looks dark and threatening without breaking out in thunderstorms, and the present tension may be relieved, for the time being, by diplomatic skill, but it would create no surprise, if one of these days it was learned that Russia and Japan had commenced the conflict, which is supposed to be inevitable.

Japan, it is said, has been preparing for such an emergency for several years, and if the struggle must come, it would be to the advantage of Japan to have it now rather than later on, when the antagonist is stronger and better prepared. It is difficult to see, in fact, how Japan can avoid an aggressive policy. When a nation perceives that a neighbor is making ready for an assault, prudence dictates measures for the prevention of such preparations.

The present strength of the prospective combatants is much in favor of Japan. This country has at present

less desert; at few points could food be obtained in sufficient quantity for man or beast, and sometimes even water failed. Wells were sunk in the wilderness, but on one occasion at least the men traveled for a hundred miles without water. Before leaving Santa Fe rations were reduced, and soon afterward further reduced to one-half, and finally to one-quarter allowance. The most injured to the troops being the flesh of such animals as were unable to proceed further, though their hides and entrails were eagerly devoured, being gulped down with draughts of water when water could be had. While suffering these hardships the men were compelled to carry their own knapsacks, muskets and extra ammunition, and sometimes to push the wagons through heavy sand or help to drag them over mountain ranges. Passing through a New Mexican pueblo on the 24th of October, some of the men were almost as naked as on the day of their birth, except for a breech-cloth, or as their colonel termed it, a "center clothing," tied around the loins.

Here is what Lieut.-Col. St. George Cooke said to the Battalion, in a general order issued January 30th, 1847: "History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry; nine-tenths of it through a wilderness, where nothing but savages and wild beasts are found, or deserts where, for the want of water there is no living creature. There with almost hopeless labor we have dug deep wells which the future traveler will enjoy. Without a guide who has traversed them, we have ventured into trackless prairie where water was not found for several marches. With crowbar and pickaxe in hand, we have worked our way over mountains which seemed to defy aught save the wild goat, and heaved a passage through a chain of living rock more narrow than our wagons."

"With a fatality common to the writer who takes so much pleasure in misrepresenting everything that relates to the "Mormons," after declaring that the Battalion was called for in response to a request from the Saints and was just what they wanted and petitioned for, he inadvertently makes this quotation from Bancroft:

"The "Mormons," however, not receiving aid to the extent or of the kind that they had hoped for, regarded the action taken as a mere requisition for troops and in numbers out of all proportion to the population that was to furnish them."

And yet after citing that historical statement, he goes on to say that "enlistment was a favor" and that "it was hailed as a favor by the Mormons." Another of his attempts to misrepresent the "News" and the facts in this case is this: "The "News" said:

"It must be evident to every person in his senses that the aid asked of the national authorities, was not a request to take away from the almost helpless body of the Saints, nearly all their able bodied men, and send them to a point far distant from their own destination."

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the larger and more efficient navy. But in some years from now, this will not be the case. Japan is about to spend \$80,000,000 for warships of all kinds, but Russia has appropriated \$25,000,000 for the same purpose, and in a few more years Japan's naval strength will naturally be inferior to that of Russia. In land forces, too, Japan has now the advantage. The Mikado can within a short time raise an army of half a million soldiers, which are within easy reach of the Chinese coast. Russia is believed to have not to exceed 100,000 men on the Pacific coast, and it would take time to gather a force sufficient to beat back a strong, invading army.

The Japanese government is aware of the situation. It may possibly deem it necessary to hurry up the developments, particularly if it has but a half promise of support, moral or otherwise, from any of the great rivals of Russia.

That this country will be neutral in an eventual armed conflict between the "Far" and the Mikado, is well understood. Yet, the Chinese coast is but 500 miles distant from the Philippine capital, and we cannot but take a lively interest in what is transpiring there. The heavy gates of the ancient empire may be broken open by the shell and bayonets of modern civilization, but when that has been done, there will be a Chinese question forced upon the industrial and mercantile world, which in course of time may assume proportions not now dreamed of by even the keenest statesmanship. It can never be forgotten that once before the products of western arts and sciences were buried under the ruins in the path of Asiatic hordes, numerous as grasshoppers. History may not be repeated in this instance, yet the events of the past should be a guide to the future. In many instances they are but the shadows of coming realities.

METHODISM SHIFTING GROUND. The general conference of the Methodists recently held, is vividly commented upon, and the impression is almost universal, that it is to be classed among the most important ever held. Among the measures passed was one abolishing the time limit by which ministers were allowed to stay in one place only so many years. In future they may be reappointed to the same pulpit indefinitely. Then there was a cleaning up in offices. Superfluous secretaries and other functionaries of missionary societies were abolished, and non-paying publications were discontinued. The rules against certain forms of amusements were retained, but after a heated debate, the result of which was that the rule will be applied only in exceptional cases. In other words, from now on the young people of the Methodist faith will be found more frequently than formerly in the theaters and the whirl of social enjoyment, without causing agony among the older members, as previously. This is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable features of the conference. For without question, it means the shifting of ground of modern Methodism.

The fact is that the followers of John Wesley did not separate themselves from the parent church on account of any serious difference in doctrine, but in practice. The Methodist, influenced somewhat by the German pietistic tendency, took up the battle for personal holiness at a time when worldliness almost covered the old, dead forms of ecclesiastical life. They attached less importance to opinions than to practices, and as a consequence they urged devotional exercises and condemned all that which was considered detrimental to spiritual fervor and zeal. Dancing, playing games of chance, visiting theaters, and indulging in secular amusements came under the ban, as unprofitable to a spiritual life. Prayer meetings, class meetings, and other religious gatherings took their place. This peculiarity of Methodism gave it a standing in the religious world. It had a mission and it set about its performance with "methods" peculiar to itself, and with success.

But judging from the debates at the conference, a change in this respect is impending. It has perhaps been made clear by long experience that prohibitive rules against that which the enlightened conscience does not condemn, must result in slavish Phariseism on the one hand, and open defiance on the other.

What the result will be of the apparent change of base will be seen in the future. One of the distinctions between Methodism and other "isms" will be wiped out. The "revivalist" methods, which pleased the unenlightened masses in the early part of the century, will be relegated to the past, and some test of "salvation" will have to be found, other than the emotions that are excited by vivid pictures of a place of torment, or by touching anecdotes.

And thus, one by one the churches of the world are forced to abandon their first positions. The world is crowding them from all sides. Their theology is torn to shreds by a "criticism" that can no longer be silenced even in the pulpits. Their ethics are rendered obsolete by the ever changing fashions of which human beings are prone to become slaves. But the lesson of it all is this, that every structure that is not reared upon the solid rock of revelation must fall. No other foundation can be laid but that which has been laid by the divine Author of the Church. All others have proven to be sand in the raging storms of the passing centuries.

President Kruger says the Boers will fight to the bitter end. The way things are going, that end is not far off.

The Boers, in retreating before the British, not only carried off their guns, but it seems they also took the British prisoners with them.

It is said that Japan will not back down in the prospective conflict with Russia. It is clear that somebody will tumble down before the thing is settled.

The New York banker, E. C. Benedict, says he is a political orphan. And yet the politicians all around the circle have been calling him a bank instead of orphan, and still insist they are right.

The Boer envoys say they are being followed and annoyed by British detectives. The British are foolish to waste time at that, if they are doing it. The

American newspaper reporter will do all the shoveling of the Boers that Britain could require, and will print it.

Illinois capitalists are going into the best sugar business on a big scale, the intention being to erect four factories in the Kankakee valley, at a cost of half a million each. It will be pretty good if the company builds one first class factory as a starter, and makes it pay in Illinois. Then others will come in due course.

The Duke of Cambridge's Own, which is made up entirely of England's nobility, was included in the recent capture by the Boers. Even at this distance one can almost hear the aristocrats expressing their disgust at being hauled in by Dutch farmers, and the "It's deucedly unfortunat, donchuknow," seems almost audible.

Gen. Otis says the Filipinos take to politics like a duck to water. That probably accounts for the monumental lying indulged in by Aguinaldo. In his yarn about the Spaniards capturing guns from the Americans at Manila. By the way, those guns were served by Utah men, and the only things about them the Spaniards got were the fired shot and shell.

Great Britain has another rebellion, this one being in North Borneo. As usual, the complaint is against the chartered company, and as usual, the arbitrary rule of the monopolist organization is upheld by force. The record of British chartered companies in colonial possessions is very far from being a picture of commendable civilized procedure.

Antient the bicycle discussion now, why is it that the existing city ordinance against fast riding on the sidewalk is not enforced? There is not a day, nor an hour in the daytime, when that ordinance is not violated, and hundreds of riders could be taken in any evening for disregarding the city regulation. Let us have a reasonably strict enforcement of the law as it is, till something better can be done.

Spokane Spokesman-Review. As in the case of the vigilantes, organized in the lawless days of placer mining, the society of "Boxers" was originally formed with a commendable purpose. It was organized to deal with bands of native robbers, but later became an instrument of private revenge, and later still for venting the Chinese hatred against "foreign devils." Originally, the "Boxers" were the Brothers of the Strong Sword (in Chinese "Ta Too Why") and accomplished good work in the interest of law and order. His movement is largely composed of ignorant Chinese, and intriguing men who desire the checking of foreign influences, work upon the ignorant masses with assertions that the missionaries are opposed to the veneration of ancestors and murder Chinese children to obtain certain organs said to be used in witchcraft.

San Francisco Call. Only a short time ago the "Boxers" were described as a small but turbulent band of fanatics roused to action by their hatred of what they call "foreign devils." A little later it was announced that the band had become dangerous and might cause disturbance in one or two seaports. Now it has grown to be an immense movement. It is no longer an insurrection. It is a rebellion. It menaces not only seaports, but the capital; not only foreigners, but the government. It is supposed to have the sympathy of the Chinese army. Nor is that all. The Chinese characteristic is given to the situation by the report that the empress is on the side of the rebels and is aiding them in the crusade.

Chicago Record. Although the public is vitally interested in the various phases of the trust question, it appears to take only a languid interest in the debate upon plans for curbing trusts now under consideration in the House of Representatives. The reason is that the plans proposed and the speeches about them are designed for political effect merely.

Omaha World-Herald. Thousands upon thousands of men in all lines of occupation have been thrown out of employment by the trusts. The prices of many of the necessities of life have been greatly advanced by the trusts, and more than all, they have set themselves up to violate a cherished American principle—the right to buy in the cheapest and best market, not to speak of the privilege of earning a living.

Milwaukee Wisconsin. The success of the trusts of Germany, and the favorable attitude of the people toward them, is undoubtedly the cause of the intense agrarian agitation aimed at the import trade in American farm and meat products. The agricultural interests of Germany would like to secure a monopoly of the home markets and enjoy the power to fix prices that is used by the trusts to enlarge their profits. But unfortunately for the agrarian interest, the poor people of Germany need the food products of the United States.

Kansas City Star. In New York, Chicago and other cities the people have organized committees to resist trusts and are seeking redress in the courts. These combinations affect all classes of people and bear down with especial weight on the poor, to whom life has become a grim necessity. The people who dwell in hot, crowded tenements, hemmed in by blistering streets, ice brings about the only means of relief from the stifling heat. It is indispensable in sickness and is absolutely necessary for the preservation of life, which is the sustenance of young children.

Pittsburg Dispatch. The government armor plate plant experiment is imminent. Fortunately the bill provides for armor for the three ships now awaiting it, and if government manufacture proves a failure, as it is almost sure to do, Congress may provide for other vessels without entailing many years of delay. This armor plate action is unwise. But an expenditure of \$4,000,000 in an experiment will not bankrupt the country; for armor should become very urgent in the near future, the bill could be carried to a capable firm.

Brooklyn Citizen. As to the action of Congress in this matter, a step forward has been taken in deference to public sentiment, but it is not clear how strong the general feeling is in favor of a government plant in order that the integrity of the armor plate trust shall be beaten down, and because of the value of such a plant to the country in an emergency. It would pass the bill without any "ifs" in it, directing the immediate construction of the same.

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