

in the people's way—not to utterly disavow the money which several times has saved its credit and at least once saved its life. If the common people can still find use for it, do not restrict them in so doing by either annulling the money power of silver altogether or refusing to issue it in small sums when it can be done as well as not; and let the groveling tollers, the coarse-grained rank and file make the most of it. If they can extract comfort, happiness or even a moderate degree of prosperity from a debased metal and at the same time not infringe upon the lauded and gilded and cultured aristocracy by so much as the hundredth part of one per cent per annum, why not let them?

A PECULIAR APPOINTMENT.

It is a rather singular circumstance that the position of poet laureate of Great Britain, after being held by the idyllic, the classic and the tuneful songsters of the realm, should at last be allotted to a man who never wrote a poem in his life, at least not since he reached maturity, and who probably may not recognize the muse when he meets it. We can readily understand that Mr. Gladstone is neither a poet nor one who permits poetry to blend to any great extent with his daily affairs; still, he is a great reader and must thereby be something of a judge of the article, and therefore does his selection of John Ruskin take a place among the unexplained surprises of the day. It has aroused a storm of criticism and a very small proportion of it is of the good-natured variety.

In this temper, according to a contemporary, it is not at all strange that the surprise which first came upon the people should be followed by indignation. Mr. Gladstone's action is regarded as rather in the nature of an ill-advised and humorless joke. He has made a prose writer poet laureate, and if even so discriminating a journal as the *New York Critic* fails to understand the premier's reasons it is not likely that the literal minds of English critics will. The *New York* paper goes so far as to find in the compliment thus tendered to Ruskin a sign of Gladstone's senility.

It is pronounced strange and regrettable that the tender of the laureate-ship has not been taken merely as a tribute to an old man of undoubted genius. Mr. Ruskin is defined as a poet only in the sense that he was a creator. But, allowing the definition, he is declared to be a far greater poet than most of his contemporaries who scratch down epics with such disastrous facility, because it were better to give the honor to a poetic writer of prose than a prosy writer of verse; and this is what Mr. Gladstone is said to have done.

One thing looms up above the discussion, no matter as to the merits or demerits of the appointment by itself: The day in which such a position was understood to be an ornamental if not a useful appendage to royalty passed "a-many years ago," and Gladstone would have shown rare good judgment in letting the office collapse for want of an incumbent.

FASHION NOTE—Furs will be suitable and reasonable all summer.

THEY FIGHT A SHADOW.

In 1888, as will be remembered, our city was visited by members of the Grand Army of the Republic and the occasion was taken advantage of by certain anti-Mormons to have a demonstration with a series of more or less eloquent denunciations of the people in this Territory. In the audience one evening was a stranger who, after having listened for a while, turned to a Baptist clergyman, a friend of his, well acquainted with the conditions in Utah, and asked him what the true cause was of the warfare against the Mormons. "Well," the minister said, "to be frank, I hardly know. As for the Christian churches, they desire that Mormonism shall be put down, because it is a wrong religion, and those whose only ambition is political distinction and remunerative offices join us, because they know that they can depend on our votes."

"But why do you not then meet the Mormons on a Biblical ground and show them that their religion is wrong, instead of threatening them with the sword as some of these speakers have done? It is making martyrs of them."

"That is it," the minister said; "but we cannot reason with them. We have tried in vain. The only point, seemingly, on which Mormonism can be assailed is its peculiar doctrine on marriage, and we are going to work that for all it is worth."

The minister stated no doubt the position of many of the anti-Mormons at the time correctly. It was not any particular love for morality that prompted their actions, but it was their desire for plunder on the one hand and for the establishment of sectarian churches on the other. The calculation at that time was that the Mormons should be led on to defy the laws and the government of the country, until in the conflict they should be broken to pieces, when the agitators would be ready to seize the spoils in the ruins they had wrought. But this calculation was sadly upset. The Mormons, instead of defying the government or eluding the laws, loyally accepted the decision of the Supreme Court, an evidence of the sincerity of their faith in the supremacy of the lawfully constituted authorities of the country.

When this became known to the whole world through the action of the Church authorities sustained by the unanimous vote of the people, it was as if an earthquake had shaken the ground on which the anti-Mormons were waging the battle. Many of them, who were honest, left the ranks, while others, perhaps the majority, were in the position of an army suddenly cut off from its base of operations. For a time they hesitated. But at last they rallied again. They could no longer plead polygamy as a cause for continuing the hostilities. They had to shift their ground, and the almost forgotten charge of "Church rule" was again raked up. Formerly it was always said that if polygamy were given up, the Mormons would be all right. But when that was accomplished the organ of hatred and vilification hastened to inform its decreasing circle of readers that polygamy had never been the worst feature of Mormonism; it was "Church rule" that was the real sin of the system,

and as long as that existed the war had to be kept up.

It is the history of the wolf and the lamb over again. In a controversy of that kind, arguments have no power. Even innocence is defenseless. It is simply a question of war and vandalism with or without a *cassus belli*. The latest allegation on the part of our belligerent morning contemporary is that Joseph Smith established a Theocracy, from which it concludes that the Mormon Priesthood rules the people politically. Now, this statement is as wrong as everything else on the same subject by that paper. Joseph Smith did not establish a Theocracy in that sense of the word. He did not establish a state governed by the Almighty. He did not even endeavor to do that. His mission was to found a church—the Church of Jesus Christ—and this mission he faithfully fulfilled. In this Church God is the Supreme Ruler, just as other churches profess, with this difference, that while other churches say they are ruled by God only through the word written in the Bible centuries ago, this Church recognizes the Divine word in all ages, including our own. That the establishment of this Church was and still is held to be one of the preparatory steps to the establishment on earth of a Theocracy during a coming millennium may be true; but that does not prove that the leaders of the Church claim dictation in political matters.

The belief of the Mormons as plainly expressed in the Doctrine and Covenants is that it is not "just to mingle religious influence with civil government," and the conduct of the members is in accordance with this belief. No amount of unsupported statements can be taken as proof of the contrary.

OUR IRRIGATED LANDS.

An article on irrigated soil which recently appeared in the *News* showed that for every acre of land subdued by that means in the trans-Mississippi region there were 247 acres not so utilized, the cultivated area being thus about two-fifths of one per cent of the whole. It should be considered, however, that only a very small percentage of it is under the best circumstances susceptible of cultivation even were irrigation feasible in all cases, there being so many high, rocky mountains and hills and elevated plateaus deeply corduroyed by torrentine streams. Leaving these out it has been estimated that there are in all about 618,000,000 acres of lands which with water would produce crops. If this be the case, then the area irrigated in the census year was less than six-tenths of one per cent of the arable lands of the arid region. All of the vacant public lands of the United States have been estimated by officials of the general land office as amounting to 568,000,000 acres. Of this amount the arid regions as above defined contain nearly 542,000,000 acres, or about 95 per cent. Taking the area of the arid region as 883,312,000 acres, and the vacant public lands in this as 542,000,000 acres, it appears that there are 341,312,000 acres in the hands of individuals, corporations or otherwise beyond the immediate control of the general government. Of this vast