

among the people of Palestine, telling them that the kingdom of heaven was at hand and calling upon all who entertained faith in his mission to come and be baptized—it appears that he created quite a sensation among the people, inasmuch that all they of Jerusalem and Judea and the regions round about went forth and were baptized by him in great multitudes, as recorded in Mark, i, 8. This had a political effect upon the rulers of that day, and when John was followed by Jesus and his wonderful works, they began to say—"If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation." It was very directly a matter of political significance and importance.

I recollect that some fifty years ago, in the days of my youth, and in the land of the Puritans, I used to hear and to see aged matrons as well as reverend ministers wringing their hands and lifting up their eyes with holy horror, because there was a great evil in the land called slavery. They could scarcely eat or drink in peace, or worship God with the spirit and understanding, by reason of a terrible sense of condemnation resting on their consciences—because their brethren in the Southern States believed in slavery. This came to be worked up by the preachers in the pulpits, by the politicians in their stump speeches, by the parents of households, and fulminated by the press, until in nearly every class of society there was a continual stir and sensation about slavery in the Southern States. This terrible evil had become one of such vast importance that it must some day bring a national scourge, and in their great anxiety and horror over this, and their determination to put it away,

they stirred up the fire until the North were at enmity and hostility against the South, and the South were at enmity and hostility against the North. We well recollect what were the consequences of the recent terrible conflict that devastated and demoralized so much of our beloved country. While this fanaticism was raging in the North, and silent preparations for defense were going on in the South, none seemed to consider the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives, or the taxation necessary to pay a few hundred millions of war debt, and still less the demoralizing influences thereby fastened upon the country.

About the same time, or very soon after, when the Elders began to preach the Gospel in that region, I recollect that there arose quite a sensation about this people that professed to have new revelation. It seemed to strike these same conscientious, religious people with consternation that anybody should dare to say that God would now reveal himself to the human family; that it was the most impious blasphemy to preach that the priesthood had been restored, or to assert that the Holy Ghost was given in the latter days, or that the gifts of the Spirit were made to abound among the children of men. No indeed; it was not to be tolerated any more than the doctrine of slavery. There were here and there a few, though but very few in proportion to the general population, that did receive this very alarming doctrine among those professing religious belief in the mission of our blessed Redeemer. It will be borne in mind that at the time I now speak of, the doctrine of plurality of wives had not been heard of as a doctrine of the Church in the last dispensation; but it was the gifts of the