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THE RECENT MASS MEETINGS.—  
THEIR REAL SIGNIFICANCE.

THERE is an old saying, the truth of which is seldom disputed, that great talkers are seldom great workers; but it will not hold good when applied to our own nation, for in enterprise, as well as ingenuity it is admitted, universally, that we are ahead of the world. The multiplicity of labor-saving inventions abundantly attest the truth of the latter part of the proposition; and we need only point to the Trans-continental Railroad, and other great works in various parts of the country in proof that we are the most enterprising people in existence. It is also true that we are a nation of talkers, and it is as natural for an American to talk as it is to eat. Hence the continual holding of caucuses and conventions on almost every conceivable subject, from the nomination and election of the municipal officers of the smallest burgh to that of the highest officer in the land—the President of the United States.

This itching to discourse in public is by no means confined to gentlemen, but the ladies of America delight to shine in the forum, and of late years lady lecturers on woman's rights have become an acknowledged public institution.

The Territory of Utah, however, has not been a very profitable or lucrative field for this class of public professionals, for the ladies of Utah know that they live in a community where woman's most sacred rights are held inviolate, in which any man, who would not dare anything, even to hazarding life itself in the defence of woman's honor, is deemed unworthy of a standing therein. It is to be deplored that Utah is the only part of the civilized world where such is the case, hence there is some excuse for the frequent unfeminine displays that take place where women congregate to advocate their favorite movement.

A woman's rights meeting, even in Utah, is not quite unknown, however, though until a few days ago such a thing, attended by ladies only, had never been heard of. On Friday last, such a meeting was held in the Tabernacle of this city; and in many other cities in the Territory. But this, though, in the strictest sense, a woman's rights meeting, was of a very different character from such meetings held in the States. It was not to assert and maintain woman's equality with man, either mentally, at the polls, or in any other capacity; but it was to maintain and assert the dearest of all woman's prerogatives,—namely her right to choose a husband. In no other civilized country under heaven, is this right disputed, at least in the eye of the law; but as measures designed to deprive the ladies of Utah of this most inalienable of all woman's rights are talked of and contemplated in certain quarters, they very properly assembled to protest against them. We refer of course to certain notorious bills much talked of, of late, framed by Messrs. Cragin and Cullom, designed expressly to abolish the practice of patriarchal marriage as revealed from heaven to, and practiced among, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Now, the ultimate passage or rejection of these or similar bills by the law-making department of our nation in reality causes us no anxiety. We know in whom we have believed, the nature of the cause we have espoused and are laboring to sustain; and though in the providence of our Father we, while laboring to establish His kingdom upon the earth, may be called, in future, as we have been in the past, to endure persecution and tribulation, we know that all things that may come along will be overruled by Him for the sanctification of His Saints and for the triumph of His kingdom upon the earth, and that even the wicked will be

made to praise Him. Hence it is not in the light of a protest against any bills that we attach any particular significance to the indignation mass meetings of the ladies of Utah.

We know that it has long been customary in the religious world, and, to answer their base ends, among politicians, and their tools—the press, to make a terrible howl about the degraded condition of the ladies of Utah, because of the practice of plural marriage in the Territory. This commiseration, however, is only sham, for the majority of those who are most loud-mouthed in its expression would extend no more real sympathy towards those whose condition they profess to commiserate so deeply than a ravenous wolf would to a lamb: They would lead them from the paths of virtue, from places where they are honored and their rights respected, make them the objects of their lust and then abandon them to shame and infamy. Even if this much vaunted sympathy were real, it is entirely unnecessary; for, without fear of contradiction, we assert that the moral and social condition of the ladies of Utah, taken collectively, is superior to that of a like number, similarly situated with regard to worldly wealth, in any part of the world.

Much of this feigned sympathy, to which we have referred above is because, the sympathizers say, the ladies here are compelled to submit to the law of patriarchal marriage, and that, had they the power, they would gladly hail deliverance from such a yoke. It is in connection with this that we attach real importance to the recent mass meetings, because they most emphatically give the lie to the above oft-repeated assertions of the "sympathizers."

If the ladies of Utah were as degraded and as anxious to get from under this so-called yoke, as they are said to be, is it to be supposed for one moment that thousands of them would voluntarily assemble in mass meeting and declare their knowledge of the divinity of the order of Patriarchal Marriage, and their determination to sustain it? Such a supposition would be the height of absurdity, and would be entertained by none having substantial claims to sanity or the possession of common sense.

Many of our sisters have endured the severest trials and afflictions since their connection with the Church of God; all have perfect freedom, whether they remain true to it or not, whether they live married or single lives, and yet thousands voluntarily step forward and avow their determination, come life or death, to sustain, by their faith, prayers and practice, the order of Heaven with regard to marriage, and to do all in their power to defeat measures designed to abolish the same.

Viewed in this light we think the indignation meetings of the ladies of Utah are deserving of consideration by all; and for the noble stand they have taken in defence of that which they know to be true they deserve and will receive blessings in time and eternity.

## THE PEOPLE OF UTAH—WHY PECULIAR.

THE people of Utah have always been called "a peculiar people," and judged by the standard which prevails elsewhere, they merit the appellation. This peculiarity is not confined to religious matters—though it is on those points they have principally attracted attention up to the present—but extends to every department of life which claims their attention. Fettered by no rules or precedents, because they only have age to recommend them, they boldly adopt and carry out everything that practical wisdom and experience suggest as being right and proper. Their course in this respect startles the old fogies who hear of their operations from afar, and shocks their conservatism, and many of them are prepared to believe any story, however outrageous, about a people who are so heterodox.

The want of a system of phonetic spelling has long been felt by philologists; isolated attempts have also been made to supply this want, but the effect has been very limited. Recognizing the importance of this subject the Regents of the University of Deseret took it into consideration, and formed and adopted a phonetic alphabet, which is known as the Deseret Alphabet. Books have been printed in these characters, and the prospect is that at no distant date it will be universally used by the people of this Territory. In the adoption of such a system as this the people have shown their willingness to discard an inconsistent, barbarous style of orthography, which is unsuited to the progress of the age, and in this respect they are peculiar.

The building of the Utah Central Railroad is another work that exhibits the peculiar manner in which the people of this Territory accomplish their labors. It is the only road in the United States which has been built without the aid of subsidies or grants from the General or State Governments, or towards which capitalists have not furnished the principal means; the only road, in fact, built by a working people. But this is not its only peculiarity: the entire work from its inception to its completion has been dedicated to the Lord, the last spike, and the hammer which drove it, both having engraved upon them "Holiness to the Lord."

We have alluded to the Alphabet and the Railroad to exhibit the manner in which the people of Utah carry out ideas and accomplish enterprises which seem necessary to them. They are, however, only two instances out of many that might be adduced. As the community increase in wealth and numbers their manner of doing business will inevitably attract attention and give them distinction as a peculiar people. They will yet achieve a fame and excite an admiration of which few have an adequate conception at present.

But there is one peculiarity which they manifest that must excite, in an observing mind, very singular feelings. The past week has been one of jollity and wide-spread enjoyment, in consequence of the completion of the Utah Central Railroad. The drama has been suspended and a series of magnificent balls have been given at the Theatre, which was specially fitted up for the purpose, in honor of the event. All classes have shared in the pleasures of the season. A visitor not acquainted with the people, would never imagine that the happy, joyous thousands whom he saw crowding the Theatre every evening, peace apparently illumining every heart and gladness illuminating every countenance, were the "Mormons," the people who, if their enemies could have their way, were so soon to be destroyed!

Those who concoct plans for the destruction of the Latter-day Saints can derive no satisfaction from the annoying effects which their plots have upon them. It must be galling to these wretches to see the people whom they would destroy enjoying themselves so heartily and being no more disturbed by their machinations than if they were not in existence! In this respect, as well as in others, the people of Utah are peculiar.

## NEW YORK TENEMENT HOUSES.

THE New York press is loudly calling attention to the evils resulting to the poorest classes of people the city contains, from the tenement house system. These tenement houses are very profitable investments for their owners, probably yielding a larger rate of interest for the outlay required to build them than could be derived from any other source. The great majority of them are constructed in the cheapest possible manner, and in the lowest quarters of the city; they are erected regardless of convenience, and, judging from the accounts of them occasionally published in the New York papers, are little better in most respects than so many hog pens.

In a populous city like New York there must always be a very large number of unskillful and necessarily poorly paid artisans and laborers; numbers of foreign emigrants are also continually arriving. All such must have shelter, hence the necessity of cheap dwellings, under such circumstances is absolute, to prevent privation and suffering among those who are thus unfortunately situated. The cry now being raised by the press is not against cheap dwellings for the poor, but because they are not cheaper and better—because those who build them take advantage of the necessities of the poorest classes in charging such high rents for places absolutely unfit for human habitation.

The majority of these wretched places, if the published accounts are true, are destitute of every convenience requisite and necessary in a sanitary point of view: they are ill lighted and ill drained, and being so densely inhabited, decency is, of necessity, but little thought of; and, as a consequence, immorality, crime and disease are developed and promoted to a lamentable extent. Then again, they are constructed so much on the eggshell principle that accidents of a serious character, through the falling of walls, are not unusual. These considerations united render the need for reform absolute, and in advocating it the press is operating in its legitimate sphere.

The passage of measures to effect the reforms needed falls within the scope of the municipal legislature. It could not control the amount charged for rent,—that must be regulated by the ordinary laws of trade,—but it might pass laws compelling the owners of such buildings to have them constructed so as to be healthy in every respect; also prescribing the number of inmates to an enclosure of any given size, thus compelling, at least, external respect to decency. These matters are well worthy the attention of the municipal authorities of New York City, and there is little doubt that subjects of far less moment often occupy their time, attention and wisdom. The legislation necessary to reform the abuses complained of might, however, interfere with the pecuniary profits of some who are in the municipal body, or who have influence with its members, and thus the progress of this much needed reform be greatly impeded. But if those who are really benevolent and philanthropic will unitedly direct their energies to the accomplishment of this object, and arouse public attention thoroughly to the evils that exist they will help on the good work, and benefit the poor incomparably more than by the bestowal of elymoseanary gifts.

Those gentlemen, too, who make it their sole business to look after the welfare of souls, might do a far worse thing than to help on this good cause. The temporal welfare of thousands of the poor of New York City, they may think, is not of so much importance as sticking the ears of those from whom they draw their heavy salaries, with their fables; but one thing is certain—a vast deal more present good would result from preaching up and procuring temporal salvation, in the shape of good comfortable dwelling houses for the poor than in picturing to the wealthy the beauties of a chimerical heaven.

An ounce of salvation to-day is worth more than two ounces to-morrow; at least that is the view taken by the people of Utah. It is true that we are termed materialists, but our materialism leads to present and substantial salvation,—salvation from want and discomfort here to those who need it. To the thousands of poor people festering and wallowing in the unwholesome tenement houses of New York, substantial, comfortable, roomy, well-lighted dwelling houses, built on well drained land would be a very desirable instalment of salvation. And we hope the efforts of the press to arouse attention to the subject and effect the necessary reform will soon be aided and backed up by the earnest co-operation of every true philanthropist there, and that their united efforts will speedily bring about the adoption of measures by those having authority, that will lead to the modification of the most glaring evils and abuses of the tenement house system.

AN "electrical child" which died recently in France, is the latest wonder. It was only ten months old at the time of death, but so overcharged with electricity was its system said to be that any person entering the room in which it was, received constant and powerful shocks. The child died without pain, apparently; and the medical men who were in attendance say that at the moment of dissolution and for several minutes after, luminous effluvia proceeded from its body. The cause is pronounced, by a leading medical journal, to be unprecedented in the world of science.

A CURIOUS case of miscegenation is noticed in the papers. It appears that some years ago the slaves of a rich South Carolina planter, named Purvis, formed a conspiracy to kill him. He was warned of the plot by a female slave named Harriet Miller, and he out of gratitude married her. She died a short time ago, in Pennsylvania, leaving property to the value of \$400,000.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LATE  
CHARLES DURKEE.

Hon. Charles Durkee, our late respected Governor, who died at the Cozens House, Omaha, on the 14th inst., was a native of Vermont, being born at Royalton, in that State, some time in 1802. The principal part of his long and useful life, was however spent in Wisconsin, he being among its earlier settlers and representative men. In 1836 he commenced business in Kenosha, then called Southport, and soon became widely known by his connexion with various enterprises tending to develop that portion of the Union. He was elected a member of the first Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Wisconsin, for she had not at that time been permitted to don the robes of State sovereignty. He was twice elected, in