

EDITORIALS.

A FATAL BUT PREVALENT ERROR.

THE Congregational body is threatened with disruption. The Andover controversy, to which allusion has been made several times in these columns, is not confined within the walls of that college nor limited to the small circle of contending professors. It is not alone the question of "probation after death" which agitates the Congregational churches, but the limitation of doctrine by old lines and contracted forms. And this is disturbing other sects and societies in both hemispheres. Progress is a law of the universe. As society grows and knowledge increases, the human mind refuses to be bound by creeds which either impose tenets that reason rejects or place barriers in the way of advancing thought.

The Boston Herald, in an editorial on the Congregational dispute, remarks:

"If the denomination is to go back upon John Robinson's conviction that God has more truth to break out upon mankind than is garnered within the covers of an ancient book, it will gradually cease to be the influential denomination which it has been in the past history of New England, and will pry about in antiquarian circles for the mission which it has lost sight of in the real work of our own time."

The great hindrance to religious advancement is the notion, imbedded in the strata of all the prevalent creeds in Christendom, that God's truth in its entirety is bound up in the Bible. Any intimation to the contrary has met with such a storm of indignation that the audacious utterer of the heterodox thought has had hard work to shelter himself. "What is not found therein and cannot be proved thereby is not to be received as an article of faith." That is the substance of the almost universal tenet on that point. To substantiate this grave error, the Bible itself has been made to do most inconsistent duty. Passages have been quoted in support of the notion which not only do not bear it out when left to their plain meaning, but actually give an inference to the contrary. The whole tenor of Bible history and teaching is to the effect that God is a Revealer of truth to all who seek to Him in the right way and that He does not change with the lapse of ages. That He was and is and always will be an inexhaustible Fountain of light and knowledge. That He is no respecter of persons. That He does not confine His revelations to one class, nation, or race, nor put all His laws and precepts into one book.

The dogma of Scriptural completeness and the cessation of divine communication in the apostolic age, has prevented the enjoyment and progress of millions of God's sons and daughters, and erected a shade to shut out the light of heaven from shining upon the souls of men. It has been Satan's stronghold when the Almighty has had anything special to reveal to the earth's inhabitants. Investigation of the Book of Mormon has been prevented by the cry predicted in its pages: "A Bible! a Bible! we have got a Bible and there cannot be any more Bible!" The revelations of God through Joseph Smith, the great prophet of the nineteenth century, have been rejected without examination by the so-called Christian world, because the orthodox doctrine was and is that the Bible contains the whole word of God and therefore any purported later revelation must be untrue.

Yet, strange to say, the Hebrew Scriptures convey no such intimation as that. On the contrary, they contain positive predictions of further unfoldments of the divine economy, and owe their own existence to the principle of continued revelation. They are eloquent and cheering in their promises of latter-day revelations which are to exceed all former manifestations of Deity to man. Both the Old and New Testaments foreshadow these outpourings from on high, and point to the last dispensation as the grand culmination of God's work for human redemption, attended with such glory and heavenly disclosures as never before have been vouchsafed to mortals.

The idea that God's saving truth is all comprehended in a few books, which humanly appointed compilers selected as inspired out of many works that were in the aggregate but a small sprinkling of the great showers of divine revelations, is one of the most preposterous of the crude and foolish notions of modern theologians, and to imagine that the perennial stream of light and truth from the Eternal Source was dammed up forever when the Apocalypse was written, seems a most childish hallucination. The Enemy of man, the Arch-Deceiver, has fostered this error from the time it was engendered in be-lighted brains, which, receiving no divine communication themselves, imagined it would never be bestowed upon others. It has been an efficient aid in his work of keeping mankind from God. As long as people believe that Deity will not answer, so long will they refrain from asking that they may receive.

It seems almost incredible that men of intellect and piety can bring them-

selves to believe that "God has no more truth to break out upon mankind." That the world is to be left to doubt, dissension and those gropings in the dark which constitute the discussions of orthodox divines. That the Almighty Father of the race has nothing further to disclose to His children, when they have advanced through the schooling of centuries, than the glimmerings of divine truth shed upon the undeveloped nations of bygone ages. Why, even to make those flashes of light from the Eternal Sun clear to the clouded minds of modern sectaries, new revelation is absolutely necessary. They are laughing over some of the simplest principles of true theology, and fighting with fanatic zeal against doctrines that a child might understand but for their preposterous rules of Biblical interpretation.

"God has more truth to break out upon mankind" than is inscribed in all the sacred books in the world. He designs to restore all that is lost and to reveal things kept hid "from the foundations of the world." The earth is to be filled with the knowledge of God. It will come down from the upper deep like a flood. Things past, present and to come, precious truths from the jeweled storehouse of infinity, will be richly bestowed. Darkness and ignorance will be chased away before the streams of light from the regions of immortality. This is the "dispensation of the fulness of times," and the work of restitution and the grand consummation commenced when the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith the Seer, broke the silence of ages, and opened a new era of revelation to man.

This work is the preparer for that which is to come. Until the world receives what has been communicated for their obedience they will not obtain more. They who accept and are guided by the few things made known, will lay hold upon the keys to unlock that which is in store. And that store is ALL TRUTH. Wherever it exists, inside or outside of books Christian, heathen, pagan or infidel, in the heights above or the depths beneath, it is all for the son or daughter of God who obeys the everlasting Gospel and comes into spiritual communion with the Father. But while the dogma is held that there is to be no more revelation and that one book contains all that God has for His children on earth, the world will stumble in the dark, and the blind leading the blind, both will fall into the ditch together.

A FLIMSY OBJECTION:

Nobody expected that the movement for Statehood would be approved of by the malignants and political adventurers who have so long misrepresented Utah and sought to build themselves up on the downfall of its builders and friends. Their opposition is not regrettable. The promoters of the present effort, we have no doubt, are pleased rather than chagrined at the anger it has provoked.

There is one objection, urged against the action of the gentlemen who have been prominent in the work, which is well enough to mention, that there may be no misunderstanding by persons not well posted on political tactics. It is in regard to the manner in which the movement has been set on foot. It is claimed that it was out of the regular order, and the intimation is thrown out that it is illegal and indicative of ignorance of political affairs on the part of those gentlemen. This is a very lame and flimsy objection.

The People's Party includes the great masses of the bona fide residents of this Territory. It has polled more than five times the number of votes cast by all the opposing factions combined. Its Central Committee represents five-sixths of Utah's population. In the absence of any legislative authority for calling the people together, no body could have been more appropriate than that Committee to issue a call for meetings to express the popular will. The invitation extended was not merely to one party or to any particular organization, but to all classes, parties, factions and political bodies without distinction. It was a free thing. Nobody was compelled to take part in it, nobody was excluded. If any person or faction objected to assisting in the movement, that was all right, there was no compulsion.

The masses of the people chose to heed the call. They met in conventions in every county and chose delegates to the Constitutional Convention, which is to be held on Thursday, June 30th. Those delegates from all parts of the Territory were legitimately selected to express the popular voice. If the several political factions, which are small in numbers but loud of speech, did not think proper to secure representation in the Constitutional Convention by taking part in the Mass Conventions, that was no fault of the vast majority. And this is not a factional movement. It is an uprising of the people as citizens of the United States and of the Territory of Utah, who desire and have long desired to obtain those rights and privileges which are attached to citizenship and of which they have been heretofore deprived.

The right of the people to assemble to petition for redress of grievances and to claim their constitutional prerogatives is guaranteed by the supreme law of the land. It is, moreover, inherent. It naturally belongs to citizens and they cannot be rightfully deprived of it. Those who seek to deny it speak in the spirit of tyranny. Those who oppose this right on the flimsy pretence set forth, expose their own ignorance of fundamental political principles while they charge lack of understanding upon others.

The idea that the people of any Territory of the Union cannot proceed to the formation of a State government and seek for admission into the Union, without an enabling act from Congress or some formal authority bestowed upon them by some governmental power, is a grave and baseless political heresy. There is nothing in the Constitution or laws of the United States requiring it, and there is no recognized and established doctrine which inculcates it. As for "precedent," that runs in two directions. States have been admitted into the Union after an enabling act was passed by Congress, other States have been organized by the people and admitted without an enabling act. In either case the right of the people to assemble in their own way and by means of their own selection, to frame and adopt a Constitution and petition for admission into the Union, has not and cannot be lawfully or consistently denied.

The great thing to be effected is the expression of the popular will. That can best be reached at the polls. By free and secret ballot every citizen endowed with the elective franchise may show his sentiments on the momentous question. This opportunity fully afforded, there can be no valid objection offered to the movement. That is the pivotal point. The people have the right to give such an expression of their will. If not, they are not freemen. He who seeks to stifle free speech or to chain the hands of citizens holding the ballot, whatever may be his pretensions is neither a Democrat nor a Republican.

This movement, however it may terminate, is perfectly legitimate. Let no one allow demagogues and conspirators to throw dust in his eyes on that question. If they do not choose to support it or if they want to fight it, that is their privilege. They can abstain from doing anything, or they can move actively in opposition. But that will not affect the integrity of the movement nor render it illegitimate or weak. It is not partisan, it is not sectarian, it is not ecclesiastical. It is political and general and for all who choose to combine in its aid. It is conducted on the ground of inherent and constitutional rights, and it cannot be successfully assailed on the foolish, illiberal and un-republican ground assumed by those who have undertaken to throw mud at it. They must try some sounder position.

THE HOME COAL COMPANY'S DIFFICULTY.

A FEW days since we published a statement taken from the Park City Record, to the effect that the miners employed by the Home Coal Company, in the vicinity of Coalville had gone out on strike.

As we understand the cause of the occurrence, it is, in substance, that the company declined to accede to a demand on the part of the workmen as a body, to reinstate one of the men who had been discharged. The cause of his dismissal is alleged to be insubordination. Those who demand his re-instatement claim that he was discharged without sufficient cause.

Not being acquainted with the details, it may be that we are not fully in a position to form a safe or correct view of the merits of the controversy. If, however, the leading facts are as stated there should be no difficulty in reaching a just conclusion in relation to the right of the matter so far as they are concerned. There is no doubt that the company has the right to select their employees, a matter in which they cannot rightly be subjected to coercion from any quarter whatever. A step on the part of a body of workmen to invade this right of choice is subversive of the principle of freedom which should prevail everywhere in the business and other relations of life.

It is to be hoped that if this be the basis of the disagreement the men will reconsider the step they have taken. The movement is an injury to themselves, to the company crippled by it, and to the public whose source of coal supply is thus to some extent curtailed. In fact we can see no good feature in the affair.

At this distance it would appear that the parties concerned should be influenced by the advice of friends who have their welfare at heart. Strikes are a novelty in Utah, among those professing to be Latter-day Saints. That is presumably the status of those involved in the difficulty in question. In view of the fact that the means of equitable adjustment by arbitration is so abundant and in every way reliable it is strange, indeed, that there should be a prolonged dispute. If a settlement has not already been reached, it is to be hoped, for the sake of all concerned, one will be effected at an early date.

FORTY-THREE YEARS.

THE Ruler of the Universe is able to choose among many different ways, the one in which He wills to bring to pass His purposes. If Joseph the Seer had lived, and led the Saints to the mountain refuge in which, by the light of prophecy, he saw them multiply and become a great people, they could not but have grown and increased with marvelous rapidity, in knowledge, numbers and faith. By the aid of his seer's gift that so often opened the heavens and brought down within the reach of men the choicest stores of eternal truth, he would have been able to advance his people in spiritual perfection with a progress not perhaps surpassed since the city of Zion was translated.

But there was a work for Joseph to do in another world than this, and before the charges were trumped up, on which he was confined in Carthage jail, he had made complete the preparations for his departure. He had received from the heavens every key necessary to the continuance of the work of the dispensation of the fulness of times, and had confided those keys to his brethren, together with a knowledge of their use.

Until Joseph had done this, his life, so often assailed, and so constantly in jeopardy, could not be taken by any agency of earth or evil; but when he had sufficiently qualified his brethren to take up and continue the work of the last dispensation of the Gospel which is to be introduced among men, he was permitted to be slain.

This makes him seem to be even more like the Savior than he would have been had his life been spared to perform the work of leadership that has been done so well in planting the Saints where he in vision saw them grow to extensive proportions. The work in which he was engaged was the work of God, and being such, will be well done, no matter what or who may be the human agencies employed to forward it. That this is true is plainly shown by what has been accomplished in the forty-three years that have elapsed since he was martyred. On this the anniversary of his assassination, we see enough to know that his single prediction concerning the coming of his people to the Rocky Mountains, and their growth there, stamp him as a great prophet.

A STANDING DUTY.

"THE poor ye have with you always." This saying of the Savior like many of his brief words of wisdom has come to be an adage. It carries with it the color of an obligation. It implies a perpetual earthly duty. If there will always be poor people, there will always be the need of alms. While there is a soul suffering from lack of necessities, the supplied disciples of Christ are required to impart of their substance to relieve the distress.

Provision for the wants of the poor is one of the established institutions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The tithing of its members is to be used, in part, to succor the needy. The Bishops and Teachers are specially required to see that no one within their jurisdiction suffers lack. Throughout all the Stakes of Zion this is recognized as an essential part of the polity of the Church. In no section of the world of the same extent is there so little real poverty as in the Territory of Utah, and this is because of the organized methods existing for the support of those who are unable to support themselves.

This is a matter of congratulation, and, considering the large numbers of people who are brought here from the toiling masses of the Old World, it is not a little remarkable. In the first place the policy here is to afford the industrious an opportunity of self-sustenance. Industry is a recognized "Mormon" virtue. "A lazy Mormon" is a phrase involving self-contradiction. When individuals through age, accident, sickness or any infirmity are unable to supply their own needs, and relatives are unable or unwilling to support them, they have claim on their co-religionists and the Church of which they are members. It is no degradation to receive necessary assistance, but it is a disgrace to shirk labor and eat the bread of benevolence in voluntary idleness.

One of the regular methods of obtaining means for the especial benefit of the poor is the monthly fast offering. On the first Thursday of every month a fast is observed by the faithful Latter-day Saints, when all who can do so are expected to assemble in their respective wards for prayer and praise, for testimony and instruction. A free will offering is expected of at least the amount, in value or in kind, of the food that would have been consumed by the individual or the family if the fast had not been observed. President Brigham Young used to say that those who did not observe the fast on that day ought to contribute double the amount of food they consumed.

This is the kind of fast that God approved in olden times, as may be

seen from many passages in ancient scripture. It is that which He enjoined upon His people in the latter days. How many of the Saints observe it "according to the spirit and meaning thereof!" There are some who are just as particular to make their offerings as they are to observe the fast. There are others who keep the latter but forget or neglect the former. And there are many who omit both. Statistics tell the tale. Figures expose the facts.

We have been permitted to look over a tabulated report of the Tithing Department, showing the amounts received in the various Wards from public sources for the benefit of the poor, and the amounts of relief asked of that Department to make up deficiencies. From this we learn that during the half year just ending there have been paid for the poor in the various Wards and Stakes of Zion: From fast offerings, \$10,690.29; from the Ladies' Relief Societies, \$8,811.91; from other sources (contributions from sundry individuals) \$4,291.34; making a total of offerings for the poor during the past six months of \$21,793.57. This, it should be understood is exclusive of private benevolence and of amounts given from the tithing. The number of persons reported needing regular support is 4,937 and the sum asked of the Presiding Bishopric to be appropriated from the Tithing Fund in addition to these regular donations is \$25,432.02. Put the two gross amounts together and we have a grand total for the poor during the past six months of \$47,125.59. This, exclusive of county and city charities, and of private benevolence in which "the right hand knoweth not what the left hand doeth," is not a bad showing as purely Church help for the poor of Utah.

But the amount demanded of the General Tithing Fund to meet requirements in the respective Wards is quite disproportionate to the sum of the last offerings. And these certainly do not represent the value of the food consumed in six days by the members of the Church. A little reflection will show that either many of the Saints neglect their fast offerings, or that they do not donate according to the rule. Tithing help is required from some of the Stakes in sums from three to eight times the total of the fast offerings. One Ward in the south received \$14.72 fast donations and asks for \$250.00 from the tithing. One Ward in a stake east of this city reports no donations whatever for the poor, and asks for \$50. Two or three populous towns report very small fast offerings and ask for large amounts for the poor, showing that while there is help required it does not come from the neighbors of those in need. Several Wards make no reports at all, others report "No poor and no donations."

This is all wrong. If we desire to observe the monthly fast in the right spirit, our fast offerings should be given for the poor. If we only abstain from one meal, the food or its value in something else available, which should be donated, would be sufficient to sustain the regular dependents upon Church support with little or no demand upon the Tithing Fund. Let persons familiar with the statistics of their own Wards figure on this, and see how near a regular, honest fast offering from every self-supporting household would come to supplying the needs of the poor of the neighborhood.

It is quite a mistake to think that because in a certain Ward there are no persons needing aid for their support, no fast offerings should be collected. Such a Ward in our opinion ought to show up larger on the list than a poorer Ward. The support of the poor must not be sectional. The means collected in a Ward that has no poor, should be disbursed in a neighboring or other Ward where the poor abound. The obligation in reference to the poor is not obliterated by local lines or lessened by Ward peculiarities. The poor of the whole Church are to be helped and the "stranger within our gates" should not be neglected. This matter should come home to each individual family and member of the Church, and past neglect ought to be remedied by future action. The Lord has said to His Church:

"For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves."

"Therefore if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my Gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell being in torment."—Doc. & Cov. p. 370.

"And inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor ye will do it unto me."—p. 171.

It was one of the characteristics of the Zion of Enoch when it arrived at its perfection, that "there was no poor among them." This will be the situation again in Zion when it is prepared for the presence of the Redeemer, like a bride adorned for her husband. But now we have the poor always with us, and we shall have until the heavenly order is established on earth. And the duty of those who have to administer to them who have not is a binding obligation, and there is no more appropriate manner of imparting general help, apart from tithing and private charity, than by the monthly donations on fast days which form an essential part of the acceptable worship of those occasions. Do not forget the poor!