

EDITORIALS.

OLD LAWS APPLIED TO NEW CONDITIONS.

"The President's recommendation that the Mormons be deprived of political rights until they abandon polygamy does not appear to us to offer a practical solution of that problem. Congress can no doubt do what he suggests, but it is almost certain that it would be without effect. The Mormon Church possesses an organization fully capable of governing the whole Mormon body, and in such a case it would doubtless proceed to govern them in this way. Of course the Territorial government could not carry out the processes of the courts in the face of an adverse community. That has been tried in the South, and has signally failed. The truth is that coercion and punitive legislation will not reach this difficulty, and it is time that fact was recognized. The Mormon leaders are perfectly aware of this, and they do not care what Congress does in the premises. Whatever can be made to appear to Mormon eyes in the light of persecution for conscience sake, is to their advantage, and will only strengthen both the Church and polygamy. Of course it is very much easier to find out the defects in any given line of policy than to propose a practicable solution. We confess that we do not see our way to any determination of this question within the reach of Congress at present, but we are disposed to place much reliance upon the silent influence of contact with Gentile civilization. It may not be satisfactory to have to await the slow effects of that influence, but it would be still less satisfactory to find, after adopting drastic measures, that the evils aimed at had only been entrenched by the attacks upon them.

The above is from the *Sacramento Record-Union*, and we believe it conveys the opinions of the most thoughtful portion of the people of the United States, on a question to which much importance seems to be attached, and to the prominence of which its enemies contribute more than its friends. We recognize the hand of Providence in all the attempts made to destroy or misrepresent "Mormonism," because it keeps up public interest in the subject, gives the "Mormons" an opportunity of telling the truth concerning their principles, and results in bringing many honorable people after investigating our doctrines to embrace the faith and aid in the work.

In the same issue of the *Record-Union*, in which the above article is published, appears an article mainly in reference to railroads as public highways, and from which we make the annexed extracts:

"It sometimes happens that law hinders progress, and it does in attempting to measure new phenomena by the rules which were devised to measure old phenomena with. * *

It is probably a very common idea that the dead are soon forgotten, but if men reflected they would perceive that the government of the world is carried on far more by the dead than by the living, and that the silent influence of those long gone to their rest molds not only opinions, but actions more generally and more strongly than any contemporary experience. And if we, in bringing to this continent the legal traditions and doctrines of old England, have secured many priceless benefits, it must also be admitted that we have entailed upon ourselves many serious drawbacks and hindrances, arising out of the want of harmony with actual conditions too frequently existing in these venerable maxims and theories. * * *

"Rules which were the result of an experience long obsolete are adhered to despite their applicability. One consequence of all this is a confusion in the interpretation of fundamental concepts, which leads to astonishing results frequently."

Although the foregoing remarks are intended to apply to another and totally different subject, they have equal application to the law in relation to "Mormon" celestial marriage, which the astute writer in the *Record-Union* ought to perceive when treating on the "Mormon" question. The Anti-Polygamy Act of 1862 was aimed against a religious ceremony and institution peculiar to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But it was in its construction a re-enactment of an old English statute framed against a very different practice. The very wording of the first English civil

law against bigamy—that of James I—is used in the Act of '62.

"Mormon" plural marriage and the crime of bigamy are as unlike in essence and in deed as any two things can be which both relate to the intercourse of the sexes. Bigamy implies the forsaking of a legal wife for an illicit union with another woman under a fraudulent form of marriage. "Mormon" plural marriage does not repudiate the first wife, but confirms her in her marital position, while it gives to the husband another by consent of all the parties. One is deceptive throughout the whole transaction, the other is by agreement with the knowledge and understanding of both the wives. In one case the second or bogus wife imagines she is the lawful spouse of the bigamist, in the other case the plural wife understands that the ceremony, while binding ecclesiastically and *bona fide* in the eyes of her people and Church, is not recognized as such by the civil law. In bigamy the man knows he is perpetrating a wrong affecting each of the deceived women whom he betrays, in "Mormon" plural marriage the husband conscientiously believes, in fact declares he knows, that he is doing right in the sight of heaven, his convictions being so strong that to him it amounts to knowledge. One is under no restraint but is done in defiance of restraint; the other is done under rules and regulations which the parties accept as divine and believe to be binding upon them. The religious element enters into, permeates, governs and controls the latter, while the former repudiates all religious suggestions or sentiments as well as the law of man.

New, take to an old law framed against that which is generally known as bigamy, and try to make it apply to "Mormon" polygamy, is unwise and incompatible legislation. It is not statesmanship. It is in the very nature of the old laws and their application to modern and different circumstances against which the *Record-Union* declaims, as we think with reason. The "venerable maxims and theories" of Anglican ecclesiastical government, are in this case grafted into modern American civil jurisprudence, with the object of overcoming by the force of law a different practice altogether from that assailed by the ancient and inapplicable edict.

We agree with the *Sacramento* journal that the latest plan proposed, even if adopted—which we have no fears of seeing—"would afford no practical solution of the problem." All this hostility to a system which its enemies can only assail with falsehood and force, but intensifies the convictions of its adherents. And the more undue and anti-republican measures are concocted in the spirit of malice and intolerance against it, the more difficult and complicated will the problem become. As a learned jurist who has visited this Territory remarked to some of his friends in the East, after investigating this subject to some extent, "There is one thing that the rabid opponents of the 'Mormons' do not take into account, and that is that they are as sincere and conscientious in the marriage portion of their religion as any members of any Christian sect are in their distinctive beliefs." This will have to be taken into consideration by those who undertake to effect any change in the marital relations of the "Mormons," and in leaving it out of their deliberations those who plan against it omit the most important factor in the so-called "problem." The *Record-Union* seems to sense this to some extent, and we hope it will also apply the argument on the inapplicability of old laws to new conditions in reference to railroads, in the same manner and to the same effect in relation to the "Mormon" question. "It's a poor rule that will only work one way."

SCIENCE AND GENESIS

THE sacred record called the Bible opens with a brief account of the creation. It not only declares that God made, created or organized the heavens and the earth, the animal and vegetable products, and finally male and female man, but gives the order of this creation, telling what was done in the several "days" or epochs until the globe was sufficiently perfected to be a fit abode for man, the crowning work of Deity, formed in his own image.

Until quite recently this Biblical account of the creation was received

among Christian nations as the revealed word of God, and remained undisputed as a relation of facts. To call it in question at one time would have subjected the skeptic not only to the scorn and indignation of believers, but to pains and penalties of the severest character. But of late years the first chapter of the Book of Genesis has been assailed by scientists in such a manner that even professing Christians, and other devout believers in the Old Testament, have come to doubt the authenticity of that chapter, while the efforts of some modern divines to interpret its sayings so as to conform to the declarations of so-called science, have in many cases been pitiful and painful to behold.

Many religious teachers claim that the portion of Scripture referred to is merely a poem, containing allegorical and metaphorical language not to be received in any literal sense. Geology has set up dogmas in such direct opposition to the common understanding of Genesis, and the tendency of modern thought is so strongly turned in the direction of human deductions rather than divine revelation, that former orthodox theology is pushed aside, and the authority of that portion of the Bible at least is as nothing compared to the enunciations of the geologists and secularists.

The mischief of this lies in the disposition to doubt which it fosters and increases, driving faith out of the heart and closing up the avenues of divine illumination to the soul. The truth of the very beginning of Holy Writ, once a matter of uncertainty or the subject of ridicule, it is easy to proceed in the same direction until the whole volume is viewed as fiction, or at least as unworthy of trusting reliance. And when those who profess to be called as teachers of the people join in the growing skepticism, the result cannot fail to be subversive of that faith which is the key to divine communion, and the great essential to present and eternal salvation.

The Latter-day Saints have faith in the opening chapters of the Bible as a relation of actual occurrences, which is confirmed by direct revelation in our own times. That great Prophet and Seer, Joseph Smith, received a divine communication making known the word of the Lord as revealed to Moses, who wrote the account of the creation in Genesis. This not only establishes the fact of the authorship of that book, but the fact that what Moses wrote was revealed to him from heaven. It was not the result of his cogitations, or a mere expression of his own philosophy or theories, but the very word of the Creator himself. This communication is published in the Pearl of Great Price. So is the Book of Abraham, in which the account of the creation, as revealed to that great Patriarch, is made known, corroborating the statements of Moses and putting beyond question the literal character of the Biblical narration of primal events.

There are some things connected with this, however, which need to be explained in order to form a correct understanding of the subject. One is in relation to the "days" spoken of in which the process of organization was accomplished. These days are shown in the Book of Abraham to be according to celestial and not earth time. One revolution of this globe, taking about twenty-four hours, measures our day, including the darkness and the light. But celestial time is measured by the revolutions of a governing world set far above our sun in astral power and glory, as it is in magnitude, one revolution taking a thousand years of our time. This makes one of the days of the Lord, who spoke to Moses of celestial time in reference to the periods of the earth's evolution and not to our diurnal reckoning.

Another thing to be noted is that no period is defined as intervening between the time when the earth was first formed out of chaos, and the time when light was called by the divine fiat out of the midst of the darkness, and the emerging of which and its division from its opposite, took place in the first "time" or celestial "day." How long the forming globe remained in the outer darkness of its embryonic state is not revealed. Ages may have intervened between the "beginning" and the time of the "first day." Whether smaller and older orbs, or fragments of others that had passed away by the word of God's power because they had not filled the measure of their creation, were involved and incorporated in the new-started nucleus, is not ex-

plained in the divine words to Moses and Abraham. And in the absence of definite revelation on this point, we will not interpose conclusions that may, however, be consistently deduced from other inspired communications. But we merely draw attention to these two points in relation to the periods of the divine work, which are not generally considered in reading the Biblical account of the creation.

The question that will arise in some minds is, how does all this tally with the declarations of science? We answer, what is called science is not infallible. It makes many mistakes. True science is indisputable, but much that is called science is only philosophy, some of it very vain philosophy. There is quite a mixture of theory and guesswork with demonstrated principles and facts, in the assertions of learned men concerning the formation of worlds and geologic processes and periods. They cannot be accepted as the end of controversy, and if the revelations to which we have referred came into direct contact with the dogmas of scientists, we should prefer to depend on the former no matter how much they might contradict the latter. But we think that there is no real conflict between the Mosaic account of the creation and the nebular theory which is the most widely accepted among the most prominent scientists. And we will close this rather lengthy article, which is written for the purpose of arousing thought on this subject among our young people, with an extract from a contribution to a late number of the *Christian Union*, placing side by side the sayings in Genesis, slightly altered by Dr. Warring, the writer, with the assertions and admissions of science on this important subject:

GEN. I., ACCORDING TO THE GRAMMAR AND LEXICON. SCIENCE.

In the beginning There was a beginning.

God There is a First Cause.

created the heavens The universe had its origin in the Unknown Source of things.—(Herbert Spencer.)

and the earth. It was once part of a nebulous mass.

The earth was without form and void. Before motion there was no light.

Darkness was upon the face of the deep. Motion as such was due to God.

The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the earth. The earth was then a ly, a flowing, non-solid, flowing, id, fluid substance.) movable substance or fluid.

"And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. The first visible effect of motion in the fluid mass was the giving out of light.

And God saw the light that it was good. Light on our planet became good, like that of the sun, before the cooled earth divided as now between day and night.

And God divided between the light and the darkness. So he does now by the opaque, non-luminous earth.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness called him Night. Day and night were the possible only after the division between light and darkness.

And the evening and the morning were the first day. The first alternation after the opaque earth divided between the light and darkness (just as it does now) was actually the first day.

And God made an expanse in the midst of the waters, etc. After day and night had begun the still hot earth was surrounded by the oceans in state of vapor, and the next step necessary to fit our world for life was to clear away those dense vapors until, as now, the air became clear.

Note.—The firmament or expanse is not pronounced good; why? Although the air was clear, yet until vegetation began it was loaded with carbonic acid and other poisonous gases, and was impossible to breathe. It therefore was not good.

God called the expanse heaven. The clearing away of the dense clouds made the heavens visible.

And the evening and the morning were the second day. The land at first was the waters under the all under water. Then the dry land came to appear.

And God said, Let the dry land appear. Unto one place. The oceans and seas are names for parts of one place or basin.

And God saw that it was good. The present arrangement of land and water is surpassingly good.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth development of the grass and the herb land, vegetation providing seed, and the seeded side by side, tree bearing fruit pariparus, and both whose seed is inside of were completed essential. [The reader will tally as at present in note that Moses puts the same period—the elevating of the Pliocene.

And the evening and the morning were the third day. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

THE DELEGATE AND THE MESSAGE.

WE copy, to-day, from the *Chicago Times*, the full account of an interview with Hon. George Q. Cannon, a few particulars of which reached us last week by telegraph. The average press "interview" should be taken with a good degree of allowance for the disposition of the reporter to exaggerate, to sandwich in between slices of actual conversation occasional layers of the writer's personal views, and to substitute phrases of his own for the real words of his victim's, which, if more euphonious, are not always distinguished for accuracy.

In this case we think our Delegate's remarks are in the main correctly reported, although some expressions are evidently not verbatim. We are pleased to note that his views are identical with our own on the subject of military government for Utah in preference to that of an appointed ring of politicians. We are not under any apprehensions of either anti-republican method of coercing an organized Territory, or incipient State, into submission to arbitrary rules or into violence and dissolution. But if either mode is an alternative, commend us to the military method. Let gentlemen of honor and valor be entrusted with the lives, fortunes and fate of this people, rather than a little knot of plotting politicians, greedy for plunder and thirsty with anti-"Mormon" malice.

There is one thing that ought to be considered in connection with the violent and unstatesmanlike suggestions which President Hayes was induced to recommend, and that is, the danger of introducing such an extreme anti-American experiment into our national system. It would form an entirely incongruous element in a popular form of government, and once incorporated might lead to the overthrow of principles formerly considered essential to American institutions, as they certainly are to human liberty. If such measures as recommended can be forced upon one section of the country under a certain pretext, they can be repeated in another under a different pretext of similar alleged necessity. What is "saucer for the goose" may, r, considered "saucer for the gander of and the insertion of the thin end in the wedge into Utah, may result in its being driven home to the butt in the body of the Federal Union. If the country can stand such a monarchical exercise of unconstitutional power, we think the "Mormons" can, and those who consent to such revolutionary proceedings will find out the truth of the Messiah's saying, "The measure ye mete out to others shall be measured to you again, pressed down and running over."

The *Sacramento Record-Union* has the following on the interview with Mr. Cannon:

"Delegate Cannon finds fault with the President's remarks on the Mormon question in his recent message, but it is not easy to understand what views he wishes to substitute for those of Mr. Hayes. He says that the Mormons will never abandon plural marriages, but that they can be trusted to condemn polygamy when placed in the jury box. That appears a strange statement, but it is what Mr. Cannon is represented as advancing. He further denies that the Federal authorities have made faithful and zealous efforts to enforce the law against Mormonism. Whether he means to imply that if the Federal authorities had been more zealous they might have put down polygamy, we do not understand, but his position seems altogether inconsistent with that of a pillar of the Mormon Church and an exponent and defender of polygamy. If anything practical can be gathered from what he says, we must conclude that Mormonism has not yet been attacked with sufficient energy by the government, and that if it is so attacked, in the opinion of Delegate Cannon, it can be made to conform to the laws of the United States. This is quite a new view of the Mormon situation, but it is not our view."

In reply to this, we have to say, that the Delegate was not attempting to substitute anything for Mr. Hayes' views on Utah, nor to make any recommendations to Congress. He merely answered questions as to his opinion of the President's assertions and suggestions. That the