

THE RETURN.

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

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The Return.

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SECRET SOCIETIES.

ARE NOT FROM THE LORD.

By Chas. W. Lanb.

Number 1.

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

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 old 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 sifting 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 that 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 engraft 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-

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ties or combinations, the safer to carry on his works of darkness, and stealthily further his evil purposes in corrupting the minds and blinding 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 institutions, religious and secular, in which the masses were, by these oaths and penalties, subject to the rule of his priests and demagogues, 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 refuse investigation, and are opposed to free speech and free press; as manifested in the case of Capt. Wm. Morgan, of Batavia, N. Y., for exposing 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 shall not be known." Luke 12:2. And also manifested in their persecution, so far as safe policy will permit, of all who have publicly exposed 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,

putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel." Luke 11:33.

The Prophet Moroni, says of secret combinations, in his words of warning to the Gentiles of this nation 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 combinations to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed. *

* For it cometh to pass that whoso 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 3:13.

But these things are not likely to be put down, that destruction may be averted; because, "ancient, free and accepted Masonry" is, by its own confession, the father of the whole brood of secret societies, and is popular in high places as well as low. And any law that would put down societies having oaths or vows of secrecy and penalties for divulging—and nothing but such a clean sweep can pluck out the cancer by its roots—would hit the Masonic institution also, and could not now be enacted nor enforced, because masonry by its sworn adherents, has possession of nearly all the places of power and authority in church and state, and thus in both its votaries to a great extent, hold the legislative and executive reins. Its members already occupy the "judgment seats," as did the members of "the secret society of Godianton" among the Nephites, when that combination was just as popular and powerful among that people of ancient America as modern masonry is now among us. But the two great and enlightened nations of old on this land, were brought down to destruction by the power for evil of secret societies.

And no wonder, for, according to the Book of Mormon, and the "inspired translation" of the Bible, the evil one is the originator and "foundation of all these things." 2 Nephi 11:14; Gen. 5:10—16, I. T. And the prophet Moroni says they have "been handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the beginning; and they were kept up by the power of the devil to administer these oaths unto the people, to keep them in darkness, to help such as sought power, to gain power and to murder, and to plunder, and to lie, and to commit all manner of wickedness and whoredoms." Ether 3:12, Book of Mormon.

Moroni further says, in exhorting the Gentiles of this generation:

"O, ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may 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 overthrow and destruction, *if ye shall suffer these things to be; wherefore the Lord Commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you, that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation.*" Ether 3:13, Book of Mormon.

But, although Moroni thus feelingly 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 even ventured to question the propriety 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 shown in private as well as in public, a righteous example to 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 degrading oaths of obedience, secrecy and assistance, and its barbarous penalties! Is it not truly a most pitiable and sickening spectacle? Their eyes were closed. Their trust was in man. But there was so much cunning 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 humiliating lessons of the past not be forgotten.

But Joseph had established his rule as well nigh absolute; and had come to be considered as infallible; and, of course, he would not, and could not do, command or teach anything wrong, since the Lord, as they believed, had commanded them to take his word and obey his command *as if from mine (God's) own*

month." Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 12, par. 2. 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 *steady* 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 you may accomplish the commandments which are given unto you;" "that it may turn to you for your salvation;" "and 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 Sec. 77 and 81 and 89.

We find more abomination and "deviltry," and down-right wickedness and blasphemy in the purposes 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 skim 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 uninitiated.

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's dignitaries; and also by the light of later disclosures, and the bolder utterances and deeds, in the after history 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. 93 and 101 contain some *fine points* on this "order of the church," 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 in 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 to earth it
be crushed;
Like the whispers of conscience, its voice
is not hushed.
It hovers o'er all of the future and past;
Where e'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;
They'd lead us to heaven, 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 Ne-
phi of old;
By his truth and light we would enter
His fold.
The good Sheperd'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 "*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.*

Magnolia, Iowa, Dec. 25, 1890.

COMMUNICATIONS.

The writers of all articles under this head are solely responsible for the views expressed therein. The Editor disclaims 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 offence 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 *ever be with the Lord*. 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, 9-10, 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 millenium. But Isaiah LXV, 17-25, describes the millenium, and a very mortal state of affairs it is, only with Satan's *ower 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 serpents 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 millenium, 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 that 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 Savior 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 exposition 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.

Randolph, Iowa, Dec. 29th, 1890.

BRO. ROBINSON: 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 1852. 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 though 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 counsellors, 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 being established. Would it not be 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 for a moment think 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 as to who is our High Priest. Nor do I think he acts wisely in trying to fasten the origin of polygamy on Brigham Young.

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 guide, just what is told them by the priesthood through the *Herald*. Thus 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 investiga-

tion, and a comparison of God's laws with the laws made by the man-made priesthood, shall cause even one honest soul to search 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 off 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; here 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. Miam 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*.

The Return.

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E. ROBINSON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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NEW YEAR.

Through the kindness of our heavenly Father we are permitted to see the ushering in of another new year. The year that is past has gone to help fill up the boundless ocean of eternity. All its joys and sorrows are among the things that are past. What the future will bring forth we know not. One thing we are well assured of, that, ultimately, virtue will be rewarded and vice punished. It will therefore be acting the part of the wise to practice the one and shun the other.

This new year's day was one, with us of care and deep anxiety. We had only three days previously, buried our dear little infant babe, whose beautiful star had illumined our family constellation only the brief space of five weeks, but long enough to be endeared to all by cords of love and tenderness, hard to be severed. And new year's day, while the winter storm was raging without, we were watching and caring for our darling baby boy, two years and eight months old, who lay very sick with fever, and whose recovery at times seemed a matter of doubt.

Under these circumstances, with our bodies and minds fatigued and worn, it seemed hard for us to exercise any great degree of faith, yet we tried to look through the dark cloud that seemed to be hanging over us, for the silver lining beyond. Thanks be to our heavenly Father, it has made its appearance. Our baby boy is at play about the house, (Jan. 22,) with his little sister, four years and six months old, and we feel to render thanksgiving and praise to our heavenly Father for his kindness to us, and kiss the hand which held the rod, and say in our hearts; 'Father, thy will be done.'

Thus we enter upon the new year with an earnest desire that our remaining days may be spent in usefulness to our fellow men, and to the honor and Glory of God.

The Stability of the Gospel.

All believers of the New Testament scriptures will admit that our Savior communicated to his disciples the gospel, and commissioned them to go into all the world and preach it to every creature, with a promise that those who received and obeyed it should be saved.

That gospel is the same to-day as it was when Jesus and his apostles preached it upon the mountains and in the valleys of Palestine. Time and place can not effect a change in the gospel. Its principles are eternal. They were obtained of our heavenly Father for the good and exaltation of the children of men, and the glory of his great name.

He sent his only begotten and beloved Son to communicate those sacred truths to the children of men, and said: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." And the Son saith; "My Father sent me." "My Father is greater than I." "I came not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me." "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Thus, Jesus Christ, as a dutiful Son, communicated to the children of men the only plan ordained of the Father for their redemption and salvation; therefore, when Jesus says: "Except ye repent ye shall likewise perish," we find repentance essential to salvation. The same principle is just as binding to-day, as it was when Jesus delivered the message from his Father.

Again, Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." Now, reader, do

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 water 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 my earnest desire.

The Hour of God's Judgment.

We are living, as I firmly believe, in the hour of "God's judgement," as spoken of in Revelations 14:7.

Since the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which contains the fullness 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 severe, that the thermometer indicated a change of 33 degrees, which was so great that three caravans 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 promises in that direction, as I have endeavored heretofore 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 republish 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 1835, when he

baptized me into the church, and lived a near neighbor to him from that time until the 13th 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 hotel, the Mansion House, and occupied it some three months, from Jan. until in 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 desist therefrom, as it affords me far more pleasure to write upon the peaceable 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. 62:7-8.

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,

Report of the Post Master General.

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 1789, the number of post offices in the whole country did not exceed 100—now there are 62,401. Then the length of all mail routes was about 2000 miles—now they have increased to nearly 428,000 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, 1 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 350, 20; over 350 and under 450, 22; over 450, 25 cts.

Double letters were double postage.
Tripple “ “ tripple “

For every ounce four single rates were charged, making \$1 an ounce for letters

carried over 450 miles, whereas now letters 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 straggling villages along a single line of post-routes, with here and there a diversion to a cross road, as was the way in Osgood's time, the mails are now transported almost with the speed of thought, according to fixed schedule of arrival and departure, over such innumerable routes as to make their aggregate journeys every working day, equivalent to forty-one times 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 postmaster 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.

We respectfully request our friends to make an effort to not only get new subscribers, but also to secure subscribers for as many sets of the back numbers as they can, as each set disposed of will not only increase the circulation, but also aid in defraying the cost of the future numbers of **THE RETURN**.

ITEMS OF PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE EDITOR.

No. 20.

Continued from page 304.

As stated in my last No. of Personal History, the masses of the people in Nauvoo were honest, faithful and industrious; very zealous in their religious devotions; anxiously laboring for the upbuilding of the principles of truth and righteousness, in view of the permanent establishing 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 "temple revelation," given by Joseph Smith on Jan. 19, 1841. Sec. 107, Doc. and Cov., Plano 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 feelingly warned the sisters to beware lest they be overtaken 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 notified to desist from speaking in tongues, for soon the sisters would get to commanding 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 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 upon 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 souls' salvation, but also that of their dead friends for whom they had been baptized, as it is positively stat-

ed 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 dead 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. Garley. Sen. 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 had been 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 *shall 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 placed 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 5th of March, 1842, he was appointed Registrar of Deeds for the city of Nauvoo, as will appear by the following quotations from his history:

"Friday, February 18th. I attended an adjourned City Council and spoke at considerable length in Committee of the whole, on the great privileges of the Nauvoo Charter, 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 establishing a registry of Deeds in the City of Nauvoo."—Mil. Star, Vol. 19, page 87.

"Saturday, March 5th. Attended the City Council, and spoke at considerable 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 commissioned by Gov. Carlin, a Notary Public. The duties of said offices I endeavored to fill to the best of my ability.

To be continued.

Macædonian 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 souls' 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 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.

—
December 26, 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" or 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 about 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 eye-sight. 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 RETURNS: 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 sots of magistrates." Heretofore 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 in full harmony with his own righteousness can extend 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 to day; 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. 23.—The message of Chief Perryman to the council of the Creek nation, now in session at Ocmogee, 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

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 misdirected zeal for the betterment of the condition of the Indians, handicapped our most laudable efforts for self-government and self-preservation. Unceasing 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.—Ex.

:O:

Immortality of Animals.

In a book recently written and sent us by Mrs. Watson, of Edinburg, Scotland, we find the following list of some of those who have believed in the immortality of animals:—Luther, Wesley, Toplady, Cowper, Southey, Bishop Butler, Pollock, Keble, Pope, Byron, Dean Alford, Rev. Dr. Chalmers, Rev. Horatius Bonar, Mary Howitt, Mrs. Somerville, Lord Erskine, Mary Russel Mitford, Martin F. Tupper, Madame Bunsen, Sir Arthur Helps, Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke, Frank Buckland, G. H. Pember, Rev. J. G. Gregory, Rev. Dr. Cumming, Rev. Dr. Adolph Saphir, Rev. J. O. Morris, J. McGregor (Rob Roy), Rev. Dr. Macduff, Canon Kingsley, Dean Stanley, A. de Lamartine, Gen. Gordon, Rev. Richard Wiltton, M. A.

[To the above may be added Agassiz, and many of the leading minds of America.]—*Dumb Animals.*

:O:

SOME people wish they could blot out their past, with its failings and errors, and begin afresh, but it is fortunate that they cannot, for thus they would blot out their future possibilities. It is out of the many failures that success

may be envolved, out of error that truth may be found, even out of sin repented of and forsaken that righteousness may be rekindled. Just as the withered and unsightly leaves trodded into the soil help to form new beauty in the coming spring, so even the past that we regret, may, if used aright, help us to form a better and a fairer record in the future.—*Lamoni Patriot.*

:O:

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 tog; ther 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 rapine,
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
Treat high from the east and the west;
And ignorance, priestcraft and error
Erever 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.

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Address E. ROBINSON,
Davis City, Decatur Co., Iowa.

THE RETURN.

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

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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, whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built 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 be 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 in its fullness, in these last days.

Brethren 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 spirit 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 carnality,) 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, fulfill the old law.

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

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 veil. 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 the 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 mode 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 hers.”

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 *in 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, attending to washings, anointings, 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 the 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 *Pro-tem* 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 Mil'm. Star, page 140. George Miller, another 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 of instruction 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."

13th. As Joseph's key words, etc., were the "Keys of the Kingdom," and pertained to the priesthood which were its rulers, and by which the initiate was pretended to be fully born or inducted into the Kingdom, and the possession of which entitled him to a "fullness of the blessings prepared," and finally to "come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim." So also with the Utah endowment key words, etc. They were the keys of the kingdom, because they were keys of the priesthood, by which authority the kingdom was run; and by his initiation which gives him these keys the candidate is pretended to be fully ushered into the kingdom, ready to receive the "fullness" of its blessings, and their possession to entitle him to finally enter the presence of the same Eloheim, where he shall give these holy secret pass words or key words at the door of the Holiest of Holies in the eternal worlds.

14th. I might mention as another pointer, that Joseph's secret order, started on the 4th of May, 1842, was by him *designed as the temple ceremony, and was to be given to the El-*

ders in the temple, or in the "Holiest of Holies" therein, when the temple should be "completed."

15th. And I might also add as a separate and final pointer, that by Joseph's temple secret order the Elders were "to be *endowed* with power," when the temple was completed. Therefore *it was designed as an endowment*. And with these facts before us, that it was for an *endowment* and to be given *in the temple*, how can we avoid the conclusion that it was beyond question, *designed* by him to be the *Temple Endowment*? And that it was the same that was afterwards given in the temple as an endowment by "Brigham and associates," with whom he had "spent the day," and perhaps many other days afterwards, in instructing in its "plans and principles." For we have seen that the two run parallel all the way through, and that the evidence is undeniable, *that the two are one and the same*. And thus "Brigham and associates" were truly, as they always claimed, "carrying out Joseph's measures," in finishing the temple and giving the kind of endowment they did. In fact I believe they have been "carrying out the measures of our martyred prophet" all the time, and in every other particular. The Reorganized church claims to be carrying out Joseph's measures also. And so they are in many things. But why is not Joseph's secret combination of the priesthood or his temple endowment, found in that church?

Endowments Then, and Now.

God's people of old, who had truly believed,
On Pentecost day by His Spirit received
Endowments with power, *coming down from the Lord,*
Through His gifts inspiring to utter His word.
But "in these last days" sadly changed
in the view!
"Endowments" were given that *came from below;*
And given in secret, with oaths to obey,
And put trust in men, who soon led us astray.

So iniquity's mystery did greatly abound,
But the "keys" of the latter day priest-craft 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 book from which they make the quotation. 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 wel-

fare, 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 assure 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 Phebe, 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, and will be seen by a letter from her under the head of correspondents.

February 14, 1891.

TESTIMONY.

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 Duplap, 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 *Leon 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 embellished pages, including several beautiful colored plates.

Vick is evidently the leading seedsman 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, 343, 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 Russel Huntley for the Church of Christ." It is a neatly printed, well bound book, of 278 pages, containing a choice collection of 219 hymns.

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

From the tenor of some letters received it seems necessary that I should repeat what has so often been stated in THE RETURN, that 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 as 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 Reorganised 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 6th of April, 1830, 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,] shalt 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 if 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, 1830, 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 1830, the Elders continued preaching and bap-

tizing 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] shall 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. and 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 Kirtland, (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 a 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 wifery," 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 wifery' 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 wifery," and had instituted a certain 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 Patriarch of the church, came to my house in Nauvoo, and taught the doctrine of "spiritual wifery," (which I here 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 foot 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 1843, continued tending to my temporal affairs, and making arrangements to take the mission assigned me. In the mean time the spiritual wife doctrine was pressed so closely that I felt the time was at hand when I must determine whether to accept it or not. I knew I had not so learned Christ, and for about three days it seemed that I must almost 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 spake to me, clear and distinct, and said: "I have not placed you to set in order the 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 I 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: "I can go readily, for I would preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." "Yes" said he, "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 the 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, 1843. 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 as from the Lord, viz. Presidents Marks and Cowles, and counsellor Leonard Soby. At that time and place, and on that occasion, President Austin Cowles resigned his position as one of the Presidents 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 who 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 contention 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 he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

In the 11th 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 if 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 our 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 firm 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 as 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 Garrard, of Little River, Rice Co. Kansas. And thus they come, 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 counted worthy of a part in the first resurrection.

Ever your sister in the new and everlasting covenant,

MRS. CHARLOTTE DOOP.

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,"

which extend for miles round the city to the edge of the desert. The water-seller still walks through the city crying, "Ho, 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-Koder, 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 to-day? Sectarianism is wrong and a great hinderance 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 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, Decatur Co., Iowa.

THE RETURN.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to say; but to DO, the things that are written therein.”—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 3. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, MARCH 1, 1895. Whole No. 27.

WASHINGTON'S VISION

Of the Growth and Perils of the Republic.

Related by him to his aid de camp, Henry Sherman, on the evening of the occurrence, at Valley Forge, in the darkest hour of the revolutionary struggle.

This narration was taken from the lips of Henry Sherman on the 4th of July, 1850, in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.

Washington began by saying:

“I do not know whether it was owing to the anxiety of my mind, or what, but this afternoon, as I was sitting at this very table, engaged in preparing a dispatch, something in the apartment seemed to disturb me. Looking up I beheld, standing exactly opposite me, a singularly beautiful female. So astonished was I—for I had given strict orders not to be disturbed—that it was some moments before I found language to inquire the cause of her presence. A second, third and then a fourth time did I repeat the question, but received no answer from my mysterious visitor other than a slight raising of her eyes. By this time I felt a strange sensation spreading through me. I would have risen, but the riveted gaze of the being before me rendered volition impossible. I essayed once more to ad-

dress her, but my tongue had become paralyzed. A new influence took possession of me. All I could do was to gaze steadily, vacantly, at my unknown visitant. Gradually the surrounding atmosphere seemed as though becoming filled with sensations and grew luminous. Everything about me appeared to rarefy; the mysterious visitor herself became more airy, and yet even more distinct to my sight than before. I began to feel as one dying, or rather to experience the sensation which I have sometimes imagined accompanied dissolution. I did not think, I did not reason, I did not move; all were alike impossible. I was only conscious of gazing fixedly, vacantly, at my companion.

“Presently I heard a voice saying, ‘Son of the Republic, look and learn!’ while at the same time my visitor extended her arm and forefinger outwardly. I now beheld a heavy white vapor at some distance rising fold upon fold. This gradually disappeared and I looked upon a strange scene. Before me lay stretched out in one vast plain all the countries of the world—Europe, Asia, Africa and America. I saw rolling and tossing between Europe and America the billows of the Atlantic, and between Asia and America lay the Pacific. ‘Son of the Republic,’ said the same

mysterious voice as before, 'look and learn!'

"At that moment I beheld a dark, shadowy being like an angel standing, or rather floating, in mid-air between Europe and America. Dipping water out of the ocean in the hollow of each hand, he sprinkled some on America with his right hand, while he cast upon Europe with his left. Immediately a black cloud arose from each of those countries and joined in mid-ocean. For awhile it remained stationary and then moved westward until it enveloped America in its murky folds. Sharp flashes of lightning now gleamed throughout it at intervals, and I heard smothered groans and cries of American people.

"A second time the angel dipped from the ocean and sprinkled it out as before. The dark cloud was then drawn back to the ocean, into whose heaving waves it sank from view. A third time I heard the mysterious voice say, 'Son of the Republic, the end of a century cometh, look and learn!'

"At this the dark shadowy angel turned his face southward, and from Africa I saw an ill-omened spectre approaching our land. It flitted slowly and heavily over every village, town and city of the latter, the inhabitants of which presently set themselves in battle array, one against the other. As I continued looking, I saw a bright angel, on whose brow rested a crown of light on which was traced the word UNION, bearing the American flag, which he placed between the divided nations and said: 'Remember, ye are brethren.'

"Instantly the inhabitants, casting away their weapons, became friends once more and united around the national standard. And again I

heard the mysterious voice saying, 'Son of the Republic, the second part has passed—look and learn!'

"And I beheld the villages, towns and cities of America increasing in size and numbers, till at last they covered the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and their inhabitants became as countless as the stars in heaven, or as the sand on the sea shore. And again I heard the mysterious voice saying, 'Son of a Republic, the end of a century cometh—look and learn!'

"At this the dark, shadowy angel placed a trumpet to his mouth and blew three distinct blasts, and taking water from the ocean, sprinkled it out upon Europe, Asia and Africa.

"Then my eyes looked upon a fearful scene, From each of these countries arose thick, black clouds, which soon joined into one; and throughout this mass gleamed a dark red light, by which I saw hordes of armed men, who moving with the cloud, marched by sea to America, which country was presently enveloped in the volume of the cloud. And I dimly saw these vast armies devastate the whole country and pillage and burn villages, cities and towns that I had beheld springing up. As my ears listened to the thundering of the cannon, clashing of swords and shouts and cries of the millions in mortal combat, I again heard the mysterious voice saying, 'Son of the Republic, look and learn.'

"When the voice had ceased, the dark, shadowy angel placed his trumpet to his mouth, and blew a long, fearful blast.

"Instantly a light as from a thousand suns, shone down as if from above me, and pierced and broke into fragments the dark cloud which enveloped America. At the same moment I saw

the angel upon whose forehead shone the word UNION, and who bore our national flag in one hand and a sword in the other, descend from Heaven, attended by legions of bright spirits. These immediately joined the inhabitants of America, who I perceived, were well nigh overcome, but who, immediately reformed their broken ranks and renewed the battle. Again I heard the mysterious voice saying, 'Son of the Republic look and learn.'

"As the voice ceased, the shadowy angel, for the last time dipped water from the ocean and sprinkled it upon America. Instantly the dark cloud rolled back, together with the armies it had brought, leaving the inhabitants of the land victorious. Then once more I beheld the villages, towns and cities springing up where they had been before, while the bright angel, planting the azure standard he had brought in the midst of them, cried in a loud voice to the inhabitants: 'While the stars remain and the heavens send down dews upon the earth, so long shall the republic last.'

"And taking from his brow the crown on which still blazed the word Union, he placed it upon the standard, while all the people, kneeling down, said Amen.

"The scene instantly began to fade and dissolve, till I at last saw nothing but the rising, curling white smoke that I first beheld. This also disappearing, I began myself gazing upon my mysterious visitor, who, in the same mysterious voice I had heard before, said, 'Son of the Republic, what you have seen is thus interpreted: Three perils will come upon the republic, the most fearful is the second, passing which, the whole world united shall never be able to prevail against her. Let every child of the

republic learn to live for his God, his land and the union'

"With these words the figure vanished. I started from my seat, and felt that I had been shown the birth, progress and destiny of the republic of the United States. In union she will have her strength, in disunion her destruction."

Copy of Will of Elder Geo. Adams.

I, George Adams, of Lamoni, Decatur county and state of Iowa, being of sound mind, do declare the following to be my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills made by me:

1st. I direct that after my decease my body shall be decently interred according to my station in life, and my executors are hereby authorized to pay the expenses of my last illness, and funeral expenses, out of any money that may come into their hands, as soon after my decease as possible.

2d. I hereby give and bequeath all my goods and effects, both real and personal, that I may be possessed of at the time of my decease (after paying my funeral and other expenses recited above), to the Church of Christ, commonly called the Whitmerite church, of which John C. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson and Solomon Thomas are members, to be used for the benefit of the church, as my executors may deem best calculated to spread the gospel and advance the cause of Christ in the earth.

3d. That the real estate of which I may be owner and possessor at the time of my decease may more readily be converted into money, I hereby authorize my executors to sell the same at public or private sale whenever in their judgement it will be best so to do, and give good and sufficient

deeds for the same and execute and deliver the same as I could do if living.

4th. I hereby appoint my brethren, John C. Whitmer of Richmond, Ray county, Mo., Ebenezer Robinson of Davis City, Decatur county, Iowa, and Solomon Thomas of Hillsdale, Mills county, Iowa, as my executors to carry out this, my last will and testament, without bond.

5th. In case either of the above named persons shall decline to act as such executor, the two consenting to serve may appoint a third person to fill the vacancy, who shall be a member of said Church of Christ. If all the above named persons consent to serve and afterward a vacancy occurs, by death or otherwise, then the two who remain shall have power to fill the vacancy according to the foregoing instructions or pattern.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and signed my name to this, my last will and testament, written on one sheet of paper, in the presence of two witnesses, this twenty-second day of September, A. D. 1890.

GEORGE ADAMS.

Witnesses:

EBENEZER J. ROBINSON.

CHLOE A. ROBINSON.

Proof of will certified to by court Jan. 19. 1891, before J. M. Schenck, clerk of the district court in and for Decatur county, Iowa, at the Jan. term of district court, A. D. 1891.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Of the Church of Christ.

WHEREAS, Joseph Smith Jr., Oliver Cowdry, David Whitmer, Martin Harris and others established the Church of Christ in the state of New York in the year A. D. 1829, which church was organized agreeable to the laws of our country on the 6th day of April A. D. 1830 and continued through David Whitmer and others with the authority given them of Jesus Christ to administer in all ordinances in the house of God, of which

church we the undersigned are members.

Now therefore, wishing to become incorporated as a religious body according to the laws of the state of Iowa, we John C. Whitmer of Richmond, Ray county and state of Missouri, Ebenezer Robinson, Frederick Cunningham, Simeon LaPoint, S. L. Losey, Sarah Cunningham, M. A. Robinson and James E. Hockert of the county of Decatur and state of Iowa, do hereby associate ourselves, our associates and successors under the general incorporation laws of Iowa into a body corporate and church, by the name and style or title of "The Church of Christ."

With the following articles:

ARTICLE I. We believe in the Bible and Book of Mormon and accept them in all cases as our standard of faith and practice.

ART. II. The object of this association is for the promulgation of the gospel of Christ and to fulfill the law of the land, believing it to be our duty to be in subjection to the powers that be, and that by so doing we may enjoy all the rights and privileges lawfully granted to religious societies.

ART. III. The business affairs of the church shall be transacted by the trustees, who shall hold their office for one year and until their successors are elected and qualified. Said trustees shall in all cases be members of this church.

ART. IV. John C. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson and Simeon LaPoint shall be the trustees for the ensuing year.

ART. V. The place of business shall be Davis City, Decatur county until changed by the voice of the church.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and signed our names this fourth day of December, A. D. 1890.

JOHN C. WHITMER.

EBENEZER ROBINSON.

SIMEON F. LAPOINT.

FREDERICK CUNNINGTON.

S. C. CUNNINGTON.

M. A. ROBINSON.

S. L. LOSEY.

JAMES E. HOCKERT.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA., MARCH 1, 1895

Salutatory.

To the brethren and friends of the Church of Christ in all the world greeting. It was our lot to be with Bro. Robinson, the founder of the RETURN, and assist him to prepare the last two numbers (January and February 1891) for publication, and shortly after to announce the end of his labors and the suspension of the paper. Many changes have occurred since, bringing about results that could not then be foreseen.

With this issue we begin the work where he laid it down. We shall not attempt to cover the ground he occupied. He had a peculiar work to do, and had been specially fitted for that work. In the early days of the church when iniquity began to be manifested in high places he was especially commanded to observe, and it is certain that special opportunities for observation were his. Our own opinion is that in the future, when the heat of conflicting elements shall have cooled and men shall have leisure to judge more impartially of these times and issues, his testimony will be sought by the clear minded, as the "golden mean" between the extremes of vicious hate, and blind partisan adulation, which has certainly entered largely into warp and woof of the history connected with the names "Joseph Smith" and "Mormon."

His aim was to "nothing extenuate, and naught set down in malice." He was one whom we are proud to name

as friend and brother. He lived in this country about thirty-five years and his character for veracity may be summed up in the remark of one of the best and ablest jurists that ever graced the bench of southern Iowa, (Judge Harvey, who had known him many years.) "There are not men enough in Decatur county, to smirch the character of Ebenezer Robinson."

He felt that his work of reviewing the past was done, and intended to devote all the space of the paper in the future to gospel work.

We take it up right where he dropped it, without reference to any other work or issue.

Our only apology for so doing is that we have felt the burden laid upon us, and the means to do it have been placed in our hands without any seeking on our part.

The future alone can tell if we are right or wrong.

If this work is acceptable to the Almighty, nothing shall prevail against it. If it is founded in error, the sooner that fact is demonstrated, the happier for all concerned.

We have a theory that the Gospel is broad enough to reach all the needs of man, both temporal and spiritual, and that the reason it found such favor with the multitudes when presented by the Master, yet falls so flat upon the ears of the same class of burdened ones today, lies in the fact that he presented both sides to them, while his professed servants today have fallen into the same evil habit as the professors of his day, viz. preaching "salvation to their souls," while combining with the robbers of the earth to bring about "starvation to their stomachs."

We shall aim to present the whole Gospel as we understand it, believing

that a gross departure has been made by the church of latter days, as well as by the rest of the Christian world.

We do not ask the use of a church fund to carry on this work. If it is needed the means will not be wanting, and that fund should be used as it was mainly intended, for the work of the ministry.

But we do ask the hearty co-operation of every brother and sister who professes to have learned the errors which brought the present condemnation upon the church of latter days.

If we receive that, we will risk the issue. We find it best to make the paper a semi-monthly, one-half the size of the former issue. This gives just the same amount of matter in a year, and when our paid subscription list reaches 500 names, we will enlarge the paper.

We Copy From

"OUR LUMB ANIMALS"—for December 1894. The following pertinent query, and reply by the Editor, Geo. T. Angell

"How can we contrive, Mr. Angell, to so educate the masses as to render such ruinous strikes as that at Chicago impossible in the future?"

We answer, in precisely the same ways used by our great political parties—by newspapers—by competent men sent into our cities and towns to address the people—by the wide, free distribution of literature bearing on the subject, and literature calculated to make both rich and poor more considerate of each other and of the rights of every creature that depends upon them.

As we have had "The Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the slave and the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the horse, so I would secure by prize offers the "Uncle

Tom's Cabin" which shall teach every man and woman in the country the proper relations of capital and labor, and the fact that in a country like ours all questions of right and wrong can be legally settled through the ballot box, where the vote of the poorest citizen counts as much as the vote of the millionaire.

I would carry the same humane education into all our schools, and through it insure the protection of property and life, the perpetuity of our free government and the prosperity and happiness of future generations. GEO. T. ANGELL.

Mr. Angell's heart is right, but we would respectfully suggest that it required a greater intelligence than was possessed by the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to place the human family upon this globe, and it will require a broader experience and range of ideas to formulate the principles and make them into laws that shall adjust the differences between the different members of that family and secure exact justice to all, in their social and economic relations.

From the profound nature of the subject we should expect the Great Author of All to furnish His children the basis of those laws, and we are free to say we have no use whatever for a system of religion and a priesthood which can not and does not grapple boldly with every question of importance to men, and furnish from the wealth of its store house a solution to each vexed question as it arises. The fact is that men have for ages willingly turned their eyes away from the pole star of their happiness because it pointed steadily away from the path which leads to the gratification of their greed.

All are to blame, but the priests

more than the people, for to them was committed the instruction of the race, and it is true today as in all ages of the past that where the priest leads the people eventually follow.

The basis of just law was laid down by the great law giver, Moses, at the beginning of our era of the world, and the toiling and oppressed millions of the earth are everywhere groping blindly but surely nearer to the realization of those principles.

There are three great fundamental principles which propound the Sphinx's question to each commonwealth as it arises: The Tenure of Land, the Use of Money and the Method of Taxation. The first was settled by Moses thus. The land of the nation, except that portion set apart for communities, was given in small parcels just sufficient for the needs of each family, until each had an inheritance in the earth. A book of record was kept, and that inheritance was to descend in that family forever, for it was forbidden to make merchandise of God's earth.

This effectually prevents real estate speculation, and the hogging of the earth by a few.

The second, he disposed of by recognizing money as the artificial medium of exchange, created by custom or law, and forbidding its artificial growth by what we now call interest.

To show the wisdom of this and point to the greatest evil of the present time, it is only necessary to remind our readers of the fact that one hundred dollars put at interest at 1 per cent per annum and compounded annually at that rate, would in a few hundred years swallow the entire wealth and earnings of the earth, and the only reason it has not been done long ago is the fact that whenever a

government became so rotten as to allow this accumulation to proceed so far that a few men owned the whole country, while the masses were sunken in besotted ignorance and vice—the result of poverty nutterable—the just law of retribution overtook them, and they died of their own rottenness, an easy prey to every greedy invader who possessed the hardy, vigorous nature born of rude and primitive equality.

Vigorous, patriotic manhood can be nourished only in the soil of freedom and equality.

If there is one lesson which history emphasizes more than another, it is this.

The third question, taxation, was answered by our law giver on simple lines. He believed in an income tax pure and simple—"the tenth of your increase (income) annually." No homesteads sold for taxes or forced into the hands of the mortgage sharks to avoid the tax save in his government. No continued fine upon a man for building a good house, a new wagon, or raising a herd of fine stock. When once his just proportion had been paid to the government for its protection, that property was henceforth exempt so long as he lived, and he could not accumulate a million and shift his taxes upon his poor neighbors as our rich men do under our own combined tax and tariff humbug scheme.

No, Brother Angell, don't offer a premium for some man or woman to write the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the wage slaves of the world. It was written thousands of years ago, but few seem to have read it, and when the taskmasters become magnanimous or the toilers become sufficiently enlightened and a Moses arises to lead

them out of bondage, then will these just principles be enacted into law, and that will bring the millennium.

The recognition of these three principles will confine monopoly to the three lines of trade, manufacture, and commerce. And when the great combines have taught the needed lesson, that the people can and should form the biggest combine of all, knock the other fellows out and pocket the proceeds, and divide them fairly, then the economic riddle will have been solved and the nation will live.

One word more: These questions are now to the front and will not down.

The chained giant's hands are feeling for the pillars! Will he grow new eyes that will enable him to burst his fetters and obtain his freedom? or will he fulfill Macauley's prediction and pull the ruins about his ears?

It is the duty of every lover of his race to weigh these matters well. For our part, while a political party can be found which advocates reform on the line of these principles, we will be found with that party, and when none can be found we'll help start a new one.

We have not learned the items of the death of Elder John C. Whitmer, but we learn from the funeral notice that he was buried from his home near Richmond, Mo., on Wednesday, August 29, 1894. If his relatives will furnish an obituary we will be glad to give space for it in our next issue.

Married, at Davis City, Iowa, Nov. 1, 1894, C. A. Wickes and Martha A. Robinson, widow of Ebenezer Robinson. Elder James McDuffitt of the Josephite church performed the ceremony.

Council Meeting.

There has been no council held since July, 1890. in spite of the fact that we are several hundred strong; that nearly \$5000 was left by Bro. Adams four years ago for the spread of the work; that a good paper had been running over two years, and the outfit was turned over to those having the fund in charge—in spite of all this there has been no council called, and only twelve numbers of a paper were published, and that stopped one and one-half years ago. There is cause for shame in this. Let the elders and members of the church come together at once. We favor April 6th next, as the time, and Davis City as the place. Write your mind on this, not later than the 18th inst. and we will call a council to meet at the time and place favored by the majority. There are serious matters pressing for consideration. Let us have a council at once.

DIED, at Davis City, Iowa, July 23, 1894, Hulda Ann, wife of Daniel T. Hockert. She was born in Preble Co., Ohio, Jan. 29, 1838.

Married at Noble, Ind., June 26, 1861, to the husband who survives her. She leaves one son and two daughters to mourn her loss. She embraced the latter day work forty-four years ago. She had long been an invalid and her patience and resignation were a marvel to her friends.

Her funeral was conducted from the family residence, by the editor.

We have some letters from some of the brethren and sisters in various parts of the country which we will publish in our next issue. We ask you to make this paper your paper by writing to it, that all may have a chance to get acquainted through its columns.

THE RETURN.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein.” —Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 4. DAVIS CITY, IOVA, MARCH 15, 1895 Whole No. 27.

Presidency of the Church of Christ. asked for proofs that the statement made was a fact.

Last autumn the Herald published an account of the death of Elder John C. Whitmer, and made some statements which Bro. Elias Land thought necessary to correct, which he did in a letter which the Herald published No. 21 last, and replied to it at the same time, taking exceptions to some of Bro. Land's statements.

Bro. Land wrote the following article in reply to the position taken by the Herald, and sent it for publication, but it was declined.

He sent it to us in December, and we take the liberty to publish it.

We endorse the position taken by Bro. Land, and shall have more to say on the subject in the near future.

EDITOR HERALD: Permit me, please, through the Herald, to thank you for your kindness in publishing my letter written under the head of "John C. Whitmer Dead," and especially for your reasons for making the statement that "John C. Whitmer was the president of the Church of Christ," etc., etc. In my letter referred to, I did not ask for the impressions of the editor and elders of the re-organized church, or the opinions of some of the members and elders of the Church of Christ, but I

I am glad, however, that no proof has, as yet, been adduced to sustain the statement made. However, I must confess some of your reasons assigned for the impressions made upon your mind that David and John Whitmer were "each in their time and place" presidents of the Church of Christ, are reasonable enough to make the impression upon a willing imagination that such was the case.

I do not wish to defend an error, foster or defend a false opinion. Hence, as "confession is good for the soul," I wish to confess that I know such opinions as a one man leader, or leading elder, president of the church, etc., did prevail in the minds of some few of the elders of the Church of Christ, and as a natural consequence the spirit of aspiration, leadership, pre-eminence, etc., forced itself upon some of the self-supposed pre-eminent leaders; in consequence of which stagnation followed, zeal died down, and the church stood still. I am not in the dark concerning these things, but if any one has ever been placed in the Church of Christ as its visible head or leader I have never been apprised of the fact, and knowing that such opinions, as given by

the editor of the Herald did prevail in the minds of several elders in the church, I wrote for proof to sustain the statement made, etc. I am glad there is no proof to sight yet.

You state in your reply to my letter that 'he (David Whitmer) assumes to write authoritatively for the Church of Christ, using the pronoun we, we believe,' etc. This is true, but does that declaration authorize any one to believe that he was the head and leader of the church in which he claimed to be only an elder? For instance, we often hear a local elder of the reorganized church speak and write, and that authoritatively, too, using the pronoun "we, we believe," etc. Are we to conclude by those words that he is the visible head, leader and president of the reorganized church? Certainly not. Neither are we justified in jumping to the conclusion that David Whitmer was the visible head, leader or president of the church because he used the pronoun "we." In his "Address" he denounces a one man leader in the church as being not of God.

You further say, "We confess Jesus Christ as the head over all the church, on earth and in heaven; but believe that a visible body of Christ, the church, or people of God on earth, the church militant, is not a complete body unless it has a visible head."

I am well aware that many good people believe in a visible head to the church on earth, or a one man leader, and that, too, outside of the reorganized church. For instance, the Catholic church believes in a visible head to the church as strongly as the reorganized church does; but the belief of the Catholic church combined with that of the reorganized and Utah churches does not make that belief a

truth in fact, or according to the mind and will of the Lord.

Again I quote as follows: "We do not know whether Mr Land has been kept in the dark or not; but rather mistrust that somebody has blundered and the information vouchsafed from headquarters to the rank and file of the 'Church of Christ' has not been sufficiently clear to prevent misconception on the part of those to whom the 'Address' was sought to be made applicable."

Good! There is more truth in part of this statement than poetry. "Somebody has blundered!" But who is it? I answer without hesitation or reservation: The self-supposed pre-eminent leaders, those who cultivated the spirit of leadership and aspiration to be first and visible head to the church. This "blunder" happened first in 1830-35, and second in 1888-9. David in his "Address" denounces the spirit of aspiration and pre-eminence as not being the spirit of Christ; and anyone reading the New Testament and the Nephite record knows the statements made are in harmony with Christ's teaching.

Again you say: "Hence, if the 'Church of Christ' which we did suppose Elders David and John C. Whitmer to represent" (mark the expression, E. L.) "respectively, while they lived on earth after such 'Church of Christ' (Whitmerites) was organized, had not and now has not a visible head, and is so properly represented to us by Mr. Elias Land, we are thankful to be so informed, and shall govern ourselves accordingly."

Thank you, Mr. Editor, for this expression. I always appreciate frank and free acknowledgments at all times, but prefer it in the outset, but I will accept it in the last sentence

rather than not at all. In this quotation the editor admits that "Mr. Elias Land's statements are correct and says "he will govern himself accordingly." He does not admit the fact, however, until he writes to Richmond, Mo., and gets a few opinions only, and he questions others upon the subject and then arrays them in replying to my objections to his statement as being correct. But, lo and behold! when, on examination, we see no evidence to sustain the editor's objectionable statements, only opinion, to convince that he had an impression that something had been done. I wish to say that the Church of Christ has never been fully organized in these sad days, as it was "in the days of old," and as it was intended by the Savior as set forth in the 15th ch. B. of Com. And the Church of Christ is laying round in scattered fragments and is not established as it was intended by the Lord.

David Whitmer thought so, for he says: "When it is God's own due time to gather up the scattered fragments of his kingdom which has been laid waste by men, then we suppose that God will place at the head of his disciples," etc., etc. Yes, David believed the church to be in a disorganized state, and in scattered fragments, and it seems that he believed it would remain so until the Lord saw fit in his time to place the twelve disciples in the church, who, it is evident, regulated the affairs of the church and by their wise and prudent conduct with the, sometimes, local officials, and at other times, possibly, the twelve alone, put down false doctrine, disputation, etc. But never at any time did one man, under the New Covenant, set himself up as the visible head and leader to the church until

somewhere about the fourth century, and which re-occurred in 1830, after the Lord had given instructions concerning the twelve disciples. And the same spirit has, evidently, since David Whitmer passed away, been working with some of the elders to bring about a visible head to the church.

Anyone with the New Testament and Book of Mormon in hand, in connection with the early revelations unchanged, as they came through the stone, ought to see that twelve disciples in the church are an indispensable prerequisite to order in the church. And I believe with David Whitmer, that when God sees fit in his own good time that the twelve will be placed at the head of His church; that is, near by, next to the head of the church, which is Christ.

Then the editors may, if they think proper, call them the visible head over the church, and we will enter no objections. But until then we hope the editors will "govern themselves" as they have promised in the last sentence of their reply. "Accordingly."

ELIAS LAND.

Temple, Texas Nov. 26, 1894

Lenial Authority.

Authority for no man to rule in the Church of Christ, I should like to see explained.

Under Christ I cannot find it. In 1829 when Joseph Smith had the Urton and Thummin, Sec. 42, book of Cox, the Lord says to the three witnesses, "You have received the same power, and the same faith, and the same gift like unto him. (Joseph) and if you do the last commandments, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you, and my grace is sufficient for you."

I have been reading in Saint's Herald about the death of John Whitmer Elder in the Church of Christ. I am happy that he was not a High Priest or Pope over all the church on earth. Today I opened my book of Mer-

mon, where it says the Lord speaks the same words to one nation like unto another, and that all nations shall have his word, and to all it will be alike, and he will gather all Israel. But those who fight against his word shall be destroyed—12 chap, 2d Nephi. Then I open Rev. of John, after the former apostacy where they fell and put one man over them in place of twelve apostles contrary to Christ's plan.

The church or woman went off into greater and greater darkness. Then she was pampered and upheld by the then existing government. When it was church and state is God unchangeable, I know he has never contradicted his Son's word.

Christ organized his church in Asia, on this land, and with the ten tribes, all alike. Is it reasonable he would put one man only, at the head of this Gentile Church of Latter days instead of twelve? Christ is alive and has all power on earth and in Heaven.

What has a High Priest to do? The law is fulfilled, the shadow has given way to the substance. We have an immortal High Priest who holds the keys of hell and death. No mortal High Priest can take these keys from him. He has restored the pentecostal gift to more elders than one in this day. Christ has power as High Priest on earth as well as in heaven. He is our mouth piece. In Ephesians, Paul said, God put first apostles, then men with the gift of prophecy. The apostles were prophets, for their prophecies are now fulfilling.

Satan exalted himself in heaven and fell. And he hates prophets, and some are weak, and all are mortal and liable to err. See what Jonah did. Even Moses exalted himself a little.

Others I could cite, but enough. The gates of hell have in a measure prevailed against this church. Many hearts have rebelled in consequence.

My book of Mormon says Christ put twelve men at the head of his church on this land, and elders, priests and teachers. Not one man, nor an inquisition or High Council to punish in some way those who would not bow to their decision. Peter says not to Lord it over God's heritage. I find each one of those disciples to reign with him and Paul called Jesus the High Priest of our profession.

What has caused the gates of hell to prevail in this day? The very same thing, disobedience to God's word given through Urim and Thummin. I am sure that was right. If not, we are in as bad a plight as Spiritual Babylon.

We have to become more humble to Christ, and not assume his keys as a High Priest over his bride the church for he is High Priest himself.

He never cast off his three witnesses for Ether says, "In the mouth of three witnesses the truth of these things shall be established and judge the world."

We don't want to help make a "mark of the beast" surely. The first beast has a head on earth purporting to be a mouth piece to the whole Roman Church.

The woman clothed with the sun had twelve beautiful stars for her crown, and they received their light from the sun's superior light.

From the sun of righteousness of whom the sun in the heavens is a symbol. Surely the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one, and teach the same doctrine to all who obey his message.

Oh, that we may all be one, make Christ our head and follow him.

He was meek and organized his church aright. Can any man change his organization and put, not only one man but two or three High Priests as mouth piece to the whole church, and be accounted innocent?

Return, dear brethren to the "old paths." Let us be united in Christ.

A SISTER.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA, MARCH 15, 1895

"The letter killeth but the spirit maketh alive." We may as well forestall criticism, by referring, ourself, to the verbal inaccuracy of the quotation we have set at the head of this paper. We have not quoted the exact words as found in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, but we have fully expressed their spirit in shorter form.

To those who would cavil at a word we would say, it matters not what it is, so you have an excuse—you will find one somewhere—to your sorrow ultimately if you reject the truth.

It is time an ensign was lifted to the people of Latter Day Israel. They have made to themselves prophets, and have said like Israel of old, These shall prophesy unto us and another we will not hear.

Did you ever read of such a case in either Bible, or Book of Mormon? Of course you have in both, and when some unknown servant of God appeared before them with a message, warning them of the impending doom, how ready they were to cast stones, literal as well as metaphorical, at one who dared assail their "lineal rights" and vested authority to dispense (with) the word of the Lord. We stated in our first number that we had a theory that only a part of the gospel has been preached, these many years. The so-called orthodox world will not understand this at all, but all latter day Israel should be able to endorse that idea, measurably at least.

Moses laid down the basic princi-

ples of fundamental law on the great points of interest, Laud, Exchange, and Revenue.

It is true he also gave a law of carnal commandments, and ceremonies of types and shadows, which would necessarily cease when fulfilled, but these are separate from fundamental principles of social and political economy, which are as enduring in their nature, as the earth itself, and can no more be safely abrogated than the law, "thou shalt not kill," which can only be "done away" by a "higher law" by causing the subject to lose all desire to kill, thereby rendering involuntary and complete obedience to the first and grosser law.

So with a state or society which claims to be perfect, or to present a perfect theory of government, we can only test it by "that which is written," and the past experience of the world. By both these tests we are willing to defend the "law giver" against any and all comers, and we find ourself in good company, for Jesus took the same grounds with erring, turbulent, ruined Judah in his day, and enforced the lesson that they had only themselves to thank for their plight, because they had forsaken the law.

When the message of peace and restoration came in latter days, the same fundamental principles were set before the minds of the leaders, and they straightway began to organize a commonwealth to be built upon lines exactly similar to the Israelitish plan.

They could not then fore-see that this vast continent would so soon be occupied from sea to sea, and homeless men begin the tramp in search of a resting place, which with so many millions ends only in the grave, because every unused spot capable of

sustaining life, is 'owned' by some idle speculator who is growing rich off other men's toil which makes his holding more valuable because it is in greater demand, as more men need it to use.

But the Great Father knew just what was coming, and he told his people how to prepare themselves, that they might not only save themselves, but be a light to the world in the time of trouble and distress that is now at our doors.

Mark the exact similarity of the plans, showing that God is the same forever.

In Moses's community the land was divided, to each family a sufficient portion for the sustenance of that family. A book of genealogy was kept, and that inheritance was to stay in that family forever.

Just so in latter days, the land was to be purchased by the general fund placed in the hand of the Bishop.

Each family was to receive an inheritance. A book of record was to be kept and that inheritance was to descend in that family forever. The same laws relating to usury or interest were to be observed and the same method of raising revenue, one-tenth of your annual income.

But how soon selfishness spoiled it all. The people of the church began flocking to Jackson county, Missouri, and instead of following the pattern, many began buying and selling land, a thing forbidden, and taking individual titles which they could dispose of at will, thus dispossessing their children from inheritance in the land.

The anger of heaven was kindled against them and they were first warned, and then driven from the land, and told that unless they would abide a righteous law, God would not

suffer them to pollute the land which he had set apart for an inheritance for his people. Again in 1834, B. of C. Sec. 102 Par. 2, "they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I require at their hands. * * And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial Kingdom; and Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial Kingdom, otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself; and my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be by the things they suffer."

Again in 1838, he says: " * * If my people observe not this law (with- ing) to keep it holy and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me. * * * Verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you; and this shall be an example unto all the stakes of Zion." How is latter-day Israel teaching these things.

Oh, they teach things; say out how. Is the "Order of Enoch" founded in righteousness either at Lamoni or Salt Lake, by all laying their property in the Bishops hand to purchase the land, that each, rich and poor may receive an inheritance from the church, that cannot be sold from his children forever.

Oh no, that is not according to "business principle."

Fellows who talk about such things as that, are "cranks," "anarchists," and "socialists."

We want to note one fact right here and that is, that the scriptures condemn what the world calls "business principles" i. e. living for gain, from Genesis to Revelations, and we have seen that, right or wrong, Joseph Smith declared in the name of the Lord, that the church should not p-

ness the land until it would abide the ancient law. We believe it fully, because it is selfevidently right, and agrees with that which "is writ en."

That is the touch stone to apply to the productions of men and spirits, the fundamental laws that are written.

The Prophetic Faculty and Dreams

B. O. Flower, the editor of the Arena, writes in the March number of that magazine a paper that is likely to provoke considerable discussion on "The Prophetic Faculty as Revealed in Dreams." It is a curious and interesting examination, full of data, some of which has been accumulated from authentic sources, some of which is vouched for as coming within personal knowledge and experience. The sincerity of the writer will cause many interested in the scientific investigation of well established psychic phenomena to read the paper carefully.

Ingersoll on Alcohol.

Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll was once in a case which involved the manufacture of intoxicating liquors, and in his speech he used the following language, which has been published, but its value and worth entitles it to re-production in these columns:

"I am aware there is a prejudice against any man engaged in the manufacture of alcohol. I believe from the time it issues from the colled and poisonous worm in the distillery until it empties into the hell of death, dishonor and crime, that it is demoralizing to everybody that touches it, from the source to where it ends. I do not believe that anybody can contemplate the subject without being prejudiced against the crime. All we

have to do is to think of the wrecks on either side of the scream of death, of the suicides, of the insanity, of the poverty, of the destruction, of the little children sucking at the breast of weeping and despairing wives asking for bread, of men of genius it has wrecked, the men struggling with imaginary serpent produced by this devilish thing; and when you think of the jails, of the almshouses, of the asylums, of the prisons and of the scaffolds on either hand, I do not wonder that every thoughtful man is prejudiced against this vile stuff called alcohol. Intemperance cuts down youth in its vigor, manhood in its strength, and age in its weakness.

"It breaks the father's heart, bereaves the dozing mother, extinguishes natural affection, erases conjugal love, blots out filial attachments, and blights parental hope, and brings premature age in sorrow to the grave. It produces weakness, not strength; sickness, not health; death, not life. It makes wives widows, children orphans, fathers fiends, and all paupers. It feeds rheumatism, nurses gout, welcomes epidemics, invites cholera, imports pestilence and embraces consumption. It covers the land with misery, idleness and crime. It engenders controversies, fosters quarrels, and cherishes riots. It crowds your penitentiaries and furnishes victims for the scaffold. It is the blood of the gambler, the element of the burglar, the prop of the highwayman and the support of the midnight incendiary. It countenances the liar, respects the thief, esteems the blasphemer. It violates obligations, reverences fraud, honors infamy. It defames benevolence, hates love, scorns virtue and innocence. It incites the father to butcher his helpless offspring

THE RETURN.

and the child to grind the parricidal axe. It burns up men, consumes women, dates its life, curses God and despises heaven. It suborns witnesses nurses perjury, defiles the jury-box and bribes and stains the judicial ermine. It bribes voters, dis-qualifies votes, corrupts elections, pollutes our institutions and endangers our government. It degrades the citizen debases the legislator dishonors the statesman and disarms the patriot. It brings shame, not honor; terror, not safety; despair, not hope; misery, not happiness; and with the malevolence of a fiend, calmly surveys its frightful desolation, and unsatisfied with havoc it poisons felicity, kills peace, ruins morals, wipes out national honor, then curses the world and laughs at its ruin. It does that and more—it murders the soul. It is the sum of all villainies, the father of all crimes, the mother of all abominations, the devil's best friend, and man's worst enemy,—Ex.

Sample Copies.

We send the issues of March 1, 15, and April 1, as sample copies.

We think that will be sufficient for all to judge whether they do or do not want the paper. Let us hear from you before April 15, in some way if you want the paper, whether you can pay for it now or not, for if we hear nothing from you by that time, we shall take it for granted you do not want it and stop sending it to you.

If any are too poor to take it, write and let us know, and we will try to make some arrangement for such.

You have been a long time without a paper. We hope now that you have one, you will help to keep it alive and make it a good one, by promptly subscribing and getting your neighbors to subscribe and then write us.

Send in articles on such ideas as occur to you. We of course must judge what should go in, but we shall give wide latitude, and write us how you feel and how the work is prospering in your locality. Get acquainted.

Back numbers of **THE RETURN**, published by E. Robinson, on sale at this office at \$1.10 per set of 26 numbers complete, post paid.

Recent letters from Bro. Elias Land of Temple, Texas, J. J. Snyder of Salt Lake City, J. C. Cox of Westport, Cal., and S. B. West of Pomona, Cal., report these brethren still strong in the truth as we understand it.

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- Tract of 14 acres bottom land, in corporation. . . . 500
- Office building, 32x36, hall upstairs, occupied by printing office; value. . . . 1000
- Printing Office complete. . . 1000

Call on or address this Office

THE RETURN.

"Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein."—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 5. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, APRIL 1, 1895. Whole No. 29.

THE NINETY AND NINE.

There are ninety and nine that live and die
In want and hunger and cold,
That one may revel in luxury
And be wrapped in its silken fold;
The ninety and nine in their hovels bare,
The one in a palace with riches rare.

They toil in the fields, the ninety and nine,
For the fruits of our mother earth;
They dig and delve in the dusky mine,
And bring its hid treasures forth;
But the wealth released by their sturdy blows
To the hands of the one forever flows.

By the sweat of their brows the desert blooms,
And the forest before them falls;
Their labor has builded humble homes,
And cities with lofty halls;
But the one owns city, and homes, and lands,
And the ninety and nine have empty hands.

But the night, so dreary and dark and long,
At last shall the morning bring,
And over the land the victor's song
Of the ninety and nine shall ring,
And echo afar from zone to zone,
"Rejoice! for labor shall have its own."
—Farmers' Tribune.

Modern Jerusalem

Editor Charles A. Dana, of the New York Sun, has been to Jerusalem and reports his impressions in an interesting contribution to McClure's Magazine. Mr. Dana landed at Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, where Peter prayed from the housetop, and took the new railroad to Jerusalem. The road was built by the French, but uses American locomotives. It is fifty miles by rail. The train requires three and one-half hours for the trip and the fare is two dollars. There is one round trip daily, the train leaving Jerusalem at 9 a. m., and on returning starts from Jaffa at 2 p. m. The traveling is therefore much more convenient in Mr. Dana's time than in

the time of Peter and Jahn, who called the trip a two days' journey.

The Oriental Jews have a notion that the coming of the railroad is to precede the coming of the Messiah. The idea is based on the last chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, where the return of the Hebrew exiles is thus predicted: "They shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord."

The word "kirkaroth," which is translated "swift beasts," literally means, it is claimed by Dr. Mendes, "a swaying furnace." This is the only instance of its use in the entire Bible. The word is not used for dromedary, camel or asses, or any other known species of animals. The early translators knew of no other meaning and therefore supplied "swift beasts." As Mr. Dana mentions, the phrase fits the locomotive exactly. The swaying furnace is a better term for the locomotive than the present term. The prophet could not have used a more appropriate name had he seen the swaying locomotive with its flaming furnace in full blast swinging on its way down the desert, over the hills and chasms, from Jerusalem to Joppa. The swaying furnace has not yet brought them

a Messiah, but is bringing them the fruits of western civilization, whose message is almost Messianic.

Traversing the plains of Sharon and Jerusalem, from which Abraham was driven by bad crops, the traveler reaches the railway terminal one mile from Jerusalem's gate.—Saints Herald.

A WISE INDIAN.

He Realizes the Wretched Results of Our Present System of Land Tenure.

In his message delivered before the Cherokee council, in 1892, Chief Harris had the following to say in regard to allotment and intruder questions:

"To the Indian the holding of land in severalty is a new system, but it is urged upon him as the one necessary step to his highest individual prosperity and his civilization as a race. This is the system of the people of the United States, where it has been practiced for more than a hundred years. Under this system their people have entered as homesteads or at a nominal price hundreds of millions of acres of public land, and one might expect among so thrifty and enterprising a people an earthly paradise, where every man, at least every farmer, enjoyed himself under his own "vine and fig tree." Do we find it so? Far from it. More than half of the people of the United States engaged in agricultural pursuits are landless, and their constant cry is for more land for the homeless. The source of the supply to meet the growing demand, the extinguishment of the Indians' title, is now exhausted, and the people of the United States are now entering the threshold of a period when the aggregation of the lands in the hands of the rich through

mortgages will be greatly accelerated and the countless number of the homeless be enormously increased.

In the light of recent statistics this system has proved a failure so far as providing homes for the majority of the people of the United States is concerned, and its wisdom is being seriously questioned by some of the best thinkers of the times. The people of the United States have no year of jubilee (see Leviticus, chapter 25—Ed.) to look forward to, when there will be a redistribution of the lands; but when the lands shall be accumulated in the hands of the rich, when the rentals shall be increased until the laborer can eke out only a miserable existence, and when the burden can be borne no longer, the system will be wiped out in revolution.

"The Cherokee system breeds no millionaires, no land syndicates, no mortgage sharks. Land is not degraded to the level of speculation. Every citizen, however poor or humble, with a little energy and by a little physical labor, can have a home of his own to shelter wife and children. He is not ever looking for a place to rest and exist. It is to be deplored that some of our people, deluded by their fear of a change in our government, or actuated by their greed, wish to change their land tenure and adopt that of lands in severalty. This experiment is now on trial among the Indians to the west of us, in the new territory of Oklahoma, where an Indian is sandwiched on a quarter section between two white men, and he is to be civilized into a brother and citizen by contact. The result is easily foreseen; his white neighbors will eventually own his lands, and his children will be outcasts, in the country their

fathers once owned. Prudence dictates that we await the trial of this experiment and profit by their experience.

"To my mind, the wisest provisions made by our fathers for their posterity was the dedication of the use only of the lands and the interest on the invested funds to each succeeding generation. They were not set apart for our benefit only, but have been given to us, in trust, to use and enjoy and to transmit unimpaired to those who may come after us. The ownership of our lands in common is the foundation upon which our national existence rests; destroy this common ownership and the bond that holds us together as a nation is destroyed. The fee simple title in the nation, based upon an act of congress, as it is, has proven the bulwark of the national citadel and has successfully withstood the assaults of our enemies within and without. It rests upon the same basis, as does the private lands of citizens everywhere in the United States and cannot be destroyed by legislation in congress without doing violence to vested rights and unsettling the tenure by which private lands everywhere in the states are held."

Are Women Fitted to Govern?

Most men who have associated much with girls and women remember how many needed lessons they have learned from them in refinement and benevolence, and how they have had, on the other hand, to steel their minds against their aimlessness and pettiness. And from youth to later years they have observed one peculiarity for which no remedy has been yet found, and that is, a pronounced frailty of the rational faculty in

thought or action. This characteristic is offset by a strength and elevation of the emotional nature, which shines with inextinguishable luster in the wife and mother. It is to this that man renders the homage of respect, admiration and such devotion as he is capable of. But are these the qualities of our governors? Men who display personal bias in ever so small a degree, unless accompanied by unusual merits of another kind, are not selected by their fellows for positions of responsibility and trust. Strong understanding, vigorous judgement and the absence of fear, favor and affection are what men desire in their governors; for only through minds of that character can justice be obtained. On account of their stronger sympathies girls often think themselves the moral superiors of boys, who are often singularly devoid of benevolence especially toward the lower animals. Some women imagine, for this reason, that their entire sex is morally the superior of the male. But a good many learn to correct this opinion. In departments of morals which depend on the emotional nature, women are the superior; for those which depend on the rational nature man is the superior. When the balance is struck I can see no inferiority in either. But the quality of justice remains with the male. It is on this that men and woman most alike depend, and hence it is that woman so often prefer to be judged by men rather than by their own sex.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

Back numbers of *THE RETURN*, published by E. Robinson, on sale at this office at \$1.10 per set of 26 numbers complete post paid.

THE RETURN costs but \$1 per year.

The Twelve.

Some hold the opinion that the "Twelve" should settle all things. But in the first place there is no "Twelve," on earth and can not be until they are appointed by the proper authority. And secondly, we understand their mission is to teach the Gospel, and "set in order" the church by founding, or organizing it in every locality. Not by running around as a court of Elders to try cases, nor yet as a fountain head of law to the church. That would give them more autocratic powers than are assumed by the heads of the Utah, or Lamoni churches, or the Pope of Rome. We see no choice between one Autocrat and twelve, except that the one would be likely to work more in harmony than twelve, and therefore would be preferable, but we have renounced both. The laws for the church are contained in the Bible and Book of Mormon, the one agreeing perfectly with the other. As the people interpret the law, so will they live, and must abide the consequences. Destroy their agency and you destroy their responsibility and make them mere machines in the hands of their masters and the wrath of God is pronounced against such, for "making flesh their arm."

Hence the only logical refuge is in just what the scriptures teach, viz. an absolutely democratic form of church government, in which each has a voice and each is held responsible.

This causes all things to be done literally by "common consent" and any other method must of necessity in some measure abridge or coerce the consent of the governed. True the world is always led by its master minds, but all true leaders govern by

teaching, thereby gaining the consent of the governed and this is the function of the "Twelve" in the church when such shall be appointed by Christ. And then such can be prominent only until the time of "Regeneration," for then the promise is unto the first twelve, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," and all other "twelves" must be subject unto them.

The organization for temporal affairs is another thing and may take different forms and be known by different names and in their place are right, provided always that they are for the purpose of carrying out the fundamental laws that are written and are not used as an engine of oppression, after the pattern of Babylon's business methods. We are in favor of letting the "Twelve" entirely alone, until they are appointed by the only competent authority—Christ.

Let the church establish itself on plain, simple lines, as a righteous temporal community, and carry the gospel to all who desire to hear, and we will venture the assertion, that Christ will attend to his business in his own due time.

Take Notice.

All who intend coming to the Council on April 6, are requested to notify us by letter so we will receive it not later than April 3.

This is so we may make arrangements for the comfort of all who are coming.

Please do not overlook this. We hope to have a good representation and a good time, and we will if all come with that idea in mind.

Send one dollar for **THE RETURN** and keep posted for the next year.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA., APRIL 1, 1895

Council Meeting.

As announced in the RETURN of March 1st, we publish the call for a council as the majority have expressed themselves. Some have written without expressing any preference. But one (Bro. A. B. Doop) has suggested another place than Davis City, and all are in favor of April 6th as the time. So let it be, on April 6th, and at Davis City. Let every one who can, both elders and members, come. We need to get together and get acquainted. There are matters that should be discussed, and settled by common consent. There should be ways and means devised for the spread of the work. We need to come to a better understanding among ourselves as to our aims and the means to be employed to accomplish them.

Doubtless it will be a sacrifice to many to come, but what can be done except we get together and act in concert? Every great good is the result of sacrifice. Shall we shirk our share and thereby forfeit our reward? If we believe what we teach, we have a very strong incentive to active work. We have sat down very quietly for several years. Is it not time for action?

Come with but one thought and aim—how to do and receive the most possible good. Let us prepare the heart before hand, by secret, earnest prayer, that the Father will rule His work for the best.

If we put ourselves in harmony with

His mind and will, nothing shall prevail against us; but, if we do not build aright, our work will not endure.

The Father will have a tried, true, and humble people, or none at all among the gentiles, from whom we are sprung.

Numbers, wealth, learning, power, are as nothing to Him, for all are His and He has often chosen the weak to confound the mighty, and will again.

The sign of the destruction of this nation has been given. If you believe the Book of Mormon, it is time to begin to prepare for that which is surely coming. Come then and let us counsel together, and if any have a grievance, real or fancied, here is the place to have it settled, if it can not be settled in your local church.

We recommend to your careful reading the extract from Chief Harris's speech to the Cherokee council, which we print in this number.

The "remnants" are being prepared for their inheritance.

They are the most just people on earth today, in that they most fully abide the righteous laws of the Almighty relative to land, given to this age of the world by inspiration through His servant Moses. You will notice that Chief Harris refers to the white man's Bible for the very terms that condemn their greed.

When will the church awake?

It is not our intention to provoke discussion of the question of "Woman's Rights," but nevertheless it is a question to be settled, so far as the church is concerned, in the Council. The article we publish under the heading, "Are Women Fitted to Govern." ex-

presses in part, our views in a general way and at some future time we shall express them more fully.

We believe that woman should have a full vote in the local church, and if so we see no reason why she should not have an equal vote in the general Council.

We believe however that a system of representation should be decided upon, that order may obtain and justice may be done to all parts of the general church, without special advantage to any.

Correspondence.

ARMBRUST, Pa., March 16, 1895.

BRO. WICKES, Davis City, Iowa.

The RETURN has again made its appearance and we hope it has returned with God's blessings to stay, to publish the gospel in its purity to the sons of men, and may the time be not far distant that all honest souls who love truth and righteousness shall be united in one common family. As I was a subscriber to the RETURN when Bro. Robinson published it, I would just say I desire to continue the same, and may God's blessings rest on you in its publication. You may continue my subscription and count on me for one, and I will try and get you more subscribers in the near future.

Yours in the love of Christ.

J. L. ARMBRUST.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Ia., }
March 16, 1895. }

DEAR BRO. WICKES: I have received the RETURN and I can tell you it is a welcome visitor. I am sorry it was suspended and hope it will now be a constant visitor at its appointed time. I think with you that there is business that should be attended to. I therefore favor the call-

ing of a council on the 6th day of April next, and Davis City as the place as you propose.

There has been no council since August, 1891. At that council Bro. John C. Whitmer, myself and Bro. Fred Cunningham were appointed trustees. * * * I think we need to have a council.

Your brother in Christ,

JOHN CLARK.

CHERRYVALE, Kan., }
March 15, 1895. }

C. A. Wickes, Davis City, Iowa:

DEAR BROTHER—Seeing in the RETURN that it was desired to call a council meeting I thought to write a few words. For my part I think a council meeting would be of great benefit, and as I live near Cherryvale, Kansas, and it would be so far to go to Davis City, Iowa, I do not know as I could have the means to go so far. The time suits. I favor a place nearer—Richmond, Missouri.

Your brother in Christ,

ANDREW B. LOOP.

HORNICK, Woodbury Co., Ia., }
March 18, 1895. }

Elder C. A. Wickes:

DEAR BROTHER—I am in receipt of the RETURN just published. Will say I am truly glad to learn that we have a paper started again. I like the spirit of the contents very well and will say may God bless you in your effort to publish the same, for if there ever was a time that called for immediate reformation in both church and state it is now, and it is surely our duty which we owe to ourselves, our fellow beings, our country and our God to do all within our power to make the world better for having lived it. Man's inhumanity to man

is indeed causing great misery, destitution and vice of all kinds, and bringing upon the world swift destruction, indeed we must be living in the prophetic age when perilous times should come.

Dear brother, I with you believe the church should hold a council meeting as soon as possible; am myself in favor of the 6th day of April next being appointed and Davis City being the place. But the question arises, will the elders turn out and make a success of it? I will try to come if I can possibly get away. Let me know what conclusion you come to.

You may count me as a subscriber to the RETURN.

Yours in Christ,

ELDER W. S. ROBERTS

RICHMOND, Mo., March 20, 1895.

BRO. WICKES; In regard to the calling of a council, it meets with my cordial approbation. First the necessity of oneness in Christ. We seem to be divided on some matters pertaining to the organization of the church, in regard to having twelve disciples or elders to rule or judge the church. Without advising, or advancing any of my views at this time, I shall only add, let us have a council by all means.

Your brother in Christ,

FRANCES MILLER.

Letters from Bro. J. J. Snyder and others on business report these brethren well.

Elder Davad 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.

COMMUNICATIONS.

When sending articles for publication, please write on one side of the paper only.

Articles may be printed over a fictitious signature, but the name of the writer must in all cases be signed to the manuscript for reference.

Each individual writing under this head, is alone responsible for the ideas expressed, and must not be construed as speaking authoritatively for the church.

All will be accorded a fair space if their ideas are couched in courteous terms.

Notice.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, Elias Land and members with me at Temple, Bell county, Texas, since reading what is called, "Articles of Incorporation of the Church of Christ" in the RETURN published by C. A. Wickes at Davis City Iowa, and styled as Vol. 3, No. 3, and dated March 1, 1895, do hereby declare ourselves in demur and protesting against said "Articles of Incorporation."

Articles of protest, if permitted by the editor, will appear in the RETURN from time to time.

Respectfully

ELIAS LAND,

Elder in the Church of Christ.
Temple Texas, March 16, 1895.

The above notice came with a kindly letter from Bro. Land and we publish as requested. Certainly Bro. Land; how can we arrive at a "unity of the faith" except we have a means of freely discussing points of difference, always remembering to do it in kindly feeling and courteous terms. That is what this paper is for. Exchange ideas, get acquainted. We'll risk discussion if the golden rule is kept in sight. Our motto is, "No gag law."

Sample Copies.

We send the issues of March 1, 15 and April 1, as sample copies.

We think that will be sufficient for all to judge whether they do or do not want the paper. Let us hear from you before April 15, in some way if you want the paper, whether you can pay for it now or not, for if we hear nothing from you by that time, we shall take it for granted you do not want it and stop sending it to you.

If any are to poor to take it, write and let us know, and we will try to make some arrangement for such.

You have been a long time without a paper. We hope now that you have one, you will help to keep it alive and make it a good one, by promptly subscribing and getting your neighbors to subscribe and then write to us.

Send in articles on such ideas as occur to you. We of course must judge what should go in, but we shall give wide latitude. Write us how you feel and how the work is prospering in your locality. Get acquainted.

For the information of those coming to the Council we will state that there is but one railroad at Davis City, the Chariton & St. Joe branch of the C. B. & Q.

The train from the north reaches Davis City about 12 o'clock noon, and from the south at 3 p. m. An escort will be at the trains on the 5th, 6th and 7th of April, and may be known by a red ribbon on the left lappel of his coat. If any should be missed they should inquire for the printing office of the editor, about four blocks from the station.

Subscribe for THE RETURN, and subscribe now. We have no fortune to draw upon, and it costs money to run a printing office. We give our time and risk the expense. Cannot you give the small portion of your

time represented by a dollar, when you get twenty-four papers in return?

We are interested in the spread of the truth as we understand it. If you are, also, show it by doing something for it. There is no probability that the subscription will equal the actual cost of the paper, so don't be afraid of doing too much. Don't be willing to let one carry all the burden. Do your part and do it promptly.

For Sale



The following property in Davis City.

Liberal discount for cash, or will sell for part cash, and reasonable time on balance, without interest.



- 10 tenement houses and lots for each, inside property, occupied all the time, rental \$42 per mo; value. \$4500
- Residence— Large double house, three blocks from postoffice; one of the finest schools in southern Iowa two blocks the other way; located on hill, fine view of whole valley; well, cistern, outhouses; value. 1300
- Three finest residence lots in town, across street from residence. 300
- Tract of four acres right in edge of town, fine residence lots, value. 200
- Tract of 14 acres bottom land, in corporation. . . . 500
- Office building, 32x36, hall upstairs, occupied by printing office; value. . . . 1000
- Printing Office complete. . . 1000

Call on or address this Office

THE RETURN.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein.”—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 6. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, APRIL 15, 1895. Whole No. 30.

Minutes of Council.

DAVIS CITY, Ia., April 6, 1895.

The Council of the Elders and Members of the Church of Christ at large, convened pursuant to call published in the RETURN of April 1, 1895.

Elder John Clark of Council Bluffs was chosen president of the Council, and C. A. Wickes secretary, after which prayer was offered by Bro. Page.

Minutes of the Council of July 24, 1890. were read and approved, and Bro. Clark reported the Council called at Hastings, Iowa, August 15, 1891, a failure, as not enough were present to effect an organization; but, informally, Bros. Whitmer, Clark and Cunningham were named as a committee to call the next council.

REPORT OF ELDERS.

Bro. Clark reported labors at Hillsdale, Ia., and other places, and four baptisms, and the ordination of Priest W. S. Roberts to the office of Elder. Had generally good meetings and enjoyed the work. He and Bro. Kisby of Glenwood ordained Bro. Ed Thomas of Hillsdale an Elder, and Bro. Ammon Thomas a Priest.

Bro. Page of Richmond reported labor in various places in Kansas and Missouri. Had found generally a good condition among the churches, and a desire among the members to

see the work move on. Had baptized three persons recently.

Bro. Frank La Point of Davis City, Iowa, reported preaching a few times in Wisconsin, and a desire to do more work in the future.

C. A. Wickes reported little recent work done in the line of preaching.

Council adjourned to meet Monday at 9 a. m.

Services were held in the L. D. S. chapel on Saturday evening, Bro. Clark preaching.

Sunday morning C. A. Wickes preached, and Bro. Page on Sunday evening.

MONDAY MORNING.

Council convened and was opened with prayer by Bro. Clark.

Minutes of Saturday's meeting read and approved.

Letters read from Bro. J. J. Snyder, Salt Lake City; S. B. West, Santa Ana, Cal.; J. C. Cox, Westport, Cal.; W. C. Kinyon, Forsyth, Mo.; P. T. Given and J. T. Clark, Independence, Mo.; James Compton, Attica, Wis.; T. J. Pollard, Provo, Utah.

Adjourned until 1 o'clock p. m.

Meeting convened at 2 p. m. and letters from Bro. Land were read.

The Articles of Incorporation of Church of Christ were taken up and

discussed, and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, On the 4th day of December, 1890, Brethren J. W. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson, Simeon LaPoint, Frederick Cunningham and Jas. E. Hockert, and Sisters M. A. Robinson and L. L. Losey, all of whom except Bro. Whitmer were members of the Church of Christ at Davis City, Iowa, did on said date, without previous notice or consultation, to or with the Church of Christ at large, (though, as we know, with the best possible intentions), formulate articles and incorporate the Church of Christ as a general body, with headquarters, or place of business, at Davis City, Iowa, and name John C. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson and Simeon LaPoint as Trustees of said Church under the laws of Iowa; and

WHEREAS, Bro. Elias Land and others object to these articles of incorporation; now, therefore,

Be it Resolved, That we, feeling that we are so few in number at this time, should not presume to act upon so important a question, do refer this question to the next General Council, for their especial consideration.

S. F. LA POINT.

P. A. PAGE.

The general condition of the church was discussed at length.

Bro. Page as Church Recorder stated that the Elders and Church Secretaries had not reported to him as recommended by the Council of 1890, hence he could not give much information relating to members. It was unanimously agreed that we urge upon the churches everywhere the necessity for complying with the resolution of the Council of 1890, which urged the churches everywhere to organize themselves on the pattern, and report to and act in concert with, the General Council.

Adjourned to meet at 8 o'clock Tuesday morning.

Preaching in the evening at L. D. S. chapel by C. A. Wickes.

TUESDAY MORNING.

Council met as per appointment and was opened with prayer by Bro. LaPoint.

Minutes of yesterday's meeting were read and approved.

Moved that we request the trustees of the Adams Estate fund to report their doings under their trust to the next General Council. Carried unanimously.

Moved and seconded that the next council be called to meet at Davis City, Iowa, September 14, 1895, at 10 o'clock a. m. Other places were suggested, but it was finally carried unanimously.

Moved by Brn. Page and LaPoint that the editor of the RETURN be requested to publish the minutes of this Council. Carried unanimously.

C. A. Wickes stated that he was informed that Bro. Fred Cunningham had gone to other places and circulated lying slanders about him of cruelty and unmanly treatment of his former wife, and the case was referred to the next Council for action, and Bro. Cunningham is hereby cited to appear and answer to the charge, and Brn. John Clark and H. C. Hoyt are cited as witnesses against him.

Minutes were read.

Moved that the minutes as read be approved. Carried.

JOHN CLARK,

President of Council.

C. A. WICKES, Secretary.

The Coming Nation published at Tennessee City, Tenn., is on our table. If you want to get an idea of what christianity would produce if applied to business and politics, send 50cts and get it for one year. It is not a religious paper but there is more practical christianity in it, than in most religious papers we have seen,

ARTICLES OF PROTEST.

BY ELIAS LAND, TEMPLE, TEXAS.

NO. I.

In the RETURN for April 1, 1895, appears a notice of demurring from, and protesting against the "ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST" as published in the RETURN for March 1, 1895 and we should have said also against the ACTION of a few to formulate articles and incorporate the church, without the sanction and approval of the church in general council. Eight members all told, dared to formulate articles and incorporate the Church of Christ under the laws of the land without the sanction, approval or authority of the church in council. We protest against such an action, because; first: To incorporate under the laws of the land, is no less than to organize according to the laws of the land:

Second: To organize according to the laws of the land is no less than to "conform to this world," which is positively forbidden by Paul in Rom. 12: 2, as follows: "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

The Church of Christ conformed to this world on the 6th of April 1830, when it organized according to the laws of the land. To prove this I only need to call the attention of the faithful to the testimony of David Whitmer in his address, page 33, as follows: "The reason we met on that day (April 6, 1830) was this; the world had been telling us that we were not a regularly organized church and had no right to officiate in the ordinance of marriage, hold church

property etc, and that we should organize according to the laws of the land."

From this testimony we learn that "the world" had been telling and advising them what to do and David says: "On this account we met at my fathers house in Fayette, N. Y. April 6, 1830, to attend to this matter of organizing according to the laws of the land, etc. Now it is plain to be seen that the church did on the 6th day of April 1830 conform to this world, when it followed and conformed to the advice of "the world" to organize according to the laws of the land, which conformity is clearly forbidden by the sacred word of inspiration which we claim to believe and obey. The act of a few members of the Church of Christ in 1830 to organize according to the laws of the land is no less than conforming to this world, just as the church did in 1830. We believe the church should conform to the laws of Christ in its organization and not the laws of the land.

But what were the objects of organizing according to the laws of the land?

Doubtless it was for the honor, the glory and the filthy lucre of this world, for we have seen that they organized according to the laws of the land as they had been advised to do, and that too by the advice of the world, so they could have the honor conferred upon them to perform the marriage ceremony and own property as a body. This is not all that accrued on that day; Joseph Smith was made God's mouth piece on earth to the church and visible head and the one man leader to the church visible, just like the Roman Catholic church in this respect.

Dear brethren and sisters, please open your eyes and behold what Satan is trying to do in this organizing according to the laws of the land in connection with the stipulations, orders and instructions as laid down in the will of Bro. Geo. Adams giving his entire estate to the Church of Christ. In this will of Bro. Adams, and this incorporation act of a few members, organizing according to the laws of the land is laid the most obscure and deepest scheme by Satan to bring about in time a one man leader and visible head to the church, that his Satanic Majesty has ever laid to ensnare the church and turn it away from God to man.

Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked. Open your eyes and with prayerful hearts look and behold the deep laid schemes and the cunning devices of Satan obscurely hid under the enticement of the handsome little sum of \$5000 00 in the will of Bro. Geo. Adams and the act of the incorporation of the church under the laws of the land, to catch and ensnare the church.

In the RETURN along side of the "Articles of Incorporation," you will find a copy of the will of Geo. Adams, the 2d par. reads: "I hereby give and bequeath all my goods and effects, both real and personal, that I may be possessed of at the time of my decease (after paying my funeral and other expenses recited above) to the Church of Christ, commonly called the Whitmerite church, of which John C. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson and Solomon Thomas are members, to be used for the benefit of the church, as my executors may deem best calculated to spread the gospel and advance the cause of Christ in the earth."

Fourth par. reads: "I hereby ap-

point my brethren, John C. Whitmer of Richmond, Ray county, Mo. Ebenezer Robinson of Davis City, Decatur county, Iowa, and Solomon Thomas of Hillsdale, Mills county, Iowa, as executors of my last will and testament, without bond."

Fifth par. reads: "In case either of the above named persons shall decline to act as such executors, the two consenting to serve may appoint a third person to fill the vacancy. * * * If all the above named persons consent to serve and afterward a vacancy occurs, by death or otherwise, then the two who remain shall have power to fill the vacancy according to the foregoing instruction or pattern."

Dear brethren and sisters in Christ, I hope you will pardon me for telling you of what this will reminds me. It reminds me of the landlord with whom the "Arkansaw Traveler" called to stay a night; the landlord called the boy and said: "Bob, take this man's horse and fasten him up in the stable and give him twelve ears of corn and two bundles of fodder and put it where he can't get it."

In this will the Church of Christ has four or five thousand dollars given it and care has been taken to put it where the church cannot control it in the least. She has not a word to say in the distribution of her money and property. This is left solely with the executors "to be used by them for the benefit of the church as they may deem best."

The church has not a word to say in electing one when a vacancy occurs, this belongs solely to the two remaining ones.

In this the church is represented as a minor infant, or an idiot, who has a guardian appointed to take care of

(CONTINUED ON 8TH PAGE)

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA., APRIL 15, 1895

The date set for the council has come and passed. Various hindering causes combined to prevent a good attendance, but on the whole we are much encouraged by the work done.

The powers of evil have been very active in some quarters but we take it as an indication that Satan is raging over the prospect of his power being broken in the church, and are correspondingly encouraged.

It is very clear that on the main ideas of the gospel, the church is a unit.

If the various members are wise enough to keep the good of the work on the main issues steadily in view, work together to accomplish that end, ignore differences of opinion on minor matters and trust to time and experience to teach all the better way, and all strive together to learn the one supreme lesson of CHARITY or brotherly love, we shall have no fear for the future of the cause.

There is no room for selfishness in this work, and yet, from the stand point of self interest, the gospel holds out the greatest possible inducement of far reaching and permanent success if we yield as a people, willing and complete obedience to its laws, for it furnishes the only perfect temporal law.

Much was done at this council in the way of preparing for future action. As will be seen from Bro. Snyders letter to the council, the executors of the Adams fund, realizing that

the fund need no longer be locked up to run a paper, are preparing to do more important work with it,—work which will preserve the fund intact, to be used again. We see no danger to the church in this fund, if studious care is taken that selfishness has nothing to do with its use.

On the contrary it will prove as intended by the donor, a great help to the spread of the work, and the little misunderstandings of the past will teach the church to transact temporal business according to God's laws and keep itself free from Babylon's unrighteous methods.

In the matter of church incorporation, so vigorously attacked by Bro. Land, the weak points in the present articles are confessed in the preamble to the resolution adopted by the council, making the entire subject, matter for action of the next council. We do not at all agree with Bro. Land that the act of incorporation necessarily implies breaking Christ's law, or "conformation to the evils of the world."

That depends entirely on how it is done. If the church fulfills its destined end, it will transact temporal business.

To do so properly it must be incorporated in various places. while the temporal government rules over it. But for all that, its officers may be "peace" and its "exactors righteousness," if they carry out the letter and spirit of the law of God.

If our religion does not reach our business methods, it is not of much value.

But while we do not agree with the brother, we accord him fair space to explain his views, for we have learned that men with the best possible intentions make errors in judgement,

and to deny expression in courteous terms to a brother's views, even though we are satisfied of that brother's error, would be arbitrary and autocratic in the extreme and it might afterward appear that we were the one in error. What then would be the verdict against us?

We may be always counted to fight to the death any assumption of autocratic power in church or state, by one, three or twelve men, or any other number. We believe thoroughly in "common consent" and how can we reach that, except by free exchange of our various ideas.

"The voice of the people is (usually) the voice of God," is a principle clearly reflected by the Book of Mormon and it adds that if the majority desire that which is not right, then they must suffer until they learn obedience to right principles.

The history of the world does not create the impression that autocrats are a successful protection against wrong doing.

We print below portions of Bro. Snyder's letter to the council, which we deem will be of interest to the church at large.

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah, }
April 4, 1895. }

DEAR BRO. WICKES:

Your letter of March 31st received today. In reply to what you write concerning your idea of the expenditure of the Adams fund for printing, I feel to answer your letter giving my impressions on the same, and will ask you to please read this letter to the brethren therein council. A question with the council will be, what part of the Adams fund should be spent in printing an edition of the Book of Mormon and what part

should be spent for other printing. In order to get some idea (for myself) of about how much of the money it would take for say 5000 copies of the B. of M., I had two printing establishments here give me figures on it, and enclose herewith the bill of one of them. The other one did not submit the bid in writing, but their bid was just \$100 more on the first 5000 copies and the stereotyping was the same, being thirty-five cents per page extra, \$224. I send you by this mail a sample of the paper on which they propose to print it, and the type, and also send a pamphlet to show the kind of a paper cover that would be on the book. * * * The cheapest B. of M. sold here is \$1.00 per copy and it is not on as good paper as this. This paper represents their \$1.25 book, which is bound in cloth. My idea would be without fail to print the book from the manuscript at Richmond, but have it versed off and chaptered, with the marginal references, just like the Salt Lake edition. I saw the Deseret News today, and they will grant us the privilege to print our book versed, chaptered and references, after their book. I know the references in it to be splendid and a great help, and it should be in verses by all means. Of course the references in it to the Doctrine and Covenants would be cut out.

To begin on, I do not think it would be wise to have over 5000 copies printed for a starter. You see the Book of Mormon will be sold (not free) by Bro. Wickes printing establishment, who of course we would all want to print it. But Bro. David's pamphlet and my two pamphlets I am writing (one of them being especially to the Lamanites), would be for free distribution and would be an out-

lay of money with no revenue therefrom. Now of course Bro Wickes has to live and I do not anticipate any revenue at all to the church from the sales of the Book of Mormon any ways soon, if ever. However that is a matter that will work itself out in the future as time goes by. In my humble opinion, brethren, I think we would make a great mistake to decide now to spend over \$1500 for printing an edition of the Book of Mormon. I think 5000 copies would probably last us for two years or longer, and it would be folly to invest any more in printing the Book of Mormon now. Too much of the money—otherwise—would be tied up.

The original edition of Bro. David's pamphlet was 10,000 copies. I think 10,000 copies of it is all we should decide to print now. We have the stereotype plates of it at Richmond, and 10,000 copies could be printed now. * * *

Your brother in Christ,
JOHN J. SNYDER.

From Preaching to Reform Work.

Rev. H. O. Sommers, of Indianapolis, resigned his pulpit without previous notice, February 17th. When asked if he had renounced the doctrine of universalism, Mr. Sommers replied: "No. I still hold to the teachings of universalism, so far as it relates to the destiny of mankind in the immortal life, but I believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ deals more with the interests of humanity in this world than the hereafter, and here is where I part company with all church organizations and denominations. I do not believe we can establish the kingdom of heaven on earth by the application of prayers and sermons which reach no further in their influence than the pews in which people sit to hear them.

"I believe that the church should take an active interest in all reforms, even in politics, for true religion and pure politics go hand in hand; they are both related to the physical welfare and moral elevation of humanity. But the traditions of all denominations preclude the introduction of any idea that was not sanctioned by the 'church fathers,' and the 'church brothers,' and the churches demand that the ministers shall spend their time discussing theological questions that are as dead as Moses, and in which the toiling multitude have no interest.

"I do not believe that the church has outlived its usefulness or fulfilled its mission, but this is a very practical age, and the people are beginning to ask the question: 'What is there in Christianity that can be made applicable to the needs of the present?'

"Theologians may be interested in the discussion of miracles, or what kind of wood the cross was made of, or who rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; but the toiling earth-bound millions have no interest in these questions, and the despairing cry is; 'Give us homes; give us bread; give us clothes; give us the comforts of life; then we will listen to what you have to say concerning the future.'

"I have no definite plans for the future, but after a brief season of rest I will take up some practical line of reform work, for there is room enough for all."

Mr. Sommers will preach his farewell sermon next Sunday morning.—The Coming Nation.

(CONTINUED FROM 4TH PAGE.)

and spend its money as its guardian may deem best, until the infant becomes of age, or the idiot is cured of his idioy. It would be more fitting to say that she was represented as an idiot; for the infant may live to become of age and take charge of its property, but the church never. The law provides at what time a minor becomes of age: but the law does not say at what time the church becomes of age: hence, she is destined to always be an infant under the law of the land, and looking to three executors or trustees as the sole controlers and dispensers of her funds without having one word to say in the matter.

In speaking of Joseph Smith being made seer, prophet and God's mouth piece on earth, David says: "Satan surely rejoiced on that day, for he then saw that in time he could overthrow them." So say I now, Satan surely rejoiced when he crept in under the nice little sum of \$5000.00, hiding away in its folds and guiding the innocent pen while that will was being written and placed in the hands of three trustees without bond, to do with it as they deemed best, and mentioned John C. Whitmer first as one of the trustees, who it is well known claimed to be first elder and therefore head of the church.

No doubt Satan rejoiced, thinking that such an order in the church would by continual practice, educate the church to look to and believe in one man as head to the church visible in the course of time.

TO BE CONTINUED.

☞ We send this number of the paper to many from whom we have not yet heard, that none may feel aggrieved by its non-appearance. But this will

positively be the last general issue in this way. If you want the paper, write to us or we shall have to drop your name.

Back Subscription.

If there are any who sent subscription money to Bro. Robinson for the RETURN and were not repaid in any way, we will on proper notification, credit the amount due on subscription for the present issue. Bro. Schweich has not yet made any arrangement with us to fill out his subscriptions.

Some have sent subscription money asking us to receipt for same. This we cannot do unless stamp is enclosed for answer. Whenever we receive subscription the date when your subscription expires will be marked with blue pencil on the margin of your paper in the next issue. Look out for the mark and if any mistake appears, write to us.

Back numbers of THE RETURN, published by E. Robinson, on sale at this office at \$1.10 per set of 26 numbers complete post paid.

Elder Davad 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.

Many letters have been received since the last issue, but lack of space prevents their publication in this number. We expect to publish the May 1st number about the 20th of this month and will have space for them in that issue.

☐ Send one dollar for THE RETURN and keep posted for the next year.

THE RETURN costs but \$1. per year.

THE RETURN.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein.”—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 7.

DAVIS CITY, IOWA, MAY 1, 1895

Whole No. 31.

Robin Redbreast.

My old Welsh neighbor over the way
Crept slowly out in the sun of spring,
Pushed from her ears the locks of gray,
And listened to hear the robin sing.

Her grandson, playing at marbles, stopped,
And, cruel in sport, as boys will be,
Tossed a stone at the bird, who hopped
From bough to bough in the apple tree.

“Nay,” said the grandmother, “have you not
heard,
My poor, bad boy! of the fairy pit,
And how drop by drop this merciful bird
Carries the water that quenches it?”

“He brings cool dew in his little bill,
And lets it fall on the souls of sin;
You can see the mark on his red breast still
Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

“My poor Bron Rhuddyn! my breast burned bird!
Singing so sweetly from limb to limb!
Very dear to the heart of our Lord
Is he who pities the lost like him.”

Amen! I said to the beautiful myth:
Singing, bird of God, in my heart a-wel;
Each good thought is a drop wherewith
To cool and lessen the fires of hell.

Prayers of love like rain drops fall,
Tears of pity are cooling dew,
And dear to the heart of our Lord are all
Who suffer like Him in the good they do.
—John G. Whittier.

Early Training.

Every child is a reflection of the home in which he has lived. His rudeness, selfishness and bad temper when thwarted are evidence, incontrovertible, of parental weakness which has sought peace at any price, even to the evasion of imperative duty. Parents often yield in small matters because “it isn’t worth while to have so much trouble over a trifle,”

when, in reality, it is not the task required that is the vital question, but the principal underlying it—obedience due the parent from the child, which should be prompt, cheerful and unquestioning.

No human being can escape the discipline of submission. The autocrat on his throne may hold life and death in his individual power; he may command armies and control navies, yet, in the domain of physical law he is as subservient as the meanest of his vassals. Like them he must yield when nature ordains that he shall eat and drink, rest and sleep. He is forced to obey whether he will or no, and disobedience to the inexorable demands of nature is punished swiftly and surely. Absolute power does not bring happiness—the late and former King of Siam, whose slightest wish was law, was a gloomy melancholy man. It is quite probable that, being absolute in matters of state, he could not brook thwarting in any direction, and so brooded over his limitations instead of reflecting upon the splendid privilege that he might have employed for the good of his kingdom and his people.

Our virtues as well as our faults are far more a matter of habit than we are willing to admit. Once turned

in the right direction we go almost without effort.

Life will teach us obedience inexorably, and it will enforce its lessons with hardship, repeated disappointment, failure and suffering if we fail to learn tractably. If we are willing to yield—to cultivate in childhood what might be called a sort of moral pliancy—it will be found that we shall bend where otherwise we would break under the hard blows of destiny.

A mother who has never taught her child willing obedience will turn him loose in the world without having acquired the first principles of efficient work, and virtually bars him from its compensating success.

MARY H. KROUT.

Back Numbers of the Return.

We have on hand about 500 complete sets of numbers 1 to 26, published by Bro. Robinson, and we are authorized to sell them at the low price of 50cts per set, post paid to any address in the United States or Canada. The personal history of the editor is the best church history of the times and events mentioned, that has ever been published.

Every believer in the Book of Mormon should have a set. Send 50cts and get one soon, for it is not likely they will last long at this price.

Some have sent subscription money asking us to receipt for same. This we cannot do unless stamp is enclosed for answer. Whenever we receive subscription the date when your subscription expires will be marked with blue pencil on the margin of your paper in the next issue. Look out for the mark and if any mistake appears, write to us.

COMMUNICATIONS.

When sending articles for publication, please write on one side of the paper only.

Articles may be printed over a fictitious signature, but the name of the writer must in all cases be signed to the manuscript for reference.

Each individual writing under this head, is alone responsible for the ideas expressed, and must not be construed as speaking authoritatively for the church.

All will be accorded a fair space if their ideas are couched in courteous terms.

WESTPORT, Cal., March 21.

BRO. C. A. WICKES: Your first copy of the RETURN reached me yesterday. I admire your salutatory. I draw from it that you intend to publish the gospel. This is indeed timely. If the truth was ever told, it should be told now. There seems to be a great deal of secrecy, or silence, in the church. Many do suppose silence to be godliness. The key to mystery Babylon, in the beginning, was silence. But after she had received power then it became force.

THE RETURN cannot be run in the interest of Christ if it favor one and spurn the other. Christ died to establish one common salvation, and if the RETURN will not stand by the rule that Christ established then it will fail. I will do all I can for the spread of the gospel, but if any man will please the lusts of the flesh then my soul will have no pleasure in him.

The Church of Christ suffereth violence. Since April 6, 1830, the church of Christ (not the Church of Christ) has had many reformers: first as the Church of Christ; second as the Church of the L. D. S.; third as the Church of Jesus Christ of L. D. S. Now I do not believe that the

acts of men changed in the least or affected the Church of Christ, but I do believe that men, on their own authority, laid the foundation of a church that was more adapted to the wants of the few against the many than the Church of Christ would allow.

But in 1887-8 David Whitmer called loud and long on the saints in every quarter to forsake those reformers and return to the truth and become the followers of Christ. He declared that he had the pure authority to officiate in the Church of Christ. He further declared that the angel that committed the gospel to them (Oliver, Martin and David) charged them to do all things according to that which was already written, "for in them (Bible and Book of Mormon) are all things written concerning my gospel and my church." How few believed his report, although he (like Joshua and Caleb) brought forth the fruit, yet it has been rejected by many. But few have received it, and even they are slow to act. Strange as it may seem, since David made that call, how many reformers have sprung up, and the Church of Christ is not exempt. All of them spread their nets, teaching for doctrine their own vain imaginations.

Why are we so far from the truth wandering as sheep without a shepherd? Because when we saw evil we closed our mouths and allowed it to grow in our midst until it has choked the good seed out of us. But it is written that we must have charity. May God open the eyes of any brother that says that we must have charity for sin. If we allow ourselves to have charity for sin then we become the associates of those sinners.

I approve of a council meeting that

the church learn of her duty. I now ask, (and have a right to know) what has become of the money willed to the church, by George Adams. I am waiting for you to put your finishing touch on your allusion to that will of George Adams, I heard something from E. H. Gurley, but do not know particulars. Your Bro.

JOHN C. COX.

INDEPENDENCE, Mo.

Editor Return:

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER—I am in receipt of two first numbers of the RETURN, and am well pleased with its contents, for the reasons that it commences where Editor Robinson left it, and 's to be continued upon the same basis. Also that it is not dependent upon the church funds for its existence, but upon the patronage of the members. Also that it will be conducted independently and will expose error and defend truth, and I do sincerely hope that it will be so conducted as to merit the patronage and esteem of all lovers of truth.

You spoke of calling a Council at an early date. I have thought for a long time that this was very necessary, that there might be some order established governing the missionaries, for without order nothing permanent can be effected. * * *

I enclose 50 cents for the paper for six months. Hoping you will prosper in your work, I am your brother in the gospel. JOHN T. CLARK.

ATTICA, Wis., Mar. 23, 1895.

DEAR BRO. WICKES: When I got my mail on the 21st, I was surprised to find that the paper called the RETURN, had again appeared to comfort the Saints, who are few in number

THE RETURN.

and had almost given up in despair, not knowing what to do.

I for one feel to rejoice, and hope the church is now revived for the last time, among the gentiles, to prepare a people to receive Christ when he comes to his temple to fulfil his promise to us gentiles

Then he will establish his church as he did among the Jews, and also among the Nephites.

Then he will choose twelve disciples and give them power to preach to all the world, and this will be the gospel of the kingdom.

Then will the work of the Father commence among all nations, and as the people obey this message, then they will soon begin to gather to Zion, the land of peace, where the Saints will assist the "remnant of Jacob" to build a city, which will be called the New Jerusalem.

But in order for us Gentiles to be thus favored, we must repent, and hearken to Christ's words, instead of words of men. So speaks the Book of Mormon. * * *

JAMES COMPTON.

SANTA ANA, Cal., Mch. 25, 1895.

BRO. C. A. WICKES: Your letter forwarded from Pomona overhauled me finally while up in the mountains, 30 miles from here. Glad to learn that you have determined to start up the paper, and I pledge you the little assistance I can render most heartily. Writing for the papers is not much in my line, (not that I do not enjoy giving this public expression to my hope and faith in Christ, but I am a poor hand to put my thoughts into words, either verbally or in writing.) Enclosed find postal order for \$1.00. I received one paper directed here. Be sure you are not sending the paper to

Pomona also. Bro. Penrod signifies his intention to stand by your paper. He thinks your course has been proper and justified by the peculiar circumstances. May God give us all more spiritual light, that we may each see the truth and walk in straighter paths.

Yours in the Master's work,
SUMNER B. WEST.

BRO. C. A. WICKES: Today we received a number of the RETURN and are glad you have taken up the publication of the same.

We will try to do what we can to help you and will write some articles for publication. I believe we are in possession of some facts here in Provo, that will interest the church. We have just come out of a long hard winter and financially are in poor circumstances and have a large family and no work.

The church here in Provo is weak, being few in number and poor in purse, but spiritually it is strong, rejoicing in the gifts.

Ever praying that the blessings of God our Father may abide with you and direct all His people, I remain your brother in the gospel.

T. J. POLLARD,
Provo, Utah.

Bro. C. C. Frisby, Salt Lake City, writes: "I was not aware of the re-issue of the RETURN until recently. My paper was sent to Provo. The churches here and at Provo are holding fast to "the rod of iron." I hope to go to California in the near future. A good work can be done out there."

Bro. James McLester of Hanna, Tex., writes: Please send me the RETURN. * * I heartily approve

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA., MAY 1, 1895

During the meetings held here while the Council was in progress, we heard a desire expressed by some members of the "Reorganization" to hear us speak on the differences of doctrine and organization between our church and theirs, or, as they expressed it, "tell us wherein your church is better than ours."

We tried to do this in a very brief way on some of the principal points, in our last discourse, and while we know of course they do not agree with us, yet so far we have heard no complaint of our method of dealing with the subject, nor yet of the points in question.

Briefly outlined, the points of similarity are: Acceptance of the Bible and Book of Mormon as joint histories of God's dealings with men. Of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah promised from of old. Of the six principles mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-2, as the foundation of the spiritual law. And the necessity for divine guidance, gifts and powers in the church. On these points there are no differences to settle.

The main points of difference may be stated thus: We believe that the name of the church should be just what Christ himself said when he came in person to settle that very point, then under discussion as I now, as recorded in the 3d Book of Nephi, chap. 12, par. 3., viz: the church of "Christ," no more, no less.

The last sentence in par. 2 reads:

"And they who were baptized in the name of Jesus were called the Church of Christ." This should settle the question if there were not another word written on the subject. The church took that view also, in 1829, and for some years after.

Next, we do not believe in an ordained "Prophet, Seer and Revelator" to lead the church during his life time, from whom the church shall receive the word "as from God's own mouth," something similar to the Pope of Rome, or the Czar of Russia, or Israel under Ahab. Our friends of Lamoni and Salt Lake do.

The head of the church is Christ. When he wants a prophet he doesn't consult some man and find out whom he may endow with the gift of prophecy. He sends his spirit where he finds a man fitted to receive it, and not to that people who reject the words of truth because, forsooth, they do not come through their appointed channel.

Again, we do not believe in a great rabble of "high priests" in the church. Our friends at Lamoni and Salt Lake do. The merest glance at the Bible shows that there was but one recognized high priest at a time, and that was under the law of "types and shadows." Paul makes this clear in Heb. 7:28 and 9:6 7.

"For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the SON who is CONSECRATED FOR EVERMORE."

"Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

"But into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for

himself, and for the errors of the people."

Also Heb. 6:20, "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an HIGH PRIEST FOREVER after the order of Melchisedec."

If there was no need for more than one high priest at a time, and Jesus was made an high priest forever, what use have we for several dozens of them?"

To clinch the argument we point to the simple fact that there is no mention of their being placed in the church since Christ, in either the Bible or the Book of Mormon, and we are told that in those two books is contained a fullness of all things pertaining to the gospel and Christ's church. We admit that there is the Melchisedec and the Aaronic priesthood in the church, but while they teach that all elders are of the Melchisedec priesthood, and that all high priests are elders, they by no means teach that ALL ELDERS ARE HIGH PRIESTS, so they can make no point on that.

Our friends at Lamoni and Salt Lake have each a special form of a book called the "Doctrine and Covenants" which they accept as a special law to the church to settle all obscure points of doctrine and practice.

We hold that while there are many good things in those books, there are also many BAD things taught in each as doctrine, contrary to the teaching of the Bible and Book of Mormon. Also that the book itself is sadly changed and garbled, by additions to the original text since it was first printed as the "Book of Commandments," at I. dependance, Missouri. Hence, we cannot receive it as a rule of faith and practice.

Lastly, (for the present) we hold

that the laws of God relating to man's temporal affairs as a social community, as laid down in the Bible and Book of Mormon, are just and true, and have never been set aside by Him or by His consent.

That speculation in His land, (and for that matter in anything,) the taking from a brother of usury (interest) for money, or the fostering of any form of taxation except that which He established—"the tenth of your increase," an income tax pure and simple, is ROBBERY, and marks the church as APOSTATE from the law of God, and given over to the service of Babylon from whom all othersystems sprang, with all their attendant brood of human woe, injustice, want, misery, avarice and crime.

Actions speak louder than words. The churches at Lamoni and Salt Lake both sanction and do these things, and have forgotten what the Saints set out to do when they first went to Missouri. We brand them on all these counts, apostate from the law of Christ and invite the most careful investigation of each and every point, not in a boasting spirit, but we are in living earnest about these things, and believe most earnestly as we have stated them.

If we are wrong it will be a kindness to show us that fact, for only truth will stand the test of eternity.

We set forth these points of difference, because we recognize the right of those whom we challenge as being in error, to a clear statement of our position, and we are not ashamed of, but always ready to give a reason for, "the hope that is in us." There are other points, mostly growing out of these. But when these are settled aright, we think there will not be much ground for argument on the others.

We call attention to an item of the council minutes, published in the April 15 number, relating to organization of the church in various places, as was urged by the Council of 1890.

This is a matter that has not been properly understood or attended to.

The resolution of 1890, referred to, reads as follows:

“RESOLVED: That we understand that this council has no authority to make laws for the church, for we already have the law of Christ and the fulness of the Gospel, in the Bible and Book of Mormon. But we deem that we are acting in accordance with that law in meeting together, from time to time, to counsel upon the doctrine and law, that we may arrive at a mutual and correct understanding of the same, and our decision is binding upon the church only so far as it is in harmony with the law of Christ. We therefore counsel the brethren everywhere to organize themselves into churches, wherever practicable, according to the pattern laid down in the Bible and Book of Mormon, and also in harmony with the laws of the land, that they may be able to transact such legal business pertaining to churches, such as marriage, and the holding of church property; and more especially that there may be concert of action in all matters pertaining to the church doctrine and discipline.

“And we deem it necessary that each church should meet together and consider each decision of this council, and if it be found in harmony with the scriptures, it should be endorsed, and if not, it should be reported, with the reasons for rejection, to the next general council of elders, that we may arrive at a unity of the faith, and a correct application of the scriptures, that our garments may be spotless before Christ. Adopted unanimously.”

Many seem to suppose that because some have added unto the pattern of the gospel, and thereby organized too

MUCH, it therefore follows that we should go the other way and not organize at all. This is clearly wrong. The result of such a state of affairs is just what we see—stagnation. “What is everybody’s business is nobody’s business.”

Nothing can be done without order, and order can not be had without organization and recognized authority. If anything at all is done in such a condition, it is done by arbitrary authority of the one moving. It is a mistaken notion that the elders, or even the twelve, had any authority to command the church to do thus and so, and to go into any church and call its members to account, and decide differences between them. The term “set in order” means something vastly different—simply preach to and convert the people, and ordain those designated by the spirit to the ministry.

The church can then choose its own officer, and run its own affairs. The elders or disciples may ADVISE in these affairs, but NEVER DICTATE.

“Common Consent” is the watchword of liberty.

We have noticed a funny thing in this connection, viz, those who object most strongly to doing any business for fear of doing wrong, very often take the most arbitrary and unjust measure to do what they deem necessary.

We attended a business meeting once which illustrated this idea. The church was small, containing only a few women and three men. The former elder had died, leaving only the church clerk at the head of the organization.

Th other two men were elders. One of them was related to all the members except the other elder and

his wife. These parties were all of the "very much afraid" sort, but finally it dawned upon them that they ought to be organized properly, hence the meeting called by the clerk. The clerk presided, led in all preliminaries, stated that they had met to perfect their organization, and then, notwithstanding he was in the chair, and debarred by all usage and courtesy from such a step, he moved that his relative be chosen elder of the church. A sister (another relative) seconded the motion, and it was carried, the two outsiders taking no part) and this was "common consent" obtained by those who were so very careful to do no wrong by doing "church business."

The wrong lies not in doing business, but in the METHOD EMPLOYED.

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of the legal organization of the church.

Bro. Ephraim Holdsworth of Webster Groves, Mo., is glad to see the RETURN again, and is alone in the gospel, his family taking no interest in the work.

Bro. J. Neilson of San Francisco sends one dollar for the RETURN, and writes a friendly and encouraging letter. Such are appreciated, Bro. N.

Bro. W. C. Kinyon of Forsyth, Mo., has not heard from the church for a long time, and was informed it was dead. Not quite, Bro. Kinyon, but pretty sound asleep. We shall try to wake it up a little before we are through with it.

Sister Cassandra Hendrickson writes from Avoca, Iowa, a kind letter full of faith and hope.

Sister Jane Walton of Newton, Kan., wants the RETURN and is trying to get others to take it also. That is the kind of interest that is needed. If we sit quietly down to enjoy ourselves and make no effort to spread the light, our influence will not reach very far, and the hands of the workers will grow very weary for lack of proper support.

Brn. D. W. Doop of Cherryvale, Kan., and W. A. Penrod of Santa Ana, Cal., each send one dollar for the RETURN, accompanied by kind wishes for its success.

We hope that all will take an interest in the correspondence columns. This is the best possible means of becoming acquainted. It is your part of the paper. Make it full and interesting.

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.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein.”—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 8. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, MAY 15, 1895. Whole No. 32.

ARTICLE OF PROTEST.

NO. II.

It will be seen in article No. 1 that to organize according to the laws of the land is no less than “conforming to this world,” which I claimed was clearly forbidden by the Apostle Paul. But whereas the editor of the RETURN has made some statements and remarks in that paper of the 15th of April in regard to the matter of church incorporation, etc., I shall call attention to them, and in noticing them I shall prove and maintain the points for which we started out. The good brother says: “In the matter of church incorporation, so vigorously attacked by Bro. Land, the weak points in the present articles are confessed in the preamble to the resolution adopted by the council, making the entire subject for action of the next council.”

I am truly glad the council has seen the weak points in those articles of incorporation and come out in open, free and manly confession; and I do hope that before the assembly of the next council the whole church will be able to see, not only the weak points in those articles of incorporation, but that they may fully realize this whole business of incorporation, or organizing according to or under

the laws of the land to be of Satanic origin.

The editor further says: “We do not at all agree with Bro. Land that the act of incorporation necessarily implies breaking Christ’s law, or conformation to the evils of the world.”

This quotation from the editor’s pen is just the kind of a perversion which, to me, is very disagreeable to handle, as it is a very serious but unintentional perversion of the entire sense and meaning of what I said, by adding the only one little word “evil.” I did not say, “conformed to the ‘evils’ of the world,” but I said just what Paul wrote, namely, “And be not conformed to this world,” etc. There are many things in the world which are good in their place and for the purpose for which the Lord ordained them; and yet if the church should conform itself to, or organize itself according to, or “make like, comply to, yield to.” It would bring a sore curse upon the church, which would land it in apostacy.

For instance, the constitution and laws of this country require a one man at the head of this government as president. Also upon the eastern continent at the time the church conformed to the laws of that land and apostatized; the laws of that land re-

quired a one man at the head of that government; the bishops or elders sought protection and favor from the kings and emperors; the kings and emperors sought the bishops' and churches' influence for political purposes. and in time the result was uniting church and state and the church conformed to, or organized according to, the laws of the land by placing a one man, the pope, as visible head to the church.

To incorporate the church under the laws of the land is a species of uniting church and state, and is a seeking of governmental protection by favors to be granted. This is clearly manifested in the second article of incorporation.

Then in 1830 the church met and organized according to the laws of the land, and conformed to this world by placing Joseph Smith at the head of the church, thus conforming to the laws of the land requiring a one man president at the head of this worldly government.

Thus it can be seen that to incorporate the church under the laws of the land is to identify the church inferior to and under the laws of the land. This is clearly stated by the brother in the following quotation from his pen, when speaking of church incorporation not being a conformation to the world. He says: "That depends entirely on how it is done. If the church fulfills its destined end it will transact temporal business. To do so properly it must be incorporated in various places while the temporal government rules over it," etc.

Here the good brother says that to properly transact business the church must be incorporated in various places, and that the temporal govern-

ment rules over this incorporated church. Thus it can be seen that the brother's ideas as expressed place the church, when incorporated, under and inferior to the temporal government. The laws of Christ and the Church of Christ are superior to the laws of the land and the temporal governments of the earth, hence the church should never be identified under the rule and inferior to the temporal government by incorporation.

But it is just as the brother says, when the church is incorporated it is under the rule of the temporal government, it is identified under it, and is therefore a subject of the temporal government and united to the government or state; hence it can be seen that to incorporate the church under the laws of the land is a species of uniting church and state, which almost every one believes to be an evil.

It is true, "If the church fulfills its destined end it will transact temporal business," but it is not necessary to incorporate the church and thereby declare the laws of Christ and the church inferior to the temporal government in order "to do so properly." We presume the church upon the Eastern continent and upon this land among the Nephites did transact temporal business without being incorporated, and if they did we can do the same. I know of many orders and organizations which properly transact business without being incorporated, and why not the church do so too? And in the place of organizing according to the laws of the land let us organize according to the laws of Christ, the superior law; and there will appear no reason for incorporation. Just as was shown in article No. 1, the object to incorporate or organize the church according to the

laws of the land was to get worldly honor conferred to perform the ceremony of marriage and reap other honors conferred by the temporal government, which was supposed not to be had only through incorporation.

The Church of Christ upon the eastern continent and the church in these last days when they organized according to the laws of the and incorporated, stepped into apostacy by "conforming to this world" A head to this government as president is not necessarily an evil, but a visible head to the church as president and God's mouth piece to the church has proven to be evil to the church, both on the eastern and western continents. This no doubt was the object of his Satanic Majesty in guiding the innocent pen that framed the will of Bro. Adams with three executors, one of whom posed himself as first and therefore head to the church, thus, as I have said, he hoped in time to educate the church to look to a one man leader and visible head to the church.

I feel sure and I almost know those who incorporated the church did so with the purest of motives, and no doubt believed they were doing the will of the Lord: the same as Brother Adams believed when he wrote that will. Also, I believe the one or many as the case may be, who posed themselves as first and head to the church did so with honest belief that it was right, I am not censuring any one of those good brethren, but feel to mention these things to show the mistakes made so that the church can avoid the like mistakes, and undo the mistakes already made and thus remove mountains in the way of progression according to the law and will of the Lord.

The members who met and incor-

porated the church, effected the first visible organization of the church since David ordained Bro John C. Whitmer in 1875. They effected the organization by electing three trustees to transact the business affairs of the church; thinking no doubt that they were preparing these trustees to take charge of the Adams fund to be used as the church might direct. But if the will of Bro. Adams is carried out as it is stipulated, those trustees as such for the church, will never handle one dollar of said fund as the church directs, for that fund, according to the will is to be used for the spread of the gospel as the executors may deem best. Thus the principal object of those who incorporated the church falls to the ground as a withered leaf. So far as the Adams fund is concerned, I believe that in time it will, as Bro. Wickes says: "Prove as intended by the donor, a great help to the spread of the work, etc." But it is now locked up, and I believe it will remain so by the will of God, until the church organizes according to the law and will of the Lord.

CONCLUDED.

In addition I wish to say that I will commence writing some article upon the Twelve in the church and as I expect to meet opposition let me say to those who may be inclined to oppose the idea of the twelve disciples in the church, that you take the matter before the Lord before you do so, for, "perhaps you may be found to fight against God."

Respectfully,

ELIAS LAND.

Rogers, Texas.

Send one dollar for THE RETURN and keep posted for the next year.

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For The Return.

Incorporation.

For the Church of Christ in its collective sense to incorporate would be like infidelity to Christ and friendship with the world, but as Christ paid tax, it recognizes that the individual Christian is a fractional part of the nation. It is wisdom in the church and its branches to have as little as possible to do with the external government. As local churches are not machines, and property in their locality would be left to them, it is wise to let them act as they choose. Some ministers have surrendered their marrying license rather than couple an infidel and a christian, the law not allowing any distinction. Property might be left to the bishop, with the proviso that it was for the benefit of the church local, but at his death his children might contend for it, if the church was not incorporated. But if the bishop was very conscientious he could will it to his successor on the same terms he received it. Marrying an infidel to a christian is very different to allowing them to live together after one of them is baptized.

Although the word archon (ruler) in the Greek testament together with its cases is often found in the gospels applied to rulers of synagogues, yet after the establishment of the Christian church it is only found once, and in the book of Revelation, and is there applied to Christ. In essential matters the churches ought to resemble each other, but to require absolute submission in details would destroy a free spirit; for example, to require officers to tes-

tify to their faith in the Nephite scriptures is proper, but to require it of all young persons desiring to be baptized would be to exclude a great many, for the books would all first have to be read and pondered. It is not so required of the Bible. The relation of the Church of Christ to the national government has always been a difficult subject. In its integral Christ is the only ruler of the church; in details each church ought to be allowed freedom and responsibility. The decrees of the council of the apostles ought to be enforced, such as not eating things strangled. The essentials of the present Church of Christ are the Nephite scriptures, orders of officers and responsible baptism. Miracles and gifts of healing are included in the scriptures and would make permanent orders, if the Holy Ghost always performed them through the same person.

I. L.

Tulare County, Cal.

Back Subscription.

If there are any who sent subscription money to Bro. Robinson for the RETURN and were not repaid in any way, we will on proper notification, credit the amount due on subscription for the present issue. We urge all who are entitled to this relief to attend to it at once, so we can close the matter up. Bro. Schweich was paid in full to fill out all arrearages on Bro. Robinson's subscription 1/2t. By some means some were overlooked, but he signifies his willingness to refund at once for all who were missed. Bro. Schweich has not yet made any arrangement with us to fill out his subscriptions.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

DAVIS CITY, IA., MAY 15, 1895

In this number appears the concluding article of Bro. Elias Land's "Protest" against the incorporation of the church

We are glad this matter has been taken up and discussed for it needed airing.

We will now turn on a little more light and then let the matter rest for the present.

We have been misunderstood by many, and denounced by a few, for the position we seemed to occupy in the references we have made to this subject, and one brother went so far as to warn us to "repent of having with a few others, reorganized the church by incorporating it". As our name nowhere appears in connection with those articles, we wonder where he found that idea. We were in Chicago at the time and knew nothing of it until we saw notice of it in the Herald of Lamoni, and the moment we read it, we felt that a terrible mistake had been made. We think so yet, and expect to secure a full repeal of that act at the next Council. We earnestly commend the exercise of patience, by all, and a careful study of the acts of the council of July 1890. That council made history that will yet tell for good. The best of spirit prevailed throughout, every act was done by full and unanimous consent and very few idle words were incorporated in any of the resolutions passed. The church can safely build upon that platform, for

every plank pointed to the word of God for its authority. In that council the chief idea objected to as resulting from this incorporation was very effectually settled, when it declared that "we understand that this council has no authority to make laws for the church, for we already have the law of Christ and the fullness of the gospel, in the Bible and Book of Mormon."

This forever bars the growth of a centralized church government, and what follows in the same resolution clinches the matter beyond all possibility of doubt. Study these things and make yourselves acquainted with what the church has already done.

If we at all comprehend Bro Land, he has failed to make a case against Bro. Adams's will, though he attacks it most sharply. Bro. Adams framed that will to avoid just the point complained of, viz: the accumulation of property and power in the hands of a centralized church government, with a man at the head, and with all deference and good will due the brethren who see it otherwise, we think he succeeded, in that point.

We are personally knowing to all the circumstances, so we can speak positively.

It was thoroughly discussed by him and the writer together, many times. We advised him to do differently than he did, to avoid certain things we foresaw would arise, and the event has justified our convictions. We believed the LOCAL churches should organize, as commended in the resolution before alluded to, and whenever it seemed best to acquire property of any kind, that they should incorporate, because they can not hold property without, and if any brother knows of any organization, of any

kind, that CAN transact such business in this country WITHOUT incorporation, we shall deem it a favor if he will tell us HOW.

We agree with Bro. Land that the act AS DONE, was a grave mistake, not founded in wisdom, and fell short of the objects aimed at. A church does not need to be incorporated, in order that its ministers may in this country perform the marriage ceremony, or the church be the beneficiary of a bequest, through executors.

But to hold and handle property it MUST be, and that does not make it a part of the state, nor any more subject to the state, than it was before, but simply protects it in that one item of its own interest, that it may carry on its own work in its own way. We counseled Bro. Adams that to leave his property to the GENERAL church would eventually build up just what we set out to prevent, viz: the establishment of a central church government, with one man at the head, who would eventually land it in apostacy similar to Rome. We therefore advised him to leave it in the hands of the church AT SOME PLACE, so its trustees would be responsible to the church at that place and would be elected every year. He chose to do neither, but left it to three men to use as they thought best for the whole church, and we must abide the results. While this looks like too much power in the hands of those three men, yet they are responsible to every member of the whole church, for the faithful performance of their duties under that will, and while I have the power to act, all may rest assured that there is ONE at least, who will very closely watch any slackness on the part of those who have it in charge, and if

necessary will go into court and compel them to do their duty.

A greater question than any yet touched upon lies hidden under this discussion.

The methods of the world in man's dealings with man, are utterly inhuman, and directly contrary to the principles of God's law. To overcome the former and build up the latter, the church must take active measures to establish a righteous temporal community. The first question to be settled is, shall it be a church oligarchy in which the church will eventually become the state and the spiritual officers administer temporal laws; or shall temporal affairs be entirely divorced from the spiritual, as in the foundation of this government, and membership in the community rest, not upon religious beliefs, but upon the recognition of certain just principles.

We invite the earnest consideration of all to this subject.

Latter Day Saints attempted to found a church oligarchy, and today their almost universal claim of favoring the separation of church and state, is as clearly against the strongest teaching of their BOOK OF BOOKS, the "Doctrine and Covenants," as the strongest Roman Catholic could wish.

Back Numbers of the Return.

We have on hand about 500 complete sets of numbers 1 to 26, published by Bro. Robinson, and we are authorized to sell them at the low price of 50cts per set, post paid to any address in the United States or Canada. The personal history of the editor is the best church history of the times and events mentioned, that has ever been published.

Every believer in the Book of Mormon should have a set. Send 50cts and get one soon, for it is not likely they will last long at this price.

COMMUNICATIONS.

When sending articles for publication, please write on one side of the paper only.

Articles may be printed over a fictitious signature, but the name of the writer must in all cases be signed to the manuscript for reference.

Each individual writing under this head, is alone responsible for the ideas expressed, and must not be construed as speaking authoritatively for the church.

All will be accorded a fair space if their ideas are couched in courteous terms.

EDITOR RETURN: Having promised to send occasional contributions to your paper, and finding myself since that promise was given an inmate of the National Soldiers' Home, I am moved to write up such impressions and observations of this, my second introduction to "soldier life," as I may deem most interesting and instructive to your readers.

Those who can remember the almost universal disregard of sacred things which prevailed among the "boys in blue" while loyally defending the old flag, will wonder what I can find to write about among such a godless set of men, which can interest those who are striving with their might, mind and strength to serve God, and like me they will be agreeably surprised to learn that the spirit of Truth is striving to penetrate even these obdurate hearts. There is an earnest religious element here, which is waging a ceaseless warfare against the many evils that surround us.

Since I am not permitted to meet in spiritual communion with those who see the truth as I see it, it is a blessed privilege to find those who acknowledge Christ as the rock of their salvation. In His dear name

we can find "a tie that binds" us together in brotherhood, though other influences may prevail (for a season) to prevent a clear unity of thought and purpose.

We have regular services semi-weekly. A good sermon as often as a preacher can be procured, and an association similar to, but not identical with, "The Society of Christian Endeavor." We have also a good Sunday School. Thus we find the Good Shepherd ever mindful of our needs, and ever pointing us to the true fold.

Hope to hear from many of the brethren through the columns of the RETURN, who in this way may help to reconcile me to this isolation.

May God hasten the spread of the truth, and thus bring about the consummation of His mighty purposes.

S. B. WEST.

CHERRYVALE, Kan., April 16, '95.

C. A. WICKES—Dear Brother in Christ: I am thankful for THE RETURN and trust that it may be the means of doing much good and that God the Father will bless you with wisdom, and that His spirit may guide you that you may be useful in His hands, is the prayer of your unworthy sister.

Find enclosed one dollar for THE RETURN. Send RETURN to Sarah V. Gerrard, Staples, Minn., Box 71.

Mrs. J. J. Doop.

CHERRYVALE, Kan., April 23.

DEAR BROTHER: Find enclosed one dollar, which is to pay for the sending of THE RETURN to Elder W. P. Brown, Jerusalem Palestine. Send from the commencement of the paper. I do not know whether there will be any extra postage on matters sent

across the ocean or not. If there is please let me know and I will send you the amount. Will you please be kind enough to let me know through THE RETURN and oblige

D. W. DOOP.

ARMBRUST, PA., April 27, 1895.

DEAR BRO. WICKES: Several extra sample copies of the RETURN have arrived to my address and I am giving them out among the people with the hope of getting them to see the truth and subscribe for the paper. My prayer is that many of the honest of heart may flock to a standard of the truth. Enclosed you will find \$1. for one years subscription for the RETURN to my address.

May God bless every effort to spread the truth, is my prayer.

Your brother in Christ,

J. L. ARMBRUST.

Bro. Peter Olsen of Weston, Iowa, writes a good letter full of faith and hope. He is very firmly of opinion that the sabbath is the seventh day of the week and should be observed instead of Sunday. We agree with the brother that it is the day appointed, but strange as it may seem, there is dispute even among Jews as to which the seventh day really is. This being the case and the essence of the matter being a reasonable observance of ONE day of rest in seven, we are of opinion that until the Lord of the sabbath speak further upon the subject, it will do no harm to let the matter stand as it is.

Bro. A. P. Smith, Independence, Mo., and Henry Van Steele, Lake Shore, Utah, write that their subscription to Bro. Robinson's RETURN was never completed. We find on the list ten months each to their cred-

it, which is transferred to this issue.

Bro. John Clark of Council Bluffs, writes us a warm personal letter, in which he mentions that the brethren at Hillsdale, Iowa, are in good condition and keeping up their regular meetings.

Sr. Belle Arnold of Lamberta, Alabama, (not far from Mobile) writes us an excellent letter, mostly of a personal nature. She and Sr. Mary Leavens are alone in the faith in that region, and would be very glad to have an elder come that way and preach in that vicinity. Land can be had there at from \$1.25 to \$5.00 per acre. Will grow almost anything and the climate is of the finest in the world. That region is fast being filled with northwestern people. Some brother looking for a cheap home might do worse than to go to that locality.

Some letters and articles crowded out this time for lack of space.

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Subscribe for THE RETURN, and subscribe now. We have no fortune to draw upon, and it costs money to run a printing office. We give our time and ask the expense. Cannot you give the small portion of your time represented by a dollar, when you get twenty-four papers in return?

We are interested in the spread of the truth as we understand it. If you are, also, show it by doing something for it. There is no probability that the subscription will equal the actual cost of the paper, so don't be afraid of doing too much. Don't be willing to let one carry all the burden. Do your part and do it promptly.

THE RETURN.

“Condemnation rests upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they turn, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, the things that are written therein.”—Joseph Smith.

Vol. 3, No. 9. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, JUNE 1, 1895. Whole No. 33.

Letter from Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM, May 8, 1895.

DEAR BROTHER WICKES: The three packages of RETURNS—March 1, 15 and April 1,—received three days ago. They had been laying at the Consulate. A one-cent stamp would have been plenty to put on them, and five cents brings a letter here if it does not weigh more than one-half ounce. We would like to have THE RETURN but at present cannot promise to send you any money for it. This RETURN is an improvement on the Richmond one and hope for spiritual improvement. For to be spiritual minded is life and without that life your paper must die. I had thought not to interfere with my brethrens work in America but a burden of duty seems to rest upon me. I am sorry that Bro. Land has made the statement that several elders aspired to be leaders or head of the church, and caused stagnation in the church. I don't think that any elder knows more about these things than I do, except Bro. Snyder and Bro. Page. As the statement—if true—makes several elders guilty of a great crime, and puts the cause of the low condition of the church upon them, which makes it needful for those several elders to be made known in order that the church may be re-

stored to spiritual life. I will tell you what I know about it.

Brother John Whitmer once said in presence of Bro. David and myself that he was the first elder in this church. But after the death of Bro. David, in a council at Richmond Bro. John was accused of making such a claim. He acknowledged his mistake and asked forgiveness. Now brethren when any does as he did, we have to^o forgive, and the brother is free, and hope we all shall meet our dear brother when the trumpet shall sound. I know of no other brother aspiring to any office, but that all understood that if ever we was to organize, it would be with twelve disciples or elders and Christ as the head, which is the only lawful order; so dear brother we will have to look for some other cause, for unless we can find the cause the trouble cannot be removed. Now I will tell you the cause. It is the same which has brought all the evils which has ever come upon God's creatures, which is disobedience. Six or eight elders agreed to fast and pray for the Lord to make known His will concerning us. We naturally thought the good Lord would speak through Bro. David or John. The time had nearly expired that we had agreed to fast. I stood up and was speaking about how

the spirit was working upon me when the following words came forth:

Let every one of you learn his own duties and each one of you are responsible to me (Christ) for the fulfillment of those duties. There was no testimony borne to it, but every one expressed themselves as being satisfied that it was from the Lord. Bro. Snyder told me afterwards that Bro. David told him that he had evidence that it was from the Lord. But they disregarded the instructions and done the very opposite to what they were told to do. Some time after that I was invited to another council but was impressed not to go but to write a letter letting them know that they had been disobedient and was in transgression, and when writing the following words was put in my mouth to write:

As the Lord God liveth, you will not be given any more revelations until you repent and obey that which I (Christ) have already given you.

Eight years have passed and has there been any revelation given in council since that time? No, not a word, and the council of April 6, '95 will be no better than the others since that time. Can Christ's Church live without revelation? We might as well say that our earthly bodies will live without food. Does Bro. Land tell the truth when he says the body is stagnant? I say yes, he tells the truth, and spiritual death will be the result if a change is not made. But what is the cause of us being in such a condition. It is disobedience. Now you have the cause for our present condition as I understand it. But what is the remedy? I know of no other than humility, confession and prayer for forgiveness, that the Lord may be the head of the

body and speak in the councils, that the body may become a living spiritual power, for if we cannot get knowledge we are in the same fix that Saul was when he had to go to the Witch of Endor because of disobedience. But I know that these are some of the Elders which are not in the condition that Saul was in and the Lord will take from amongst the faithful and obedient of us to assist in the great work that will soon commence in this land and in America. But I hope that every one of us will be saved for our position is right if we will only do right, and we pray three times every day that the Lord may help you all to be faithful. Do not think hard of me for the way that I am writing for it is not that I hate you but because I love you and want to wake you up to the reality of being on the verge of the greatest spiritual work that the world has ever seen. The great work amongst the Indians that the L. D. S in their zeal thought to do sixty years ago has yet to be done, and will commence soon.

It is a great comfort to me to know that the good Lord is preparing some individual elders in America for that great work. There is another great comfort that I have, that though the body be standing still, we have not gone into any false doctrine. Praise the Lord for that and let every brother and sister praise the Lord for that. So long as we keep from false doctrine the authority is kept pure. I never did believe the Lord took David Whitmer from amongst the L. D. S. to organize another gentile church, but for the purpose of keeping the authority pure on the earth until His time came to gather Israel. Therefore let us

continue to keep from false doctrine, and it takes close watching, for we can see how the church went into them, all they had to do was to make a man like themselves head of the body. So long as the church is spiritually minded they are able to discern Christ as their visible head.

Who and what is Christ's Church? Only the spiritual minded is His church. So the brethren very soon got a little exalted and thought they were going to turn the world upside down, convert the indians and build the new Jerusalem, and lots of other great things which Christ has not told them to do, and through disobedience became carnal minded, for remember that so long as a church or individuals are spiritual minded they will look to their spiritual head for instructions and be obedient to them. Paul said He conferred not with flesh and blood. And, all the apostles were able to see Christ as their visible head, not with fleshly eyes but with their spiritual minds. Christ is visible to all spiritual minds, and no man or church will put another man between them and Christ until Christ is invisible to them. So the L. D. S. through disobedience could not see Christ as their visible head and Christ cannot be a head to a carnal body, and a body cannot live without a head of some kind, so they voted Joseph as their visible head. Christ also became invisible to them as their great high priest so they voted a whole quorum of visible high priests. But let us close our eyes from all the other abominations and be guarded against all false doctrines. But do not understand me as disapproving of the L. D. S. in all things, I cannot do that, for they preach the first principles the same as we do, and some of

them are blest with a large portion of the holy spirit, and I must say that I have very warm feelings to L. D. S.'s every where, even those that I have had the hardest conflicts with, and hope the day will come when all will make the B. of D. C. a matter of history. Letting every person believe as much or little as they please of it, and come to the terms of the two Books and be one people. The Utahs having given up polygamy, is a great step towards it. We see that the two were to come together. But there is no evidence in existence that there was to be three books as a standard of faith to Gods people. Now my dear brothers how do we stand before the world as a church, and how are we to become a living spiritual power. The only way I know is to be spiritual minded. Think more of the masters work than of the world, see Christ as our visible head, receive instructions and be obedient in all things. Then we will be a living church instead of a dead one. Then Brother Wickes's little paper will be running over with spiritual food for the dear ones that are starving for food, and make the RETURN a grand success.

We are both in moderate health, and send our love to all the church.

Address, W. P. BROWN,
Jerusalem,
Palestine, Asia.

Special Offer.

For \$1.40 cash in advance, we will send THE RETURN for one year and a complete set of back numbers (26) published by E. Robinson. This will apply to those who have already sent a dollar for the paper. Send forty cents more and we will send you a post paid set of back numbers. In clubs of five we will send the paper and back numbers for \$6.50.

Since the last number of **THE RETURN** was published, the editor has visited the brethren at Richmond, Mo., by invitation of Brn. Schweich and Snyder, to counsel with them concerning the disposition of the funds from the estate of Bro. Geo. Adams.

We copy from the executors' record certain items which will explain themselves.

There has been some friction and misunderstanding over this matter in the past, but all differences have been adjusted and we trust that all will move forward from this time with but one object in view, viz., the advancement of the work.

That all may get a clear idea of the business, we commence at the beginning of the record:

In November, 1890, Brother George Adams died, leaving his property of about \$5000 value, in the hands of three executors, to be used for the benefit of the Church of Christ, for the spread of the gospel as they deemed best.

These men were Brn. J. C. Whitmer, Ebenezer Robinson and Solomon Thomas.

In March, 1891, Bro. Robinson, the executor in charge, died, before much had been done toward settling the estate. Brn. Whitmer and Thomas chose Bro. C. A. Wickes to succeed him.

About the same time a claim was filed against the estate by one Hewell, from near Lamoni, Iowa, for about \$1500.

The executors deemed the claim unjust and refused to allow it, and a vexatious suit followed, which dragged through the year and was finally decided against the claimant, but had cost each side several hundred dollars.

Shortly afterward a difference of

opinion arose between the managing executor, C. A. Wickes, and the other two, and as there appeared no hope of arriving at a unity of opinion, C. A. Wickes resigned his commission and turned over to John C. Whitmer and Solomon Thomas the properties in his hands, as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Cash..... | \$1197 76 |
| Notes to amount of..... | 2499 00 |
| Personal property..... | 60 00 |
| House and lot in Lamoni.... | 900 00 |

Total..... \$4656 76

This was done on the 27th day of May, 1892.

Bro. Geo. Schweich of Richmond was chosen in his place.

An arrangement was made by Brn. Thomas and Whitmer, with Bro. Schweich, by which he was to publish **THE RETURN** for five years, and was to have as remuneration for such service the use of \$4000 of the estate for that period, and all subscription money from the paper.

On June 7, 1892, Bro. Whitmer paid Bro. Schweich \$1000 of the amount to bind the bargain, but various things produced delays until October, when the first number was issued at Richmond.

After twelve numbers had been published, Brn. Whitmer and Schweich decided that it was best to suspend the paper for a time.

Bro. Thomas had died meantime, and Bro. John J. Snyder of Salt Lake City was chosen by them to fill his place, but before his confirmation by the court of Decatur county, Iowa, Bro. John C. Whitmer also died in August, 1894, leaving only Bro. Schweich as actual executor.

In January, 1895, Bro. Snyder was confirmed as executor by the court and entered upon his duties.

In March, 1895, **THE RETURN** WAS

revived at Davis City, Iowa, by Bro. C. A. Wickes.

In the same month Bro. Schweich filed his report with the court, showing a cash balance in his hands of \$3854 60, and other properties as follows: Books, \$100; Note of G. E. Reyner, \$20; Type and office fixtures, \$75. Total, \$195.

He also recommended the appointment of Bro. P. A. Page of Richmond, Mo., as executor in place of Bro. Whitmer, deceased.

The court approved of this appointment, but Bro. Page refused to serve.

It having been thought best by Brn. Snyder and Schweich to meet and confer together regarding the fund, about May 25th, they invited C. A. Wickes to meet with them.

The meeting took place at the house of Bro David Whitmer, Jr., at Richmond, Mo., May 27, 1895.

Bro. Page having refused to serve as executor, Brn. Schweich and Snyder appointed Bro. C. A. Wickes to fill the place.

It was decided that a record, or minute book, of the proceedings of the executors should be kept from this date, and every transaction should be duly recorded and also published in THE RETURN from time to time as they occur, that the church may know from this time forward just how every dollar of said fund has been expended.

Brn. Whitmer and Thomas having turned over the funds to Bro. Schweich to run THE RETURN, without security, Brn. Wickes and Snyder thought it right and justice to the church that he give security for the safe return of the funds which he promised to do by July 1, 1895, to be paid back as follows:

On or before Sept. 1, 1895, \$ 350 00

On or before Dec. 1, 1895... 600 00
 On or before June 1, 1896... 950 00
 On or before Dec. 1, 1896... 950 00
 On or before June 1, 1897... 1004 60

Total..... \$3854 60

Bro. Schweich will not be charged interest on this fund, as we find the law of God forbids charging interest to a brother, for the use of money. (See Lev. 25:36.)

Further business was deferred until Tuesday, May 28, 1895.

TUESDAY, May 28.

We, as executors under the will of Bro. Adams, deem best that the fund should be expended for the publication of the Record of the Nephites, from the original manuscripts now in the hands of David Whitmer, Jr., and also other publications and printing, details of which will appear in THE RETURN from time to time as the work is done.

It is deemed best at the present time to publish 5000 copies from David Whitmer's "Address," from the plates which we have, and 5000 copies of a pamphlet just finished by Bro. John J. Snyder, called "Truth No. 1."

It is estimated that these two pamphlets will cost about two hundred and fifty dollars.

JOHN J. SNYDER, Executor.
 GEO. SCHWEICH, Executor.
 C. A. WICKES, Executor-elect.

Back Subscription.

All who paid for THE RETURN, to either Bro. Robinson or Bro. Schweich, and did not receive the paper to the full amount of their subscription, are requested to notify this office and the amount found due them will be credited on the present issue. Please attend to this without delay.

Also, all those knowing themselves to be indebted to either Bro. Schweich or Bro. Robinson, will please remit the amount due, to this office, and they will be properly receipted.

THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

Entered at the postoffice at Davis City, Iowa, as second-class matter.

DAVIS CITY, IA., JUNE 1, 1895

We are in receipt of several letters, some of which are written in a fault-finding spirit, and some indulge in personal allusions of a slighting nature.

Such we cannot publish, so we hope no more of such character will be sent.

The paper should be a source of joy and comfort to those who read it, by reason of the messages of peace and gladness, and the lofty and inspiring thoughts of Christ's glorious work, which it should contain.

This cannot be if it is to be debased to the level of a fault finder or a scold.

In writing on points on which there are differences of opinion, attack principles, not individuals.

Remember, the opinion of another is as dear to him as yours is to you, and he MAY be RIGHT and YOU WRONG. Even if you are right, the brother has feelings and they should be respected.

A sharp thrust adds nothing to the weight of argument, and as it may wound, should not be given. The loftier the tone of an argument, the more the individual is lost sight of in contemplation of a principle, the better will be the effect upon the truly thoughtful.

If there are differences and grievances that cannot be settled privately, bring them to the council, where

they may receive proper attention, but do not rush with them into print, thereby advertising such conditions to the world. Another thing, no letter or article will be published unless the writer's full name is sent to us, so do not waste any more time and postage that way.

If things are not moving as they should in your locality, go to work earnestly and in the spirit of the Master try to WIN men to better ways, but don't try to DRIVE them with a club. The world is on the eve of dissolution, for lack of truth and righteousness.

A giant's task is before each lover of his race.

Then in mercy's name don't fritter away your time wrangling over what you think some one else ought to do, but do your own duty in the fear of God, and trust him to take care of his work in his own time and way.

Church Organization.

Considerable interest has lately arisen in certain quarters on the question of church organization. Some seem to think the church is not sufficiently organized and that they have a special mission to perform in perfecting that organization.

With all kindness due these brethren, we must beg to disagree with them.

The church has now elders, priests and teachers.

From these three divisions, all ranks of officials, for all conditions of the church, were chosen. Great stress seems to be laid upon the fact that we have no apostles among us. The early church tried its hand at apostle making before they were endowed with the spirit, and they made one by chance—

cast lots between two. Christ ignored him, so far as we know, and called Paul. On this land, having a clear succession of the disciples, they fell into darkness, with three of the original ones remaining with them. Those who were appointed to fill vacancies could not and did not have the same testimony to bear as the original ones.

In our generation twelve witnesses were chosen—witnesses of a certain thing, viz. the plates of the Nephite Records.

Shortly after the first step into error was taken (on April 6th, 1830,) these witnesses were ignored and two MEN—think of it—were told to choose twelve APOSTLES. They did so, and the one who was spared to old age, considered it one of the greatest errors of his life, and those apostles and their immediate successors led the church very near, if not quite, where Joseph Smith is reported to have said they would—to hell.

There is one eternal head to the church—Christ. There are twelve apostles in the church, chosen by Christ at Jerusalem. They are to sit, in the regeneration, “upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Let no man usurp their places. Ye that are called to be elders in the Church of Christ, better attend to the duties Christ has laid upon you, preach the gospel, rescue the perishing, give a light to a darkened world. Execute God’s law, both in and out of the church. You don’t need any higher honors or authority until you learn how to do these things.

Beware of attempting to do what Christ never called you to do.

Learn your own legitimate duties and do them, and don’t step outside those bounds. In 1890 the church

affirmed that the officers of the church are “elders, priests and teachers.”

Let it so stand until Christ comes and adds more, if he wants to.

Our own opinion is, that if he DOES come and call twelve men for any special work, before he brings back the original twelve, he will choose them from the seed of promise, the REMNANTS.

We would just as soon go back to the “Reorganizers” and accept their twelve, and a few other man-made officials, as to assist in starting another copy of Rome.

COMMUNICATIONS.

PEORIA, Ill., May 20, 1895.

C. A. Wickes:

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: Several copies of THE RETURN have come to my address, which I am very glad to receive. I subscribed for and received the paper through 1890, renewed my subscription for '91, but think I only received two papers. I subscribed and paid for it once afterwards and only received one or two numbers. I would be glad to receive it the year out and if there is anything due I will pay it when notified to that effect.

I believe in the doctrine of the church it represents, so far as I understand it, and my prayer is that it may be successful in promulgating the truth and making manifest existing errors.

Your sister in Christ.

MRS. C. M. HERSTINE

MESA, Ariz., May 21, 1895

Editor Return:

DEAR BRO—I paid for one year’s (1892) subscription to THE RETURN, but received only one copy, and would like it if you would continue to send

me the paper for amount paid. If I still like the paper I will renew my subscription for the coming year.

Have you the book for sale entitled "Archæological Writings of the Sanhedrim and Talmuds" as spoken of in Vol. 2, No. 5, of this paper? If not, can you tell me where I can get it and the price of the book?

I enclose postage stamp, for which please send to my address Elder David Whitmer's Address.

Your sister in Christ,

MRS. PAULINE ANDERSON.

[The book you mention is a fraud. You can find the substance of it in Gen. Lew Wallace's novel, "Ben Hur."—Ed.]

Bro. H. S. Howell writes from Independence, Mo., that his health is not good, but he has an abiding faith in the gospel.

Bro. Peter Olsen of Weston, Iowa, writes a good letter and approves of the Book of Mormon or "Nephite Record," from the Richmond Manuscript. He says the Salt Lake people have perverted it in their Danish edition by leaving out of the Book of Jacob, that portion which condemns polygamy. He also says they have tried to gather up the first edition. If he is correctly informed in these matters, we begin to see why they told David Whitmer he could have any price he might ask for the MSS., even to the sum of \$100,000.00. That manuscript has been, and is in safe hands, and we are glad of it, for the record in its purity must go to the remnants that are left of the land. And if such schemes as this are being hatched among a people who did not hesitate to garble and change what they put forth and taught as revelations of God in 1833-5, we are of the opinion that the sooner that book is published just as written and under its proper name, the better it will be for all concerned.

Send one dollar for THE RETURN and keep posted for the next year.

Some Curious Facts About Our Planetary System.

As a matter of course the planets will all be in a straight line on one side of the sun within limited periods of time, viz: the least common multiple of the times of their revolutions, which are, omitting the asteroids, $\frac{1}{4}$, 5-6, 1.2, 12, 30, 84, 166 years. As the first five are contained in the last three, it will be the same as that of 30, 84 and 166, viz: 34,860. Taking only the last two, viz, that of Uranus and Neptune, we get 6889. When the two latter are abreast Saturn will come twice nearly in a line, and all the rest several times. If the two last were abreast at the creation they will be so again in 990 years, allowing time for Saturn in 1000 years nearly. The two last are said to be prolate spheroids and Saturn very flat at the poles. There is reason to believe that planets shift their poles, for the reindeer, an arctic animal, is found buried in the south of France, and the mammoth, an equatorial animal, has been preserved with flesh in the Arctic regions. Who can imagine the stupendous changes likely to be wrought in the face of nature as a result of such a mighty conjunction of the planets?

INNER LAMB.

Back Numbers of the Return.

We have on hand about 500 complete sets of numbers 1 to 26, published by Bro. Robinson, and we are authorized to sell them at the low price of 50cts per set, post paid to any address in the United States or Canada. The personal history of the editor is the best church history of the times and events mentioned, that has ever been published.

Every believer in the Book of Mormon should have a set.

We have also a number of sets of the publication of Bro. Schweich, which we are authorized to send for 25 cents, postpaid.

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.

“Condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they repent, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to SAY, but to DO, according to that which I have written.”—Joseph Smith., D. & C. Sec. 83, Par. 8.

Vol. 3, No. 10. DAVIS CITY, IOWA, JUNE 15, 1895. Whole No. 34.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

Position of the Denominational Churches Regarding the Orders of Officers.

All admit that a deacon was originally the lowest of the ordained officers and was intended to be a temporal office and that the words deacon and deaconship are often used in the new testament in a spiritual sense, as Gal. 2:17, “Is Christ the servant (deacon in Greek) of sin?” and Rom. “The service (deaconship) of your faith.” also that the deacon ought to confine himself to his own work, for when Paul says; “Let him that ministereth, wait on his ministry.” (1 Cor.) The original is, “serves as a deacon,” and “deaconship,” also “If any man minister (serve as a deacon) let him do it as of the ability with which God entertains, (1 Pet. 4:11, literal and temporal).” The same word, wrongly translated “giveth” occurs in 2 Cor. 9:10 and refers to the entertainment of a chorus leader. This then can be concluded that a deacon was a temporal ordained officer, not enumerated among the spiritual orders in 1 Cor. 12:28, and also that the term is applied spiritually and generally to any member.

The same double application of

meaning is found in the New Testament with regard to the terms, prophet, teacher, evangelist, pastor, and overseer or bishop, so that the office of a temporal overseer or bishop is not abolished because it is used in a spiritual sense and applied to elders in Acts. 20:28, any more than is the temporal office of deacon, because often used spiritually.

In its spiritual sense Christ is called the bishop of souls. Its spiritual application to elder shows that his office is spiritual, otherwise all elders would be temporal bishops, uniting in themselves the greatest spiritual and temporal power, and becoming lords over God's heritage. As the elder has taken the place of apostle, first order (1 Cor. 12:28), he has nothing to do with serving tables, or property-keeping. If the deacon had charge of property there was no temporal bishop, but the words in 1 Tim. applied to bishop. “Take care of the church of God” in the Greek, proves that it was a temporal office, for the same Greek word is found in the parable of “The Good Samaritan,” where he gave two pence to the host to take care of the wounded man. The fact that the bishop was to be apt to teach does not make him an official teacher, but rather that he ought to

be a man of some education on account of the sordidness of his office.

If local churches object to incorporate, he ought to be a very conscientious man as well as his children, for property would be legally left to him.

That the offices of pastor and evangelist are placed after prophet in Eph. 4, although they belong to the eldership, is probably from the fact that the apostles were still living. Though Peter once called himself an elder and John twice, it was after the epistle to the Ephesians was written. But as pastor and evangelist are used in a dual sense, special and general, it is not of much consequence as the elder could perform any subordinate office when necessary without changing his order.

The office of apostle was not intended to be perpetuated, he was to have seen Christ in person or the flesh, hence Paul says "Am I not an apostle, have I not seen Jesus Christ?" Who else could fill the first order but elder?

As a new church becomes developed and confirmed, more officers are required. We find in the New Testament that elder, prophet or priest, and deacon, were ordained.

The bishop's, was an office, but is not mentioned as being ordained. Elders, priests and teacher are the only enumerated spiritual orders. Miracle workers, healers and interpreters would be orders, if always confined to the same person. Pilots, directors, and helps are evidently temporary.

We find that Paul and Barnabas, among prophets and teachers, were enumerated ordained by prophets and teachers to be evangelists. Timothy ordained by the presbytery was to do the work of an evangelist.

Paul is no doubt referring to Stephen

and Philip (ordained deacons) when he says that those who have used the office of a deacon will acquire great boldness in the faith and procure to themselves a good degree (promotion as elders).

Philip was authorized by the Holy Ghost to baptize the Samaritans but could not communicate the gifts of the spirit by laying on hands. Peter and John had to be sent for, who no doubt ordained him to the eldership. Ananias had to be sent for to lay hands on Saul.

Laying on hands was by stretching out the hand and has no reference to a show of hands, as is common at elections. The tips of the fingers receive as well as give out magnetism. The Israelites prevailed when Moses' hands were lifted up.

Paul speaks of "lifting up holy hands in prayer". The strongest passage in reference to a bishop-elder is in Titus 1: Some of the qualifications of temporal bishop in 1 Tim. 3, are here repeated, but there would be no wresting of the scriptures to one's destruction by supposing that overseer is here used only spiritually. The union of the temporal and spiritual power in one person is drawn from these words in Titus, by the church of Rome.

INER LAMB.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Back Subscription

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THE RETURN.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1 a year

C. A. WICKES - - EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

Entered at the postoffice at Davis City, Iowa, as
second-class matter.

DAVIS CITY, IA., JUNE 15, 1895

Infallibility.

"Cursed is he that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm."

This used to be a favorite saying among Latter Day Saints, but "how are the mighty fallen."

It has been for many years past the policy of The Saints Herald to laud the character of Joseph Smith to the heavens, and to try by every possible means to crush every man who dared assert that he was liable to be mistaken in his official utterances, or that he had anything to do with establishing the spiritual wife heresy known as polygamy. We are quite sensible of the gravity of the question and the weight of opposition we shall arouse in taking up this subject on the lines laid down by David Whitmer and Ebenezer Robinson.

We do so only because of the brazen effrontery with which the Herald, and the official members of the Josephite church, pushes the official infallibility of Joseph Smith, and his entire innocence of the spiritual wife heresy, persistently to the front on all occasions, even when silence would serve their purpose better.

Not long ago we were invited by some of the members of a Josephite "Branch" about four miles from Davis City, to preach to them at their chapel one Sunday afternoon. We did so, and spent a very pleasant hour with them and a number of

their neighbors, showing the departure of the Saints from right doctrine by changing their name in 1834 from "The Church of Christ, as they were previously known, to "The Church of Latter Day Saints," leaving Christ entirely out. And also, in forgetting the temporal salvation which the Gospel must bring if taught in its fullness, by obedience to God's just laws, instead of the unjust methods founded in Babylon and Egypt, and followed by all nations at present.

We said not one word reflecting on Joseph Smith in any way, but some of the officers of that branch were evidently afraid that some of their flock were in danger of being led astray, for they had sent to Lamoni for help, and the instant the speaker was out of the stand, Elder Asa Cochran stepped into it and "reviewed" our argument, just as we had told the people would be done, viz., by talking all over the scriptures for INFERENCES against us, and not once touching the direct commandments we had quoted to prove our position.

How often have the Josephites laughed in derision when the "Brighamites" and sectarians have employed such tactics to break down the impressions made by their own teaching? How well grounded their people must be in their pet theories, if they are not to be trusted to digest one "Whitmerite" sermon without a little fresh salt mixed with it. SHAME!

The sentiment of the well informed seemed to be expressed by one Josephite, who said to another in answer to his assertion that "Cochran had completely answered him." "Yes, if blank assertion can answer positive proof, he was answered." But this was not all.

Bro. Cochran went entirely out of his way to state that "many foolish assertions were made about Joseph Smith, among them being the one that he had gone into polygamy, and had been entirely disproved."

Now we had not said a word about anything of the kind, either in the pulpit or paper, but as it seems necessary that this worship of Joseph Smith should be broken down, that the honest may come into the mighty work so soon to begin among the "remnants" of the land, we shall take the same position occupied by Isaac Sheen, Wm. Marks and many other well informed men who helped to start the Reorganization years before Joseph Smith, now of Lamoni, came into it and changed its policy on this head, viz.: State the exact truth as near as we can get at it, and let lightning strike where it will, if strike it must.

In the first number of the Herald, published in Cincinnati, O., Jan. 1860, Isaac Sheen, its editor (than whom there was no better posted man in the Reorganization), admitted Joseph Smith's responsibility for the spiritual wife revelation, quoted Ezekiel 14th as showing the condition of the case, and closed that portion of his article by saying, "The death of the prophet is one fact that has been realized, although he abhorred and repented of this iniquity before his death." See pages 8 and 9 of first Herald. On page 24 of same number he says in another article, "The Salt Lake apostles excuse themselves by saying that Joseph Smith taught the spiritual wife doctrine, but this excuse is as weak as their excuse concerning the ancient kings and patriarchs. JOSEPH SMITH REPENTED OF HIS CONNECTION WITH THIS DOCTRINE

AND SAID IT WAS OF THE DEVIL. He caused the revelation on that subject to be burned, and when he voluntarily came to Nauvoo and resigned himself into the arms of his enemies, he said that he was going to Carthage to die. At that time he also said, that if it had not been for that accursed spiritual wife doctrine, he would not have come to that. By his conduct at that time he proved the sincerity of his repentance and of his profession as a prophet. If Abraham and Jacob, by repentance, can obtain salvation and exaltation, so can Joseph Smith."

Isaac Sheen was made editor of the Herald by vote of a general conference of the "Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," which met at the house of Israel L. Rogers, near Sandwich, Ill., Oct. 6, 1859. By vote of the same conference Wm. Marks, Z. H. Gurley and Wm. W. Blair were made the publishing committee. In a letter, page 22 of this same first number, Wm. Marks reports a conversation between himself and Joseph Smith, at Nauvoo, Ill., in which the latter says he had "desired for a long time to have a talk with me (Marks) on the subject of polygamy."

"He said it eventually would prove the overthrow of the church, and we should soon be obliged to leave the United States, unless it could speedily be put down. He said that he would go before the congregation and proclaim against it, and I must go into the High Council, and he would prefer charges against those in transgression, and I must sever them from the church, unless they made ample satisfaction."

"There was much more said, but this was the substance."

At the time of this conversation Elder Marks was president of the stake at Nauvoo, and also president of the high council.

At the time of this letter and its publication, "Young Joseph", as he is called, had not yet taken control of the Reorganization.

When he grasped the helm, the ship was put on a different tack in a hurry, with Wm. W. Blair as chief mate and assistant. The policy then was to deny the assertion that Joseph Smith was the author of the polygamy revelation, or that he was in any way implicated in it.

In this situation is displayed a bit of fine cunning of the lawyer, to understand which, requires an understanding of the case in a manner in which I have never seen it stated in print. "Young Joseph" has many times spoken and written about the doctrine of "spiritual wifery" which was very early heard of in the church under which husbands and wives were "sealed" to each other by the elders, for eternity. And he claims this was all the "spiritual wifery" his father had any dealings with, and has often made the point that the "revelation" produced by Brigham Young in 1852 and imputed to Joseph Smith, was not in his writing.

Elder Whitehead of Lamoni is reported to have said that he heard the revelation on "spiritual wifery" read at Nauvoo in presence of Joseph and others, but it was NOT LIKE the one PRINTED IN THE SALT LAKE BOOK OF COVENANTS.

B. Young is said to have stated that Emma, Joseph's wife burned it when she first heard it read, and afterward a copy was made by dictation from Joseph's lips.

Isaac Sheen, it will be noticed,

states that "Joseph had it burned."

We think that it was burned, beyond question. We think also beyond a reasonable doubt, that the document printed at Salt Lake is not JUST EXACTLY like the original that was burned. But from the positive testimony of such men as Marks, Sheen and many more who were right there and knew, and swore to what they knew,—men and women who were not mixed with it—many of whom left the church then and there because of it. We are forced to conclude that when the leaders of the reorganization reversed the frank and manly acknowledgment of Marks and Sheen, they erred wilfully and must answer in the near future to an enlightened public sentiment, as well as to Him who rules the destinies of nations. We wish all to distinctly understand that we are making no war upon Joseph Smith as an individual, nor for that matter upon any one else. But public policy, records, and acts, are public property, and as long as certain parties persist in thrusting untruthful statements upon the public, they must expect that those who know better will occasionally remonstrate, and point to the statements of accredited witnesses who knew of the matter far better than these of later day could possibly know. It is not necessary to make out a case of infallibility for Joseph Smith, in order to preach the gospel and present the claims of the Book of Mormon, but it was clearly seen that to uphold the Book of doctrine and Covenants and the church government and policy it creates, Joseph Smith had to be placed very conspicuously in the foreground. But who would think that such intellectual giants as the Josephite leaders are

supposed to be, would undertake a task so Titanic, as to ignore the record of facts, left by such men as Marks, Sheen, Robinson, the Laws, and others who never went to Utah, and knew whereof they spoke, and spoke to the point in no uncertain terms.

And who would expect from the vaulted light and gospel freedom of Latter Day Saints, such a complete duplicate of the papal doctrine of infallibility as is contained in the following quotation which we clip from the Saints Herald for June 12, 1895, page 374: "It is but a fair conclusion that Joseph Smith, the Seer, held himself in readiness at all times to hear and deliver what might be given unto him; and that he could only present what should thus be revealed, at the will of the Lord; his time and place being at the discretion, pleasure, or will of God; his messages being in nowise dependent upon his own desires, or will. The same is true of every prophet whatever the age or time when he lived and served God."

If this is not blind adulation run mad, then we never heard of an instance that would fill the bill. If such a presumption as this is "only fair," what did God mean when he told Joseph Smith that if he was "not aware" he would "fall and incur the vengeance of a just God" against him. And again, when he had followed a spurious revelation over into Canada, and come back discouraged, why was he told that "some revelations are of God, some are of man, and some are of the devil." And why are we told to "try the spirits?" We know of nothing but the word to try them by. And why are we to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good"? If it is "fair to pre-

sume" that a prophet of latter days is so infallible that he will always be in condition to receive what God wants to say, and could not say anything else.

Out upon such sickening sophistry, that would lead a people gagged and blindfolded into the very portals of hell. Rome never promulgated a more blinding or misleading doctrine to pave the way for the absolute supremacy of the Pope, than is here set forth in behalf of Joseph Smith, by the editorial columns of the Herald. Joseph Smith was chosen as the humble instrument in God's hand to bring forth the Record of the Nephites, to this generation.

While he was still translating them he was chided for his disobedience and rebellious inclinations, and told "you have a gift to translate the plates * * * and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift * * * for I will grant unto you no other gift."

And it stopped there and was so published twice under his direction. But when he and his fellows had become blind enough in 1834 to divorce themselves from Christ by dropping his name entirely, he was hardened enough to revise what he said was a revelation from God, and add to the above the words "until it is finished."

In the face of such facts as we have cited, and a host of others that can be cited if necessary, where is the wisdom or utility in pushing Joseph Smith so constantly to the front as a being so fully inspired of God that he could not, and did err, in that which he presented to the church.

Better take the simple, straightforward course of the early organizers of the Josephite church—be honest first of all, in that which is told to the

people; admit the errors and follies that occurred, point as they did to God's word for justification of the punishment he inflicted; preach the plain gospel on the simple lines laid down in the Bible and Book of Mormon, and trust God to prosper his own work in his own way. It must come to this in the end, and the longer the move is delayed the harder it will be to act, and the greater the wrong done.

The time is growing short and desperate. The sign given by Jesus for the church to know of approaching destruction of this gentile nation, is plainly with us. It is time for men who have received the light of latter days, to turn from chasing the vain and foolish things of this world or age, and prepare for the terrible events that must shortly come to pass.

Bro. Geo. Schweich begs to acknowledge the receipt of \$5.00 from Mary P. Rowe, Grass Valley, California. He furnished the amount and duplicated same to a brother for transportation to the council of April 6th, 1895.

MARRIED, at Richmond, Missouri, Jan. 6, 1895, Elder Francis M. Miller to Mary C. Short. Elder P. A. Page officiating. All the parties reside at Richmond. May they be blessed in their union.

Special Offer.

For \$1.40 cash in advance, we will send THE RETURN for one year and a complete set of back numbers (26) published by E. Robinson. This will apply to those who have already sent a dollar for the paper. Send forty cents more and we will send you a post paid set of back numbers. In clubs of five we will send the paper and back numbers for \$6.50.

Send one dollar for THE RETURN and keep posted for the next year.

That Quotation.

Under date of March 22, 1895, we received a letter from Joseph Smith, asking the question, "Why do you misquote from Sec. 83, D. C., and give 'Joseph Smith' as the author? Is that honest?"

We answered emphatically, "Yes, sir." If for the sake of brevity I shorten the terms and drop out useless repetitions, but am scrupulously careful to preserve the exact meaning, I can not truthfully be charged with dishonesty.

From our knowledge of the methods usually pursued by the Herald, we had expected criticism of this kind, and forestalled it by an editorial in THE RETURN of March 15th, admitting the verbal inaccuracy of the quotation.

We had an object in allowing this inaccuracy to stand uncorrected.

Having drawn the fire of the Herald, in an editorial under the heading "Questionable" on page 235, in the April 10th number, we cheerfully comply with the editor's suggestion—give the words quoted just as they read, and state where they can be found. And now that this is done we ask anyone to tell us wherein the meaning and sense is changed in any degree.

But the most curious thing about the Herald's position, is its objection that Joseph Smith is "not the author of the language attempted to be quoted." The only point we can see in this, is that the Herald holds that God, and not Joseph Smith is the author.

If this is the point, we think the

Herald is hard run for points of objection.

When quoting from Isaiah, or John, or Moses we credit the quotation to the writer of the book. The Herald does this in common with all other Bible teachers, and to urge a technical quibble of this kind is very much like "straining at a gnat." We shall insist on crediting this quotation to Joseph Smith.

Hit birds flutter. The strength of this quotation is touched in the last part of the Herald's criticism where it says, "to attempt to draw adherence to the Whitmerite movement by such methods is, to give it no harsher name, questionable."

If quoting Joseph Smith is likely to draw adherence to the Whitmerite movement, then the Josephite movement feels itself in sore straits. That is what hurts the Herald. A full record of its transactions is all that is needed to prepare the funeral of any unjust cause, and there is enough in the right teachings of Joseph Smith to condemn his most zealous followers both at Lamoni and Salt Lake, and the quotation we have selected for a motto is one that will eventually drive both factions to the wall, for it lays the ax right at the root of the matter and tells Latter Day Saints that they should remain under condemnation until they repented of their departures from the Bible and Book of Mormon.

Come back, Brother Joseph, to the "o'd paths" of primitive simplicity in all matters of church and state.

God's law in the Bible and

Book of Mormon will lay the foundation and furnish the details, for the plainest and simplest church, and the grandest and truest temporal government, that ever man dreamed of; and it don't fill the church with such a complicated tangle of official positions that the best lawyer in the bunch can't make it clear, either. Seyer the church from the state. Don't attempt to build another copy of Rome.

To all presiding elders and church officers:

It is desirable that the general church record should be more complete. Brother P. A. Page of Richmond, Missouri, is church recorder, but has received no reports for some years. It was decided at the April council that all should be requested to report to this office, but it was overlooked at the time and did not appear in the minutes. All church officers will please take notice and forward a report from their jurisdiction. State how many members of the church on your books, how many living near the place, and how many located abroad. Give names of officers of the church, and state condition of the church spiritually. Please attend to this without delay.

Back Numbers of the Return.

We have on hand about 500 complete sets of numbers 1 to 26, published by Bro. Robinson, and we are authorized to sell them at the low price of 50cts per set, post paid to any address in the United States or Canada. The personal history of the editor is the best church history of the times and events mentioned, that has ever been published.

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THE RETURN.

"Condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all, and shall remain until they repent, and remember the New Covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments. not only to SAY, but to DO, according to that which I have written."—D. & C. Sec. 83, Par: 8.

Vol. 3, No. 11.

DAVIS CITY, IOWA, JULY 1, 1895.

Whole No. 35.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

Concluded.

POSITION OF THE DENOMINATIONAL CHURCHES REGARDING ORDERS OF OFFICERS.

Some might aver that the office of teacher is abolished because Paul says: "Ye need not that any teach you, for the Holy Ghost himself teacheth you," and again, "be not many teachers knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." (James.) This is just what the denominational churches do. Again it might be said that the office of evangelist is abolished because after the martyrdom of Stephen the church at Jerusalem was scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word or evangelizing. The strongest word for preaching and preach in the original Greek is *kerux* and *kerusso*. Much misunderstanding arises from the word "rule" as applied to the elder. Its proper translation is "maintain." The word *archon*, ruler, and its cases, though often applied to the rulers of Jewish synagogues, yet after the establishment of the church, is only found once and in the Apocalypse, where it is applied to Christ. The precedent is given of an annual gathering of all the saints, when the leading elders instead of exercising authority have

to set the example of washing each other's feet; a general council of officers could only be convened by a voice from the living high priest and head, Jesus Christ.

A very important matter that distinguishes the Church of Christ from denominations is to provide for the poor who come into it. None ought to be rejected simply on the ground of poverty. For if any man provide not for his own, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. Modern churches will send their poor to the county union. As the ministers of the church may not work for salaries, it follows that there ought to be common property for their support, and that industries ought to be developed for members only. How else can the church maintain its purity? The general church ought not to incorporate without the sanction of the Lord and would cause a division by so doing. It would be better to have property left to the bishop or any conscientious member in charge for the rest. If we ask any minister of modern churches what order of office he holds, he will either answer "minister" (which is usually the translation of the Greek deacon), or else "pastor," by which "elder" is really meant, for they were to feed

the flock of God, Acts 20, but how is this reconciled with a young man fresh from college called reverend, ordained without any specific designation. In a certain church the deacon does the duties of teacher, while few if any churches have a distinct ordained order of teacher. They speak of taking holy orders, but either hold more than one or are unable to specify the one.

The doctrine of double meaning or dual idea, on which the argument in this article hangs, brings prominent the universal doctrine of correspondences, of which the Bible is full, viz: that all externals in man and nature correspond to internals in spirit, there being very little originality in a man's spirit. Origen taught it. What else is worth knowing? Heaven itself is an infinite number of them. Consciousness of them is day. But the wearied spirit flags; the author of life for whose use man was made, suffers an alternate dream-some unconsciousness to come over him till the spirit, sunk in reverence to his father, God, revives refreshed in hope to learn more lessons of wisdom and understanding by periods. This doctrine is the substance of sanctity, fills the world with a halo of beauty and holiness, elevates the flatness of nature and does everything for adoration. Without it religion has only sympathy and goodness. It is the teacher's proper domain. The idolatry of the heathen shows it was once understood in the world, but the spiritual significance being lost, material idolatry ensued. The solemnity of that doctrine does away with sectarian quibbles and shades of religious

opinion, such as the vicarious atonement, imputation of merits, and immaculate conception. The church is the best means of grace. God will be true to his external correspondence if man neglects to watch his interiors, hence the words of Christ, "If the goodman of the house had known what time the thief would come, he would have watched and not suffered his house to be broken up," "for in such an hour as ye think not (are unconscious) the son of man cometh." Not *will come*, but *does come*. Watch what? The clouds. What house? The unbalanced cerebrum? the un governable cerebellum? To think longingly of anyone in spirit is to call him. Why should the elders wash each other's feet at the annual paschal feast but for the sake of the efficacious correspondence attached to the form? They must provide for a pure walk in life. Elders are an ensample to the flock and worthy of double honor (not salary). Civilization must come to communityships and purity of life, for a new era of countless multiplication of people is at hand, duplicating in every century. It is the duty of prophets to prepare the people for this mode of life and be in readiness to pass over to another life—that of the regeneration, eternal in the heavens. We do not deny the power of God to raise the material body, but what is that compared to the internal resurrection of the spirit? If this is secured the other will follow in time to make perfection, as a matter of course. The prophet has two meanings; as regards place as well as time; while there is

a special order of prophet or priest, and Paul says ye may all prophesy. The doctrine is seen in the two glories. There is unity but not identity. The learned can distinguish these ideas. Paul says Christ's body was raised up by the glory of the Father (in nature) but Christ speaks of his own glory: "My glory which I had with Thee before the world was," and "in the day of regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory," and "My kingdom is not of this world," hence Christ's kingdom and regeneration is a continuation of creation from the plane of sinful nature. If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation. "If any man keep my sayings he shall never see death." "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die," and "even if he were dead, yet shall he live." Language could not be any stronger to signify intent of meaning. The attractions of spirit life must subdue the engrossing pleasures of the animal nature, which are a fire that consumes the interior till there is none. It is the same with alcohol and its effect on the organic quality of the brain. The short-come of sectarian preaching, with its hectic revivals, is the worst kind of intoxication, because it is done in the name of God and is spurious. They are afraid of the consequences of investigation, and that fear is the obstruction of light to the world. The merely natural drunkard, with his overburdened and unrequited labor, is not guilty of spurious teaching and false exemplary practice like the professed ministers of religion. He that knew his master's will and did

it not shall be beaten with many stripes. The early or former church was disturbed by Judaism, Gnosticism, The Trinity, eating things strangled and meats offered to idols. At this day the church is called to consider orders and ordinances to keep it from being carried away by the metaphysical sea of spiritualism and free thought. Elders have the chief charge over the flock and are the most responsible to God.

Texts of Scripture referring to the commandments of the Lord: I Cor. 14:37, John 14:21-24. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that heareth me heareth him that sent me." "He that heareth us is of God; he that heareth not us is not of God." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. He that loveth me not keepeth not my saying." "The word which ye hear is not mine but the Father's which sent me." If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another." Rom. 3:20: "No man cometh unto me except the father draws him, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "It is appointed unto man once to die and after death the judgment." "Christ is the light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." Men are condemned for preferring darkness to light in a world of spurious teaching, lust, taking advantage, overreaching, and national financial iniquity. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

INNER LAMB.

Send one dollar for THE RETURN and keep posted for the next year.

The Return.

Published Semi-Monthly at \$1.00 a Year

C. A. WICKES, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

Entered at the postoffice at Davis City, Iowa, as
mail matter of the second class.

DAVIS CITY, IOWA, JUNE 15, 1895

How Shall We Preach the Gospel.

The world is full to surfeit, of essays and sermons, learned and ignorant, upon matters of doctrine in theology.

Even stirring appeals to the moral and emotional nature of men, fall mostly upon deaf ears, for men have learned by observation that there is little difference between the business methods of christians, and non-professors, and though they are unable to locate the difficulty, they feel instinctively that there is something false at bottom. Hence while an occasional man is roused under special circumstances to a religious life, i. e. a sense of his relation and responsibility to God, the vast majority are content to drift quietly along the stream of life, trusting that they will fare as well in the future as those who are striving in so many ways to accomplish the same end, and none showing any results, collectively, in the present life, that are especially desirable.

Jesus struck right at the root of the matter by not only teaching a spiritual and moral salvation, but also a *temporal* salvation that would make the former possible on a broad scale. He knew very well that it was of little use to preach ethics to a starving man, or quote the golden rule to a people and at the same time

by a system of legalized robbery called "business" take from the masses all but a small fraction of what they produce, and give it to a few who by superior cunning and unscrupulousness, overreach their fellows in the struggle for existence.

Knowing these things, he pointed to a righteous law as the remedy, and lifted his voice always against the oppressor, no matter who—sleek-coated money changer, or hypocritical teacher for gain,—all fell under his scathing condemnation, because, like wolves, they lived for self alone.

This is the secret of the success of the Salvation Army. Its founder has recognized the need of a practical as well as a theoretical religion, and going into the worst slums of the earth, in the heart of the greatest Christian(?) nation, he offers to the most depraved of the earth a chance to escape at once from the intolerable oppression of their Christian brethren, and from themselves, by placing them in a community where none are idle; all are self-supporting, and hence self-respecting. Then they are in a condition to think of the future, and its possibilities for them. The prosperous and satisfied can see no beauty in this, for, having obtained a competence for themselves, by superior cunning, craft, or lack of conscience combined with opportunity, they loudly laud the era of "individuality" and affect to despise all who fail to gain an advantage like themselves, never stopping to think that there must be a host of producers to be robbed, if robbery is to be profitable.

The thousands of small merchants

of Chicago who, a few years ago, were gaining a comfortable living from the profits of their sales to the laborers of the city, could see nothing wrong with the competitive system. But today when the cheap and rapid transit of the electric, cable and elevated railways of the city make the great department stores down town possible, and the smaller ones are being ruined by thousands because the great stores can sell cheaper than they, the legitimate results of competition are very apparent to them, and they are trying all sorts of expedients to bring back their lost trade.

As well might they try to dam the torrent of Niagara with sawdust.

Their clubs and societies, and indignation meetings are of no avail; men will buy where they can get the most for their money. As with them, so with all others throughout the country, and the world. Not one man in a thousand thinks of, or cares for, national results of a system, so long as his individual greed is not molested. Competition is simply a refined system of brigandage, which as population increases, and peace is maintained, eventually brings the products of the labor of millions into the hands of a very few, without any adequate return. The opposite extreme is ultra socialism, which while it provides for the physical wants of all, yet leaves no room for growth of soul, or individual manhood, but reduces all to the status of machines where each must play his part and there is no escape.

The most perfect example of this is found in the history of ancient Peru.

Freedom and truth are found in the middle ground, as laid down by Moses, thus: Absolute independence of the rural community under national laws; urban communities allowed to regulate their own affairs under the same general laws; and the greed of all to be checked by laws preventing speculation in land, growth of wealth by interest on money, and providing for a just distribution of governmental burdens by an income tax only.

Back Numbers of The Return.

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Back Subscription.

All who paid for THE RETURN, to either Bro. Robinson or Bro. Schweich, and did not receive the paper to the full amount of their subscription, are requested to notify this office and the amount found due them will be credited on the present issue. Please attend to this without delay.

Also, all those knowing themselves to be indebted to either Bro. Schweich or Bro. Robinson, will please remit the amount due, to this office, and they will be properly receipted.

DEATH OF DAVID J. WHITMER.**Suffocated in a Sand Pit.**

On Sunday, June 16th last, we received the sad intelligence of the death of Bro. David J. Whitmer, of Richmond, Mo.

Only a few days before, we had parted from him at Richmond; a hale and hearty man, giving promise of many years of usefulness and vigor. He was full of the spirit of peace and love, and our visit with him had been very pleasant, and he was happiest when talking of the Gospel, and our Father's dealings with His children. The news of his sudden death came as a shock, like a stroke of lightning from a clear sky. We can hardly realize that the genial voice of our friend and brother is hushed forever, but we bow in submission to the will of our Father, and count one more friend to welcome us at the gate of the Beautiful City. The Richmond Conservator of June 20th tells the story so completely, and voices so thoroughly the sentiment of the people among whom he lived, that we copy its article entire, as follows:

On Friday morning last, between 9 and 10 o'clock, the sad intelligence reached our city that David J. Whitmer, one of our old and respected citizens, had been caught beneath a heavy sand slide at Whitmer sand bank, two and a half miles south of our city, and smothered to death.

Between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning he hitched his team to the wagon and started to the bank for a load of sand, reaching there quite early. David A. Whitmer, son of the late John C. Whitmer, was hauling from the same place and had come to town with his first load. Upon his return to the bank he found the team and wagon of David J. Whitmer backed up to the accus-

tomed place of loading. He also noticed that a high bank of dirt and sand which overhung the hole from which the sand was dug and loaded, had caved and fallen in, and not seeing any one around and noticing the wagon and team still standing there he at once concluded the owner was buried beneath the great heap of dirt. He at once gave the alarm and went to work digging to find the body in case his theory was correct. He had not searched very long when the lifeless body was found, the head being about two feet below the surface and the feet something like four feet beneath the sand. He had fallen face foremost, and from his position he had evidently seen the approaching danger and attempted to reach a position of safety, but was too slow to prevent the fatal termination of his life. Young Whitmer thinks he must have remained under the sand at least an hour and a half.

As soon as the body was discovered a runner was at once sent to town for medical aid and the body was taken to the home of Edward Whitmer near by. Upon the arrival of several doctors an examination was made and the possibility of resuscitation was pronounced hopeless. The body was then removed to the home of the deceased in this city, where it was embalmed and made ready for burial. At the time of the occurrence Mrs. Whitmer, wife of the deceased, was in Atchison, Kan., where she had been summoned on account of the serious illness of her daughter-in-law, and the news of the untimely death of the husband she had left in perfect health only a few days previous, came like a crushing blow to her. She returned to Richmond at once, burdened with grief and with tear-dimmed eyes remained beside the casket that contained his mortal remains until it was hid from view in the silent city of the dead.

Everybody in Richmond and vi-

cinity knew David J. Whitmer, and everyone was his friend, and nothing has occurred in our city for many a day that caused such profound sorrow and regret as his sudden taking away, which could easily have been avoided by a little precaution. He was perhaps better known than any resident of Richmond, having spent almost his entire life in business here. The writer had known him since our early boyhood, and during all the years that have rolled around since that time we never heard him say a harmful word of anyone, and we never heard anyone say a harmful thing against him concerning his personal honor or integrity. He was an unusually even tempered man; courteous and kind to all alike, and if he experienced troubles they were not detailed to the public. We feel that we voice the sentiment of this entire community when we say that an excellent citizen has gone from among us and one that will be missed by all, and especially by the old residents of our town who have known him longest.

Funeral services were held at the residence on Main street Sunday morning at 10 o'clock by Eld. Philander A. Page, of the Church of Christ, of which the deceased had for many years been a member. At the conclusion of the services at the house the body was conveyed to the city cemetery, where the last sad offices were paid to the departed. One of the largest crowds we have ever seen in Richmond on a similar occasion attended his funeral, and their expressions were universal regret that he had been taken from among us forever.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

David John Whitmer was the only son of the late David and Julia Ann Whitmer. His father, David Whitmer, was born in Pennsylvania, January 7, 1805, and his mother, Julia Ann Jolly, was born in New York February 7, 1815. They were married January 9, 1831,

and not a great while afterwards moved to Missouri. Of this union there were born two children, David J. the subject of this sketch, who was born in Clay county, Missouri, on the 27th day of November, 1833, and Julia Ann, born at Kirtland, Ohio, July the 28, 1835, who is yet living and whose name is now Julia Ann Schweich. When the subject of this article was yet a small boy his parents moved to Richmond, where his father engaged in business. When David J. reached his majority he entered into partnership with his father in the livery and stock business and the firm was known as David Whitmer & Son for many years. When the father grew too old to look after the business it was turned over to his son, who continued to manage it successfully for a number of years. In the year 1888 he retired from business leaving his nephew, Geo. W. L. Schweich, in charge, who continued the business for quite a while under the name of the Whitmer Livery Company.

On the sixth day of November, 1861, David J. Whitmer was united in marriage to Miss Sylvia R. Stockwell, of Ray county, but because of a misunderstanding they separated and remained so for thirty years, and in the meantime were divorced, but the fires of love continued to burn in their hearts, a reconciliation was effected, and on the seventh day of July 1892, they were again united in marriage, and since that time have resided at the old Whitmer homestead in this city. He leaves many relatives to mourn his loss, among whom is his widow and four step-children, viz: David G. Fowler, Edson B. Fowler, Alice B. Fowler and Sylvia R. Fowler, the two first residing in Atchison, Kan., and the latter two in this city. He also leaves a sister, Mrs. Julia Ann Schweich, and nephew, Geo. W. L. Schweich, both of this city, and a niece, Josephine Helen Schweich,

now Mrs. J. R. B. Vancleve, of Chicago, Ill., besides many other relatives.

His father, David Whitmer, died on the first day January, 1888, and his mother, Julia Ann Whitmer, died on the 25th day of February, 1889. David Whitmer was the last of the three witnesses who claimed to have been present when the angel delivered to Joseph Smith the plates of gold upon which was inscribed the record of the Nephites, and he was the custodian, of the original manuscript of the Record of the Nephites, (or what is commonly known as the Book of Mormon,) and upon his death his son, David J., was made the custodian by lineal descent, and upon his death this interesting manuscript, which has been held sacred by the family for so many years, falls into the hands of G. W. L. Schweich, of this city, who is the only grandson of David Whitmer, its original custodian. Mr. Schweich is a young man of ability and will preserve this interesting and aged document with as much care as it has been guarded by his grandfather for the past half a century, and it will be transmitted to posterity and cherished, if possible more in the future than in the past by those who adhere to its teachings and doctrines.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HORNICK, Woodbury Co., Iowa, }
June 27, 1895. }

BROTHER WICKES: You will find enclosed \$1.00 to pay my subscription to THE RETURN. I take great pleasure in reading THE RETURN, only wish it was larger. I like to read the beliefs of the elders on different subjects, yet I wish there was more of a oneness on some things than there is at present; but we are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and to this end was the spirit of God, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, given, the gifts of the same not being left out, that we might go on unto perfection unto the full stat-

ure of a man in Christ Jesus. Hence we should let our light shine and "come let us reason together". Was glad to hear from Bro. Brown again. Our little band here are all firm in the faith of Christ and rejoicing in the steps they have taken. All poor as to this world's goods, but rich in the mercies and blessings of God, and glorious hope of inheriting all things in the world to come. I am still laboring in the Master's vineyard, in this immediate vicinity. Will write more in the near future as I get more time and will send in a report ere long. May write some for THE RETURN after awhile on different subjects. The subject of the twelve seems to be the foremost subject at the present. My views are somewhat different from most of the brethren that have expressed themselves. I believe my views coincide almost, if not exactly, with Bro. Wickes's. May the Lord bless you in your undertaking, giving you understanding and wisdom, that THE RETURN may be a success, and yet be a power in lifting the scales from the eyes of those that are sitting in the valley and shadow of death, and trusting in man where all is but vanity. I am still as firm as ever in the blessed gospel of the Son of God, rejoicing in the hope of eternal life in mansions of light.

Your brother in Christ,

W. S. ROBERTS.

To all presiding elders and church officers:

It is desirable that the general church record should be more complete. Bro. P. A. Page of Richmond, Missouri, is church recorder, but has received no reports for some years. It was decided at the April council that all should be requested to report to this office, but it was overlooked at the time and did not appear in the minutes. All church officers will please take notice and forward a report from their jurisdiction. State how many members of the church on your books, how many living near the place, and how many located abroad. Give names of officers of the church, and state condition of the church spiritually. Please attend to this without delay.