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Editorial Thoughts

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Abstract: When the Book of Mormon was published it was assumed that the American Indians were headed for extinction, but the Book of Mormon predicted that they would become a mighty people. This prophecy will yet be fulfilled.

The Juvenile Instructor.

GEORGE Q. CANNON, - - - EDITOR.

SALT LAKE CITY, FEBRUARY 1, 1883.

EDITORIAL THOUGHTS.



FIFTY years ago, or about the time the Book of Mormon was published, the almost universal opinion in the United States was that the Indians were doomed to utter destruction. No one appeared to believe that they could survive, or that it was at all desirable they should survive. It was supposed that they and the buffalo would disappear together. It was with this feeling that about the time we have mentioned, it was written concerning them:

"They are sinking before the mighty tide that is pressing them away, and must soon hear the roar of the last wave that will settle over them forever."

The prophet Joseph, in translating the Book of Mormon, gave to the world an altogether different view concerning the Indian race. That Book predicted for them a great future. Though divided, crushed and ground into the dust until they should be contemptible in the eyes of the people of the United States, it was predicted they should yet arise and become a mighty people in the future, and perform works that to the people who did not believe the Book of Mormon, would seem utterly incredible. If for no other reason than because he made such predictions as these, they would have pronounced him a false prophet. Had he been influenced by the spirit of man and not by the spirit of God, he never would have made such statements; because to all human appearance they were most unlikely to be true.

But however such things may seem to human vision, when God makes a decree concerning an event, it is sure to come to pass. His word cannot fail. In the eyes of the world the Indian has been without a friend in heaven or on earth who could be of any service to him. Abuse him, rob him, or kill him, as men pleased, and but few thought that any one took notice of it. But mankind were mistaken. God's eye was and is upon him. He is under covenant to preserve and bless him; and he never yet failed to keep His covenant.

Though the opinion still generally prevails that the Indians will perish, there are some who begin to think otherwise. The census shows that they are increasing in the United States at the rate of 1,000 a year. There are said to be now within our confines exclusive of those in Alaska, about 262,000 Indians. These are distributed among some seventy agencies.

The Lord will so shape events that they will be favorable to the preservation of this race, and it will yet attain to the mighty future of which it has the promise.

MOST wonderful changes occur in our day, especially among so-called religious teachers. It is only a few days ago that a Protestant Episcopal minister in New York, by the name of Rev. R. Heber Newton, preached a sermon, in which he called the assertion that there can be no repentance after death, "the most atrocious doctrine which Christianity has given to the world." This must have had a startling effect upon many of

his hearers, who had always been taught that when they left this state of existence they either went straight to heaven or to hell and remained there eternally without change.

It is not long since that we saw a statement made by another preacher, by the name of Scudder, to the effect that people were preached to after death. It was the same doctrine that the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been preaching for about forty years past. It was revealed to the Church about that time by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and it has been a doctrine which has been believed in and taught by the Saints since that time. And now after having ridiculed and persecuted the Latter-day Saints for accepting and teaching it, the religious world begins to believe this true doctrine. This may be called wondrous strange. But it is what we may expect. One by one the truths which the Lord inspired the Prophet Joseph to teach are being believed in by mankind. We might mention very many truths which, when they were taught, the world did not believe in, but which they now accept. In this way the teachings of the Elders of our Church have had far more effect upon the people than they are disposed to admit, or than we ourselves are fully conscious of. We are not a very numerous people, but our teachings and examples have had a wide-spread and wonderful influence.

But while this is the case, men will not acknowledge the source whence they get these truths. They will not give any credit to the Elders of this Church, and least of all through them to the God of heaven who has revealed them. If they did this they would have to acknowledge that Brother Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. How can it be expected that a generation which consented to and excused, and justified his death would say or do anything to establish his character as a true prophet of God? Yet the day is not far distant when this will be done by the world.

FIGHTING A GOOD FIGHT.—A stingy Christian was listening to a charity sermon. He was nearly deaf, and was accustomed to sit facing the congregation, right under the pulpit, with his ear-trumpet directed up towards the preacher. The sermon moved him considerably. At one time he said to himself: "I'll give \$10;" again he said, "I'll give \$15." At the close of the appeal he was very much moved and thought he would give \$50. Now the boxes were passed. As they moved along his charity began to ooze out. He came down from \$50 to \$20, to \$10, to \$5, to zero. He concluded that he would not give anything. "Yet," said he, "this wont do—I am in a bad fix. This covetousness will be my ruin." The boxes were getting nearer and nearer. The crisis was upon him. What should he do? The box was now under his chin—all the congregation were looking. He had been holding his pocket-book in his hand during the soliloquy, which was half audible, though in his deafness he did not know that he was heard. In the agony of the final moment he took his pocket-book and laid it in the box, saying to himself as he did it: "Now squirm, old natur'!"

Here is a key to the problem of covetousness. Old nature must go under. It will take great giving to put stinginess down. A few experiments of putting in the whole pocket-book may, by and by, get the heart into the charity-box, and then the cure is reached. All honor to the deaf old gentleman. He did a magnificent thing for himself, and gave an example worth imitating, besides pointing a paragraph for the student of human nature.