

DESERT EVENING NEWS

PUBLISHED EVERY EVENING.
(Sundays excepted).
Corner of South Temple and East Temple
Streets, Salt Lake City, Utah.

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Horace G. Whitney Business Manager.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES.
(In Advance):
One Year \$2.00
Six Months \$1.25
Three Months \$0.75
One Month \$0.25
Saturday Edition, Per Year \$2.00
Semi-Weekly, Per Year \$2.00

Correspondence and other reading matter for publication should be addressed to the EDITOR.

Address all business communications and all remittances to:
THE DESERT NEWS
Salt Lake City, Utah.

Entered at the Postoffice of Salt Lake City as second class matter on order of the Act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

SALT LAKE CITY, MARCH 5, 1906

A SCIENTIFIC WITNESS.

Readers of the Desert News doubtless paid special attention to the extended report, given in this paper, of the very able and interesting lecture which was delivered by Dean Pennington, of the University of Pennsylvania, on "The Old Testament in the Light of the U. of P. Excavations in Babylonia." Among other instructive explanations given by the learned speaker, of occurrences related in the Old Testament and confirmed by tablets and other relics recently uncovered in the excavations at Nippur, the antiquity of ancient civilizations was very clearly portrayed and the following remarks made by the speaker are of particular interest to the Latter-day Saints. He said:

"Jerusalem was not a Jewish city until several centuries after the occupation of Palestine by the Hebrew nation, and existed long before under the name of Salem—how far back is not yet known. He then referred to Melchisedek whom the Scriptures portray as a speaker of the Semitic language, or beginning or end of days. This has been hard to understand, but it is now cleared up by the tablet or cuneiform historical records which show that this being without parentage or days referred to Melchisedek's priesthood which was from everlasting and does not refer to any such thing as exemption from the ordinary pre-emptive processes of human kind."

The language attributed to the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, that Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, to whom Abraham paid tithing, was:

"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually." Heb. vii. 3.

That has been a source of controversy, or at any rate of mystery, for many centuries. But the matter was set at rest for those who received the Gospel as restored through Joseph Smith the Prophet, by the explanation that the beginningless and endless qualities spoken of, refer to the priesthood held by Melchisedek and not to the individual. That is clearly set forth in the Book of Mormon, which was translated and published many decades before the discoveries were made of the tablets mentioned by Dr. Pennington. The Book of Mormon was published in 1829. The following passages are found on page 273 of that book:

"This High Priesthood being after the order of His Son, which order was from the foundation of the world; or in other words, being without beginning of days or end of years, being prepared from eternity to all eternity, according to His foreknowledge of all things."

"Ye, humble yourselves even as the people in the days of Melchisedek, who was also a high priest after this same order of which I have spoken, who also took upon him the high priesthood for ever."

An account is also given of the manner in which Melchisedek established peace in the land of Salem which entitled him to the name of the "Prince of Peace," and it is added:

"Now there were many before him and also there were many afterwards, but none were greater, therefore of him they have more particularly made mention."

It is further explained that Melchisedek was king of Salem and inherited the throne from his father. Now it is remarkable that the tablets obtained by the excavators recently, from burnt clay in the time of Abraham, substantiate the truth of that which we have quoted from the Book of Mormon, and understood by believers in that work ever since the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. The Priesthood held by Melchisedek was greater than that given to Aaron in the time of Moses, the latter being but an appendage to the higher. It was called the Melchisedek Priesthood, because Melchisedek was a most remarkable possessor of that authority, as Aaron was of the lesser Priesthood, which was called after his name and that of Levi.

This is all explained in section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants, and we refer to it now to show that the interesting point brought forth by science in the beginning of the twentieth century, was first made known in these latter times by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the early part of the nineteenth century. Thus, discoveries on the Eastern hemisphere, as well as on this Western continent, contribute to the testimony in favor of the truth of the Book of Mormon.

ABOUT ORDINATIONS.

"Editor Desert News:
"In Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 29, verse 45, it says: 'No person is to be ordained to any office in this Church, where there is a regularly organized branch of the same, without the vote of that Church.'"
"Now, sir, does that mean that both the vote for and against is to be called for before anyone has a right to hold office?"

The rule referred to in the preceding letter was given at a very early date in the history of the Church and the principle embodied therein is sound and essential. It was revealed in April, 1829, before there was any organization

of the Stakes of Zion or the wards which compose them. In the succeeding verses of the same section, there are further directions which modify the rule in the verse that is quoted. They should be taken together, and also verses 61 and 63.

The presiding authorities in the Stakes of Zion and the general authorities of the Church have power and authority, under later regulations, to ordain men to the Priesthood under the "power of the Holy Ghost," and as decided in conferences of the Priesthood held from time to time. The direction given in verse 65 was designed to prevent officious individuals from ordaining men to the Priesthood on their own volition, without proper authority from the Church or any of its branches.

The vote of the Church or one of its regularly constituted councils, conferences or assemblies, is required to give the person selected to hold the Priesthood authority to act in that particular Stake or ward or branch of the Church, or the quorum to which he may be designated. The principle of common consent is thus maintained, so that the person ordained may be recognized as holding legitimate authority in the Priesthood. The discipline established in the Church in regard to these matters in later years is the rule to be followed, and it received the sanction of the Prophet Joseph Smith during his lifetime, as may be seen from the History of the Church.

It is not wise to be too technical, nor to be tied up to the provision of one rule that was absolutely necessary during the first few months of the organization of the Church. No officer of the Church, however, is authorized to ordain others to the Priesthood without the sanction of the presiding authorities or councils to which such matters are to be submitted. That is the principle that governs in the entire discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM.

A gentleman of North Tarrytown, N. Y., is of the opinion that the general adoption of an artificial, universal language is merely a question of money. In a leaflet he calculates that for five billion dollars, the object could be accomplished. The cost would cover the making of the language, free text books, literature, salaries for teachers, bounties for scholars, free libraries, etc. "If," says the author of the leaflet, "the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia would each give a billion of dollars, the great problem would be solved. But if a great agitation were aroused, many other countries would give considerable, so that no nation would need to devote more than half a billion, and this would be distributed over a number of years, so that it would not be burdensome."

It is hardly necessary to discuss such a proposition. No country is going to appropriate a billion dollars, or even half a billion, for the creation of a new language, as long as the need of it is not felt more generally than is the case now. The Volapuk and Esperanto enthusiasts are really "crossing the river in search of water," in their efforts at establishing a common medium of communication of thought. This object would be gained through an agitation in favor of the practical study in every common school throughout the civilized world, of a couple of foreign languages, or more, as could be agreed on at an international conference of educators and business men. By that means the problem of an international language would soon be solved. And it would be entirely practical to solve it that way.

It is not much of a trick to learn enough of a foreign language to speak a little of it, and understand it when spoken. The thorough mastery of a language is another thing altogether. But the acquisition of a limited vocabulary and the facility for building sentences accurately enough for all practical purposes does not require any more labor than must be expended on Volapuk, for instance. It would therefore be entirely practical to agree on a couple of living languages and adopt them throughout the world as universal studies, and that would solve the problem.

We have mentioned Volapuk and Esperanto. We understand a third jargon has been constructed under the name of "Idiom Neutral," and that the world is now being asked to forget the former "idioms" and contemplate the beauties of this. But it is all wrong to burden the world with new artificial languages. It is like trying to force imitations of food on a market already overstocked with all kinds of eatables. There is no scarcity of languages. There is no need of a poor imitation. An international conference for the purpose of agreeing upon a language or two for international use, such as was proposed some years ago by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, would do more good than all the agitation for a new mixture of words without history and without literature, and dead and cold as a marble statue.

A GOOD SUGGESTION.

Somebody has suggested the observation in the schools of the country of a "Seed Grain Day," to be held on April 4, south of the latitude of St. Louis, and on April 11, north of that latitude, or as near to these dates as practical. The idea is for the children to test at once selected seed grain, and to report the result on "seed grain day." The grain is tested in the following manner:

"Take two dinner plates and two pieces of thick cloth or blotting paper, the size of the inner part of the plate. Wet these thoroughly and drain off the extra water. Put one piece of cloth on the plate and scatter the grain over it evenly and cover with the second cloth. Turn the other plate over it to prevent evaporation and set in a warm place. Examine frequently and if it grows dry add a little water. After six or eight days remove the cloth and determine the percentage of germination. To test kernels from several ears of corn in the same plate, mark off the blotting paper into squares and number each one to correspond with the ear from which the kernels are taken."

It is also suggested that, on the day set apart as "grain day," the children bring to school sample ears, or kernels of corn, and that these be studied so

that the children become familiar with their good and bad points, and to create further interest in the subject, it is suggested that a "harvest feast" be also held in every school, with the distribution of rewards for the best specimens of grain raised. The state of Colorado, we are told, gives \$2,500 in special prizes, Minnesota a like amount, other states are officially promoting the idea in various ways, and the children may compete with the grown-ups in the contest to add millions to grain growers' profits.

The suggestion seems good to us. Anything to awaken in the children an interest in what Washington called the "manly art of agriculture," deserves encouragement. Too many of our young people get ambition for the professions. The necessary education and training for a life "close to the earth" is sadly neglected.

RATE REGULATION IN FRANCE.

The railroad rate question seems to have been solved satisfactorily in France. There all railroads are subject, to a certain extent, to government supervision. This is vested in inspector generals with headquarters in Paris and with seats in the councils, or committees, established by the minister of public works. These officials have full access to all books, papers and reports of the various railway companies, and may, in addition, call for any necessary information.

No rates of any kind can be imposed by a French railroad without authorization from the minister of public works. The companies must, before applying any tariff or rate, show up a list or schedule of the prices they propose to charge for the transport of passengers, cattle, merchandise, etc. Copies of this schedule are forwarded to the minister, the prefect of the department through which the road is to pass, and to the control service. The schedule of necessary expenses, such as those of loading, unloading, storage of goods and warehousing, as well as of all other rates determined annually, must be submitted to the government in the month of October in each year, and these schedules are, when approved, posted prominently in stations for public information.

These regulations seem to work to the satisfaction of both the roads and the public. But French and American methods are different, in railway as well as in many other affairs.

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?

The New York Journal of Commerce, speaking of trusts and the present financial situation in this country, says, in part:

"Everything possessing commercial value is turned into gold. Prices have advanced well beyond reach of the masses; millionaires have marvelously multiplied; the banks are unprecedentedly plenteous with the floating balances of the newly rich; billions of 'watered stock' issued by these new creations have been installed on the stock exchanges; and on every hand we are surrounded by the riot of wealth. Not to be flippantly prophetic, it may be prudent to look forward to a day of revealing, when the outcome of these grand transitions will surround an awakened nation. At the moment, we are not in a position to estimate nicely the futures of these things. A very influential minority are now drunk with new wine of trust speculations, and so long as their intoxication lasts, buoyancy will be maintained in the interests they are fostering. But who in his senses can regard the present situation as normal? Or as exempt from dangers untold and difficult of control? The real test of the trust system has yet to come, when, coincidentally with the violent reaction that always follows speculative overdoing, everything undeserving of confidence is subject to the merciless verdict of the public judgment. This, however, is but one of the judgments which the trust situation and system awaits. The system must also face an ordeal of a still more trying character. It embraces the weightiest political and social issues, which must be submitted to the judgment of the country in its highest tribunals. Graver issues than those which will then have to be met have rarely been presented for a nation's arbitration."

Again the weather man has befogged everything.

San Francisco is to have eighty-five cent gas, if her papers are not gassing.

Eating "crow" will not cease even when the country has a pure food law.

Death Valley seems to be quite a proper place for ambuscade and assassinations.

Again the Longworths are in their native land. "Don't you remember Sweet Alice?"

The Chinese might smooth over their present troubles if they would take them to a laundry.

There are twenty-five thousand John Smiths in Chicago. Wouldn't Poulson-tas have had a time saving them all?

The confessions of Orchard and Adams may be good for their souls; they certainly are good for the prosecution.

The burden of the song of the Russian refugees who arrive in this country seems to be, "Listen to my tale of woe."

President Remsen of Johns Hopkins comes to the defense of Dr. Osler. If this isn't heaping coals of fire on the doctor's head, what is it?

Professor Minot, of Harvard, says that "permanent fatigue" sets in at the age of twenty-five. The professor must be suffering from "that tired feeling."

President Castro declares that Americans, Englishmen and Germans are worse than Chinese. That may be, but they are not so bad as Venezuelans.

Orchard and Adams have not told, so far as the public knows, what the "inner circle" paid them for their work, but evidently it was the wages of sin.

When a tornado sweeps through a town, carrying death and destruction everywhere, then comes a realization

of "how weak and frail a thing is man."

A New Yorker is said to have been unconscious for seven weeks. The thing is impossible. A New Yorker never loses his self-consciousness for a single minute.

Senator Morgan finds it pretty hard to fight against a combination, in one witness, of William the Conqueror, Nelson, the hero of Trafalgar, and Cromwell the Protector.

HOW TO BOIL WATER.

Good, living.
To boil water would seem to be a very simple thing, and yet the late Charles Delmonico used to say that very few people knew how to do it. "The secret is," he said, "in putting fresh water into a clean kettle, already quite warm, and setting the water to boiling quickly, and then taking it right off for use in tea, coffee or other drinks before it is spoiled. To let it steam and simmer and evaporate until the good water is in the atmosphere and the lime and iron and dregs only left in the kettle is what makes a great many people sick, and it is worse than no water at all. For water boiled like this and flavored with a few drops of lemon juice Mr. Delmonico used to charge as much as for his best liquors, and he often recommended it to his customers and friends who complained of loss of appetite. It is worth trying."

GEMS FOR MISS ROOSEVELT.

Pittsburgh Dispatch.
Already some of the Longworth jewels have blazed at Miss Alice Roosevelt's throat. On New Year's day she wore a necklace of diamonds set in dull gold, every stone pendant from a delicate link. When she laughed and shook her head the glitter was dazzling. These diamonds were the gift of Nicholas Longworth, Sr., to his wife on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding, and the younger Longworth, the thirteenth year of his prospective bride. It was at his request Miss Alice wore them at the first official reception after the announcement of the engagement. Longworth has pledged his heart with three rings. One is Etruscan gold with four diamonds set in the circle, and another a Roman gold ring, with a large sapphire in the center. The third, which Miss Roosevelt considers her real engagement ring, has three pigeon-blood rubies surrounded by diamonds.

THE WHISTLE LANGUAGE.

Philadelphia Bulletin.
They have a whistle language on Gomera Island, in the Canary Archipelago. They can whistle there as articulately as a Bostonian can speak. And since they can whistle very loud and clear, the Gomeras can converse a long way off. A Gomera hunting a mile from home can ask his wife what there is for lunch, and if the menu does not please him he can scold her and order a change as well as though he stood beside her. The Gomeras talk in a sing-song, and their whistle language reproduces the spoken one's intonations.

JUST FOR FUN.

"That big dog you gave us actually does police duty at our house." "So?" "Yes. He spends most of his time in the kitchen with the cook."—Detroit Free Press.

"I made my first dollar picking up chips," said the self-made man. "And who staked you to the stack you started in on?" was the interviewer's absent-minded question.—Cleveland Leader.

Defeated Conservative candidate (addressing supporters)—"There is a saying. Give a man enough rope and he will hang himself." This the Radical party will do; and then it will be our turn!—Punch.

Wigg—I know a man who was robbed in broad daylight in his own home. Wags—That was very remarkable. Wigg—Why, is robbery so scarce there? Wags—No, but broad daylight is.—Philadelphia Record.

Elderly Man (greeting former acquaintance)—I remember your face perfectly, miss, but your name has escaped me.

The Young Woman—I don't wonder. It escaped me three years ago. I am married now.—Chicago Tribune.

Why He Was Summoned.

One day a village parson was summoned in haste by Mrs. Johnson, who had been taken seriously ill. He went in some wonder because she was not of his parish, and was known to be devoted to her own minister, the Rev. Mr. Hopkins.

While he was waiting in the parlor before seeing the sick woman, he passed the time by talking with her daughter.

"I am very pleased your mother thought of me in her illness," he said. "Is Mr. Hopkins away?" The lady looked very shocked.

"Oh, dear no," she replied, "but we are afraid mother has something contagious, and we don't like to let dear Mr. Hopkins run any risks.—Exchange.

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