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SCRIPTURE AND COMMON SENSE.

We receive, frequently, questions to answer, that indicate either a disposition to start controversy or weakness of intellect that is pitiable. Some of them are founded upon isolated texts of anclent scripture, showing that the inquirers cling to the old sectarian notion that the Bible is "the only guide," and that instructions given by Jewish prophets to the people of their time and locality, are to be taken for present direction and to be followed implicitly as divine commands today.

The Latter-day Saints have the living oracles, who bear "the burden of the word of the Lord" just as much as did the prophets of old. And the word revealed now is for the present age, and adapted to existing circumstances and requirements. It needs no interpretation or private construction. If explanation is required, it can be had from those who declare the word. This is a great advantage over books, ancient or modern. The living word of God is the safe guide for the people to whom it is

"What was written aforetime was written for our learning," but that which comes by present revelation is "a more sure word of prophecy," whereunto the Saints of today would do well that they take heed, and not be so concerned about some obscure text which, when given, had a local signification written. On general principles there is perfect harmony between ancient and modern revelation. Every truth relating to the eternal salvation of mankind endures and applies to all generations. But in every dispensation there are instructions specially bearing upon its time and people, and these may have application to other dispensations or individuals.

Noah was told to build an ark. That is not a duty devolving upon anybody else. Moses was commanded to build a tabernacle, the pattern of which was revealed to him. That is no requirement to others. All the Hebrew prophets had particular and special missions, each for himself and not for another. To take the scripture referring to these things and apply them to ourselves, would be not only foolish but presump-

One of the needless questions now before us we will mention as a sample. The people of Judea were promised in the time of Malachi, that if they would obey the word of the Lord then delivered to them He would "rebuke the devourer for their sakes" so that "he should no longer destroy the fruits of their ground." A correspondent is anxious to know whether, in view of that promise, it would be right to kill ground squirrels, which are a great nuisance in his vicinity, causing much loss to farmers.

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This is a case of dead-word worship that illustrates our theme. Destructive pests may be rightly destroyed for self-preservation. It is not right to take animal life for mere sport. It is right to kill animals for food, and also when necessary, to preserve our lives and property. Also it is folly to expect the Lord to do anything for us that is proper and we are able to do for ourseives. Without the spirit of life that proceeds from Hlm, the seeds we now would not bring forth, 'in their kind." But we do not, if sane, expect Him to plant the seed, or irrigate the soil or do our harvesting.

In all the affairs of life, and in spiritual as well as temporal things, a little common sense, and the exercise or the reasoning powers which God has given us for use and development, will be found of more value than poring over some ancient scripture, given to people in other times and adapted to their partleular condition.

All the books that have been preserved relating to the dealings of God with mankind in the past, are of value b-youd price. But they are not to be worshipped as a fetish, nor regarded as the only guide for today. Dependence upon them and the diverse private int-repretations of them made by uninspired theologians, has involved Christendom in a web of inextricable confusion, that can only be escaped from by bursting it usunder, and receiving the pure rays of celestial light that come from present divine revela-

"REORGANIZED" CASCISTRY.

We have received from two of the Elders laboring in Michigan, a clipping from a paper published there, containing a communication from a "Josephlte" or "Reorganized church" representative, in which he uses the stereotyped arguments (?) of his associates, in opposition to the Church which was organized on April 6, 1830, and has continued uninterruptedly to the present time. The Elders are anxious that those attacks shall be met by the Dea-

eret News. If there was anything in them that was new or had not been replied to

time and space in disposing of them. But there is no profit in continually noticing such stale stories as those about "polygamy, blood-atonement, Adam-God, smoothest liars," &c, &c, with which some of the gentry who support the "Reorganization" delight to regale their audiences. We do not think our missionaries should take phins to discuss those objections of our opponents, but simply preach the Gos. pel in its purity, and let those who will, listen to the perversions of the adversaries of the Church.

There is one point put forth in the thade of the "Reorganized" assailant, however, which while it has been turned aside many times, may not be familiar to our friends who are new to the missionary field, and we will therefore briefly notice it. The position taken by the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is, that it has never been disorganized, and therefore there could have been no need of the "Reorganization" claimea to have been effected by the individuals forming the "Josephite" faction. The proclamation was made when the Church was fully established, that it was organized by the revelation and commandment of God, to continue and abide and "stand forever." It was 'not to be given to another people." It was to prevail over all things beneath the eternal heavens. The authority given to the First Presidency and to the Twelve Apostles was "for the last days and for the last time." The Lord told the Saints, "Fear not, little flock, the Kingdom is yours until I come,' And He further assured them that "The enemy shall not overcome," (See Doc. andw Cov., Sec. 27: 13; Sec. 35: 27;

Sec. 38: 9; Sec. 112: 30.) The decease of the Prophet Joseph Smith, while it disorganized the First Presidency, so to speak, did not and could not disorganize the Church. If it had that effect necessarily, then every time a President of the Church died or was removed for any cause the Church would become disorganized. That is a palpable absurdity and scarcely worth notice. But it is claimed by the "Reorganized" people that the Twelve, in an epistle seven years after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph

"We now, having it in contemplation soon to reorganize the Church according the original pattern." Mill. Star, Vol X, p. 86.

The quibble that is raised on this fragment of a sentence, is characteristic of the fraternity that feeds on contention and fattens on a byplay upon words. The conclusion jumped at by those who use this subterfuge is, that there was "a complete overturning and a purpose for the age when it was of Church government," and that the disorganization was such that the Twelve announced this contemplated re-organization. Now let us look as the real signification of the words of the Twelve at that time, by simply reading the entire paragraph that has been mutilated. Here it is:

"Since the murder of President Joseph Smith, many false prophets an false teachers have arisen, and tried to deceive many, during which have mostly tarried with the body of the Church, or been seeking a new lo cation, leaving those prophets and teachers to run their race undisturbed, who have died natural deaths, or committed suicides; and we now, having it in contemplation soon to re-organize the Church according to the original pattern, with the First Presidency and Patriarch, feel that it will be the privil ege of the Twelve, ere long, to spread abroad among the nations, not to hin der the gathering, but to preach the Gospel, and push the people, the honest in heart together from the four quarters of the earth."—Mill. Star, Voi.

This "re-organization," then, was only the organization of the First Presidency and the selection of a Patriarch, offices made vacant by the departure of Joseph and Hyrum to another sphere. The Twelve were presiding over the Church; they were writing to the Church abroad by their President, Brigham Young, whose signature is attached to the letter which is headed: "General Epistle From the Council of the Twelve Apostles, to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Abroad, Dispersed Throughout the Earth." It gives particulars of the progress of the Church at home, and directions to those parts of it in other places abroad.

The Church never stopped a moment In its onward career. The Twelve, holding equal authority with the First Presidency, exercised those functions in its absence, and being empowered to "ordain and set in order all the other officers of the Church," they announced their intention to fill the gaps that had been made by the hands of assassins, so that when the First Presidency was re-established, they might be able to perform their Apostolic labors abroad. (See Doc. & Cov., sec. 107;

It is pitiful to see the efforts of misguided men to twist language from its evident meaning, for the purpose of conveying something never intended. Such sophistry can accomplish nothing in the end, that will be of lasting service to those who resort to such measures. We should think that by this time, even those in that sect who are the most given to the casuistry we here expose, would cease from making themselves ridiculous to the informed when they can only hope to hoodwink for a little time even the most simple When they are guilty of such an evasion, the rest of their nonsense is worthy only of slience or contempt,

DOCTRINE OF A PARABLE

In recent years there has been quite general tendency among religious people of the world, toward a more scriptural conception of the state of mankind after death, than that which prevailed in former ages. The idea, on the one side, of a heaven with a few select souls continually wearing crowns, singing, and playing; and, on the other band, a "pit," bottomless, yet containing a lake of fire in which the majority of mankind are doomed to terment without end-all this has really no onger any hold on advanced thought. Its origin in pagan philosophy is recog-

That life hereafter is but a continuation of life here is understood as never before. It is clear that earth is but many times, the "News" would have will devolve upon children of the Etera school of preparation for duties that

the opportunities here offered are accepted or neglected. This is the largely prevalent idea-one that is in full harmony with the Scriptures and with | ple is the President's best safeguard.

It therefore sounds rather strange when a sectarian clergyman lifts his voice in defense of the ancient idea of everlasting torment in a burning lake, as does the Rev. R. A. Lapstey, of Greenville, Va. He takes the ground that our Lord, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, teaches unequivocally: first, that the souls of the ungodly do at their death pass into a state of penal suffering; second, that this state is without mitigation or end. "And the authority," he says, "of Jesus Christ, as a divine teacher, stands committed to these two points of doctrine."

Is this true? Is Jesus committed to the doctrine that the greatest number of the Father's children are to perish ternally; that the adversary, in the battle between right and wrong is to come out triumphant at last; and that the infinite mercy, that found its expression in the redeeming work of the Son, is wasted, as far as the many are concerned? If so, no wonder if infidelity claims many victims. But the divine Master never taught

such gloomy doctrine. He did speak, again and again, of the awful fate hereafter of those who die unrepentant. He spoke in terms that sufficiently indicate that their misery is beyond human comprehennsion. But He never in timated physical torment without end. The parable of the rich man, to which Mr. Lapsley refers, has not the least feature upon which such a doctrine can be built. Its aim is evidently two-fold. It teaches that he who selfishly closes his heart to suffering brethren in this fife, will suffer torment hereafter, because his selfishness has excluded him from the company of the righteous. It has, in hades, placed him where there is a "gulf" between him and the society in which Abraham moves, just as crimes here often open a "gulf" between those who commit it and former associates. Still Abraham calls the man who suffers for his errors "son," and we would think in that term alone, a ray of hope is offered. He was not eternally cast off. He was still "son."

The second object of that parable is to teach the futility of relying upon visions or appearances from another world, for repentance and salvation. Abraham is represented as saying to the erring man, that his living brethren, whom, probably, by his example, he had led on the wrong road, had Moses and the Prophets, and that, if they would not be guided by them, they would not believe a testimony from a departed spirit. "Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." This seems, indeed, to be the great lesson of this remarkable parable. To make it teach endless torment to the great majority of mankind is to deduce from it something entirely foreign to its obvious purpose.

The Scripture teaching on this point is summed up in the statement that being, and that to disregard all tradieveryone shall finally be rewarded according to his works. It is intimated in the wonderful vision in which both death and hades are represented as being cast into "the lake of fire," as having served their purposes and being no more needed. That in this final consummation of all things some will be lost, namely all whose names "are not found written in the book of life,' is also stated. But it is nowhere revealed what their fate will be; nor is it anywhere intimated that the large majority of the children of men will thus become eternally lost. The throng of the redeemed is said to be innumer-

The subject is of no small importance. The work of redemption, the relationship of God to His children, and the efficiency of the Gospel are involved in the proper understanding of it. Luther once asked an applicant for a pulpit the abrupt question: "What do you know about the devil?" as if such a knowledge were of the first importance. And in one sense it is. For without a correct understanding of the influence and power of evil, there can be no correct view of the work done by our Father for the redemption of His children.

In Kentucky it is a field of waving rye that makes a smiling land. In Texas it is a field of gushing oil wells that does it.

Rioting in Detroit, staid old Detroit. Who would have thought it? It may have been the result of too much potatoes and Pingreeism.

It is not to be wondered at that the President uses rather flowery language in California. It is the land of blossoms and flowers are its glory.

It was rather tough on Admiral Melville that he should have been robbed by pirates in Los Angeles, he never before having encountered them in all his naval experience,

That Santa Barbara man who, when informed that his house was on fire, replied, "Let it burn, I will wait and see the President," could have fiddled while Rome burned, had occasion re-

The list of committees for the grand celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birthday of the late President Brigham Young, will be found in another part of this issue of the Deseret News.

There are three hundred thousand Germans in Brazil and a million, three hundred thousand Italians there, and only five thousand North Americans. It is hard, looking at these figures, to see where the "peril of the north" comes in in Brazil.

A Plain City man has filed a petition in bankruptcy for debts amounting to less than two hundred dollars. Evidently he did not obtain his ideas of "financing" from the most advanced school of failures. For these to go under for less than half a million is a disgrace. All things are relative, bankcuptcy as well as wealth and great

Eighteen picked men will guard the President when in San Francisco, The precaution may not be needed, yet may not be unwise Should there be

that the future will depend upon how scarcely prevent it, as witness the case of Carnot and Victor Emanuel, and the very recent attack on Emperor Wil-Ham. The esteem of the American peo-

The Laws of Utah, passed by the Legislature of 1901, are now in print, the work having been done at the office of the Descret News. The State secretary will, no doubt, see to their distribution in the proper official quarters. with his usual promptness and courtesy. The book is now on sale at this office, at one dollar and a half paper covers and two dollars sheep. Applications should be made at once, as there will most likely be a lively demand for

Popular government in Hawali is going it under full sail. The legislature has sent a memorial to the President asking the removal of Gov. Dole, and Gov. Dole, when requested by the leg-Islature to call an extra session, refused to do so because he had been reliably informed that bribery was taking place. If the allegations of the parties to the unseemly squabble are to be believed, it seems to be a clear case of the kettle calling the pot black. It might be well if both were "polished

The quick recovery in Wall street esterday after the great panic of Thursday is, if anything, more remarkable than the panic itself. Had those who had the shorts cornered used their power to "squeeze" them to the utmost the consequences might have been most appalling and nation-wide. But will those who have had such a very narrow escape be content to leave well enough alone, or will they go ahead in their wild speculations, thinking that they will henceforth be able to avoid the rocks and shoals? Perhaps they will and maybe they will not. The fascination of gambling and the chance to make great fortunes are so great that those who have indulged them once can seldom resist them a second

ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

Northwestern Christian Advocate. Our next devotional habit should be work for God. This comes under the scope of our definition. All our as-sumed devotion is hypocrisy, unless it finds outward expression in some form of Christian activity. Do not be deceived. All we really do for God is what we do for God's creature-man. Read this as plainly set forth in the parable of the judgment (Matt. xxv). We should never allow the cares of this world so to engress us that we have time for some form of Christian bered when we make our plans. These habits, including that of Christian work, should become the fixed custom of our lives-they should become second nature to us. The external result of the fire thus enkindled within will be a work for God among our fellow-men.

Washington Times.

It behooves these martyrs, reformers case may be, to take note of the fact that conscience needs education as much as any other power of the human ion and run wild in matters ethical is quite as futile and as foolish as to try paint a picture without the proper colors and brushes. All the genius in the world can not effect as good re sults with a whitewash brush as with the colors which are the outcome o centuries of cunning experiment; and the rules of ethics which have been evolved through countless generation of human life are not all wrong, though some of them could be improved.

The Christian Statesman. Thoughtful men all admit that the evils from which the nation suffers are moral evils and the dangers from which she is in peril are moral dangers. Po litical corruption, the misgovernment of cities, the prevalence of vice and crime and the shameless alliance of government in many places with the vicious and criminal classes are moral evils. They cannot be described except in the use of moral and religious terms. The cure for them must be a moral and spiritual cure. How can this cure be applied so thoroughly and so effec-tually, as through the public schools, where nearly all citizens spend from five to ten years of their life in prepar-ation for the duties of citizenship? In the schools the nation of today holds in its hand the nation that is to be, plastic and susceptible to the lightest touch, and can mould it as she will. Where else, or by what other means, can vic and crime be combated so successfully?

The Baptist. Whether or not children learn as much by the modern method of making rk attractive and delightful, a did their fathers and mothers by being set to work at tasks which they had to master whether they liked them of not, may be an open question. Bu there can hardly be a doubt as to the usefulness of the older method in teachng application and resolution, and dis abusing the youthful mind of its native delusion that valuable results can be accomplished without hard work. mitting that the knowledge gained by the two methods is equal, the resultant of the two methods upon character is not by any means identical. Boys and girls need tasks that shall elicit their powers, just as a young dog needs to gnaw a bone or to crack the hardest kind of biscuit. If we succeed in making the attainment of knowledge too easy, we rob the children of an incidenresult of education that is of more value than knowledge itself.

The Independent. Last week, in Baltimore, at a meeting of the Congregational churches which fringe the coast from Jersey City to Washington, a Catholic priest deputed by Cardinal Gibbons, an Episcopal bishop, and a Congregational clergyman severally expounded their plans for church union. They were, in brief, severally: Accept the Pope; accept the historic episcopate; liberty to differ. It is clear that there can never be union on the basis of submission to any one plan or scheme of church creed or church government until people can all be melted in one mould. We want a bond of peace for all who have the unity of the spirit. So we rejoice in Dr. Joseph Parker's proposition to unite the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Inde-pendents of Great Britain. It is by such unions, taking in but two or three de nominations at a time, that larger union will begin.

Guide to Holiness.

A storm of passion will disorder one's nervous system about as soon as a thunderstorm the wires of a telegraphic line. A few such storms will destroy it altogether. You will die soon enough vithout calling in anger to help you off the stage. The Christian should not allow the devil to kindle the fire of anger in his soul. Suppose the basement of the house in which you live takes fire: you soon extinguish the flames and thank God that the fire is out. But on going up in the apartments above you find the walls and ceilings dingy and the room offensive with the odor of smoke. Many a soul-house is in a bad condition today because of the fire of many times, the News would have will devolve upon children of the Eter- any miscreant who contemplated harm love reign in your soul and the demon to the President these men could of anger will find no place

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