

THE SICK MAN IN OUR CIVILIZATION.

Again the recurring question is asked, What shall we do with the Mormons? When this occidental nation began its departure from the banks of the Mississippi, twenty years ago, and struck boldly into the wilderness, it was the wrong answering of this question which made it sanguine and strong. The vigorous compulsion of a large and peaceful community in a matter of morals is at variance with the mild and comprehensive genius of our institutions. The civilized world has got past the flower of ethical absolutism in governments. Even the despotic Czar would not venture in the face of Europe, after a conquest of the Turk, to annul the relationships and thrust out the inmates of the harems. But polygamy is a great evil. It is the drinking of whiskey; yet no one proposes to suppress it with the torch, or to set up laboratories besides them from which to flood them with deadly gases. They are made tributary to the public treasury, and we pay with the revenue for the things of clear and the prayers of Congress.

Nor do we propose in the dismemberment of Utah either equitable dealing or remedy for abuse. That the surrounding Territories are waiting and eager to receive their respective morsels is the worst feature of the prospect. To the rapacity of covetousness would presently be added the arrogance of domination and the rancor of dissent. Wrangling and waste, strife and bloodshed, would ensue. An intense fanaticism would be kindled in the body of the Mormon population, to be followed by another exodus—a closer cohesion and a larger growth in time the application, and the absorption of small and obnoxious States on other pretences of peccability, moral and political, insisted upon. Here it would be a pillory; there a wrested question of finance. Surely our Christian faith is strong enough, unarmed with the faces of civil authority, to cope with this peculiarity of Asiatic civilization, even though it be an old as the patriarchs and robust as an Anglo-Saxon crossing. What, then, is the solution of this problem of polygamy? Simply to surround the "saints" and let them alone. They will contaminate nobody—the Christian women will take care of that. So in time the snakes will untwist from the unweaved head of this Medusa, and creep silently and stealthily away.

We protest, further, in behalf of the interests of industry against all projects of prospective aggression. That is always a calamity which disturbs the equilibrium of peaceful labor, and chokes the sources of production. Bring discord with her dagger on the scene, and the tolling hand drops nerveless from plough handle and forging tool; those virtues that dwell in serene security quit the land. The Mormon population of Utah numbers nearly a hundred thousand souls. To be usefully busy is a part of their religion. When their pioneers entered the valley which they have since rescued from the wilderness, that same day they drove their teams afield and turned with their share the virgin furrows. Since then they have labored on undaunted by drought and locust. Everywhere throughout their reach of settlements, north, south, east and west, they have dug canals and ditches for irrigation. Numerous flocks of sheep of superior breeds feed on their pasture ranges. They cultivate successfully diverse staples—wheat, cotton, and the vine. As you look down upon Salt Lake City from the bench, after emerging from the Wasatch Kaigons, it seems almost as unobtrusive as Damascus of Padua. Each house has its orchard of apple, apricot and cherry trees; and the wide and watered avenues of the town are shaded with locusts, mulberries and cottonwood. Here is a quiet and increasing community of well-to-do consumers, with iron arms reaching for supplies on either side across the continent to the markets of the East and of the West. And it is proposed in Congress to dismember this community and allot it, in a feast of fragments, to the wandering adventurers of the surrounding regions—miners, gamblers and traders, who will sin in an orthodox way.

This project of dismemberment may be to some extent a bid for disorder in the interests of jobbery. We think we see in it a suspicious shadow lurking behind the Cross. The hectoring Mormons will sell their hallowed improvements at low prices; there will be valuable franchises and congressional subsidies for this and for that; there may be turbulence and another expedition of troops, and then, in a hundred ways, to employ the language of the sagacious Nym, "profits will accrue." Of course, nobody in the last case would be accountable but the perfidious and polygamous Mormons; and the contractors, with full pockets, could very well dispense with the acclamations which would be withheld by an ungrateful country.—Ex.

A revenue agent in Cincinnati, visiting a suspected distillery, came upon one room marked "private," and securely locked. After some little delay he managed to effect an entrance, only to discover a young man on a bed in the worst stage of small pox. The agent did not stop to consecrate anything.

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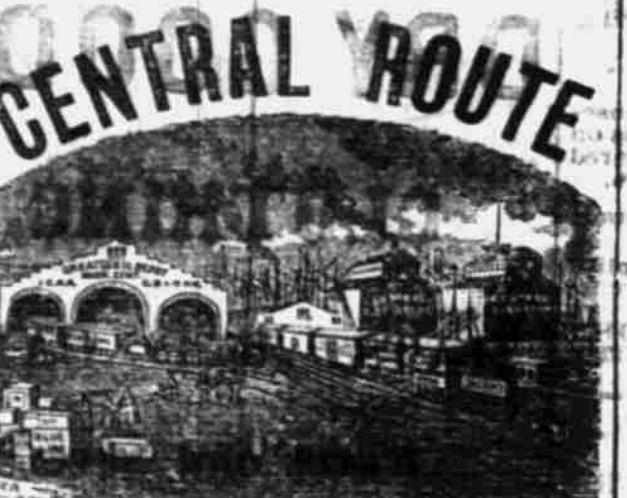
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