

EDITORIALS.

SAFE AS WELL AS JUST.

We are enabled to present to our readers to-day another capable communication, on the question of statehood for Utah, from the forcible pen of George Ticknor Curtis. It appeared first, as will be observed, in the New York Sun and is in a similar vein to one recently published in these columns. His views are clearly set forth, and in addition to their intrinsic soundness, the well known acumen, ability and experience of the writer, give them great weight from a constitutional standpoint.

In addition to the justice of Utah's claim, the potency of the fact that Congress is clothed with a trust to grant statehood to a Territory as completely qualified to assume it as this is and other reasons that have been elucidated, the national safety demands that the petition be favorably acted upon. History has demonstrated that free nations cannot be perpetuated unless dependencies are abolished by admission to the full benefits of their political institutions. If this be not done an unhealthy condition ensues, the result being ultimate dissolution. This may be safely stated as a general proposition whose application lies in the case of every dependency whose numbers and resources are competent and who signify by their offer of compact that they will govern themselves in strict harmony with republican institutions. Utah possesses those qualifications, and has signified her purpose in the only manner in which such a disposition could be exhibited or constitutionally demanded. These preliminaries having been complied with, it only remains for Congress to perform its duty in conformity with the trust with which, as Mr. Curtis says, that body has been clothed.

This graceful act of the National Legislature would, so far as Utah and the nation is concerned, place the Republic in harmony with itself, by bringing into political homogeneity an integral part of its own body entitled to the full privileges of its Constitution and institutions. The life's blood of popular sovereignty would be extended in closer proximity to the extremities of the body politic and greater health and vitality would be inevitable.

Returning to the main idea of this article—the safer course for Congress to take upon the statehood question—it may not be inappropriate to quote the view of Froude, the eminent historian and philosopher. In his graphic narratives of events of the past connected with the career of nations, he occasionally interpolates his conclusions in reference to the lessons which history should impress upon successive generations. A striking and vividly truthful remark in point occurs in his "Julius Caesar." He says, in substance, his exact words not being before us:

"If history teaches one thing it is this: that free nations cannot govern subject provinces. When it transpires that they are unable or unwilling to extend to them the benefits of their constitution, the constitution itself falls to pieces from mere incompetency for its duties, and governments share the fate of all earthly objects, from the merest flower to the mightiest human institution; they rise, culminate and go to dissolution. When reason is discarded in the controversy, the calamity soo longer distant.

Assuming that conclusion to be true—the rise and fall of empires has demonstrated it—and placing it in juxtaposition with the truism that history is constantly repeating itself, it would not only be the more just and wiser policy for Congress to admit Utah to the full benefits of a republican form of government, but likewise the safer. It would conduce to the perpetuity of the glorious institutions of our common country.

In the controversy in relation to Utah, those who have arrayed themselves on the side of the opposition, have thus far substituted prejudice for reason. It is to be hoped that better judgment will, at the opportune moment, prevail, that justice may be vindicated and national injury averted.

THE MITCHELLSTOWN TRAGEDY.

It is rarely in the history of clashing class in modern times that merely political sentiment has become so malignant as to lead to bloodshed when all around and concerning the combatants is ostensibly peaceful. When such a calamity does take place, it produces a shock among those who read of it, corresponding with the character of the proceedings and the extent of the injuries inflicted. That at Mitchellstown, Ireland, on Thursday last is the most conspicuous case in recent years, and it is also one of the most deplorable because unprovoked, and having but a tendency to heighten the feeling which was previously warm enough among those who make of Irish Home Rule a political issue. The fact that blood was shed does but make of

mere opponents outspoken and defiant enemies, and just how or when the difficulty will be settled is not at present discernible.

The government organs in London—the Times, Telegraph and Post—made haste to throw the responsibility of the tragedy upon the English leaders of the Irish Nationalists, even before all the details had reached them, the first named journal declaring that the blood of the victims was upon the heads of Labouchere and his confederates. This sounds so ultra partisan even for those journals that many people who have known of their long and active services in behalf of the British Empire and British interests will be at a loss to comprehend how they can be induced to so far depart from correct statements. These people will ask themselves what the offense of the Irish was and what the provocation of the government's agents was, and when they learn that the former was engaging in the long-time and generally respected constitutional privilege of peaceably assembling in public to discuss their wrongs and petition for redress, and that the latter was preventing them from so doing, the traditional English love of fair play will be so outraged that many among the masses will bear with impatient loyalty the time when by their suffrage they can set the present government aside.

It seems that the Irish people had determined upon this meeting some time previous to the preparations made for a general suppression of political gatherings in Ireland under the crimes act, and as it was to be a purely conventional affair, to discuss wrongs and remedies, a number of eminent gentlemen of both English and Irish nationality decided to take part in it and if possible promote the cause of self-government for the badly misgoverned island. No hostile intent was shown; there was not a weapon to be seen as the people quietly assembled at Mitchellstown; no loud words were spoken; no defiance of properly constituted authority was exhibited; only, acting in accordance with the promptings of their somewhat ardent nature, they were proposing to make good use of a privilege guaranteed them by Magna Charta, the instrument through which the government existed and exercised sway. All at once the constabulary, armed, equipped and officered, appeared on the scene, the peaceful gatherings were ordered to disperse, and having violated no principle of fundamental law, they refused to go. Then the fighting began. It must manifestly have been greatly to the disadvantage of the people, for they were not armed nor prepared for a struggle, and thus situated and realizing, it would seem to be a presumption against common sense that they should have given the first provocation. Add to this the evidence that is now coming along by means of the cable and land telegraphs, and it appears only too plain that the government forces bear the difficulty which resulted in an inexcusable slaughter.

Of course the Irish went to fighting when they found they were in a fight; it is decidedly characteristic of them as a people to do such a thing. But on this special occasion, common justice would seem to demand that they be relieved of the responsibility and that it be placed where it belongs—upon the Tory agitators indirectly and primarily, and their agents and henchmen in Ireland directly. The arrest of editor O'Brien for merely going on the steamer with Labouchere to see him off for home and the offer to release him if he would not try to accompany his friend nor speak in public, shows a spirit of tyranny and apprehension which is not English but more likely renegade Irish, taking advantage of the occasion to make a law, bad enough of itself, subserve their subsidized purposes against their former friends.

A PLEA FOR A MORE HUMANE POLICY.

We publish to-day an exceptionally fine article from the New Haven Register. A more truthful description of the general attitude toward the Latter-day Saints could scarcely be given. The manner in which they are treated is utterly devoid of sympathy, being unchristianlike and denunciatory, and therefore mistaken.

The Register is right in attributing the harsh position of the press and the country generally toward the Saints to ignorance. Yet no special pains are taken to penetrate the thick wall of misinformation which has been built between the nation and this much abused and maltreated community. This is largely because the slanders that have been industriously circulated concerning the Saints have been accepted as correct. They have thus been prejudged; the popular mind being satisfied, no effort is made to pursue the subject further, resting upon a partial verdict predicated upon one-sided testimony.

The chief guilt of this lamentable situation lies at the doors of ambitious political conspirators located in this Territory, who have, by a course of the foulest misrepresentation, flooded the country with falsehood concerning the "Mormons," that under cover of the popular sentiment thus manufactured they might conduct their nefarious schemes with im-

punity. This appeared to them to be necessary in order to forward their ulterior purposes; if they had set their anti-republican schemes afoot against a people of good repute with the nation, the country would have snowed them under.

While the country and the government may not be entitled to unequalled censure because of the usually harsh and unsympathetic manner of treating the "Mormon" people, they are doubtless not entirely free from blame. It is always wrong to adopt a policy of that character without first ascertaining whether it is justifiable—if it is ever open to justification—by obtaining correct information, which the people most interested are the most capable of furnishing. But those who put the misrepresentation in circulation are the really guilty ones. Upon this point Tom Paine enunciated a forcible truism when he said:

"A continual circulation of lies among those who are not much in the way of hearing them contradicted, in time passes for truth. The crime lies not in the believer, but in the inventor."

There are no people of modern times against whom a larger quantity of infamous lies have been invented and circulated than the Latter-day Saints. Having been flooded upon the country and the world at large, to contradict them among people where they gained currency has been an impossible feat. Indeed, it has not been undertaken, except in a limited degree; hence the fabrications have, in time, been accepted as truth.

Doubtless this web of falsehood is largely the cause of the widespread ignorance in relation to the Saints and, as the Register holds, this lack of information leads to the harsh result of a cruel and mistaken policy. The cure lies in an effort to obtain correct information from reliable sources, the inauguration of a more sympathetic policy and the consequence will undoubtedly be a kindly response. If the rest of the nation take the position that this community should change their views and beliefs, let them bring on the intellectual and moral agencies necessary to produce the transformation, if they possess them in greater quantity and superior quality, but they must not as the Register says, fire them at the "Mormons" from the mouth of a cannon; neither should they be thrust at them in the shape of such cruel measures as the Edmunds-Tucker law.

The Latter-day Saints have been vilified and abused because it was claimed they did not conform to certain political aspects of the country. They have been repeatedly told that if this were done, all would be well, and everybody would be satisfied. The constitution framed and adopted by the late convention appears to meet every point which had been demanded by those imbued with the anti-"Mormon" spirit. Now the "Mormons" are denounced by the same class for doing what their censurers asked them to do. And still the harsh, unchristian and unreasonable spirit continues to be exhibited. Every consistent and fair-minded person who has given the question any consideration will agree with us and the Register, that a change of the mode heretofore in vogue of treating the "Mormons" should be summarily inaugurated and one of a more humane, kindly and consistent character instituted forthwith.

THE TWO STATESMEN.

Two eminent Englishmen—W. E. Gladstone and John Bright—have declined invitations to visit the United States on the occasion of the celebration of "adoption day," or the day on which the federal constitution of the United States was formally ratified. The cause of the declination should not be understood as unwillingness on their part to be with us and participate in the rejoicings on that memorable occasion, but merely indicates that the present is a momentous period in the history of their own country and each conceives it to be his duty to remain at his post at least "until the clouds roll by." This much in common, but in all other respects the scope of action and the actuating motives of the men seem as wide apart as are the antipodes.

Gladstone took great pains in his reply to set out not only his friendship for this country and sympathy for its institutions, but showed at some length why he had reason to entertain the warmest of feeling toward us, why a land consecrated to human liberty should be endeared to him; and having such sentiments as his guide, how impracticable it would be for him to desert his post now when he is battling in a similar cause. Besides, he was not disposed, on behalf of those for whom he is contending, to weaken his strength or dissipate any of his limited opportunities by giving the opposition cause for indulging in political jealousies because of his visit and misconstruing his motives when he is not present to defend them.

The reply of Mr. Bright is somewhat more curt, much more business-like, and altogether diffusing an air of greater caution and regard for himself. The sincerity of his friendly professions for the United States and its peo-

ple will hardly be questioned, would not probably have been if he had made no reply to the invitation at all; still there seems to be struggling for a place and appearance between the lines a suppressed objection to something we have lately done, are doing or have in contemplation. It is like the hospitality of a man who makes all callers welcome, but is displeased at something one of them has done and the effort to treat him no different from the other becomes a little labored. He is really, in a general sense, as friendly as ever for all that.

There are, we think, two and perhaps three causes for Mr. Bright's asperity of feeling, if such it may be. One of them is because of the ex-Premier's attitude on the Irish question, wherein he and his former colleague are painfully at variance and have almost ceased to be friends, and his invitation following that of Mr. Gladstone with the understanding that it might not have been sent at all but for that gentleman's inability to attend; another reason would seem to be the unanimous sympathy of the American people for the cause of Home Rule in Ireland. If this diagnosis of the case is the correct one—and do not all deductions based upon his words and actions of late bear it out?—it presents an element of strangeness which it will be hard to explain away. Mr. Bright is far advanced in years, is, in fact, at that stage of life when one must look to the preservation of what laurels he has won in the past rather than seek to gather fresh ones from the future. His life has been an illustrious one, such a career as few ever attain to by the force of personal effort and honest achievement. He has placed himself indelibly upon record as the friend of human liberty and human progress. In all save an affectionate allegiance for a titled ruler because she governs the land of his nativity and his destiny, he is a republican, a commoner, a humanitarian, as well as a statesman of profound ability and far-reaching consequence. Why, it will be asked, is he not only opposed to popular government in one of the Empire's provinces, but against the adoption of such measures as would raise a prostrate people from out the ashes where the hereditary curse of landlordism has placed them for three centuries? Why does he sever the friendship of his long-time ally when the latter is consecrating what little remains to him of life to the sacred end of undoing the wrongs to which his government has been committed so long? And why does he seek in his visit when a cordial bid is sent him to visit his kinsmen beyond the sea, those who see eye to eye with his compatriot on the great and all-absorbing question of Ireland for the Irish? These are the questions that a great many people will ponder over; and it is hard to think that some of them at least will see in such deportment as that we have mentioned the possible third reason—the trail of the green-eyed serpent over it all. We hope those who take a different view of the case and do not concur in the conclusion last suggested are altogether right; the others would doubtless be glad to know that they are mistaken.

OUR MORMON POLICY.

A paper published in Salt Lake City has recently expressed the opinion that the United States government ought to have sent an army corps to Utah by the first train that passed over the Pacific railroad, with a view of stamping out polygamy; and thinks that, if this had been done, Utah would now be a prosperous and peaceable member of the American Union. We have no doubt of this paper's earnest desire to see the Utah question properly settled, nor of its intense opposition to polygamy; but there is very grave reason to doubt the editor's common sense. If he thinks that questions of religious belief—and that is what Mormonism is—can be settled by bullets and bayonets, he needs to take a course of historical readings, under the guidance of some judicious and philosophical professor. And yet the spirit of that utterance breathes in very much of what is said now on this subject, and animates, to a degree which one day we shall greatly regret, our congressional legislation with reference to the Mormons. We wish that a change might be effected in this matter. We may be able to win the Mormons; it is tolerably certain that we shall not be able to drive them. Kindness and conciliation are needed far more than harsh and rigorous laws.

The great difficulty that is encountered in the settlement of the Mormon problem is that of ignorance. The Mormons do not really know us, and we do not really know them. There is no sympathy between them and us, and comparatively little communication. We have always felt that they were strangers to our commonwealth—a people remote from our ways of thought and our manner of life, singular in their ideas and habits, and obnoxious in their customs. Though living within our national territory they have ever been to us a strange and alien race. These feelings on our part they have reciprocated; they call us Gentiles, and unbelievers, and look upon

us very much as the Chinese look upon foreigners. Thus there has grown up between us and them a wall of separation, which it has been very hard to pass over. A spirit of antagonism, sometimes partaking of the rankest bitterness, has been cultivated, now by us, and now by them. Every effort has been made by them to keep apart from us, and keep us away from them. The tone of recent legislation has been such as to aggravate this bitterness, and to make Mormon exclusiveness and intolerance more rigorous and more fierce. A large portion of the newspapers of the country, both secular and religious, have done their part to make bad matters worse by indulging in the ill-considered and unchristian style of writing of which we gave a sample above. And so, while Mormon missionaries have been active abroad, and Mormon emigrants have been flocking in hundreds and thousands to Salt Lake City, we ourselves, in our desire to abolish the manifest evils of Mormonism, and to prevent that contamination which its existence among us threatens, have been doing all we could, by injudicious laws, and the exhibition of an unkind and ungenerous spirit, to defeat our own purposes, to intensify and to concentrate the energy of Mormon resistance.

It is time to begin a different policy. That barrier of ignorance and distrust which has separated the Mormons from the rest of the nation must come down. If Mormonism is to be overcome, it will be by the power of a better civilization, a purer morality and a better religion. But in order that these ameliorating influences may enter Utah, and permeate Mormon homes, and make themselves felt in Mormon hearts and lives, this Chinese wall of exclusiveness and suspicion must be leveled. Mormons will never be disposed to accept of our better ideas, if we offer them at the point of a bayonet. Our religion and our morality cannot be shot at them from cannon. The longer we continue the present policy of hostile criticism, of bitter denunciation, and of harsh legislation the longer will Mormonism be tightly sealed against the entrance of whatever benefits we may have to offer them—the more completely and hopelessly will they be alienated from the general life of the nation. If Mormonism be a plague spot—and certainly we would not deny the danger inherent in the existence of such a community in the very midst of our people—the more malignant will its power for evil become, and the more will it tend to perpetuate and strengthen itself, in answer to such a course on our part.

A convention of the people in Utah from which, we believe, the Gentile population very largely held aloof, has recently drawn up a constitution for a state government which it is proposed to present to Congress with a view to Utah's admission to the Union. No document drawn up by Senator Edmunds himself could more completely detract from polygamy than this Mormon constitution has done. Bigamy and polygamy are expressly declared to be incompatible with a republican form of government, are forbidden and declared misdemeanors. Any one found in the practice of them is on conviction to be visited with suitable penalties, or fine and imprisonment; and it is further provided that this section shall be immediately operative, without the aid of special legislation to give it effect. A proviso enacts that that particular clause shall not be altered or amended without the consent of the congress of the United States, although all other amendments to the constitution are to be made by the usual process, of securing the concurrent action of two legislatures followed by popular ratification. Another section of this constitution abolishes the union of church and state, and forbids the domination of the state by any church; while another provides for free worship, according to the dictates of conscience, and abrogates all religious and property tests for holding office, for voting, or for testifying in a court of justice.

All this looks very well; and the only weapon left to the anti-Mormon party is that of denunciation. They are trying to deceive us; they have framed a constitution which contains every provision which the most rigid Puritan would care to have—but they don't really mean it; they are drawing wool over our eyes; there is a cat in the meal; no sooner are they admitted to the union than the mask will be torn away and their real intent and purposes will stand out in all their villainy, when it is too late for us to do anything to help ourselves; the Mormons are tricksters and impostors, and now they are imposing on us by offering us this constitution—which only covers another of their numerous pieces of deceit. We need not say that we do not care to defend Mormonism. At the same time Mormons are to be treated with justice, charity and decency. There is material in Utah for a good state, and good citizens. That material must be worked up, and those embryo citizens educated and trained. We plead, therefore, not for sympathy with polygamy, or with Mormon doctrines generally, but for friendliness and kindness towards the Mormons themselves; we plead for a policy of conciliation to replace that which is now in vogue. We plead for increased efforts to carry to Utah, and to make permanent there, the church, the school, and every means of civilization and of moral and intellectual growth with which we are familiar at the east.