

[From the Millennial Star.]

A FEW WORDS ON TITHING.

Taking the actions of men, as seen through the telescope of truth, as the standard of judgment, we may reasonably conclude that, with few exceptions, all men regard the Lord as a beggar—a pensioner on their generosity. If such were indeed the case, his position would not be unlike that of the man who, while going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves. Blinded as men are by their vain imaginations, benumbed as are their sensibilities by transgression, they fail to recognize this truth so plainly written in the volume of Revelation, that the earth and the fullness thereof are the Lord's. On the contrary, they severally by word and deed emphatically declare,—"These flocks and herds are mine, this gold and silver are mine, these houses and lands are mine, and in the use, possession, or disposition thereof, neither man nor God shall interfere." They seem to have forgotten that they were born into this world without shoes or stockings, that they came here with nothing to cover their nakedness, and that every thing they have received came from the Lord. They not only fail to recognize God's title to the earth and all things therein, but in like manner also deny His right to govern them, and the obligations they are under to obey His laws. But these remarks are more general than our present purpose demands. We wish to speak to the Saints, or more correctly to those who by profession desire to become Saints, for the name of Saint is strictly applicable to those only who have brought themselves into subjection to the perfect law of righteousness. The subject for our present consideration is one which has been repeatedly written on, and presented to the people through the columns of the *Star* in almost every conceivable phase. It has also been spoken on by the Elders times almost without number, and yet, strange to say, many professing to be Saints (in these lands, and some also in Zion,) seem to understand little or nothing concerning it. Such regard the law of Tithing as oppressive, and a compliance therewith an intolerable burden. To such it may be said, repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins, that the eyes of your understanding may be opened to see and comprehend the goodness and wisdom exhibited in the government of God.

That a better understanding of this subject may be gained, let us ask and answer a few plain, simple questions. And 1st, What is tithing? In its primary and Scriptural sense, the tenth of anything, or in other words, the INTEREST which the Lord requires for the life use of the property lent by him to man. From this answer it will be observed that tithing or interest is due to the Lord, not only from the Saints, but from all men, whether Saints or sinners.

2nd. Is the law of Tithing a new one, or peculiar to this last dispensation? No, it dates from as high antiquity as the Gospel itself; and in every age when the Lord has had a recognized people on the earth, it has been taught to and obeyed by them, and it will continue to be as long as the Gospel power is required to save.

3rd. Is the Lord poor and needy, that He asks for Tithes of all people? No, for the earth and all things therein are His.

4th. Why, then, does He demand Tithing, and require it to be paid? For the same reason that He requires obedience to every other principle of the Gospel—viz., the benefit of the creature, man.

5th. What benefit will result by obedience to this law? The Lord hath said, "He that is tithed shall not be burned." (Doc. and Cov., sec. xxi, par. 5.) And again, "And shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you." (Sec. cvii, par. 2.) Again, the Lord speaking to Israel by the Prophet Malachi, charges them with infidelity, and calls them robbers, even the whole nation, because they paid not their tithes. He afterwards entreated of them to obey this law, and promised if they would comply with its requirements, that He would pour them out a blessing that there should not be room enough to contain it. A further promise, great and precious, he makes to them, "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall

your vine cast her fruits before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." It is also recorded, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Proverbs iii, 9, 10.) Saints! are these blessings desirable? They are attainable.

6th. In what is Tithing to be paid? In kind, or in what the increase consists of. "And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly." (2 Chron. xxxi, 5.) By a compliance with the requirements of this law, the means necessary to build Temples to our God are obtained, wherein, only, many of the ordinances of the Gospel can be performed, and the blessings consequent thereon obtained. Saints! do you wish to be participators in these blessings? The use the means by which the right is secured. These are some of the resulting benefits. We will mention one more; it is this, it draws the line of demarcation between the honest and the dishonest, for the law leaves it with the subject to say what the amount of his Tithing is. It therefore makes him the judge of his own case. Thus circumstanced, vile indeed is that person who would render an unrighteous judgment, and of such well might it be said, "Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me." The whole world are at the present time under the curse, because they are using the Lord's property without rendering to Him the Tithing or interest thereon, which it is His right to demand and have.

7th. When is this interest or Tithing to be paid, and for what period? In the times of thine increase, in the times of thine ingathering, year by year throughout all thy generations forever.

8th. What is our increase? All that we have, for remember we came into this world with nothing.

9th. How many times are our possessions Tithed? ONCE ONLY. On becoming citizens of the Kingdom of God (if we obeyed this law) we paid one-tenth of the property we then possessed. After this our Tithing is paid on the interest or increase of the remaining nine-tenths. For example, A, when he entered the Church, was possessed of £100. On this he owed £10, which as an honest man he paid. He had £90 left. By the use of this £90 he gained £20. This £20 is increase on which he owes as Tithing £2, and will pay it unless he become dishonest and a robber before God. This, by some, may be considered rather strong language, but it is such as the Lord used towards Israel when they paid not their Tithes; and if we pay not our Tithes, in this respect we are not unlike what Israel were.

10th. Who are required to pay Tithes? All men. They who pay it willingly and honestly will secure to themselves the favor of God; His blessings will be poured out on them; in six troubles He will be with them, and in seven He will not forsake them; They will become the FRIENDS of God, and, with Jesus Christ, heirs to the Kingdom of the Father. Those who will not comply with this requirement, will bring on themselves the Lord's displeasure, will secure their banishment from His presence, and will stay the hand that would strew their pathway with every good.

11th. Where can the revelation on Tithing be found? In the book of Doctrine and Covenants, sec. cvii. Read this revelation all ye professing Saints, and from this time henceforth, for shame, let not the words pass the lips of any, "I did not know that to pay Tithes was a standing law in the Church."

12th. Do All professing Saints pay their Tithes? No, they do not. Some pay all the Tithing they honestly owe, and reap the benefits. There are others who pay a small portion of what is their honest Tithe, but who, Ananias and Saphira like, seek to defraud the Lord out of the remaining portion. Henceforth let all deal righteously with their God, and He will bless them with means whereby they may be gathered to the land of Zion. Others still there are who pay no Tithing. Those seek to justify themselves, some on the plea of poverty, others of indebtedness to their fellow-men. These should bear in mind

this fact, the Lord requires of them nothing but what they can do. Speaking solely from a temporal point of view, the poor of all others should obey the law of Tithing, that they might claim the fulfillment of the promise—I will multiply thy substance on thee exceedingly, I will bless thy bread and thy water, and I will take away sickness from the midst of thee. Those indebted, also, should pay their due to the Lord, so shall they retain the Lord as their friend, who will assist them in their times of need.

There is still another class, many of whom do not pay Tithes; of this, are the rich in the things of this world, but extremely poor in spirit. They cannot pay Tithes because the amount thereof is too great; they cannot afford to pay so much. Let such remember that no punishment of Heaven are so severe, as those for mercies abused; let them also beware lest their riches take to themselves the wings of the morning and fly away. There are to be found some among the Elders who endeavor to palliate the neglect on the part of the people to pay Tithing, on the plea that such are poor. To one and all let it be said—Those who do not pay Tithes are not so poor in purse as they are poor in spirit, and if they do not awake to duty, poverty will be their portion; they will be found unworthy to be numbered among the Saints; they will apostatize. Hear it all ye professing to be Saints in Zion and throughout the world, They will apostatize, saith the Lord. This is a gathering dispensation, and with but very few exceptions, all professing Saints desire to gather with the Lord's people in the land of Zion. There is also another fact which it will be well to bear in mind, it is this: that while this is a gathering dispensation, the Lord desires to gather such only as are honest at heart. Those who will be dishonest with the Lord here, will be dishonest with the Lord there, except they repent, for should such go to Zion, they would be sure to take themselves with them.

Some may perhaps infer that we would concentrate all the saving power of the Gospel in, and make the reception of all blessings consequent on, the one act of paying our Tithing. We answer, No. There are many other duties we have to perform; but we will add, that those who will honestly pay their Tithing, will perform every other duty which the Gospel enjoins, for money is the great stumbling block in the way of life, and the love thereof the root of all evil. Again, Tithing may be regarded as the revenue of the kingdom of God. This being the case, it becomes at once the duty of every loyal citizen of that kingdom to aid, in proportion to his means, in its maintenance, and in the faithful administration of its laws and ordinances. It is written, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." True as this may be, we will reverse the statement; and when reversed it constitutes a rule without an exception. When reversed it will read, "Where your heart is, there will your treasure be also," for if it is with us at heart, "the kingdom of God or nothing," we will devote not only our Tithing, but ALL THAT WE POSSESS, together with ourselves, to its interest and support.

We have perhaps said enough on this subject, at least for the present. But before we close our remarks, let us exhort the Saints that henceforth they look not on the paying of their Tithes as a duty or requirement only, but as a VERY GREAT PRIVILEGE; for by paying your Tithes and neglecting the weightier matters of the Gospel, you will make the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit your friends, and having so done, when ye shall fail in mortality. They will receive you into everlasting habitations.

A. MINER.

Correspondence.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Aug. 21.

EDITOR DESERET NEWS:

A few days since I first saw a copy of your paper, and must say that I was surprised at its excellence. I therein found topics of the day discussed in a large and comprehensive style, in fact, much more ability was displayed in the handling of matters under discussion than is displayed in our San Francisco papers. It has come to be a standing joke that the best papers published in San Francisco are the *Sacramento Union* and *Territorial Enterprise*. Your the-

atrical criticism is in advance of our metropolitan journals, which make theatrical criticism an especial feature. I have seen Mr. Couldock, and think your criticism discriminating and just. In San Francisco critics cannot afford to be just, if they had the necessary discrimination and ability, for, if they don't puff all the performers the managers wish puffed, the advertisement is withdrawn; the proprietor begs for a renewal, and promises there shall be no cause of complaint in future. This thing has frequently been done by prominent publishers, when their critics ventured to speak their minds honestly.

AMUSEMENTS.

Places of amusement, with the exception of the melodions, are poorly patronized at present. A season of opera, which has just closed, was given at a loss to the management of five or six thousand dollars. The Metropolitan Theatre is occupied by a Mr. Fitzgerald, who announces himself as the great American tragedian. I have seen no one who has ever heard of him before; he appears to be an amateur of considerable experience; he tears passion to tatters in a very powerful manner. The attendance is not large, and the company is very weak, the principal members being the Howson family, who have become entirely *passe* in Frisco. At the Opera House Edwin Adams, a actor of excellence, is playing to a paying business. The German Company essayed a Sunday performance at the American last Sunday, and the manager was arrested on Monday and fined on Tuesday, for giving a performance on Sunday.

YELLOW FEVER.

"Yellow Jack" has taken his departure from the United States ship of war *Resaca*; there was but one additional case after the ship arrived in our harbour. By the arrival of the last Pacific Mail Steamer, from Panama, we are informed that there are no cases of yellow fever on the Isthmus; in fact there have been no cases on shore; only those who were confined on shipboard were affected. The *Sacramento* sailed on Monday with a crowd of passengers, the traveling public having got over their fright. It is reported that the cholera is prevalent in Nicaragua; if so, we may expect a visit on this coast and it behoves every one to put his house in order.

POLITICAL MUDDLE.

Political matters are considerably mixed, and it is doubtful who will be the next Governor. Gorham has shifted his position so often that it is difficult to know where to find him. John Conness is running the Union party of California.

WHEAT CROP.

The wheat crop promises to be in excess of last year; it is rapidly arriving in market, and being mostly shipped to Liverpool; later shipments will go to New York and Philadelphia.

INCREASE OF FIRES.

There is a great increase in the destruction of property by fire in our city, mostly the work of incendiaries desirous of getting from the insurance companies exorbitant remuneration for property destroyed. Some of the local insurance companies are now weak and tottering; a few more heavy losses will cause a general crash. Rates of insurance have been run down by competition to a ruinously low figure. An insurance agent calls at your house during your absence, and asks if the furniture is insured; if it is not, he manages to get inside the door, casually glances around and walks out; in a few days a policy of insurance is left at the premises, with a request for the party insured against his will to call at the Company's office and pay the premium and cost of surveying. Several calls of this kind have been ventilated.

MORALS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

There is a rapid increase in demoralizing tendencies in our city. There are over 3,000 Chinese prostitutes and about 5,000 of other nations who openly ply their trade, and between 600 and 700 houses of assignation. Justice is very loosely administered in our courts; the greatest criminals escape scot free, and the small ones are severely punished. There were, in the last year, 756 applicants for divorce in the District Courts of San Francisco, and most of the petitions which have come up for examination have been granted. All grades of criminals are on the increase, and crimes of various shades can be committed with impunity, if the criminal has friends, political influence, or money.

SAN FRANCISCAN.