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HOLIDAY PROSPECTS FOR CHRISTENDOM.

The political sky of the world is anything but clear. Heavy and portentous clouds are hanging over the nations; and the present season of holiday-making and festivities is laden with muttered sounds that seem to indicate approaching strife.

Monday 25th, was celebrated by Christendom, as the anniversary of the birth of Him whose nativity was announced accompanied by the song "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to man;" and after more than eighteen centuries and a half have elapsed, what is the condition of that portion of the world which seeks to perpetuate the anniversary of that day? Religiously and morally it presents a sad spectacle. God is not glorified,—He is almost unrecognized. Jarring, discordant sects insult the wisdom and intelligence of Heaven by claiming that as the source of their conflicting theories, when ignorance is the parent of error and contending opinions. The spread of corruption and crime is so rapid, that newspapers which devote largely of their space to chronicling the misdeeds of their fellows, profess to be growing alarmed at it. Every virtue enjoined, every crime condemned in the decalogue is daily, hourly disregarded or perpetrated in the great cities of Christendom; while places of smaller size and fewer inhabitants show a fearfully increased prevalency of evil. This is gathered from sources that have no interest in holding up the condition of society to abhorrence. The press is but fulfilling what it deems a portion of its duty, when it publishes the actual state of the people, and records their acts, so far as those acts affect the public interests.

Twelve months ago this republic was engaged, with vigorous efforts, in putting down a gigantic rebellion. That rebellion is crushed under the foot of the nation; but many serious questions connected with it still demand attention, and grave results may grow out of them. Apart from the still unsettled condition of the late rebellious States, and the fact that our country is compelled, and likely to be for some time to come, to maintain a standing army which is almost equal, in a military view, to a war establishment, points have arisen during that rebellion which are still unsettled, and which may seriously try the temper of the nation before an understanding can be reached. The depredations by the Alabama and similar vessels, which issued from English ports under the flag of the rebellion, forms a subject for diplomacy to deal with, which may prove too weighty for a peaceful solution. The establishment of an empire in Mexico under Napoleonic auspices, in direct contravention of the Monroe doctrine, is another question which presents aspects of lowering character. The Fenian movement, however unwise and imprudent many of its leading members may be, is sufficiently wide spread to threaten trouble. Other subjects are presenting themselves, or looming up, that are far from indicating a speedy approach to that millennial peace of which prophets have spoken

and poets have sung. And while we wish, in the customary language of the season, a merry christmas and a happy new year to all, the signs of the times do not augur peace to the world of mankind.

Yet the nations and their inhabitants are in the hands of God, who will order all things according to His good pleasure; and individually we feel that as a people and community we have much reason to be grateful to Him for the peace, happiness and prosperity, continuing and increasing, which exists within our Territorial bounds.

LEISURE HOURS—MENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

During the depth of the winter, in this Territory, out-door work is of necessity measurably suspended, and there is much more leisure time at the command of the people than at any other season of the year. It is a time of very general relaxation from arduous toil; and amusements, parties and other sources of social intercourse and enjoyment receive a large share of attention by many. Dancing is a good and healthy exercise when it is not indulged in to excess and when proper precautions are taken to avoid injurious results. Theatricals are pleasing, amusing and often instructive, when properly conducted; and in such a Theatre as we have, with stage capacity, scenery, costumes and appointments, capable of giving us faithful pictures of scenes and society in other lands than our own, and of reproducing historic characters with the habits and manners of the times in which they lived, they are a source of relaxation and instruction having highly beneficial tendencies.

But no wise person would wish to dance every evening; and there are many who, while they enjoy theatricals occasionally, would not care to attend regularly every time the Theatre is open for performance. Apart from these things the mind requires cultivation as well as relaxation; and for many the best and most convenient season in which that could be done is the winter season,—that through which we are now passing. Schools are held during the day-time in our various ward school-houses and in other places devoted to that purpose: Would not the formation of evening classes for adults, under competent instructors and at moderate charges be also productive of good? One or two evenings a week so employed would be of vast benefit to many of our young men, and young women, too, for here, as elsewhere, the common claims of subsistence and existence compel many to commence working for a living before they have progressed so far in educational acquirements as to be able to correctly conduct and keep an account of even their limited business transactions; while many of the simplest and most beautiful truths of science are comparatively sealed mysteries to them. Such classes could be formed and well attended during the winter, and those composing them have all the time for amusements which it would be wise for them so to spend.

Again, associations for mutual improvement might be much more numerous than they are. We are seeking knowledge; we wish to acquire an understanding of truth. It is right that the mind should stretch out for the accomplishment of these objects. We are no advocates for debating clubs whose members come together simply that they may display their ability in litigation and debate, seeking to gain the victory for the sake of triumph, whether they are advocating truth or error. That is too much like the practice of pettifogging lawyers who have no regard to truth or equity, seeking only to earn the dollars, every victory

in court, no matter how obtained, being viewed by them as increasing the value of their services. Debating to win or overcome an opponent, whether right or wrong, is the gratification of a vanity that is very reprehensible and will lead men to do wrong. But mutual improvement societies can be and are conducted without descending to this.

If, too, the members will regularly pay a stipulated sum, however small, into the hands of a treasurer of their own choosing, and after necessary expenses are met, for lights or other purposes, invest the balance in the purchase of goods, useful books on history, science, mechanics, &c., a very respectable library would soon be the joint property of such an association, who could borrow and read their own books, returning them at stated intervals for others to have the like privilege. This is no speculative theory. It is a something that has been and is now being done in some other parts of the earth; and with good results.

There are many other ways in which the leisure time of the winter season can be well and usefully employed. Gaining a knowledge of the science of music, is acquiring that which is a source of future pleasure and enjoyment. It is gratifying to note how rapidly harmonic societies are springing up throughout the various cities and settlements of the Territory; and we would imagine, from the quantity of music and musical instruments that has been and is being ordered through br. D. O. Calder, that there is no necessity for urging attention to this branch of improvement. Still, it is pleasing to all friends of progress to see every branch of study, calculated to elevate and improve the mind, receiving a due share of attention; and we will be gratified if these few hints provoke thought among those most interested, and aid in the work of mental improvement.

HOME ITEMS.

LEGISLATIVE.

Wednesday, 20th.

COUNCIL.—Council met at 1 p.m. Councillor Woodruff presented petition of John H. Picknell and others, praying for the enactment of a law to enable business men to collect their debts without exemption from execution. The petition was referred to the committee on agriculture, trade and manufactures.

An act for the relief of the Recorder of Marks and Brands, etc., was referred back to the committee on claims and appropriations, with instructions to incorporate the sum of \$300,00 in the Territorial Appropriation Bill; the committee on agriculture, trade and manufactures was also instructed to examine the law on Marks and Brands, and bring in a bill to incorporate the necessary amendments.

The committee on appropriations were instructed to incorporate in the Territorial Appropriation Bill, certain amounts omitted accidentally in last session's bill.

HOUSE.—An act regulating Estray Pounds was presented by Mr. Callister and ordered to be printed.

Memorial to Congress for increased mail service in Piute and Sevier counties, was read and referred.

A message from the Council was read, announcing their concurrence in the Tooele City charter and the Lehi Library charter, and their non-concurrence in the amendment to the Logan City charter.

The bill for a charter for a bridge across Bear river, in Box Elder county, was reported back and tabled.

Thursday, 21st.

COUNCIL.—Council met at 1 p.m.

A communication was received from His Excellency the Governor, announcing his approval of the act to repeal an act creating an agent to receive and manage the Agricultural Fund of the Territory.

The committee on elections reported the number and kind of officers to be filled by joint vote of the Legislative Assembly.

Councillor Carrington presented an act defining the Judicial Districts for the Territory of Utah, prescribing the times and places of holding Supreme and District Courts, and assigning the Chief Justice and the two Associate Justices, which was made the order of the day for Friday.

Councillor Harrington presented an act creating the office of Selectmen and prescribing their duties and the duties of the County Courts, which was read and laid on the table.

HOUSE.—House met at 1 p.m.

An act to repeal an act incorporating Weber Kanyon Road Company was presented by Mr. Peterson, read and referred to committee on roads, etc.

An act regulating Estray Pounds and for other purposes, was read and referred to committee on judiciary.

House adjourned until 1 p.m., Friday.

Friday, 22d.

COUNCIL.—Council met pursuant to adjournment.

An act defining the Judicial Districts, etc., and assigning the Judges to their districts, passed the Council.

An act creating the office of Selectmen, and prescribing their duties, also the duties of the County Court, was read the second time.

Councillor Carrington, chairman of the select committee on revision, presented an act defining the boundaries of counties, and locating county seats. Laid on the table to come up in its order.

Adjourned till Wednesday, 1 p.m.

HOUSE.—The House agreed to meet with the Council in Joint Session on the 5th of Jan., 1866, for the election of Territorial officers.

Joseph Young, senior, petitioned for a charter to A. Nichols and W. S. Godbe, for a toll bridge across Bear river, in Box Elder county.

Mr. W. S. Snow was added to the Committee on Militia.

The House concurred with the Council in the passage of a bill for an act defining the Judicial Districts for the Territory of Utah, prescribing the times and places of holding Supreme and District Courts, and assigning the Chief Justice and the two Associate Justices.

Adjourned till Wednesday the 27th inst.

SABBATH MEETINGS.—Bishop Joseph Murdock spoke on practical religion and every day duties.

Elder G. B. Wallace followed, encouraging the Saints to continued and increased faithfulness in living according to the principles of the gospel, inculcating the principle that men must live their religion if they would obtain the blessings which they desire.

Afternoon.

Elder W. S. Snow spoke of his experience in the work of God, and bore testimony to his knowledge of its truth gained in that experience.

Elder George Peacock also referred to his experience, and to the blessings enjoyed by those who faithfully observe and abide in the principles of truth.

SEVENTIES' HALL.—On Wednesday evening, 20th inst., Elder E. L. Sloan spoke a short time on the physical training of youth; Elder John Park, treated on agriculture in this Territory, and, in some very interesting remarks on the subject, recommended the rotation of crops and the cultivation of a little land well in preference to a larger breadth in an imperfect manner; Elder E. L. T. Harrison followed on happy thoughts with regard to the future of mankind, as suggested by geology and science generally.

MORE OF IT.—Not snowed by the effort of the previous week, the snow came down on Friday evening and night, as if it were the first storm of the season. Sleighting "on the braip" continues the prevailing epidemic.

AFTER THEM.—Infractions of the City ordinance on liquor selling are cropping out again. Proprietors of certain establishments, open avowedly for other purposes, named Reynolds, McGinley, Hegart and Reichman were brought up before Judge Clinton yesterday for selling liquor without licence. That's it; jerk them up and trot them through.

CHRISTMAS DAY.—Anybody going around town on Monday, as everybody was doing, of course, must have come to the conclusion that "Christmas is a holiday," if not a holy-day. Sleight-driving seemed to be a premium, and pedestrianism at a discount. The city appeared to be—not on wheels—but on curved iron appliances, our local, a big crowd of boys, and a few other folks seeming to be the only people who were using their pedal extremities. East Temple Street was a little more lively than usual, not the Rialto fashion, though, "where merchants most do congregate," but with sleighs, and boys *ad in*, full of fun and frolic, and bent on having their holiday. The stores were closed—for business—but open for the occurrences of the season, more than one having their employees congregated in festive communion, while the amount of "My name is Norval on the Grampian hills" with kindred recitations and songs which gratified appreciating audiences, was much above the ordinary. We heard one citizen, of weight, say to another, heavier on the stomach than the brain, "Your Christmas dinner must have been rich," and imagined his case was the rule not the exception. Still, in the midst of fun, frolic and festivity, the good order, decorum and genial feeling which prevailed were truly gratifying. We don't gamble; still, we would risk a bet, that in no other city on the globe, with the same number of inhabitants, did the day pass off with so much real enjoyment and so little that infringed upon the rights of others and the claims of public morality. Read our police report, and convince yourselves.

LITTLE & GARRET announce good meals, and they have them. If you want a good, rich, juicy cut, call there: they are prime.