

# DESERT NEWS: WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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## CHRISTMAS GREETING.

THE ever-flowing current of time has brought us near to Christmas again, and before we hold another communication with our readers, the day adopted throughout Christendom as the anniversary of the Divine Man will have passed away. To all present appearances the Christmas of eighteen-hundred-and-eighty-two will be a happy one for the people of Utah. Nature has been bountiful in her gifts to the thrifty dwellers in the fat valleys of Ephraim, and the land smiles with plenty. The rich products of the soil, the fatted kine and poultry, the luscious fruit in varied beauty, the yield of earth's interior treasures, the comforts and luxuries of the factory and the workshop, in bounteous abundance vie with the imports from older repositories of skilled and artistic handicraft, to contribute to the pleasure and delight of the people in these upper regions of the earth.

Peace reigns within our borders, contentment greater than usually rests within the breasts of mortals sheds its calm influence around, brotherhood and friendship unite the families and neighborhoods of the Saints, and love sanctifies and hallows the humble but prized and hospitable homes that make glad the mount-protected vales of happy Utah. For she is happy, mangle the frowns and sneers of misjudging millions, the cunning devices of malignant plotters, and the threatenings of fierce and angry foes. Happy in the bounties of a generous Providence; happy in the spot she has chosen for an abiding place; happy in the prospects that shine so brightly and welcome her to progress and renown; happy in the knowledge revealed from on high; happy in communion with Him whose birthday is about to be celebrated, and in whose honor the bells will ring, the good cheer will be partaken of, and gifts will pass to old and young in the midst of laughter and merriment, kind greetings and pleasant benedictions.

And this last-named cause of the happiness of Utah's people is their distinguishing mark among the communities of earth's children. Christ, the King, whom all civilized nations are about to reverence by feast or worship, has manifested Himself by word and presence, for the joy and salvation of those who are called by His great name, and who have severed themselves from the world to carry out His high behests. The Saints, above all people on this fallen globe, can rejoice at Christmas tide. Jesus is to them much more than the subject of a sacred story. Not only do the echoes of the song, caroled to the shepherds of the East, sound in their ears down the corridors of time and move them to join in the heavenly chorus; not only do the scenes of the brief earthly life of the Nazarene appear before their eyes as painted by the hands of his disciples; not only are the crucifixion and the resurrection realities to their faith-inspired souls; the voice of the same Jesus has been heard in their day and for their guidance and comfort. His spirit has been shed abroad again as a radiation from His own presence, and the channel through which communication with Him may be obtained has been cleared of all obstructions, that He may be with them and they may be with Him.

Christ, the Lord, the King, is to the Latter-day Saints a living, speaking, loving Savior, steadfast friend and veritable Elder Brother, the first-born of their Eternal Father, though the only begotten in the flesh. He is the real head of the Church of which they are the body. He guides, directs and animates it. He watches over and lifts it above the reach of those who would destroy it. He reveals the means whereby it prospers, and He will bring it to a glorious and triumphant consummation.

Then let the Saints of God rejoice and give thanks, while they make merry and bestow gifts, over the advent into the world of the babe of Bethlehem, who will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In His humble beginning and rejection on earth and present glorification among the nations, let them see the promise of their future as the outgrowth of their present despising, and an example of the changes which time and Providence can bring to the worthy and the faithful. While plenty abounds and is relished by the well-supplied, remember His ministrations to the needy and His legacy—the poor whom “ye always have with you.” In the midst of abundance, let no one lack for food, fuel, or raiment. And make the hearts of the little ones glad, whom He always loved, and declared were “of the kingdom of heaven.”

We extend cordial Christmas greetings to friend and foe, to “Mormon” and “Gentile,” Saint and sinner. The sincere wish of our heart is, “God bless you all.” Let the sword be sheathed if it cannot yet be made into a ploughshare; let the spear be laid aside if it cannot yet be turned into a reaping-hook. Let the tongue not speak words of bitterness nor the pen be dipped in gall. But while the song and the jest and the good wish make music in the air, while kindred join and friends meet to hail the glad day of reunion and harmony, let all people hush their strife and bury their feuds at least for a season. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## A BILL FOR THE STATEHOOD OF UTAH.

SENATOR A. SAUNDERS, of Nebraska, so the dispatches inform us, introduced a bill on Wednesday for the admission of Utah into the Union as a State. We may naturally expect that the press of the country will become very much excited, and lay down the proposition for the nine-hundred-and-ninety-ninth time that polygamy will never be recognized by the United States. Senator Sanders, too, will doubtless be assailed as the “champion of polygamy,” for introducing a measure looking to Utah's statehood. And yet polygamy has nothing really to do with the question.

After the space of many days, it may dawn upon the minds of journalists that the great bugaboo of the marriage relations of the Latter-day Saints does not properly enter into the political status of Utah as a Territory or a State of the Union. It forms no part of her political organization, does not enter into her laws, asks for no recognition as a secular system, but is wholly and entirely an ecclesiastical question, regulated by sacerdotal rites and governed by religious motives.

The Constitution of the State of Utah speaks for itself. It is one that contains all the essentials. It provides for “a republican form of government.” It is liberal and broad in its extension of privileges to all citizens alike, has no discriminations in favor of any creed, party or race, embodies all the features of modern State constitutions which are considered progressive and abreast with the advance of the times, and if presented by any other than a “Mormon” community, would evoke the admiration of both Democrats and Republicans.

The polygamy question is juggled in to the consideration of Utah's Statehood, by those who desire to keep this Territory in a condition which offers an opportunity for rewards to political hangers-on, and a chance for a living to the professional office-holder and office-seeker. How long it will loom up into undue importance, and to blind the eyes of statesmen when attempting to look at the claims of Utah to statehood, we do not pretend to say. We have no idea, however, that it will at present be removed to a sufficient extent to permit of a fair and candid investigation of the subject. There is little probability of Utah's admission into the Union just now. But it is the duty of her citizens to continue knocking at the doors of Congress and asking if she may come in. The responsibility of her position will then rest upon the power that can admit, not upon the people who are kept out in the cold, at once a source of annoyance and expense to the country instead of being a help and a strength to the nation. We can afford to wait.

Some day, perhaps, Congress may find that it cannot afford to be fooled by the sophistry of priests, the nonsense of political fanatics, or the ravings of official pap-suckers and rapacious adventurers. Then Utah will go in with a welcome, and add glory and wealth to the greatest government under the sun.

## FAVORABLE REPORT ON THE UTAH DELEGATE.

THE report of the sub-committee to whom was referred the application of Hon. John T. Caine for a seat in the Forty-seventh Congress during the remainder of the term, will be viewed with pleasure by nearly all of the people of Utah. There are very few persons here who will object to Utah's being represented by that gentleman as its Delegate. We hope that the full Committee on Elections will adopt the sub-committee's report favoring the application, in which case there is little doubt that Mr. Caine will be admitted, as there is no contest for the seat, and there is no valid reason why he should not occupy the position to which he was elected by the people of Utah in the best manner that was open to them by which to express their wishes and their choice.

That Utah has been harshly treated in being entirely deprived of representation, during a session of Congress in which special legislation of a stringent character against many of her citizens was enacted, is very generally conceded by members of both houses, and it will be some little reparation to pass by the unimportant technicalities that might be urged against the admission of Mr. Caine, that she may have a voice raised in her defence when again assailed by her enemies. Mr. Caine has good prospects of success.

## THE SENATE BILL DUPLICATED.

It is not surprising that in Mr. Cassidy, of Nevada, District Attorney Van Zile should find a willing hand to present in the House of Representatives the same bill which he induced Senator Edmunds to introduce in the Upper House, for further legislation against the “Mormons.” Mr. Cassidy's course at the previous session prepared the minds of the people of Utah for any step on his part that would be to their disfavor, and so extreme a measure ought to find an extremist as its champion. Mr. Cassidy's career will do to watch, and it will be found that his decadence, in company with the long list of officially defunct “Mormon”-eaters who have gone into shame and oblivion, is only a question of a little time. There is nothing more certain than that public men who misrepresent and fight against the people called Latter-day Saints invariably go down to darkness or disgrace. Their doom is marked by the finger of Providence.

## A CANDID REVIEW OF A SHAMEFUL MEASURE.

THE New York World thus vigorously expresses the opinions of a large number of fair minded American citizens in relation to the latest piece of anti-“Mormon” foolishness, concocted by the disappointed office-holder and office-seeker Van Zile, whom the people of Utah wouldn't have as their Delegate:

“Senator Edmunds has discovered that his outrageous Anti-Polygamy bill will not work unless it is made still more outrageous. He has accordingly introduced a new bill of three sections, each removing from any person charged with polygamy one of the safeguards of civil liberty which are integral parts of the common law, and for which men of Anglo-Saxon lineage the world over are prepared to fight rather than surrender them. The first provides that a man's lawful wife shall be a competent witness against him. The second provides that personal service of a subpoena shall not be necessary before the issue of an attachment to compel the attendance of the person named in the unserved subpoena. The third provides that no statute of limitations shall be pleaded against a prosecution for bigamy or polygamy, and so makes the Edmunds bill an *ex post facto*

law. The new bill is so outrageous indeed that Senator Edmunds, who has at least some reputation as a lawyer to lose, has disavowed it, and announces that he introduces it “by request.” Whether he occupies a more dignified attitude by avowing himself the tool of another for the introduction of a scandalous, tyrannical and unconstitutional bill into the Senate of the United States than by assuming for himself the responsibility of the measure, is a question for Senator Edmunds to settle with himself and his constituents. But he ought not to be allowed to shirk his responsibility as a Senator. If this bill should pass, every defense of personal liberty which has been won by Englishmen and Americans from Runnymede to Yorktown would be taken from the Mormons of Utah; and the Mormons of Utah would deserve the contempt of mankind if they did not fight rather than submit to the tyranny to which Senator Edmunds proposes to subject them.”

## SCIENCE AND “THE MORMON PHENOMENON.”

IN another part of this paper will be found a lengthy article from the San Francisco Chronicle. It is of a different character from the articles on “Mormonism” which frequently appear in that paper. It contains no violent attacks upon the Latter-day Saints or their creed, but is written in a fair and rational spirit. Yet it contains many errors, some of which we will endeavor to point out. The first is that “Mormonism” is “a creed more at variance with reason and science than any that ever preceded it.” Nothing is cited in support of this statement, the writer no doubt believing that it would not be disputed. There is so much misunderstanding of the subject that any absurdity about it is readily believed. But those who understand it best are of the opinion that none of its principles can be controverted by reason, and that they are in perfect accord with the demonstrations of science.

It is verily true that this is an iconoclastic age; that the beliefs of centuries have been shattered, that the popular worship of “Christian” as well as heathen idols has been displaced by secular notions and skeptical modes of thought, and that the movements of the past half a century have made more inroads upon orthodox ecclesiasticism than has occurred since the opening of the Christian era. But it is not generally perceived that this nineteenth century “phenomenon,” vulgarly called “Mormonism,” has been one of the most powerful levers for the upsetting of the popular acquiescence in moss-grown dogmas, and the casting down of the idols of religious tradition. Yet “Mormonism” is one of the most potent iconoclasts of this age of general image-breaking.

For fifty years its diligent and devoted missionaries have been moving among the masses in all the countries of Christendom, and to some extent in heathendom, proving by scripture and reason that the orthodox beliefs are in many respects foolish and false, and testifying of the re-establishment of the pure Church of Christ, by direct divine revelation which is in perfect harmony with true science because it emanates from the source of all intelligence.

There is more reason in unity with faith, and more science connected with theology in what is called “Mormonism,” than in anything else in the shape of an organized religious system under the sun. It goes right to the origin of all worlds and their products and the creatures that inhabit them. It explodes the fallacy of creation out of nothing. It explains the necessity and uses of evil. It reveals a personal Deity and His opposite in a rational and comprehensive manner. It accounts for the sorrows and sufferings of mortal existence, and shows their consistency with Infinite Goodness. It sets forth the full object and necessity of the atonement. It sweeps away the dogma of endless, unremitting torment for sinners. It shows the conditions of mankind after the change called death, in a way that dissipates the clouds and gloom which priestcraft and sectarianism have conjured up to obscure the truth, scare the weak-minded, and disgust the fearless investigator. It expounds the doctrines of pure Christianity as taught by its founder and primitive promulgators, unmixed, with the vagaries of

self-constituted authorities. It proclaims the justice of the Eternal Father in consonance with mercy, for the benefit of his creatures and the maintenance of righteous government. It provides a way for the redemption of the unenlightened dead as well as for the enlightened living. It opens up a rational heaven for the enjoyment of developed men and women made immortal, and depicts a rational punishment for evil-doers, as a means of reformation and the vindication of eternal law. It measurably dissolves the veil that hides futurity, and makes plain the origin and destiny of the whole family of man.

In addition to this and very much more that might be said, it brings to all its sincere and faithful followers the certainty of its truth and divinity. For it establishes in their souls a conviction that no man-made system can furnish a spirit which gives communion with the source of all light, wisdom and abiding joy. This is the real secret of its power. This is what makes it a “phenomenon” in the nineteenth century. This is the force to which its adherents yield. This prompts them to make willingly the sacrifices which astonish reflecting men. It is this and not “orders” or “commands” of men—no matter who they may be—which moves the “Mormons” in any given direction. It is the same spirit and its effects which inspired the early Christians in their struggles and resistances, and sufferings and triumphs. It is a positive reality, as much as the light of the sun, and its influences and powers though super-human are not supernatural, and are not in conflict with anything that has been demonstrated by science.

There is a vast difference between true science and vain philosophy. That which is proven and that which is presumed by persons noted in the sphere of scientific thought, are very different. While established truth stands unmoved by the changes of time and the discoveries of enlightened inquiry, the theories of celebrated thinkers are often dissipated by the light of experience. What Huxley, or Darwin, or Tyndall may have proven, ought not to be classed with that which they have inferred. And it is the inferences and deductions and hypotheses, often unwarranted, of scientific celebrities which frequently delude mankind into the notion that revealed religion is in conflict with science. We state without hesitation that “Mormonism” is in harmony with demonstrated scientific principles; we do not affirm that it corresponds with the vain philosophy of ancient or modern times.

We maintain that there is nothing in science that disproves the fact of the Divine Existence; that makes revelation from God to man irrational; that shows a spiritual being incorporated in an earthly body to be impossible; that is in conflict with the idea of the pre-existence and after-life of the spiritual man, or his possible communion with higher beings while in mortality. Thoroughly examined it will be found that man's nature is such that he can never be fully satisfied with that which ministers merely to his physical and intellectual cravings. The spiritual cries out for something that is beyond the limited power of those agencies to impart. True theology is eminently scientific, and the science which only explains things cognizant to the senses is but of the lower grade.

It is a great mistake, though a common one, to class Joseph Smith as “a coarse, sensual, ignorant man,” and to denounce as “absurd” his “pretensions as a prophet and religious expounder.” If there ever were prophets, why not a prophet now? If God ever did reveal anything through a chosen medium, why not to-day? If such a Being exists, why should he not manifest His existence and pleasure? The “absurdity” is in the nonsense attributed to Joseph Smith, not in his actual utterances. Mere “animal force” could not have brought forth the spiritual light and power which are the life and vigor of the system which he introduced, nor the advanced spiritual principles that he advocated, and which the combined learning, cunning and intolerance of the age can neither controvert nor destroy. His “boldness” was born of the confidence of conviction and the certainty of Divine help. He was indeed a “remarkable man,” and it is not a little remarkable that so much is said about him by persons who will not take