DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH.

On July 1st of the present year the News published, in a correspondence from Elder Samuel O. Spencer, a series of questions and answers which made up an interview between Elder Spencer and others and Mr. Joseph Smith, president of the Reorganized church. The interview took place in March, at Independence, Missouri, in Mr. Lafe's house, Elder Spencer and the other missionaries having been in attendance at a conference of the Latter-day Saints held at Independence. About the 15th of July the editor of the News received the following:

LAMONI, Iowa, July 8, 1896.

Publishers Deseret News, Salt Lake City, Utah:

Gentlemen—In your issue of July 1st, you have chosen to publish Elder S. O. Spencer's report of an interview with me at Independence, Mo., March 19th, 1896.

The heading is misleading, as it implies that the questions asked by Mr. Spencer were submitted to me, being written and I replied to them in a similar way.

No questions were submitted to me nor did I know that they were in written form; nor did I either write answers, or have any of the answers submitted to me after they were written. Mr. Spencer has misrepresented me in several of the answers; and as Mr. Spencer writes you that his object in sending his records for publication was that all might "judge for themselves," I ask you for the same purpose to publish my version.

I wrote J. M. Stubbart, one of our Elders, in regard to it, and sent a copy of what I wrote him.

I am in no sense afraid of the answers I did make to Mr. Spencer's questions, as I made them, nor of the logical consequences of them; but, I regret that men who came to me in ostensible kindness, and were courteously treated, should have misrepresented me, even in the slightest.

Please publish this letter and my version of that interview and oblige,

Yours respectfully,
JOSEPH SMITH.

P. S. Mr. Spencer has taken advantage of what he stated to me was for personal information, and published without my consent.

Accompanying this was the letter referred to as sent to Mr. Stubbart, the first paragraph of which reads:

Yours of the 15th received. In reply: Messrs. S. O. Spencer, R. S. Hart, A. G. Young and W. E. Criddle were at Brother Joseph Luff's house, and Mr. Spencer did the talking. He asked me several questions, the form of which I do not remember. If he had them written I did not see them; but he certainly has not given the answers as I gave them. He had asked me for an interview, and I granted it. He brought the others with him at his own motion, and without consulting me. I had no thought he would misrepresent me. If he had the questions submitted and sat down, I did not see them; nor were his notes of what I said submitted to me for correction. I hoped he, not either of them, would go away and do about so.

Then follows a series of questions and answers, which Mr. Smith claims to be his recollection of what the conversation was. The letter closes with these words:

These men are not at liberty to use, or misuse an interview with me, which Mr. Spencer said was for their own private benefit. Besides this, the parties are bound by my absolute answer of mine to leading questions contrary to the books of the Church. Yours in haste.

Then is appended the following note:

The above is a reply of mine to Brother J. M. Stubbart, who sent me a copy of a letter purporting to have been sent by Elder W. E. Criddle of Utah. As I never saw the written questions, nor yet the answers which they have given, in writing, for examination and submission, I am not bound by them either.

The News forwarded Mr. Smith's letter and account of the interview to Elder Spencer, with the request that he present them to the Elders present on the occasion of the interview, and return them with a brief statement of the facts. As the Elders were separated in their different fields of labor, this required some time. The News editor also wrote to Mr. Smith, informing him that before the interview was published it had been verified by this paper; telling him of the reference of the complaint to Elder Spencer and his associates, and assuring him that the News has no intention of treating him either unfairly or harshly. The following came in response:

LAMONI, Iowa, July 25th, 1896.

Mr. John Q. Cannon, Salt Lake City, Utah:

Dear Sir—Yours of July 20th at hand. I do not wish to be too intrusive, but the fact that the "interview" published by you, and which is being circulated by the eldership under S. O. Spencer, does misrepresent me, I think impose on me my rights.

A proper verification of the interview would have required that Elder Joseph Luff and myself should have been permitted to see the answers, and the questions as well, before it was published. The statement that the answers were written "in the presence of all," is misleading, as it carries the idea that all, including Elder Luff and myself, knew what was written, which is not correct. Hoping for fair dealing, I am yours respectfully,

Elder Spencer and companions also forwarded to the News this statement:

KANSAS CITY, MO., July 24, 1896.

To the Editor:

Dear Sir—Yours of the 20th at hand and contents noted; said manuscript of Mr. Joseph Smith touching his version of interview, carefully perused.

The accusations and explanations made and endorsed by Mr. Smith are delivered very unbecoming his ecclesiastical station. We see no reason why he seems to deny the interview as he has already been published. He states that we had the interview for our "own private benefit."

Why should he be afraid of the world's knowing what he admitted to us in "private?"

Hope receiving your letter I have handed my journal, in which the interview is written, to Elder Eugene S. Hart, who carefully examined the same as I read your publication of it in the News, and there is no difference whatever that will change the meaning thereof. This was read in the presence of Elders W. Parys Pratt and Jos. Dennis.

We are willing under oath to affirm that the questions (excepting one asked by Elder Young) were written and sent to Elder Hart and others taken going to Mr. Luff's residence; that Mr. Joseph Smith did know that the answers were written, as Elder Spencer held his pocket pad on his knees, his footmate pen in hand, and some of the answers were read to him after they were written; especially when it was one of which he seemingly tried to evade a direct answer, as asking, "Is that the answer?" Which was to get a repeating answer. We distinctly remember the answers as to whether it was possible that an inferior was of a superior spirit, or, being one among them that were used to him.

We declare in the words of scriptures, knowing full well that no "liar" shall inherit the kingdom of God, that the answers are complete to the questions stated in said interview, entirely free from any misleading words.

And, in manner how Mr. Smith may separate together fragments of conversations of the interview, he cannot succeed in denying the answers he gave us on that occasion, and we fail to see why he should attempt it. The same afternoon of the interview, the questions and answers were read at the mission office, Kansas City, Mo., to other Elders, in the presence of those who witnessed the interview.

(Signed) SAMUEL O. SPENCER,
EUGENE S. HART,
ALONZO A. YOUNG,
W. E. CRIDDLE.

We might leave the matter here, it seems to us, to let every intelligent discriminating person judge as to the points at issue in the controversy; but Mr. Smith seems to press for more, and we will add a few words by way of review and comment. When the interview was first offered to the News for publication, it was sent, not by Elder Spencer, but by one of the other signers to the test document given. Knowing that Mr. Smith, who has many estimable qualities and for whom we have a high regard, especially because of his family associations, as well as for other reasons, had an substitute pensent for juggling and twisting of words and facts, after the fashion of some lawyers, we asked a verification of the interview, receiving the letter signed by Elder Spencer, which recited how the questions were formulated and the answers taken down, and contained an identical report of the interview, taken from Elder Spencer's journal. This we published in the News of July 1st.

Now as to Mr. Smith's accusation against the News, in his first letter for the News put the heading to the article. He says the heading is misleading, as it implied that the questions were submitted to him in writing, and replied to by him in similar way. The heading reads: "Interview with Joseph Smith. Questions submitted to and answered by him." There is not the shadow of an intimation that either questions or answers were written or were not. As whether they were or were not written, Mr. Smith's accusation that the heading is misleading is untrue; it being an illustration of the word juggling and distortion to which we have referred.

In his letter to the News Mr. Smith says:

No questions were submitted to me.

In his letter to Mr. Stubbart he says of the interview with Mr. Spencer:

He asked me several questions, the form of which I do not remember.

Now the fact whether or not questions are submitted has no dependence whatever upon the other fact as to whether or not they were written. In newspaper interviews they are generally submitted orally, and common answers are given the same way. In one letter Mr. Smith denies that they were submitted; in the other he affirms it. As a lawyer he must remember the maxim, falsa in uno falsa in omnibus. Having discredited himself as a witness in one prominently essential particular, how can he, as lawyer or juror, give credence to any part of his own testimony? The logical result of the situation is that he is an unreliable witness, judged by his own words.

On the other hand, Mr. Spencer and others state the circumstances with such minuteness of detail and certainty of knowledge in all particulars, that there is no room for question. They and the interrogatories written, in that they are uncontradicted. Mr. Smith says he did not see them. They write the answers in his presence, and read some of them to him. This is not endeavored. Mr. Smith says the written answers were not submitted to him "for correction" hence he is not bound by them. How often people could escape responsibility upon this plea! The interview was in the possession of the News a few days after it took place, while it was fresh in the minds of those present. Mr. Smith's denial of certain facts, and his recollection of what occurred, is also matter have elicited, and then is shown to be contradictory to itself.

As to the fact that Mr. Smith did not know the interview was to be published; neither did Mr. Spencer or the others, so far as the News was concerned. It was probably the nature of the answers, as: the absolute certainty of the correctness of the report, that suggested the publication. And we dissent from Mr. Smith in his conclusion that a proper modification of the interview required its submission to himself and Mr. Luff; or that there was the least advantage taken of him in publishing what he said as the official representative of the organization over which he presides; or that there was any discourtesy shown him or intended, either now or then; or that he has been misrepresented at all, so far as Elder Spencer and his associates are concerned. We do this with feelings of due consideration for the position in which he finds himself, and with a sincere desire to treat him kindly and fairly, and at the same time to ascertain truth and justice.

Parting from the subject, there are some points upon which we will agree with Mr. Smith. These are that, plain, simple and straightforward as the questions were, he was "baffled" by them; that his answers therein are "absurd" from the standpoint of the organization which he heads, but not altogether so from the ends of fact; and that his followers are not "bound" by them in the sense that he possesses any divine authority to direct those who may be preaching any principles of the Gospel. Further, we would have avoided any newspaper discussion of this character were it not that Mr. Smith insisted upon it; and we have sought to deal with the matter in a reserved way so as not to cause unnecessary heartburnings or ill will on the part of anyone.

NOT HERETICS.

Recently we have had occasion to refer to the practice of Protestant Christians to brand the doctrines of the Latter-day Saints, especially those relating to the Godhead, as gross heresies. Our opponents in other denominations assume with remarkable naivete that their position is an infallible and unassailable as an axiom, and that anyone who takes a different view must of necessity be intellectually or morally unbalanced. That was the burden of the criticism accorded Mormonism at a recent religious gathering in Hatchfield, and the same statements are made almost everywhere, where theologians discuss the subject.

From the pride shown by votaries of modern orthodoxy, one would be inclined to the belief that the harmony between that system and scripture truth is a demonstrated fact. Yet, a closer scrutiny of ecclesiastical history reveals exactly the opposite. Modern orthodoxy was cradled in the age of Origen and Augustine and nursed by ecumenical councils. It does not date back to the days of our Lord and His Apostles. It is nothing to be proud of. It is at best a substitute for that faith which distinguished the first Christians, which rested on the revealed word of Godhead was effective of a pure life, prophetic knowledge and great power. It came as an effort to fill up with heathen philosophy the supposed lack of system in the theology of primitive Christianity. The merits of it can best be estimated after a view of the time in which it was originated.

Origen is universally considered the most influential of all the theologians of the ancient church before Augustine, and the latter is said to have left an impression on Christian thought so none after him. The former found Christianity in what he considered a crude state and set about to "develop" it. He explained the relationship of the Son to the Father, laid the foundation for the theory of universal sin and the relation of that doctrine to children dying in infancy. This led him to the pre-existence of souls and the fate of mankind after death. He believed that faith was the saving principle; that knowledge rests on divine revelation; that God created matter of nothing; that Jesus was a dual being and that salvation is universal. It is plain enough that he is many things was in possession of truth, while in others he was in total darkness.

Augustine built further upon the foundations laid by Origen and in the latter theology is mainly indebted for an explanation of the necessity of infant baptism and the doctrine of Trinity. There is no doubt that Augustine had a master mind, but whether he had the Spirit of the Lord to direct his mind is a grave question even among some Protestant teachers.

It is probable, however, that the great church fathers alone would have been powerless to perpetuate their ideas had it not been for the ecumenical councils. One of these was the important one at Nice, 325, and its history is particularly instructive. At the time Constantine had succeeded in establishing himself as emperor of the west, while Licinus claimed the east. The latter was once defeated in a war and the former united the empire under his own scepter. The haughty emperor now had several of his rivals executed in true oriental style, and concluded to establish himself on the throne of Christian subjects. He found, however, that these were continually squabbling about doctrines, and so they, in order to be of any use to him, must be united, he convened the council at Nice where all controversies should be settled. Here for the first time, the state and the church met. Historians tell us that the emperor clad in purple and jewels, joined upon the 318 bishops assembled in council because of their attaching importance, at least upon the gathering as a true crumble of his magnificence. But he wanted a united church.

The matter of controversy was the Arian heresy. The famous Elder from Alexandria taught that if Jesus is the Son of God, His father must be older than He, and that consequently there must have been a time when the second person in the Deity did not exist. He further maintained that Jesus was a free agent, capable of doing wrong as well as right. Orthodoxy as represented by the majority of these Bishops condemned Arius and his doctrines. Later, however, Arius submitted a written confession of faith which the emperor declared orthodox and on the strength of which he ordered the Bishop of Constantinople to submit him to Church fellowship.

It is hard to tell what would have happened, had not Arius just then conveniently died, some say by poison. Possibly his heresy would have prevailed and Athanasius been declared the heretic.

This is a fair sample of the councils that from time to time in ecclesiastical history have directed the tide of orthodox theology. This was born in an unofficial age and often helped along by political or personal considerations. Before the light of revealed truth as before the criticism of true philosophy it cannot stand. Its exponents have, of course, a perfect right to their views, but they certainly exceed the boundaries of their moral right when in a spirit of boastfulness and from their own exclusive position, they brand as heretics those who strive to attain to truth beyond the cloudy atmosphere of ancient church fathers and ecumenical councils.

COAL MINE INSPECTION.

The question of the validity of the State coal mine inspection law has been raised and it would will be tested in the courts. The general proposition presented is that there is a discrimination against the coal industry in providing regulations therefor such as do not attach to any other industry, and which operate as an additional tax upon that one owner. One particular as to how this is done is the fee of ten dollars required for each quarterly inspection and the maps of the mine to be furnished the State. This, it is said, makes a tax of $60 to $72 to be paid to the State treasury in maps and fees, annually, which tax is not required in any other business.

The probability is that the question of constitutionality here has been brought forward as a result of the negative action of Illinois coal mine operators. Last February the mine owners of Illinois banded together to test the coal mine inspection law to that state on precisely the same grounds. The cost of inspection, etc., there is somewhat less than in Utah, ranging from $24 to $40 annually. The Illinois case is yet undetermined, so far as we have information.

About one thousand operators are affected in Illinois and about twenty-five in Utah; but few or many, the principle involved is the question. In Utah the constitutional provision differs somewhat from that of Illinois; the labor article in the Constitution of this State specially directs the Legislature to pass laws to provide for the health and safety of employes in factories, smelters and mines, and the State coal mine inspection law was passed in conformity therewith. Whether the fact that it singled out coal mines alone for inspection, and taxed fees upon the operators of such mines only, infringes on the letter or spirit of the Constitution, is one of the points the courts must decide. There seems to be no doubt, in view of the provision of the labor article referred to, that the Legislature of this State can provide for such mine inspection and regulation as it deems essential to the safety of employes therein.

LANGUAGE OF CHRIST.

The question, What language did Christ speak? is again being agitated, and Dr. Arnold Meyer, of the university of Bonn, Germany, has just issued one of the best discussions of the subject yet given to the public. A condensed translation is given in the Literary Digest, which presents a fair idea of the reasoning of the German professor. Dr. Meyer cites that the church fathers accepted the view that Jesus spoke in the language employed by Matthew in the preparation of his gospel, and which Papias declares was Hebrew; and the current opinion was that the Lord employed the Syriac as His vernacular, which term was used interchangeably with Hebrew and Chaldee. This view was questioned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Jesuits expressed the idea that "the Lord's vernacular must have been the Latin, or this was the language spoken by the saints in heaven," and the official bible of the Roman church was in that tongue; but skeptical minds insisted that the Savior spoke a mixed dialect current in Palestine, while some Protestant scholars maintained that he spoke Greek, the language of the New Testament, and others that He used pure Hebrew, which was rapidly sought in the crucible of Palestine. Dr. Meyer reports from all these views, and makes the following finding as to the result of his exhaustive research:

The facts in the case, essentially as seen in the words of the New Testament other than those, show that the Lord spoke an Aramaic language, and at this language again a different dialect. The Aramaic is a branch of the north Semitic and as such a sister tongue of the Hebrew. Long before the close of the Old Testament period the Aramaic had supplanted Hebrew in popular use in Israel and had became the language of trade and business between the peoples of Syria and countries farther east. Already a Jeremiah and an Ezekiel show the influence of this tongue; the same is true of the later Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and especially Ezra and Daniel, both of which contain portions written in this dialect. During the Maccabean period the Aramaic had virtually supplanted Hebrew in Israel. It is used in the Talmud, and its general use is reported by Philo, a contemporary of St. Paul, and by the historian Josephus, who calls it the "language of the fatherland."

Only in one respect the old Hebrew maintained its hold. It was the language of the sacred writings of Israel and the official tongue of their Scriptures. In the synagogue their books were read in the original Hebrew, but were interpreted to the people through Aramaic paraphrases called Targumim. Testimonies abound and agree that such was the case regularly, so that the common people could no longer understand the sacred tongue of their fathers and of their Scriptures. The current language of the day was accordingly the Aramaic, and this language beyond any reasonable doubt was the one employed by Christ in His discourses with His disciples and with the people. The Hebrew as such was known only to any to the learned, but was not understood thoroughly by the common people.

Dr. Meyer brings the New Testament as a witness to the correctness of his conclusions, citing the fact that therein the names of persons taken from other sources than the Greek are Aramaic in form and sound, as are also the terms found in 1 Cor. xvi: 22, the citation from the Psalms spoken on the cross, and others. From these, and the conclusions known to exist in Palestine at the time of the Savior's ministry there, Dr. Meyer reasons that it is only fair to conclude that Christ spoke the language of His people; that in fact it is even probable we can conclude that of this Aramaic He spoke the Galilean dialect. At that time three dialects of this tongue were used in Palestine, namely, the Jerusalem, the Samaritan, and the Galilean dialect. Peter, in the night when Christ was before Pilate, was betrayed by the fact that he spoke the Galilean tongue. It is well-known that the Galilean was the mother-tongue of Jesus. Just what the exact form of this dialect was is learned from the so-called "Jerusalem Talmud," written in the third and fourth centuries after Christ, in the city of Tiberias on the sea of Galilee. This work is in the popular tongue of Galilee, and is the only work extant in the exact dialect spoken by our Lord during career on earth, as claimed in Dr. Meyer's work.

The author seems to present a very strong case; and when it is remembered that as a student the young Nazarene probably was trained in the Hebrew for the reading of the Jewish sacred writings, with which He was thoroughly acquainted, it is easier than otherwise to believe that He conversed with the people in the language most familiar to them, as did also His disciples. A liability of the supposition that He used some other language known only to the educated would be that the force of His sayings would have been lost to a great extent upon "the common people," which was not the case, for they "heard Him gladly."

"REMEMBER THE Sabbath day to keep it holy," does not mean to go fishing, hunting, bathing, etc., on that day, but to observe it by doing good—by keeping it as the Lord has commanded. This is a lesson that Church members do not always remember, hence they are not always in full accord with their profession as Christians. The Sabbath may be observed in the country or in the town, in the wild canyon or the crowded city; but only by conduct and association that comport with its character as a day of sacred rest.

IF GENERAL WEYLER did as stated in a Havana dispatch, ordered an American to be wrapped in the Stars and Stripes and burned to death, he ought to receive a cooler shock than the Cuban revolutionists have yet given him. The United States should not be excited until the truth or falsity of that report is determined. The Spaniards or other official who does not have a secret regard for the American flag should be promptly executed up to the point that he will do so.

AT a recent meeting of dentists in Switzerland Dr. Rosse, who for several years has investigated the various causes of the decay of teeth, spoke of the results of his researches. He maintained that in the districts of Germany where the people almost exclusively eat coarse rye bread, diseased teeth are the exception. It would appear, therefore, that the suspicion long entertained as to the effect of wheat bread upon the teeth is not too well grounded.

THE NEW YORK Mail and Express seeks to enlist the sympathy of the women against free silver by telling them that prosperity will cost double as much as now if the silver cause wins. That is just what the women want; there is no style in having cheap money; it makes them seem poorly. Besides, a woman would much rather pay the double price when she has twice as much money to spend.

A MADRID dispatch sent an inquiry is to be made as to how the Spanish in Cuba allowed the revolutionists to pierce its trenches. That will be known when it is learned what impelled the Cubans to make the attempt. The Spanish troops themselves could not help it.

POLITICAL CONVENTIONS in Utah must early nominations for State and district officers this year between September 5 and October 4, to the Secretary of State, in order to get them on the official ticket on election day.

LI HUNG CHANG is the representative of China, the highest official in the empire except the emperor of the three; and the United States did a very proper thing to the official reception given to him on his arrival in New York.

THE NEWS has received, through the courtesy of Hon. C. E. Allen, a copy of the report of the director of the mint for 1895.

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