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SALT LAKE CITY, - FEB. 27, 1904.

LIBERTY STAKE OF ZION.

The organization of the Liberty Stake of Zion is an important event in the history and progress of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are three other Stakes to be formed out of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion. When these are completed, they will make a total of eleven Stakes which were parts of the original Salt Lake Stake.

We need not here repeat the reasons for the latest movement in this direction, as they have been very clearly set forth in the explanations given by President Lyman and others, as reported in the Deseret News. Suffice it to say, they are cogent and ample, and there appears to be a general feeling of cordial approval among the officers and members of the Church who are directly interested.

The name of the new Stake—Liberty—is, in our opinion, the best of all the titles that were proposed. There could not have been a better choice of officers for it than that decided upon by the First Presidency, endorsed by the Twelve, and supported by unanimous votes of the Latter-day Saints residing in the new Stake. They were all included in the list of nominations by the body of the Priesthood at the meeting on Tuesday last and therefore could not fail to be acceptable.

There remain now to be chosen, two Counselors to the President of the High Priests' quorum, and the officers of the several auxiliary societies, which will bring into active service many other young men whose names were in the list proposed, and ladies suitable for the stations to be filled. The Presidency of the Stake and others will attend to this duty, and they will doubtless proceed as wisdom shall direct to perform it to the best of their ability.

Until Presidents Joseph P. Smith and F. M. Lyman return from Washington, the organization of the other three Stakes will doubtless be postponed. Meanwhile the Presidency of the Salt Lake Stake will continue their labors, and the affairs of the remaining portion of the Stake will be conducted as usual. The regular monthly Priesthood meeting will be held next Friday in the Assembly Hall at seven o'clock.

The Tabernacle Sunday services, except on Fast days, will be held as usual at 2 p. m. for the people of the new Stakes and the general public. The Tabernacle choir will remain intact. The Bishop will hold their ward meetings as before. Nothing is to interfere with the Tabernacle general meetings. This, we are sure, will be satisfactory to the people, and the entire arrangement will prove harmonious and beneficial. Zion is growing and the work of the Lord is onward!

AN HONORED WOMAN.

We publish today a sketch of one of the most active, experienced, able and respected women in Mormondom—Sister Emmeline B. Wells, whose name is "a household word" in every country where the Church has been organized. We give place to the article with much pleasure, although it is two days in advance of her birthday, when its publication might seem more appropriate. But we desired that it should have the benefit of the wide circulation of our Saturday edition. The lady is honored in Israel, and she is held in high esteem among people in America and Europe who are not of our faith, and who recognize her as a faithful worker in woman's cause in every department of life. God bless her, and may she be spared to enjoy many happy birthdays among her devoted and loving friends!

CHRISTIANITY NOT INVOLVED

The war between Russia and Japan has suggested the question whether Japan is a heathen, and Russia a Christian country. We fancy the closest scrutiny would find it difficult to assign any reason why one should be classed as heathen, and the other Christian.

About twenty years ago Shintoism was declared to be the state religion of Japan, but later, religious liberty was granted, and all religions have about equal chances in Japan, as in this country. The number of Shintoists is, perhaps, 200,000. The Buddhists are much more numerous, and, in fact, the two religions are very much mixed. Still, the emperor, we believe, is the head of the Shintoists, and the aristocracy of the country are the main supporters of that faith.

The sacred books of the Shintoists date from the beginning of the eighth century of our era, but they were composed several centuries earlier, and handed down from generation to generation.

These works are, strictly speaking, histories, but they contain also mythology, describing the origin of gods and men. According to these books, in the beginning,

"Far in the deep infinitudes of space, Upon a throne of silence,
Sat Ame-no-mikasa-nushi-ro-kami,"
Which name signifies The Lord of the Center of Heaven. Around him was chaos. But soon came forth pairs of beings, and last of them Izanagi and Izanami. These lived in heaven, the earth not yet being formed. The sun, moon and earth were just separating and a heavenly bridge still connected them. On this bridge Izanagi stood while giving to the earth mass a rotary motion and causing dry land to appear. Izanagi and his wife, now descended, and created Japan, "the Empire of the Eight Great Islands."

After this 8,000,000 gods were formed, and gradually the continents and islands were made to appear, to become clothed in verdure, and inhabited. Japan, however, is the center of this earthly creation. The stars were made to guide warriors from foreign countries to the Mikado, who is the son of heaven, before whom all should bow.

It is claimed that for 1,200 years Shintoism, with these ideas of creation, was the sole religion of Japan. Implicit obedience to the Mikado is its fundamental aim. It has no creeds. Good gods must be worshiped, it says, that good gifts may be obtained, and evil gods, to appease them. Twice each year festivals were held for general purification, and the following prayer was then offered up:

"O God that dwellest in the high plain of heaven, who art divine in substance and in intellect, and able to give protection from guilt and its penalties, to banish impurity, and to cleanse us from uncleanness; Hods of Gods, hear us and listen to these petitions!"

This gives some idea of Shinto religion. Its characteristics in its pure state are an absence of an ethical and doctrinal code, of idol-worship, of priestcraft, and of any teachings concerning a future state, and the deification of heroes, emperors and great men, together with the worship of certain forces and objects in nature. It is claimed that the Shintoists have 14,000 gods, of whom 2,799 have shrines.

If these features of Japanese religion are compared with prominent features in Russian forms of worship, the difference will not appear so greatly in favor of Russia. If Japan has its gods and shrines, Russia has her saints and sacred places, and pilgrimages and festivals. The reverence due the Mikado as "the son of heaven," is equaled by that paid to the Czar, as the vicergerent of God, not to speak of the Blessed and Holy Patriarch of the Holy City. If morality counts in this comparison, Japan is ahead. Alfred Stead says, you can go all over Japan and never see a drunken soldier—that is, a Japanese soldier. When off duty, soldiers go about in the quietest manner imaginable. Their principal diversion is drinking tea with their friends, or hanging about the old book shops. Unless a Jap is actually engaged in war, you will find him an extremely child-like creature. And this is a national characteristic.

The truth is that Japan is as much "Christian" as Russia is. The Japanese are as moral, as truth-loving, and as progressive as the Russians. Neither is a "Christian" nation, if that word is taken to mean one that follows the divine Nazarene in faith and practice. If they both were Christian nations, they could not make war upon one another. It is well to bear these facts in mind, when the statement is made that the war is one between paganism and Christianity. It is not. It is emphatically a war of greed, and not of principles.

"MORMONS" IN ARIZONA.

By the courtesy of Hon. Joseph Howell, congressman from Utah, we have been favored with a copy of the official report of hearings before the House Committee on Territories, in relation to the bill for the admission of Arizona and New Mexico. Strong objections were raised by speakers from Arizona, against the proposed union of those Territories as one State. They were cogent and emphatic. The claims of Arizona to statehood for herself alone were strongly put. The population, resources, wealth, schools, public institutions, railroads, telegraphs, irrigation works, &c., were thoroughly gone into, and among the prominent advocates for admission was Hon. J. F. Wilson. In his closing remarks refuting the various stories told as objections to Arizona's admission, he noticed the anti-"Mormon" opposition and we reproduce that portion of his argument verbatim as follows:

"I notice now another objection—that is the Mormon proposition. It has been said that we are Mormon ridden in Arizona, and that the Mormon people are dangerous to society. The farther away people are from these people the more they seem to know about them. You find a lot of people who have never crossed the Mississippi River, who have never inhaled Western air, who have never seen a Mormon settlement, or who have never seen a community of the Mormon people, and they think that the name indicates what they charge, and that therefore they rise up on a far-fetched presumption and through partisan feeling and dogmatism, and make the charges without knowing whether they are true or false.

"Their charges are mainly made against the Mormon people in Utah. Whether what they say and charge against the Mormon people of Utah is true or false I do not know, but I certainly do not believe them. I have not been there. As to the Mormon people in Arizona, I have been among them for eighteen years, and I have observed them carefully. Of course, the older set is not there. The younger, educated class is there. They are in large settlements in the counties of Apache, Navajo, in Maricopa, and in Graham. There are four counties in which they live. The Graham Valley, where in one of these, large productions of the soil have been made, they are mainly Mormon people. Now, I say I have been among them for eighteen years, and in every two years especially I have been among them. We make it a business to see those folks. In politics they are about divided. Some of them, sometimes, we think, have gone wrong and voted the Republican ticket. There is not much difference between the strength of the respective sides. They are independent on that.

"So far as the practice of polygamy is concerned, I can say that it is not

practiced there, because when practices of that kind are carried on evidence will necessarily exist—just as you travel through the sand you make tracks—but you see no sign of it there. For eighteen years I have been in every settlement among them and have yet to see any signs of polygamy, and I looked for it with a good deal of interest when I first went there, with the intention of prosecuting it, but when I learned those people, I learned them to be as true Americans as live under the sun. I know that is a fact. When the time came that tried men's nerves and their hearts, when the long roll was sounded and the battle flag was raised in 1893 they rushed to the country's aid as quickly as the nervous of men.

"They are people who attend strictly to their own business, they stay at home, they till the soil, they worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, they pay their debts, and they tell the truth. They do not practice polygamy. Among other things they figure in politics. They send legislators to our legislature. They never have yet seen, nay, for the first time I have to see, a time come when there was legislation pending for the elevation of the moral mind, that was for the education of the young, the instruction of the people of the country, but what they were for it to a man. And I have for the first time to see an effort to enact a law that might reflect against the morals of the country or against the elevation of the young mind, but what they were opposed to it to a man. These things, gentlemen, I know to be true. They have their schools, more numerous than any other people in the Territory, and they have children and they send them to school and they adopt rules of school government. I am sorry I have mislaid a code of their school rules. It was a model for school government.

"The Chairman. You can incorporate it in your remarks.

"Mr. Wilson. I am afraid I have lost it. I have written for another copy and perhaps it will come. As I say, it is a model formula to be followed by those who are teaching the young men in America. These are the people that we hear those statements concerning—made by people who live from them thousands of miles and who only know them through the writings of individuals, which are written for a purpose, perhaps mercenary.

"This much, my dear sirs, I have to say in repudiation of that charge because I know the facts that I speak of concerning them to be true.

"Mr. Thayer. Many, many Mormons are there in your Territory?

"Mr. Wilson. I do not know; perhaps 20 per cent of the population.

"Mr. Thayer. They live in communities by themselves?

"Mr. Wilson. No, everybody lives together, but they preponderate the great valley of the Graham. But you go into the town of Safford, in Graham county, where the population of the town is perhaps 3,000, and you will find about 1,000 of what we call Gentiles, a matter of distinction, and the balance are Mormons. They have no trouble; they neighbor with each other just like other men.

"Mr. Thayer. What is there about their worship beyond what is generally understood?

"Mr. Wilson. There is nothing except that some people say they are more moral than the general run of other people.

"Mr. Thayer. Are there any bigamists?

"Mr. Wilson. There certainly are not.

"Mr. Powers. About twenty years ago I spent about two weeks in Utah and I saw a more sober, more laborious, more honest, better paying, industrious people than I saw in the Mormons.

"Mr. Wilson. There is no doubt of it.

"Mr. Powers. As you say, they pay their debts and attend to their own business, and while a few might practice polygamy, the great majority do not.

"Mr. Wilson. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee, that I have reached my conclusion about the Mormon people because I could not help myself. I did not want to. I believed the other way. I was as thin skinned as some of these people who are here in the East howling against them; but since I have known the reverse of what I first thought about them to be true, I must admit it. I have found in favor of those people the facts I have stated, and these are the reasons I have for defending them here and elsewhere, and I shall do it though the sun shall shut off its light."

A RUSSIAN THREAT.

It has been intimated that Russia intends, with the consent of Turkey, to send her Black Sea fleet through the Dardanelles, with the object in view of dispatching it to the Asiatic waters. Could England, as the ally of Japan, permit these ships through the Suez canal? Their passage through the Dardanelles would be a violation of existing treaties, and it is not likely that Great Britain could, under the circumstances, permit them to pass through any channel over which she exercises control.

The Black Sea fleet consists of the battleships Tri Sviatitsa, 12,430 tons; the Kniaz Potemkin Tavrichesky, 12,500 tons; the George Pobiedonosets, 12,280 tons; the Tchemse and the Sinop, each 10,150 tons; the Dvornadst Apostolof, 8,500 tons, and the Rostislav, 8,800 tons, together with a cruiser of about 3,000 tons displacement and three torpedo boats. This would be a considerable addition to the naval strength of Russia in the Pacific. But the forcing of the Dardanelles, against the protests of the Berlin treaty powers, would almost certainly lead to complications of a most serious nature.

The transportation problem—how to get it free.

Ohio's new senator is a bird—a Dicky-bird.

To be press censor is greater than to be a king.

Any port in a storm of shot and shell, even Port Arthur.

The rise in flour will not make the bread rise any better.

Rochester's fire was a mere flareup compared with Baltimore's.

Japan's flying squadron might blue bottle up the fleet at Port Arthur.

There is no greater smoke nuisance than the man with a cigarette.

Excursions to see a great snowslide made to be something new under the sun.

If so minded Japan could tell a tale about ships that do not pass in the night.

If Korea had not cast her lot with Japan the latter would have cast it for her.

You can't make the desert blossom

as the rose so long as the soil is saturated with alkali.

It's a poor way for a young man to round out his education by becoming a "rounder."

Strange that the big drop in wheat yesterday was not in fall wheat but in spring wheat.

The still small voice of conscience needs cultivation much more than the ordinary voice.

A Russian officer boarding a British ship in the Red Sea will make John Bull red with rage.

The silence of Japan regarding her war movements surpasses by far the silence of Dean Maitland.

During the present war considerable has been heard of Admiral Evans but nothing of "Fighting Bob" Evans.

Why doesn't Uncle Sam get some guaranty title assurance company to guarantee the Panama canal company title?

Like father, like son. Alonzo Taft was secretary of war under Grant, William H. Taft is secretary of war under Roosevelt.

The most welcome news from Washington is not that the Panama treaty has been ratified but that Congress may adjourn early.

"Guilty as indicted" is the verdict in the postal fraud cases. And guilty as every body thought. The defendants are a precious lot.

Yesterday the Russians confessed all their sins. This will be good for their souls even if it does not help them in the war with Japan.

The dear flour dealers have sent the price of flour up twenty cents, making it dearer than ever. Of course this is all for the benefit of the "dear public."

Russia and Japan are both highly pleased with the result of the latest attack on Port Arthur. It is a case where they seem to have sunk their differences.

Mr. Craig cannot steal Kansas' thunder and call his state "Bleeding Colorado." "Bleeding Kansas" it has been and "Bleeding Kansas" it always will be.

Yesterday Mr. Bryan paid Mayor McClellan a visit and he says that they never talked politics. And to think that Washington's birthday was celebrated only last Monday!

There is a chance for some bright woman to make a thousand dollars. This prize is offered for a work of about 50,000 or 70,000 words addressed to Young women, as a companion book to Conwell's "Manhood's Morning." It will have to be a good literary production, and such as to mark out a proper course for present and coming generations. It must be a woman's work, and be sent by Sept. 1, 1904, to the Vir Publishing Company, Land Title building, Philadelphia, Pa., from whom further information can be obtained.

ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

New York Examiner.

The one great obstacle in the way of the union of Christendom, about which so much is said nowadays, is Error—error in doctrine, error in practice. There can be no fellowship between error and truth. Those who believe that spiritual regeneration is the result of conscious faith in Jesus Christ cannot join hands with believers in baptismal regeneration, wrought in unconscious infants by an act of priestly legerdemain. Mere forms of worship and of church government may be matters for concession and rearrangement; but Baptists, at least, must stand aloof from all entangling alliance with error so radical as that of mechanical regeneration. And this, we believe, will be the case also with our Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist brethren, in spite of their practice of the unsupportable and meaningless rite of infant baptism.

New York Outlook.

"The greatest need of today is the opportunity of hearing the voice of God. That voice is speaking in this year of our Lord as distinctly as it has spoken in every years since man began to reckon time. The trouble is that men do not listen; in the noise and rush of the age they do not seek the silence and the repose in which the still, small voice becomes audible. What is sorely needed is the open church on the crowded thoroughfare at the rushing noonday; the quiet of a true Lenten season in the very center of the turmoil; the thoughts, memories, and prayers of a spiritual Lent in the sweep and stir of an age of intoxicating activity. We shall not find peace by escaping from our age into cloisters nor by evading its hard conditions; we shall find rest and refreshment and keep our souls alive by spiritualizing work and making room for God in the world He has made and of which He is always the Master.

The Catholic World.

There are many things which children do not understand, but wish to, which we understand but can not explain to them. They are continually asking "Why?" and "How?" and we can give no explanation that they would understand. Fortunately they do not press their questions, but pass to something else. But, however much they might insist, or however little we could explain, we should still have to instruct them in what they ought to know. Is it not, then, equally probable, to say the least, that God should instruct us, His children, in some matters unintelligible to us? For it is important that we should know them.

Northwestern Christian Advocate.

There is no place that one should covet more than to be a leader of men—a leader, not a boss. In the parable of the Good Shepherd it is the true leader, or that is exalted. The good shepherd goes before the flock—he does not drive them. Something of this power of leadership is shown by every great military commander. Napoleon was fairly worshipped by his soldiers. Sherman and Grant were greatly beloved by their men. They did not have their influence merely through their position or chiefly through that. What is the secret of this power of leadership? General Havelock, the hero of the Sepoy rebellion in India, himself one of the most beloved of commanders, has revealed something of it. When asked the reason for his great influence over his soldiers, he replied to a friend: "I keep close to them." There is very much in that remark for the Christian, who ought always to be something of a leader of men.

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