

Written for this Paper.

THE CONTRAST AND THE WARNING.

It seems somewhat of a hopeless task to secure any general unanimity of opinion in society, whatever the subject may be; judicial minds are rare, and to weigh the evidence for and against is not the ordinary habit of mankind.

This was brought forcibly to reflection during our late election. The two great parties (as they are called) are about in the same relative proportion in Utah as in the country at large; but why one half the population should conclude in favor of one policy and the other half, or nearly so, in favor of the other, is one of those things which are undiscovered. It used to be said that "Truth is in a well," and probably that is so deep that but few have the ability to draw the precious thing from thence, or maybe the few only can afford the time or have anxiety enough concerning it to make any effort.

Surely it is not all self interest which determines whether one is a Republican and another is a Democrat; why one or other is all awry in intellect and the other possesses a clearer conception of right. The difference is just as radical in cultured men as it is among the masses, so it would appear as if neither experiment nor experience had given a reliable answer as to which is really the best for society at large, leaving out the value of local issues as of but little consequence in comparison with the mightier interests of the whole.

If no demonstration is possible, common sense would seem to suggest the propriety, nay the advantage, of superseding the old issues by newer ones equally important, and yet possible of solution. Or will further educational opportunity give the preponderance to one side, so as to overwhelm the other and make the mental conflict complete?

The argument cannot be too often presented from the standpoint of an onlooker that however important controversy may appear to be on national issues or policy, it seems the wisest child's play to make this an overmastering question in regard to local affairs in which there is nothing involved. Probably the blindest would admit that men selected for position as senators or representatives in a national congress should have ideas of their own or be instructed of their electors on the most absorbing of questions. But why? a mayor, an alderman, a city councilor, a policeman, or a fireman should find position on these irrelevant issues is a strange anomaly. If it could be shown or proved that a man would be more successful or efficient because of political ideas or bias, it would be understandable. But no such thing is even claimed, or public action would surely justify itself and elect the proper—the effective, partisan every time.

That was a wise decision which left politics out of local school affairs, or desired it. But where the reason exists in the one case and hides itself in the other, greater wisdom must determine; unless it is that only the few feel competent on education, but the many in politics are self-sufficient enough to believe they can fill any position in the gift of a blinded or hypnotized people.

If men were selected of undoubted probity, men who would take pride in or seek to glorify their city or state, it would be more in accordance with the methods of man in every other department of human affairs and business. No man employs a carpenter, a blacksmith or artisan of any kind because his ideas of politics are either original or good second-hand, and no intimation permits men in business to place those in charge of their interests purely on the strength of a vote or because he was "a hard worker" in the ranks of party. This intuity is carefully reserved for politics, when in its moments of delirium commits a crime to be repeated of when the exciter, but has yielded to a bitter if useless reflection.

It may be that the newness and novelty of political duty and action will account for much of the past; that intoxication was a natural resultant of the conditions. If so, our "appeal is from Philip drunk to Philip sober," and after a little time and experience, sobriety of manner, expression and action, will demonstrate that when the political body "was a child it spake as a child and understood as a child, but when it attains to an assured manhood it will put away childish things."

However clear a conclusion may appear to some, disappointment is very likely to supervene when they find how difficult it is to correct or convert an opponent. If we may "compare temporal things with spiritual," the illustration is wonderfully effective. In the domain of politics it may be asked whether it is true that "the agitation of thought is the beginning of wisdom;" but we know that converts from party are not very numerous in the heat of battle, and when converts are made whose intensity of expression tells the story, there is often doubt as to whether a becoming modesty would not be more or better evidence than that which is generally exhibited. To be sure, it is no discredit to accept the right, but many sudden political conversions seem to spring more from the love of the "loaves and fishes" than from any very decided change of heart. In the great field of religious propagation, and in the political, the best converts have generally been from the ranks of the untaught, from those who seeing the inconsistencies of sectarian partisanship had concluded to avoid hurry, and wait from some source the manifestation of the truth. The chronic sectarian is hardly ever converted; he is almost impregnable to argument or to authority; he inherited his faith and creed; "it was good enough for his father it was good enough for him," or as the old English voter said, "his father always had voted the blue, and he intended to vote the blue."

So, many a hopeful man having received the truth has gone forth rejoicing to his kindred and his friends, expecting their ready acceptance of the welcome news. But disappointment was almost always the result. Dear though it might be to one, it was questionable, nonsensical or unnecessary to the other. St. Paul cautiously asked in the olden times as to "who had made the early converts to differ from others," and he more than intimated that there was a subtle something

which had predetermined the outcome for itself.

Now, there is somewhere a prophecy of coming unanimity in religious matters. We do not know of any positive declaration in regard to politics save as an inferential deduction, but it seems as if when men are more passive or become more controversial, some authoritative word may come to men on things political, as the word came to young Joseph near seventy years ago, that "all the churches had gone astray, none were divinely acknowledged, or had the requisite authority." So some day it may come to Israel in regard to political sectarianism; it may be shown to them that they are "all gone astray," and that while they may be used in the divine economy yet are they without authority, save it be momentary, and are as powerless for national salvation as is religion in the world as systematized, efficient for the salvation and exaltation of the human race. It is conceded by all Israel and perchance by others, that "the Constitution was given by inspiration," and it was further intimated that it would yet be preserved by those who cherish that grand and glorifying truth. But when that day comes (as come it will) no old partisan political organization will be the instrument. They do not comprehend its genius, they do not know how to apply its principles, any more than sectarianism with its multitude of forms, ceremonies and faith comprehends the Gospel or can apply its powers according to the spirit and intent of its great Founder, "to whom be glory for ever and ever."

Present association with parties is but an educational test; one long needed perhaps, for the people have not fully learned to "put no trust in the arm of flesh;" they are not fully satisfied that "when they have asked for bread they have been given a stone, and that when they have asked for fish they have been given a serpent." Promises made by political chiefs and parties are as little to be relied upon as the promises of priests and creeds. Even where they mean well, they are controlled more by expediency than by principle, as this long-suffering community have proved, "to these many years." Not that they should be denied the poor satisfaction of repentance, if it is genuine and proves its sincerity by their work; but up to the present time the Shakespearean saying, "A plague on both their houses," is applicable to "the two great parties," and but little can be expected from the small fry, until we can take the power into our own hands, and He whose right it is shall come to reign!

THE ORDINANCE OF CONFIRMATION.

The News is in receipt of the following communication:

POCATELLO, Idaho,
November 14, 1895.

Will you please answer the following:

1. "We lay our hands upon your head, and confirm you a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and confer upon you, or say unto you, receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Your correspondent holds that the above is right.

2. "We lay our hands upon your head, and seal upon you the Holy Ghost."

3. "We lay our hands upon your head,