

one of which was signed with the secretary's autograph.

I learn that Bryan's book has made a fortune for both him and his publishers. It was put out at the low rate of \$2 per copy, and more than 200,000 copies were sold, netting Bryan the neat sum of \$40,000.

General Lew Wallace has a new novel in hand. It is an American story, and though he does not say so, I have an idea he hopes to make it the great American novel. I had a chat with General Wallace not long ago about his work. He revises and rewrites some of his novels many times. He tells me that he likes to keep his literary efforts in cold storage at least six months before completing the draft which is submitted to the publishers. By this method he is able to judge of his manuscripts coolly and to revise them more impartially than when the work is all done at once. Gen. Wallace made a great fortune out of "Ben Hur," but he did even better from the "Prince of India." He is very indignant at the pirates who have made a stereopticon lecture on the basis of "Ben Hur," and who have been exhibiting pictures of the scenes therein described all over the country. He told me once that these people have made about fifty thousand dollars out of their piracy and that he hopes to be able to get damages for their infringement of his copyright. I see, however, that the lectures are still being used.

The statement recently published that Mrs. William Edgar Nye is in destitute circumstances, owing to the foreclosure of mortgages which "Bill Nye" had given in making certain investments in New York is, I am told, untrue. Mr. Nye left a good estate and his books are still selling. Mrs. Eugene Field is also doing well. When Eugene Field died he left nothing but his copyrights and his library. He had no business instincts and never was a money-saver. After Mr. Field's death, however, one of Mrs. Field's friends gathered together his literary effects and put them in shape. New contracts were made with the publishers, and the result, I am told, is that Mrs. Field is now getting more than twice a congressman's salary every year out of her husband's books. She still holds Eugene Field's library, although it is said she was offered fifty thousand dollars for it by the Field Museum shortly after Mr. Field's death.

I understand that ex-President Harrison's book on "The United States Government" is selling very well. He received a thousand dollars a page for the articles when they were published in the Ladies' Home Journal, and his royalties will probably double his original compensation.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

### THOMAS PAINE.

The subject of this letter was born in Thetford, England, 161 years ago. He was endowed with gifts that made him one of the most noted and altogether the most hated man of his time. Indeed, the hatred was not interred with his bones, but lived long after him. For half a century after his death he was, "among the unco guid," a bogey raised to frighten unruly children. "Tom Paine" and "the devil" were synonyms. He was a firm believer in God and immortality and yet he has always been denounced as an atheist. The infidels have made him their hero because the church denounced him. He was bitterly hostile to sham and pretense and all forms of despotism. He was not learned, yet he shook crystallized conservatism worse than any man who ever laid hands upon it.

The "ultra ungodly" of Salt Lake held a meeting recently to commemorate Paine's birthday anniversary. It was of the usual kind, eulogistic of his

services as a patriot and as an iconoclast.

What I would present is the man. Paine's opinions on religion were incidental outbursts in the convictions of the man against what he believed to be caricatures of God and blasphemies against the eternal calm and justice that controlled the universe.

Paine never outgrew the environment of his Quaker parentage. In the closing years of his life he lived in New York city, and his most intimate companion was Elias Hicks, founder of what is known as the "Hicksite" branch of the Quaker church. That such a man was Paine's friend and close associate at a time when the whole orthodox Christian world was denouncing him as an atheist and infidel, is evidence that the charges were true only in a very exaggerated sense. Paine was so much of a man that I hope the "News" will give place to this brief sketch of his life:

He received only such a common education as poor parents could give him, which was meager. He had no dream of authorship. He came to America in 1774, like all immigrants, in hope of bettering his condition. He found the American colonies in a state of intense excitement over the exactments forced upon them by the British government. His quick sense of discernment showed him that there was only one way out of the difficulty, and that was in the independence of the colonies.

He made the acquaintance of Franklin in England, and it was by his advice that Paine came to America. He became editor of the Penn'a Magazine. His first work of renown was "Common Sense," a large pamphlet in which, after elaborating the condition of the colonies and their relation to the king, he cut the knot by declaring that the colonies should become free and independent states. This question had been agitated in New England by Sam Adams and his brother John, Otis, Hancock, and others for years, but the fiery impetuosity of Paine started the blaze that had been only smoldering. Soon, from the Lakes to the Gulf, the cry for independence became general, and on the Fourth of July, 1776, independence was declared.

In the seven years' war that ensued Paine was a private soldier under Washington. On a drum head he wrote sixteen numbers of pamphlets called "The Crisis," through all of which he denounced the crown and urged the Americans to patriotism. When Washington's army was on the point of surrender he went to France and was largely instrumental in securing a loan which put the American army on its feet with new life and enabled it to secure the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and the triumph of the colonists.

The Revolution over, Paine went back to England. Edmund Burke had just published a book against the efforts of the French to secure a republican government. Paine replied to Burke in his "Rights of Man," first part. His reply created such an excitement in England that republican clubs were formed in every manufacturing city, and a popular song had for a refrain:

"God save great Thomas Paine.

His 'Rights of Man' proclaim

From pole to pole."

This was sung to the air of "God Save the King"—the original of our "America." The government was so alarmed that it suppressed the "Rights of Man" and ordered the arrest of the author and publisher.

The popularity of Paine in France caused his election to the French Assembly, as a delegate from Calais, and, knowing that he was under orders of arrest, he secretly made his way to Dover and immediately set sail for France. He had not left the shores of England half an hour before an of-

ficer of the crown reached Dover with an order for his arrest. Paine took his seat in the French Assembly at Paris. When the question of killing the king came up, Paine insisted that they should kill monarchy, but spare the man. For this he was thrown into prison and only by merest accident did he escape death under the guillotine. That is, he was condemned to death, but escaped. The next day Robespierre, the tyrant, was himself deposed and Paine soon after regained freedom.

If Paine had not written that work he would stand today very close to the head of the class of those men who made "the United States." He was honored by Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and all the "fathers" whom the American people delight to honor now.

But, with death staring him in the face as a prisoner under the implacable Robespierre, he wrote his last words to mankind on the subject of religion, his purpose being to overthrow the power of ecclesiasticism in human affairs. He dipped his pen in lightning and wrote, in lines of fire, words that burned to the heart of every fraudulent pretense of religion in his time, words that are still burning, and the whole so-called Christian world rose in its might to denounce and destroy him!

I could string the story of his persecutions out to interminable length, if your space and patience permitted. But this I must say—If there is any truth in Mormonism, Paine was a John-the-Baptist of the new unfolding of the everlasting mind. No people on earth should be less disposed to cast odium upon the great "infidels," so-called, of the latter days, than the Mormons! For, if Mormonism has foundation in fact, every "kicker" against the idiotic theology of the "church" has been a pioneer, in the name of God, blazing the way for "the fullness of times."

CHARLES ELLIS.

### THE WORK IN WASHINGTON.

Walla Walla, Washington,

Jan. 17, 1898.

I left my home in July, 1897, to fill a mission in the state of Washington. I was appointed to preside over what was to be the Washington conference. As there were no Elders laboring here at that time, I spent a short time in Oregon. On August 13th, in company with Elder James R. Smurthwaite, I reached this city, Walla Walla, and immediately we began our labors.

The people in general are very kind to us. We meet a great many people who have been in Utah and quite a number of so-called Morrisites who generally receive us well.

Elders Amos Hatch and Joel Lewis reached here in November. Elders Lewis and Smurthwaite were assigned to labor in Whitman county, Elder Hatch remaining in the Walla Walla district.

The weather here has been very bad for the past two months. We have not had ten days of sunshine during that time. Elders B. A. Hendricks and Lewis Pond have recently arrived in this conference and begun their labors in the city of Spokane. We have six Elders here at present. They are all in good health and good spirits and have bright prospects before them.

If any of the Saints have friends or relatives in this state, please send their names and address.

G. L. BRALEY,  
AMOS HATCH.