

W. H. Mills, referred to one locality on the Po river in Italy where, he said, 4,000,000 people were enabled to make independent livings on only 5,000 acres of soil by the judicious use of irrigation. He also stated that in California there were 40,000,000 acres of arable land and a total population of but 1,500,000 people. "Think," he said, "of what that land could be made to produce if properly worked."

This again brings forward the oft repeated assertion that we in Utah do not yet know half the possibilities of a thorough irrigation system. But we are drawing nearer to the proper comprehension thereof; and as the increase of population will require more intense farming, the value of fertilization and irrigation will be more generally understood. At the same time, it is well to remember in the discussion of irrigation problems that general rules for the application of water in agriculture and horticulture are difficult to formulate, for the reason that much depends on local conditions, and what would be too little water in one place for a given acreage would be too much in another; the same is true in other respects as to the application of water to crops, there being necessary a great dependence on the cultivator's careful judgment and experience.

#### DR. LE PLONGEON AND ANCIENT AMERICA.

Readers of the NEWS will remember that a few months ago we gave an advance notice of Dr. Le Plongeon's book of travels and explorations in Central America. The work has just been issued. It deals largely with the explorer's travels in Yucatan, where a close study was made of the ancient hieroglyphics found there. From an private letter from Elder Joseph A. Anderson, formerly of the NEWS composing room and now on a mission to the Eastern States, we learn that Elder Samuel W. Richards, president of the Eastern States mission, paid a visit to Dr. Le Plongeon in Brooklyn on April 14, and had an interview with him on his travels.

The letter describes Dr. Le Plongeon as a very pleasant man to converse with; "is about five feet five inches in height, with a long white beard, and very little hair on the top of his head; he is heavy built, with a long body and short legs; says he is a free thinker and is independent; he is not a Christian, does not believe in any religion, and hates all Christendom as far as religion is concerned." The letter then says Le Plongeon is a great admirer of Ingersoll; that he maintains that Christ was not a Christian, and bases his assertion on the claim that "the Christians of today do not teach the same doctrine that He taught; that after His crucifixion the Christians persecuted the true followers of Christ;" and he claims that Jesus came to earth to fill a mission just as many great men, but will not concede that He was greater than other reformers. The letter also states:

Dr. Le Plongeon claims to have traveled with President John Taylor in Europe, and informed us that he corresponded with him until a short time be-

fore his death, in 1887; he thinks a great deal of President Taylor.

We are further informed that the veteran explorer declined to enter into any discussion as to the divinity of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, or to listen to any evidence thereon. The letter continues:

Dr. Le Plongeon quotes from the Bible and Book of Mormon in his work, but does not believe in any kind of religious faith. He claims his work to be plain facts, as he has studied them out by his learning, and presents them as they actually exist. He says he is able and ready to prove that the first habitation of man was the American continent, call it the Garden of Eden or whatever you like. He has some excellent engravings of ancient ruins and wall paintings found in South America, and says he is able to interpret the majority of them correctly, although some he is unable to decipher at present.

He admits that his work, which has just been published, corroborates a great deal of the Book of Mormon, but will not say that the Book of Mormon is a correct history of the people of ancient America. He tells an incident about the Rev. Dr. Lamb paying a visit to him. "Lamb," said he, "claimed to be a Christian, but in his remarks about Mormonism he became so abusive that I was compelled to inform him that I did not even believe that he was a Christian, and was under the painful necessity of requesting him to leave my house. Thus ended my interview with the Rev. Lamb, once a minister in Salt Lake City."

From the forecast of what Dr. Le Plongeon's book contains it could be easily seen that it was a work of great interest to those who have given attention to the history of ancient America.

#### OF GENERAL APPLICATION.

A NEWS subscriber, writing from Victor, Ravalli county, Montana, says that a preacher there has been asserting that the sixth verse of the seventeenth chapter of Jeremiah refers to the people of Utah and not to the Jews; our correspondent informed her family that the preacher made a misapplication, and asks the NEWS's opinion.

The lady assuredly is right, as any person examining the text can readily see. The words of the Prophet from the fifth to the eighth verses in that chapter apply a principle which reaches to people generally. The language used is:

5. Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

6. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

7. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

8. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Those who depart from the Lord and trust in the arm of flesh are surely like a heath of shrub in the desert that does not see or receive when good comes, because it is withered and parched.

But the attempt to make Utah out as being the "heath in the desert" for such a comparison is too absurd for serious consideration; it would be much more reasonable to say that this State is meant in the eighth verse—a tree by the waters whose leaf is green and is not destroyed by heat, and whose seasons of drought do not cause a cessation of yielding fruit because the system of irrigation in vogue renders drought of rain measurably ineffective to destroy. It is inconsistent, however, to say that in the comparison made there is particular reference to any locality; at the time, a lesson was to be taught to the Jews, and a simile so plain they could not mistake it was presented before them; it is good for any other people on the same lines. So far as Utah is concerned the historical fact is that the people trusted in the Lord and have realized the precise results illustrated in the eighth verse as consequent upon implicit confidence in Jehovah. The preacher referred to made a most unhappy reference for himself, as would have been shown at the time if anyone had taken the trouble to call him down to existing conditions here. ;

#### THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

A notable gathering in the interest of peace on earth was that held at Washington this week. No matter what the immediate result of the proceedings may be, ultimately the cause will be strengthened thereby. Efforts in behalf of that which is true and good and which tends to the furtherance of human progress never are in vain. They are felt in ever widening circles, gradually accomplishing their work.

The pages of history give abundant evidence of the fact that throughout all ages the almost unanimous sentiment of mankind regarding war has been that it is, if an evil at all, an unavoidable one, something in the line of earthquake, cyclones or epidemics. In accordance with this view history has turned around the wars of the world and made the great warriors its central figures. There is now a decided change in this respect. Thousands in every country look upon wars as an artificial evil and the glory of heroes as, consequently, not all that it once was, in popular estimation. It is felt that the killing of human beings on the fields of battle, the crushing of tender hearts, the desolation of homes and the ruthless destruction of the sweet fruits of patient labor in the quarrels of nations are indicative of a condition of barbarism from which mankind must be lifted up. Progress in the right direction has been made by the consolidation of families and tribes into nations, by which feuds and tribal wars had to give room for a peaceful settlement of disputes. But the final goal is the combination of nations into the brotherhood of mankind. This accomplished, peace will prevail.

Those actively engaged in the movement for international arbitration look for great results in the next generation, and with much reason. The children are apt to receive the new light and be guided by it when on them will rest the duty of carrying on the affairs of the world. Among them are future states-