

DESERET NEWS

WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - JUNE 5, 1878.

THE "MORMONS" AND EDUCATION.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Omaha Bee, writing over the signature of "Gusto," gives a very good description of Salt Lake City and other parts of Utah which he has seen in a flying visit. But he concludes as follows:

"The public schools of Salt Lake are not the best in the world. Especially by the Mormon element, we believe schools have been too much neglected. In a future letter we shall speak further of Salt Lake City and its people."

Is this designed as a sop for the anti-Mormon element? Or as evidence that he has not been "Mormonized?" Preachers and press writers who utter anything at all favorable to the people who founded and have built up this flourishing Territory, seem always to think it absolutely necessary to say something or other in disparagement of the "Mormons." They either want to pander to the hostile feelings of a few bitter opponents, or are afraid lest they may be understood as countenancing "Mormonism."

The public schools of this city may not be "the best in the world." What sane person would expect to find "the best schools in the world" in a Territory not much over thirty years old, and which, until recently was a thousand miles from anywhere, and without connection except by team? But it is not true that the "Mormon element" has neglected schools. When the clouds of prejudice that have covered the facts from the eyes of the world are cleared away, it will be a marvel to mankind that, in the midst of the immense difficulties that have surrounded the "Mormons," they have been able to accomplish as much as they have towards the secular education of the young.

The school for children is an essential feature of every little settlement or hamlet established by the Saints in any locality. Every Ward in this city, and there are twenty-one, has one or more day schools. As the Territory grows in numbers and wealth the educational facilities provided increase correspondingly. Our Sunday schools are ahead of anything of the kind in the Territories and many of the States. Without a dollar of aid from the government or any extraneous assistance, the people who came here stripped of all their earthly possessions have done wonders in the cause of general education, while at the same time they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in bringing here their indigent co-religionists from all parts of the world.

It is one of the great mistakes in the popular estimate of "Mormon" principles and practice, and one of the most frequently repeated wilful falsehoods of "Christian" preachers and infidel editors, that the "Mormons" are opposed to or indifferent about education. The contrary is the truth, and this is abundantly proven by unimpeachable statistics. If the Bee correspondent will write nothing for facts but that which has been substantiated, his letters will be read by the people of Utah with far greater gusto.

A STATEMENT AND A DEDUCTION.

A STATEMENT is "going the rounds" that at the late "Mormon" conference a report was read, showing that the receipts from tithing during the previous four months amounted to \$500,000. Some absurd comments are made based upon this assertion, one of which is that "polygamy must be undoubtedly costly."

We do not know that it will be of any use to contradict the statement, nor to enquire into the logic

of the deductions therefrom. For there are so many papers that care very little for the truth and so very much for anything that will make a sensation, that proof would be wasted upon them. But we will just remark that no such figures as those mentioned were embodied in any report at the Conference, that the particulars given were not for any "four months," and that if the amount stated were correct, it would have no bearing whatever upon the question of the "costliness of polygamy," except perhaps in a contrary way from that intended in the application. For, if a people who practice polygamy are able to pay half a million to their church, in four months, as tithing, they must be in very prosperous circumstances, and advancing towards material wealth in a much faster degree than their monogamous contemporaries. See it?

DENOUNCING A FASHIONABLE EVIL.

CONSIDERABLE ridicule has been heaped upon the leading Elders in this Church for their efforts to suppress round dancing. They are not alone in their condemnation of this social dissipation. The Catholic Church has emphatically pronounced against it; many eminent preachers have pointed out the evils attending it; and now Bishop Whittle, of the Episcopal Church, at the convention in Lynchburg, Virginia, attacks it with eloquence and vigor.

Referring to the address of Bishop Johns, in 1872, he said that distinguished divine characterized this exercise as "that lascivious mode of promiscuous dancing." Bishop Whipple went on to say:

"Let every appeal be made in the way of affectionate remonstrance, judicious teaching and earnest prayer for the reformation of those led astray, if God peradventure will give them repentance. If all such efforts prove unavailing to remove the scandal and awaken the offender to a sense of his sin and danger, and it becomes necessary to resort to the exercise of a decided discipline, it must be done. I adopt this language as my own, that he being dead, may yet speak on this important matter. Perhaps his words struck some as being too strong and harsh when they were first uttered, who think very differently now, after six years' observation and experience. Certain it is that many of our wisest and best people, ministers and laymen, judging the tree by the fruit, have become alarmed lest the effect of this dreadful evil of round dancing shall be not only to injure pure and undefiled religion, but even to sap the very foundations of all social virtue and morality."

The committee to whom this portion of the address was referred reported a canon, "forbidding the holy communion and confirmation to persons who habitually indulge in round dancing." It would have been passed, but the rule required a two-thirds vote, which was not obtained, but resolutions were adopted urging that the practice be discontinued by all good members of the Episcopal Church.

There is no doubt that many may indulge in round dancing without any evil thoughts, improper feelings or ill effects. But it is certain that this mode of recreation has led to results of the worst character, and that it opens the way for designing persons to effect base and shameful purposes; therefore it ought not be encouraged among the Latter-day Saints.

We have thought that if our young ladies would just imagine themselves in the exact position they assume with their partners in the waltz, without any music or the usual surroundings of the ball room, they would be ashamed to be seen by anybody, and would scorn the idea of submitting to such miscellaneous embraces. Neither musical strains nor modern custom takes away the impropriety of the position, and, putting aside the hygienic reasons that might be advanced against the practice, its immodesty ought to be plainly perceived by all people who go through the world with their eyes open.

A METHODIST MALTHUSIAN.

AT the Methodist preachers' meeting in Chicago, a few days ago, the subject of Communism being under discussion, Dr. Patton said "it were well to do something to check the growth of population," and that "it was time to lay aside all false sentiment on the subject."

Malthusian doctrine has spread to a considerable extent among skeptics and so-called "advanced" social reformers, but the "Christian" pulpit is not exactly the place one would look to for its advocates. The prevention of family increase a crime which is practised in American fashionable society to an alarming extent, has been winked at by orthodox doctors of the body and physicians of the soul, and the prevalence of the horrible and deadly sin is greatly attributable to their failure to denounce it in fitting language and force. They are sufficiently culpable for the apathy they have manifested in view of the evils, physical and spiritual, which are its certain results. But here is an influential minister of a powerful "Christian" sect, actually supporting and openly favoring the devilish doctrine of "checking the growth of population," and thus encouraging the crimes of foeticide and infanticide. Well may an astonished and disgusted Nebraska editor, commenting upon the shameful words of Dr. Patton, exclaim that "no more criminal or infamous words ever fell from the lips of a human being."

The same Satanic preachers of a perverted gospel who countenance and recommend the unnatural theories of Malthus, oppose and denounce the doctrine of Biblical marriage; trample under foot the first great commandment, "increase and multiply;" seek to persecute and destroy those who aim to carry out the purposes of Jehovah and extend the benefits of the family life; and would put into chains and shut up in prison the "Father of the Faithful" and the ancestors of the Savior, whom the religion they profess to expound holds up as exemplars for all Christian people. If the great Founder of the Faith were on earth in these days he would be constrained to repeat his denunciation of the Pharisees: "Ye hypocrites! ye generation of vipers! how can ye expect the damnation of hell?"

SENSE IN THE SENATE.

THE House of Representatives recently inserted in the legislative judicial and executive appropriation bill, a provision cutting down the number of territorial legislators to nine councilors and eighteen representatives, and reducing their pay to four dollars per diem and mileage. This change was inspired by the spirit of parsimony which seems to have taken hold of the Democratic House, and which is mistaken for prudent economy.

The Senate seems to be guided by a more sensible policy. The clause in the bill inaugurating this revolution in territorial affairs has been stricken out in the upper chamber, and it is to be hoped that the House will coincide with the amendment. An effort was made in the Senate to place the compensation of the judges in the Territories at \$3,000 per annum, but it was defeated. This is much to be regretted, as it is not at all likely that competent and honest men can be obtained for the position at the meagre amount of the salary fixed by the House.

The change in the number of representatives and councilors in the legislative assemblies would necessitate the redistricting of the Territories, and would leave some districts practically without representation. And the small figure of Four Dollars per day is pitiful pay, in this western country, for men of the calibre required to make laws for the people. Utah has had thirteen councilors and twenty-six representatives ever since it was organized, and the idea of reducing the number, after the increase of its population and the growth of its material interests and general importance, is both stingy and inconsistent.

THE TREATMENT OF THE RED MAN.

WE have received a pamphlet containing the speech of Hon. S. S. Fenn, Delegate from Idaho, in the House of Representatives on the 2d ult. The gentleman favors the bill for the transfer of the Indian Bureau to the War Department.

In the course of his remarks he gives many particulars of fraud on the part of agents, and the shameful indignities endured by the redskins. He also presents evidence of the evil effects of giving the nomination of agents to certain religious denominations. He denounces the practice as unconstitutional, for, instead of allowing church authorities to name and select the agents, all public officers should, according to the Constitution, be nominated by the President, and appointed by him "by and with the consent of the Senate." Under the present system, men are selected who know nothing of the Indian character nor of frontier life, and Mr. Fenn maintains that the bigotry, intolerance and sectarian bias of such agents have been the cause of a great many outbreaks, and of driving otherwise peaceful Indians into implacable hostility.

He gives great credit to the Roman Catholic missionaries, who have accomplished much good among the savages, but shows that their efforts have in many instances been annulled, through Methodist and Presbyterian antagonism and the villainy of denominational agents. The Nez Perce war he lays to the charge of agent J. B. Monteith, and supports the accusation by very strong evidence.

Mr. Fenn advises the abolition of the reservation system and the abrogation of tribal authority, the extension of the laws to Indians in common with the whites, and the encouragement of the former to become citizens and owners of the soil under the provisions of the homestead act. He says:

"Your system of farming out the Indian agencies to different religious denominations, in order to bring the Indians under Christianizing influences as a means of civilization has only resulted in depopulating reservations and producing Indian hostilities, while your religious agents and religious teachers have plundered the Indians, plundered the government, and produced naught but discord and disorganization by attempting to force their peculiar religious faith upon savages and barbarous or partly civilized people."

But the Idaho Delegate does not wish to ignore the influence of religion upon the savages, nor to banish the church or the schoolhouse from their midst. One clause of the bill he supports provides:

"Sec. 9. That it is hereby provided that all religious denominations shall enjoy a free and equal right to erect and maintain church and school buildings on any and all Indian reservations, and shall not be molested in their religious and philanthropic efforts to advance the Indians in moral, religious or literary culture, but shall equally and alike be perfectly free and encouraged in the prosecution of their civilizing and educational efforts."

This he considers will remedy one of the greatest evils attending the present system, under which, he says, "most of the denominational authorities, prompted by their greed and love of power, have striven to secure the control of as many agencies as possible," and "their tools have often depopulated the reservations by their endeavors to coerce the untutored Indians to adopt the faith of the denomination in charge."

This is a very bad condition of Indian affairs and a radical change in the policy of the government is considered necessary by the best minds in the country. But will the remedy proposed, the turning over of the Indian Bureau to the War Department be any guaranty that the evils complained of will be removed? Some of them would be, no doubt. The provision taking away denominational control of the agencies is calculated to accomplish one good thing, and the arrangement giving all religious bodies equal opportunities for missionary

work is excellent. But are there no cases of fraud in connection with the army? Are there no Belknap in the War Department? Is speculation confined to the Indian Bureau? And when stealings are uncovered and light is thrown upon official darkness, is any difference made in the coat of whitewash that is brushed over the doings of military and those of civil offenders?

Mr. Fenn makes one statement in support of his position that is singularly incorrect. He says:

"The cry that it is better to feed than fight the Indians has produced its legitimate fruits of murder and devastation."

Is there any evidence in favor of this statement? We think not. The "cry" has been the result of experience. In this Territory the feeding policy has been demonstrated to be better and cheaper than the fighting method. And murder and devastation are not its "legitimate fruits," but the natural consequence of agreeing to feed and failing; of making contracts and breaking them; of promising certain things in payment for lands or as a reward for certain concessions, and then violating the promises and thus cheating instead of feeding the Indians. Mr. Fenn's speech shows the truth of this and disproves his own proposition. Through all his relations of facts it is plainly portrayed that the Indian troubles which have arisen in his Territory and the country adjoining, have been the result of starving and swindling instead of feeding the "wards of the Government."

If the agreements and treaties made with the reds had been honorably fulfilled; if the rascally agents who have grown rich on their robbery of the savages had been adequately punished for their crimes; if as much care had been taken to keep faith with the Indians as to pursue and punish them when driven into hostility by repeated injuries; the Indian problem would not offer to-day so many difficulties and perplexities.

Mr. Fenn truly says:

"A single Indian, or body of them, when treating with an individual of the white race, if they are impressed with his superiority, if they find he never makes a promise in express terms or by implication that he does not fulfil, and especially, never makes a threat he does not enforce, not only obtains their respect and confidence, but he retains it as long as his conduct justifies their appreciation of his character."

Every man who has had any experience with the aborigines knows this to be true. It was this that gave the late President Brigham Young his great influence with them. They said "he never spoke with two tongues." What he agreed to do, whether by promise or by threat, he accomplished, and they counted him their superior. Has the Indian any reason to reckon the average white man his superior? From the pale face he has learned to break his word, to lie and to cheat, to gamble and drink "firewater." Even his cruelties and barbarism have been but the counterpart of the atrocities of some white soldiers who have scalped the fallen braves, outraged the squaws, beat out the brains of papooses, burned lodges, and fought with fire as well as the rifle and the howitzer. The destruction of an Indian village in soldiers' parlance is a victory," but the defeat of a company or regiment is a "massacre."

The Indians have rights as the primal possessors of the soil and as a part of the human family. Those rights should be but have not been respected. The Government is under obligations to God and humanity to regard those rights and secure them. It has been demonstrated, as Mr. Fenn's speech shows, in the history of the Nez Perces, the Spokanes and the Cour d'Alenes, that the savages can be reclaimed and the roving red skin by proper treatment can be transformed into a land-tilling and land-owning citizen. "Mormon" missionaries have also proven this fact satisfactorily. To feed, instruct and care for them, then, until they become self-sustaining, is a far better policy than to fight and destroy them, and, as the financial reports of the disastrous Indian wars have shown, it is also much cheaper.

Treat the Indians as human beings; fulfil the obligations which the nation is under to them; pay them for their lands as agreed; appoint honest men, if they can be