

EDITORIALS

THE WORLDS, THEIR CONDITION AND THEIR DESTINY.

SHORTLY after the lectures delivered in this city by Mr. Proctor, the eminent astronomer, we offered some evidences of the Divine Hand in the order and government of the stellar universe, and of the necessity of revelation as a guide to science. We also touched on the formation of worlds from a scriptural standpoint, and promised to return to the subject, particularly in relation to their future.

According to the theory of the best astronomers including Mr. Proctor, the worlds, like their inhabitants, are creatures of time and nature, subject to decay and death, and differing, in their changes, from short-lived humanity chiefly by the periods in which they pass to their doom. While a few decades comprehend the brief career of a mortal man, millions of ages roll away before the living globes become defunct and incapable of supporting animal or vegetable organisms. But the same event happens to all in their season, and the death of a world as the decease of a human being is but a question of time.

The moon is described as a dead world, destitute of water, without an atmosphere and animated by no living thing. Mars is believed to be in the stage of decrepitude, advancing towards its end, but still able to support life, and with many conditions somewhat similar to those of our globe. Venus is still nearer in likeness to Earth, and other planets are in their earlier stages, while the Sun, though older than all of our system in years, is yet in its infantile condition, its immense size requiring a vastly longer period for the cooling process than any of its circling family of planets and their satellites.

Science, so called, makes such grievous mistakes, the established theories of one age being often disproved in another, that the question naturally arises in the midst of its calculations, and deductions, and alleged demonstrations, what are the facts in regard to the worlds? Is it true that any of them die? And if so, do they perish for ever? Here is shown the need of something more than human research and natural reason. One look at the material universe in the light of eternal life, and with the eyes of the immortal spirit quickened by the rays from the Eternal Sun, will disclose more than all the monster telescopes of modern times, and unfold more than all the studies of ages. But is there any such revealing power, and has any mortal ever been so blessed as to receive such manifestations? Yes, the power exists and all beings are more or less susceptible to its influences; but some are naturally of easier impression than others, while a few have been filled with the divine illumination and have gazed upon the creations of God in their immensity, variety and beauty, beholding not only their surfaces, but describing the very particles of which they are composed as well as their inhabitants, and their motions, and their glory.

Among those favored persons were Enoch, Abraham and Moses. It was by the spirit of revelation that Moses wrote the account we have on record concerning the beginning of this earth. By the same spirit Abraham obtained his knowledge of the heavenly bodies which history says he taught to the Egyptians. And by that eternal essence Enoch saw the innumerable hosts of stars, and suns, and systems, which glitter in the firmament and move in their immensity in the boundless regions of space—without a discord or a jar. The record of the manifestations to those ancient worthies was lost to mankind, but has been measurably restored through that great Seer and Prophet of the latter times, Joseph Smith, and a portion of it can be found in "The Pearl of Great Price."

From this we learn that the worlds, created by the power of God, through faith acting on matter, do have their times and seasons and then some of them pass away; that they are governed by fixed laws; that one system revolves round another, the higher governing the lower, and all sustaining relationships to each other as to the times of their revolutions, the periods of their continuance and their general condition; that they are numbered unto God but innumerable to man; that the

Creator's works never cease, but as one system fills its periods and purpose, another comes forth by the power of the Almighty, whose spirit is in and through them all, and who can discern them all to their inmost depths, every atom being clear to his omniscient gaze; that a man quickened by this spirit can measurably behold them on the divine principle; that the worlds are peopled with the offspring of Deity in their various stages of progress towards divine perfection.

The infinitude of stars which modern discoverers by means of improved telescopes has brought into notice, and which writers and lecturers try so hard to bring to some extent within the comprehension of the multitude, is graphically described in a few words by Enoch, who lived in the earliest times known to the Adamic race. When gazing upon the numberless orbs in the vast domains of the Eternal he exclaimed:

"And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea and millions of earths like this, it would not be a beginning to the number of thy creations; and thy curtains are stretched out still."

These grand ideas were made known through the Prophet Joseph Smith, who has been proclaimed an ignoramus by learned divines. Yet there are truths proclaimed in the revelations he brought forth, and that too at a time and in a region when the recent discoveries of astronomical science were not diffused, which are in advance of the learning of his age and will give a key to the unlocking of many mysteries of creation. According to his doctrine there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of God's power, having filled their mission in the universe. Some of them destroyed by fire, may have formed fragmentary portions of newly organized globes, and have no doubt been a puzzle to the geologists in their computation of the ages required to effect the conditions existing when examined. But the earth on which we dwell is one of the orbs that will not perish. It will pass through the ordeals set for the worlds, and will survive. The fiery trial will not destroy it, but prepare it for higher conditions and for a higher order of inhabitants. The astronomers' doctrine of the death of worlds is true, in the main, if not in all its details. But the death which to them is the end of men as well as worlds is not a real finality. There is something after death, it is the resurrection. Here again we are indebted to revelation for an understanding of that which is beyond the grasp of science. And it is modern revelation too, that makes this matter plain. We quote from the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And the end shall come, and the heaven and the earth shall be consumed and pass away, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth." p. 134.

"And again I say unto you, the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation and transgresseth not the law. Wherefore, it shall be sanctified; yea notwithstanding it shall die it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the righteous shall inherit it. For notwithstanding they die, they also shall rise again a spiritual body." p. 281.

It is quite likely, when the glorified and regenerated earth shall come forth in the effulgence of its own glory, its latent light all developed into such lustre that there will be no need for the rays of sun or moon or twinkling star, nor of any artificial illumination, that the learned astronomers of some lower planet, if able to see the celestialized earth, blazing like a sea of glass mingled with fire, will conclude that its condition is such that no human beings could inhabit it. There are states of being that are not dreamed of in the philosophy of modern scientists, and worlds fitted for these various stages of personal existence—spiritual, earthly, disembodied, resurrected, celestial, terrestrial, telestial, etc., etc., and none of the species but one can be understood from comparison with the earth on which we dwell.

From all this it appears that a little revelation is a splendid addition to the sum of scientific knowledge, and a good balance wheel to the machinery of philosophical hypothesis. Blessed is he whose soul is sensitive to the vibrations of the spirit of truth! He is in communion with the light and life of the worlds. He is on the path that leads to the fullness of intelligence. And if he so order his life and so train his whole being that it will be responsive to the

whisperings of that divine emanation, he shall emerge from the darkness of human ignorance into the Sunlight of Eternal Glory, and see as he is seen and know as he is known. He shall be guided into all truth, step by step and day by day, till changed, quickened, celestialized, he shall stand on the plane of the Gods, and his eyes shall pierce to the essences of all things, spiritual and physical, and all eternity shall be open to his immortal vision.

GOD IN TEMPORAL AFFAIRS.

AT an annual meeting of Methodist ministers held recently in Springfield, Massachusetts, a lively debate occupied considerable time over the question of healings through faith. The idea was advanced that prayer was effectual for the healing of the sick, some cases, reports of which have appeared in the newspapers, being cited in proof. The Rev. Frederick Woods was one of the speakers in opposition to the doctrine, and he is reported as saying that "it would be as sensible for him to ask God for \$50,000 as for a sick man to pray for restoration to health. His theory was that God did not interfere in temporal matters at all, but only in things concerning the soul."

The Woods theory is the popular one. But is it not a little singular that a professing Methodist should avow such a belief. It is not only a distinct contradiction of the Bible, but of Methodist principles and teachings. Both the Old and the New Testaments are a record of God's dealings with mankind in relation to their temporal affairs, much more being said in the sacred record concerning them than about those things generally denominated spiritual. If "God does not interfere in temporal matters," then the Bible is false, and so also is Methodism which teaches belief in the Bible and in special providences in all things.

All the healings effected under the personal administration of the Savior were the result of faith. "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole," was his repeated declaration to the restored and rejoicing afflicted ones. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up," is the promise of the inspired Apostle. It was through faith and prayer that the Divine power was manifested in the temporal affairs of the House of Israel, and of the early Christians, and those who repudiate the interference of God in human affairs might as well throw aside the Bible at once, and, joining the ranks of the boldest infidels, pronounce the holy Book a fable.

That there are many infidels in the ranks of the orthodox ministry there is little doubt. The leaves and the fishes are the objects of their devotion. They labor simply for a living, not for the love of the truth or the faith of the gospel. But they generally manage to cover up their disbelief in a closer manner than Mr. Woods has done, and instead of denying that God governs and directs in human affairs, they make out that such Divine interferences as are related in the scriptures belonged to former ages and are now "no longer needed."

The Rev. Frederick Woods belongs to a very numerous class of modern thinkers, and has a perfect right to believe as he does, and to avow his belief, or rather unbelief, but we cannot see what place he can consistently occupy in any Christian church, and particularly within the Methodist communion.

"The truth is that the world—'Christians' included, have been drifting so long and so far away from God that living and active faith in Him has almost expired. 'When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?' might well be asked by Jesus of Nazareth, while yet in the flesh. The Latter-day Saints are denounced even by professing Christians for their belief that God does and should guide and govern in all things. People who profess to pin their faith to the Bible, denounce us for holding to one of the plainest and most essential of Bible doctrines. If God does not hear and answer prayer, and if His power is not exercised in the overruling of temporal matters as a consequence of faith and prayer, then is Bible history but a myth, and Bible doctrine but a delusion and a snare."

But we have great satisfaction in knowing and bearing testimony that the Woods idea is false and the Bible doctrine is true. In the gospel restored to the Latter-day Saints

there is the requirement that we "acknowledge the hand of God in all things." And that Divine Hand has been manifest so many times that we should be blind indeed if we could not discern it. Not only in healings and gifts and spiritual manifestations has the Lord demonstrated his existence and interposition to His people, but in their whole history and travels, trials and successes, the persecutions they have suffered and the victories they have won. It has all worked together for their good and His glory, and dovetailed into His plans, and the worst and vilest schemes and apparent triumphs of their enemies, have all been turned for blessing and benefit and tended to the accomplishment of God's purposes.

And as the Lord lives and reigns in the heavens above, the time is not far distant when He will demonstrate to all people that He also rules in the earth beneath, that kings and princes, and presidents and governors are in His hands, and that all their little doings will but contribute in the end to the accomplishment of His great designs!

THE LIQUOR BUSINESS.

WHILE the Federal power in Utah is being used to foster the sale of intoxicants, public sentiment in the East as well as in Utah is strongly in favor of legislation to curtail and prevent the traffic. The American says:

"In several of the State Legislatures, the question of the proper regulation of the liquor traffic is under consideration. That of Massachusetts contemplates a return to the prohibitory law which was in force a few years ago. That of Ohio has before it a measure whose general character is expressed by the statement of its authors that they mean to 'tax the business into respectability or out of existence.'"

In the Nebraska Legislature a new license law has been enacted, of which the following are the chief features:

"Section 1. The county board of each county may grant license for the sale of malt, spirituous and vinous liquors, if deemed expedient, upon the application by petition of thirty resident freeholders of the township or precinct, stating that the applicant is of a respectable character, he paying into the county treasury not less than \$500. No power to grant license in or within two miles of a city or village. Must publish notice two weeks; if no newspaper, post up notice—when objector, board grant a hearing; all evidence to be preserved in writing; and on appeal to district court, said evidence alone to be used. Applicant must give bond for \$500, approved by the board, that he will pay all fines, penalties, etc. Forfeits, \$25 for selling to minors; prohibited on general election days and Sunday. Forfeits, \$50 for selling or giving to Indians or habitual drunkards. Selling or giving without a license, guilty of misdemeanor, imprisonment for thirty days, or fine \$100 to \$500, and liable for all damages. Cities and villages shall have power to grant licenses and cities less than 1,000, \$500; first-class cities \$1,000. Petition must be signed by thirty freeholders of the ward; also may grant permits to druggists with heavy fines for violation. Married women can bring suits for damages and support of children injured by sale."

This was a House bill introduced by Mr. Slocumbe. In the Senate a bill was introduced by Mr. Perkins which passed and has become a law, to prevent treating or offering to treat to any intoxicating beverage in a saloon or any other public place where the same is kept for sale. Either treated or treatee is guilty of a misdemeanor. Penalty \$10 fine, or imprisonment in jail, or both, and the defendant shall pay to the court \$16, to be paid to attorney prosecuting the same; if no attorney, to be paid to school fund.

Utah would establish rules and regulations to prevent the spread of the great evils that curse the centres of civilization, but the local authorities are prevented by the force of Federal authority. And it is openly advocated by those who want to overturn the "Mormon" system of social life, that brothels, saloons, and kindred establishments should be encouraged, protected and multiplied as a corrective of the morals of those who believe in the doctrine of extended marriage. Is not this a truly "Christian" argument and a "civilized" condition of public affairs?

OUR POSITION ON AN EDITORIAL POINT.

IN a recent issue the Cleveland Herald devotes about one and a half of its long columns to a discussion of "The Mormon Problem," taking for its text a communication in the Chicago Times, from a "Gentle" correspondent, who came to "study the various features of Mormonism from the standpoint of an unprejudiced observer, to course the views and statements of any writer who does not join in intemperate attacks usually by those who treat of the "Mormon" question, do not obtain much from editors who float with the stream of public opinion.

It is the fashion to denounce "Mormonism" in the most vulgar style, to repeat baseless and unsubstantiated assertions about "Mormon" doctrines and doings, to call for the most coercive measures possible under the strongest government. But the Chicago Times correspondent treats the subject in a rational manner, puts some strong and irrefutable facts for general consideration, and abstains from invoking summary vengeance upon a people who are innocent—however mistaken they be considered—from the firm religious convictions.

We do not propose at present to quote the points made by the writer, nor to follow the Herald's attempt to reply to them, merely to correct the Herald's guard to the annexed assertion, we clip from the editorial reference.

"Generally speaking, the Mormons are Mormons because Church sanctions polygamy, away polygamy and the sect falls to pieces. So the Deseret News, official organ of the Church has frankly confessed."

We challenge the Cleveland Herald to produce any statement in the Deseret News to the above. The trouble with nearly all the writers who attempt to discuss the question is, that they do not know all about it—their own intelligence being rumor or the full falsehoods of persons who are in misrepresenting us—and if they do pay any attention to explanations or arguments on the "Mormon" side, they give them but a glance and jump at their own conclusions.

The very reverse of the statement is true in regard to reasons why converts are made the "Mormon" Church. Those who become convinced of truth of its first principles become "Mormons" spite of the fact that "the Church sanctions polygamy." This has been the case with nearly all its adherents. Strongly prejudiced against any marriage system in which they have been educated, and incensed particularly by "Mormon" marriage in consequence of public rumor, men and searching after truth, hear the gospel preached by the Elders of the Church and are struck with beauty, simplicity and force, compare what they hear in Scriptures and find them to be true in every respect. Enquire the marriage part of our results in the same way. The struggle between prejudice and conviction, between the opinion of the world and the force of truth with the honest-hearted soul and conviction gain the victory.

Baptism into the Church is a quest upon faith and true repentance, is followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in such a manner that the recipient is established in the doctrine, and is possessed of testimony that nothing but a shake or remove. This influence every place and every nation the invariable effect of obeying the first principles of our gospel so peaceful, happy, purifying and powerful that it is so convincing to the soul. By its light the revelations concerning marriage are studied, prayed over, and in spite of tradition, training, custom and world's opposing, prejudice, way and celestial marriage, being plurality of wives, with its lasting covenants, its bonds of promises, and exaltation and reaching beyond the grave and the joys, hopes and redemption, immortality and eternity, become part of the believer's creed which mortal power can remove from the soul.