

and during the entire week they persecute themselves in every conceivable manner. We camped one night at Moquino a small town where one of these societies existed. They remained in the lodge-room during the afternoon, but just at dark we heard the sound of a flute, and the people told us they were coming to the prayer-room to offer up their devotions. They moved slowly up the street. First came several men in citizens clothes, one of whom blew a few mournful notes on an old flute. After them followed the *Penitentes*, six in number. They were naked with the exception of their drawers. Their faces were masked, and each carried in his hand a short heavy whip made of oose. Every step they took they would strike themselves upon the back with this whip with all their force. After they had entered the prayer-room and got their positions we were permitted to go in. The room was lit up by about a dozen candles. In one end was a large image of the Savior or Virgin, I could not tell which, while on the benches were several smaller images. The back part of the room was occupied by spectators, principally women. Four of the *Penitentes* were placed before the large image, two on each side of the room. In the centre was a pole to which a cactus was bound, and one of them with his bare arms and body hugged that, while the other was laid down on his back with a cactus under him. The performance then began. Some one would mutter a short prayer to the Virgin, then the women would strike up a few doleful notes, while the fellow at the post hugged his cactus more closely, and the others whipped themselves until their drawers were saturated with the blood which flowed from their backs. This persecution is continued until midnight, when they retire to their lodge room to rest and prepare themselves for a repetition of the same thing upon the morrow.

Early the following morning we again heard the sound of the flute. I hurried up to the plaza, when a heartrending scene presented itself. The man with the flute was again coming slowly up the street. Next was an old grey-haired Mexican, leading by the neck something which it was hard to distinguish as a man. His body, arms and legs were naked. His head was covered, upon his back a cactus was tied, and one to each of his thighs. His legs, body and arms were bound with cords wound round and round until his flesh was purple and he could scarcely move his limbs. In this condition, with a plate in his hands, he was led from house to house soliciting alms. This persecution is continued until the first rooster crows on Saturday morning, when they return to their homes. Their sins are now forgiven and they return to their wickedness and thieving for another year.

It is not uncommon for them to kill themselves, in which case they are supposed to go direct to Jesus. If one is killed he is buried without a coffin, his whip laid on his shoulder. His clothing is given to his wife, who is not allowed to mourn for him, and his friends say he has gone to California or some other place.

I little thought before seeing it that we had so near us and under our own government a people so benighted, so idolatrous. If idolatry exists in the world it certainly does here. They profess to believe in God and the atonement of Jesus, but their prayers are all offered before the images of St. Peter, Paul, the Virgin Mary, or some other of the ancient worthies. They make their petitions to these Saints and expect them to plead with the Lord in their behalf.

When we left Savoya we expected to have remained here on the river to study the language, but day before yesterday I received a letter from Brother Hatch, requesting us to be on the Little Colorado in time for conference which will be held on the 6th of May. To do this we will be obliged to start back to-morrow and then I am afraid we shall be too late as our team is poor. We are anxious to hear the conference news. When you write address St. Joseph, Yavapia Co., Arizona.

I remain, &c.
A. W. IVINS.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa,
April 30th, 1878.

Editors Deseret News:

I left Ogden on the morning of

the 18th inst., on the mission to which I had been appointed at the late general conference, and to engage in the genealogical labors which I had previously undertaken.

Considerable snow lay on the country as we passed through Wyoming, but the climate became more spring-like in descending to the level plains of Nebraska. The snow was no longer visible, and vast tracts of cultivated land greeted the view on either side of the track. I arrived in Omaha on the afternoon of the 20th, and crossed over to Council Bluffs without delay. The work of repairing the damage done to the bridge by a storm last fall had just been completed that day.

Good Sister Powers received me with the hospitality she usually extends to the Elders. Considering my short stay here I have made many acquaintances, done much fireside preaching, and have quite as many calls as I can meet.

At the urgent solicitation of a number of persons who are investigating, I have consented to hold a series of public meetings. The first two were held in McMacken's Hall last Sunday afternoon and evening. The audience in the afternoon consisted mostly of Saints, but the evening meeting was attended by a number of strangers. At the close of the evening service, before the audience had dispersed, an ex-Campbellite preacher stepped forward and challenged me to a public joint discussion of certain principles relative to the salvation of the dead, which I had advanced.

I was not prepossessed with his appearance. He looked to me like a man who would be apt to draw around him a class of persons the opposite of genteel, orderly or refined, and calculating from the appearance of this champion, what kind of a time we would have at a public debate, I declined. I have since learned that this Goliath failed in the evangelizing line, and that he now runs a low rate boarding house. He was backed up, when he presented his challenge, by a Methodist exhorter of similarly unprepossessing air and appearance.

The next two meetings of the series are appointed for next Sunday afternoon and evening, and last evening a rumor reached my ears to the effect that these two worthies were plotting a disturbance, and a gentleman present at a conversation between them has advised me to request that a police officer be in attendance at the meetings, that order may be preserved. This is what I shall do in case I ascertain fears of a disturbance to be well grounded. I shall much regret being forced to forego meetings, as a strong spirit of inquiry has been manifested by a number of persons who are bearing a portion of the expense of the hall, and no less than four men have signified their intention to unite with the Church.

There are, in the Council Bluffs district, five branches of the Church, viz., one in Council Bluffs proper, numbering about 25 members; one in Omaha, of 16 members; one in Boomer, 12 miles from Council Bluffs, which, owing to the emigration of several members lately, is reduced to five or six; one in Fremont, a station on the U. P. R. R. west of Omaha, of 11 members; and one in Pleasant Valley, Saunders County, Neb., of nine members.

My present design is to proceed eastward to prosecute missionary and genealogical labors in New England and other States, as soon as I can do so without detriment to the work here, probably early in May. For the present and until further notice, my address will be Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Your brother in the gospel,
B. F. CUMMINGS, Jr.

May Day in Cache.

WELLSVILLE, Cache Co.,
May 3rd, 1878.

Editors Deseret News:

The advent of "May Day" is fraught with more real amusement and jollification to the youth of our town than any other holiday of the year. The scholars of our Sunday School, claiming the privilege of choosing and crowning a "May Queen," proceed to make that day wholly their own.

At 8 a. m. the youths and maidens assembled on the square and formed a procession headed by the city brass band, marched to the

residence of the interesting young lady, Miss Belle Leatham, to whom they were about to give the homage and honors of the day. Here the procession stopped and the band striking up a lively air the royal party came forth. The Queen elect escorted by the Prince Consort, dressed in the uniform of a colonel of the Nauvoo Legion, and followed by her maids of honor, passed through the opening lines of the procession, and preceded by the band, walked to the scene of coronation on the Public Square, where a May pole was erected.

Here, surrounded by the assembled throng, the ceremony of coronation was performed. The Prince Consort, James B. Stoddard, officiating. Holding a wreath of beautiful flowers over the queenly head, exclaiming "Glory be to God and to the Queen of May," he placed it on her brow, and the shouts of God save the Queen, from the throats of the youthful participants, attested their pleasure and satisfaction. When this burst of enthusiasm had subsided, her majesty, radiant and smiling, made the following address:

"My loving and loyal subjects:

We've assembled here together
To commemorate this day,
And I have been elected
And crowned the Queen of May.
I hope I may be able
To do honor to my place,
And wear this crown upon my brow
With dignity and grace.
The crown which rests upon my brow
Will fade and be no more;
But if we will live faithful,
There is one for us in store,
Which will endure forever
And never fade away,
While the ages of eternity
Will be one long "May day."

The Prince Consort followed in a speech of homage and devotion to the youthful sovereign. Supt. Leatham of the Sunday School and Bishop W. Maughan made some few remarks, then all engaged in the dance around the May pole. This over, the company proceeded to their carriages waiting to convey them to Mendon.

The order of procession was as follows: The state carriage containing the Royal party, drawn by four high mettled gaily decked horses. Immediately behind came four or five mischievous lads, bent on having their own sport, who had improvised for this occasion a nondescript sort of vehicle mounted on two wheels; they carried the stars and stripes, and went bobbing along in the funniest manner imaginable. The vehicle was drawn by four animals, but not daring to imitate royalty too closely, the off leader was a mule. About 20 buggies and wagons followed.

The six-mile drive to Mendon was made in 24 minutes. They drove to the depot, met the incoming train, alighted and sang a few songs, and then a terrific storm of wind and hailstones burst upon them. The company were thrown into great confusion and rushed for their conveyances. The queen and suite retired in undignified haste to their carriages. The storm was of short duration, and all arrived home safe from accident.

A grand picnic and dance for the juveniles in the afternoon, and ball in the evening for the older people, brought the festivities of the day to a happy conclusion.

RANDOM.

The Screw Plow and Crooked Stick.

UTAHVILLE, Arizona,

April 26th, 1878.

Editors Deseret News:

I have just been reading the account of the testing of the Screw Plow by Bishop Layton. I have not the least doubt but from the description given it will soon be in use in this valley. The land here is level and easy to pulverize. You speak of the ancient Egyptians using a crooked stick for plowing; if you will call down here soon we can show you some 300 acres of good wheat, put in by our colony with the crooked stick plow, without so much as a ram's horn point. This colony is so productive and easy of cultivation that, notwithstanding this colony was too poor, at seeding time, to buy a common plow, from present prospects we hope to be able to square up and have enough for bread and seed the coming season. All is well with us.

DANIEL W. JONES.

Items From Malad.

MALAD CITY,

April 30th, 1878.

Editors Deseret News:

We are having a delightful spring, and the late refreshing rain storms have caused the spring crops to look green and luxuriant. But amidst all the joy and gladness of early spring the demon disease has crept into our midst and it has carried off several of our children. Our worthy Bishop George Dunford, has acted as a father to the sick and afflicted, for which he deserves much praise.

The people of Malad were much pleased with the visit paid us by E. A. Box and Bishop A. Nichols, of Brigham City. Bro. Box was here for the purpose of more fully organizing the priesthood. He effected the organization of the Lesser Priesthood, and the 6th Quorum of Elders, with the following result: For President, J. P. Harrison, with J. L. Roberts and Henry Denning as his counselors. Bishop Nichols was up in the interest of the Logan Temple.

I would say to all those who are seeking homes, Malad is the place for them to come, we have a healthy climate and plenty of good land, and one of the best cattle ranges in the mountains. So come along, for we are in need of some more good Latter-day Saints.

Yours in the gospel of peace,
SIKES.

EPHRAIM, Sanpete Co.,

May 4th, 1878.

Editors Deseret News:

In your issue of the 27th ult., "Old Settlers" have used my name pretty freely in a communication about "water affairs in Sanpete," and I therefore hope that you will not deny me space in the DESERET NEWS for a few words in reply.

That "Old Settler" should be pleased with my statement of what I was an eye witness to, part of the time, it would certainly have looked a little more manly, if he or they (it seems that he does not know himself which) had exposed themselves by signing their names to their true statement of things(?) instead of standing behind the bush throwing missiles at friend C. C. A. C., not giving him even a chance to look at their pretty smiling faces. Undoubtedly they were afraid that their signatures would rather diminish the force of their attack on me and others.

As there are hundreds of men, women and children familiar with; and more or less interested in these affairs, I shall not trespass upon your time, but leave it for somebody else, to give further particulars when needed; neither will I say anything more about his insinuation, that somebody is trying "to shield greater things," than that he or they know as well as I do, that it is false.

The biggest gun and last shot fired by "Old Settlers," was evidently not aimed at your correspondent, but at "one of the heaviest land-owners in the county." This highly respected gentleman did, in a public meeting, previous to my communication of March 17th, relinquish all claim to water for the 20 acres of land that had been granted him in settlement of a debt incurred by the city council, and he is not only a heavy land-owner, but holds a still greater claim in the hearts of the people of Sanpete, and Ephraim in particular, for his able management of public affairs.

The manifesto being declared "a fraud" criminales in one sweep all the signers, and that is by far the greater portion of our community, including bishops, teachers, and, of course, your unfortunate correspondent.

As I have been honest enough to sign my name to the article in question, headed "A fight and a victory," I most respectfully request the News to publish the names of "Old Settlers," that the public may have an opportunity to judge for themselves, and your humble servant learn where to call for redress.

Respectfully,
C. C. A. CHRISTENSEN.

We think this matter has gone about far enough. The general public are not interested in these personal matters, and we hope our correspondents will not put us to the necessity of declining their communications. As to publishing

names, we do not feel at liberty to give the real name of any correspondent whose article we accept over a *nom de plume*; although, as a general rule, we think it far better and more manly, when a discussion like this water question is the subject, for each writer to sign his real name to his communications.—[EDS.]

WASATCH STAKE CONFERENCE.

MAY 4th and 5th.

At our Quarterly Conference in Heber City, Wasatch County, 10 a. m. on the 4th, President A. Hatch and his Counselors T. H. Giles and H. S. Alexander were on the stand, also the bishops of the various wards, with their counselors, Presidents of quorums with their counselors, and a well filled house to hear instructions. After singing and prayer, President Hatch spoke briefly and called on the Bishops to report their wards, which they did, representing them as being in a healthy and prosperous condition, spiritually and temporally. The different quorums and Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Societies and Ladies' Relief Societies were all duly reported.

The Sabbath Schools also were represented as being well attended and in a flourishing state.

Brother George Dabbling, who left this county two years ago, for Arizona, joining Lot Smith's company, was here on a visit, and gave us a very interesting account of their travels and their trials and pleasures after they got there. Bro. Dabbling is in no way discouraged in regard to the future of that mission, but on the contrary, looks forward with pleasure and high anticipations in concerning it.

On Sunday morning, long before the hour of meeting, the house was again crowded full and, unfortunately, many could not obtain seats or even standing room inside the house. Meeting opened as usual, President Hatch presiding. No one of the Twelve present. Some disappointment on account of it, yet at the close, all appeared satisfied with the good, wise, and judicious counsel and instruction given and received, throughout the conference.

On Sunday afternoon the sacrament was partaken of. The general authorities of the Church were put before the meeting and unanimously sustained, after which our local authorities were separately voted upon, as they previously existed, and all sustained without opposition. Bishop William Foreman was sustained as Bishop Hunter's agent.

President Hatch read the articles of our faith and spoke a short time on the glory of God; read from the book of Doctrine and Covenants, claimed the glory of God to be intelligence; the glory of man also is intelligence, therefore we should seek to be intelligent.

All spoke well and good counsel was given. And our choir, led by our stirring friend, Alexander Fortie, certainly deserve a word of praise for their efforts, which were not in vain, to make our conference interesting.

Adjourned till August 3d, 1878.

CHARLES SHELTON,
Clerk of Conference.

The man who hasn't a war claim to push through Congress can't even commence to realize what a glorious thing patriotism is.

Dentist, to old lady about purchasing some false teeth: "For masification, my dear madam, they can only be surpassed by nature herself." Old lady: "O laws, doctor! I don't care nothing about the masification if I can only chaw with 'em."

ADMINISTRATORS' NOTICE.

Estate of Anna Eva Seegmiller, deceased.

NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned Administrators of the estate of Anna Eva Seegmiller, deceased, to the creditors of, and all persons having claims against the said deceased, to exhibit them, with the necessary vouchers within four months after the first publication of this notice to the said administrators, at their residence at St. George, Washington Co., Utah.

C. W. SEEGMILLER,
W. H. SEEGMILLER,
Administrators.
St. George, April 12, 1878.