

REGENCY!

We have observed the frequent sittings of the Board of late that has the fatherly supervision of education in the Territory of Utah, and are happy to learn that their discussions are calculated to call forth a searching investigation into the elementary sounds of language, and also into the nature and structure of such characters as are employed to express the radical and multiplied sounds of language. The Governor and other members of the First Presidency find time, in the midst of all their onerous duties to mingle in these meetings. The traditions that have come through the misty labyrinths of passages are most powerfully assailed by the Governor, whose keen eye looks with suspicion upon the corruptions and perversions of language which was originally pure. Thus far it appears that the present orthography of the English language is too full of absurdities to be tolerated by an enlightened people without a gradual and complete reformation. It is considered an easy matter to make many obvious improvements in this department of literature, but a query has arisen and occasioned some warm debate whether the present old Roman alphabet is sufficiently perfect to carry forward this reformation. It is objected by some that the characters of the old alphabet are like the white man (as the Indian says) too uncertain. That is, their sounds are too variable: too many letters enter into the composition of single words, and some of these letters are often silent and unmeaning. Now in the present stage of the discussion it is proposed by some to change a small portion of the English alphabetical characters and attach invariable certainty to the sounds of others, in order that words may be palpably shortened, and the spelling become natural and simple and easily acquired. Others are for carrying the reformation still further, thinking that a people of progressive intellect will not be contented with only a partial reformation, and that it requires an entirely new set of alphabetical characters to effect a clean handsome reformation that will be abiding. All seem to be agreed that both the written and printed language should be one and the same.

Some of the Board have even offered the phonographic hand-writing as a better hand for printed language than the phonetic hand, the latter being rather clumsy. We are happy to learn, however, that the Wards of the City will all be repeatedly visited, and the people lectured on education very shortly. These lectures will be the result, it is confidently believed, of more careful reflection and deliberation than usual. Crowded houses of both parents and children may be looked for whenever these lectures shall occur. The variety of subjects embraced in such a course of lectures cannot fail to interest every class of persons. One thing seems quite certain in regard to language—especially the language of this people; it ought to be adapted to the emergency of these peculiar times. The focal point where the diverse languages of the people of all nations must be brought to harmonize into one common standard of speech renders the selection of a language for this purpose worthy of devout consideration. Can it be expected that the Apostles at Great Salt Lake City will speak by the immediate power of God so that people of every nation and language will forthwith understand them? Or should we rather look for the power and wisdom of God to be displayed in forming a simple, easily acquired language, in which barbarians and Christians, bondmen and freemen, of every grade of intelligence, out of every tribe, caste, language, and country, can, in a short time, interchange their sentiments and praise God unitedly in spirit and understanding?

If such a language is ever demanded at all, it seems to be required without delay, even now. It is not for a future generation, but for the present. Now the people are gathering, and the varied and most general influx of the diverse tribes, nations, kindreds, and tongues, is even at our doors. Provision must be speedily made for this forthcoming crisis and event. Can we suppose that a few interpreters will answer the demands of a constant intercommunication between several thousand languages. May we not, and must we not, look for a *standard* to be lifted up? Should not that language be such as can be acquired by the most ordinary minds within a few days or months at the outside? Now is it possible to simplify and reduce the English language, or in any way remould it so as to make it answer the emergency that awaits the saints of this generation? Tell us ye wise men! Will the old bottles answer for the deposit of the new wine? Or shall we construct new bottles for the new wine? The English language may be as good as any other known language but is there any known language whatever fitted to meet the great emergency of the great gathering and great work of teaching the law of the Lord to all people? Let wisdom speak, and her voice shall be heard.