

DESERET NEWS

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - JUNE 26, 1878.

THE CLOSE OF CONGRESS.

THE first session of the Forty-Fifth Congress of the United States was to have closed to-day at 4 p.m., but the two houses have agreed to hold over until to-morrow at 6 p.m. We cannot congratulate its members on their legislative efforts during this long sitting. Most of their time has been occupied in contention, and measures required for the benefit of the country have been thrown aside and neglected, to give place to personal bills and schemes designed for party purposes.

This is a great country. Its Government was founded in the highest wisdom, its constitution was penned under divine inspiration, and its aims were the happiness, union and prosperity of its citizens. The Senators and Representatives, composing its legislative department, were once really the expressers of the will of the people, and they labored solely in the people's interest.

But a change has come with the growth of the nation which does not correspond with the increase of its wealth, power and standing in the world. Corruption has worked its way into high places, fraud is written upon the machinery of elections, personal greed has taken the place of patriotism, and politicians sit in the chairs of statesmen. Congress now is a meeting of partisans to struggle for supremacy. The money, the time and the real property of the people are expended and used for the furtherance of party schemes, and the Hall and Senate chamber of the capital are turned into pandemoniums, where demoniac passion and individual hostility take the place of dignified debate and the controversy of principles.

The spirit that led to the civil strife which spread horror through the nation and sunk the country in the depths of sorrow and woe, still moves upon the political waters, and the shades of hate and fratricide may be discerned beneath the surface. There are troublous times ahead, and the men who should be the most strenuous to avert the impending storm are the chief agents in its invocation.

But the most deplorable feature in the outlook is the fact that the masses of the people are similarly influenced to the men who act for them. As is the leader so are the people, was an ancient adage. But it may be said in this country and in these times, as are the people so are their leaders. Smartness rather than honesty, and attention to local aggrandizement rather than devotion to the general welfare, are sought for and required in a candidate for congressional honors. It cannot therefore be expected that there will be much of a reformation in the law-making department until the people who elect the legislators become more patriotic and less contentious, and integrity and honor shine out above the gloom of the general indifference to purity and truth.

During the session which will close its sitting to-morrow, hundreds upon hundreds of bills have been introduced, but very few, comparatively, have been passed, most of the time having been consumed in unprofitable bickerings, and the course of business being obstructed by selfishness or factional opposition. There is no immediate prospect of anything better. But the glorious system which Providence has caused to be established on this great continent will not be suffered to go down into chaos and destruction. It is the destiny of the people who have been driven into the chambers of the mountains to rescue the country from anarchy and the weapons of the patricide, and save the constitution from the utter demolition which threatens it.

Now is the time of preparation for the work. Our sons and daughters should be trained in the path which leads to it. They must be taught the value of honesty

and the power of purity. They must be educated in the laws of nations and the true principles of government. They must be imbued with the spirit of patriotism and tutored in the doctrines of human rights. And they must be impressed from their early years with the conviction of their exalted calling, and shown the only path that leads to it. Then there will be hope for the great republic of modern times, and an assurance that it will not share the fate of the ancient popular commonwealths, which flourished for a season and then went down to swift decay and were buried in the debris of their own corruptions.

Democrat against Republican and Republican against Democrat, that constitutes the statesmanship of the present. It is a political seesaw, one party up, the other down, and the people bear the weight of the board and the players while the game goes on. The Forty-Fifth Congress merely exhibits a few gains to the Democratic end and a desperate struggle for control of the next session. Meanwhile the interests of this splendid country are neglected, and the nations of Europe are gazing at the spectacle of a model republic, whose statesmen find no better employment than to show that fraud sits at its head, controls all its departments, and governs the whole machinery of its political organization from a saloon caucus to the national convention.

A WORD WITH OUR WOOL-GROWERS.

THE wool product of Utah increases every year. It is one of our most profitable staples. Notwithstanding the many losses which sheep-raisers have sustained from various causes, at sundry times and in divers manners, the yield of wool has helped them out of their difficulties, and the business of sheep-raising is, in many parts of the Territory, returning good dividends on the amount invested.

What shall we do with our wool? is a question that needs some serious consideration. The answer will be different when given from opposite standpoints. Regard for the general welfare will suggest, that as much as possible should be worked up at home and manufactured into cloth and other things needed for general use, and that the rest should be disposed of in such a way that the best results may flow to the community. Selfishness, which is the bane of the world and the cause of most of its miseries, will say, sell the wool wherever you can get the biggest price and at the least inconvenience, without regard to the interests of any person or people except those of Number One.

Now, which course should be pursued by the Latter-day Saints? There can be no dubiety on this point by any of them who are governed by principle, and have the least regard for their most sacred promises and agreements. To succor and sustain home manufactures and to deal as far as possible with those of their own faith, are dictated by good policy, inculcated by ecclesiastical teachings, and agreed to by common consent and solemn covenant.

We have factories in Utah built and equipped with means invested by our brethren, and established rather for the public good than with the hope of large returns. Should the wool raised here be shipped to a foreign market, leaving these woolen mills half supplied, and the work hands idle for months, or should those who have the raw material to sell seek their market first and foremost with the home manufacturer? Some may object, "but I want money and the cloth-makers want to pay in goods." We ask, have you enquired so as to be sure on this point? We hear that the Provo factory people and others in the business offer the highest market price, in cash, for wool, and yet it is taken elsewhere and sold to be shipped out of the Territory.

It may be said that the wool product of the Territory is greater than its home demand, that the factories cannot work up the whole clip. That is very true, but this demand should be first supplied, and then there are men identified with all our interests who will purchase it, or sell it for the owner on commission, and save the necessity of

playing into the hands of strangers who have nothing in common with us.

We hear of men of experience, holding prominent positions, not only ignoring the principles of domestic economy that they have taught to the people themselves, and disregarding their own agreements and the public welfare, by disposing of their wool to persons who do nothing towards building up the country and whose feelings are hostile to the community, but at the same time descending to the degradation of accepting a bribe for their influence in inducing others to sell to the same parties. This we regard as getting pretty low down, and a course that will lessen those men in their own esteem as well as in the regard of their brethren.

If we are rightly informed, the wool growers of Utah can obtain as high a figure in cash from the factory buyers, and those of their own faith who ship wool to other markets, as can be obtained elsewhere. Yet we notice that outside dealers have huge stacks of the raw material on hand, while the mills are very poorly supplied. Further, we hear of wool being sold last year on commission netting the owners from 23 to 27 cents per pound, while five per cent. only was charged for commission, including all the cost and labor of receiving, packing and shipping, and the parties who received the benefit disposing of their wool this year in other directions at 17 cents per pound, without any regard for the agent who worked for their interest before. All this appears singular to us, and illustrates the lack of principle in many persons who would be supposed to know and do much better.

Now we have no disposition to work for the private interest of any person or firm, to the detriment of wool-growers, or any other portion of the community, neither will we sustain an unrighteous monopoly. We speak only for the public welfare. We want to see the Territory built up, its resources developed, and its people prosperous and happy. But we know that it is our best policy to sustain each other and unite in all things temporal as well as spiritual, for mutual profit and general advantage. Therefore we deplore any departure from the principles we have acknowledged to be conducive to the best interests of the whole people, and consider it our duty to check it as far as we have the ability so to do.

We do not blame any one for endeavoring legitimately and on business principles to obtain a proper price for any article which he has to dispose of. We would discountenance any attempt to take advantage of covenant or principle for the purpose of procuring products at less than their market value. But at the same time we must denounce the false and foolish course which some are following, of passing by their brethren who offer equal advantages to others, and trading with those who are cunningly seeking to control the wool trade of the Territory, and whose profits go, not to build up local interests nor to forward any cause which is important in our eyes, but rather to break down, destroy and render useless the labor and plans and sacrifices of years of the best portion of the community.

If the same course is pursued in relation to other matters of business as is taken in regard to the disposal of our wool, where will be our anticipated prosperity? where will be our home industries? where will be our union, our strength, our faith or our existence as an organized body, with aims and objects that are not according to the spirit of this world?

We ask our friends throughout the Territory to ponder upon this important subject, and not suffer their eyes to be blinded by selfishness, so that they cannot discern the fact that their interests are identified with those of the whole people, and that mutual sympathy and support is life to the system of which we form a part, while individualism and segregation are certain death.

THE "DANITES" AND OTHER FICTIONS.

THE love of the marvellous is a very prominent organ in a majority of craniums, or the world would not believe the monstrous stories

which traveling preachers and newspaper reporters delight in recounting about "Mormonism" and the "Mormons." No matter how many times such fabrications may have been refuted, or how inconsistent with themselves they may be in their construction and details, they are eagerly swallowed and taken with a relish, while the truth is rejected and despised.

From the day when Joseph Smith first announced the visit of the angel restoring the everlasting gospel, down to the present time, the most ridiculous reports have been circulated in reference to this Church, its doctrines, objects, ordinances and people, and dying out at one period have in another been resurrected, rehabilitated and palmed off upon the world as living facts. The spaulding story, which bears its own refutation upon its face; walking upon the water; working up slaves to rebellion; worshipping Joseph Smith; repudiating the Bible; killing apostates; tampering with the Indians; preventing escape from Utah; forcing women to marry; opening all the letters, and many other false and stupid things have been advanced and received as the truth about the "Mormons," and in consequence the bitterest prejudice has been engendered against them.

But the most widely spread story and one that has gained the greatest credence, is the fiction about the "Danites." We remember hearing, nearly thirty years ago, that there was a secret society among the "Mormons" called "Danites" or "Destroying Angels," and that if any member of the Church attempted to leave the society, these murderous persons were set upon his path, and his death was swift and certain. By frequent repetition this silly story has come to be regarded as an acknowledged fact, and preachers and editors will repeat it as gravely as though it were indisputable. Only a short time since Rev. (?) Sheldon Jackson, who has visited Utah, told a congregation in Dr. Cuyler's Church, in Brooklyn, as a part of his experience among the "Mormons" that

"The women are expected to do all the work of the farm and support the man, leaving him to idle away his time as he likes, perhaps hunting or fishing. They are not only servants, but slaves, and if any wife tries to escape, she is shot down and her carcass left to rot on the ground."

Such tales are considered here too grossly ridiculous to need any denial, but there are many people who will believe anything about the "Mormons," however absurd, and we now offer the facts in relation to the "Danite" story that those who choose to be informed may have the opportunity, and then if they choose to believe and love a lie, they may do so and take the consequences.

The origin of the Danite organization is given in the History of Joseph Smith, and we make some quotations therefrom, as published in the *Millennial Star*, volume xvi. It started at a time when the great persecution came upon the Saints in Jackson County, Missouri, and Joseph the Prophet relates, in October 1838, as one of the "perils amongst false brethren," which he had to encounter, the doings of one Dr. Samson Avard the originator of the "Danite" scheme:

"And here I would state, that while the evil spirits were raging up and down in the State to raise mobs against the 'Mormons,' Satan himself was no less busy in striving to stir up mischief in the camp of the Saints, and among the most conspicuous of his willing devotees was one Dr. Samson Avard, who had been in the Church but a short time, and who, although he had behaved with a tolerable degree of decorum, was secretly aspiring to be the greatest of the great and become the leader of the people. This was his pride and his folly, but as he had no hopes of accomplishing it by gaining the hearts of the people in open strife, he watched his opportunity with the brethren at a time when mobs oppressed, robbed, whipped, burned, plundered and slew, till forbearance seemed no longer a virtue, and nothing but the grace of God without measure could support men under

such trials, to form a secret combination by which he might rise a mighty conqueror at the expense of the overthrow of the Church.

In this situation he stated that he had the sanction of the heads of the Church for what he was about to do; and by his smiles and flattery persuaded them to believe it, and proceeded to administer to the few under his control an oath, binding them to everlasting secrecy to everything which should be communicated to them by himself. Thus Avard initiated members into his band, firmly binding them by all that was sacred in the protecting of each other * * *

and would often affirm to his company that the principal men of the Church had put him forward as a spokesman and a leader of this band which he named *Danites*.

Thus he duped many, which gave him the opportunity of figuring largely. He held his meetings daily, and carried on his work of craft in great haste, to prevent a mature reflection upon the matter, and had them bound under the penalties of death to keep the secrets and certain signs—which they had to know each other by day and night."

"After the performances he held meetings to organize his men into companies of tens and fifties, appointing a captain over each company.

"When a knowledge of Avard's

rascality came to the President of the Church, he was cut off from the Church, and every means proper used to destroy his influence, at which he was highly incensed, and went about whispering his evil insinuations, but finding every effort unavailing, he again turned conspirator, and sought to make friends with the mob.

"And here let it be distinctly understood, that the companies of tens and fifties got up by Avard were altogether separate and distinct from those companies of tens and fifties organized by the brethren for self-defence, in case of an attack from the mob, and more particularly that in this time of alarm no family or person might be neglected, therefore, one company would be engaged in drawing wood, another in cutting it, another in gathering corn, another in grinding, another in butchering, another in distributing meat, etc., etc., so that all should be employed in turn, and no one lack the necessities of life. Therefore, let no one hereafter, by mistake or design, confound this organization of the Church for good and righteous purposes, with the organization of the Danites, of the apostate Avard, which died almost before it had existence."

After this evil-disposed person had been excommunicated, he tried to curry favor with the mob who were plundering and murdering the Saints, and the same history thus describes his proceedings:

"About this time Samson Avard was found by the mob, secreted in the hazle brush some miles from Far West, and brought into camp, where they were 'hail fellows well met,' for Avard told them that Danitism was an order of the Church, and by his lying, tried to make the Church a scapegoat for his sins."

While the Prophet was in prison in Richmond, Missouri, he wrote a letter to the Saints in which he gave counsel to them in their afflictions, inculcating the highest virtues, and exhorting them to patience, honesty, charity, and brotherly love and honorable dealing with all men. He also refers again to the "Danite" scheme in the following language:

"We have learned also since we have been prisoners, that many false and pernicious things, which were calculated to lead the Saints far astray, and to do great injury, have been taught by Dr. Avard, as coming from the Presidency, and we have reason to fear that many other designing and corrupt characters, like unto himself, have been teaching many things which the Presidency never knew of being taught in the Church by anybody, until after they were made prisoners, which if they had known of, they would have spurned them and their authors from them, as they would the gates of hell. Thus we find that there have been frauds and secret abominations, and evil works of darkness going on, leading the minds of the weak and unwary into confusion and distraction, and palming it all the time upon the Presidency, while