DESERET EVENING NEWS.

DESERET NEWS PUBLISHING COMPANY, LESSEES.

Wednesday, March 6, 1895.

ABOUT LENT.

A period of forty days before Easter, commencing with Ash Wednesday, is known in the Roman church, as it certainly the same part of the year in the Greek and Oriental churches, as Lent. The word is of Anglo-Saxon derivation and means simply "spring," as the German *Lenz*, but it is used as a substitute for the ecclesiastical terms *Tessarakosti* or *Quadragesima*, from Greek and Latin words respectively, meaning forty. During the whole period the members of the churches mentioned are supposed to fast. That is, they are to abstain from eating flesh and limit the quantity of food to a minimum. They are to attend public worship daily, with frequent partaking of the Sacrament, and particularly on Saturdays and Sundays. Increased diligence in almsgiving and deeds of charity is one feature of it, while public amusements, particularly stage plays, holiday celebrations and marriages are abandoned universally. Of course, the strictness with which the fast is observed is very much relaxed from what it was anciently and varies with the civic and religious consciousness of different individuals, but these are the principles recognized in theory at least by the orthodox of the western and eastern churches.

In some of the Protestant churches the Lent is retained on the ecclesiastical calendar and special prayers and texts for sermons are provided the clergy for the edification of their audiences; but as to fasting or abstaining from certain kinds of food, that is left to each individual. The anxiety of the reformers to obliterate every trace of Romanism in the Protestant countries led them to abolish many ancient customs and fasting among others. In this connection it is interesting to note the tenacity with which traditions handed down from the past live in the minds of the people. In some Lutheran countries it is still customary during the Lent to add certain kinds of food to the bill of fare. On a particular Monday, for instance, bread and milk is eaten, and pancakes is the proper thing on a certain Tuesday in the season, just as eggs, the symbol of the resurrection, are Easter food, and fish, the symbol of the Savior, is considered appropriate at Christmas, because the letters in the Greek word for fish (*ichthys*) are the initials in the original language of the New Testament of the words, Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. Thus traditions and customs after centuries still linger among the people, even long after the original meaning is forgotten. Protestantism still retains much of Romanism, while this latter has perpetuated ancient paganism, and Judaism too, to a considerably greater extent than is generally supposed.

As to the origin of Lent, it can be traced to the very early days of the Christian Church. At first it appears only as an almost universally recognized custom of setting apart some time before the anniversary of the death of our Lord for devotional exercises and contemplation of His sufferings for mankind. To the devout disciple it was impossible to combine such meditation with feasting and gaiety. The importance to the individual Christian of feeling the power of the atonement in his heart as well as understanding the doctrine was no doubt the foundation for the practice. At last forty days were fixed as the proper length of time, in commemoration of the forty days fast of our Lord and that of the two great men of the Old Dispensation, Moses and Elijah. It was also found that forty days, excluding four Sundays, would be a tenth part of the year, which, it was argued, was due to the Lord, as tithes of everything were by the Mosaic law. The custom of keeping Lent is certainly a very ancient one, although at present little more than the name of it exists. That a few observe it in the right spirit is no doubt true, as it is also that such are benefited accordingly.

FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

The City Council has decided to spend $5,000 in the street and water departments, the understanding being that the amount will go to giving employment to deserving workingmen who are bona fide residents of the city. If the program is carried out in that spirit it will stand as a most commendable feature of the present administration's work. There are worthy workingmen who need the employment and should have it, and there are departments in which the money could be better expended. If the business is conducted properly nobody can complain, because the city will get the worth of the money, and the men who are employed will receive what they earn, being benefited. The proceeding may serve also as a suggestion for the future. The distributing of the amount apportioned to the water department is timely, but there are a good many people who feel that the streets should receive attention earlier in the season, that benefit may be derived therefrom when it is most needed—when the mud is at its plentiful as to make street crossings almost impossible. If this had been done the past winter, the public would have been greatly relieved. There can be considerable good, however, performed in this direction yet, and if it shall be necessary to provide for unemployed next winter, a scheme for doing it during the wet and muddy season, which also is the time when men most need the advantage of such employment, would be received with favor.

THE NEGRO SIDE.

In the News dispatches last evening (March 5) was an account of Miss Ida Wells being excluded from a Methodist meeting in San Francisco because she had not proved that she was a member of the Methodist church. The woman who is thus being given notoriety is a negress who formerly lived in the Southern States, and who is entering into the reform movement against the treatment to which negroes are subjected there. She is an eloquent speaker, and relates in graphic words the story of the condition of her race in the South.

In her discussion, Miss Wells points out many features which will be interesting to consider as the statement coming from the negro side of the controversy. Regarding the particular occurrences which have led to the movement in behalf of the colored race—the lynching of negroes for heinous offenses against white women—Miss Wells recalls that when the masters of the slaves had gone to battle during the Rebellion, the negroes were left on the plantations to protect the women and children. There was then no complaint of these awful crimes, which she claims are the outgrowth of the later conduct of the white race, in its antagonism to the black race. She states that colored women have suffered more from the criminal assaults of whites than ever white women have from negroes, and in every case the punishment meted out to the whites has been infinitely less than to the negroes. She further alleges that the silence of the North is largely responsible for the lynchings in the South, for the suppression of which her race asks the co-operation of moral and Christian people.

Miss Wells treats that one great cause of the trouble is that, although the slaves were freed during the war, at no time do the Southerners believed that they had the same right to rule the negro as before, and in many cases resorted to massacre to secure the desired result; laws were made to humiliate and enslave the negro, and the principal social and temperance societies of the South closed their doors to the race, consequently the colored race built churches and schoolhouses of their own, established newspapers and mercantile houses, and made considerable progress, which, however, would have been much greater but for the way they were held back. Regarding the statement that Southern workhouses and prisons are filled with negroes, Miss Wells says it is owing to the fact that for the commission of the most trivial offense a negro is often sentenced to years of imprisonment, while the penalty for a white man for a similar crime would be very light.

Doubtless there is a great deal of truth in the negro woman's claim that white oppression is measurably responsible for negro crime, and that the colored people are the chief sufferers. The bare fact that in the South there is a sentiment which justifies as a necessity the hanging and burning of negroes without recourse to legal methods indicates a disregard of justice and humanity which is deplorable. It may cause some improvement, therefore, to have the subject agitated, sifted, and understood, giving both sides a hearing, so that the sentiment complained of may be replaced by one of a more enlightened character. In that view the reform movement may not be without good fruits, securing a less hostile relationship between the two races than exists at present.

HOME INDUSTRY AGAIN.

The manufacturers' associations and chambers of commerce in surrounding states and territories are sending out circulars, and taking action in other ways, calling upon people to show their patriotism and pride in their own locality by building up their own states, i.e., by patronizing home manufactured goods. Whenever they can be obtained, in preference to anything which comes from the outside, east or west. In some places arrangements have been made to circulate the matter of placing home industries in a more advantageous situation before the people. One of these is issued for California on the 15th of this month, and is the call signed by the heads of the Mechanics' Institute, merchants' association, boards of trade, and manufacturers' and employers' associations, this statement is made:

> The statistics of California show an alarming decrease in the amount of wages expended by the manufacturers of this state during the past five years, while the population has shown a marked increase. Factory manufactories are virtually supplying the demand of our home customers, which will be opened wholly employment of another year unless steps are taken to check the evil.
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> The purpose of the organization to be perfected at organization whose object will be to educate the masses to the needs of fostering home industry, secure necessary legislation in behalf of these industries, and to take an active interest to counteract unfair competition of which it is alleged as a principal cause to effect the desired change in sentiment.
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> In this Territory a chief aim of those who advocate its interests is to induce immigration, hoping thereby to enhance business. But if those who advocate it cannot induce Utah or California to have treated, that is, to materially increase population and at the same time cause a marked decrease in the wages paid for local manufactures, of what benefit will it be? Taking together of these two conditions—increased wages for those engaged in local industries, and increased population—simply means an increase of business and a prolongation of hard times. The first step necessary is to adopt a plan by which more men shall be engaged in production at home, to the exclusion of imported products of labor. Thus, when local manufacturers are larger producers, more men are to be paid in wages to employes in that branch, there is attraction for both capital and skilled labor, and the most potent force for increasing population of a desirable character is at work. We have plenty of consumers now, proportionately, and there are enough here at present who would be willing producers. A great trouble is that their product does not get to the consumer to performs to the importation.

> There still may be some lack of patriotism in patronizing home goods yet in the main there is no great scarcity of educating the masses here to the needs of fostering home industry. The people generally comprehend that in theory; what they need is the ability to practice it. The consumer feels that where there is any material difference in price between the locally made article and the importation, he must of necessity make the most of his money. Hence the aim should be to enable the manufacturer to get his wares on the market as cheaply as possible. One great barrier to this proceeding is the railway. There is now, and always has been, a curious discrimination between the freight rates on the manufactured article and those for the natural product. What is needed is a method of procedure by which people here can compete with those in the older states in the matter of manufactures, and change materials from the raw to the finished state on equal terms with other communities. This process would be largely assisted if the cost of transportation of raw material necessary for manufacturers here were to change places in its present relation to the rate for made-up goods imported.

> In view of the agitation going on among our neighbors in every direction, it would not be amiss to have some special attention devoted to manufactures here. Last year's agitation had a good effect. Something of a more advanced practical character might be undertaken now. In this the manufacturers properly might be expected to lead out in their particular division, and as in every plan that will further the interests of the people generally, they would be given the aid of the press and men would receive the practical endorsement of the public.

A curiousness in the political life of Senator Dolph of Oregon is that twelve years ago the legislative deadlock in the selection of senator was only broken on the seventy-eighth ballot when Mr. Dolph was chosen a few minutes before the close of the session. Last week another senator was chosen to Mr. Dolph's place under exactly the same circumstances.

Mayor Strong of New York is one of the few municipal chieftains of the day who has the courage to express the sentiment that the streets where the tenement houses are should be cleaned first, even if the "Broadway boys have to row" meanwhile.

W. H. Bolt, Justice of the Peace, 214 Main Street. Telephone No. 586.

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A Great Novel Play,

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