

THE DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

THE DESERET ALPHABET—ITS ADVANTAGES.

Any system that will have the effect to simplify the present method of educating the young ought to be hailed by mankind as an invaluable boon. Under our present mode of instruction it requires years of close and persistent application on the part of children to acquire even a moderate knowledge of the ordinary branches of an English education. This is principally attributable to our faulty and defective spelling. It is not unfrequently the case that after years have been spent in acquiring a knowledge of orthography, writers are under the necessity of having recourse to their dictionaries to satisfy themselves respecting the spelling of a word. And as for pronunciation, comparatively few men, who do not spend years in study, ever master it sufficiently to be free from faults. To acquire a sufficient knowledge of our language to be able to speak, read and write it correctly is an immense task for the memory, and strains it more than we can well realize.

There are serious and well-founded objections to sending young children constantly to school. Many constitutions have received permanent injury, and many lives have been sacrificed, through the anxiety of parents to educate their children. Yet, in many instances, if they are not kept steadily at school while they are young, they grow up illiterate and ignorant, for by the time they are old enough to go to school every day, and study hard without fear of physical injury, their labor is wanted by their parents in other directions. The introduction of the Deseret Alphabet will remedy the evils of our system of orthography, and facilitate, to a wonderful extent, the acquirement of education by the children. By its aid, in a very brief period, any person will be able to learn to read. It will also bring about a uniformity of pronunciation, for every word will be spelled as it is pronounced, and *vice versa*. If a person understands the sounds of a language, by the aid of the Deseret Alphabet he can write it correctly; for the characters of that alphabet represent the sounds.

A few moments' reflection will convince one what a great advantage such a system presents, and what time it will save the learner. Instead of spending years in learning to spell and read, it will only require, at the farthest, a few weeks. We are pleased to have it in our power to announce that there is every prospect that this system will soon be generally introduced into our schools. David O. Calder, Esq., was sent East last Spring, as the Agent of the Chancellor and Regents of the Deseret University, to make arrangements for the manufacture of type and the publication of primary school books in the characters of the Deseret Alphabet. He has been very successful in accomplishing this business, and, as the fruits of his labor, he has sent on a specimen copy of the primer he has got out. It contains 36 pages printed in the new alphabet. The characters, to a person unaccustomed to them, may look strange; but to the eye to which they are familiar they are beautiful. Their chief beauty is their simplicity. A person of ordinary intellect, by applying himself to their study for a few hours, would be able to read a letter or book written or printed in them.

The introduction of these books into our schools will be a highly important step in the right direction. The thinking, liberal portion of educated men in America and England have long felt the necessity of a change in our system of orthography. They have in some instances advocated such a reform, and steps have been taken to make it effective by publishing papers and books in phonetic characters. Many, however, while freely admitting that such a reform would be very desirable, have despaired about it ever being accomplished. To them the obstacles in the way of its universal adoption have seemed insurmountable.

If our community were situated as others are, it might be Quixotic to attempt the introduction of this reform among us with the hope of carrying it into practical operation. But our position is unique. We are united. This system can be made universal among us with but little trouble. We have effected important reforms in other directions, and done so successfully, and we can also make the correction of the orthography now in vogue a success.

It is a labor worthy of us and our destiny. Some have an idea that if a child be educated in the system of spelling and writing by sound, it will be a detriment to it in learning the present system. But those most familiar with phonotypy assert that it is an aid to a child, if familiar with that system, in learning our present orthography; of course the Deseret Alphabet holds the same relation to our present system that phonotypy does; the principle of the two is the same; the characters only are different.

It will probably be advantageous to children to have some knowledge imparted to them of the present system, even after the Deseret alphabet is generally adopted; but with us this should be a matter of secondary consideration. If they could find no better reading than much of the miserable trash that now obtains extensive circulation, it would be better, in our opinion, if they never learned to read the present orthography. In such a case ignorance would be blissful. Our own literature would be open to them, and though it might be limited, the minds of those who perused it would be more healthy and strong, than if they had a wider range of reading of an inferior character. The greatest evils which now flourish, and under which Christendom groans, are directly traceable to the licentiousness of the press. It sends forth a prurient and dangerous literature, which corrupts and distorts the minds and judgments of men. It is our aim to check its demoralizing tendencies, and in no way can we better do this, than by making the knowledge of the Deseret alphabet general and by training the children in its use.

THADDEUS STEVENS.

The telegraph this afternoon announces the death of Thaddeus Stevens, an account of which will be found in the dispatches. This veteran leader of the Republican party was born in Caledonia County, Vermont, April 4, 1793; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1814; during that year removed to Pennsylvania; studied law and taught in an academy at the same time; in 1816 was admitted to the bar in Adams County; in 1833 was elected to the State Legislature, and also in 1834, 1835, 1837, and 1841; in 1838 was elected a member to the Convention to revise the State Constitution; in 1838 was appointed a Canal Commissioner; in 1842 he removed to Lancaster; and in 1848 was elected a Representative, from Pennsylvania, to the Thirty-first Congress, also to the Thirty-second; and in 1858 was re-elected to the Thirty-sixth Congress, and also to the Thirty-seventh, during which he was Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, having previously served on various important committees. In 1862 he was re-elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress, again serving as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means. He was also a Delegate to the Baltimore Convention of 1864.

REMARKS

By President BRIGHAM YOUNG,
made in Mill Creek Ward meeting
house, Sunday, July 26th, 1868.

REPORTED BY EDWARD L. SLOAN.

From my earliest labors in the ministry I have taken truth as my text; but I will refer this morning to the words on one of the banners here, "Education is our motto." This will be my text. We are here that we may learn to improve. My inquiry is, How can I do the most good to my fellow beings? What can I say to them; what can I do; how shall I walk before them; how shall I commune with them to do the greatest possible good to the human family? I am so weak that when I give instructions to my brethren and sisters it seems but a very feeble effort, when the mind is open to behold the great things of God, the riches of eternity; to behold that which is understood by angels and by those made perfect.

My first remarks will be concerning such exercises as we have seen here this morning. The Latter-day Saints have many pastimes, and they enjoy themselves in social society with one another. Yet I think, in my reflections, that we should have an increase—and we are having partially an increase—of recreation for our youth. We have very few holidays. When the 4th of July comes, we have our amusements and exercises. When the 24th of July comes we hail it as the anniversary of a day of deliverance; a day of peace and joy to the Latter-day Saints, in finding the peaceful valleys of these mountains, where we can rest and gather the people together, and enjoy the privilege of

serving God without any to molest or make us afraid. These two days with Christmas and New Year's, are about all the holidays we have, that we notice at all. On reflection, I have come to the conclusion that it would be better if we would pay more attention to these public exercises, and direct the minds of our children by observing them, taking a course to have them avoid getting into the habit of drinking and every kind of rowdyism, and other things that are unbecoming; and in all of our amusements have objects of improvement that are worthy of pursuit. I think we are improving a little in this respect; but more of us should take an increased interest in it. We should have more of the children attend Sunday School, and the teachers should continually place objects before them that will lead them to study to improve in their manners, in their words, in their looks and in their behavior; and that will guide their minds aright. You will find we can place before them objects that will do them much good in their thoughts and reflections, that will improve their young and tender minds, and have an influence upon their future lives for good; and we can thus bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by taking a course to lead their minds.

The brethren here have caught us as they generally do. I had no thought of any person coming to meet us, nor of seeing the schools lining the road. I thank them for their good feelings to the elders of Israel. But is there any good in it? Yes. It attracts the attention of the young people—that is, I mean all under a hundred years old—elevates their feelings, and is calculated to induce reflections and thoughts of a life that is useful; and they will think, when are we going to have another meeting? when is brother Brigham coming to see us again; with brother Wells and brother Cannon, and others?—we cannot say brother Kimball, for he has gone to reap the reward of his labors. It will have the effect of drawing them to good, and they will follow after good continually. Is there any harm in Sunday School parties? No; it is one of the most harmless kinds of enjoyment, when conducted aright. If they wish to dance, let them dance; let them talk and play; but not do any wrong. They must not get angry with each other; and if any do wrong instruct them to do right. If our children are thus taught, they will be patterns of piety and their conduct will be worthy of imitation.

I would be very pleased to learn that your Bishop, brother Miller, was preparing a place for parties; with a little pond to float boats on, and other means of enjoyment, where the people could assemble to have their exercises. Get the young minds to follow after you in these things, and they will follow after you in every precept that is good. And I would like to hear of other Bishops taking steps to prepare suitable places for the same purpose.

We are gathered here from various nations of the earth; and many of us have been in conditions of society where we have been wanting in many privileges which others enjoy. The people come here and their feelings are united directly, which is a positive proof that there is something in our belief more than there is in the beliefs that are recognized in the world. They come here and try to be one immediately, and to amalgamate their feelings. We see this, and it is encouraging; and we see our prominent men leading out and directing the minds of those from the eastern and those from the western world, and teaching them never to do a wrong, never to do evil; and, by example, to beautify themselves and their places, and everything around them. This is good, for in it we do no wrong; we do not do anything by it to injure our feelings or the feelings of others, nor to grieve our spirits; but we do that which will increase beauty and excellence among the people. In this the Lord is well pleased. For the sake of our children, for the sake of the youth of our land, I am pleased, every time I travel, to see this manifestation of respect for the elders of Israel.

We wish to improve. I will ask a question with regard to knowledge and wisdom and understanding and all the blessings of Heaven bestowed upon the people, and it is this: Who are deserving of a good name? The man and the woman who seek to know and understand the mind and will of God and to carry it out in their lives, or those who are slothful and who seek to live by what they call faith alone? I think we would decide that those who manifest by their works that they seek to do the

will of the Lord are more acceptable before Him than those who live by faith alone. I believe the Latter-day Saints are the best people on the earth of whom we have any knowledge. Still, I believe that we are, in many things, very negligent, slothful and slow to obey the words of the Lord. Many seem to act upon the faith that God will sustain us instead of our trying to sustain ourselves. We are frightened at seeing the grasshoppers coming and destroying our crops. We pray to the Lord and try to exercise faith that He may remove these devouring insects. We got along very well in the first part of the season, and our crops looked beautiful. But how has it been for the last few days? I can understand your feelings by my own. A week ago yesterday I went through here on my way to Provo, and everything looked promising. Yesterday, when I returned, fields were stripped, young orchards were stripped of the leaves, and the evidences of destruction were to be seen around. Some try to exercise faith and ask the Lord to remove this destructive power. I remember saying in the School of the Prophets, that I would rather the people would exercise a little more sense and save means to provide for themselves, instead of squandering it away and asking the Lord to feed them. In my reflections I have carried this matter a considerable length. I have paid attention to the counsel that has been given me. For years past it has been sounded in my ears, year after year, to lay up grain, so that we might have an abundance in the day of want. Perhaps the Lord would bring a partial famine on us; perhaps a famine would come upon our neighbors. I have been told that He might bring just such a time as we are now having. But suppose I had taken no heed to this counsel, and had not regarded the coming time, what would have been my condition to-day.

View the actions of the Latter-day Saints on this matter, and their neglect of the counsel given; and suppose the Lord would allow these insects to destroy our crops this season and the next, what would be the result? I can see death, misery and want on the faces of this people. But some may say, "I have faith the Lord will turn them away." What ground have we to hope this? Have I any good reason to say to my Father in heaven, "Fight my battles," when He has given me the sword to wield, the arm and the brain that I can fight for myself? Can I ask Him to fight my battles and sit quietly down waiting for Him to do so? I cannot. I can pray the people to hearken to wisdom, to listen to counsel; but to ask God to do for me that which I can do for myself is preposterous to my mind. Look at the Latter-day Saints. We have had our fields laden with grain for years; and if we had been so disposed, our bins might have been filled to overflowing, and with seven years' provisions on hand we might have disregarded the ravages of these insects, and have gone to the cañon and got our lumber, procured the materials, and built up and beautified our places, instead of devoting our time to fighting and endeavoring to replace that which has been lost through their destructiveness. We might have made our fences, improved our buildings, beautified Zion, let our ground rest, and prepared for the time when these insects would have gone. But now the people are running distracted here and there. I do not wish to condemn them. I wish all the justification that can be brought to them. But I look at them as they are. They are in want and in trouble, and they are perplexed. They do not know what to do. They have been told what to do, but they did not hearken to this counsel.

I have never promised a famine to the Latter-day Saints, if we will do half right. You have never heard it drop from my lips that a famine would come upon this people. There never will, if we will only do half right, and we expect to do better than that. There is not another people on the earth whose faith and works are directed for the accomplishment of good like the Latter-day Saints. But we do not obey counsel as we should. Yet when we look at them and at others on the face of the earth, we have reason to say we are proud of the Latter-day Saints. But are we all we should be? No. We must learn to listen to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit, and the counsels of the servants of God, until we come to the unity of the faith. If we had obeyed counsel we would have had granaries to-day, and they would have been full of grain; and we would have had wheat and oats and barley for ourselves and for our animals, to last us for years. The people have also been counseled to take their straw and stack it up, making nice beautiful ricks of it. You may see the day your cattle