

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

### A WORD TO THE SAINTS.

It is now a little more than sixty-six years since the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was established. During this two-thirds of a century it has had to encounter much opposition from without, and at various times a certain amount of dissension from within. Whenever there have been symptoms of the latter, the outside opposition has done its best to encourage and magnify the proposed schism, and has fondly anticipated that influences were at last at work which would accomplish the severe wounding or destruction which it hoped for. Even when there have been no elements of internal discord whatever, the busy forces of antagonism have sought to irritate and foment trouble, hesitating not to use any weapon of distortion, falsehood or slander that promised to be effective in the unworthy warfare. Yet the Church in its onward progress has never been hindered or hurt for a moment. It has constantly gained in strength and righteousness, the faith of its members in the wisdom and integrity of its leaders has been continually increased, and its power and influence for good have been infinitely multiplied.

Neither friends nor foes need therefore indulge in any false ideas as to impending troubles which certain critics are fond of predicting. The whole history of sixty-six years is against any such result as these affect to look for. Swayed by the passions of the hour or by motives less excusable, contemporaries at diverse times in the past have roundly abused the men who stand at the head of the Church. We observe that under similar influences they are doing the same thing now. With a zeal and an enthusiasm that would be more remarkable if its mainpring and purpose were less easily detected, writers and speakers of the present day are fairly bursting with all kinds of criticism of the conduct of the Lord's anointed and with advice as to the character of the course to be pursued. Their interest in a matter which is none of their business, and their condemnation of or counsel upon concerns which they cannot possibly understand and which they know nothing about, are signs of current activity which the true Saint can afford to smile at if he does not ignore. It is amusing to hear them talk about the mistakes the Church authorities are making, and to watch their hungry relish of every trivial incident that appears to offer a text for a fresh wall. With consummate conceit, men who hardly ever use the name of Deity except as an oath, presume to tell other men, whose whole lives of purity and righteousness are before the people as an open book, how they must speak and act and even think—and this, too, in ecclesiastical matters. They accuse them of severity, of sordidness, of selfish seeking after worldly power and of various other moral Christian delinquencies. If they are thus bitter in their fault-finding, they

are also maudlin in their sentimentality. To hear them talk one might think they possessed all the judgment and charity and wisdom that ought to belong to the most godly of spiritual shepherds, and that the latter, so far as the Mormon Church is concerned, had none of these attributes.

Now, this sort of thing is not altogether new. The Church has passed through similar experiences before. The past sixty-six years have not been without their lessons, not only to the Saints but to their opponents. The latter may not heed them, but the former will not fail to profit by them. One of the plagues of these lessons is that without a single exception the authorities of the Church have been found during all these years to be right in their administration of Church affairs. Their policy, their rules, their reproofs, their teachings, have in every case met not only with the approval of the Saints themselves but with the approval of Heaven. Honorable men not of their faith have applauded their wisdom, and whatever they may have thought of the religion itself, they have recognized that the Mormon authorities knew exactly how to manage the affairs of that Church successfully.

The Latter-day Saints hardly need to be warned, therefore, against the insidious whisperings or criticisms put forth to beguile them and to destroy their confidence in their leaders. The latter are now, as ever, in the line of their duty toward their fellow-men and their God. They desire nothing but the welfare of Zion, her inhabitants, and righteous men everywhere. Their duties are performed in humility but courageously. From these they dare not shrink, nor in their performance will they forget prudence, charity and the integrity of heart and purpose which the Almighty requires of His servants. They are safe leaders, faithful shepherds, true benefactors—and no Latter-day Saint who values his soul's salvation need fear to follow in their footsteps and heed their exhortations, as they follow in the footsteps and heed the instructions of their Divine Master.

### WAR OR PEACE?

In London there is just now a growing conviction that the British government is only at the beginning of its troubles in South Africa. Every sign seems to indicate the approach of race troubles both in the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and Cape Colony. The parliament of the first-named country, now in session, is considering a proposition virtually to deprive all outlanders of the franchise. The Boers propose to distribute arms among the burghers to the extent of providing every boy over twelve years of age with a gun, and to store up ammunition to the amount of 4,000,000 rounds. The frontiers are to be fortified ostensibly as a measure of precaution against Africans. On the other hand the English colonists are

indulging in meetings and inflammatory speeches. Their speakers insist on the necessity of preparing for resistance of any attempt to curtail their liberties. The home government is being criticized for its supposed cowardice as shown in its South African policy.

How long this strained state of affairs can last without causing an actual rupture is impossible to say, but the conclusion seems irresistible that a race war is on which eventually will call for interference by the British government.

Nor is South Africa the only source of trouble to England. The Turkish question continually rises to the surface. The recent atrocities in Crete remind the world that harmony cannot be established between the followers of the Cross and the Crescent, at least not until the time shall have come when the lamb and the lion can lie down together in perfect peace. In the case of the occurrences at Canea it is pointed out that Lord Salisbury cannot plead inability to deal with the perpetrators of the murders. They are within easy reach of the guns of the English fleet. To fail to act in the matter will be regarded as a repudiation of the responsibility undertaken by England in relation to the sultan's Christian subjects.

The political sky, although comparatively calm, has a decidedly cloudy aspect. The bright spot is the effort of the friends of peace to bring about a more rational mode of settling international questions than those hitherto resorted to. Notable in this effort is the plan of influential French women, who have formed a Woman's League for General Disarmament, at the head of which stands Mme. Flammarion, wife of the celebrated astronomer. This field of work is particularly one in which women should be interested, and it is safe to say that if once wives, mothers and sisters grasp the idea and realize their power to turn thought and sentiment into new channels, the day cannot be far off when all the vexed international questions will be referred to intelligent and just arbitration rather than to brute force. May the angels of peace succeed!

### WOMEN ARE PERSONS.

At last it has been discovered that the persistent agitation carried on for about forty years in order to obtain for women the right of franchise by an addition to the Constitution, is entirely uncalled for. It is now claimed that that wonderful instrument of human freedom gives that right to the gentler sex as freely and unreservedly as to men. W. E. Harwood in the North American Review takes this view of the matter and gives his reasons for it. Article XIV, which has been in force since July, 1868, reads:

All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person