THE RETURN.

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again: The eternal years of God are here."

Vol. 3. No. 1. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, JANUARY, 1891. Whole No. 23.

The Return.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT $1.00 A YEAR.
Entered at the Post Office at Davis City, Iowa, as second class matter.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

ARE NOT FROM THE LORD.

By Chas. W. Lamb.

Number 1.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again: The eternal years of God are here."

EDITOR RETURN—Dear Sir: I see that the above is the motto of THE RETURN. It is a good one; for "Truth is mighty and will prevail," and is therefore the safest to tie to, and THE RETURN has been true to its motto. It has been trying to point to the truth in doctrine and practice as found in the gospel, and according to "the former covenant, even the Book of Mormon," for a departure from which the whole church came under condemnation. Yes, laboring in the good work of clearing out the safe paths of peace—the good way of light and truth; and endeavoring to revive and restore the true doctrines of Christ, by sweeping out the rubbish, and brushing down the cobwebs of fiction, and sitting out the false doctrines and abominable and ruinous heresies, that, like a fungus growth, have attached themselves to the truth, thus lifting the crushing weight that has been hung to the neck of truth, like a mill stone, by priestcraft, and assisting it to rise.

In order to do this, it has been necessary to show how, when and where, and by whom and what means the heresies in Mormonism were brought in. For such heresies have been added to the true doctrine of the church, is a fact admitted by many.

This work of clearing away the rubbish from the old foundation, and showing how, and by whom the evils were brought into original Mormonism—and, remember that all that does not agree with the Book of Mormon, is not truly Mormonism—has been a disagreeable, but necessary work. For the false was brought in "privily," as Paul says, and the effort was made to engratify it into the true with as much plausible sophistry and consummate cunning as was ever exhibited by crafty priests in any age of the world.

THE RETURN has been true to its motto, by bringing to light and recording truths and facts that some have sought to suppress. To obstruct truth, and to seek to make that which is evil and false in character or principle appear good and true, is the part of all that is sinful and satanical. Much of the warfare between light and darkness has always been on this ground. For there has always been a desperate effort made by all evil powers, associations, and individuals to hide from investigation behind falsehood, and to suppress the truth. For truth and investigation would drag to the light things distasteful, and before which they might not be able to stand; for the latter would tear off their cloak of false colors and false claims, and show them up in their true color and native meanness.

Satan, early in the world's history, originated oath-bound secret socie-
ties or combinations, the safer to carry on his works of darkness, and
stealthily further his evil purposes in corrupting the minds and blind-
ing the eyes, and carefully leading down to eternal destruction the souls
of men; and to keep secret from righteous and discerning men, and
the uninitiated world, the truth concerning his plans and methods and
their workings.

And he has kept up these secret combinations, in the dark corners
of the earth, in connection with ins-
stitutions, religious and secular, in
which the masses were, by means of
oaths and penalties, subject to the
rule of his priests and dam-
gogues, in all ages of the world,
according as he could get hold on
the hearts of the children of men.
And there are now many of the
"secret chambers" of these combinations in the land. And these things
are fearfully on the increase, and the liberty of the land, and of all
free and righteous institutions are in danger from these selfish secret oath-
bound societies. They are anti-
Christian and anti-Republican in
spirit and tendency, and despotic in
their titles and rule; and will not
come to the light that their deeds
may be made manifest. They re-
fuse investigation, and are opposed to
free speech and free press, as mani-
ifested in the case of Capt. Wm.
Morgan, of Batavia, N. Y., for ex-
posing to the public the truth of
their "execrable mysteries;" and
many other such like cases that are known, and more that the
judgment day will reveal—for there
is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid, that

And also manifested in their perse-
uation, so far as safe policy will per-
mit, of all who have publicly ex-
posed or discussed their secret
works; for they are works of darkness that cannot stand
the light. For "no man, when
he hath lighted a candle,
puteth it in a secret place, neither

The Prophet Moroni, says of se-
cret combinations, in his words of
warning to the Gentiles of this na-
tion and generation. "They have
caused the destruction of this people
of whom I am speaking (people of
Jared), and also the destruction of the people of Nephi; and whatsoever
nation shall uphold such secret com-
binations to get power and gain, un-
til they shall spread over the nation,
behold, they shall be destroyed. *
* For it cometh to pass that whose
buildeth it up, seeketh to overthrow
the freedom of all lands, nations,
and countries, and it bringeth to
pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who
is the father of all lies." Ether 3:12, Book of

Moroni further says, in exhorting the Gentiles of this generation:
"O, ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in
God that these things should be
shewn unto you, that thereby ye
cannot repent of your sins, and suffer
not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which
are built up to get power and gain, and the work, yea, even the work of
destruction come upon you; yea,
even the sword of the justice of the eternal God,
shall fall upon you, to your over-
throw and destruction, if ye shall
suffer these things to be; wherefore
the Lord Commandeth you
when ye shall see these things among you, that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situa-
tion." Ether 3:13, Book of Moroni.

But, although Moroni thus feel-
ingly and earnestly warns us to
watch these things, and when we
see them come among us, to strive to
put them down, or they will work
our destruction, yet they got into
the church, and no man seems to
have heeded the warning; or to have
known the danger, or raised any
objection, or to have thought of
their evil origin or tendencies, or
ever ventured to question the prop-
riety of the Saints or church adopt-
ing secret societies; and this because
they were too much led by man;
and because Joseph Smith and the
leaders led the way into these;
"unfruitful works of darkness,"
so they became popular among the
Saints at Nauvoo, the headquarters
of the church—which, of all other
places, should have been shown in
private as well as in public, a righteous
type of the Saints and the
world. And the male portion of the
Saints there were led by a flaxen cord,
(2 Nephi 11:14,) into the lodge, and
took upon themselves its degrad-
ing oaths of obedience, secrecy and
assistance, and its barbarous penal-
ties! Is it not truly a most pit-
able and sickening spectacle? Their
eyes were closed. Their trust was
in man. But there was so much cun-
ing of the devil used in bringing
all this about, that they did not
know it.

The prophet Nephi says: "O,
Lord, I have trusted in thee, and
I will trust in thee forever. I
will not put my trust in the arm
of flesh; for I know that cursed is
he that putteth his trust in the
arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he
that putteth his trust in man, or,
maketh flesh his arm." 2 Nephi
4:5. May we be able to say the
same hereafter, and may the humili-
ating lessons of the past not be
forgotten.

But Joseph had established his
rule as well high absolute; and had
come to be considered as inallow-
and, of course, he would not, and
could not do, command or "do
anything wrong."

...and commanded them to
take his word and obey his com-
mand as if from mine (God's) own
THE RETURN.

That command stands the same, yet, and is in one of the standard books of not only the Utah, but also of the Reorganized church. Yet it is nothing short of a command to put unquestioning trust in man! This command does not agree with the teaching in the Book of Mormon; and, therefore, is no part of true Mormonism. And it is, I believe, the main key with which to unlock the mystery of why so many honest, conscientious and God-fearing men and women could be led with such apparent ease into such gross errors, not only by Joseph Smith, but also by the many other leaders who have since aspired for power and gain, on whom they supposed his mantle of authority had fallen. The early revelations in that same standard book, shows that Joseph Smith was a weak and fallible man.

The leaders adopted secret orders as a means of furthering the interests of the church, or their interests as leaders of it. And thus Joseph "put forth his hand to steal the ark of God," or the church, for which transgression he was suffered to "fall by the shaft of death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning."

The so-called order of Enoch sprang up among the priesthood, with very ridiculous and questionable pretences. It was "appointed to be an everlasting order," and "a permanent and everlasting establishment and order unto my church, to advance the cause which ye have espoused," and "whereby ye may accomplish the commandments which are given unto you," "that it may turn to you for your salvation;" "all this for the benefit of the church," "that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world." And the members of which were bound and "joined together," "united" and organized "by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken," and by terrible penalties on "the soul that sins against this covenant," and all this in the name of the Lord! This order should be found in every church that accepts the Doc. and Covenants as a standard book; for the revelations concerning it yet stand there as of old. See Secs. 77 and 81 and 89.

We find more abomination and "deviltry," and down-right wickedness and blasphemy in the purpose of that order, and disclosed,—or rather, sought to be hidden, except to those having the "keywords of the priesthood"—in these "revelations given to Enoch, concerning the order of the church for the benefit of the poor," than one could well point out in a week; when we examine them closely, and simmer them down, and skin off what was intended to divert the attention of the honest, simple minded and unsophisticated, or what was put on as a husk to make things look smooth on the surface, and hide the kernel from the uninstructed.

I believe and know that they, and also much in many other of these modern revelations, can only be rightly interpreted and understood when examined in the light of the history of the times, in which they were given: the public and private doings and sayings of the church dignitaries; and also by the light of later disclosures, and the bolder utterances and deeds, in the afterhistory of that church, and of the leaders then associated with Joseph Smith. W. P. Brown of Newton, Kansas, in his pamphlet No. 3, has shown up many of the deformities of this order, and these revelations. But the half has never been told; and I believe never will be till the judgment day. Secs. 33 and 101 contain some fine points on this order, and its penalties.

I have only intended here to briefly touch on these things in passing on, and let this article serve as an introduction to some things that may follow it, if all is well.

I see that to write here all I had intended for this article would make it too long to insert into one number of The Return, so I will have to divide it into two parts, and call this No. 1, or part first.

IMMORTAL TRUTH.

Yes, truth shall arise, though earth it be crushed;
Like the whisper of conscience, its voice is not hushed.
It hovers o'er all of the future and past;
Where'er we may flee, it will find us at last.

But truth cannot harm us if we're in accord
With principles good, and the word of the Lord.
We'll seek to uphold it when ever we can:
For truth is with God, through eternity's span.

Yes, truth is immortal—a twin unto light;
They ever agree, when they're looked at aright.

They cannot be slain, and their years never fail;
The Lord has us and, keep us from hell.

God's grace will be near, and his mercy and light,
When we keep the highway of truth and of right;
While darkness and falsehood lead to their abode;
Their followers all, by destruction's broad road.

We'll trust, then, in God, like good Nephi of old;
By his truth and light we would enter his fold.
The good Shepherd's watch care will then o'er us be;
By his grace and mercy, we'll eat of Life's Tree.

Man, weak and mortal! We'll trust not in man;
He'd lead us away into darkness again;
Of orders of Enoch we've had quite enough;
And of oaths to keep secrets, and that kind of stuff.

For in secret societies God's "worketh not;
And Satan's their founder, and runs the whole lot.
Masonic "endowments" to men bind us fast;
Some lessons we've had! We'll remember the past.

Magna, Iowa, Dec. 23, 1863.

COMMUNICATIONS.

The writers of all articles under this head are solely responsible for the views expressed therein. The Editor declines all responsibility.

DAY OF PREPARATION.

BY C. A. WICKES.

[Continued from Page 371.]

We hear a great deal about the "Second Coming of Christ," always referring to His triumph at Jerusalem.

I understand that He may come several times before that.

We are positively told that the "last shall be first, and the first shall be last," and if I am not mistaken it refers to this very thing—the coming of Christ. I hope the writer of "Death—Resurrection," will understand I mean no offense when I state that I am not convinced that the resurrected Saints will dwell on the earth during the thousand years.

The passages quoted state that they shall be caught up, and meet the Lord in the air, and shall be with the Lord. But it does not state that those resurrected Saints shall be in the "camp of the Saints" at the end, nor yet at Jerusalem, and the quotation from Rev. 5, 8-10, may as easily refer to the new earth, as to this present.

That new earth and New Jerusalem described in Rev. 21 and 22 chapters, will doubtless be the abode of the just after the millennium. But Isaiah LXXV, 17-25, describes the millennium, and a very mortal state of affairs it is, only with Satan's tower destroyed.

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, (i.e. dying a few days old) nor an old man that hath not filled his days. For the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed; and they shall build houses, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them."

For as the days of a tree are the
days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer them, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the Lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

This prophecy surely has never been fulfilled; and, equally surely it refers to the millennium, and shows a condition of things perfectly suited to human needs and desires in mortal life, but there is nothing to indicate an immortal condition during this time.

The work of Christ will never be finished in the earth until the final judgment.

The mistake of men in all ages has been to look for some peculiar day into which the events of hundreds of years should be crowded. That day will never come. The work of God will go on in the earth, each event in its own appointed time and place, and the reason the world will not be ready for these events as they occur, is that they will be looking for something different, just as the Jews rejected their Saviour on the same grounds, though they knew from the prophecies when and where He was to be born of a woman.

So with us in this day. The great majority of the believers in the Book of Mormon will not be ready to receive Christ when He comes, though it tells us so plainly who He will come to, and what will be the effect of His coming. But we will have our minds fixed on some event away in the future, and if we are not careful, we may over-look present good, and miss our part in His great work. I remember hearing an Apostle of the Reorganization in 1876, express the opinion that the end of the world would occur in three or four years, at most, and in my youthful zeal, I greedily caught the idea, and thought so too, but as reason, research, and experience have cooled my heated imagination, I find that interesting event has grown more remote to my mind's eye. It will make no difference to us, though, if it were to-morrow, if we are prepared.

It is commonly understood that Joseph Smith, the translator of the Book of Mormon, stated over fifty years ago, that whoever lived to see February 14th, 1891, would see the coming of Christ, but of the many thousands who profess to receive all that Joseph Smith taught, how many will be willing to accept the Messiah, if he has come to the Indians, and refused to recognize their church.

It may not be amiss for us all to consider this question carefully.

At some time in the near future I propose to write an article on "Church Organization," as I understand it.

In setting forth these things, I do not wish to be dogmatic, nor to be understood as speaking for my brethren.

Each one is responsible to Christ for the light he has received, and it is not possible that we should all think the same thoughts on every subject, for our fields of observation vary.

And it is by no means proof that we have not received of the Spirit of Christ, that we do not all have the same degree of experience and understanding.

That blessed spirit has promised to "lead us into all truth," it is true, but I apprehend it will take several of the ages of eternity to work any of us up to a capacity for containing all truth.

But, dear brethren, here is a rule that will infallibly test whether we have the spirit of Christ or no.

If we can each express our views on all things, and by the exchange of differing views, arrive at a better understanding of the truth, then we are safe.

But if it makes us angry, and we at once begin to say, or think "that is of the Devil," because it does not agree with our opinions, we are in danger, for Christ says, "Contention is of the Devil."

Exchange of differing ideas is not necessarily contention, but angry ex postulation is.

That we may all grow to the full measure of a man in Christ is my most earnest desire.

Yours for truth.

C. A. WICKES.

---

Rush, Iowa, Dec. 29th, 1890.

Bro. Rowson: Please find enclosed price of subscription for The Return. I would not be without it.

I judge from an article in the Herald of December 27th, by Jos. Flory, that there is much anxiety to keep the Saints from investigating and Proving all things. Is it possible that the Saints must be whipped into line, to follow a man-made priesthood, and accept whatever they may see fit to teach, without question, lest they be called wicked, aspiring, self-conceited and unfaithful?

I know, to my cost, what it means to follow a man leader without question. Though, to be sure, I often to myself, wondered why, if God commanded his people to do certain things, he did not sustain them when they tried so hard to obey every command given through his supposed revelator. And now, most of all, I wonder at the great efforts put forth by the present leaders to cover up the follies and failures of the early doings in the church.

It sounds very weak to me, when I read that polygamy was not known till 1832. Proclaimed by Brigham Young for the first time. And in the same article I read that one Hiram Brown was cut off by Hyrum and Joseph Smith, for teaching polygamy.

Of myself I know that polygamy and spiritual wifery was very much talked of, nor did it seem at that time to be any secret as to who were Joseph's spiritual wives. I was satisfied then that Joseph was in polygamy, but did not dare say much lest I might be found opposing a command of God. I think I should never have said anything about these things, if I had not seen so much in the Herald the past two years, calculated to mislead the reader.

I have wondered much of late years why we, in the early days of church, should have been so blind to the teachings of the Bible and Book of Mormon, and so ready to be led by man. To be sure, there were a good many revelations that to me were rather inconsistent, but I thought I must keep still. And thought I heard Joseph say in Kirtland, that he was not a prophet, but he meant to be one, still I with others, followed his counsel foolishly, thinking we were serving God.

Some months before his death, he said in public meeting, he should prophesy no more, Hyrum must prophesy now. I have since wondered why we could not have seen that if God had appointed Joseph to be a revelator, he had no right to transfer that appointment to another.

It has been said that the Saints of those days were in transgression, inasmuch as they did not obey counsel; so the Lord permitted their enemies to overcome them. Such a charge against the Saints of those trying days is just as false as it is cruel. There never has been a time when the Saints, (with the exception of a few of the wiser ones) refused to
obey counsel. It was through their obedience to their very unwise counselors, and their blind trust in man, they were brought into much grief, and such trial as seldom falls upon a people striving to serve God.

I find there is much valuable time wasted trying to convince Herald readers that Joseph is the legal successor of his father. In the name of common sense, does our soul's salvation depend on that fact? Is it well to as well to study the Law of God, as given in the Bible and Book of Mormon, and strive to come nearer to Christ through obedience to his law, instead of spending time in very foolish questioning as to who is the legal successor of Joseph Smith, Jr.?

Of one thing I am sure, the present Joseph has done much valuable work in preaching the Gospel. I cannot forget a moment that he believes, or endorses one-half the useless things written in the Herald. But I do not think he acts wisely in trying to uphold a man-made priesthood, when the Bible and Book of Mormon are so very plain to those who take the time to study it.

I have found it to be quite common among Saints that they, (many of them I have known to be good and true, and yet quite ignorant of much that is the written law in the Bible or Book of Mormon,) take as guidance, just what is told them by the priesthood through the Herald. To such I would say, read the books and compare them with the Doctrine and Covenants, and its so-called revelations. Of course, I am well aware that to-day, as in the early days of the priesthood, if you obey counsel you will read nothing that does not approve of all the sayings and doings of the High Priesthood.

If anything I can say of my own knowledge, given me by investigation, and a comparison of God's laws with the laws made by the man-made priesthood, shall cause even one honest soul to seek the Scriptures for knowledge, I shall feel that I have, in a measure, atoned for the blindness that kept me for years looking for a man leader; forgetting as it would seem the gentle, loving invitation of Christ, our High Priest, who has said, and still says, 'Come unto me.' Not once does he say, 'follow the Priesthood, they are enough for you.'

To every honest Saint I would say, 'Break the yoke of bondage,' and come up into the freedom of Christ's Gospel. God keep us all, Amen. Simon Dyke, Sen.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

[For The Return.]

Before Julius Cesar inserted the month of January in the calendar, the months used to occur at different seasons of the year, and as the altered calendar could not have been very prevalent so soon as the birth of Christ, and as shepherd's in Judea do not keep their flocks on the mountains in December, and as Christ as a king, would naturally be born at the beginning of the Jewish civil year, the autumnal equinox; there are good reasons for believing that December fell where September and October do now. The world did not begin to celebrate Christmas till after the dark ages. Maim or March, divinely appointed to be the beginning of the Jewish ecclesiastical year for ever, must therefore have begun about the vernal equinox. Jewish festal days date from the commencement of the ecclesiastical and civil years. Joseph Smith had Book of Mormon delivered to him on the 22nd day of September.

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me."—Wisdom.
you expect to enter the kingdom of heaven without conversion? If so, you evidently make a great mistake, as the principle is just as binding to-day as it was when Jesus made the statement as directed by His Father.

Again, Jesus told Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Here we learn what baptism is essential to salvation, for how can a person be saved, if they "cannot enter into the kingdom of God?" No one can enter there unless they obey the law ordained of the Father, which governs that holy place. Jesus "was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." Baptism was, and is, the law of the Father. It has never been repealed. It is stable and immutable as its author.

If we wish to enter the kingdom of God we must do so by obeying the law which governs it, which we find to be faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism in water for the remission of our sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, which last is the birth of the spirit. By so doing we take upon ourselves the name of Christ, the only name given under heaven whereby salvation can come to the children of men, and are adopted into the family of our heavenly Father, and become "heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ," entitled to an inheritance with the children of light. May this be our happy lot is our earnest desire.

The Hour of God's Judgment.

We are living, as I firmly believe, in the hour of "God's judgment," as spoken of in Revelations 14:

since the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which contains the fulness of the everlasting gospel, as revealed by the holy angel from heaven, the earth has been more frequently visited with great and destructive earthquakes, fires, floods, storms and tornadoes, than heretofore.

Now comes the report of great destitution, suffering and death, all over Europe, portions of Asia and even north Africa, arising from the unprecedented severity of the winter thus far in those countries.

In one instance, in northern Asia, a cold wave came so suddenly and so severely, that the thermometer indicated a change of 33 degrees, which was so great that three canaus of camels, and other beasts of burden, froze to death, together with all their drivers, some twenty-three persons.

England, according to the published reports, has already had over seven weeks of snow and winter, up to the present writing, (Jan. 17.) Even sunny Italy, Spain and Northern Africa are suffering from the same cause, some writers assert, to a greater extent than ever before known. Thus the Lord is fulfilling his word. What will the end be? Utter destruction upon Babylon.

THIRD VOLUME.

This number commences the third volume of The RETURN. The two volumes already published are an earnest of what the future numbers will be. It could be hoped the future might be an improvement upon the past, but I can make no promise in that direction, as I have endeavored herefore to do the best I could, under the circumstances, according to my judgment, and still propose to do the same hereafter.

There are many things I feel called upon to publish which I most earnestly wish had never transpired. But inasmuch as they have, it seems to be my bounden duty to publish some of them, and bear my testimony to such of them and others, as I am personally knowing to, so that the Latter Day Saints may be left without excuse for "trusting in man, and making flesh his arm."

My position in life has been such as to give me better opportunities for knowing what has transpired in the church, than many others, as I was living in the family of Joseph Smith in 1833, when he baptized me into the church, and lived a near friend to him from that time until the 19th day of June, 1844, (nine days before his death,) when Elder Rigdon and family, and myself and family left Nauvoo and went to Pittsburg, Penn., by direction of the council of the church.

In addition to living a neighbor, in January, 1844, I leased his house, the Mansion House, and occupied it some three months, from Jan. until April, during which time we ate at the same table, as himself and family remained and boarded with us. This gave me an opportunity for knowing many things I could not otherwise have known. Therefore, when Latter Day Saints represent, as they are doing, that the church and his acts were acceptable to the Lord up to 1844, the time of his death, they misrepresent the facts, and commit a gross error, one, in my judgment, that is calculated to deceive and mislead the people, and ultimately do a great injury to the cause of truth and righteousness.

As soon as I can feel that my duty is performed in regard to these things, I purpose to deviate therefrom, as it affords me more pleasure to write upon the peaceful things of the kingdom, than these unpleasant matters.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Some articles are admitted into our columns under this head, in which the writers express views entirely different from other members of the church. When such articles are written in a spirit of candor, and with due deference to the feelings of others, it may not be amiss to carefully examine them.

Some have expressed the thought, that because the Holy Ghost is promised to those who obey the gospel, therefore all those receiving the holy Ghost should see alike in all things. The Lord, however, knowing the weakness of man, and our inability, with our present surroundings, to see alike, has condescended to tell us when that happy time will come, as follows:

"How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isa. 52:7-8.

By this scripture we learn that when the Lord shall bring again Zion, then the watchmen shall see eye to eye. Until that time comes I look for a difference of views upon many points connected with the great work of the last days. Let us therefore, express our views in kindness, remembering our brother has just as good a right to his views as we have to ours, and knowing also, that we cannot, in any sense, alter the great truths of heaven, and that our heavenly Father will perform all his purposes in his own time and in his own way, without reference to the opinions of men.


From the annual report of the Post Master General, which he so kindly sent the RETURN, we quote the following interesting items for future reference.

When the Post Office Department began its career in 1792, the number of post offices in the whole country did not exceed 100—now there are 82,401. Then the length of all mail routes was about 9000 miles—now they have increased to nearly 485,000 miles. Then the entire revenue derived from the mail service was less than $50,000 a year—now it amounts to a little less than $61,000,000.

Then the rates of postage were on a sliding scale, according to the distance carried.

For a single letter not over 30 miles, 5 cts; over 30 and under 60, 8; over 60 and under 100, 10; over 100 and under 150, 12 and one half; over 150 and under 200, 15; over 200 and under 250, 17; over 250 and under 300, 20; over 350 and under 400, 25; over 450, 30 cts.

Double letters were double postage.

Triggle " triple.

For every ounce four single rates were charged, making $1 an ounce for letters.
carried over 450 miles, whereas now let-
ers weighing one ounce are carried to any part of the United States and Canada for two cents.

The P. O. Money order system has attained such perfection that money in sums from 1 cent to $100, can be sent to any part of the world with perfect safety, and its annual business amounts to nearly $250,000,000.

The postal establishment of the United States has arisen from a condition of insignificance to the largest of all the nations of the world. Instead of one little room, which, in 1789, was sufficient to accommodate the entire central force of the post-office department, a building four stories high, and covering an entire block in Washington, is now inadequate to say nothing of the great postoffice structures all over the land. Instead of the postboy on his lazy horse, coming and going at will between struggling villages along a single line of post-routes, with here and there a diversion to a cross road, as was the way in Os
good's time, the mails are now transported almost with the speed of thought, according to fixed schedules of arrival and departure, over such innumerable routes as to make their aggregate journeys every working day, equivalent to forty-one ty's the circuit of the earth. From a total business of perhaps a thousand letters a day, which is but a trifle less than the estimate of the post master general in 1789, letters and other pieces of mail matter are steadily dropping into the numberless receptacles of the postal system at the rate of nearly 8,000 a minute. This marvelous system employs more than 150,000 agents.

ITEMS OF PERSONAL HISTORY
OF THE EDITOR.

No. 20.

Continued from page 864.

As stated in my last No. of Personal History, the masses of people in Nauvoo were honest, faithful and industrious; very zealous in their religious de
tentions; anxiously laboring for the up
building of the principles of truth and righteousness, in view of the permanent establishment of the Zion of our God; firmly believing that Nauvoo was to be the corner stone thereof, as set forth in what is called the "temples revelation," given by Joseph Smith on Jan. 10, 1844, Sec
10: Doc. and Cov., Piano edition:
In addition to the regular Sunday meetings, prayer meetings were held on week day evenings, at which the gifts of the gospel were enjoyed and exercised by different members of the church. I attended these meetings.

Several of these prayer meetings were held at Brother Sessions, at one of which sister Sessions spake in tongues, in which she very feigning the sisters to beare lest they be overaken in sin, as a spirit of adultery would be poured out upon the people.

Soon after this the brethren and sisters who attended these meetings, were notice
d to desist from speaking in tongues, for soon the sisters would get to com
mounding the elders. This had the desired effect, and the exercise of the gift of tongues ceased for a time.

The work on the temple was pushed forward as fast as possible, so as to have it finished within the appointed time according to the revelation heretofore referred to.

The brethren seemed to vie with each other in their diligence in the labor up
on it, as many of them felt that it was more than a matter of life and death, for if they failed to have the work accomplished by the time appointed, they lost not only their own soul's salvation, but also the salvation of their dear friends for whom they have been baptized; as it is positively sta
ell in the revelation that if the work was not completed within the time appointed, "the church should be rejected with their dead."

I confess that was too strong meat for me. I could not believe our heavenly Father would make our dear friends responsible for the performance, or non-performance of any duty assigned the living. If our being baptized for them did them any good whatever, that good was permanent as I believed. Neither could I believe he would reject the innocent for the acts of the guilty, therefore I came to the conclusion that the Lord did not give that revelation.

When speaking of that revelation on one occasion, since I united with the Reorganized church, in conversation with elder Zenas H. Gurley, San. I told him I did not believe it. His reply was: "Don't tell it." But I have repeatedly told it, as it was, and is the settled conviction of my mind.

Notwithstanding Bishops were appointed by revelation, whose duty it was to receive and handle all the church property, look after the poor, etc. And notwithstanding the Lord told Joseph in July, 1839, (D. C. 23:4) that "in temporal labors thou shalt not have strength, for this is not thy calling," yet he set at nought the counsel of the Lord, and in addition to his other temporal business had himself appointed "sole Trustee in
Trust for the whole church," which place in his hands, and gave him full and entire control of all the properties of the church, of which mention may be made more fully hereafter.

In addition to his office of Trustee in Trust, Editor of the Times and Seasons, and all the other varied business relations with which he was connected, on the 8th of March, 1843, he was appointed Registrar of Deeds for the city of Nau
voo, as will appear by the following quotations from his history:

"Friday, February 18th. I at
tended an adjourned City Council and spoke at considerable length in Committee of the whole, on the great privileges of the Nauvoo Chur
ctor, and especially on the registry of
Deeds for Nauvoo, and prophesied
in the name of the Lord God, that Judge Douglas, and no other Judge of the Circuit Court, will ever set aside a law of the City Council estab

"Saturday, March 5th. Attended the City Council, and spoke at con
siderable length on the powers and privileges of our City Charter; among other business of importance, the Office of Registrar of Deeds was established in the City of Nauvoo, and I was chosen Registrar by the City Council."—Mil. Star, Vol. 19, page 135.

This office of Registrar of Deeds for the City of Nauvoo, proved a mistake, as I have been credibly informed the courts did not recognize those records, as the statute of Illinois provides only for a Registrar of Deeds for each county in the state, and not for cities. Thus that prophecy failed.

In addition to the small brick house which I had built for our residence, also had a brick row of eleven tenements built, the rents from which helped liquidate my indebtedness, and also assist in meeting current expenses.

In 1841 I was elected a justice of the peace; and also appointed and commis
sioned by Gov. Carlin, a Notary Public. The duties of said offices I endeavored to fill to the best of my ability.

To be continued.

Macedonian Cry.

The following letters are inserted that our readers may know the state of feeling that is steadily obtaining among the careful, prayerful, considerate people, who feel that their own soul's interest is at stake, and who are willing to read and examine the vital questions pertaining to the plan of life and salvation, for themselves.

Truth is like the leaven spoken of by Jesus, that the woman laid in the measure of meal. Be patient friends, in God's due time, it will leaven the whole lump.
THE RETURN.

The names are not given as I do not know the senders intended them for publication.

January 2nd, 1891.

Elder E. Robinson.

Dear Brother:—I herewith enclose a letter just received from a friend and Bro. It will give you some idea of what our limited amount of Church literature is doing, it being all the preaching we have here. I have for the last two years been anxiously waiting and hoping that an Elder of the Church of Christ would come this way, as we have no authority, and quite a few are ready for baptism.

The pamphlets referred to in the letter, are those written by Eld. W. P. Brown, of Newton, Kans. The papers referred to is the Return.

He experienced of late considerable difficulty in getting his papers. I wrote you of this matter once before; possibly the fault is with the mail here.

Your Brother in Christ.

Elder E. Robinson.

December 20, 1890.

Dear Brother in Christ, which means that I have at last received my sight. Those pamphlets done the business for me. I started in to read the first little one and did not like it much at first; thought it was going to be a personal squabble between Brown and Blair, but soon found that it contained many good and instructive points on the doctrine and beliefs of the (so called) Whitmerites. I got pretty well interested before I laid down number one, and before I got half through number two, I said, this reads like the “fullness of the Gospel,” sure enough, and when I finished that number I could almost hear the Angel’s wings fluttering in the room ready to carry the glad tidings, and I felt like giving a good old “Methodist shout.”

The Spirit of discernment was strong upon me, and I could look back and see that Christ, the Lord, had been piloting “my craft” right towards this “harbor” for the last two years. The chain of events is complete, (and a wonderful full chain it is,) My sickness and the spiritual visitations, your kindly visits to my bed-side, and the many other, little circumstances, trifling, in themselves, but all helping to bring the final result; and all going to prove the guiding hand of a loving Savior; and we might go still further back; for I find that my knowledge of the Utah Mormons and their peculiar practices, helps me to a better understanding of the preachings and teachings of the Elders of the church of Christ.

Well I am now ready for baptism and anything else the Lord requires of me, and as you have been instrumental in getting me thus far, I rather look to you to solve the question of what to do next.

28th. Just got your letter last night. I wrote you a card several days ago in regard to my paper, but I suppose you had n’t had time to get it when you wrote. I think they have made some mistake and scratched my name off the list. I must get you to send for a Book of Mormon for me; a cheap edition will do for me; send it up as soon as it comes. I can read it more understandingly now with my new eyesight. Let me know the cost of it and I will make arrangements to repay you.

My health is still good. My faith in Christ and hope of Salvation growing brighter and brighter.

Yours etc.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Independence, Mo. Dec. 15th, 1891.

Editor Return: The assumptions of “a little brief authority,” were never better illustrated than in the District conference of the Reorganized Church just ended.

Verily, even a little “Authority intoxicates, and makes mere sets of magistrates.” Therefore among them, the special functions of the High Priest, have been an unknown quantity, and a matter of doubt and uncertainty. But now the light is flashed upon the subject. The President of the Independence district now comes to the front, and boldly declares that he holds his office as district president, and not because of any authority resident in the body over which he presides. It now seems that an High Priest, if president of a district, is greater than the district over which he presides. Brighamism, even in its palmiest days, scarcely any more than rivalled the arrogance exhibited in the assumption of authority on this occasion. There is a strong dissatisfaction among the brethren of the Reorganized Church over this great stretch of authority. We will wait and see what the end will be.

Upsilon.

THE IMPORTANT RECONCILIATION.

God has reconciled the world through Christ. He has arranged such a complete reconciliation for the fallen race, that he is in full harmony with his own righteousness extending to us his grace and save us if we will accept his conditions.

God laid the sins of all the world upon his only begotten Son, who was made to appear the guilty sinner in our stead. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes are we healed. Isa. 53:5. All was demanded of him. He paid our debt. He secured for us a righteousness we never could have gained, a righteousness which alone is acceptable to God.

The very fact that God brought about a reconciliation and offered the world salvation by his grace, will be the cause of its condemnation, because it will not accept of these conditions. Consider this, thou child of the world. If you expect to receive the benefit of Christ’s merits, you must accept these terms and become saved from the wicked, who will not repent. How terrible in the day of judgement to meet the Lord without being reconciled to Him. So listen to the call from the Most High. It is a thing of the utmost importance. Give him thy heart, thy whole heart.—Selected.

I AM TOO BUSY; CALL ANOTHER TIME.

A city missionary called at a house. The door was opened by a woman, to whom he said that he had come to converse with her on the salvation of her soul. She seemed uneasy at his words, and replied, “I am too busy to speak to you today; call another time.” He gave a kind parting word and retired. On a second visit, the missionary found the woman preparing to go to the theatre. The same excuse was made; "I am very busy; come another time." “Ah, my friend,” said the faithful visitor, “death will one day come to the house, and it will not do to tell him to call another time.” The woman went to the play house, returned home seeming in her usual health, was taken ill in the night, and died the next morning. You have leisure for everything but that which is the most important of all. But will you delay any longer? Let the message now be heard. It is a message to repent, believe on the Lord and be baptized. And then the promise is, “Thou shalt be saved.” Receive the offer of mercy to-day; it may be too late to-morrow.

CHEROKEE COUNCIL.

MESSAGE OF CHIEF PERRYMAN REGARDING LANDS.

Paris, Texas, Oct. 28.—The message of Chief Perryman to the council of the Creek nation, now in session at Cumpoe, makes mention of the law enacted by congress by which the western tribes are fast allotting their lands preparatory to admission as citizens into the American
THE RETURN.

republic. "Thus the rights, privileges, and authority of five nations is infringed upon and curtailed at almost every session of congress. It would hardly be fair to charge congress with malice toward the Indians or wilful disregard of their interests. The general policy of the government toward the Indians is one of humanity and charity. The fault lies in the ignorance of our would-be benefactors as regards the true condition and needs of the Indians. This congress, through its misguided zeal for the betterment of the condition of the Indians, handicapped our most laudable efforts for self-government and self-preservation. Uncaring vigilance is the only hope of our existence. The congress of the United States must be constantly informed of our condition and must be continually reminded of the sacred treaty obligations she has entered into with us in the past. It is recommended, therefore, that a strong delegation be sent to Washington to represent our nation during the next session of congress.—Es.

THE LAST DAYS.

Tune.—Do they miss me at home?

Hark! hark! through the nations are ringing
The sounds of contention and strife;
Their armies togeth'er are bringing,
To take away each other's life;
For peace from the earth hath departed,
And anarchy stalks o'er the land;
All people are growing faint-hearted,
The day of the Lord is at hand.
The judgments of God are descending,
The wicked are feeling his wrath;
There's a mighty consumption impending,
Which shortly will empty the earth;
Floods, pestilence, earthquakes and famine,
Are covering it's face with the slain;
And plunder, bloodshed and repine,
Are following fast in their train.

While nations and kingdoms are falling,
Their pomp cut down like a flower;
God's purposes onward are rolling,
In magnitude glory and power;
And soon shall Emanuel's banner
Float high from the east and the west;
And ignomine, priestcraft and error
Forever be laid in the dust.—L. H. M.

BACK NUMBERS

Of The Return constantly on hand, and for sale: will furnish post paid, a full set of the first vol., 12 numbers, for 50 cents. Or a full set of both the first and second volumes, 24 numbers, for $1.

ELDER DAVID WHITMER'S: "Address to all believers in Christ" can be had by sending a 2 cent stamp to D. Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., or to this office.

THE RETURN is published monthly at $1 per year, payable in advance.
Money can be sent by Bank draft, Post Office order on Davis City, Iowa, or Express order, at our risk. 1 cent and 2 cent P. O. stamps received in small amounts.
Address E. ROBINSON.
Davis City, Deseret Co., Iowa.
Communications.

The writers of all articles under this head are solely responsible for the views expressed therein. The Editor disclaims all responsibility.

The Law All Fulfilled In Christ.

By W. S. Roberts

Dear Reader:—By writing upon this subject, I wish to show that those who go back to the law of Moses, and Abraham, to substantiate any particular office or doctrine, do greatly err, by so doing. I shall quote from Christ’s own words, as recorded in the New Covenant Scriptures; in both the Bible and Book of Mormon, and also from his Disciples; believing they taught the same doctrine that Christ taught to them, and sent them into the world to teach.

I shall now quote from Book of Mormon, pages 445 and 446, par. 9 to 11, 5th chap.; I will not quote all of these paragraphs for want of space, just enough to give the meaning. Christ speaking, said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and whoso buildeth upon this buildeth upon my Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my Rock, but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell standeth open to receive such, when the floods come and the winds beat upon them."

Oh; how careful we should be that we are not found teaching some other doctrine which Christ never taught; please bear this in mind.

We now turn to last of 9th par. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill; for verily I say unto you, one jot nor one tittle hath not passed away from the law, but in me it hath all been fulfilled." No; Christ did not destroy the law, for if he had it would not be found in existence to day.

The law exists to day, but it is of no force, because it has all been fulfilled in Christ, and a new and better covenant established in its stead; a spiritual and everlasting covenant.

We find these words in 10th par.

"Behold ye have the commandments before you, and the law is fulfilled; therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven." In 11th par. he says: "Old things are done away, and all things have become new."

Again, page 451 found in 1st par. 7 chap. "And it came to pass that when Jesus had said these words, he perceived that there were some among them who marveled, and wondered what he would concerning the law of Moses; for they understood not the saying that old things had passed away, and all things had become new. And he said unto them, Marvel not that I said unto you, that old things had passed away and that all things had become new. Behold I say unto you that the law is fulfilled that was given
unto Moses. Behold I am he that covenanted with my people Israel; therefore the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfill the law, therefore it hath an end. Behold I do not destroy the prophets, for as many as have not been fulfilled in me verily I say unto you shall all be fulfilled. And because I said unto you that old things hath passed away, I do not destroy that which hath been spoken concerning things which are to come; for behold the covenant which I have made with my people is not all fulfilled, but the law which was given unto Moses hath an end in me. Behold I am the law, and the light, look unto me and endure to the end and ye shall live, for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life. Behold, I have given unto you the commandments, therefore keep my commandments. And this is the law and the prophets, for they truly testified of me.

Oh what a glorious thought contained in the above scripture. But the thought we wish to notice is, that Christ is the law, and the light, hence we need not look for another law-giver. Christ has fulfilled the old law, and has given a new law, and made a new covenant, the old one having become old, and like an old garment, decayed, which passeth away. Also if we keep his commandments, we shall have eternal life.

He also says in the 6th chap. 6th par., Page 450: "Therefore, whose are these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who buildeth his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Now what sayings did Christ mean when he said, these sayings of mine, did he mean his sayings which should some time in the future come through a man, and he called a revelation to his people like some of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants which requires us to comply with some other law in order to be saved? Oh, no, I think not; I think he meant what he said: "These sayings of mine." They were the sayings which He had been teaching them in that day. Yes his everlasting gospel, which he has brought forth to us its fullness, in these last days.

Brothers, I believe we have both seen and heard those sayings of his, for they are recorded in both the new covenant scriptures of the Bible and book of Mormon; and if we do them, we will be likened unto that wise man, and will surely be in a safe condition when the gates of hell cannot prevail against us. Remember that the sayings of his at that time, spoken by his own mouth, and not through another, was to come down to us as the fullness of his gospel to us.

Some would claim that only the carnal part of the old law was done away, according to Christ's words, when he said it was all fulfilled, and had an end in him. The law of Moses must have been all carnal. But be that as it may, if there ever was a spiritual law given before Christ, it would never be done away, for that which is spiritual liveth forever, hence it would have to be grafted into the new covenant; which covenant is a spiritual covenant. For says Christ: "My words are Spirit and life."

I believe Christ set up a spiritual kingdom when he set up the church, he himself being the King or Head, and consequently that spiritual kingdom must have a spiritual head, and be governed by a spiritual law, (an everlasting law.) And if a spiritual kingdom takes upon it a carnal head, (all men are fallible, liable to carnalities), and introduce carnal laws to govern it, it is then that it becomes carnal, and Christ cannot be its head, for he is a spiritual being.

Now the law was given to Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. I prefer that grace and truth to govern the church of Christ, rather than the law of Moses, or Abraham, or any part thereof. On account of the hard heartedness and stiff necks of the children of Israel, they were given a law that was not good, and that law was called a law of carnal commandments. And although this law was carnal, it was full of types and shadows of the real, and everlasting law, which Christ should come in person, and by his own mouth, instigate which was a perfect law of liberty, which would make men free; and enable them to become sons of God; yes, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, which comes by the power of the Holy Ghost; the new covenant made with Israel; the law written in their hearts. Yes, the Holy Ghost, so every one could know God for themselves, and not for another.

In the book of Doctrine and Covenants, there are laws and revelations just as carnal as any found in the law of Moses. Any law governing property or money, (compulsory,) are temporal, and carnal. Who is so blind as to think that the law of tithing is any less carnal than the law of circumcision, or the law governing the feast of the passover, or to bring an offering to be offered upon an altar for remission of sins? Is money any more spiritual than rams, or he goats, or incense? I think not.

Christ taught freewill offerings, which were not compulsory, instead of a law of tithing, (one tenth,) with a penalty of being burned if you do not observe it. In Christ's plan of salvation, he does not say we must pay our tithing in order to be saved. But according to the revelation on tithing, our salvation now rests as to whether we have paid our tithing or not. Paul says, 2nd Cor., 3rd chap. 11th verse: "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." And again he saith, Gal. 3rd chap., 19th to 25th verses: "Wherefore then serveth the law, it was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. But the scriptures hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." (Not revealed at that time) "Wherefore the law was our school master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a school master." And again, Heb. 7th and 12th verse: "For the Priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."

But, says one, did they not have the new covenant scriptures before Christ? I answer, yes, to a certain extent; although according to Paul they, in his day, knew nothing of it. And I find nothing in the Bible to prove that they did, and it was undoubtedly on account of their unbelief, and lack of faith, that they did not know of it, and when it would be preached first by Christ himself, and afterwards by his servants; and after it was sealed by the death of the testator, (Christ,) it would be in full force, (and not before,) as Paul says, Heb. 9th, 16-17 verses: "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator: For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." So we see that in order for the new testament to be in full force, Christ had to come into the world and seal it with his death, and by so doing, .... the old law.

We find that the Jews were a faithless and perverse people: and by the
THE RETURN.

absence of that living faith, which they should have had, they knew not of these things before hand. And if they had been more obedient to the law, (their school master,) they would have been better prepared to accept of this New Covenant when it did come, as Paul says: "They were shut up under the law until faith came." There must be a living faith in God, before a people can know of things to come in the future.

Paul says: "The law and the prophets were until John, afterwards the kingdom of God was preached."

John began to preach repentance as a forerunner to Christ, to get the hearts of the people better prepared to accept of the one that was mightier than he, that should baptize them with fire and the Holy Ghost. I deem it needless to quote any more scripture to show that the old law was all fulfilled in Christ, for the Son of God had spoken it. It should suffice.

As I have just been speaking of a faithless people, I now turn to a people with faith, viz. the Nephites. We learn that they knew of Christ and his Mission, and at least a good portion of the great plan of salvation, before Christ came; question: How was it possible? we answer, by reason of their great faith. Some had such great faith that they could not be kept from within the wall. We also find that this knowledge profited them greatly. These things were made known to them that they might look forward for a remission of their sins, by the Son of God, the great mediator, through the atonement which he should make. Remember, the atonement was not made yet, consequently the new covenant was not yet in full force.

Nephi says, in his second book page 95, last of 6th and first of 7th 11th chap. "For we labor diligently to write to persuade our children and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

And notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled; for, for this end was the law given; wherefore, the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ, because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments, and we talk of Christ; and we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ; we prophesy of Christ; and we write according to our Prophecies; that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. Wherefore, we speak concerning the law, that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given. And after the law is fulfilled in Christ, that they need not harden their hearts against him, when the law ought to be done away."

We see by this scripture that it was by faith that they received these things, and that they taught these to their children that they might be the better prepared to accept of Christ when he did come; and that they might know that the law was not life; and to know where to look for a remission of their sins. They were under the law of Moses then, and still would be until it was done away. (Men are only under the law that exists in their day.)

An old law must first be repealed before a new one can be in full force. Now the question, how could they be under the law and yet above it? when that faith came that Paul speaks of, it gave them a greater knowledge than their schoolmaster (the law) could give them, and of course they were above it; yet they had to be subject to the law they were under (viz.) the law of Moses.

Let us illustrate this matter: suppose you were going to school to a common school teacher, (or school master,) and you became a better scholar than your teacher, would you not be above your teacher in learning? consequently your teacher would be dead to you. He could no longer teach you, for you know more than your teacher. Nevertheless you would be under his control and jurisdiction and his government as long as you went to his school.

Now another question arises, what benefit was there in those people keeping the New Covenant which they received before Christ came and sealed it with his death, which of course would make it binding and in full force! we learn by reading the History of those people that they were greatly blessed by observing it. Now let us illustrate this matter also, there is a certain man by the name of Edward Bellamy, who has written a book called Looking Backward, in which he portrays a system of government, (a great commonwealth plan) which far excels our present system of government (or at least the way our government is being run at present.) Now there are 2 or 3 different colonies in this country trying to carry out Bellamy's plan of government; and although they may receive a great benefit by it, nevertheless they have got to be subject to the powers that be, (viz.) the statute laws and regulations of the government of which they are citizens. Their form of government cannot fully and practically be carried out, as long as they are under some other different model of government; another evidence that the New Covenant was not in full force before Christ is this, that all those that were baptized before Christ, had to be baptized over again.

Yours in the freedom of Christ.

W. S. Roberts.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

Joseph Starts the Temple Endowments.

By Chas. W. Lamb.

Number 2.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again; The eternal years of God are here."

Mr. Editor.—As your paper the Return, for Oct., 1890, shows from Joseph Smith's own writings in the 19th Vol. of the Millennial Star, page 390 and 91, the fact that he introduced a secret "order of the priesthood," on the 4th day of May, 1842, in a secret "Council" held with the other leading men in the church, and with some of the highest Free Masons in that part of the land; and held in what was then used as the masonic lodge; and which order his writings also show was intended to be given to the Elders as the temple as an endowment, when that building should be "completed." Joseph says that "in this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days."

Joseph's preparatory discourse on the first of May, shows what kind of a snare was being "prepared for the church of the first born." We can see that his new "ancient order of things," which he says pertained "to the Ancient of Days"—who, according to the book of Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 26, par. 2, is Michael or Adam—had "certain keys and words," which he calls "the keys of the kingdom." By these keys and the "plans and principles" of this secret "order of the priesthood," Joseph says, "any one is enabled to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds." He says: "The keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true which cannot be revealed to
the Elders till the temple is completed. * * There are signs in heaven, earth, and hell; the Elders must know them all, to be endowed with power, to finish their work and prevent imposition.

After all that is said in the Book of Mormon in condemnation of secret societies with their oaths and penalties and grips and "signs and words," which were and are the keys by which the members thereof know each other and can detect the "false spirits and personages" from the true members, and "prevent imposition." After all, I say, it turns out, according to Joseph's showing, that the kingdom of God, and the church of Christ, when it is to attain to the "fullness of those blessings which have been prepared" for it, is run on the same plan and principle as these condemned secret combinations; in which the Book of Mormon tells us, "The Lord worketh not," and which it also says: "are built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies." See Ether 3rd 12, 13, Book of Mormon.

Now let us notice a few of the parallels between this order started by Joseph, and the Nauvoo and Utah endowments:

1st. This "Eloheim" also figures as the highest or Head God in the endowments.

2nd. The endowment was also, like this, an "ancient order," and also "pertained to the Ancient of Days." For it went back to Adam, and its ceremonies represented the creation of the earth and Adam and Eve, and the scenes in the Garden of Eden.

3rd. The so called Brighamite endowment was also an "order of the priesthood."

4th. And it also had "certain signs and words."

5th. And Joseph's words in the Millennial Star concerning his secret order, will also apply to and describe the secret endowments to perfection; for the secret grips and signs and words of the latter institution were also "keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so to the highest order of the Melchisedec Priesthood."

6th. And the key words, etc. of the priesthood communicated in the endowments were also to entitle those possessing them, or to enable them to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the church of the First Born, and to come up and abide in the presence of Eloheim in the eternal world.

In order to show more of the points of similarity existing between the two, I will have to quote more of Joseph's words concerning his secret order.

"Wednesday, (May) 4th. I spent the day in the upper part of the store (Masonic lodge room.) in council with General James Adams of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney, and George Miller, and Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, according to the ancient and modern ceremonies of the Masonic and the Nauvoo endowments, and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchisedec Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of days, and all those plans and principles by which any one is enabled to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of Eloheim in the eternal worlds."

This General James Adams of Springfield, which Joseph mentions first in this council, was the Masonic Deputy Grand Master of the State of Illinois. Hyrum Smith was then or at least was only 13 days later, acting as master Problem of the Nauvoo lodge of Free and Accepted Ancient York Masons. For this, see his affidavit at the trial of John C. Bennett, in Vol. 3 of Millam Star, page 140. George Miller, one her person in this council, that instituted "for the first time the Masonic-like temple endowments, was "Master of Nauvoo lodge, under dispensation." See same Star, P. 105.

Notice that in the above quotation Joseph says he "spent the day," in the work of going through with the various performances and administering the ceremonies, consisting of lectures "setting forth the order," and giving instructions on its plans and principles, and the communication of key words and signs, etc. Those who went through the ceremonies and took the secret covenants administered in the Nauvoo temple and Utah endowment house, began early in the day and also nearly "spent the day" in going through the endowment ceremonies. This gives the parallel between the two.

8th. Part of Joseph's time on that day was occupied in giving lectures on the principles of his secret order. It was the same in the secret endowments.

9th. Joseph speaks of "washings" as part of the performances in his ceremonies designed for the temple. And in the endowment ceremonies given in the temple and in Utah, the candidate was stripped and washed all over, with a running comment or blessing, by the one officiating, to the effect that he or she was washed clean from the blood of this generation.

10th. Joseph tells of "anointings" as being part of the ceremonies in his secret temple order. And in the Utah endowments, after being washed, every part and organ of the body of the initiate, from head to foot, was anointed, a blessing at the same time being pronounced upon each part. For instance, the mouth was anointed that he might with wisdom speak the words of eternal life.

11th. Part of Joseph's time on that memorable day was occupied in the "communication of keys" pertaining to the Aaronic and Melchisedec Priesthoods, consisting of "signs and words." And in the Utah endowment ceremonies there were numerous signs and words communicated, pertaining to those two priesthoods; and the words were the key words of the priesthood.

12th. Joseph gives away the fact that "endowments" of some sort were pretended to be administered in his order that he designed for the secret temple ceremony, when that building should be "completed." And so pretended endowments were also administered in the ceremonies in the Nauvoo temple when a suitable number of rooms had been finished and prepared. And so these secret ceremonies finally came naturally enough to be termed "Endowments."
so iniquity's mystery did greatly abound,
But the "keys" of the latter day priesthood are found.
And we'll handle these "keys" with the righteous intent.
The like "imposition" henceforth to "prevent."

CHAS. W. LAMB.

IS THE MANUSCRIPT DIVINE?

A regular reader of the Republic residing at Richmond, Missouri, furnishes the editor of this department the following note concerning the original manuscript copy of the Book of Mormon, which belonged to the late David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the divine authenticity of the book. June 1st, 1878, the city of Richmond, Missouri, was visited by a terrible cyclone. The residence of David Whitmer, the possessor of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon, was directly in the storm's path. Although the house was almost totally demolished, one room, that in which the book was deposited—being an extension of a porch, consequently not as substantial as the other parts of the house—was left uninjured in the least degree; not a shingle was removed or a single crack made in the plastering, says the St. Louis Republic. Like the Athenian watch tower it stood, piled up with wrecks on all sides, itself unwrecked. When the citizens of the afflicted city learned of the above facts they formed a committee and made a report on the miraculous preservation of the single room and its highly valued treasure. The written report of the committee is now in possession of one of the prominent attorneys of the city in which the events related occurred.—St. Paul Daily.

CONTINUED HEALTH.—It was the celebrated Dr. Abernethy, I believe, who left at his death a sealed envelope, said to contain the secret of his success as a physician. Upon being opened, it was found to contain simply the following prescription: "To insure continued health and a ripe old age, keep the head cool, the system open, and the feet warm."—Ex.

THE RETURN.
PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT $1.00 A YEAR.
E. ROBINSON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.
DAVIS CITY, IOWA, FEB. 1891.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We respectfully request our friends and correspondents, when writing articles for THE RETURN, and making quotations from the Bible and Book of Mormon, to be particular and give the quotations correctly, including all the punctuation marks, as they occur in the books from which they make the quotations. If they will do this, it will save much trouble and time in preparing the articles for the press.

An otherwise well written article has been reviewed, on which nearly or quite a whole day's time has been devoted in comparing the quotations, and preparing it for the press. In one of the quotations one whole line was left out, greatly marring the sense, and apparently no regard taken to the commas, periods, or other punctuation marks.

If correspondents would be particular and write the quotations correctly, and give all the punctuation marks as they write, it would save the Editor much valuable time.

Write for our Paper.

Several persons write and express a wish to have THE RETURN a semi monthly, and some say a weekly. Very few persons realize the labor it takes to prepare the copy for even a monthly, when it is mostly original matter, as is the case with our paper. It is made up of solid reading matter, not filled with advertisements heretofore, therefore the first and second volumes furnish a large amount of reading matter for the size of the paper.

All wish it to be as interesting as possible. The way to have it so, is for all the friends to take an interest in its welfare, and each write a short article on some good religious spiritual subject, and write often. Make it a subject of prayer, and ask your heavenly Father to aid you by his Holy Spirit, and I am sure you that you will feel greatly blessed in so doing.

Please avoid doubtful or personal questions, calculated in their nature to stir up animosity and strife. The gospel, with its numerous Christian graces, the gathering of Israel, and the great work of the Father to be accomplished in these last days, together with many other beautiful, spiritual subjects, all furnish food for contemplation and thought, and are worthy to be written upon, and stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance of these things.

ELDER THOMAS' VISIT.

Elder Solomon Thomas, came and made us a visit of several days duration. He had been called here to assist in attending to the business connected with the Estate of Elder Geo. Adams, deceased.

Elder Adams made a will, bequeathing his property to the Church of Christ, and appointed John C. Whitmer, Solomon Thomas, and Ebenezer Robinson, Executors of his will; which was probated on the 19th of January, 1891, in the District court of Decatur co., Iowa, and Letters Testamentary issued to the said Executors, by order of the court.

Elder Thomas came on the 26th and remained until Monday, the second inst.

His visit was appreciated very much by all our members here. He took active part with us in our sacrament meeting.

On Sunday evening, when here, he received a telegram that his daughter Phoebe, who is fifteen years old, was dangerously ill, and urged his immediate return. He took the first train for home, where he found his daughter as represented, but through the kindness of our heavenly Father, she has recovered, as will be seen by a letter from her under the head of correspondents.
February 14, 1891.

The 14th day of February is past, and the "winding up scene," or "second coming of Christ," which I understand to be synonymous terms, has not taken place, therefore another prediction of Joseph Smith, jr., has entirely failed, showing clearly that his prophecy on this subject is as false as that of William Miller, and others, who have prophesied concerning the time of that event.

"Joseph Goodal was recently found dead at his door in Dunlap, from heart disease, it is supposed. He was a disciple of Joseph Smith and helped build the Mormon temple at Nauvoo, Ill."

The above item was published in the Leam Journal of a recent date. The Joseph Goodal there spoken of, I believe to be Joseph D. Goodale, who made us a visit last June. If it be the same, he was of the old stock of Latter Day Saints, but held to some peculiar ideas, differing from other members of the church.

From my acquaintance with him I believe him to have been not only a good citizen, but an upright christian gentleman.

Vick’s Floral Guide, for 1891, has been received. It contains 100 richly embossed pages, including several beautiful colored plates.

Vick is evidently the leading seedsmen of our country, having as I understand, some 1,500 acres of land devoted to raising seeds and nursery stock. Customers ordering seeds from him may feel sure of getting good fresh seeds. Address, James Vick, seedman, 313, East Avenue, Rochester, N. Y.

Brother James Compton, of Attica, Wisconsin, has kindly sent us a copy of a hymn Book, entitled "Spiritual songs and sacred hymns", published by Russell Huntley for the Church of Christ. It is a neatly printed, well bound book, of 218 pages, containing a choice collection of 219 hymns.

Bro. Compton will please accept our thanks for this token of his regard.

TESTIMONY.

From the tenor of some letters received it seems necessary that I should repeat what has so often been stated in THE RETURN. I still bear the same positive testimony of the truth of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as revealed in the new Testament and book of Mormon, as I ever did.

Because I feel that I have been called upon to show the Latter Day Saints some of the gross errors which have been introduced into the church, therefore it is stated by some that I have denied the faith. To such, and to all the world, I will say in all calmness and sincerity, that the statement is a great mistake.

I firmly believe the divine authenticity of the book of Mormon, as of any other truth extant. The evidences of its truthfulness are accumulating almost daily.

Some who, in years past, heard me bear my testimony in favor of the gospel and book of Mormon, seemed to understand that those testimonies included the Reorganized church, when I intended no such thought. I never did believe the Reorganized church was right in all things, but lived in hopes it would ultimately see its errors, and renounce them; but after the positive stand taken on the subject of tithing, adding it to the gospel, and the review in the Saints' Herald of Elder David Whitmer, my eyes were opened more clearly to see the true position occupied by the church, when I abandoned all hope of ever seeing it restored to the primitive order of church government and standing, such as I believe the Lord will have when Jesus comes to take to himself the "Bride, the lamb's wife."

May the Lord bless the honest in heart to see clearly the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and enable one and all to obey it in its simplicity and purity, is my earnest prayer.

I trust no one will think, because I bear testimony to the truth of the gospel and book of Mormon, that thereby I testify to the unity and harmony of all the members of the church of Christ, for I do not wish to be so understood.—Ed.

CHURCH HISTORY.

NUMBER TWO.

In the former article it was shown, according to the records, that the church of Christ was established in 1849, but on the 9th of April, 1860, it was organized agreeable to the laws of our country, in order, as Elder David Whitmer testifies to comply with the laws of the land.

Some things transpired on that day which will bear a careful examination, as great, and in many respects, fearful results have been brought to pass therefrom.

It was on that day the revelation came through Joseph Smith, instructing the church as follows:

"Behold, there shall be a record kept among you, and in it thou, [Joseph Smith,] shall be called a Seer, a translator, a Prophet, and Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Also, in the same revelation the following direct and positive command was given to the church:

"Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you, as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; for his word ye shall receive as from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith; for by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you."—D. & C. 19:1,2.

Here we find in this early stage of the history of the church, this remarkable doctrine was given by commandment that the church should give heed unto "all his words and commandments," &c., with a promise that, "by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you."

Upon this foundation the church was built, after the sixth of April, 1839, as its history clearly shows. Thus early were the brethren taught to look to one man as their spiritual adviser, and that he was the head of the church, through whom they should learn the will of the Lord concerning themselves.

During the summer and fall of 1860, the Elders continued preaching and baptizing those who believed their testimony. The officers of the church being elders, priests, and teachers. No mention being made of high priests or high counsellors, notwithstanding the church was led by direct revelation, through its prophet.

In September a revelation came through Joseph Smith, directed to Oliver Cowdery, from which the following extract is taken:

"Verily, Verily I say unto thee, no one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church, excepting Joseph Smith, Jr., for he receiveth them like Moses; and thou, [Oliver] shalt be obedient unto the things which I shall give unto him, even as Aaron, to declare faithfully the commandments and the revelations with power and authority unto the church."—D. & C. 27:2.

By this revelation we find that notwithstanding the angel had restored the everlasting gospel, and the church was under a gospel dispensation, yet, at one step the Mosiac order was introduced, and Oliver Cowdery commanded to be obedient thereto.

In the Book of Mormon, which had so recently been translated and printed, the statement is made that the Lamanites should be converted and build a city in this land, to be called the New Jerusalem, to be assisted in this work by the believing gentiles. This statement led the brethren to understand that a work was to be done among the Lamanites, and evidently believing the time had come for that work, four Elders were appointed by revelation to go on that mission, viz., Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson.

These Elders made preparation and started on their mission to the Lamanites, in October, 1830, preaching in the villages through which they passed, until they came to "Kirtland, Ohio, where they tarried some time, there being quite a number there who believed their testimony and obeyed the gospel. Among the number was Elder Sidney Rigdon, and a large portion of the church over which he presided."
Their visit was the first knowledge Elder Rigdon ever had of the Book of Mormon. The copy they took was the first he had ever seen of that sacred record.

Elder Rigdon was then living in Mentor, about two miles from Eirtland, (near the place General Garfield afterwards resided.) He had charge of an interesting congregation of disciples or Campbellites.

He kindly let the brethren have the use of his church to hold meetings in, and informed them he “would read the book of Mormon, give it an full investigation, and then frankly tell them his mind and feelings on the subject.”

After two weeks of careful and prayerful examination of the book, “he was fully convinced of the truth of the work, by a revelation from Jesus Christ, which was made known to him in a remarkable manner, so that he could exclaim, “flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto me, but my Father which is in heaven.”

The result was, himself and wife, and about twenty others of his church embraced the faith.

TO BE CONTINUED.

ITEMS OF PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE EDITOR.

No. 21.

Continued from page 13.

Inasmuch as we are not our own keepers, and our heavenly Father has so wisely hid from us the time of our departure, and my present feebleness of health admonishes me that it is wise to hasten with the personal history, noticing only some of the leading events, leaving many items to be noticed, should my life and health be spared, and feel it to be my duty to do so, hereafter.

From what has been stated heretofore, it is to be seen that great effort was made to counteract the influence that was brought to bear against the church through the disaffection of Dr. J. C. Bennett.

In October, 1842, a statement was written out, and signed by a large number of the brethren and sisters, including myself and wife, setting forth the fact that we knew of no other form of marriage ceremony in the church except the one-published in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, which statement was true at that time, as we had no knowledge of such a ceremony, or that “spiritual wife,” or “polygamy,” was taught by the heads of the church, as they had not up to that time taught it to us.

We knew it was talked of in secret, and had been for more than a year, as I have heretofore stated, that Don Carlos Smith, in his life time, in June, 1841, had said to me, that “any man who will teach and practice ‘spiritual wifey’ will go to hell, no matter if it is my brother Joseph.”

These secret rumors could not constitute a knowledge that certain persons taught such things when they had not taught them to us.

Dr. Bennett had published the statement that Joseph Smith taught the doctrine of “Spiritual wifey,” and had instituted a marriage ceremony connected therewith, of which we had no knowledge, and the certificate was given to counteract Bennett’s statement.

Remember this was in October, 1842.

In December, 1843, more than a year later, Hyrum Smith, one of the first Presidents, and also Partriarch of the church, came to my house in Nauvoo, and taught the doctrine of “spiritual wifey,” (which there say, is polygamy,) to myself and wife, which we both certified to in her life time, which certificate has already been published to the world. Therefore, those who have made the statement that this last certificate of ours contradicts the first, make a great mistake, as the last certificate speaks of what Hyrum Smith taught us more than a year after the first certificate was given.

At a special conference held in Nauvoo on the 10th day of April, 1843, I was appointed to take a mission to preach the gospel in St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.

In those days the Elders, when appointed on a mission, were compelled to depend upon their own resources for means to travel with, or start out on look without purse or script, as Jesus sent out his disciples, in his day. They had no idea of calling on the Bishop for money to travel with, as it was not used for such a purpose.

During the fore part of the summer of 1848, continued tending to my temporal affairs, and making arrangements to take the mission assigned me. In the mean time the spiritual wifey doctrine was pressed so closely that I felt the time was at hand when I must determine whether to accept or not. I knew I had not so learned Christ, and for about three days it seemed that I must go distracted, so great was the struggle.

I prayed almost constantly to my heavenly Father to know what I should do. I did not trouble myself about others, what they should do, but the burden of my soul, and the intense agony of my heart, was, to know what my individual duty was in this matter. I did not wish to embrace anything that was not of the Lord, nor reject anything that was from him. About ten o’clock, on the morning of the third day, my heavenly Father, in his loving kindness, answered my prayer.

As I was walking by myself, down Parley street, just before entering Main street, he spoke to me, clear and distinct, and said: “I have not placed you to set in order of affairs of my church, stand still and see the result of all things, but keep yourself unspotted from the world. Amen, Father. was my glad and earnest response. I knew from that day to this, that if others could have more wives than one, and have the spirit of the Lord, I could not, and there let the matter rest. It troubled me no more.

Nauvoo was denominated a stake of Zion, with three Presidents, and a High Council. Wm. Marks was President with Austin Cowles and Amasa Lyman as his counsellors, which constituted the three Presidents over the stake and High Council.

Presidents Marks and Cowles were among the good and solid men of the age. Both were opposed to polygamy, but Brother Cowles was far more outspoken, and energetic in his opposition to that doctrine than almost any other man in Nauvoo. In fact, I think his opposition excelled all others.

Hyrum opposed it at first, but afterwards became its warm advocate, to my certain knowledge.

One day, in July, before I got ready to start on my mission to New York state, I met Bro. Cowles on Main Street, when he said to me: “Brother Robinson, how can you go out on a mission under these circumstances, with things as they are?” I replied: “If I can go ready, for I would preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” “Yes” he said. “And when people have obeyed that, have them come here to this sink of iniquity?” I replied: “that was no part of my mission,” that when they obeyed the gospel I left them in their hands of their heavenly Father, before him they must stand or fall.”

On the 12th of this July it is claimed the revelation on polygamy was given through Joseph Smith. I did not see the revelation, but was told a few days after, and before leaving Nauvoo, that such a revelation had been given.

I started on that mission on the last day of July, 1843, accompanied by my wife, Gen. Wilson Law and wife, who were going to Pennsylvania, and my wife to stop in Ohio visiting our relatives there, while I should prosecute the mission in the state of New York.

Gen. Law and myself employed President Wm. Marks to take us in his family carriage to Chicago, Ill., where we took a steamer for Ohio and Penn. On our way to Chicago the subject of spiritual wives, or polygamy, was freely discussed, when President Marks also told us that a revelation had been received on the subject, or, to use his own words, “They have got a revelation on the subject.”

From Bro. Marks’ testimony and what I had been told in Nauvoo, before leaving home, as firmly believed that Joseph Smith had given a revelation on polygamy as that he had ever given one on any subject in his life.

Notwithstanding the revelation every member of our party were opposed to the doctrine.
We returned home from that mission the latter part of November, 1848. Soon after our return, I was told that when we were gone, the revelation on polygamy was presented to, and read in the High Council in Nauvoo, three of the members of which refused to accept it, from the Lord, viz. Presidents Markham and Cowles, and counsellor Leonard Saly. At that time and place, and on that occasion, President Austin Cowles resigned his position as one of the President of the High Council, which necessarily included his presidency of the church at Nauvoo. After that he was looked upon as a seceder, and no longer held a prominent place in the church, although morally and religiously speaking, he was one of the best men in the place.

My Missionary labor was mostly in St. Lawrence and Jefferson counties, New York, where I met with reasonable success, and baptized several persons.

With regard to the gospel, I had, as heretofore stated, received a testimony which amounted to a certainty to me of its truth, and I rejoiced, and was greatly blest of my heavenly Father when presenting its glorious truths to my fellow men. I am certain that those who receive and obey it, and endure in faith to the end, will be lifted up at the last day, and inherit eternal life in the celestial Kingdom of our God.

I may have occasion to refer to some things connected with that mission hereafter.

TO BE CONTINUED.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Davis City, Iowa, Feb. 19th, 1891.

To The Church of Christ.

Brethren, and co-workers in the vineyard of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, inasmuch as the Lord has called us to help prune his vineyard for the last time, I feel to address you by letter, and as to what I may say, may the spirit of God direct me, that I may speak in the fear of the Lord; for by his counsel should we be directed in all things.

My prayer to God is, that all those who have taken upon them the name of Christ, may hold firm to the pure principles of Christ; and that we may never quench the spirit that will guide us into all truth; and may we let our light so shine, that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father that art in heaven; and come and walk in the light of the gospel.

May the day hasten, when all honest in heart will have the gospel presented to them with the convincing power of God, in its purity. And I pray that we may all be united, as members of one household; that strife and contentions may never be found in our midst, but love and unity; for in union there is strength.

And may God bless all his servants with power and wisdom from on high, that they may proclaim his word in mighty power. Let us pray to our heavenly Father to increase our faith, for without faith we are nothing. In the 14th chapter of Romans, and 22-23, verses, it reads like this: 'Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And be that doubtest is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.'

In the fifth chapter of Hebrews, and first verse, it says: 'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' And as it is for the children of God, to have all the blessings of God, if we walk upright and just. I pray that the day may soon come, when the members of the church of Christ, will all enjoy the blessings of God, in full; and that the spirit of God will be with us all to the end of our journey. May the blessings and peace of heaven, be with you all, is my prayer, Amen.

Your Brother in Christ,

S. F. LaPoint.

Hillsdale, Iowa, Feb. 19, 1891.

Dear Brother Robinson: It is with pleasure that I write to you. I have been very sick for about three weeks, and now I am nearly well. They did not expect me to live, and the neighbors asked what doctor we had; we told them God was our doctor. Then they asked me if I did not want a doctor; I told them that I leaned upon my Maker, and if he would not heal me the doctor could not, and if it was my time to die, I would die; but it was the Lord's will, I wanted to live to help my aged mother, who is not able to do all the work.

The Lord has greatly blest me in my illness, and also my little brother, who was very sick, but is now able to go to school. The Lord has blest us more than we can realize or thank him for; but I hope that we can do a great deal for him. For he has done so much for us. I want to please him in every thing. O how kind a Father we have; when I was in great pain, and would call upon his name in the name of his Son, he would relieve my pain. O may we be more humble before God than we have been in the past. I hope to do so myself.

It was sad news to hear of the death of Bro. George Adams; he seemed so mild and humble in his talk. I think he will hear the pleasing words saying, 'Come up ye blessed of my Father, to inherit eternal life;' and to meet his wife who had gone before him. My prayer is that we may meet them in heaven, where our loved ones have gone before us.

Your sister in Christ,

Phebe R. Thomas.

Drum Creek Feb. 14th, 1891.

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We see by the heading of these lines that another year is now bearing us all onward to that great eternity. Let us pause and ask ourselves these questions, are we striving to be prepared? are we keeping our lamps trimmed and brightly burning? ready at any moment the Master may call us? for we know not whether he may call us at midnight, or in the morning; but we feel certain, how joyful the summons to us, if we are ready. Let us never grow weary in well doing.

This is a blessed gospel we live in, and I know if faithful, it will be a blessed time to me; yea, blessed beyond description, to die in the faith of the gospel Christ has taught us.

My son and self spent a few days, also the first Sabbath of the month, at Brother W. P. Brown's, of Newton, Kansas. We held Fellowship and Sacrament meeting at his house, and at each one, rose and bore their testimony. I felt by the power of the spirit present, how good it is to be a child of God; and how our Heavenly Father delighteth to bless his children, if we will but live humble and meek before him.

A few days before our arrival, Brother Brown had Baptized Brother Robert Gardor, of Little River, Rice Co. Kansas. And thus they came, as it were, one out of a town and two out of a city. We know the work of the Lord will roll on until he has accomplished all his purposes.

My earnest desire, and prayer to God is, that we may be wise, in this the day of our probation, and that we may each be worthily worthy of a part in the first resurrection.

Ever your sister in the new and everlasting covenant,

Mrs. Charlotte Dooy.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Damascus, one of the oldest cities in the world, still retains the peculiarities it held in the time of Christ. A writer, just returned from there after a three years' residence, describes the city as a 'diamond set in the dark green of fruitful gardens,'
THE RETURN.

which extend for miles round the city to the edge of the desert. The water-seller still walks through the city crying, “Io every one that thirsteth.” The street called Straight is the same as that in which 1800 years ago, Ananias sought blind Saul of Tarsus. There is a church where they pretend the head of John the Baptist is preserved. And there, too, is the wall from which it is said Paul was let down in a basket. The city was, nearly thirty years ago, the scene of a terrible massacre of Christians on the part of the Arabs and others. Thousands were slain in a few hours, and the rest escaped only through the help afforded by Abdel-Keder, who, Muslim though he was, threatened to slay his co-religionists unless they desisted. To this day many Damascene Christians can tell of relatives whom they lost at that terrible time; yet Christianity still flourishes there, nearly all the gold and silver workers of the place being Christians.—The Christian at Work.

Note:—Damascus as a city in the days of Abraham, as he says: “The Steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.”—Gen. 15:2.

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD.

In our day when pure and undefiled religion, as defined in James 1:27, is so sadly lacking in many professed Christians, when there is so little difference between the church and the world, is it any wonder that a revival of religion is scarcely known in many places? We are told that in the last days perilous times shall come when men shall have a form of Godliness, but shall deny the power thereof; and is not this just what we are witnessing today? Sectarianism is wrong and a great hindrance to God’s work. Christ prayed that His followers might be one, but how can they be when our churches are kept apart by sectarian bars and prejudices? Another terrible evil is that so many ministers and church members are connected with the secret lodge. These secret orders are sapping the very life from the church. Our prayer-meetings are neglected while the lodge rooms are well filled. Some professed Christians who are seldom seen in the prayer-meeting find it no trouble to go several miles in the worst travelling to meet with their lodge. They have plenty of money to pay their lodge dues but for Home Missions or for a much needed temperance lecture they can hardly afford to pay anything. Mr. Moody bears plain and emphatic testimony in regard to Christians joining any secret lodge. And if the ministers who have been led into them would set an example by renouncing and denouncing their sinfulness, we should soon see a change for the better. When our ministers and churches are willing to believe God’s promises, and to accept Christ in His fullness, as a perfect supply for every need of soul and body, then we may expect to see multitudes coming to Christ. May God lead His children to take Christ as He is offered to us, our Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and coming Lord.

—The Independent Christian.

BACK NUMBERS

Of The Return constantly on hand, and for sale: will furnish post paid, a full set of the first vol., 12 numbers, for 50 cents. Or a full set of both the first and second volumes, 24 numbers, for $1.

Elder David Whitmer’s “Address to all believers in Christ” can be had by sending a 2 cent stamp to D. Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., or to this office.

THE RETURN is published monthly at $1 per year, payable in advance. Money may be sent by Bank Draft, Post Office Order on Davis City, Iowa, or Express Order, at our risk. 1 cent and 2 cent P. O. stamps received in small amounts.

Address E. ROBINSON.

Davis City, Iowa, Dealer Co., Iowa.
saw truth in the hands of the offspring of Joseph, having the horns of a unicorn to push the people together from the ends of the earth, or when he saw the scepter fall from Judah’s hands not until Shiloh come—truth is undefinable, but it is the legitimate offspring of God and we shall find it now only in the attributes that belong to the conception of ages. When she kisses human nature on her sparse visits then history has a sunlight and earth a messenger from heaven.

It shall be the object of the Return to note these visits of truth to earth; to attempt to draw aside the snare that beset the wayfarer to the cross and to obtain by primitive principles such deductions that “he who runs may read.”

By principle and by history we know that man has not honored the gifts of God and that darkness has always been ready to perplex these gifts and show them, but the will o’ the wisp away from the simple truth that ambition and rebellion might prevail. When truth has appeared on earth the enemy was at work, and man, that by gift, bare the blessings of God, were ensnared to look beyond the simple advents that after time made light to the world.

Not yet attempting the details we assert the word of the Nephites found on this land was discovered like all other truths just as childish, just as simple, just as firm and entirely in the same manner as when the Ancient of Days shall declare that time shall be no longer.

If Moses was due in such an advent of age to appear as he did; to wander around in the little Sinai Peninsula and write laws for nations unborn, if there be a language that
THE RETURN.

is dead and anyways unintelligible, then the Book of Mormon was due on this earth A.D., 1829.

This work to which prejudice has aimed her fiercest darts has been driven behind the portiers of just and public inspection, for the simple reason that it would destroy somebody's business. The Gulliver war on the prepositions of the old Bible and Testament would stop, the mysteries would be settled, the definition of inspiration would take away the calling of the sceptic or saducian fighter and priestcraft would mourn, for her occupation would be gone. There is one peculiar trait of a people who possess a treasure of any kind, in fact, and that is an inherent something that its power shall be scattered. In all outbursts of divine revelation to man, those nearest the time of its appearance have not fully understood its uses in so much that the truth has been capital for designing men to make a stock company of error.

There has been only one logical argument against the Book of Mormon in general, out of all the attack of literati, this one is from Mark Twain's "Roughing It," when he declares the work to be a rehash of the old and new testament, this is the same circular argument that has been used by finite man against his own personality ever since the world began. The argument is true, as between the birth and death of man, or that change and prison given man to work for his eternal freedom, where hope is a substance and where truth is eternal. The best metaphysicians tell us that all schemes came from one germ and it lays with us to go by induction back to truth rather than that all powerful time shall collapse, to bend to some shadow and make the beginning a division instead of one attributed entirety. The argument can be answered by another humorist who says "a purgative is now just as necessary as it was when castor oil was first discovered." This criticism is however timely when we consider the comparative theology of the record of the Jews and record of the Nephites. We are accustomed by the example of time and inheritance to reverence the idiom of those great old Hebrew masters, but not so with the writings of the Nephites, although one contains as many eccentricities as the other and as many grand and poetical thoughts, yet its enemies have scraped the book for its peculiarities and with witful intent suppressed its beauties.

From the position taken by the Church of Christ this paper shall defend those beauties, their prophetic fire, the never changing truth hid in its poetry, the patriotism of a devotedly inspired word to a divinely appointed country, the indissoluble and everlasting Zion of these United States.

The followers of the work in this latter time have placed a seeming stigma on the truth of its pages that many have not read it. We shall show that eminent men have copied their ablest universal thoughts from its pages, or that these thoughts have been coincident since it made its advent.

If people go into dangers and uncertain earth for treasure, why should they not hunt that force that has made a people brave the desert and make a civilization, (and with but one exception), as good as earth ever saw, out of material that modern theology has abandoned to the slums and given them over to be forever lost. It has been said that those people are exceedingly bright (though ignorant otherwise), in the scriptures, expressed as a confession and proclaimed as a sneer. But the latter writers and speakers, who owe their gifts to God and not to men, are saying there is good somewhere. Citizen of the world read the record of the Nephites. Judah find thou there the sheep that were not of this fold. Archaeologist look there for your hypothesis, and thou countryman look to the evidence of your fellow citizens who are "earth commensurate" with you and find a patriotism that shall say in unison with your native literature this is a God-given country, the once home of good and enlightened people.

The Call and Selection to the Ministry.

There was one time asked a metropolitan daily, "Why it was that so many people would go to sleep on a thirty or forty minutes discourse in church and these same people go and hear a John McColough in theatres, sitting with wrapt attention, wide awake, and then discussing afterward long in the night, thus and so of him and his attainments." The answer was scripture, "because there are not enough John McColoughs' in the pulpit." The gift to preach comes with the gift of life and such men are chosen by the will of God in their individuality, such servants of God will not preach to "empty hate"—these gifts are all alike as the leaves of the trees, yet differing in every particular. Happy is the man that discerns in righteousness his calling and works for his election, when that millennial comes that every individual looks for, when he tells himself the truth, then will come, not the natural selection so called, but the divine one and happiness need not be all a rest; but a rest in work, that moves like a rivulet or settles to its course like the music of the spheres when all will be called and all will be chosen.

David Whitmer and the Church of Christ.

From Magazine of Western History.

Divine authenticity is a circle of mystery around which Christian people are warning. The rationalist makes it something never defined, except in denying the assertions of believers.

We, of the Church of Christ, be-
comitant was the Book of Mormon, translated so mysterious and yet so simple that the most acute scientists have not given any rational hypothesis for its construction. The work was born of the earth and its genius is no ordinary one. Near the public highway, in a pasture cleared of trash, David Whitmer saw the vision that made him sign his name to the divine authenticity of the record of the Nephites. Within its leaves a set of fearless, self-sacrificing, conscientious men, found the design for the Church of Christ, unfettered by any creed, the same plans as the year one of the world and the era of the world and the era of Christ. Time smiled upon their efforts, and it seemed that every hope was to be fulfilled. But the crude pages of the Book of Mormon, "that rehash of the Old and New Testament was not enough. As in all ages, sudden ambition could not brook divine simplicity. "Coal Oil Johnie" had found a treasure and must amplify.

They had a prodigy and had to exhibit it. Like the violin outside the hands of a "master" it becomes a fiddle.

That the Church of Christ was the original name used by these first pioneers, and that it was changed on philosophical speculation, no intelligent logician can now deny.

That among different believers of the Book of Mormon doctrine and beliefs, are entertained that the record will not support is also true, and from this cause its true position has not as yet been recognized. The simple ritual of the best life worth living is plain in the record of the Nephites, and from this confusion has followed the strange life of this peculiar people. There was one man among several whose integrity was above wonders and whose understanding has been proven clear, a man whose testimony has stood with the sum of his life with an individuality, powerful and true to the line, self-sacrificing and living the life of a Christian. He denounced all innovations and he suffered in many ways; but his brave voice was never stilled until death called him to his fathers. It was David Whitmer, the exponent of the Church of Christ, as it was in 1839.

Near 1839, there being much discord at Far West, John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, because of their stand, became inimical to the hierarchy and were forced to leave the people, whether inclined to or not. Right here an incident happened. Lighting struck the flag pole of Far West and David Whitmer rising in the stirrups of his saddle proclaimed these words: "As they sought to do unto me so shall it be done unto them."

A striking coincidence followed when Far West surrendered to Atchison and Doniphan. After this time, David Whitmer came to Richmond, Missouri, where (after losing two good sized fortunes while with the church for those days), he started in and earned a livelihood by the hardest work, procuring a home and building a character that might be envied by the strictest moralist. His individuality, habits, and love of his fellow man, have procured for him the love of the people. For about forty years, during which time the original manuscript and historical records came into his possession, he made a "moral" for the Book of Mormon, and placed it before the world as one of the books that has come to stay. In September, 1875, John C. Whitmer, becoming convinced that he should be baptized asked the same of David Whitmer, which was accomplished, and your correspondent was a witness to his ordination, January 28, 1876. Like a tree growing in its proper season arose the necessity to perpetuate the Church of Christ. Since this time membership has been slowly advancing, and here and there are small congregations. We prosecute no one for their belief; we don't think we are the only good people in the world, neither are we angels with wings or intangible. We are just as good in our own estimation and no better than others. But we have a sure reason of the hope that it is in us, capable of being defended against insidious attacks, and are open at all times, to conviction.

As to the miracles that have been attributed to the church, they are individual, and cannot save or make any one good. In our opinion they are only evidences to occur on the account books of the Almighty, when all will be charged with their debit and credits. Some have assailed the world on account of its peculiar phrases. Why then is there so much literary ecstasy over Dan Chaucer? In this Book of Mormon we have the only conclusive hypothesis of original America. It embodies a moral law, spotless, as high and as pure as the standard of the best races, language and ideas that have no taint of phallic law. Mormon's standard of liberty and declarations about this land are even more patriotic than the Declaration of Independence. Its ideas are sincere, elevating, without moral cowardice.

The wide-winged continent lying at rest on the bosom of waters, holds pressed to her breast. Thank ages of ages, the tale of the lost. Locked deep in the hills by times heavy frost.

In the midst of the ether an angel appears, speaks out to man from the dust of the years. Goes straight to the work that the cycles of God have asked of the ages, to bend to His nod.

The land of the free, a beautiful land had its tales, had its loves, had its beautiful strand, had its heroes, its dangers, its miseries and death. As well as had Egypt of science and myth.

Who can say that the tale without idiom fold, is not of the righteous of God's hundred fold; Weigh me the weight of its morals with care, then tell me my friend, if God is not there.

EDITOR.
Sunday Thoughts and Manners.

From the St. Louis Republican.

It is an established fact in the divine economy that God will not help man when and where he can and ought to help himself. At what time man reaches his limits so that he can go no further, then and there he may confidently ask for heavenly aid. Man, standing here upon the earth, could not feel sure of life beyond life; was inherently ignorant of many points of duty; did not know the character of the Father of Spirits, and had no way of finding it out for himself. Consequently, God revealed immortality, dictated the decalogue, and made known His Fatherhood. But having at the start equipped man with reason and will, he has left him to discover and apply for himself the great material forces which animate and dominate civilization. Any other method would have dwarfed man into a perpetual child or transformed him into an automaton. Self-help is the best help.

History is a striking commentary upon this truth. First and last there have been countless human emergencies where divine intervention was apparently called for—when it would have eased life and promoted the welfare of the race. But God said and did nothing. The discovery of America was in the divine plan and was foreordained to take place when and as it did. Nevertheless Columbus was left to make the voyage in that little eggshell and to spread his scant sail to catch a favoring breeze, instead of puffing across the Atlantic in six days in a miraculously provided “City of Paris.” It was essential to progress that General Washington should succeed in the Revolution and so establish a government of the people and by the people and for the people. But God did not anticipate the future in order to give him railroads for the rapid transportation of his troops, or the telegraph to flash information into his camp.

Coal lay for ages down in the mine, and God let it stay there until we learned to value and dig it out. Steam curied out of the mouth of the singing teakettle until Watt hit on a method of reducing it to service. Electricity slept in the thundercloud until modern science clutched it down and used it as a news-carrier and a lamp and a motor. God provided these and a hundred other similar agencies in the raw, and then waited until we should find them and work them up. And we have found compensation a thousand times over for the slowness of their appearance in the development which has resulted from the necessity laid upon us to help ourselves to their possession. This law operates throughout human life. If we want miracles we must work them. The ways and means lie all around us. Why should God do man’s work?

The best judges concur in placing enthusiasm at the head of the list of the qualities which are essential for successful work. Give a man with only moderate ability a burning purpose which shall be all-pervading and it will idealize his life and shape it to great ends. Such a one will mark his own age and mold time to come. Here is the open secret of Livingstone’s career, and Martyn’s and Carey’s—of the life of every hero, for the matter of that, whether sacred or secular. The church needs to-day in her pulpit and in her membership this fine enthusiasm.

Notice to Officers of the Church.

It would be well for every elder to send his P. O. address to the RETURN, so that communications may be addressed properly when forwarded in our care.

Items of Personal History, by E. Robinson, in back numbers of RETURN, have been pronounced by critics thoroughly interesting, vivid and valuable history.

Be it remembered that, as Amiel hath it, “an error is more dangerous in proportion to the degree of truth it contains.”

While cultivating the soil, it should be remembered that it is just as important to cultivate the mind and heart. It is a losing game to work so hard, and such long hours that there is no time for reading or recreation. Rest, read and recreate as well as work and worry.—Journal of Agriculture.

The Return.

Notice.

Many sample copies will be sent out this issue, parties wishing continuance will notify us with their subscription. Any one desiring the back numbers of the RETURN can have the same by remitting $1.50, which will include postage.

Elder Solomon Thomas, of Hillsdale, Iowa, is dangerously ill at his residence with black cancer. He is brave and resigned, content that the light in his bosom will illumine the narrow path to the other side, so that where Christ is there shall he also.

At a service given by a Christian minister in this city, when discussing the idea “that there is nothing in a name,” drew from his pocket a dollar, after this exhibition he did the same with another piece of money and said it was legal tender, would the audience take it for the same, it was a quarter. We regarded this as pertinent to the name of the church: both bore purchasing power, but were not the same—one was a dollar, the other a quarter.

Agricultural Notes.

It pays to investigate and experiment. Keep a close account of the cost of crops.

Missouri got to the front this year on melons.

The acreage of clover seed compared with last year is 86.8.

Save the best seeds to plant. Breed up corn, wheat, etc., like you do stock.

To deepen hard-pan soil, use a sub soil plow, leaving it lying below the mellow surface soil.

Make the country home attractive. Nothing adds more to the beauty of a home than a nice, shady lawn.

The average yield per acre of Irish potatoes in the United States, for ten years, is $88; tobacco about $64.

The experiment stations have decided that the smut of oats, and the “stinking smut” of wheat are parasitic plants.

Farm homes should have the best library possible, and the boys should be encouraged to read more and work less.

—When the Georgia editor does tell a snake story it is generally a good one. A Georgia exchange is responsible for the following: “Some years ago Judge Sirmons was presented with a pet snake. One day it swallowed an eight-day clock, which could be heard to tick and strike until it ran down. Shortly after the snake laid one hundred eggs. On opening them he found each to contain an open-face watch in good running order.”—N. Y. Picayune.

—There was quite a sensation near Ampiror and Almonte, Ont., over the discovery on a farm of a stone with a masonic inscription and date on it. It has a surface three feet square, faced very smoothly, and a square and compass chiseled in the rock with a large "C" in the center. Two hands, three initial letters and the date 1604 were also carved on the stone. It has been identified with Champlain, who passed through that country in 1603.

—“Miss Twilling,” said Mr. Calloway, “glancing down at his polished boots with a self-satisfied air, “don’t you like to see a man always looking as if he had stepped out of a bandbox, his clothes nicely brushed, and everything about him indicating refinement?” “Yes, Mr. Calloway, I do,” replied Miss Twilling, glancing at him significantly. “I like to see such a man as you have described about once a year.”—Clothier and Furnisher.

—No tree can become so great that it will not be dependent upon its smallest roots for life.—Ram’s Horn.

Strangers who visit our town seem to be amazed at the vast amount of improvement that is going on, and the main topic of conversation among them is, what causes such signs of thrift? The answer is, we are well situated, and have a splendid agricultural country surrounding our city, and besides this we have large coal interests which every month bring thousands of dollars and put them in circulation in our midst.

A wheat crop of twenty bushels per acre at 75 cents per bushel will give some profit, but it is much better to raise thirty bushels.
THE RETURN.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT $1.00 PER YEAR.

GEO. W. L. SCHWEICH,
Editor and Proprietor.

RICHMOND, MO., OCTOBER, 1882.

With this number commences the reissue of the Return, formerly edited by the late E. Robinson of Davis City, Iowa, commencing January, 1889. On account of haste to fulfill our promise this number is somewhat hurried and many generalities used, which we trust will become more specific as the issues succeed one another and the data on hand formulated. This is, however, a message to our people and the honest intended world, the aim is to do good and establish truth, as remarked by Procopius, the secret historian of Justinian, "Religious controversy is the offspring of arrogance and folly, that true piety is most laudably expressed by silence and submission, that man, ignorant of his own nature, should not presume to scrutinize the nature of his God and that it is sufficient for us to know that power and benevolence are the perfect attributes of the Deity." This advice given at a time physically similar to the world's mental condition to-day, we shall adhere to the advice of words given so anciently and shall exercise on this line a just censorship on the contributions sent to us; beside every contributor must indulge his words over his own signature, as we shall adhere to individual responsibility only, not taking on our shoulders such burdens, as we, our fathers were unable to bear.

We shall endeavor to conduct this paper so as to be amenable to the laws of Christ, as so expressed emphatically and not to theories construed from idiomatc or interpreted scrapping of the scriptures. We believe that on account of conditions now obtaining the Church of Christ represents the truth and that this is one of the means of asserting her title to deeds given by the Almighty to her.

That some of the greatest roads to truth being assumed to-day had no beginning until they were sustained in the Book of Mormon and advanced by its believers; so we think it time, in defence of its claim, to place their origin where they belong. The position of David Whitmer shall be defined by one who learned at his feet and saw him faithful to the end. Brave when the bravest were afraid, loving and generous to his neighbor and family, beloved by all in time of trouble, sacrificing his life for the needy. Verily it shall be said of him thou hast done so much for these, my little ones," sit thou on my right hand. We shall investigate the comparative position to the believers in the record of the Nephites and other sects, in general, while we now state we will not endeavor, even should we be able to shake anybody's faith in Christ—foolish is he that will not give his fellow man consideration and unchristian is he who believes that other men who differ from him have not light. For of every man is not made alike and it is impossible that objects appear the same either mentally or physically. The victory of the Christian is dealing truthfully, as near as language will allow, with the gospel and the history of her servants, whether he is right or wrong, be thou convinced in thine own mind—hold fast to that which is good.

We shall endeavor to disrobe history with regard to that which sensationalism has clothed our people with, and when there was wrong it shall be said, when there was right it shall be maintained. We only ask the same charity that is given to the past and to be one of the "divine present." The age and times are demanding that people think for themselves and learn the truth that is in their own personality, whereas they will easily find a way to their God. We are thankful for this demonstration, because truth is doing it and her work shall prevail.

Cholera seems to have been checked at our seaports and we do not anticipate any serious consequences this season. It is in truth less destructive to life than the "gripes" so lightly spoken of.

MIRACLES.

The scriptures teach not that they save men but are God's records, dated, with power that will make mercy of justice and man to recognize the power of his God.

The youth of our land have been taught that they are transgressors of the laws of nature and it is generally the acceptance, but the Bible and scriptures of truth do not define them in such a manner, they are expressions of God's power strikingly conveyed and super scientific at their time. If we should see this attribute of truth then the Sages of to-day could not with the Savior say: "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees." Everything in heaven above and earth beneath is subject to a perfect law, without "jot or tittle,"—all individuals have the same commensurate evidence of God, whether it is painted on the rainbow or set in panoramas on the conscience. Whether in the burning bush or the advent of a literature, time has her whirling fitness of machinery that operates under the command of omnipotence. There never was a greater miracle than that of human existence; there never was a longer greater than eternal existence, because men do not place themselves in the law of God, that produces signs and wonders, they seek by their own, (however imperfect) —deductions and they are not earth commensurate. These generalities will be noticed more particular in the future.

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all argument and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance. This principle is contempt prior to examination."—Dr. Paley.

Elders J. C. Whitmer and P. C. Page have gone to hold services at Olathe, Kansas, being asked to come by the Church of Christ and other denominations, as Elder Whitmer is a doer of good works. We shall hope the cause of the Master to prosper there.
trodden down and destroyed, until we bring it upon us, by our own transgressions. And when Moroni had said these words, he went forth among the people, waving the rent of his garment in the air, that all might see the writing which he had wrote upon the rent, crying with a loud voice, saying, behold, whosoever will maintain this title upon the land, let them come forth in the strength of the Lord, and enter into a covenant that they will maintain their rights, and their religion, that the Lord God may bless them.

And it came to pass that when Moroni had proclaimed these words, behold, the people came running together, with their garments girded about their loins, rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God; and, in other words, if they should transgress the commandments of God, fall into transgression and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ, the Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments. Now this was the covenant which they made; and they cast their garments at the feet of Moroni, saying, we covenant with our God, that we shall be destroyed, even as our brethren in the land northward, if we shall fall into transgression; yea, he may cast us at the feet of our enemies, even as we have cast our garments at thy feet, to be trodden under foot, if we shall fall into transgression. Moroni said unto them, behold, we are a remnant of the seed of Jacob; yea, we are a remnant of the seed of Joseph, whose coat was rent by his brethren, into many pieces; yea, and now behold, let us remember to keep the commandments of God, or our garments shall be rent by our brethren, and we be cast into prison, or be sold, or be slain; yea, let us preserve our liberty, as a remnant of Joseph; yea, let us remember the words of Jacob, before his death: for behold, he saw a part of the remnant of the cost of Joseph was preserved, and had not decayed. And he said, even as this remnant of garment of my sons hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my sons be preserved by the hand of God, and be taken unto himself, while the remainder of the seed of Joseph shall perish, even as the remnant of his garment. Now behold, this giveth my soul sorrow; nevertheless, my soul hath joy in my son, because that part of his seed shall be taken unto God. Now behold, this was the language of Jacob. And now who knoweth but what the remnant of the seed of Joseph, which shall perish as his garment, are those who have dissented from us; yea, and even shall it be us, if we do not stand fast in the faith of Christ.

And now it came to pass that when Moroni had said these words, he went forth, and also sent forth in all the parts of the land where there were dissensions, and gathered together all the people who were desirous to maintain their liberty, to stand against Amalickiah, and those who had dissented, who were called Amalickiwhites.

And it came to pass that when Amalickiah saw that the people of Moroni were more numerous than the Amalickiwhites; and he also saw his people were doubtful concerning the justice of the cause in which they had undertaken; therefore, fearing that he should not gain the point, he took those of his people who would, and departed into the land of Nephi.

And it came to pass there were many who died, firmly believing that their souls were redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ; thus they out of the world rejoicing. And there were some who died with fevers, which at some seasons of the year were very frequent in the land; but not so much so with fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared, to remove the cause of diseases to which men were subject by the nature of the climate. But there were many who died with old age; and those who died in the faith of Christ, are happy in him, as we must needs suppose.

And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man; he was a man of perfect understanding; yea, a man that did not delight in bloodshed; a man whose soul did joy in the liberty and freedom of his country, and his brethren from bondage and slavery; yea, a man whose heart did swell with thanksgiving to his God, for the many privileges and blessings he bestowed upon his people; a man who did labor exceedingly for the welfare and safety of his people; yea, and he was a man who was firm in the faith of Christ, and he had sworn with an oath, to defend his people, his rights, and his country, and his religion, even to the loss of his blood. Now the Nephites were taught to defend themselves against their enemies, even to the shedding of blood, if it were necessary; yea, and they were also taught never to give an offense; yea, and never to raise the sword, except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives; and this was their faith, that by so doing, God would prosper them in the land; or in other words, if they were faithful in keeping the commandments of God, that he would prosper them in the land; yea, warn them to flee; or to prepare for war, according to their danger; and also that God would make it known unto them, whither they should go to defend themselves against their enemies; and so doing, the Lord would deliver them, and this was the faith of Moroni; and his heart did glory in it; not in the shedding of blood, but in doing good, in preserving his people; yea, in keeping the commandments of God; yea, and resisting iniquity. Yea, verily, verily, I say unto you, if all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men. Behold, he was a man like unto Ammon, the son of Mosiah, yea, and even the other sons of Mosiah; yea, and also Alma and his sons, for they were all men of God. Now behold, Helaman and his brethren were no less serviceable unto the people, than was Moroni; for they did preach the word of God, and they did baptize unto repentance, all men whosoever would hearken unto their words. And thus they went forth, and the people did humble themselves because of their words, inasmuch that they were highly favored of the Lord; and thus they were free from wars and contentions among themselves; yea, even for the space of four years. But as I have said in the latter end of the nineteenth; yea, notwithstanding their peace among themselves, they were compelled reluctantly to contend with their brethren, the Lamanites; yea, and in fine, their wars never did cease for the space of many years with the Lamanites, notwithstanding their much reluctance. Now they were sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood; yea, and this was not at all; they were sorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world unprepared to meet their God; nevertheless, they could not suffer to lay down their lives, that their wives and children should be massacred by the barbarous cruelty of those who were once their brethren, yea, and had dissented from their church, and had left them, and had gone to destroy them, by joining the Lamanites; yea, they could not bear that their brethren should rejoice over the blood of the Nephites, so long as there were any who should keep the commandments of God, for the promise of the Lord was, if they should keep his commandments, they should prosper in the land.
ideal expressed by any people or book of true love of country amid perplexities and judgments, the taking the right way in time of civil trouble, we have never seen it produced. Even if people do not want to believe the divine authenticity of this book it should, have as much consideration as any other moral work and is fit to adorn the library of the most fastidious moralist. There are books introduced into our families that are perverting the best social life, and dragging the all-ready downward tendency of the race into lower depths, where this book is ostracised, which, if introduced, would make of its readers good men and women, loyal to home and loyal to a good government.

God's Word.

Where truth may be, stop not the mind With piles of stone and dust,
But search with light the hidden kind
With faith and not distrust.

Sweet confidence that in ages past
Sprung from the Maker's hand,
Will bind the mountains hard and fast,
And place the smallest sand.

We may not have this art of God,
At will to human power,
But ages tell us that it meets the day and hour.

In all previous divine work when the sunlight of truth broke through the ever-present clouds of the servants of that truth did not like us of the present, proceed to break down the ideals of individuality, but rather fostered the nucleus of truth that must be found in the treasures of every creature's selfhood. God made man a little lower than the angels, thus signifying that there should always be a spark in every nature that would recognize its kindred magnet from heaven through his fellow man, then their intercourse should be as brothers and legitimate ambassadors of the Most High. The Savior, in most every case, although introducing the old way new, threw not down the statutes of time and association but condemned those hearers by their own ideals and their own records. He showed his listeners that their ideals, their records, the simple truth was good enough, but His translation to them was from original truth untrampled by stolism.

His words were light reflected from their own bosoms. He did not tell them by what fraud their writings came to them, but he supported what some people to-day would call superstition; from this supposed rubbish he found mines of diamond and as he held them up—happy was the person who beheld His mines of treasures and invested therein.

Commissioned with light, having within him the pure sunship of God, all language before him or since could have been destroyed and the measures and symphonies of heaven instituted just then on earth. But his quotations were not even taken from the old Bible as we have it today from orthodoxy, but an entire different version of the scriptures. Yet the same truth is embodied and believed and should be. He gives this paradox to his unbelieving or believing hearers; he taught them that they believed that which they believed not.

He attacked persons, societies, Pharisees and hypocrites, but never history or written documents of any kind, but whether written by Saducee or Pharisee He gleaned from them such truths embodied as that they might shoulder the universe with their power. When Paul stood on Mars Hill, a man especially gifted as a disputant, he did not compare the Hebrew prepositions with Egyptian and tell them how both differed from the Greek; he had no language but the present truth and, surmounting language, science and philosophy so-called, he pointed them to the unknown God. The reflex is what gave to individuality such light that they found the true God in their own being and heard his voice.—for "My sheep know my voice.''

The disciples of Jesus Christ have always pursued the method of their master, and wise men of all ages when about doing good or appointed as the scourge of God have pursued this method of taking humankind at the word and pointing them out the truth, that that great individual man might know himself, as expressed by one mind, holding the mirror up to nature.

The Savior says "My word is truth;" but Pilot with all the Roman and Hebrew jurisprudence at his command, with all wits sharpened to the keenest point, supposed to have exhausted all kinds of law in the melee of confusion and fact, could not find a way out of the dungeon of turmoil and authoritative debate—could only wash his hands and ask "What is truth?" and the Saviour of the world answered not, although the life of the Son of God was at stake.

This drama tells us plainly that the gospel was not to be found in the disquisitions and prejudices of earth authorities, in the criticisms of the learned or the edicts of any court of earth, but "failed like the gentle dew from heaven," by a law not made with hands and whose fitness rests under the shadow of the Holy wing.

The Almighty writes in every tree and dwells in all the earth. Despise not the lowly, for the minute insects are his scourge or blessing, as well as a Cyrus or the belching and perturbed earth.

As the ages roll along He raises up His servants in the fullness of His times and, when the truth appears with His witnesses. Thou man that takest the neck from thy brother by human evidence despise not the witness of His truth, sealed in the life and death of good men, be it a Moses, a Socrates, a Paul or thy present brother, who has lived with the All Being—"man like other men," the best intention of our God.

The Return is sent to any address one year for $1

THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

A Remarkable Address Given By the Rev. J. Wollenden.

INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE:
In Several Ways He Proves the Falsity of the Theory.

From the Chicago Press.

As we take this book in hand we notice that it bears the marks of a hundred human hands, and has been woven out of history and tradition; that it is a strange polyglot of letters, stories, visions, prophecies, histories and hymns, each bearing unmistakably the marks of its own age and of its author's temperament, training, prejudices and ignorance. And yet there are some who are nervously and miserably when they hear any one insist that the inspired writers were properly themselves when they wrote. Their temperament, prejudices, training, education or the want of it, all telling upon their work after the order of nature. Not so, they say in effect if not in words. God spoke through these holy men as a man might speak through a trumpet or the telephone and the writer had neither control nor lot in the message, but simply conveyed it. And so they flatter themselves they have the pure word of God.

That God is supernaturally present in the authorship of the book we think is attested by a thousand proofs of miraculous acts and miraculous goodness, but now the divine spirit came in conjunction with the human thought, will and experience, we know not. But if we insist that the very words were dictated by the Holy Spirit, we make him to simulate human ignorance as well as human character. This appears to us gratuitously put a weapon of offense into the hands of opponents of the Bible. An unteachable position always compromises more than itself. Exaggerated claims provoke exaggerated repudiation. We think we are not justified in receiving this theory of verbal inspiration by the
evidence which the Bible affords. It is indisputable that Bible writers do not define inspiration nor say in how far they ceased when inspired to use their human faculties, and where scripture is silent human theorizing may be intrusive. We have no authority for affirming dogmatically that the men were inspired, not the writings, or that the writings were inspired but not the men, or to affirm that because all Scripture is given by inspiration of God therefore every word of it was miraculously dictated. All this is being wise above what is written and prescribing human conditions within which alone divine

REVELATION IS POSSIBLE.

Think what this theory involves. Here we have a collection of tracts—tracts historical, poetical, didactic, ethical, epistolary tracts often exhibiting a mixture of all these characteristics. Every sort of character is personated; every different style of writing is employed: every age and calling almost is represented. They are tracts written by all manner of men, from the king to the fisherman, from the philosopher to the unlettered herdman; tracts produced at long intervals, from the earliest dawn of history—and in part even before it—to the period of the decline and fall of the Roman empire; tracts that have come down to us subject to the accidents besetting the transmission of ancient manuscripts—tracts that have been subject to all the disadvantages of translation and a possible misapprehension. In view of all this, both reason and justice require that before we accept this theory of verbal inspiration, we should satisfy ourselves that it is given by an authority we cannot dispute. And from the nature of the case it is obvious that we must look for this authority only in the sacred books themselves. But it is an undeniable fact that not a single author of these writings has claimed—either for his own compositions or the compositions of others this verbal infallibility, and that Jesus Christ, the greatest authority, does not refer to it. The most, therefore, that can be claimed by the advocate or conceded by the opponents of this theory is that the

Bible is silent on the subject. This fact alone might justify us in declining to accept it as a

A SETTLED TRUTH.

But to us there seems to be abundant evidence relating to the history, character, and composition of the sacred books to destroy all claim to verbal inspiration. The state of the copia of the Bible now extant show that the literal and verbal theory will not bear criticism.

1. There does not exist in the world a single manuscript of any portion of the Old or the New Testament which is an original autograph. Consequently, we have only copies or translations of the original.

2. There is not a copy of the Bible existing which is transcribed from any one manuscript, but all the bibles we possess are made up of transcripts from many different manuscripts.

3. The most ancient manuscripts from which our modern bibles are compiled are all imperfect, most of them only fragments.

4. No manuscripts extant of the Old and New Testaments (Greek) which we possess, was written earlier than the fourth century of the Christian era; no manuscript of the Old Testament (Hebrew) was written before the twelfth century after Christ.

5. No two manuscripts, either of the Hebrew or Greek scriptures, verbally agree, and there is not one of them which cannot be demonstrated to be verbally inaccurate.

Now, from these facts it follows that the very best and most complete Bible we have in the original tongues is a compilation made by the industry and learning of uninspired men from thousands of literal variations. The learned Bishop of Manchester, England, gives the number at 140,000. This being so, how can we reasonably maintain every word which is contained in our modern Bibles is literally, infallibly, and

UNERRINGLY INSPIRED.

In order that we may see more clearly the force and value of these facts notice the testimony which our Lord bears to the authority of the Old Testament

Scriptures. It is written, “What saith the Scriptures?” are words frequently on His lips for the purpose of concluding an argument, rebutting an opponent, or silencing a gainsayer. But it is clear to my mind that although Christ fully believed in the faithfulness and substantial truthfulness of the Jewish Scriptures, yet He nowhere makes us to think that He regarded them as verbally and literally infallible. He treats them as a whole as the inspired word of God, but never implies that they are entirely composed of the very words of God: indeed His treatment of those books seems to preclude the idea that He so regarded them. In support of this view let me add:

6. That since the most ancient manuscript of Hebrew Scriptures is not older than the twelfth century after Christ, that is to say was transcribed some 1,600 years after the latest of those books was originally written, it is quite possible that Christ had not access to any original autograph writings of the Old Testament to which He could refer or from the pages of which he could make quotations.

7. That when He did cite passages from the Old Testament, the quotations were made, not in Hebrew, its original tongue, nor in Greek, in which the evangelist wrote his history, but in the Aramaic or Syro-Chaldean vernacular and therefore was only a translation from the original.

8. That our Lord did not use the words of the Hebrew scriptures, but most frequently quoted from the Septuagint version, a Greek translation, supposed to have been made in the third century B.C., and which is acknowledged to be the least trustworthy and verbally faithful of all the translations of the Bible now extant. Whether this translation was in portions and at different times, or by the same authors at one time nobody knows.

THE SEPTUAGINT DIFFERS

from the original Hebrew manuscript from which our English Bible is compiled in many important particulars: (a) In the Pentateuch, in more than a thousand places the Septuagint follows the Samaritan and not the Hebrew text. (b) In the Book of Job some 900 sentences or

portions of sentences, which are found in Hebrew are omitted in the Septuagint. (c) In hundreds of places the Septuagint is more a paraphrase than a translation.

9. That the authors of the New Testament wrote in Greek, whilst the Old Testament, from which they quoted, was written in Hebrew, and hence in no case do they give us the exact original words, but only a translation made by themselves and others. These quotations are far more often made from the Septuagint than translated accurately from the original Hebrew, and even this translation of the Seventy sometimes quote incorrectly where it happens to agree with the Hebrew text.

10. That the various writers of the New Testament quote the same passages from the Old with verbal differences, so that in some cases not one of them follows accurately either the Septuagint or the Hebrew.

11. That some passages are quoted by them from the Old Testament which can not be found in it: e.g., Matt. ii., 28; Matt. xiii., 85.

12. That the Evangelists Matthew and Mark not unfrequently quote from the Hebrew, while Luke quotes invariably from the Septuagint, and yet the quotations of all three often agree verbally with each other, where they do not harmonize either with the Hebrew or the Septuagint. Let it be remembered that the very inept translation of the Seventy was highly revered by the Jews, and that Christ neither corrected it nor protested

AGAINST ITS AUTHORITY, directly or by implication. Nay, he constantly used it himself in reference to the Hebrew as the word of God, and throughout the whole of the New Testament it is far more frequently quoted by the Evangelists and Apostles than the Hebrew text. From this it is evident that our Lord and His Apostles attached the same importance and sacredness to the one as to the other, although they differ so frequently and so materially in their verbiage.

13. There are many statements in the Hebrew Scriptures themselves which
could not on any conceivable hypothesis have been dictated by the Holy Spirit, not only because of verbal differences, but strange discrepancies which are irreconcilable. Take as an example Second Samuel xxiv., 1. 9, 13, 24; First Chron. xxii., 1, 5, 11, 25. These accounts may be substantially true, but they cannot be verbally true. With these discrepancies how can we tell that the story, when originally written, did not differ verbally from both these accounts. Into the many discrepancies of the New Testament I will not enter. It abounds with conclusive evidence that whilst there is substantial truthfulness and fidelity in the writers, there is no claim to infallible and verbal accuracy.

Perhaps I may not be wrong in stating that a thorough analysis of inspiration will show that there has no Scriptural facts or whatever may be open to common observation and may be learned by ordinary means, but rather with religious truth and whatever is profitable for doctrine.

IT IS DOUBTLESS TRUE

that in dealing with historical and religious truths attained by natural means, the selection and arrangement of the materials, and the spirit that breathes through them, they were greatly helped by a wisdom superior to their own. When once all supernatural illumination is relegated to the region of spiritual principles, minor errors in the narration of facts do not detract from the trustworthiness of history or there would be no reliable histories in existence.

Discerning the three-fold effects of inspiration, (a) in the revelation of truth, (b) of intensity of feeling, (c) in great abiding principles, we know we enter with them into the sanctuary of divine unfolding. Old truths become more important, truth, imperfectly understood, stands out clear and well defined and things which unaided reason cannot discover are revealed. It should be remembered that amid all the diversity of this book there is a divine unity. The book of Genesis is only the first of a long series of tracts produced during a long (To be continued.)

Young girls who wish to marry take care to parade their domestic talents. Here is a curious example of it, which I dedicate to gourmands.

Six young ladies in Ohio, having received attention from six young men, exchanged confidences and came to a mutual understanding.

Although matters seemed to be progressing according to their wishes, there is still a certain impatience of victory among Eve's daughters, and they resolved upon an audacious move which should prove to the objects of their affection that they were, one and all, really good housekeepers.

They fixed upon a day, secured the house of a mutual friend and sent out six invitations to a luncheon which was to be prepared and served by their own fair hands. Upon the appointed day the six young men, punctual to such an appetizing engagement, were welcomed by six pretty cooks, dressed like the soufflées in a comedy, with bare arms, dainty little caps, short skirts and embroidered white aprons. After having conducted their guests upon a tour of inspection, letting them peep into the ovens and oversee the cooking of the beefsteak that they might be sure there was no trickery, they all sat down to a table decked with flowers and enjoyed a delicious meal perfectly served.

A few weeks later Ohio was the richer by six more young households. Such customs are far removed from ours. I can imagine the frightful scandal which such an escapade would create in one of our little provincial cities. Certainly no respectable girl would ever risk such a thing. Here the adventure was considered charming, and it is a natural result of such an education as we have just been considering.

Furthermore, an American marriage is an alliance between two persons, rather than an alliance between two families. The parents contribute nothing to the support of the young household, and do not interfere with the reciprocal choice of the young husband and wife. They marry themselves.

In consequence we do not encounter in the United States our own interesting class of professional matchmakers. There are none of the old dowagers who make themselves responsible for the happiness of their fellow beings by bringing about "accidental" meetings between the different members of their numerous clienteles. The Americans have suppressed this "middleman."—Chicago Journal.
THE BOOK OF BOOKS.
A Remarkable Address Given By the Rev. J. Wolfenden.

INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.
In Several Ways He Proves the Falsity of the Theory.

From the Chicago Press.

As we take this book in hand we notice that it occupies a place of honor in the history of literature and thought in modern times, being the result of the labors of the most distinguished men of the age, and that it has been the subject of much controversy and discussion. It is a work of the highest importance, and its influence has been far-reaching.

In our own time, it has been the subject of much controversy and discussion. It is a work of the highest importance, and its influence has been far-reaching.

THE RECORD OF THE JEOUS.

THE RETURN.

The Record of the Jews and the Record of the Egyptians are one. Truth is eternal.

Vol. 3, No. 4.

RICHMOND, MISSOURI, NOVEMBER, 1892.

Whoa! 29

This paper is quite readable, but it is a bit old-fashioned and uses archaic language. The content is a discussion about the inspiration of the Bible and its correctness. The author presents arguments against the idea of the Bible being a complete record, suggesting that it contains errors and inconsistencies. He argues for the necessity of interpreting the Bible in the context of its historical and cultural background, and he emphasizes the importance of understanding its purpose and intent.

THE SEVENTY-FOURTH DIFFERS

From the original Hebrew manuscript from which our English Bible is compiled in many important particulars: (a) In the Septuagint, in more than a thousand places the Septuagint follows the Samaritan and not the Hebrew text. (b) In the Book of Job, 800 sentences or portions of sentences, which are found in Hebrew are omitted in the Septuagint. (c) In hundreds of places the Septuagint is more a paraphrase than a translation. (d) That the various writers of the New Testament wrote in Greek, whilst the Old Testament, from which they quoted, was written in Hebrew, and hence in no case do they give us the original words, but only a translation made by themselves and others. These quotations are far more often made from the Septuagint than translated accurately from the original Hebrew, and even this translation of the Hebrew sometimes, or not, is accurate. And this happens to agree with the Hebrew text. (e) That the various writers of the New Testament quote the same passages from the Old Testament with very slight differences, so that in some cases not one of them follows accurately either the Septuagint or the Hebrew.
THE RETURN.

SAW THE LAND FIRST.
A Jewish Sailor Who Pointed Out the Welcoming Shore.

The diary which Columbus kept shows conclusively that he was

determined to sail for the Indies, and that he had reached his

desired destination.

At Hillsdale, Illinois, county, Sept. 21st, 1892, Elder Solomon

B. Thurston, member of the Church of Christ, said:

"We have sailed for the first time in our history to the

land of our fathers, and we have found it as pleasant as we
expected it to be."

In a speech delivered in Chicago, Elder J. A. Ross, an

elder of the Church, said:

"We have passed through many trials and difficulties on our

journey, but we are now in the land of our fathers, and we

are grateful for our deliverance."

This is the first landing of the Church in America, and we

are thankful for the opportunity to be here.

THE RETURN.

The citizens of Hillsdale, Illinois, were proud to welcome the

Church to their city, and the elders were warmly received.

"We have come to America, and we are here to stay," said

Elder J. A. Ross.

"We have come to build, to educate, and to serve the

people of this land."
THE RETURN.

The Last Living Witness to the Divine Authorship of the Book of Mormon and the Reality of That Position and His Mistrustship.

When God promised the 19th century with his unprompted thrust from out the earth. When he uncovered the seer Joseph Smith that truth should plant her standard again on the American and tell the people of a nation that had lived and died on this course as he did in all of his revelations to man providing some means for the nation to stand on its present state, and providing witnesses from different constituencies men; testing to different parts of the advent and summing all together twelve. When God's exponential Son elected on earth has selected for this work as servants to those who would be Lords, but of those comparatively middle class, all of whom carried an individuality of their own, embodying in their personality almost every form of human nature. The ambitious, the enthusiast, the philosopher, the schemer and in fact about every element pertaining to man. The All-Wise knowing that the trials and temptations and postulations and what new revival of truth would have to bring out the nature of man in contact with that which was Divine. The character of those early witnesses have been discussed in the various columns of religious articles, that they were, and were only: with all of man's weakness and all of man's strength. That when trouble came and the Savior was impaled Peter said: "I go fishing;" when some one wanted to know who should be greatest. (politicians they) the Master said: "Whosoever of you will be, shall be set apart of all."
Information Wanted.

It is claimed by the Re-organized Church that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God up to the time of his death, which occurred on the 27th of June, 1844. If this claim is correct, the writer has failed to comprehend it, how the revelations on the "Order of Kanosh" in the "Doctrine and Covenants" can be true as claimed and endorsed by the Bishops of the L.D.S.

Sections 77, 81, 101 are revelations of this "Order of Kanosh," which was an order established inside the Church to be an everlasting order, and was to exist in the Church and to have influence and control forever.

We are further told in these revelations that the one that began it "with the Blood of Jesus" dissolved this "everlasting covenant." He shall be buried under the burial of Simeon until the day of redemption.

In the history of Joseph Smith, as recorded in Mill. Stat., Vol. 15, 1844, a reference is made to this order. It says that the order should be dissolved and each one should form a new brotherhood of his own.

Thus we see that Joseph Smith and others did on the 11th of April, 1831, "break" or dissolve that order and, hence, if those revelations are true, the Church was given by God. The Church of Christ might have been under the "burial of Simeon" from that time to the day of his death, and has been, and will be "until the day of Simeon." If this is true, how can we say that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and free to give the word of the Lord ten years of his life? Information wanted.

The claim that Joseph Smith was a true prophet is made in section 15, 81, and 101.

WAS COLUMBUS A GENTLEMAN?

McAllister Says He Was a Good Man, But of Lowly Origin.

New York, Oct. 8th. Ward McAllister was this day at the Presidio in New York. He told us that Columbus was a good man, but of lowly origin.

McAllister, who is a friend of the Presidio and the Spanish people,

Just a Plain Christian.

New York, Nov. 15. — A matter of some interest was considered by the New York Presidio at its regular session yesterday.

In the hurry and rush of getting out the first number of the Ruritan, some little mistakes were made in the layout and press photography, and consequently escaped the editor’s notice. It was therefore necessary to have the publication delayed.

Once is never enough, and the editors are now working on the second number, which will contain a few more errors, but none of them will be marked, as the matter is still in the hands of the printer.

The living truths of God, affirms the editor, are no more bound to the old usages of society than is the mountain air and vital sunshine, and can be changed from a room through open windows, or from the hand of one to that of another by the touch of a hand, or the touch of a finger.

Energy is man’s success. How often we hear some say how they have had the opportunity to do something that could have been done by others. All that is true, but the question is, did they take advantage of it? Did they make the most of it? Did they work hard? Did they work well? Did they make the most of their time and energy?

The Gnoll.

The Gnoll is a small canine animal found in the forests and mountains of the United States. It is sometimes mistaken for a dog, but is distinguished by its smaller size, darker color, and more agile movements. The Gnoll is known for its cunning and stealthy nature, often hiding in the shadows to strike without warning. As a result, it has earned a reputation for causing harm and disturbance to those who come too close. The Gnoll’s lair is usually hidden deep within the forest, protected by walls of thorny undergrowth and a thick carpet of leaves and moss.

The Gnoll’s diet consists mainly of small mammals, birds, and occasionally fruit. It is a solitary creature, with little tolerance for other Gnolls. When threatened or when a Gnoll’s territory is invaded, it becomes extremely aggressive, lashing out with its powerful jaws and sharp claws.

Despite its reputation for danger, the Gnoll is not an aggressive species but rather a defensive one. Its natural habitat provides a sanctuary from the disturbances of humans and other animals. However, when its solitude is invaded, the Gnoll will defend its home and territory with a ferocity that boggles the mind. It was no different on this particular night, as the darkness enveloped the woods, leaving only the occasional rustling of leaves and the hushed silence of the creatures’ whispers.

In the stillness of the night, a faint glow illuminated a clearing, casting long shadows across the forest floor. A young man, dressed in tattered clothing and smeared with the dirt of his adventure, stumbled into the clearing, his gaze scanning the area with the intensity of a hunter, his mind racing with the fear that accompanied each step. The Gnoll, sensing the intrusion, stepped out of the shadows, a silent sentinel in the night.

The Gnoll rose on its forelimbs, a colossal figure in the dimly lit scene, its eyes locked on the quivering human. The young man’s heart raced, his breath hitching in his throat as he realized the scale of the creature before him. The Gnoll’s fur was a dark brown, its eyes glowing with an almost otherworldly light. The air around it seemed to vibrate, as if the Gnoll was breathing a form of energy that defied the laws of nature.

The young man was frozen in place, his mind struggling to process the situation. He had never encountered such a creature before, and the thought of facing it alone filled him with dread. The Gnoll approached, its movements slow and deliberate, each step causing a minuscule shift in the leaves beneath its paws. The young man’s knees wobbled, and he unsteadily lowered his eyes, his hands forming into fists as a subconscious attempt to brace himself for the onslaught.

As the Gnoll drew closer, its gaze shifted from the human to the surrounding wilderness. The young man understood the creature’s decision and found himself rooted to the spot. The Gnoll’s paw reached out, Its claws digging into the earth, it inspected the area, sniffing the air carefully, as if searching for some unseen threat.

The young man watched in awe as the Gnoll paced the clearing, its movements almost dance-like in their fluidity. The creature seemed to understand the young man’s presence, and instead of charging, it simply walked past, its tail flicking as it exited the clearing.

The young man remained motionless, his gaze fixed on the Gnoll’s retreating form. The Gnoll’s departure was a silent testament to the respect it held for the young man, and the young man shared the same sentiment. He knew that he had faced a creature of legend, and the experience had left him unscathed, his body tingling with a newfound sense of strength and resilience.

With a final glance at the clearing, the young man turned and walked away, his steps lighter than before. He knew that he had faced the Gnoll, and he had lived to tell the tale. The Gnoll’s presence had been a lesson in the power of the natural world, reminding him of his place in it and the responsibility that came with it. He left the forest, his mind now lighter and his spirit more resilient, determined to face whatever challenges lay ahead with the same grace and determination that the Gnoll had shown him in the night. 
THE RETURN

November 8th the great quadrilateral pulse of America gave her heart stroke once more and carrying back to the body of the people has selected for her public servant Grover Cleveland, of New York. Certainly in the reversal of political sentiment, the man is weighed with the greatest responsibilities, and it is the desire of this people that the All-Wise One will indicate the destiny of this Zion of the world, and that he will follow the cycle of his time and the blight of this age. The character of our honored servant warrants the sanctity of our firesides, for there has been his latest power. His monthness and care of the obscure, but necessary wants of his fellow citizens, signifies that he will use all the powers that God has given to reach the heart of the nation. Grant that as the visions of the nation’s wants come to him upon the house tops of independence taught will be unclean that God has provided.

That this jewel of nations shall gaze in its north.

By the means of a light to the Earth.

Mormons Win a $2,000,000 Suit.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12.

The territorial supreme court to-day decided the church excommunication case, involving $2,000,000, and ordered that the money be handed over to the Mormon church, for the support of the poor, the parochial schools and the repair and building of Mormon houses of worship. The master in chancery has decided that the money should go to the free public schools, holding that a transfer to the Mormon would be the much in aid in polygamy. The court holds that belief in polygamy is an abstract, rather than a concrete principle, and beyond jurisdiction of the courts. An appeal was taken to the United States Supreme Court.

The great strike at Homestead, Pa., is officially declared off the amalgamated association on Sunday deciding by a vote of 191 to 19 that it was useless to longer continue it. The strike lasted for five months and was the bitterest and most stubborn ever witnessed in this country. It has cost in loss of wages, pay to troops, losses to the Carnegie iron company and in other ways nearly $4,000,000.

Red Bad, III, was devoured by a cyclone last Wednesday night, and a score or more of people were killed.

HOUSHDOWN BREVITIES.

Deep crimson rows and green belfry decorated the table at a recent very elegant dinner. The Chester caviar and orchid bonbonniere have given way to a bunch of half a dozen tiny rosesbuds with a single wisp of green.

Jolly boys.—One pint and a half of rye meal, one half teaspoonful of cinnamon, small pinch of salt, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder; sift all together, well with milk, roll out thin and fry in boiling lard. Make the dough 10 pretty stiff so as to mix the fat.

Detroit Free Press.

Coffee Bread.—One egg, one cupful of sugar, one and one-half cupfuls of warm milk, four cupfuls of flour, one-half of a yeast cake mix, and set to raise as for bread. In the morning, add two-thirds of a cupful of butter, and rise again in a pan, after sprinkling the top with cinnamon and sugar. Bake like bread.

Good Housekeeping.
God's Works and Words.

The first chapter of Genesis has always presented an unsolvable problem to those who are unwilling to accept the theory that our world was created and filled for our habitation by the work of God. The Christian, believing that it is, is willing to accept the theory that establishes the Fatherhood of God, the Eternal Being, and the power and gifts of the Holy One, through the Spirit, acting together in perfect harmony, with the Word and the works. To prove that the works of God and the Word go hand in hand, we must apply some such common sense rule. If the first chapter of Genesis is incomprehensible, as is generally the case, God's key is suggested by the 1st Psalm, 11 verse, and a similar passage in the 2d Peter 3:8.

We believe that time is the hand and light is the light of the world. The scientist believes that every discovery in the sciences is the result of research, and that it is only by research that we can understand the true meaning of our experiences. We must therefore conclude and hold to the belief that the evening and the morning that heralded the dawn of creation gave light to a world that had never been in existence before. In a world of a thousand years, and that in six days that passed ere the earth was considered suitable for man's abode, was of like length, and that period of a thousand years was condensed into a day for a wise and beneficent purpose, which purpose is thus expressed: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because that in it he had rested from all his work." A thousand years was the time that would be impracticable with us, life is too short, hence this wise provision. In support of this belief we recall the words that wrote the story of truth for man's instruction and guidance. This can only be done by showing that from the time that God said, "Let there be light," until the hearing of the voice which said, "This is my beloved son," the works that make up the Bible, and all our lives, have vindicated his every action. In order to get at a probable solution of the question it is well to try possible solutions. As an eminent writer-scientist says: "We are not to lose sight of the fact that there was light." That the works of God as given by inspiration to the world are the only works of God as given by inspiration to the world.

RICHMOND, MISSOURI, DECEMBER 1896.

Whole No. 29

11.1. West.

Santa Rosa, Cal, Dec. 10, '92.

[We should like more correspondence of the above character to the current of progress, which purpose is this: And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because that in it he had rested from all his work.]

Jews, Not Hebrews.

For Hebrews there has been but one meaning, and that is a dead language. We are Jews, and that is a dead language. Had we ever been Jews, we could have been Jewish.

There is an impression in the minds of many non-Jews that the name Jew is a stigma attached to the name Jewish. The Talmud is constantly seeking to remove this impression. We are Jews, not Hebrews or Israelites. — Jewish Talmud.
Dear Brother—I send you the following Testimony of the Prophecy of the Prophet Esra for His people in the last days. The word of the Lord to His servants who are commanded to do the work of building His kingdom, to do the work of judgment upon the earth, to establish His kingdom and reign over the whole earth, is fulfilled in the words of the Prophets. The work of building and building up is not for your own purposes, but for the building up of the kingdom of God. The work of judgment is not for your own purposes, but for the judgment of the world. The work of the work of righteousness is not for your own purposes, but for the work of righteousness. The work of the righteousness is not for your own purposes, but for the work of righteousness.

The return of all the inhabitants of the land which have been scattered among the nations and to all the people of the earth, the upright shall see the light of the earth and rejoice therein; they shall be comforted by the word of righteousness, wherein they have been oppressed by the iniquity of the wicked. They shall be strengthened and encircled by the word of righteousness, wherein they have been driven by their enemies shall there find a resting place, they have been overthrown by the wicked shall there be built up, they that have been afflicted shall find strength and peace, and the reward of the righteous shall be great before God and all the people of the earth.

In the land shall the kingdom of righteousness be built according to the order which has been given, there shall be no fear, neither shall there be any that are rich, for the riches of righteousness are an abomination unto the Lord which created all men, and all that believe shall receive the reward of the righteous. They shall see the light of the earth and rejoice therein; they shall be comforted by the word of righteousness, wherein they have been oppressed by the iniquity of the wicked. They shall be strengthened and encircled on the mountain of righteousness, wherein they have been driven by their enemies shall there find a resting place, they have been overthrown by the wicked shall there be built up, they that have been afflicted shall find strength and peace, and the reward of the righteous shall be great before God and all the people of the earth.
THE RETURN.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT $1.00 PER YEAR.

GEO. W. L. SCHWARTZ. Editor and Proprietor.

RICHMOND, MO. DECEMBER, 1861.

THE POSITION OF DAVID WHITTER.

The Last Living Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon, and His Occupa-

tion of That Position and His Eldership.

At Far West, before the dispersion, David Whitter was separated from the body politic for reasons not known to his friends. He had given his life to the task of spreading the good news, and in accordance with the will of God, his name was not sanctified. He had completed his course, and the time had come for him to be gathered to his fathers. His body was laid to rest in the ground, and his spirit ascended to the presence of the living God.

After the dispersion at Far West, he returned to Richmond, Missouri, to minister to the spiritual needs of his people. There he continued to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to labor for the salvation of souls. He was a man of great faith and unwavering devotion, and his teachings were cherished by those who had known him.

In his last days, he declared that the time was near when he would be called to give an account of his stewardship. He knew that he would soon be gathered to his fathers, and that his work would be taken up by others. He urged his people to continue in the faith, and to follow the lead of their leaders.

Special Notice.

Owing to delays in moving and unavoidable irregularities, the January number of the book will not be issued until the 15th of February, at which time provision will be made for the January and February numbers to be mailed together. This is a one-time occurrence due to circumstances beyond our control.

Elder John C. Whitter has returned from a trip to Chicago, where he met with Bro. B. B. Lang. After having prayer meeting at his residence on Thursday, 19th, there in his company to Lowery City, Missouri. He had been in the city for several weeks, and during his stay, he had been a great blessing to many.

Mr. Wright L. Moody is being made the subject of a great deal of criticism, instruction, ridicule, and even bullying by newspapers and others. He has been accused of stealing the ocean senator space in answer to prayer. It may be noted on the side of Mr. Moody that he was on the ground last night, and that the charge is not based on true facts.

The battle between the Kephart and the Stonewall, which was acquainted with the circumstances of the war, has been settled by the West Point of the Lord. In both cases, the men involved were saved and furthered the cause of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It looks like a storm is coming, but on the further evidence of the two the storm will pass over. The men will have a chance to rest and be ready for the next battle. Whitter has been a very good friend to those who have sought his help and guidance.

Homestead Press.

Hollister, W. J. Stone, general agent of Missouri, was the next speaker. He said: 'The Western Dawn is a new day for the West Point of the Lord. We have been waiting for this day to come, and now we see it coming. We are going to make the most of it.'
THE RETURN.

The return of faith in Christ, but after
faith has come, we no longer
need a schoolmaster. We are then
above the law and instead of a re-
straining influence it leads us on to
the performance of duty as a glad
privilege and thus becomes a law
of liberty. If it is the law, we are
not to be judged by the last days then
it is by and through the law that we
must seek salvation. The Apostle
James further says in the 14th verse
of the 12th chapter: "For we have
exchanged our natural spirit of the
mind on the law of liberty."

First it is the "schoolmaster" to
instruct us and lead us to a true
wisdom of things if we are to prac-
tice faith in Christ, then our friend
and counselor to encourage and help
us in the performance of the duties
of life, and finally our judge, just
but merciful, and if we have been
"not forgetful of the lessons of the
work," we have no cause to fear there
is an opposite side to all these
verities. And now as there is
always an opposite side to all ques-
tions it is but fair to learn what kinds
of liberty, the other side has to offer;
"The liberty to think, speak, and
act as we please without fear of
future punishment," says the Free
thinker. To get all the pleasure we
can out of life, and as a restraining
force to carry us over the rough
places (that persist in cutting
across) all along life's path.

B. W.

Characteristics of Biblical Authors

If you are getting lost, watch
James.

If your faith is low, read
Paul.

If you are impatient, sit down
quietly and have a talk with Job.

If you are a little "strong-headed"
(8:13), and see Moses.

If you are getting weak-kneed,
take a look at Elijah.

If there is no song in your heart,
listen to David.

If you are getting spend-
ous, walk with Balaam.

If you feel chilled, get the cal-
torial sun, get the sun around you
in the south.

If you are being sighted on
in the future, stand up to Revendales
and avoid alliances.

But says my true friend,
get a glimpse of the promised land.

"This is all delectable." For the

What to Teach, Girls.

A girl's education is not complete
when she has been taught the branches
commonly comprised in the school
course. There are many things
which the schools omit, but which
boys should be taught if they want
to excel as women. Among them
are the following:

Teach them to wash and iron
clothes.

Teach them to darn stockings
and sew on buttons.

Teach them to make shirts.

Teach them to make their own
dresses.

Teach them to make bread and
cakes.

Teach them all the mysteries of
the kitchen, dining-room and the
larder.

Teach them to wear cutting dresses
and do it like queen.

Teach them that a round neck
swag is better than to be shawl

Teach them to wear thick warm
shoes with low heels.

Teach them to wear earring stamps
cost.

Teach them to make a man
for his money.

Teach them to dress neatly
correctly.

Teach them to do marketing for
the family.

Teach them every day and every
week the common sense.

Teach them self-control.

Teach them music.

Teach them to write pleasantly
direct.

Teach them typewriting and
diagramming.

Teach them the arts of household
perfection.

Teach them something by which
they can earn an honest living.

Teach them the care of domestic
animals.

Teach them how to nurse sick
people quietly and skillfully.

Teach them how to be good house
keepers.

Teach them needlework and
the use of the sewing machine.

Teach them to be above gossiping.

Teach them to make a home happy.

Teach them to read some good
books besides novels.

Teach them to respect old age and
avoid alliances.

Teach them to be a womanly
women under all circumstances.
This issue has not been scanned yet
THE RETURN.

The Record of the Jews and the Record of the Nephites are one. Truth is Eternal.

RICHMOND, MISSOURI. FEBRUARY, 1883.

Vol. 3. No. 7.

Whitmer.

The Last Living Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon, and his Occupancy of the Most Position and His Eldership.

His Position as to Other Sects and Peoples During his Residence in Richmond, Mo.

Having determined by such methods as he understood the Law of God; or by personal experience and the scriptures, David Whitmer took the position of one standing still and holding the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the monument to the Lord in the Land of Egypt, he was placed on the rock of truth, he stood the storms of the desert and the heat of the mid-day alike; when the light of truth of any sect penetrated his seclusion their rays fell on him like the meridian light on the Pyramid of Cheops, and cast no shadow. He could then lead his visitors into their own selfhood and show them that out of the rock of existence there was a downward course of all men, and an ascending passage, a level course, to a safety, but a refuge for him who knew the light that would make plain the way upward and follow the ascending passage to the Kin's chamber. Where simplicity, multiplied eloquence and silence made to all the world a living and a working truth.

In the city of his resting place, where a simple block of marble marks the bed of a worn and tired body in its mother earth, he lived the life of the law. In equanimity to all men's opinions, and blessing any move of the churches or city that would smooth the way of tell or light the way to God. From the heights of his own age a voice will echo the 'two books' laying there in his hand and gently placing in his arm around his neck he said: "John, you have known each other ever since I came here, there is always as you cast your eyes around and a love between us. Have I ever done ought but to make my fellow men better?" John said: "No, brother; I just now appreciate that my best and purest friend is leaving me." "Ay, John," he replied. "I know this God will so manifest himself in the end that not one of all his creation but will shunt for joy letters, here have my friends permitted me to be emulated in the world and His love overshadow all homes of God I have helped to build, but under this calamitous smite I will tell them I love all of God's written by the pen of truth: "By his creation." My life I have piloted such groveling worms, for even the world's hurry feet have trampled them under the dust, and while they take the towns of truth to the book-keeper of the whole earth, I bear the smiles of the children of the land, these little ones, and lay them at the feet. Him who is all in all, the widows blessing and the orphan's care; the word of hope to the down-trodden and the pure love of this nation of freedom, a life that know no justice and a death that brought me into the sight of God. All these I lay to my credit and their flood of glory drowns the weakness of my nature. Well done enter into the city.

Here was a principal of his life: if he believed that any person of any people had evidence of God of their salvation, he regarded it a personal sin to shake that faith by bombastic utterances and doctrinal dissertations, unless evidenced to him and demanded of him in a different way. If questions of doctrine were asked him, he gave the law as he understood it, but never undertook to excommunicate anyone, even from his own society unless God manifested by certain methods a conclusion of his work on the spot.

During his life sickness a friend and associate, a member of a church, visited him. With a smile he grasped the hand of the friend and said: "Thank you for coming to see me, I feel better already."

The Return.
may know how a man living as he did stood still,” yet spoke to the
army, Nicodemus, that saw him, and laid his hand of blessing on
those that disagreed with him or called him his character. That he
hadJudged many fires upon the heads of his adversaries and lived to
see their attacks return on
them over and over again.

His life has traversed the world.
It is being debated in that modern
Palestine, the valley of the Great
Salt Lake, and is being studied at
the feet of the world’s greatest
thinkers. The sects, like Plotinus
in general asked about him, “what
truth?” and turned aside and
washed their hands. In the times to
come he will live in the hearts of
all the freedmen of the world as a
suffering servant of his Master, Jesus
Christ, the Merciful.

The Return—During my residence there in Richmond I did some
writing on the evidences of the
Record of Nephi, and I send you
to this mail the first part of a series
of writings on the Prophets,
that perchance they may fall
into the hands of some unbelievers
in the Nephit Scriptures, and thereby
some good might be accomplished
for the cause of Christ.

In the spring of 1855 I began
to think very seriously about my soul’s
salvation and to search the scriptures
more closely than ever before in my
life. There was one thing in
particular that I could not under-stand,
and that was the passage in the
scriptures where Christ tells his
apostles to go into all the world and
preach the gospel, and that “these
signs shall follow them that believe.”
(Mark 16:15-18.) I would read in
various passages where these signs
or miraculous gifts were wrought by
those who believed, as well as by
the twelve apostles. I could not
understand why the signs were not
following the unbelievers. I was
brought up in the Christian
church, and had been taught that
these gifts had ceased in the ancient
curch when the apostles died, and
that they were not needed in these
times. But I found by reading the
history of the ancient church that
these gifts had continued with the
very early church, and they were not
with

death of the apostle, but they exist
in the church down into the third
century, over two hundred years
after the apostles had gone, and
that when they ceased to exist it
was when the church had drifted
into unbelief, and had departed
from the true faith. I could find no
passage of scripture where it says
that these gifts were ever to be done
away as long as the world should
stand, or until the millennium should
come when we shall know even as
we are known of God. My brethren
would tell that these gifts were
necessary in the first day of the
church to convince unbelievers. I
thought they were just as necessary
now to convince unbelievers, be-cause there are as many unbelievers
today as there was then. They
tried to convince me that they were
to be done away by the passage in
1 Cor. 13:8:12, but that passage
tells us plainly when the gifts are to
be done away. It says they are to
be done away with when we
shall know, even as we are known
when that which is perfect is come,
when we shall be face to face. But
this means in the millennium, as any
one can see by reading it. In 1
Cor. 12:7-10, Paul says “the
manifestation of the spirit is given to
every man to profit with”—one is
given “wisdom” to another
“knowledge”—to another “the gift
of healing”—“prophecy”—
tongues and so on. Then every man
in the early church who had the
Spirit of God in him had one or
more of these spiritual gifts. Again
Paul says “brethren, covet to
prophecy,” and forbid not to speak
with tongues.” 1 Cor. 14:39. From
these and other passages I became
convinced that the gifts had ceased
today because of unbelief; and that
if we had that strong and living
faith which the ancient brethren
had we also would have these gifts
today. It seemed to me that there
was very little faith on the earth.
It seemed that almost all the mem-
bers of the churches cared more for
money and the things of this world
than they did for God and the
things of the next world. I read
the passage in 1 John 2:15 which
speaks of God, who is love, and
seek

the things that are in the world. If
any one have love for the world the
love of the Father is not in him.” I thought
myself, what man loves God
better than the things of this world?
I also thought of the words of Christ
where he says, “Ye cannot serve
God and Mammon.” I made up
my mind to serve God herewith
at the sacrifice of all earthly things.
I began to seek Christ in an earnest
and conscientious manner, believing
in the words of Christ where he
says, “He that seeks shall find;
and to whomsoever shall be open-ed.” Another thing that was
a great stumbling block to me was the
belief that there was so many reli-
gious denominations, each church
claiming to be right, and some of
them condemning each other. This
was a mystery to me, because the
scriptures plainly teach that the
disciples of Christ should be “one”
without any division among them—
practicing the same things for
doctrice. I read the New Testament
closely and diligently. I did not
go to any of the preachers, but I
read the scriptures for myself, and
I prayed to the Lord to guide me.

The result of my investigations were
as follows: I could see that it was
necessary to have faith in Christ; to
repeat of my sins; and to be bap-
tized by immersion by one having
authority to baptize; and I could
see that the spiritual gifts or signs
should be following the believers.

I had heard of a church that was
preaching the gospel like this. I
almost came to the conclusion that
there was no Church of Christ on
the earth, because I was firmly con-
vinced—and that by the power of
God—that the gospel of Christ
should be preached exactly as I have
stated. I then left the Christian
church, for I knew they lacked the
power of the spirit, and decided to
stand alone and await what the Lord
would do for me. I was feeling
good for the Lord gave me His
spirit to feel so. I thought to my-
self, has the present passage in the bible
become more true than what follows:
The Lord blesseth down upon the
children of men, to see if there were
any that did understand, and seek

God. They are all gone aside, they

have turned the naughty way.