DESERET EVENING NEWS.

Saturday, October 1, 1898

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All communications should be addressed to

DESERET NEWS COMPANY.

T. G. WEBBER.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will convene in the Tabernacle on Thursday morning, October 6th, 1898, at 10 o'clock a. m. Officers and members of the Church are invited to be present.

LORENZO SNOW,
GEO. Q. CANNON,
JOS. F. SMITH,
First Presidency.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

The semi-annual conference of the Sunday schools of the Latter-day Saints will be held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday evening, October 9, 1898, at 7 o'clock. A full representation of officers and workers is requested, and all interested in the Sunday school cause are invited.

GEORGE Q. CANNON,
GEORGE GODDARD,
KARL G. MAESER,
General Superintendency.

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Recently an attack has been made on the Book of Mormon from a somewhat unique point of view. It has been argued that because the translation did not appear in the most elegant English language, but, on the contrary, contained grammatical errors, therefore it could not be given through inspiration. Divine inspiration, it is claimed, would not only exclude every possible error, but produce a perfect work, as judged by classical standards.

It would seem a little late in the day to urge such an objection, in view of the fact that thousands—and among them men entitled to be regarded as scholars—have accepted the Book of Mormon as being all that is claimed for it, with full knowledge of its contents and peculiarity of style. Common sense and regard for truth would suggest the propriety of giving due consideration to this fact in a discussion of the authenticity of the record.

The question involved is an old one, and not upon which various opinions have been expressed. It is this, whether when the Almighty selects a human instrument through which to communicate with mankind, the individual so chosen, while under the special divine influence, loses all voluntary action or not. This was the view held among the ancient papists as well as the ancient Jews. The five Christian authors who hold to this point, but with the Reformation it was found necessary to examine the doctrine of inspiration closely, both on account of the claims of papacy and the claims of the Reformers that all Scripture are the ultimate authority.

Some arrived at the conclusion that the divine Spirit dictated the sacred Scriptures word for word, as we have them in the original languages. But this theory has not found favor. It has been shown to be inconsistent with facts and with the claims of the inspired writers themselves. We are not aware that the Prophet Joseph ever claimed for the translation of the Book of Mormon any other kind of divine inspiration than that which guided the ancient Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles when they communicated the will of God to men. This the sensitivity of his mission are sometimes apt to lose sight of.

With regard to the ancient Scriptures, it is perfectly clear that the writers, while under the divine influence, were allowed the full use of their own faculties, their mental peculiarities, their own amount of knowledge and modes of thinking. We find the sacred writers engaged in "diligent research." We find them give different accounts of the same events; they quote from inspired authors and even from uninspired documents; diversity of style, arising from differences in social surroundings or educational influences, is noticeable throughout; even peculiarisms and barbarisms are found in the sacred writings of the Bible. This is positive proof that the mental faculties of the authors were not removed and divine functions substituted while under divine influence; it is a proof that God simply made use of the powers with which His servants were endowed, when it was His infinite pleasure to communicate with man in their way.

And how could it be otherwise? When the word of the Lord came to the ancient servants with a command to write, this did not mean that the Lord was to supply miraculously the writing materials, making a good pen out of one already unfit for use, nor did He guide the hand that wrote to the effect that a bad handwriting became a perfect specimen of penmanship. As little did He miraculously guard against grammatical errors. What He did was that He enlightened the minds of His servants to exhibit to the truths He desired to communicate to man and entrusted to them to give this one of which they were the guardians. Their knowledge, their mental faculties, their accomplishments were at the service of the Divine Master, that is, they were inspired.

If we remember what divine inspiration is as near to the sacred writers of the Bible, there can be no reasonable objection to the alleged imperfections of the Book of Mormon translation given through the Prophet Joseph. This was done by the gift of the Almighty operated through him in the same manner as through Isaiah, Ezekiel, John or Paul. They, he at the time he was chosen as translator of the Book of Mormon, stands among the noble assembly of inspired men as the illiterate youth does not in any way lessen the immense value of the work he brought to light, when under divine influence. On the contrary, the very peculiarities are one proof of its truth. If in the lately fabricated from the shores of Galilee, whose rural dialect was a matter of contempt to the scribes of their age, we can see the exalted Apostles of the Lamb of God; if in the carpenter's son of Nazareth, who died as a malefactor on a cross, faith can behold the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it is a small matter to accept knowledge in the Mormon boy, Joseph, a servant of the Most High.

A DREARY DAY.

The snow king began his reign rather earlier than usual this year—October 1—although it has snowed in the part of Utah as early as the 20th of September. It should be remembered that our altitude is somewhat above the average and we are closely bordered in to lofty mountain ranges, from the peaks of some of which the snow has never disappeared to this generation at least, and perhaps never will be entirely effaced, at least so long as earthly conditions remain as at present. Under such circumstances a variance of a month or even more from the normal row and then roof occasion no surprise.

Speculations as to the conditions likely to prevail during the coming winter are now in order. Some of those who claim to have "signs" prophesy a moderate temperature as winters go, with an abundance of snow. This is welcome information, if information it be, embracing as it certainly would be an augury of another beautiful harvest next year. But having such conclusions upon what we are having now would be a rather idle proceeding. This kind of thing at this season is never long-winded; it is only a blizzard which, according to precedents, will soon wear itself out, with the chance of the weather following and continuing for a month or more. Still it is pretty uncomfortable today without a fire indoors or an overcoat outside, and we may fairly regard this as a sort of "curtain raiser" for the principal performance which follows hard upon and is likely to have a run reaching up and over into the time when the roses bloom again.

LET US BE JUST.

So little has been heard of Admiral Montijo lately that some people have measurably forgotten about him. It will be remembered that a dispatch appeared some time ago in these columns saying that there was a Republican on the part of the Spanish authorities to court martial him for cowardice at the battle of Manila bay, where his whole fleet of eleven vessels was sent to the bottom. At that time the "News" took occasion to say a word for him and show by the record that not only did Montijo not act timorously or backwardly in that terrific engagement, but exactly the reverse. The admiral has recently made a report of the engagement, which has been received and published by the navy department. He is held in the highest esteem by Admiral Dewey, and the latter is the last person who would bestow unmeasured praise upon a person or even one who was deficient in courage.

Speaking of the report, that exceedingly up-to-date and war illustrating paper, Collier's Weekly, says Montijo's language is concise, pointpicken, unadulterated. Behind it whose reads may see the picture of a brave foe, the figure of a gallant old sailor fighting coolly, determinedly, never despairingly; firing his guns until there are no gunners left to fire them; sending when his ship is shot from under him to another; exposing the hull of shell with the few canvas that remain undamaged still, encouraging his personnel; directing rescue; retiring to the last, meeting while his little squadron goes to the bottom about him, and, at the end, when submitted himself, retreating coolly, yet as a lion retreats, his face to the foe. Cowards himself could not have done better and some cattle deserters to that hero, might not have done as well. The Weekly concludes that it is men like these and courage like these, the royal grit of them, their others to do or die, the fashion in which they front death and defeat, that should enable us to discover in Spain some of the inner of the glamor she has lost."

"The Spanish soldiers and their commanders have had misfortunes enough in the war without bandying them with false responsibility of even withholding merited praise. It is all the more brave and gloty in our own favor that our opponent is so cowardly and despicable. Montijo, Pavia, Toral and many others fought as brilliantly and as bravely as any men in the positions ever fought, and although deserted, the victors in either case will lend whatever full back Spaniard may claim fighting."

THE DREYFUS CASE AGAIN.

The situation in France is regarded as alarming on account of the expected new revelations and developments in the Dreyfus affair. The army chiefs threaten a coup d'etat if the case is reopened, but nevertheless this is to be done, and the question naturally is, what next? Will the army revolt? Will the people side with the army or with the colonel? Will Dreyfus ever be allowed to return to France?

As will be remembered, it is now about four years since Captain Dreyfus, an artillery officer of Jewish extraction, was convicted on a charge of treason and condemned to degradation and life imprisonment. There were many suspicious circumstances connected with the trial. It was a secret one, and the defendant was never permitted to see the documents on which his conviction was based. Practically he was condemned unheard.

In justification of the unusual proceedings it was given out that a memorandum in the handwriting of Dreyfus had been found, referring to copies of French military plans supposed to have accompanied the memorandum. It also offered to supply detailed plans of certain French fortifications. The document, it was alleged, was addressed to the military attache of the German legation at Paris. The document demanded was submitted to experts, some of whom identified the handwriting as that of Dreyfus, while others pronounced it a clever forgery. The German military attache also denied having had any dealings with Dreyfus, and he repeated his denials most emphatically, having it to be inferred that the memorandum was a forgery that never had been on the premises of the German legation, but brought there by the member of Dreyfus for the purpose of being found there at the proper time. This was the view taken by the general public.

Dreyfus protested his innocence. His last message to his wife was a solemn declaration that he was not guilty, that he believed him an innocent man, and his brother joined the little circle of active and earnest workers in behalf of the unfortunate officer. They collected the evidence and laid it before the president of the senate, who at once became convinced that the prisoner on Devil's Island was the victim of a miscarriage. At this time Emile Zola became interested in the affair and undertook a thorough investigation, after which he publicly charged that Dreyfus had been convicted in order to shield the real criminals. The celebrated novelist was arrested and tried for libel, but the court refused to hear any evidence that might throw light upon the Dreyfus case. Army officers refused to testify and were sustained in their refusal. Zola made another public accusation and was again condemned, whereupon he fled from the country in order to await developments from a safe distance.

Public opinion now commenced to show evidence of a change in favor of the condemned man. Then Col. Henry came forward with a letter purporting to have been written by the German military attache to the Italian gentleman of similar rank, in which the writer said:

"If I am questioned about the Dreyfus affair I shall say that never have I had any relations with the Jew. That is understood. If you are asked, say the same, for nobody must ever know what has occurred with him."

This famous letter was posted in the streets of Paris in order to allay the uneasiness of the public. But both the German and Italian attaches denied all knowledge of the letter, whereupon Col. Henry was arrested and confessed that he had forged it for the purpose of shielding his superior officers. Soon after this confession he was found dead in his cell, his throat having been cut with a razor. It has never been explained how the prisoner happened to be in possession of a knife and there is a suspicion that he was assassinated. After the suicide, or murder, of Colonel Henry, Colonel Esterhazy, who was suspected of being the author of the communications that condemned Dreyfus, fled to England where, it is said, he has confessed the forgery.

Col. Picquart has from the first asserted his belief in the innocence of Dreyfus. This officer has also been arrested on a charge of that. It seems that, in order to prevent a fatal trial, Gen. Saussier, the military governor of Paris, snatched the prisoner from the civil authorities and confined him somewhere in a military prison. The supporters of the cabinet now urge the premier to have Saussier arraigned on a charge of treason.

What the outcome will be is impossible to predict. At present the French people demand a reopening of the Dreyfus case. The army officers are against this. All depends upon the President. Possibly he will prefer to resign and leave as a successor the responsibility of choosing between a conflict with the army or one with the common people.

THE COLOR LINE.

The force of the colored troops that took part in the Santiago campaign has spread far and wide. They fought side by side with the white troops and it was supposed that the heroic deeds in the battlefield sent a long way towards eliminating the color line. Major General Graham, commanding Camp Meade, evidence from the view of the men a few days ago, but he soon found it to be a mistake.

The story, as told by the Cleveland Plain Dealer, is as follows:

"The Fifteenth Pennsylvania and the Ninth Ohio are both to that camp and both are composed of negroes. The Ninth Ohio, one full regiment would go to France, and the attack Major General Graham is a good thing to do. He therefore issued an order to that effect, ordering the Ninth Ohio to relieve the Fifteenth Pennsylvania.

"The Ninth Ohio men are white, while the Fifteenth are colored. The Ohio men are accustomed to be free, military men, well disciplined and in capacity proof of their qualities. When the order for the relocation was read there were two sets of very mad soldiers, men and officers being disappointed.

"The Pennsylvanians were perfectly at the idea of being substituted with the Ohio Ninth, with whom they took no here to. They insisted that the order mentioned do not exist, and darkies insisted that some if they go to France will be treated."

The officers threatened to resign if the order was authoritatively issued but to this way.

"The Ohio men were even madder than their white neighbors. They did not propose to lose their reputation and state identity in their race distinction. Their mixed northern and southern for their race at Santiago and they intended to share those honors.

"Major General Graham was advised of the temporal his order had failed to fix. With the officers at two regiments threatening to resign in a body and the men in both organizations on the point of mutiny there was nothing to be done but rescind the order, which was done as quick as the new order could be written and posted up. Then the Pennsylvania whites and Ohio blacks shook hands with themselves and there was joy once more in Camp Meade."

Professor Dulom, the brilliant and famous theoretical physicist of the University of Bordeaux, in France, waxes enthusiastic over the work done in physical chemistry in Cornell university. In a recent article he says:

"I have already mentioned the beautiful and fruitful researches going forward in the Dulong laboratories, under M. Dulong Kendrosse's direction, at Gottingen, at Berlin, at Leipzig many investigations are guided by the genius of Ostwald in the United States, in the public and state university, at Ithaca where, under the guiding impulse of Professors Trevor and Remsen, science in physical chemistry are seriously made, the phase rule is astonishing optimism. It has been the law also for instruction and investigation in the Journal of Physical Chemistry which emanates from that university, the chemical publications of the entire world are classified according to the varieties of the spaces studied."

A few days ago, it will be remembered, some of the European powers sent an ultimatum to the Turkish sultan demanding an immediate settlement of the Cretan question. Only forty-eight hours were allowed for the reply to the demand. The time so has elapsed, but there is no movement of the allied fleets toward the Dardanelles. Instead, another threat has been sent to Constantinople to the effect that the Cretan ports will be blockaded unless some satisfactory arrangement is made before October 10th. The sultan is, no doubt, thoroughly convinced by this time that the European powers do not mean what they say. Perhaps there will be no settlement of the Turkish question until the United States finds it necessary to take a hand in the game.

Holmes having resumed the Maria Teresa, is now engaged on the Christoval Colon. If he succeeds in this he will have produced salvage for the government worth about $1,000,000. A valuable officer he is, more respects than one. By the way, since there seems to be some few who do not know the meaning of Christoval Colon, they are hereby informed that it is Spanish for Christopher Columbus.

The "News" is credited with being chronic in placing the late Henry Davenport's age at somewhat past forty. It is hoped we are always so when dealing with such subjects, also that no greater error than that is committed. One of our critics thought she was about sixty. Deceased was born in London, England, in 1858.

Gen. Kitchener, the hero of the Soudan, has been made a peer of the realm by the British government. In this country, where we have no peers and yet everybody is a peer, we would give such a mere promotion in the army and a chance to talk back to Secretary Alger.

It is a dull, dreary, drizzling day, but not sufficiently so to greatly diminish the spontaneous enthusiasm which greeted the Twenty-fourth all along their line of march.

"We have remembered the Maine," was one of the inscriptions which greeted the returned troopers. To which might be added, "and are remembered by the people."

The heavens wept for those of the Twenty-fourth who were not here.

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