

THE DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

PRIESTLY INTOLERANCE AND IGNORANCE.

A QUIET village in England has lately been thrown into considerable excitement over the death of a widow who, during her life, made profession of the principles of what is called "Mormonism." Newspaper correspondents have made the case public, and it has been bruited about and commented upon by the press. It appears that in England it is viewed as a very shocking thing for a corpse to be entombed without the burial service being mumbled over the body by a clergyman. We cannot gather what effect non-compliance with this custom is supposed to have upon the spirit; but, from the importance that is attached to the ceremony, should suppose that it would be something very terrible. At least we should imagine that the rector of the village where this old lady died entertains such an idea. He had heard that she was a "Mormon." It is not improbable that he had reason to know that she was; for it is very common for men of his cloth to ferociously pounce upon women and children who make a profession of "Mormonism," and try and overwhelm them with their show of learning in their attempts to prove their doctrines; and it is very common, too, for them to get wofully discomfited in such encounters.

When the body of the widow was prepared for the grave, he refused to perform the burial service, alleging as a reason that, being a Latter-day Saint, she was not a Christian! Credible and respectable witnesses, who attended her in her last moments, testified that she was truly penitent and a Christian, that she prayed most fervently to the Almighty and grounded her hopes of salvation on the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was all made known to the rector before the funeral took place, with the hope that, upon hearing these statements, he would alter his previous determination. But to all entreaties he was inexorable. "So the poor old woman," the English paper pathetically exclaims, "was (to the great indignation of the inhabitants) taken to the grave and buried with no more ceremony than would be observed in the burial of a horse or a dog."

How shocking! What a terrible penalty for a "poor old woman" to endure for professing the principles of "Mormonism!" And what immense satisfaction it must have afforded this pious (?) man to have it in his power to inflict such retribution on the corpse of the refractory one! He, perhaps, indulges in the hope that his refusal to read the burial service over the widow will have such an effect that there will not be another "old woman" in the kingdom dare to turn Latter-day Saint for fear of having to be buried with no more ceremony than a horse or a dog!

If this woman had been a murderess, this rector would, doubtless, have been ready enough to pray with and for her, and to have accompanied her to the scaffold, and assured her that she was a Christian and that they would meet in heaven, &c. We see in another column of the paper in which we find the account of this case, a murder case. The murderer killed almost an entire family. He is a Christian (!) however. At least the clergymen say so, and they ought to know, of course, what it takes to constitute a Christian. They ask the prayers of their congregations in his behalf, and their words are so consoling and their prayers so assuring that he thinks he has got a through ticket to heaven, and he is going, when he is hung, straight to the arms of the Savior! He is sure, he says, he will meet all his friends in heaven! How much better is his case than that of the "poor old Mormon woman!" He will not be buried as a horse or a dog! He will have the prayers of the parsons, and on them be wafted to glory!

Can anything be more absurd, or more libellous upon the attributes of the Almighty? If such men had their way, Heaven would be made an undesirable place for any decent man who had any desire for good society. They would place the blackest villains and the most cruel murderers near the throne of the Lamb. According to their views and practices murderers throng the courts of Heaven, who, if they had not been murderers, would in all probability, have weltered through the endless ages of eternity in hell. The viler the sinner the greater his chance of exaltation

and glory. With such views what a blessed thing it is to be a murderer! What wonder that men are reckless about taking the lives of their fellow-men, when religious teachers assure them that they only need to repent and believe in Jesus to be forgiven of the blackest crimes. Such damnable doctrines people jails and offer premiums to crime.

An upright, moral man, who has dealt justly with his fellow man all his days, may sicken and die; but what notice is taken of him by the clergy? At the most, probably some preacher may turn up the whites of his eyes, and say to the afflicted relatives that he *hopes* the dear departed has gone to a better world. But let a murderer be caught, one who has outraged every law of God and man, and committed deeds of heartless cruelty—and how quickly he is visited and prayed with! They do not merely *hope* that he will go to glory; they are certain of it, and he and the public are assured that his soul will be saved! Is it any wonder that there is infidelity in the world or that men have no faith in systems of religion, and many have no faith in God, when such disgusting ideas are taught as His gospel?

If modern, so-called Christian preachers had a chance to pray with Lucifer for a little while, they would assure him of a re-entrance to Heaven, and insist upon his right to be there. According to their theory the surest way to get the reward of the righteous, is to be desperately wicked. How much they differ from the Lord, is seen by reading a true servant of the Lord's words—John, the Apostle—"ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

EXCITEMENT AT WASHINGTON.

"The illness of three Senators—Howard, Conkling and Grimes—causes considerable excitement. The first symptoms of all are of the same character. * * * There were some grounds last week for apprehending such trouble, and Senators are cautioned to exercise great care in drinking from pitchers at the capitol." What a horrible meaning is couched in these few sentences! To every city and hamlet in the land the word is sent that there is reason to believe that poison is being used to remove obnoxious Senators; for this is what the despatch means. It may be sensational, and have but little or no foundation in truth, yet it has an air of probability. The papers throughout the country are filled with accounts of secret combinations, plots and threatened assassinations. Senators and other prominent men have been repeatedly threatened of late, and when so much has been said upon this subject, it would be almost surprising if some tragedy did not follow. There are thousands of desperate men in the country who are ripe for any species of wickedness. The bitterness of political hate is greatly intensified just now, and there are many, doubtless, who would not hesitate at any deed to carry their points. Assassination is openly threatened, and coolly talked about, in some papers, as though such a crime were meritorious. Poison is more easily used than the pistol or the dagger, and without the same risks to the assassin.

If it were not before the eyes of the people, and they were familiar with it, they would not believe that such a change could have taken place in our nation in the few years that have elapsed since 1861. Scarcely a single person could be made to believe before the rebellion that there was any probability of the Union being severed, notwithstanding the expressed determination and threats of leading Southern men. People indulged in a blind, unreasoning confidence upon the subject of the Union and its perpetuity, and they resolutely shut their eyes to every thing that would be likely to destroy their illusions.

So also at present; their foolish confidence is undisturbed by all that is happening around them. The Chief Magistrate has been struck down by the hand of an assassin; other leading men have narrowly escaped the same fate. Threats are now freely made to men in high places that if they do not change their policy, they will be put out of the way. Newspapers which have a wide and extended circulation talk with as much apparent unconcern about the assassination of public men, if they pursue a certain course, or if they do not pursue a certain course, as if they were speaking about killing wild animals or vermin. And all this in the United States of America! And yet who believes the Republic in danger? Who sees in these

things the portents of an approaching period of anarchy violence and ruin? This blindness is most ominous of evil. A people who, when menaced by dangers, cannot perceive their peril, or when informed of it, denounce those who warn them as their enemies, are in a condition of great danger.

Sensational rumors will be freely put in circulation with a view to create excitement, alarm the people and bring pressure to bear upon Senators. We may expect such a course to be pursued by both parties. The dispatch to-day may be one of this character. But, without being startled at this, there are still good and sufficient grounds left for serious apprehensions to be indulged in by every patriot and well-wisher of his country and her prosperity.

REMARKS

By President BRIGHAM YOUNG,
New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, May
10th, 1868.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

The gospel which we preach is the gospel of life and salvation. The Church which we represent is the Church and Kingdom of God, and possesses the only faith by which the children of men can be brought back into the presence of our Father and God. The Lord has set His hand to restore all things as in the beginning, and by the administration of His Holy Priesthood, save all who can be saved, cleanse from the world the consequences of the fall and give it into the hands of His Saints. I am a witness of these things. How far short we may come of being what we should be, or of improving as fast as we should, matters not; this is the Kingdom of God, this is the way of life and salvation, and all who hearken to and receive it in their faith, and live it in their lives, will have the privilege of returning to their Father and their God; and none else will come into His presence. It is true that the spirits of all people will return to God who gave them, both Saint and sinner, but as to their staying there and becoming permanent settlers in His immediate presence is another question.

The practical part of the lives of the Saints in our day, and in former days on this earth or on other earths, is another part of the great subject of salvation. The faith of the people as a general thing is correct; but the lives of many of the Latter-day Saints are far from being what they should be. To be Latter-day Saints men and women must be strictly honest; they must observe that code of moral religion which is taught in the world and which is as good as can be taught. There are numbers of the human family who profess the religions of men who live the moral code acknowledged among them as strictly as men and women can do.

When we talk of the true Church of Christ we speak of a system of theology, the principles of which will bear upon every motive and act of mankind. If there is a fault in the people, it will make it manifest; if there is a weakness, it will be made apparent, for the Lord takes this course that His children may exhibit what is in them. In the latter days He will reveal the secrets of the hearts of the children of men. He is now doing this by breaking up the people here and there. He is leading them through circumstances to try them to the uttermost. If we are not tried in all things already, there is plenty of time yet for us to be so tried, even as Abraham was. Be patient, my brethren and sisters, for we shall all have the privilege of being tried to the uttermost if we are worthy. How many trials Abraham had, and how severe they were we have not been fully informed. A portion of his life has been committed to paper, and handed down to us, which we can read at our leisure. Whether he was tried as we are tried, and in as many ways as the Latter-day Saints are tried, I do not know. There is no question but that he was tried sufficiently to prove before his Father and God that he was worthy of the blessings he obtained—that he was worthy of the priesthood and the keys thereof—that he was worthy to receive the articles of truth, to dispense salvation to his father's house and to his friends and neighbors, and to all who would hearken to his counsels.

The Latter-day Saints are a very peculiar people, and they are led in a peculiar way. We are brought into circumstances so as to be a stumbling block to the nations, through the failings and weaknesses of the Latter-day Saints. Jesus was a stumbling block to the nation of the Jews, and to the generation in which he lived, and to all that

knew him, and how singular it is that Jesus Christ, at this late day, and at such a distance from the theatre of his operations, should have attained such celebrity and fame; even his disciples are not only canonized, but almost deified, and looked upon as though they were gods come down to dwell with men. Every circumstance connected with the Savior's life is looked upon as being divine. Christendom now acknowledge that Jesus was the Son of God; they look upon Him as God manifested in the flesh according to the New Testament; yet the generation in which He lived did not see these tokens of divinity which this generation recognize. To them He was "a root out of dry ground"—"a stumbling block," "a rock of offence." So with the Latter-day Saints. They are a stumbling block to this generation. The world see all their weaknesses and faults, and see no divinity in the work in which they are engaged. Yet this is not to be wondered at, inasmuch as the world could not see it in Jesus when he dwelt in mortality. We are looked upon as a low, degraded ignorant set of fanatics. This is the opinion of the great majority of the learned and refined world. Others say that our people are the dupes of a few. We do not claim to be very wise, but we do know that that portion of mankind called Christians in our day, who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, are grossly ignorant of His character, and of the means and way of salvation which He offers to the world. The Latter-day Saints, as a people, may not be so far advanced in the knowledge of many of the sciences, as their neighbors; but they are learning how to take care of themselves, which is one of the greatest arts known to man. When the most learned and scientific among men scrutinize their own lives and experience, they are under the necessity of acknowledging that they are faulty, weak, ignorant; they are "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

Instead of considering that there is nothing known and understood, only as we know and understand things naturally, I take the other side of the question, and believe positively that there is nothing known except by the revelations of the Lord Jesus Christ, whether in theology, science or art. The world receive information and light on great principles of science, and knowledge in the arts to subserve the hidden purposes of the Almighty, but they are ignorant of the source from whence it comes to them. They seek not to know God, whom to know is life everlasting. They seek not to know the source of their own existence, and of all light and truth. They are not willing to acknowledge His hand in all things; they are not willing to acknowledge His hand in anything; and for this the God of Heaven is displeased with them, and His anger is kindled against them. They have every evidence that can be asked that Joseph Smith was a prophet sent from God, yet they cannot acknowledge it; while at the same time, with the scriptures in their hands, they can but acknowledge the supremacy of the doctrine we preach over the dogmas of the age, and in the growth of this community in the face of a constant stream of abuse and persecution, gathering the poor from all nations, they must acknowledge the superior wisdom and power displayed, that cannot be attributed to man. The wisdom which God has given them teaches them better. It teaches them that a secret something, an invisible agency is evidently at work behind the curtain. What mortal has the power to call people from the ends of the earth? While Jesus Christ was in the flesh He did not manifest His power. How much power did He manifest over the people of the world in His day? Did He send His disciples to the nations and call His followers together from the ends of the earth by thousands? He did not. There is no doubt but that he had the power to call the people together; but he did not manifest it. The people saw no exhibition of this power when he was among them. But he is doing it now, and if it had been the time to do it in His day it could have been done by the power of the heavens through Him, as it is now done by the same power through Joseph Smith and his brethren. God is now displaying His power in a marvelous degree, whispering to the inmost souls of the children of men in foreign lands with a still, small voice, "flee to the mountains, for the day of the Lord is upon the wicked nations of Babylon;" and the cry: "come out of her, my people," has gone throughout the world. Do we improve as fast as we should? We do not im-