

DESERET EVENING NEWS

Organ of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

PUBLISHED EVERY EVENING.
(Sundays excepted).
Corner of South Temple and East Temple
Streets, Salt Lake City, Utah.Charles W. Penrose, Editor.
Horace G. Whitney, Business Manager.SUBSCRIPTION PRICES.
(In Advance):One Year \$3.00
Six Months 1.50
Three Months75
One Month25
Saturday Edition, Per Year 2.00
Semi-Weekly, Per Year 1.00

NEW YORK OFFICE.

In charge of B. F. Cummings, manager
Foreign Advertising, from our Home Of-
fice, 112 Park Row Building, New York.

SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE.

In charge of F. J. Cooper, 78 Geary St.

Correspondence and other reading mat-
ter for publication should be addressed to the
EDITOR.Address all business communications and
all remittances to:
THE DESERET NEWS,
Salt Lake City, Utah.Entered at the Postoffice at Salt Lake City
as second class matter on April 11, 1895,
under Act of Congress, March 3, 1879.

SALT LAKE CITY, - OCT. 24, 1905

WHAT IS THE "WORD OF GOD?"

The New York "Outlook" for October 21 has a vigorous article by Henry Goodwin Smith, entitled, "Can the Word of God be Burned?" The question was suggested by a Sunday school lesson in the International course, bearing the title, "Jehoiakim burns the Word of God." The writer in the Outlook asks "Is it true?" He follows the question with this pertinent paragraph:

"Does the prophecy of Jeremiah, from which the lesson was taken, affirm that the 'Word of God' was burnt? Does the Bible warrant the view that the Word of God is inflammable or combustible? Should our Protestant Sunday school scholars be taught, and taught in a superficial and superficially unscriptural idea of the 'Word of God'?"

The passage of scripture under consideration was Jeremiah xxxv, in which it is related that "Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken unto him." These were inscribed on a roll of a book, which King Jehoiakim cut to pieces and cast into the fire so that the roll was consumed. Thus it was the roll that was burned and not "the Word of God." The critic argues that:

"The Word of God is spiritual, personal, indestructible; the roll, and that alone, is consumed. Baruch reads in the book the words of Jehovah." The book and the words of Jehovah are distinguishable. We are not told that Baruch read the Word of God as a book. It is said later that the word of Jehovah came again to Jeremiah in a message against Jehoiakim. The statement is, "Thus hath burned this roll." In Hebrew usage this could not read, "Thus hath burned my word." The narrative in the book of Jeremiah gives justification for the assertion. The word of God in the book of God. It should be Jehoiakim burns the roll."

The point is well taken. It may be thought that it makes "a distinction without a difference," or at any rate one of no importance. But the difference is great to a thoughtful mind, and involves a principle of moment. We quote further:

"Throughout the Bible the Word of God is represented as the Message of the Living God to living men. Nowhere is it restricted to the words of a document. In the Old Testament the Word of Jehovah, or the Word of Elohim, was his immediate, personal voice to the soul of the prophet. The Word of God in the New Testament is the Gospel, the Good News preached in the spirit by living Apostles of the Gospel. In only two passages in the New Testament (Mark vi, 15 and John x, 35) is the conception 'Word of God' connected with the Old Testament Scriptures, and neither of these verses requires a documentary interpretation of the phrase."

This is well worthy of thoughtful consideration. The prophets of old came with "the burden of the word of the Lord," and that was a spoken message from Deity to people at that time and place. When it was written the parchment on which it was inscribed, or the "roll" that held the writing, was not "the Word of God." The words were framed by that Divine Word and it was imperishable. The common declaration that the printed Bible is "the only Word of God" is a mistake as appears in the annexed paragraph:

"Nowhere from Genesis to the Revelation does the expression 'Word of God' require the meaning of Bible, or the collection of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. The venerable Protestant and Catholic tradition that the Bible alone is the Word of God is utterly unsustained by any statement in the Scriptures themselves. Everywhere in these Scriptures the Word of God is living, personal Message. Never is it limited to the letter of an ancient manuscript."

"Our Protestant theology is here found to be in a curious predicament. It holds as a fundamental truth that the Scriptures alone are the Word of God. And, as a logical consequence of this, it holds that all fundamental truth can be proved by Scripture. And yet Scripture, when closely examined, fails absolutely to prove this fundamental truth that the Scriptures alone are the Word of God, and teaches, on the other hand, that the Word of God is living, personal Message, and that it is limited to the letter of an ancient manuscript."

This view of the Scriptures has been held by the Latter-day Saints for many decades and taught by them in many lands. That the volume of sacred writings is not complete is proved from its own pages, which in both the Old Testament and the New, speak of prophecies and revelations from God that are not to be found in that compilation. The Outlook writer says further:

"He who affirms that the Bible is the solitary, immediate unrolling of God finds no support in the spirit or letter of Scripture. There are many statements in the Bible which are inconsistent with that view. The Bible does not sanction the opinion that it, the Bible, as a document, is an immediate unrolling of God. The direct revelation of God, according to the Scriptures, is invariably to a person and not to a parchment."

That statement will be startling perhaps to many Bible students, but it is absolutely true. And so is the supposed arraignment of modern dog-

matism as to the completeness and sole authority of the Holy Scriptures:

"One of the most difficult and urgent tasks set before progressive theology today is to add in unapologetically to Protestant churches from the historic Protestant dogma that the Bible alone is the Word of God, and to proclaim the glorious, spiritual, Biblical conception of this eternal and ever-present word."

"The Bible is not the only Word of God, according to its own testimony. Still less does it contain exclusively that Word. The Bible is the great historic Palestine Word. There have been other true words, from which we may learn much. There are new words today and more words to come."

This is "Mormonism," pure and simple, as it relates to the living Word and continuous revelation. The Latter-day Saints' faith declare: "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He now reveals, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things concerning the Kingdom of God." That is scouted by the "Christian" sects, but it is virtually adopted by the Outlook writer, who concludes his interesting paper as follows:

"We can no longer focalize our faith on the letter of Scripture. Let us thank God for that. The true basis for faith is not the Bible, it is God Himself, personally and immediately known. And this is what the Bible itself tells us over and over again."

If the people of the present age were not bound up by the notion drilled into the "Christian" mind through centuries that the Bible is the complete and only final "Word of God," they might be more ready to receive the living Word by direct and present inspiration and learn how to approach the Eternal Father in such faith and confidence that they could receive His mind and will today, not only through authorized living prophets, but direct to themselves individually, with an increased outpouring of Divine light, until "the knowledge of God shall cover the earth," and "all shall know Him from the least even unto the greatest."

SELLING AMERICAN GIRLS.

According to a Denver contemporary, traffic in white women is one of the "industries" of certain concerns of the larger eastern cities. The authorities of Chicago are said to have discovered that kind of business there, but there is, we are told, no law that prohibits it. Can that be possible?

The names of two women, who are thought to be the "managers" of the traffic, are given. One lives in Chicago; the other in Shanghai. They are said to entice young, inexperienced girls to consent to go to China, where they are promised remunerative positions in wealthy households. The tales about oriental luxury are tempting. The traveling expenses are paid. When the girls arrive in China, they are placed under guard and sent to the masters, who pay as high as \$1,500 for a white girl. It is claimed that a number of American girls have, in this way, been sold to Chinese masters.

We only refer to this matter to show that the anti-Mormon agitators, if they were not rank hypocrites, would have no time for an agitation that is entirely unprovoked by existing facts. Their energy, their zeal, their patriotism, provided they have any, are needed in other fields. They continue their fiddling while Rome is enveloped in flames.

HIS LAST WORDS.

The last words uttered by Sir Henry Irving on the stage were: "Through night and light, into thy hands, O Lord, into thy hands." And these beautiful words are said to be practically the last words of his life, for he never spoke after his collapse in the hotel. So they will be recorded in history as the words with which the earthly career of one of the world's greatest actors closed: "Into thy hands, O Lord!"

Much interest attaches to the dying testimonies and last words of famous persons. Livingstone was found dead in the attitude of prayer. His last words were uttered in communication with his heavenly Father. Julian, the apostate, is reported to have exclaimed shortly before his death: "Thou hast conquered me, O Gallilean!" Cardinal Wolsey, one of the great ministers of state, poured forth his soul in these words of regret: "Had I been so diligent in serving my God, as I have to please my king, He would not have forsaken me now in my gray hairs."

Quite a number of last words and testimonies of famous men and women are on record. "God be praised for everything!" was the triumphant exclamation of Chrysostom. Bede, the Venerable, said: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." Zwingli, on the battlefield where he met death in the cause of liberty, said: "They can slay only the body, not the soul." Particularly remarkable were the words of Anne Boleyn, when she was preparing for the scaffold. She said: "Commend me to the king, and tell him he is constant in his course of advancing me. From a private gentleman he made me a mistress; and from a mistress, a queen; and now he hath left no higher degree of earthly honor, he hath made me a martyr." "O Lord, my God!" were the last words uttered by the Prophet Joseph, as he fell among the murderers who adorned his noble brow with the crown of a martyr. A fitting exclamation of a man whose entire life had been devoted to the service of his Maker!

The Milwaukee Wisconsin recalls several instances in which impressive sentences spoken on the stage have been the last uttered in this life. John Palmer, one of the most distinguished impersonators of the character of "The Stranger," in Kotzebue's play of that name, died while enacting the part at Liverpool. He had exerted himself with great effort, and, uttering in a tone of indescribable pathos, the words, "There is another and a better world," seemed overpowered with emotion. He paused there, as if waiting for the prompter to give him the word, then put out his right hand, heaved a convulsive sigh, fell and stopped breathing, dying apparently without a pang. The audience sat still, supposing that he was merely acting his part; but on

the truth being made known by those upon the stage there was naturally intense excitement.

This tariff "made in Germany" is simply awful.

This year the South will raise almost as much quarantine as cotton.

Germany shows that she is as much of an adept in a tariff war as in physical warfare.

It is now admitted that dogs have appendicitis. That's right. Every dog has his day.

Secretary Taft seems to view Mr. Bryan with alarm. Alarm-viewing isn't so popular as it once was.

The President is sure to meet Colonel Carter of Cartersville on his southern tour. The South is full of him.

A California automobilist was killed trying to avoid killing a pedestrian. The record is absolutely unique.

A mushroom measuring thirty inches in circumference has been found in France. This is hardly the famous mushroom of a night.

The Russians have rendered thanks for the return of peace. They would be more than glad to render thanks for the return of Port Arthur.

Governor Folk's official residence at Jefferson City has been damaged by fire. It is not to be wondered at considering how hot he has made it for a whole lot of Missourians.

It is claimed now that the spices in the food which is eaten by rich people cause them to become immoral. No doubt they also account for the spicy gossip that comes from the tables of the rich.

Rev. J. Minot Savage does not like it because the Trinitarians accept Unitarians' money but do not want to join with them in a church federation. Would he have an absolute boycott?

The railway strike in Russia is said to be political, to force the czar to grant universal suffrage. But the leaders are very cautious. They are doing all in their power to avoid a collision with the authorities on grade crossings.

Friends of Edward G. Cunniffe who stole a hundred thousand dollars from the Adams Express company, are considering the advisability of petitioning for the appointment of a commission in lunacy to inquire into his sanity. It is an old dodge frequently resorted to by high class criminals.

Secretary Taft announces that the government is prepared to let contracts to corporations or individuals to dig the Panama canal. That is as it should be. There will be no "construction" company to whom will be insured a "grant" or "take off" on everything that is used in making the canal and without whose good will nothing can be done. It is likely that at the best there will be jobbery in the building of the great water way but evidently it is the administration's intention to prevent it if possible.

Business men just home from Europe are now telling the Eastern press of the bad influence of the insurance investigations upon public opinion abroad. One of these returned travelers says it will take years for the United States to recover from the damage done by the wide publicity given to those investigations. European business men are jealous of American competition, and they are sure to make the most of the revelations made, for the purpose of injuring our business interests.

In Los Angeles they are talking about introducing the so-called Gochenberg system of regulating the liquor traffic. According to the reports, 25 men of means have proposed to pay the city \$150,000 a year for the 200 saloon licenses now in force. If this offer should be accepted, the plan is to buy the stock, fixtures and good will of all these saloons, at an appraised valuation, and then reduce the number of places where liquor is sold, from 200 to 25. The scheme further provides that after an annual dividend of 6 per cent on the investment has been taken, all further profits will go to the city.

THE HARRIMAN SYSTEM.

Portland Oregonian.
First of all things that Oregon wants and needs, in the way of internal development, is a railroad across Middle Oregon. Such road, crossing the Cascade Range from some point in the Middle or Upper Willamette Valley, traversing Central Oregon and connecting with the Oregon short line at Ontario, would afford the means of development required for great part of the area of Oregon. The main reason why progress of the state has been so slow is that this line through its central part has been neglected. Such line, through the middle of the state, would throw out laterals right and left, or north and south, covering or reaching every important locality. Centers of population and business and industry would quickly be established. As in other localities of similar nature—arid or semiarid—where railroads have been built, every kind of development has rapidly followed.

TRYING IT ON THE DOG.

Nashville American.
Professor Viard, the chemist, has been feeding a dog on the adulterants used in foods prepared for the market. The dog, a robust Newfoundland, is almost dead, though he has been supplied with ordinary food in addition to the adulterants. Another case of "trying it on the dog." In fact, it is quite common that men eat things that will kill a dog. They also drink things no sane dog will touch.

BEES' LOVE OF COLOR.

Philadelphia Record.
The inquisitive modern investigator has been prying into the secrets of the little bee. His curiosity has been rewarded by the discovery that it is the bright color of the flower and not the presence of the nectar that attracts the honey-gatherer. In fact, it is quite possible to coax the bee away from dull-colored flowers of nature by artificial flowers of brilliant hues. As far as nature's flowers are concerned, those of the brighter hues, always receive

more attention than those of subdued shades. Moreover, the belief that the perfume of flowers attracts bees has also been exploded. It is believed that the attraction exercised by the form and color of flowers is approximately four times as great as that exercised by perfume, pollen and nectar taken together.

AN AMERICAN QUEEN.

New York Mail.
"There are 102 American women in the aristocratic circles of England and seventy-eight in France," says the Rev. Dr. Daniel H. Martin, of Newark. "I am looking forward to seeing an American girl on a European throne. Why not?" Why not, indeed? America has sent a vicereine to India, and to England several women who, as the helpmeets of dukes, have the privilege of being addressed by "Edwards" as his "right trusty counsellors." Indeed, the Empress Josephine, the spouse of the most powerful European monarch since Charlemagne, was an American in the sense that she was a native of a New World island.

FILLING UP NORTHWESTERN CANADA.

New York Globe.
Settlers are pouring into the country at the rate of several hundred thousand a year, not a lot of them being American farmers who have pulled up stakes at home because of the better opportunities across the border. It is probable, therefore, that the region between Winnipeg and the Rocky mountains will within a generation or two be inhabited by many millions of prosperous and energetic men and women mainly of Anglo-Saxon blood. What part will Canada's great natural wealth in the history of the British empire and of the world? asks the London Times. The answer to this question is of even more importance to the United States than to England.

WEARING HATS IN CHURCH.

The New York Tribune.
The question of women wearing hats in church recalls the fact that men also formerly wore theirs at worship. Pepsy shows that in the seventeenth century both men and women wore their hats to worship. "To church," he writes, "and heard a simple fellow opening the praise of church music and declining against men wearing their hats on in the church." Later he notes that he saw a minister "preach with his hat off, which I never saw before." The hat was then an integral part of both male and female costume, and Pepsy catches "a strange cold in my head by flinging off my hat at dinner."

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

The feature of the American Illustrated Magazine for November is the first installment of a novel by Mary Cholmondeley, called "Prisoners." The story is dramatic and emotional. The entire magazine is attractively illustrated, and there are a number of very interesting articles. Under the caption, "The Man Behind the Stars," P. Elden-Kie tells of Clyde Fitch's power in the theatrical world, as maker of popular actresses. Charles H. Giffin continues his story of American painting, Frederic Tudor Cooper has a readable article on "The Hopeful Tendency in Fiction," and Miss Laid writes the history of Baranot, the "Little Czar of the North." There is also a paper by Miss Gail, on "Monsieur Strain." The short stories are by Mrs. L. H. Harris, Arthur Train, Dorothy Canfield, Henry C. Rowland, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Henry A. Shute and Norman H. Crowell. "The Man Behind the Stars," serial concludes in this number—Coveler Pub. Co., 141 Fifth Ave., New York.

Pearson's Magazine for November contains a collection of brilliant short stories and clever articles for the long indoor evenings. First, there is Lawrence Perry's deep-sea story, "The Duel of Two Ocean Sharks," "The Snicker," a capital Equimaux dog yarn, full of human interest. "The Great Seal of England" is an exciting link in the "Burglars' Club" series; just as "How Kid Brady 'Broke Training'" is a vivid chain in the new gentleman prize-fighter character, who appears now and then in this magazine. Then, there is our bandit friend, "Don Q.," and three other stories; a glitzy story, an automobile story, and a funny story about George Harliss—Charles Battell Loomis's new character. Besides, there are six special articles: one on Richard Mansfield; another, "The American Diplomat in Foreign Eyes," "A Sailor of Fortune" and "The Story of the Y. M. C. A." "Night in a Marconi Station" is a vivid picture of the work among chained lightning in the interior of a wireless station. "The Casualty Roll of Peace" by Rene Bache will interest all—20 Astor Place, New York.

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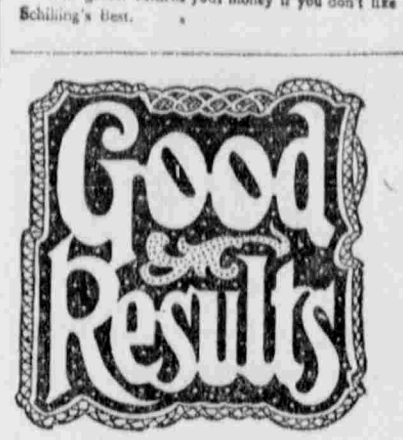
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