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## "GOD'S TENTH"

We publish today an article from the pen of a Christian minister, Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D., which is being distributed among the Baptist churches in the East, and will be read with interest by many of our people and by students of the scriptures in different denominations. The subject is of great importance and is very well understood by the Latter-day Saints. The writer strongly favors the principle of tithing as of divine origin and for human benefit. He calls it "God's Tenth." This is a very appropriate title for his little pamphlet, which has also been published in the Baptist Missionary Magazine. We commend it to all persons who believe in the Bible, as worthy of their close consideration.

There is much misunderstanding in relation to the supposed enforcement of the law of tithing upon the "Mormon" people. It is commonly supposed that it is in the nature of a tax. Also that any member of the Church who fails to respond to the demand of the tenth of his or her increase, is peremptorily excommunicated. The truth is that in this Church tithing is a free-will offering, and that there are many persons still in the Church who do not fully comply with the doctrine, and some who do not pay anything at all.

Every person who contributes to the tithing fund in any degree is entitled to a receipt for the amount, stating that he or she has "voluntarily donated it to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as tithing." A strict account is kept of every cent received by the respective Bishops and these accounts are forwarded to the Presiding Bishopric, whose books are kept in the most perfect order and are open to the inspection of Church members to see if their accounts are correct.

The payment of tithing is a matter of religious doctrine and personal conscience. It is proclaimed as a divine law, just the same as the law concerning the Sabbath, or any other commandment given by the Lord for the observance of His people. It is not a new thing under the sun, as shown in the article entitled "God's Tenth." As to this Church of the latter days, the law of tithing was revealed July 8, 1838, and the manner of its distribution and the purposes thereof, on July 18, 1838. These revelations are to be found in Sections 119 and 120, of the Doctrine and Covenants. They are observed in the Church at the present time.

"God's Tenth" is not regarded as the property of any individual or individuals in the Church, to be used for their own purposes or according to their own notions or desires. The fund thus created is a sacred trust, committed to the Church authorities as defined in the section last referred to, and is a matter that concerns the Latter-day Saints only. Other people and societies have nothing to do with it, and all efforts on their part to pry into the concerns of this Church are sheer impudence, and their impertinent curiosity is not to be gratified. This Church has its own discipline and means of management and will conduct its finances as directed by common consent.

The idea which some persons endeavor to convey that the payment of tithing is a burden and imposition upon those who thus contribute of their substance, is evidence either of misunderstanding of the divine law and the blessings that come from complying therewith, or of a desire to injure the Church as a body and prevent its members individually from obtaining those returns which the Almighty has promised to the obedient. The payment of one-tenth of a person's interest, annually, for the furtherance of the work of the Lord in the earth, is a privilege. It is a commandment with promise. God says, observe the law and I will add the blessings. These are both temporal and spiritual. Prosperity in earthly things and a rich outpouring of heavenly things are to be the result of compliance with the command.

It is a common remark, when country places particularly are visited and large stacks of grain and barns filled with products are seen, "There lives a man who pays his tithing." It is certainly the experience of the Latter-day Saints that God favors the obedient. There are no people anywhere who are more greatly blessed with the good things of the earth as the fruits of their toil under the divine blessing, than are the Latter-day Saints. At the same time they are favored with peace in the home, joy in the heart, union with their neighbors, praise, thanksgiving

and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their public assemblies, and inspiration from on high in the teachings of their leaders.

The law of tithing is universal in the Church. From the President down to the newly baptized member it is a requirement from the Lord. But no force is used in its collection. It is received "in kind," that is, in any sort of produce tendered by the tithpayer, or in money, at his option. Every Church member can determine what is "God's Tenth," and the payment of it is voluntary, just like obedience to any other divine behest. If he keeps the law of the Sabbath, he does it voluntarily. If he breaks it, he loses the blessings attending its observance. So with the tithing law.

The fact that the Creator requires or commands or counsels a certain thing, does not convey any idea of coercion upon the creature. God told Adam and Eve that they should not partake of the fruit of a particular tree in the Garden of Eden. They did partake of it, however, and the consequences came as decreed. Man's free agency is respected by Deity. Every human being may act on his own volition. He can obey or disobey. Bishop Hunter used to declare, "Pay your tithing and be blessed." This may be followed or rejected at the will of the individual. The consequences are between him and the Lord.

The Latter-day Saints who observe the law of tithing, which means one-tenth of each person's interest annually, are fully aware that they are favored of the Lord in obeying this command, and a great many who have neglected or disobeyed it have learned the folly of their course. The time to pay tithing is when the product or money is received. It is a pretty good test of the faith and sincerity of a Latter-day Saint. It may seem difficult for a poor man or woman to observe the law, but experience shows that it is usually much more difficult for the wealthy person to obey it strictly. The Church member who observes the law in poverty is not only entitled to the divine blessing, but has a claim on the Lord's storehouse for that help which may be needed, and it will not be withheld.

Thus, then, there is no hardship or cruelty or deprivation in donating "God's tenth" for the building up of His work on earth, but on the contrary there is blessing and increase, prosperity and divine assistance for every obedient son and daughter of the Most High. It is not man's law, but God's law that is under consideration, and he who does not believe in it need not comply with it, but he who knows his Master's will and doeth it will not assuredly reap the fruits of his own folly. "Pay your tithing and be blessed!"

## AN IMPORTANT MATTER.

The Deseret News has given to the public particulars of the organization and conducting of an employment bureau in this city, under the auspices of the Relief Society, for the benefit and protection of young women seeking employment. This institution is charitable in its purpose and has already accomplished much in the desired direction. That is, to find places for applicants, in respectable families where there is no danger of evil influences or associates, and to supply help to families that can be relied upon. At the same time the Society, through its officers and management have thrown a protecting arm around young women from country places to guard them against harm and give them good advice.

A wrong impression, however, has obtained in some quarters, in reference to the power and promises of the Relief Society in this respect. It is thought that the Society holds itself responsible for those who come under its auspices. That, of course, is incorrect. It would be impossible to keep up a personal watchcare over its beneficiaries. A little reflection and common sense will show that no such agreement could be made or kept if it was implied.

The Society will do all in its power to provide places for applicants, and to lead them in the right path and make life pleasant to them in their associations and times of leisure. But every individual must of necessity stand responsible for herself and her own acts, and the Society cannot and must not be held accountable therefore.

It will do all that it has agreed to perform. It has a most laudable object in view. It will accomplish much for the purposes explained, and it will remove many objections that are offered to the coming of young persons to this city to obtain remunerative employment.

At the same time it must be understood that it cannot remove the temptations and opportunities for wrongdoing that exist in all large cities, nor change the nature and disposition of people whose tendencies lie in a downward direction. Information concerning the bureau can be had of the officers of the Relief Society here and of Miss Annie Campbell, 124 North State street, Salt Lake City.

## WHITE AT FUNERALS.

Some of the Eastern papers are advocating the use of white instead of black for decorations at funerals. They treat this as though it was something new and novel. But, as people here are well aware, it has been the custom for some years among the "Mormon" people to decorate their assembly halls and meetinghouses with white drapery and flowers on such occasions, and, as much as is possible considering the traditions and fashions of centuries, to dispense with the wearing of black raiment by the living relatives of the departed. The dead among us are laid away in white clothing, and we will be pleased when the time comes that the ordinary and fashionable garments of mourning will not be in use at funeral ceremonies. White is certainly most appropriate in the case of the burial of innocent children, and seeing that our church ceremonies require that the clothing of the inanimate body of one

departed, whether male or female, should be white garments and robes, we think that ladies at least would prefer to be dressed in white when the last rites and ceremonies are performed, than to appear in the somber habiliments that are usually called "mourning" dresses. There are many things that have been introduced by the Latter-day Saints which at one time were jeered at and ridiculed, but are now coming into vogue. The "Mormons" are willing to adapt to their lives and customs anything that originates outside of their circles that is true and good and worthy of adoption. The time will come when other "Mormon" customs and observances will be imitated by our friends who do not believe altogether as we do, and the reciprocity will be of benefit to us all. White at funerals appears to us to be much more beautiful and appropriate than black, which is suggestive rather of the gloom of the grave than of the brightness and glory that lie beyond.

## AN "ADVOCATE" OF SLANDER.

There is a weekly paper here, published monthly, called the Intermountain Christian Advocate. It devotes a great deal of its limited space to misrepresenting "Mormonism" and the people who believe in it. How this can be thought "Christian" work we fail to discover. It may be all right for persons of other creeds to point out what they believe to be erroneous in the faith of the Latter-day Saints, if it is done in a Christian spirit. But we think the preachers and writers of other denominations would probably accomplish more if they would expound their own tenets, and explain away many of their inconsistencies and their contradictions of the scriptures, than by attacking other churches and believers.

In the current number of the poor little periodical mentioned, we find a number of allusions to "Mormonism" and the "Mormons," and incidentally to the Deseret News, which it calls the "Church organ." We briefly notice one or two of them, but have no intention of taking up a controversy with that feeble "Advocate." On its first page is a story about some "Danish woman" who had been here fifteen years and "who had not read her Bible since she came to Utah." Whose fault it was is not made to appear, but it is stated that when "the Danish Bible was brought she remarked, as certain texts were pointed out to her, 'That seems too easy a way to be saved. It seems to me that I ought to save myself.' And here is what the editor remarks on this matter:

"That diabolical Mormon perversion of the doctrine of Christ, so often heard, 'Christ died to save us from Adam's sin, we have to save ourselves from our own sins,' had its fangs on her soul."

That paragraph should be sufficient to show how the writer of it attempts to pervert the teachings of "Mormonism" on the atonement of Christ. All through the standard works of this Church and the teachings of its authorized ministers, the doctrine is found that the atonement of Christ was made for Adam's transgression unconditionally, and for the sins of the whole world conditioned on obedience to Christ's Gospel. That is New Testament doctrine. It may not be in accord with the notions of some of the modern sects, but there is nothing clearer or plainer in holy writ than that as taught by Christ and His Apostles. If there is anything "diabolical" about it we fail to perceive it, and the writer of the paragraph we have quoted, virtually calls the pure Gospel of Christ diabolical. What its "fangs" are, and how they could injure that mythical Danish woman's soul, is not explained by the would-be critic.

The same puerile paper has the following paragraphs:

"When President Smith of the Mormon Church issued his proclamation that religion classes should no longer be held in the public schools, one school in a certain county simply changed the time of meeting from Thursday afternoon to Monday afternoon. Wonder how many obeyed the proclamation in a similar way?"

"Notwithstanding that it was reported at Washington during the Smoot investigation last winter that no religion classes of the Mormon Church had been held in the public schools of Tooele county, it is a fact that religion classes were held in every school in the county except one. The exception is the Stockton school which is largely Gentile."

"The Mormon Church organ of this city persists in repeating the falsehood that religion classes have never been held in the public schools during school hours. As long as it continues to do this we shall continue to affirm that these religion classes have taken from 30 minutes to an hour of the scholars' time for sectarian instruction and in one instance the entire Friday afternoon was so used."

It is by just such means as the foregoing that the falsehood concerning religion being taught in the public schools of Utah, obtains a foothold in the minds of many people in different parts of the country. We here reiterate our statement, which will be corroborated by the school authorities of the State, and by the Attorney-General, who is not a "Mormon," that religion has not been taught and is not permitted to be taught in any of the public schools of this State. That the whole story concerning this matter, which has been reiterated from pulpit and platform by "professed" "Christian" public speakers, male and female, is a complete perversion of the facts, is well known here and must be known to the writer of the three paragraphs we have quoted.

The only excuse that can be offered for its publication is the organization of religion classes for the children of the Latter-day Saints, which for convenience's sake were held in a number of the school-houses in the different settlements, after school was closed. They were never held in the schools. A writer who does not know the difference between a school and a schoolhouse, ought to be sent to a primary class to learn the meaning of simple words.

The confounding of the two terms was purposely made at the beginning of the controversy over this matter, in order to arouse prejudice in the public mind against the "Mormons," by con-

veying the impression that the "Mormon" religion was being taught in the public schools of the State. This was a flagrant falsehood, intentionally concocted for the very "Christian" object of deceiving the American people and arousing hostility against the Latter-day Saints.

In order to remove any excuse for this perversion of the truth on the part of our pious Christian opponents, an order was issued not to use the school-houses for religion classes at all. The Attorney-General of the State had given it as his official opinion that there was no violation of the law in the holding of those classes in the schoolhouses outside of school hours, but the desire was felt that there should not be any shadow of a reason for reiterating the untruths that had been told on this matter. Yet, it will be seen, our religious adversaries still repeat the old stupid falsehood in different ways, in order to keep up the evil effects which it produced at the first.

The law in this State is clear and emphatic against the teaching of any religious tenet or doctrine in the public schools, and it has been rigidly observed from its passage by the Legislature. The Constitution of the State also forbids any such mingling of religion and secular education in the district schools, and we believe nobody is better acquainted with that fact, and with the compliance that has been had with the law throughout the whole state, than the originators of the miserable untruth concerning the holding of religion classes that were never introduced into the schools on any day or at any time of the day.

We will not waste further time or space on this subject, but we thought it advisable to notice the repetition of this stale slander by a professedly Christian publication, issued in this city from which nearly all the vile stories concerning the "Mormon" Church and its people usually emanate.

All circuses are good, but some are better than others.

The howl of the knockers is like that of the disappointed jackal.

Was it the yellow fever of which Peter's mother-in-law lay sick?

The peace plenipotentiaries pilgrims will also sail in the Mayflower.

Chief Collins of Chicago is having the time of his life chasing gamblers.

Mrs. Lanetry is going into vaudeville. That is better than becoming a chorus girl.

Will the furious knocker organ please explain how a Hebrew can be a Gentile apostate?

Negroes may be immune from yellow fever but unfortunately they are not from lynching.

Once again the paving on South Temple street is proceeding. Is this a sign that another row is on hand?

"Birthdays cost nothing," says Russell Sage. Not money, perhaps, but youth and years. Are they nothing?

"All honor to the patriot, Thomas Homer," says a contemporary. Yes, all honor to "Omer with 'is blooming lyre."

Preparations for the reception of the peace envoys were so elaborate that it is impossible to say "they met by chance the usual way."

Both sides to the railway telegraphers' strike claim to be making gains. They talk exactly like the managers of a presidential campaign on election night.

The Japanese and Russian plenipotentiaries have all arrived and have been presented to the President, and will now proceed to negotiations. Blessed are the peacemakers!

"There are too d-d many reporters," says Mr. Harriman. And the remark raises the same cry of surprise and disgust that was raised in the breasts of Sir Joseph Porter's sisters and his cousins and his aunts on a certain historic occasion.

The United States government has been asked by Governor Blanchard of Louisiana to take charge of the yellow fever situation. Most unfortunately the request is justified, for the fever has become an interstate affair, and it looks much as though it would spread.

The Sultan of Morocco has come to the conclusion that he does not want an international conference on Morocco, fearing that his kingdom may be injured thereby. His majesty is beginning to awaken to the fact that an international conference for a small nation is very large ante-mortem examination by the diplomatic doctors.

Mention has been made in these columns of the trip taken a short time ago by the Utah Press association from Portland to Astoria and Seaside on the Astoria and Columbia River railroad. The company has issued a souvenir of that scenic route in the shape of a brochure, giving beautifully executed cuts of many of the principal scenes along the route of the road, following the line of the Columbia river and crossing some of its bays. It is very attractive and portrays many points of interest which are grand and unique. Visitors to the Fair will find the trip to Astoria and Clatsop Beach well repay them for what it costs. Information may be obtained from Mr. C. A. Stewart, at Portland, Oregon.

## ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

Examiner, New York.

We moderns here in America, are feeling very strong and secure in our great prosperity. We, too, like Manasseh and his people, are worshipping idols—the idols of money, success-at-any-cost, social distinction, political power, commercial supremacy—and are

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LADIES' WHITE WAISTS HALF PRICE.  
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## Dog Days.

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