

DESERET EVENING NEWS

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A WORK FOR WISE MEN.

The State Library and Gymnasium Commission can get very busy just now, if officials without salary can afford to devote themselves to a labor of love.

In several of the States and notably in Oregon, a State Librarian compiles and keeps on file the clippings from papers and magazines from all over the country, relating to questions that are prominently before the public, and especially those questions upon which legislation is proposed or asked for.

These references, statistics, arguments, and opinions, are kept on file primarily for the use of the members of the legislature, of town councils and county commissioners; but any one may have access to them, and they are regularly supplied to the high schools for the purpose of furnishing materials for debates, orations, and essays.

As is well known to many of the former legislators, it is sometimes difficult to secure reliable, first-hand information on topics that come before the legislative assembly for action, and the difficulty of arriving at a wise conclusion is often keenly felt by the State they represent. At such times the statements of partisans require testing by first-hand facts and opinions as to the working of laws of the same kind that may be in operation elsewhere.

Legislators have not the time to collect and collate such materials; yet it would be an enormous advantage to the State itself if those who make the laws could be supplied with just such sort of information outside of the representations of those who may be interested in the passage or the defeat of certain measures.

Our State Legislature will soon be in session; many important questions will come before it; the best information possible—unbiased, complete, and intelligible—should be at hand for consultation before final action is taken on any measure fraught with great consequences in the public welfare.

The following are among the topics already noted: Temperance, prohibition, liquor selling, juvenile courts, detention houses, prison management, compulsory sanitary measures, board of health, State University, Agricultural College and High schools, public schools, courses of study, school officers, State forestry, reservoirs, public roads, canals, rivers, railroad commission, railroad rates, monopolies and trusts, pure foods, soda fountains, measures for simplifying court procedure, initiative, referendum and recall, election of senators, publicity of campaign contributions, corrupt practices at elections, and other similar topics.

We have in Utah no State Librarian to compile, arrange, and keep on file for convenient access, the information necessary to an impartial and thorough investigation of such public questions as those above enumerated. Nevertheless, we suppose that the State Library Commission could make a beginning on these lines. Formerly we had a state statistician, but for some reason the office was abolished. That official did a good deal in way of compiling statistics of the State. What is chiefly desirable, however, is the experience of other commonwealths; and this function it seems to us, the State Library and Gymnasium Commission might well perform until the office of State Librarian shall have been created, to do the work more thoroughly.

When there is such an opportunity to be of service to the State, we hope that our commissioners will do whatever they can at it, even though they are not under obligation to do so, and can not receive any other reward for their labor than the consciousness of duty well performed.

THE RECALL.

Eastern contemporaries are commenting on the various features of the constitutions of Arizona and New Mexico, as they are being adopted. The recall clause in the Arizona instrument is attracting special attention, and the New York Evening Sun says it is simply "one of many devices invented by the eager reformers of the West in derogation of the existing representative character of our government. Seeing the evils which have crept into executive, legislative and judicial action by independent representatives, these worthy gentlemen at once cry to have the whole system destroyed. When they can they wipe out the agents altogether and let the people do the work directly. Witness the initiative and referendum, for example—an effort to minimize the functions and responsibility of the people's legislative representatives. The recall, which enables the people to jerk out of office at any moment a public officer whom they do not like, is of a piece. When applied to a legislator or an executive—as, thus far, it has chiefly been used—the public officer ceases to be a representative possessing independent judgment and a responsible charge and becomes little more than the prolonged arm of the people. So far as is possible in our modern complex communities, you approximate mob rule, wherein the whims and passions of the moment are the guide for the making and the execution of laws."

That is strange logic. The people have now both initiative and referendum, insofar as the power is delegated to the people to elect the men who are

willing to make, or to repeal, laws demanded by the people. They certainly have recall, since at election time they may "jerk out of office" any public officer whose term may be up and place someone else in charge; yet, we do not hear that the exercise of this power is "in derogation of the existing representative character of our government." If the exercise of that power at one time is perfectly right and safe, why should it be different at another time?

Under the present system a public servant may have obtained his position by false representations and fraud. This may be apparent immediately after the election. He may prove himself dishonest, or incompetent, but as a rule the people must tolerate him until his term is out, before the recall can be applied. He knows this and takes advantage of it. But under what is known as Recall the people can turn that class out of office, by means of the ballot, at any time. They need not wait two years. That is the difference between the old order of things and the new. Why should it not be well to vest in the people the power of recall at any time? Public servants now-a-days are not, as a rule, too honest. Very likely the power would be exercised very seldom, but the possibility of a sudden removal might keep some scoundrels from hunting offices, and that would be a distinct gain.

THE DELUGE.

The following is a letter just received from a friend in Mantle:

"A Latter-day Saint teacher is often placed in a dilemma when the question of the Deluge arises. Are we justified in holding strictly to the Biblical account? To do so one must, as you well know, disregard the evidences furnished by anthropology, biology and history, and must disagree with the text books adopted by our schools."

"Will you kindly discuss this question in the columns of your paper?"

The question that seems to occupy the mind of our correspondent in relation to the Deluge, concerns its extent. Was it universal or only local? We are aware that eminent scholars of a modern school regard the idea of a world-wide flood as unworthy of consideration. Volck, late professor of Old Testament Exegesis, University of Rostok, in his article on Noah in the New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, says: "The Deluge was universal, not in the sense that it covered all the earth's surface, but in the sense that it affected all mankind. Its extent, therefore, is limited to that part of the Earth inhabited by man. The Biblical narrator thinks of western Asia and perhaps the Mediterranean countries. He knew nothing of the rest of the world or of mountains loftier than Ararat."

This represents a modern view which many have adopted as an escape from the obvious difficulties of the older theory.

It is quite possible that the Biblical narrative is not explicit enough on the question of the extent of the flood, to warrant an opinion; but for many reasons, we are inclined to the older view, and we know of no conclusive argument against it.

In the first place it should be remembered that at the time of the Deluge the human race must have been quite widely distributed on earth. The Hebrew chronology gives the year 1656 after the first appearance of man as the date of that epoch-making event, and the Septuagint makes it 2317 years. But it is perfectly clear that during two thousand years the human family must have become very numerous. Israel, during the sojourn in Egypt, became a large multitude, perhaps 2,000,000 souls, and this in a little over two centuries. During 20 centuries, accepting the Biblical chronology as approximately correct, the human family must have multiplied and become pretty well sprinkled over a large part of the surface of the Earth. Perhaps the idea of August Le Plongeon is not, after all, so very fanciful. He believed that civilization was cradled in this country, and that from here it radiated to all parts of the world, in the earliest part of history, including the continents beyond the oceans. This may, or may not, be correct, but there is no doubt that mankind multiplied rapidly in the early age and spread over a large surface of the Earth, both from the land of Eden peopled by the descendants of Seth, and the land of Noe, inhabited by the descendants of Cain. And for that reason it would seem that a local flood would not have answered the purpose for which the visitation was brought about.

In the second place it might be asked, if the flood was but a local affair, why the necessity of building an ark? Would not emigration have been a more simple way of salvation? Noah and his family and animals might have been saved by emigrating to a neighboring country, as Lot was saved by leaving Sodom and going to Zoar. If the Lord never does anything superfluous but always accomplishes His ends by the simplest and most direct means, the construction of a ship would have been contrary to the common rule of Divine procedure, as a means of escape from a partial flood.

And it is another question whether a ship could have lived in a local flood, caused by cloud bursts, or a tidal wave, or some such agency. Generally the water comes rushing with the force of a cataract when descending from the mountains into the plains, or rolling over the land from the ocean, and boats are mired over and wrecked. It takes a comparatively smooth sea for the navigation of ships.

Furthermore, as Bishop Horne observes, that the Deluge was universal appears from the highest mountains, all of which show that the sea has at one time been spread over their summits. "It should be considered," Bishop Horne adds, "that the author who relates this transaction relates it to have been carried on under the immediate direction of God—the event must from the very nature of it have been miraculous, and out of the common course, as it is said to have been." (Henry and Scott's Commentary.)

Finally, we believe that it was on the American continent that Noah lived, preached, and constructed his wonderful vessel, and that this was carried across the Ocean to the mountains of Ararat, nearly midway between the Euxine and Caspian seas.

This could be done if the flood was universal in extent, but not if it was only local.

We think Ewald expresses the significance of the Deluge correctly when he says that it came "in order to sweep clean the sin-stained earth, to sweep away the first race of man, which was utterly degenerated in Titanic intoxication, and to produce on a new race made more refined and wiser by the warning." In harmony with this view Ewald considers the flood as a type of baptism, in which the Earth was cleansed.

As already stated, it may be that we have too few data upon which to construct a theory as to the extent of the flood, but these are some of the reasons that seem to preclude the modern idea of a local inundation.

The old theory demands an answer to the question, where did the water come from in sufficient quantity to cover the entire earth?

Michalich discusses this question. His idea is that the interior of the earth's crust contains cavities filled with water, and that some of them are of so immense capacity that the oceans are small, in comparison. Undoubtedly they are connected by subterranean passages. If now, he argues, through some agency, the water in some of the interior reservoirs should be suddenly heated, it would boil over and force a way to the oceans on the surface. These would then overflow the land. According to the Biblical narrative, "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up;" on which Fuller comments: "The great deep seems to mean that vast confluence of waters which are said to have been gathered together on the third day of creation into one place, and were called seas. These waters not only extend over a great part of the surface of the Earth, but probably flow, as through a number of arteries and veins, to its most interior recesses, and occupy its center. This body of water was turned, in just displeasure against man's sin, into an engine of destruction." At the same time "the windows of heaven were opened" and the rain descended for forty days and forty nights.

Nearly all nations have traditions of this flood. According to the Chaldean story Xisuthrus wrote a history of the world and buried it in the City of the Sun, whereupon he built a ship on which he saved himself and family from destruction. The Hindu story is that Brahma appeared to Manu and commanded him to build a ship and put on it all kinds of seeds and "the seven holy beings." The flood then came. The Chinese are said to have a representation of the flood in plaster work, in one of their temples. The Mexicans and many of the North American tribes of Indians have legends relating the destruction of the human race by a flood. The father of the Indians, they say, was warned in a dream. He then built a vessel which he boarded, with his family and a number of animals. For months he floated on the water. The animals murmured and rebelled. Finally a new Earth appeared and he left the vessel.

Such are the legends found in various parts of the globe. They prove that the event made a deep impression on the human family. We may not be able to explain every particular of it, but the event itself is fully attested, and the lesson of it should never be forgotten.

It is the coal rate that kills.

The Mexican revolutionists still hope to make a Reyes.

In Mexican history Madero will be known as Francis I.

As speaker, Champ Clark at least will know how not to do it.

It is useless to tell any man but an aviator to get off the earth.

More people lay up on a rainy day than lay up for a rainy day.

In some people the milk of human kindness is terribly condensed.

Food prices may be falling but it is not at the rate of sixteen feet per second.

The school book trust believes that knowledge is power and does all it can to corral it.

The government of Mexico has found Madero guilty of treason but it hasn't found him yet.

Children call a father devoted when he devotes himself to doing the chores that they should do.

What a stir it would make if people's other delinquencies were advertised as their delinquent assessments are.

That mutiny pays is shown by the fact that those mutinying Brazilian sailors got increased pay.

So many reforms are being instituted in the New York customs house that it will yet become a palace of political purity.

The gospel of peace and the gospel of great armies and huge navies do not dovetail, and no amount of sophistry can make them.

It is much more natural to do unto others as they have done unto you than to do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.

How much more imposing an "apple congress" sounds than a state fair, just as a mother's congress is so much more imposing in sound than the old fashioned quilting.

The mayor of San Francisco is calling on the grand jury for an investigation of the charge that he has been a taker of bribes. Is this what is known as the call of the wild?

of war. Evidently the general belongs to the impressionist school of painters.

Buy your Christmas presents early in the day and early in December. That will be your biggest gift of the holidays to the workers behind the counters and on the delivery wagons.

It is said that the treatment of the tariff question in his forthcoming message to Congress is bothering President Taft somewhat. He cannot recommend revision in toto for he has committed himself to revision per schedule. If one schedule is singled out for revision those interested in it will call it an invidious distinction. It is a great dilemma from which the President may well wish he was freed.

THE VOTING MACHINES.

San Francisco Chronicle. A few years ago it seemed probable that within a short time all voting in cities of some size would be done with the voting machine. We hear no more of any extension of their use. This city has discarded them, and now Oakland proposes to do the same. And yet the desirability of the machine is as great as ever. It is the best assurance which the public can have against stuffing and fraudulent counting. The opportunity for fraud in the count occurs when there is a long ballot. The officials in precincts where fraud may be considered safe have only to dawdle in the count until it is ascertained which way the vote is going, and then, if it is going wrong, stuff the count as may be necessary to win. There used to be much of this in large cities. Probably there is now very little. But the opportunity is there for those willing to take the risk. A simultaneous announcement of the machine-recorded vote in all precincts does away with the possibilities of fraud in the count. Doubtless machines may be easily adjusted to register falsely, but that can be prevented by experting and sealing the machines before election. Improvements were made to be found in the machines first subjected to the test of an election, but there is no doubt whatever that all these would be remedied as the result of experience. The breakdown seems to have been in the practical difficulty of constructing a machine capable of dealing with the enormous number of candidates and questions to be voted on, and which seems to increase with each succeeding election.

AN AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT.

Pueblo Chiefdom. In spite of men that come and go, in spite of landslides and political upheavals, there is one job that goes steadily forward. There is no halt to the work of construction on the Panama canal. That greatest work of the century, inaugurated by President McKinley, vigorously prosecuted by President Roosevelt, bids fair to reach practical completion before the end of President Taft's first term. Under the supervision of Colonel Goethals wonders are being accomplished. That quiet and little known army man, taking on the work that had daunted and baffled the highly paid engineers who had preceded him, now has the work so well in hand that the end is in sight. He is able even to predict the completion of the job by the first of December, 1913. There is cause for congratulation in the fact that the work is going forward so efficiently, without the slightest suggestion of scandal. The United States suffers from the accusation, in Europe, of being purely a mercenary country, corrupt in politics, and unscrupulous in graft. In the building of the canal, however, America is doing, without graft, something that the grafters of Europe are unable to do. It is an accomplishment. Another thing that the American people themselves who are building the canal. It is your job, my job. We are often told that the government is inefficient, that private parties or corporations can do more effective and better work than the government can do. Here is proof to the contrary. After ten years of government work, even after corporation engineers had given up the task, the United States government puts a plain army man on the job, and, lo, it is done. It is something for which the world has waited long. It is an accomplishment in which every American may well take pride. It shows that the people can do. It is proof conclusive that the American government is essentially honest; that no work is too great for it to accomplish.

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