

offensive and really sacrilegious practice!

The law given to Israel amid the thunders of Mount Sinai was, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." This command inculcates a principle of observance by men and for their salvation. The person who blasphemes the Most High by profaning His name is guilty of a crime; he who ridicules or brings into derision the title of the Holy One is under sin; and he whose frequent repetition of that name makes unnecessary use of it commits an offense by taking it in vain—an act that is expressly forbidden by the great Lawgiver Himself. To impress the principle more deeply upon the minds of those who receive His law, the command was reiterated in imparting the information that "the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

Many of those whose profession is that of preachers of modern Christianity evidently do not realize the force of the divine command, judging by the uncalled-for manner in which His name is injected into their expressions, especially when they assume to pose as exponents of the doctrines taught by the Divine Master; and because of this pernicious disregard of a direct command they will not be held guiltless when they come before the great Judge. As with the Pharisees of olden time, condemnation will rest upon them for their heathenish practice of vain repetitions.

Those among the Latter-day Saints, if any there be, who have formed this habit of frequently and unnecessarily repeating the name of the Almighty, are without justification, and are in pressing need of repentance; for there is constantly before them a prominent example of the acceptable rule, under direct revelation from heaven. In this example is found the reason for the name Melchisedec being applied to the Higher Priesthood. Melchisedec was a great High Priest, and the manner in which he magnified his calling led to the selection of his name to designate that order. "Before his days," says the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph, "it was called the Holy Priesthood after the order of the Son of God; but out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too frequent repetition of His name, they, the Church, in ancient days, called the Priesthood after Melchisedec, or the Melchisedec Priesthood."

The Almighty endorsed this action of the Church anciently, and the same rule was enjoined upon the Church in this dispensation and is followed. Those who vary from the rule depart from the order which the Lord has instituted. The use of His name is necessary at times, as in certain ordinances, among which is the administration of Sacrament. There are occasions, too, in preaching, in prayer, in admonition, when such use is proper and is directed by the spirit of revelation. But the rule to avoid its too frequent repetition, to abstain from using it unnecessarily or in vain, should be strictly adhered to; in cases where doubt may arise it is well to be on the safe side and not transcend the limit of the commandment. The Latter-day Saints should be the most

careful of all people in conforming to this principle, and should not utter the name of their Eternal Father unnecessarily or upon occasions when it will be treated lightly, or mention it except with feelings of the highest veneration.

THE WELL ZEMZEM AGAIN.

Last summer, when cholera cases were reported from Mediterranean ports and fears were entertained of the spread of the disease, attention was called to the Mohammedan pilgrimages to Mecca and certain religious rites connected therewith, particularly the custom of drinking of the sacred well Zemzem. Some papers clamored for energetic action on the part of the European powers to compel Turkey to discontinue these pilgrimages, as they were looked upon as a perpetual menace to the health of the rest of mankind. The NEWS at the time pointed out that the real source of danger was the more than careless way in which the refuse of thousands of sacrifices slain by the pilgrims is left to putrify in the open air, not to mention other kinds of filth which necessarily accumulate where so many thousands gather, unrestricted by sanitary regulations. The subject has been discussed by the press lately. The *Scientific American* published an article taken from the *London Times*, in which the author endeavored to prove that the water of the holy well is full of cholera microbes. To this article a paper in Constantinople, the *Sabah*, takes exception. Its reply has been translated and condensed for a recent number of the *Literary Digest*. As the NEWS published the substance of the article in the *Scientific American*, the reply of the Mohammedan contemporary in the Turkish capital is herewith also reproduced. It is only fair that both sides should be heard. The *Sabah* says:

Every nation has its own religion and forms of worship. Attempts to weaken that religion and its requirements are not permissible by justice, logic, or propriety. Those who make such attempts merely draw upon themselves the scorn of their fellowmen. Upon this principle rests the intercourse of diverse nations, and it explains why the self-evident religion of Islam prohibits all attacks on other religions, so that, in all these centuries, the people of Islam have never in any way interfered with other religions. Especially has the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid been to all his non-Mohammedan subjects a period of quiet and justice and equality, during which no single individual has been restrained in his practice of his religious duties. The gratitude and content of non-Muslim people on this score is of public notoriety, and entirely beyond the need of reiteration or proof.

Exactly as the Muslim people do not attack other religions, they expect adherents of other religions to show them similar consideration. Yet, *The Scientific American* has lately published an article, taken from *The London Times*, concerning the water of the holy well of Zemzem, venerated by all Muslims. In this article, it declares that this holy water (God forbid! a thousand times, God forbid!) contains cholera microbes and has been the means of spreading cholera. The fact is, that the holy water of Zemzem is a pure and limpid water, absolutely free and safe from these micro-

scopic animals. During many centuries, no Mohammedan who has drunk this water has been attacked with cholera, nor can such a one be attacked with disease. This is a truth of the class proved both by history and by science. At a time when the cholera is present in our city, those who seek favor with God by fasting Monday and Thursday, break their fast with Zemzem water, and no sickness has appeared among them.

The united testimony of all doctors, Mohammedan and non-Mohammedan, throughout the world, has shown that cholera is imported into Mecca by men coming from India. And if (God forbid!) there were noxious beasts in the water of Zemzem it would follow that cholera would always prevail in Mecca; yet, as soon as the pilgrims from abroad left Mecca, the cholera disappeared. It is well known, moreover, that this year the inhabitants of Mecca, who drink of the holy Zemzem every day, suffered no deaths and no attacks from cholera. As to the importation of cholera into Constantinople, it is declared by all doctors from all medical universities of all nations, that the disease sprang from a patient from Roumania, who was brought to the madhouse in Scutari.

So silly an attack on our religion cannot have originated with any man not afflicted with what is known as compound ignorance. If the author of the article in *The Scientific American* did not write in profound ignorance and hopeless stupidity, he must have had a secret motive which we do not like to contemplate. The writing of such nonsense may arise from the sole desire to spread calumny. This scurrilous article has no value that should call out more than denial. Hence, we content ourselves with pointing out that when a newspaper published in the territory of a country which professes to be a friend and well-wisher to Turkey, is allowed to become the vehicle of vile attacks on the enlightened observances of the religion of the great empire to which that country professes friendship, the occurrence is one which will bring serious consequences in its train.

Notwithstanding these emphatic denials and assertions it seems to an impartial observer only natural that, however pure the water of the sacred well may originally have been, impurities must find their way into it at that time of the year particularly when the pilgrims crowd in and around the objects of their pilgrimage. To suppose this is by no means to attack the religious rites of a strange religion. We believe it would be one of the greatest benefits to the Mohammedan world could the sultan of Turkey be induced to establish dormitories where the pilgrims gather, as well as promulgate certain sanitary regulations and maintain a corps of officers sufficient to enforce these regulations. With such precautions it is very improbable that any bad effects would be felt from the drinking of the water in controversy. And we also believe that the present sultan, who has in many instances shown a willingness to improve the condition of his subjects, might easily be prevailed upon to take such a measure, were it urged upon him by the right authority and by proper arguments.

THE LESSON OF STRIKES.

The calamities attending the Lehigh Valley railway strike are something shocking. Seven hundred thousand dollars in one smash is pretty serious work. It would not take many such