

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

Twenty-eight years ago today the DESERT NEWS began the publication of its daily edition. That was a long time ago in the history of this Territory—more than half of the time these valleys have been occupied by white men. On the 21st of November, 1867, there were no railways here, and it was not until the next year that the great transcontinental line made its way into Utah. The development in this one respect since then is suggestive of the vast changes which have come over Utah to the period named, and with which the NEWS has kept pace as a faithful chronicler of events and an earnest worker for the welfare of the people of this inter-mountain region. Glancing over the record of the past, it is with unshaken confidence in the glorious destiny of the dwellers in these mountain vales that the EVENING NEWS starts upon its twenty-ninth volume; and it anticipates that another twenty-eight years will record in this section of the Republic a grander development in prosperity and power than ever has been witnessed in a like period elsewhere in the nation.

MILITARY TRAINING IN SCHOOLS.

For some time there has been in different parts of the United States an agitation having for its purpose the creation of a public sentiment favoring the introduction of a system of military training in the common schools of the nation; and in these days when even facts of little merit are caught up and pushed to the fore I would not be surprising if some educators of prominence should fall in with this idea of a military schooling which has as much to back it under some circumstances. With this fact in view it is not amiss to consider carefully the advisability of such training in the light of its object and effects and the condition and destiny of the Republic.

The question at issue in this matter is not such as to call for elaborate discussion, since it involves but two simple propositions: 1—Whether the maintenance of the Union requires constant application of the strong military arm to internal affairs; and 2—Whether a large army and navy and a warlike policy are necessary to preserve this nation from foreign interference and overthrow.

The first of these propositions will be successfully negated by every patriotic citizen, who will readily discern that it is the complete immunity from such influences as are wielded through a large standing army that enables the people to exercise all the functions of freemen. Hence the nation's internal affairs need no regulation such as flow from giving to the minds of its youth a special military cast.

As to the second proposition, there are some people who affect to believe that the United States

is in an unsafe condition in its international relations because its armament is comparatively small. Such an opinion cannot be based upon the past experience of the United States, since that affords the strongest suggestion to the contrary. This government has followed a peace policy that has proved a tower of strength in the midst of the family of nations. Its attitude in this respect has relieved it of the bickering and quarreling that always mark governments which possess great active military strength; and because of the reputation growing out of this policy, any nation that would press to a violent settlement a dispute with the United States would be by common consent looked upon as going far beyond the limits of propriety before "good-natured Brother Jonathan" would square off at it, and thus would be placed in a light before others that no government finds to be desirable. Besides, nations readily recognize the rule that when a peace-loving man does fight he fights hard; and there is no disputing the fact that when Uncle Sam is in a usual he is there in dead earnest. His military enthusiasm is not worn out by internal abuse, and when it is aroused no necessary ingredient is lacking; hence no nation is in a hurry to assail him. People who talk of other nations being more than a match for the United States because of their strong military equipment forget or ignore the fact that any cause which would precipitate an international conflict with our government as one party would bring to the latter's support a nation of fighting freemen instead of armies of hirelings; and to give citizen soldiery the requisite training it is not necessary to go back to the age at which our boys attend the public schools. Hence in this there is no demand for a military training for children in those schools.

Thus a necessity for introducing any such system of instruction may be readily understood not to exist. A further glance at the suggestion for military training, however, reveals the fact that it would be a direct and serious menace to a continuation of the republican form of government in this land. The United States has grown and prospered beyond all other nations because of its peace policy, which has freed the minds and energies of its people to something beside the art of war as a leading feature in their accomplishments. The awakening of a strong military ardor in that permanent form which would follow the school instruction proposed would change the bent of those minds and energies into harmony with itself, and the destiny of the Republic could be pointed out in that military despotism where the American freedom of today, even yet too restricted in some respects, would be wholly a thing of the past.

We can see now how easily the average youth becomes "soldier-struck" through the glamor of heroism and the display which attend military life. But consider that under the proposed instruction a desire for that life would be instilled into the boys of the

whole nation from their earliest years, and what do we have as a result? Nothing short of a military disciplining when those boys become the controlling factor in the nation's affairs; and with the inauguration thereof, goodbye to the Republic that has found its wonderful prosperity in a policy of peace and has achieved its greatest victories on the plane of good will to man!

By the very nature of men, military training in the public schools would bring soldier life into prominence as the acme of youthful ambition, and the equilibrium of the nation as it has been and is would be destroyed. There is abundant opportunity for instruction in the art of war, so far as that instruction is of value in this nation, after the age at which our boys leave the public schools, and this opportunity probably should be taken due advantage of. But every thoughtful person who considers carefully the situation, and who desires the perpetuation of American institutions as they have been known from the founding of the Republic, will set his face firmly against military instruction in the public schools, for the reason that it would inject into the minds of the youth ideas that at such a time of life would be productive of disastrous results individually and nationally. We have no need for, and do not want, a nation whose youth glory in the achievements of a military career beyond that which is found in the peaceful avocations of life.

MISAPPLICATION OF PROPHECY.

In an interview with an Adventist preacher published in yesterday's NEWS the views of the religious body he represents on the present trouble in Turkey are given. We do not know whether it is an authorized statement of those views or only the gentleman's individual opinion, but anyone who reads the dispatch relating to the matter will notice many inconsistencies in the exegesis. In the first place historically the Ottoman power and the Mohammedan power are two distinct appearances on the stage of the world and cannot be considered identical. Then the "kings of the east" cannot be France, Russia, Prussia and England, unless "east" means west and north. That the ideas are confused is further evident by the suggestion that England possibly is "the king of the south," too, as well as "the king of the east." There are other equally glaring inconsistencies.

The rule laid down by Isaac Newton, not to study prophecy as if it were intended to make every student a prophet, is too often violated. Hence come misstatements of times and seasons and places which no man can know except by special revelation interpreting that which is written. Hence also the discrepancy in which the written word has been held by scoffers who have noticed the failures of apparently devout men to grasp the real meaning of the word. The prophetic writings occupy a similar position as that of a "light in a dark place." It may guide the wanderer to its presence, although darkness intervenes between