DESERET EVENING NEWS.

Tuesday, - - - - July 7, 1868.

LETTER FROM GREAT SALT LAKE CITY.

The following letter is from the correspondence of the Davenport, Iowa, *True Radical*. The editor says "It is from a literary man and artist, well known in New York, and one of the most entertaining writers of the day." Its author has used his eyes to advantage in this city, and writes with a liberality of thought and unprejudiced spirit that is creditable alike to his head and heart:

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY,
May 31, 1868.

Dear Radical:—A grand, stupendous feeling of veneration creeps over me, when I look out of my window upon the magnificent scene before me—the verdant plain, dotted with neat and cosy habitations, surrounded by blooming peach orchards, gardens, and the proud snow-capped mountains that stretch themselves in one massive girth around the blessed valley. You know I have always been an ardent admirer of mountains and the people that inhabit mountainous countries.

Here we may say, eternal Sunday reigns! Here the mind receives constant inspiration from the powerful spirit of majestic nature. No need of fishing for thoughts; they rise constantly before your mind like the gigantic mountains that raise their peaks to the floating clouds. The man, whose power of imagination does not increase a hundred fold at the sight of these beauties, must indeed be lost to every emotion of goodness, to all noble aspirations—must be a hypocondriac, or an egotist. But my dreamy phantasy leads me away from the real purpose of my letter. I know this political rhapsody is not the thing you look for; you want something more rational, more practical and instructive. You want to know whether the people who inhabit this fair spot, keep pace with the grandeur and majestic sights that surround them. I entered this valley with a spirit of impartiality. I shall not look at things with the eye of a fanatical bigot, not as one that comes but to condemn and blame, because the prejudice of the so-called Christian world rests upon this people, but as a liberal minded observer of things and manners, as an impartial chronicler of facts.

The reason that is here taught to these Christian judges is a great one. They would be taught to live in harmony and peace, not to hunt too much after riches and money, but be contented with little, and in that little, find the blessing of happiness and content. A more quiet and orderly city I have not seen. No crimes of any kind are recorded here; police is almost superfluous; prostitution is not known; drunken men are not seen in the street, nor loafers on street corners insulting passing women. Although there are no street lamps, females may venture to walk the streets with impunity, and no fear need oppress them that they will be insulted by some ruffian, who has had all the advantages of Christian teachings or the great examples (?) of the ministers of the gospel before him to make him a better man. Here the people practice what they teach among themselves, for here every one has the mission to teach others, if he is able to do so, either by actual speech or the force of example. Some of the sanctimonious people in the States call these persons deluded. Suppose they are so, it is a happy delusion—a delusion those teachers of virtue and morality cannot bring their adherents into, with all their spasmodic ravings and the rolling of their sanctimonious eye-balls. Is it not better to see a deluded people live happy and contented, practice real virtues, live up to their means, and in the innocence of their hearts offer a sacrifice to the living God, than to see a people brought up in all the grand principles (?) of the orthodox church, practising the contrary of what they profess to believe, cheating their neighbors when they can do it, cause wars and turmoils, upset the foundations of a solid government, and tolerate among themselves all sorts of fashionable vices and immoralities; not having the power to correct these evils, and practice a system of mock charity and hypocrisy? If delusion has a noble and practical mission, and exercises so much good as it does here, then let delusion reign upon the earth. But I see these people are not so very deluded; they believe in their own doctrines, live according to their doctrines, and cling to them with a heroic and self-sacrificing tenacity, a tenacity that has changed deserts into blooming gardens, the vast and dreary desert into a paradise, that gathers to their valleys thousands and thousands from all the nations of the earth, and keeps them together by the strong bonds of brotherly love, of harmony, and the force of good teachings. I send you in this letter a sermon from President Young; read it carefully, and you must say to yourself, so does a father speak to his children. See the amount of good advice he gives to his people, the absence of every flowery bombast or the dreary ravings of a fanatic. It is plain, simple, practical truth, that strikes a thousand times deeper and produces more effect upon the heart and mind, than the melancholy sing-song of sectarian preachers. It flows into the heart like oil, and makes one feel good to hear it. It appeals to reason also; for there is practical, common sense in these words. Ladies have no time to admire each others' cloaks and bonnets; the force of these simple words rivets their attention.

There is another proof of the tolerance and liberal disposition of the Mormon Church. It is their Theatre, their temple of art which has risen in gigantic proportions out of the chaos of private residences and which rivals in size, internal arrangements and general management the proudest theatres of our metropolitan cities. No raving maniac thunders here his anathemas against the stage; no holy and kind-hearted (?!) so-called apostle of God condemns or stigmatizes the poor actor as an outcast, banishing him from the pale of civilized society (?) hurling him forever into the dark abyss of eternal perdition, because he dares to amuse the people, because he dares to shorten the long faces they brought from the Church, and to cheer up a little their drooping spirits. No; here the artist can hold his head high, if he is a good man and not a drunkard, if she is a good woman and a lady; here the actor or actress will be respected and esteemed. Here art and religion go hand in hand, each doing good in its own particular sphere. The Theatre once stood even under the direction and patronage of President Young himself, who did all in his power to promote its progress and *prestige*. He has succeeded remarkably, for he made it a model institution. Order reigns in this dramatic Warsaw. No swearing, no drinking, no smoking, no tobacco chewing allowed here behind the scenes, and also not in front of the house. Plays are produced with lavish expenditure and with great care.

(*To be continued.*)

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