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Editorial Thoughts

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Abstract: The hostile attitude of the Americans towards the Indians is a remarkable fulfillment of Book of Mormon prophecy. LDS church members should consider the glorious future of the Lamanites.

The Juvenile Instructor.

GEORGE Q. CANNON. - - - - - EDITOR.

SALT LAKE CITY, AUGUST 15, 1876.

EDITORIAL THOUGHTS.

GOLD in the Black Hills! Gold in the creeks, gold in the ravines, gold in the gulches, gold in the canyons, gold in the valleys, gold in mountains, gold everywhere! This is the cry which is spread concerning the lands of the Indian. The gold fever is raging. Men of the East, men of the West, men of the North and men of the South are seized with it. They have been rushing thither. Government foreseeing the excitement which the discovery of gold would create, made an effort to buy the country from the Indians. But they would not sell: or, at least, not for the price the Government would give. The failure of the Government to buy did not kill the fever. Neither was the fever checked, by the fact that a treaty had been made with the Indians concerning these lands, in which the Government pledged itself that "no white person shall be permitted to settle upon" them. The column of gold hunters pressed towards the Black Hills. The Government sent troops there and made a feeble attempt to stop the miners from going into that country. But, after awhile, the gold seekers were left free to go there as they pleased. They are digging gold all over the Hills wherever they can find it: they are building towns and filling up the country as fast as their fears will let them.

They have some fears, however. They have a fear of the Indians. While they think they have a perfect right to go where they choose in the Indian country, and do as they please there, they may have an idea that the Indians may have different views upon this subject. The Indians, they know, may take it into their heads to kill and scalp the white men whom they find, as intruders and trespassers. Cases of this kind have occurred, and they may occur again. This fear acts as a check upon the gold seekers.

The treatment of Indians by the people of this nation, and the feeling they entertain respecting them, is one of the most remarkable fulfillments of prophecy to be found on record. Jesus said to the people of this continent, as we find in the Book of Mormon, that the white men or Gentiles should scatter those whom we now call Indians, should cast them out, tread them under foot, smite and afflict them, hate them, make them a hiss and a by-word and slay them. The Indians should be reduced to a remnant. Has this been done to the Indians by the people of this nation? Are these the feelings they have towards them? Yes, indeed. They are hated with a hatred that can scarcely be expressed. It is frequently said that the only good Indian is a dead Indian, and the sooner they are killed the better it will be. The general feeling is that they must all be killed off. The buffalo, the antelope and the other wild animals of the land are being destroyed, and it is said that the Indian must perish with them. It is said that they are doomed to speedy destruction. Probably outside of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there are not

half a dozen persons in the nation who think otherwise. They are counted unfit to live. Men say, it is no use to try and civilize them. They never have been, they never can be, they say, be made anything of. Savages they have been, savages they are and savages they will be, and, they say, it is useless to try and teach them to be anything else. So, by the great majority of the nation, they are given up as hopeless, and are looked upon as so many wild beasts whom it is no harm to kill and whom it would be a great relief to have out of the way.

There was a time when it was acknowledged that the Indians had a right to the soil upon which they lived. The government would go through the ceremony of buying the land from them at a nominal price. But now there are large numbers of people who deny them all right to the land upon which they and their forefathers have lived. It is not long since that a Senator stood up in his place in the United States Senate and said, speaking of the Indians:

"When you describe them as the owners of the soil, you might as well aver that the rattlesnake, the coyote, and the buffalo are the proprietors of the land where they dwell. They were never the owners of the soil. The law of nations, the law of civilization, the law of humanity repels the assertion as baseless and unfounded. They had the mere right of occupancy. They had the right to exist."

The argument now is, that the white man being a civilized man, has every right superior to the Indian, who is a savage. If the white man thinks he has need for the land which the Indian occupies, the latter has no right to refuse him, but should give it up! It is the white man's, because he claims to be civilized! In other words the white man belongs to the stronger and more numerous race, and "might makes right;" the Indian has no rights which the white man is bound to respect. In the words of the poet:

"The good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

Such ideas as these shock every properly constituted mind. If these were correct, then any strong race, which thought itself superior to another would have the right to rob and crush it out. The Chinese call the Americans barbarians. They are counted by hundreds of millions. Suppose they were to send their hordes, and gradually edge us off until they had increased so as to take possession of all our lands. How would the Americans like that? They could then feel for the Indians whom they have treated in this manner. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." The Indian has as much right to an existence and to a place to live as the white man. The Book of Mormon has taught us who they are, and what their future will be. And though the Lord has suffered the Gentiles to scourge them, He has not forgotten them, nor the promises He made to their fathers concerning them. He will protect and preserve them to accomplish His own purposes.

LITTLE THINGS.—Life is made up of little things. He who travels over a continent must go step by step. He who writes a book must do it sentence by sentence; he who learns a science must master it fact by fact, and principle after principle. What is the happiness of our life made up of? Little courtesies, little acts of kindness, pleasant words, genial smiles, a friendly letter, good wishes and good deeds. One in a million, once in a lifetime, may do a heroic action. But the little things that make up our life come every day and every hour.