

to mining men. It would be infinitely better for them to have those lands under their own direct control in a state capacity. And the State of Utah ought to get into the van of progress by securing the cession of public lands at an early date as practicable. On second thought of those who might have felt adversely at first, and reviewing all the circumstances carefully, Judge King's bill ought to call for unanimous support from the people of this State and adjoining commonwealths, where the people usually recognize and accept a good obance when it is offered.

### PECULIAR IDEAS OF RELIGIONISTS

The peculiarities of many religionists who claim to draw their conceptions of religion from the Bible have multiplied the various sects of Christianity until there are now the embodiment of disunion and disunion, instead of the compact organization formed by the Lord as the true Christian Church. Men, being "driven about by every wind of doctrine," give conclusive evidence in their denominational church associations of the universal apostasy of which the early Apostles spoke. The key to all this division, alleged to be based on the Bible, is that men have preferred to interpret the Scriptures, or give particular prominence to one feature and ignore another, instead of accepting the plain statement of the Bible as the rule of practice.

An illustration of this is given in the dissentient views relative to the ordinance of baptism by water. There is no question as to the meaning of the Greek word translated baptism in the New Testament being immersion, or that the Savior and His Apostles required candidates for baptism to be "born of the water," to be "buried with Christ by baptism," to be "planted" in the watery element in likeness of His resurrection. The New Testament record is very plain. Yet there are very many professing Christians who believe baptism by immersion to be non-essential to members of Christ's Church, forgetting that its abolition is a work of man and not of any warrant in divine revelation. These people are encouraged in this view by eloquent and popular preachers who are either willfully ignorant of the historical facts or who willfully pervert them. For instance, the Rev. V. Marshall Law, a popular preacher of Oakland, Cal., in his sermon last Sunday on the preceding in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, refers to there being 3,000 members added to the Church in that day, and says:

I want you to notice that this great number makes it impossible that all these should have been immersed. For had the whole Twelve begun at 10 o'clock and baptized steadily each a convert every two minutes, it would have taken until 7 o'clock in the evening to do the baptizing alone. To suppose this is absurd, for it was not in the power of human endurance to do it, and furthermore there was no water deep enough anywhere about Jerusalem. They were undoubtedly baptized by the most hastily devised form of sprinkling, for

no set preparations had been made for such a wholesale baptism.

Mr. Law's misstatement of history is so palpable that it is a wonder he would venture to make it, even in defense of his man-made dogma of sprinkling for baptism. He says there was no water deep enough anywhere about Jerusalem. In this the Apostle John and others contradict him. There were many pools in Jerusalem; the Apostle John names one—John 4:2-4—where a "great multitude" of people waited to go into the water when the angel troubled it. This was the pool of Bethesda, which the Apostle says was by the sheep market; it is situated within the gates of Jerusalem, near the St. Stephens gate and the temple of Omar, and is 460 feet in length by 130 in breadth. The existence of this one pool, to say nothing of others, disposes of Mr. Law's statement on that point.

There is another feature in the quotation, regarding the ability of the Twelve to do the baptizing in that time, and to endure the effort. On this point, the assertion of Mr. Law shows that he does not understand what he is talking of. The Latter-day Saints practice baptism by immersion, and it is no uncommon occurrence for them to baptize seven to eight hundred people in half the time the gentleman gives, and for two persons to do the work. So that there would have been no difficulty for the Twelve baptizing at once to complete the ceremony for the whole 3,000 converts and then have to spare more than half the time allowed by Mr. Law; instead of allowing 30 baptisms to the hour by one person, actual practice suggests 150 or over without exhaustive effort. The disparity between these estimates is such as occurs between that made by one who does not and one who does know how to baptize.

Again, there is no statement in the record which says that only the Twelve did the baptizing, or, indeed, that any of these performed the ordinance. It might have been and probably was done by other disciples; for there were many others, since Jesus had sent out at least two quorums of Seventy before His death, for this very purpose. So the assertion that there was neither time nor persons enough to baptize the 3,000 by immersion is seen to have no warrant in scripture; while if any other mode had been followed the command of the Lord would not have been complied with—a course the Apostles did not follow. As a matter of fact, baptism by immersion, properly performed, requires but little more effort or time on the part of the person performing the ordinance than does sprinkling; but it is the Lord's way, while the other is not.

Another statement of Mr. Law may be named here, that "electricity is God," or as he also puts it, that "electricity is undoubtedly God's very own body." This statement is made with reference to Christ. Like the gentleman's other assertions, it is denied on most excellent authority. Jesus, when His disciples supposed a spirit stood before them, told them His body was of "flesh and bones." The words of the Master are better authority on this point than the vagaries of

man. Electricity is one of the means by which God operates, but is not Deity.

Such peculiar religious views, which are subversive of the Bible and of true Christianity, although they may be sincerely held by people who have not learned better, yet have been a prolific source of disputes and quarrels, and a potent means of spreading infidelity, because of the contradictions they involve, and which tend to throw doubt on the scriptures among those not familiar with the spirit and letter of the latter. The Church established by Christ, the true Christian Church, has no such disagreements in vital principles.

### NOT CHINESE INSCRIPTIONS.

On Monday the San Francisco Chronicle published the following dispatch from Hermosillo, Mexico:

A rock recently discovered in the mountains of Magdalena district, state of Sonora, which is covered with Chinese inscriptions, has just been visited by Sen Yup, a well educated Chinese of Guaymas. He says the inscriptions are Chinese, but are somewhat indistinct. He made a copy of them and has translated enough of the lines to show that the writing was probably inscribed on the rock at least 2,000 years ago.

There are ten lines of characters on the part of the rock in view, and some of the lines may be still buried under the earth. There are ancient and Chinese tombs and monuments to the north of Magdalena, near the mining camp of Jacobs. These have never been explored.

Sen Yup asserts that in the history of China there is a tradition that an exploring expedition, divided into eighteen parties, landed on the western coast of what is now Mexico, over twenty centuries ago.

There are several slight inaccuracies in the foregoing, which show that the stone discovered is not covered with Chinese inscriptions of ancient date, and that if Sen Yup made the statements credited to him he is not as well educated as claimed, particularly in the legendary lore of his own country. In the first place, the tradition that he refers to is that when the Chinese had a sea-faring class of population, which they say was from 2,000 to 4,000 years ago, their ships made voyages to the north, landing along the Russian coast, the Aleutian islands, and even coasting for trade along a large body of land to the east which might be taken from the description to refer to northern North America, on the British Columbian coast. This is the broadest construction that can be given. But when the tendency of tradition to exaggerate historic achievements is considered, as well in Chinese records as with others which have a mythology, the stronger probability is that the Pacific ocean was not the great northern water referred to at all, but that it was the sea of Okhotsk, and the eastern land which stretched to the south on the other side of the broad waters was not North America, but the Kamchatkan peninsula; and it is not improbable that the tradition might be applied with still greater accuracy to the Yellow Sea and its islands and the Korean peninsula.