

It is difficult to form any idea as to the age of the ruins, when they were first erected, how long they were inhabited or how long since they were destroyed. In my opinion these periods must have covered centuries, but how many I am not able to say. From the worn step stones that I saw, I would conclude that the buildings were occupied a long time. We shall have occasion to refer to this subject in a future letter. JOEL RICKS.

BEAR LAKE STAKE CONFERENCE.

Bright and beautiful were the 6th and 6th days of this August, 1893, in our valley, when the quarterly conference of the Bear Lake Stake of Zion convened pursuant to appointment. On Saturday morning at 10 o'clock Elder Wm. Budge, President of the Stake, called the assembly to order. After the opening exercises he made some remarks setting forth the objects and benefits resulting from these quarterly general assemblies of the Saints.

Father, Ezra Clark of Farmington, in a kindly way congratulated the people on the changes for the better that have occurred since the first settlement of the Stake. He also spoke of the critical situation of the people of the world and admonished the Saints to profit by the experience of others and to keep free from entangling obligations and to pursue a policy of self sustenance.

Elder Joseph Morrell, of Logan, then, in a few remarks bore testimony of the divinity of the Gospel, of the efficacy of proper parental training, and the value of the instructions imparted in the institutions established for the spiritual education of the youth of Zion.

Elder Ben. E. Rich followed, showing the sad results of disobedience to divine laws and impressing the people with the necessity of diligence in reading and obeying the revelations of the Lord. He concluded by an interesting recital of his observations in and around Far West, and other old land marks in the history of the Church, which he had recently visited.

The afternoon meeting was addressed by Elder Paul of Logan, who logically and elaborately sustained the authenticity of the four "Gospels," the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the evidence of the existence of the allwise Creator.

On Saturday evening a concert was held in the tabernacle and encouragingly patronized.

On Sunday, after the opening exercises, reports were received from the Bishops of all the wards from Paris southward, and also a general report of the Stake by the president, Elder Wm. Budge. From these reports it appeared that the people are in fair condition. Meetings were fairly attended; the health of the people was good; crops of hay were light and of cereals and vegetables moderate; everybody was busy; there was nothing specially to complain of, and much to be thankful for.

Elder Willard Young made an interesting address, commenting on the reports and amplifying upon the revealed propositions that every blessing is predicated upon our obedience to God's laws. He answered lucidly the questions: Whence came we? Why

are we here? and, What is our ultimate destiny?

Elder F. M. Lyman, of the council of Apostles, explained the duties of members of the Church in regard to attending meetings, partaking of the sacrament, etc., and exhorted all to forgive each other as they would improve Divine mercy.

After the administration of the Sacrament at the Sunday afternoon exercises Elder C. W. Hibley spoke on the condition of the world as he beheld it in his extensive travels. Elder F. M. Lyman again spoke to the assemblage, advising them to be careful and economical in their financial affairs. He then gave attention to Church discipline, explaining the duties of the various offices in the Priesthood, and the obligations of members of the Church.

JOSEPH IRWIN.

LAKE TOWN, August 7th, 1893.

THE PREDATORY PESTS.

What with an occasional earthquake, cyclones abundant, cholera threatened, all kinds of accidents continuous, and a special session of Congress discussing the financial shortage, the people would seem to be well enough stocked with misfortunes without the prevailing incursion of the seventeen-year locust; but they are upon the land, eight states reporting them as out in full force. The department of agriculture at Washington "as in duty bound" is sending circulars broadcast regarding the pests and asking information in regard to them; but the genus locust has no respect whatever for the present administration, or anything else save its insatiable appetite, and continues to spread and devour in spite of the circulars. The information gained may, however, be put to good use hereafter.

We are advised that there are twenty-two known broods of them, which turn up in different years in various sections of the country, but their respective territories overlap to some extent. Each brood, however, comes out of the ground only once in seventeen years. The intervals are absolutely regular. One brood has been under observation since 1815, and it is possible to make with absolute certainty such a prediction as that the "locusts" will appear at a given place in 3033 A. D.

The creatures are pronounced to be not "locusts" at all, but cicadas. They are good to eat, according to the testimony of the division of entomology at Washington. Experts attached to that bureau experimented with them some years ago. They tried them in plain stew, in thick milk stew and broiled. The insects were collected from trees as they emerged from the chrysalis. After soaking in cold water over night they were cooked for breakfast. It was found that they imparted a distinct and agreeable flavor to the stew, but were not palatable themselves. They were best fried in batter, when they suggested shrimps. They are not likely to become popular as a comestible in Utah, whatever distinction they may attain to elsewhere; in fact, it would be hard to designate a place here where they would be wel-

comed unless there were a brisk fire prevailing there at the time.

It is said that during the first few years of its all-too-long life the cicada does not as a general thing burrow deeper in the ground than two feet; later on it becomes more energetic and venturesome and has been found as low down as twenty feet. When its hibernating period is drawing to a close it starts upward quite slowly, and when the time comes for it to appear it is discovered quite close to the surface, under logs and stones, seemingly awaiting the opportune moment. When that moment comes the creatures swarm out in vast numbers and scramble over the ground to the nearest trees. If there is an isolated tree a strange phenomenon is exhibited. All of the insects in its neighborhood, led by a remarkable instinct, make so many bee-lines toward it. Converging to this central point they clamber up the trunk in a steady stream, diverging again along the branches. The sight is pronounced one not easily forgotten.

The cicadas begin to come out at sunset and continue until midnight. When the insect has attached itself comfortably to a twig or leaf its skin begins to split down the middle. It takes from twenty minutes to an hour for the animal to extricate itself from its discarded shell. The transformation completed it appears as a beautiful creature with gauzy wings. At times they will swarm on a tree in such vast numbers as to break down the branches—so it is said; we never saw it done.

The people of Utah, or those who were here in the earlier days, know a good deal of the cricket, grasshopper, locust and cicada by reason of bitter and trying experience. It is undoubtedly the case that the destroyers belong to the same family and seem to have a common object—to harass the human family. They have not been so bad here of late, but have done considerable damage, especially to lucern, this year; and, without any disposition to create alarm, we may state that they are at present so plentiful in some of the higher valleys and on the benches as to cause among residents of those localities a genuine fear that next year they promise to be out in full force.

A DOLLAR in a savings bank is worth two in an old sock.

THE CHICAGO *Dispatch* maliciously observes that while the recent silver convention in that city settled the entire financial controversy, some of the delegates neglected to settle their hotel bills.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 12.—Honolulu advices to August 3rd, per steamer New York, arrived today to the effect that everything remains quiet, though there have been a few absurd rumors of a royalist plot, to which the government paid no attention.

Taxes are coming in freely. Spreckels & Co. have paid all their personal taxes and have already returned schedules on their real property.

The Americans there are much pleased by the change in Blount, who, since sending his report forward, has dropped his exclusive habits and mingles freely with Americans. The impression now is that he is friendly personally to annexation.