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EVENING Deseret News.

THE EVENING PAPER IS THE PAPER OF TODAY, THE MORNING PAPER IS THE PAPER OF YESTERDAY.

NO. 193 SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1898, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH. VOL. XXXI.

DISCOURSE

Delivered at the Sixty-eighth Annual Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, Wednesday Morning, April 6th, 1898, by

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.—It is gratifying this morning to see such an assemblage in this building, and at the commencement of our Conference, and it is to be hoped that the interest that is manifested today by those who are present will be maintained during the Conference, that influences which are present may be maintained during the Conference, and that we may all feel, as we come to this Conference, that it has been a good thing for us that we have attended the last Conference we ever attended. This is the usual feeling with those who attend the Conferences of the Church. At each Conference we have the privilege of God that are present to be greater than those that preceded it, and of course this feeling is produced by the influences that rest upon us in attending meetings and in listening to the instructions and drinking into the spirit of the Conference. It is most gratifying to all of us to see President Woodruff with us this morning. As he has said, he anticipated when he came up to be able to attend this Conference, but suffering as he did from a very severe attack of cold. But he is here with us, and it is a cause of great satisfaction and joy to all of us that we have our aged leader with us once more, even if it is only for a brief period.

President Woodruff has said, the work of the Lord in which we are engaged is very gratifying, and is an important period in which we are living. A great change has taken place in the spirit that rests and is manifested upon the nations. No doubt greater publicity of this congregation has been given to the services that were rendered by the servant of God during the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple than to any other event that has taken place in the United States, and the consequence of this is that a great many persons who would naturally be led to oppose the work of God have been prevented from doing so by the influences that rest upon the nations. No doubt the favor that it would find from the people is the reason why that has not been fulfilled.

I have said, a great change has taken place in the spirit that rests upon the earth. It no more is a different position to many reports to that which existed a few years ago. It is now a matter of interest in connection to the Saints, in and honey, that we witnessed some years ago, and which we have predicted would take place, that a better day was to dawn upon the people, and that the spirit of God would be poured out upon the different nations of the earth in a much greater influence and more powerful degree than it had formerly been exercised. It seemed highly important that these predictions would be fulfilled, because the mission of the Latter-day Saints to the nations was so well-nigh closed. But these predictions have not been fulfilled.

We have often been surrounded by circumstances of interest, and have been made more sure in our history than it seemed as though the work of God would be able to stand up against the opposition brought to assault. Those who have fought against this work have invariably been defeated, and the purposes which they undertook to carry out, and which they endeavored to carry out, to the destruction or the suppression and the hushing of the gospel. They supposed themselves able to accomplish the work that they had in view. They would, without question, have tried other plans, but which has existed in the Lord's mind from the beginning of the world, during these times of the dispensation of the fullness of times, when the people of God should be gathered from all nations, and from every land, and should be brought together in one, to receive the fullness of the gospel, and to be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man, and for the ushering in of the Millennial reign, when the people of God, and they would be gathered from their trials stronger and more firmly rooted in the faith of the Lord had revealed to them, than they were before, more than in the history of the Latter-day Saints have we been driven from our homes—the places the Lord had ordained as places of gathering, and where we had settled and built up homes, and without an abiding place, under the inspiration of the Almighty through the spirit of prophecy that rested upon His servants, and in the people themselves, they were driven from place to place, and were invisible to human eyes. And at times they were widely separated, and were without a place of gathering place, which