

states, and especially in the East, an honest account of what it has done in North Carolina would be a valuable contribution to religious, moral, and sociological literature. What are its fruits? That is the main question. How has it affected the lives, habits, and characters of the converts?"

It is quite unusual to see so much good sense and simple justice in an editorial treating of the Mormons, or of their religion, as are shown in the Post's article. Jesus gave a key by which the adherents of all creeds may be accurately and righteously judged: "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and the Post makes a sensible as well as an eminently Christian suggestion when it advises the use of this key in the case of the Mormons of North Carolina.

First inquire what fruits they are bringing forth. If authentic information is desired it should be sought from their friends who know them, and not from their persecutors who hate them. An honest and intelligent inquiry will disclose the fact that every person who, with full purpose of heart, has embraced Mormonism, has formed a fixed determination to shun sin of every kind in future; to be incorruptibly honest; pure in morals; forgiving and charitable; humble and prayerful; and to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

If all opponents of Mormonism could be prevailed upon to take the Post's advice and judge its adherents by their fruits, opposition to Mormon missionaries would soon be totally disarmed.

A MESSAGE MUCH NEEDED.

By looking over numerous criticisms of Mormonism that have found their way recently into public print, it appears clear that to many it is considered strange that its teachings are so largely accepted wherever presented. Very few endeavor to account for this fact except by stating that the religious system mentioned is "a swindle," a "blazing mark of shame" and so on—modern expressions presumably for those anciently applied to the Gospel: "A stumbling block" and "foolishness." A thoughtful consideration, however, of the present condition of the world and a correct understanding of the principles enunciated by the latter-day messengers of peace account for the progress of the Gospel in this age on grounds analogous to those that made Christianity in the early ages a world-conquering force.

The century in which we live and on the last scenes of which the curtain is about to fall has taught mankind one great lesson among others. It has shown that liberty, freedom from restraint, is not in itself sufficient for happiness, or omnipotent as to the moral regeneration of mankind. There has been an awakening from the delirious dream that dethroned the Almighty and defied human reason. The gift of liberty has taught the world that the more perfectly this blessing is enjoyed the more need there is for the divine guidance that alone can check the evil tendencies of mankind and guide those that are good into the right channels. The world is about to realize the great fact that divine guidance is as much needed as it was in the early history of our race when great forward strides were to be taken towards the unknown future. The earnest desire on the part of many is, therefore, for light from heaven, for that communication with the Almighty which made it possible for Israel to be the bearers of truth in the ancient world, or the first Christians to become witnesses in the later dispensation.

Another fact is that arts and sciences have had their say but without giving satisfaction. If the prophetic declaration: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," is applicable to any century, it is to this. Science has penetrated to the farthest boundaries of the universe of which our earth is but an atom; it has analyzed and weighed the immense orbs that move in boundless space; their trackless paths have been mapped out and the laws that govern their rhythmic movements explained. Science has found its way seemingly to the very border of physical creation, where but a step, apparently, remains between what is sometimes called the material and immaterial; the great habitation of man has been searched from roof to cellar and its structure and history, its possibilities and probabilities have been discussed. The arts have kept pace with the sciences. The knowledge gained has been utilized in every department of life until the very forces of heaven and earth have been summoned into service. But after all, the hunger and thirst for knowledge of God and of the destiny of man remain unsatisfied, as far as scientific solution of those problems go. The thoughtful among men commence to understand that the reply to those most vital questions are and must remain outside the reach of telescopes and microscopes as well as beyond chemical analysis and mathematical calculation. When, therefore, the "final experience, the final lesson," as Mr. Gladstone calls death, comes, something more satisfactory is needed, something that can be supplied only by revelation. It is felt that a rock is needed on which to build, strong enough to remain unmoved by the raging storms of adversity and the swelling tide of death.

The condition of the Christian churches—be it said in a spirit of kindness and humility—is not such as to meet the new requirements. With few exceptions they disclaim direct divine guidance and spurn revelation in this age. They offer their own deductions as doctrine and leave men sometimes in the dark as to the possibility of obtaining absolute knowledge on vital points. That modern Christianity is unable, without changing its position, to meet new requirements is well admitted by those qualified to speak on the subject. A New York paper recently submitted some questions bearing on the future of religion to several prominent divines. Among the replies are many interesting statements. Prof. Joseph le Conte takes occasion to say:

"We must make a wide distinction between essential Christianity and the orthodox theology of the churches. I am equally sure that this latter must be profoundly modified. The whole body of systematic Christian theology must be restated in terms of modern thought."

Prof. Alexander Balmain Bruce, Glasgow, thinks another Luther may arise. He says:

"The divisions of Christendom and incompatible conceptions of Christianity, some widely prevalent, whose decadence would be for the world's good, are hindrances to the progress of the true Gospel. True, but reform has come before now, and it may come again. Another Luther, with the needed modifications, may arise. The Providence of God always finds the needed instrument. And a beneficent Providence must care for a religion like that of Jesus."

W. S. Rainsford, D. D., reasons in the following manner:

"What is the chief danger threatening all religious bodies, all forms of organized Christian bodies, today? I be-

lieve it is the danger of confusing man's past thinkings about Jesus Christ, or, in other words, Christian doctrines, with the real revelation of God's nature and man's capacity for goodness, which Jesus Christ brought into the world and still brings. Man's thinkings are often like old leaves on a living tree—once they have served their time and done their work they had better go. At one time they are all-important. They are quite useless and in the way at another time. At one season they help the tree to live. At the next season, if they don't give way to new, living leaves, their tendency is to kill it. The living tree is Christ Jesus, the revelation of God. The leaves are man's thoughts about Him. The tree must stand, the leaves must go."

Dr. Heber Newton:

"If it [Christianity] is to maintain the faith handed down from the fathers, the great essential beliefs in God and immortality and the divine manifestation in Jesus Christ, with the other faiths clustering around these central beliefs, Christianity must be prepared to effect a reconstruction in the theology of a most momentous character."

The need of the hour for a Christianity identical with the "living tree" and deprived of all its dead leaves and branches is felt by the masses as well as by their ecclesiastical leaders. And therefore the Gospel of Jesus Christ commends itself to them. There is a power in it—the power of God—manifest in the humble testimony to the fact that God has again revealed Himself. And as the acceptance of this testimony is followed by the assurance which only the presence of the influence of the Holy Spirit in the soul can give, as well as by numerous manifestations of divine power, it cannot be deemed strange that many believe and find peace. Indeed, it is more strange that so many turn away in unbelief. The whole history of the Latter-day Saints is a divine seal attesting the ence of the Holy Spirit in the soul can truth of the system called by the world "Mormonism." That so many in the full glare of Christianity fail to understand it is one of the anomalies of the present time.

HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER.

An exchange relates a story of a theological student who recently wrote to his destitute mother that he could not help her because of the expensive studies in which he was engaged. He added that the mother had never done much for him, and that consequently he was under no obligation to her. This is about as sad a case of disrespect to parents as can be imagined, when it is remembered that it is exhibited by one preparing himself for the ministry—one contemplating to dedicate his life for a labor of love among fellowmen, for their moral elevation. It goes a long way to prove the correctness of the impression once prevalent in some university cities that among the theological students are found very degraded specimens of humanity.

Lack of filial affection is, however, in our day not uncommon in the world. Supreme wisdom long ago sketched in outline the characteristics of the "last days," stating that during these "perilous times" men shall be lovers of self, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, and to these qualities add "disobedience to parents" and lack of "natural affection." This was said nearly 2,000 years ago by one who stood on the brink of eternity after a long and faithful battle with the besetting sins of his own time, but it is impossible but to feel, that the picture is true in every detail to the features of the