

THE DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

BISHOPS AND THEIR DUTIES.

THE duties of a Bishop are most responsible and onerous and they embrace a very wide range. Bishops are the leaders of the people, and are invested with a power that, if properly wielded, will bring about great and important results. It has long been admitted in theory that a time would come when they would exercise much greater power and jurisdiction among the people than they have done in the past, or even than they do now. But there has been a disposition manifested to postpone this time, and to view it as still very distant. It is evident, however, to those who have reflected carefully and watched the signs of the times, that there is a great necessity at the present for the Bishops to step forth and act in their calling and office in a manner almost entirely different to that which they have been in the habit of doing.

In our leading article yesterday we briefly hinted at some few things which should receive their attention. But the more this subject is examined the more plainly does it appear that there is an imperative necessity for the Bishops to devote more of their time and attention than they have been in the habit of doing to the care of their Wards. Instead of spending a portion of their time in superintending the affairs which come within the purview of their office, they must devote the whole of it to these labors. Instead of the duties of their calling claiming the time they can spare from the care of their families and business, it must receive their entire attention and occupy the first place in their thoughts, while their own business and the sustenance of themselves and families must be subordinate and be viewed as of comparatively minor importance. For the twenty years that we have been in these valleys, God has been training us to bring us into such a condition of knowledge and obedience that this order can be carried out.

But, the question very naturally arises here, how can the Bishops do this? If they neglect their own business, and do not take measures to provide for themselves and families, how are they to live? President Young has already plainly answered these queries by saying that the Bishops must trust in God. He who said to his disciples of old: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on," and who has repeated the same words to his disciples in these days, adding that if they trust in Him they should not go hungry, neither athirst, is able to feed, clothe and supply all the wants of His servants who labor in His service in Zion as easily as He does the wants of those who engage in His ministry abroad. His power is neither limited to one country, nor confined to one class. The Bishops are assured that if they will place their business in the hands of their sons, or sons-in-law, or in the hands of other trustworthy individuals, and devote their entire time to the duties of their calling and the care of their wards, they shall not want. They will even make property faster and have greater influence in every way than they have at present. By relying upon the Lord, and exercising faith, they will find that they do not trust Him in vain. The fowls of the air sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet God feedeth them. Are not the servants of God much better than they? God knoweth what they need, and He will supply their wants. It is His promise, and who can say that it ever failed?

In every ward in the Territory there is an extensive field of operations open before the Bishop who presides there. The Bishops of some of the large Wards will find, even when they devote their entire time to their calling, that there is more requiring their attention than they can possibly attend to. There is no end to the ways in which a Bishop can help the people over whom he presides. It is not in preaching and praying alone, (though very good at the proper seasons,) that they are required to spend their time; but in teaching the people how to live, how to employ their time and means to the best advantage. The people require to be taught how to use, in the best manner, the elements with which they are surrounded. They need oversight and instruction respecting the proper method of cultivating the earth, making gardens, setting out orchards and shade trees, building

houses, barns, corrals, and fences, constructing canals, water ditches, roads and side walks; also what kinds of grains and other seeds they should sow. Those who are able to work at mechanical and other pursuits need counsel respecting their labor.

We cannot, in our brief space, touch upon one-hundredth part of the duties that naturally devolve upon the Bishops. They will readily suggest themselves, however, to those who are familiar with the practical working of our system. The labor of caring for the poor is of itself by no means inconsiderable. When they are able to work they should be directed in such a manner as to become self-sustaining. Every one who can labor should be furnished with employment. There should be no idlers among us. When we are properly organized, there will be no poor among us. The Bishops will derive great help from the Female Relief Societies which they have organized in their Wards, in caring for and furnishing the poor with employment. When the Bishops take the proper view of their duties, and apply themselves assiduously to the discharge of them in preference to everything else, a wonderful change in affairs throughout the Territory will speedily be perceptible. In no way can their time, talents, and experience be better or more profitably used. If wise Bishops had dictated matters in the manner sketched above for the past twelve months in the various Wards and settlements of this Territory, would there be any scarcity of breadstuffs in the country at the present time? or would men be standing still for want of employment? All who understand matters must acknowledge that there would not.

At the present time some of the people may not see the necessity of hearkening to the counsels of the Bishops respecting their labors, &c. It is not always that men can see what is good for themselves, and when a correct course is pointed out to them, they are liable to misconstrue the motives which prompt the advice, and to go in opposition to it. All this ignorance has to be contended with now. The people will not be brought to understand these things as they should all at once. It will take time to bring them to such a condition. But there are some who are now prepared to hearken to the counsel of their Bishops. They will accept it and strive to carry it out with pleasure. And their examples will have a powerful influence with their neighbors. The Bishops have authority; but if they never wield it and suffer it to lie dormant, it is as though they were destitute of it. When they commence to exercise it judiciously they, themselves, will be surprised at the results.

THE IRISH CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.

THE persistent attempts of the Fenians to accomplish something against England, and the outrages committed by, or attributed to them, have stirred up the British Parliament to discuss some measures for the amelioration of the condition of Ireland. One of the first wrongs to which attention has been directed, is the Church Establishment. Both parties in Parliament admit there is cause of complaint concerning it, but they disagree as to the extent of that cause, and the remedial means which should be adopted to remove it. Indeed some of the extreme Tory party hold that the Establishment should be maintained at all hazards, and upheld for the benefit of the Saxon or Protestant element, against the Celtic or Roman Catholic. The subject still occupies the attention of both the House of Lords and House of Commons, for, by the dispatches yesterday, it was matter for discussion in each House.

The Church Establishment of Ireland would certainly be viewed in this country as a most enormous and national evil. It taxes industry to support idleness. It tithes over five millions of people for the benefit of perhaps a couple of hundred thousand. It compels every man of every shade of religious faith in the country to pay for the maintenance of a religion which is believed in only by a few, and which the rest look upon as worse than a mockery—a delusion, a snare, and a mass of errors upheld by act of Parliament and forced upon the people.

The inhabitants of Ireland are Roman Catholic and Protestant, being, probably, three and a half millions of the former to one and a half millions of the latter. But the Protestants are subdivided into Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, Quakers, and a few other sects who

number, however, but few believers. Of the different sects of Protestantism the Episcopalians are far from being the most numerous. Yet they are the only ones who directly derive benefit from the tithe-rent charge of the country. Other sects are endowed to a greater or less extent from Government: the Presbyterians receive a *regium donum*, or "Kingly Gift," for their ministers; so, we believe, do some of the Methodists; and even the Roman Catholics enjoy the Government bounty to a degree, such as the endowment of Maynooth College. But all the people of Ireland, who own, hold, or occupy, as proprietors or lessees, a foot of soil in that island, pay into the revenue of the Established Church. In this way it is asserted that £12,000,000 sterling, a sum nearly equal to \$60,000,000 in gold, is collected from an impoverished people, who are so poor that in many instances they do not possess the common necessities of life.

Here is a tithe forced upon millions of people to support a faith which they disbelieve, despise and hate. If this tithe had continued to be paid as it had to be at one time—when the parson would take the tenth sheaf of wheat, or bushel of potatoes, from the field, and the tenth pig from the pen—the entire people would have risen against it *en masse* ere this, for ideas have grown since that day, even though the people still remain poor, down-trodden and unarmed. But a law providing for a composition for tithes was first tried; and subsequently a fixed amount, equal to three-fourths of the original sum, to be paid by those having a perpetual interest in the land, who, in turn, exact it from their tenants. Thus it is paid by all, without the bulk of the people knowing to what amount they are taxed, it being an indirect tax; though they do know that they are taxed to sustain the Established Church. This is partly the cause of the discontent which exists concerning the Establishment. The hierarchy, generally, lead lives of indolence and extravagance. The work of their ministry is, in nearly every instance, performed by under-paid and over-worked curates; while rectors, vicars, deans, arch-deans, bishops and arch-bishops live on the fat things of the land, dress richly and indulge in a style of extravagance which stands in glaring contrast by the side of their miserably poor parishioners. The ministers of other Protestant sects, and the Roman Catholic priests, are generally hard-working men, who are not over-well paid; and this difference between the indolence and luxury of the priests of the few, with the industry and economy of the priests of the many, is another cause which makes the Episcopal hierarchy hateful in the eyes of the people. A writer recently speaks concerning this English Church Establishment in Ireland, in the following succinct and correct terms:

"The Hierarchy of the Irish Church consists at present of two Archbishops—the Archbishop of Armagh and the Archbishop of Dublin—and ten Bishops. The beneficed clergy are 1400, exclusive of deans, prebendaries, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries. The number of parishes in Ireland is about 2400, most of which have their parish churches; but in some of these there is often not a score of Protestants, while the Roman Catholics in them are counted by hundreds or thousands. Every parish in Ireland is provided with a clergyman, but as the number of clergymen is not equal to the number of parishes, in the numerous instances, one clergyman has the spiritual care of two or three parishes. In certain parishes where divine service is regularly performed in the places of worship belonging to the Establishment, the congregation might be counted upon the fingers, and there are cases in which besides the clergyman and the clerk, no worshippers present themselves when the edifices are opened for the performance of the service.

The present temper of the British House of Commons seems to be to sweep this Establishment from existence, but in their attempting to do so they are likely to have a severe struggle. Many of the Tory party look upon it as the entering wedge of a series of revolutionary changes which may disserve the connection now existing between Church and State in Britain, and be the precursor of still more serious results. The whole of the wealth drawn from the people to sustain it, does not go directly to do so, many of the large landed proprietors being benefitted by the tithe-rent charge. For this they are likely to struggle. Thus there are contending, on the one side, the whole hierarchy of the Anglican Church, and the more conservative of the Tory party, aided by much of the wealth and influence of

Episcopal Ireland and England; and on the other side, the Liberal portion of Parliament, the Reform League of Britain, and thousands who, terrified by Fenianism, desire to throw any sop to the Fenian Cerberus to obtain peace and quiet.

But supposing the latter party should succeed in disendowing the Church Establishment in Ireland, will it satisfy the disaffected among the Irish? It does not seem likely. The unjust landlord and tenant law, and other things which are deemed oppressive have to be removed; and then there is a large portion of the Irish who declare they will be satisfied with nothing short of a total severance from England and the establishment of a republican government in Ireland.

DISCOURSE

By Elder GEORGE A. SMITH, delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, April 6th, 1868.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

We have been in the habit of looking contemptuously on the sectarian world, so far as their habits appear to us to be indications of hypocrisy. Among them men take great pains to seem to be religious. They will put on a long face, a sad countenance, and on the Sabbath day they will endeavor to seem to be very holy. But as soon as the Sabbath has gone by, a great many men will not scruple to commit the most outrageous acts of dishonesty and corruption, thinking, perhaps, by being so very good on the Sabbath day, that the wickedness and corruption of the remaining six days will be sanctified and justified.

Well, we have looked contemptuously upon a spirit of this kind, and in so doing some of us may have failed to appreciate, as we ought, the importance of observing the Sabbath day. We may have felt that it was a tradition that we and our fathers had inherited from the sectarian world. There are many instances of our brethren failing to observe the Sabbath day. Some going to the cañon on a Saturday for wood or lumber, knowing that they could not return with their loads until Sunday; or going out to hunt cattle when they knew they could not accomplish what they desired without breaking the Sabbath. I feel a desire to call the attention of the Conference to the consideration of this subject, because it not only involves a commandment given in the law of Moses, and endorsed by the New Testament, but it has been also enjoined upon us by revelation through Joseph Smith in the present generation; and if we neglect it we have no right to expect the blessings of God to that extent that its observance would ensure. We find on the 149th page of the Doctrine and Covenants something on this subject, to which I wish to call the attention of the brethren and sisters. It reads as follows:

"Wherefore I give unto them a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind and strength, and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Thou shalt not steal; neither commit adultery, nor kill, nor do anything like unto it. Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things. Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; for verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High; nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days, and at all times; but remember that on this the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacrament unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

"And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect; or, in other words, that thy joy may be full. Verily this is fasting and prayer; or, in other words, rejoicing and prayer."

I read this simply to call your attention to the law as it has been given to us through Joseph Smith, our Prophet, and to impress upon the minds of the Elders the necessity of observing it.

We find it also enjoined upon us in a portion of section 4, of a revelation on page 160, of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which reads as follows:

"And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy."