

REMARKS

BY

PREST. GEORGE Q. CANNON

At Hooperville, Monday, June 27, 1881.

REPORTED BY G. F. GIBBS.

It affords me great pleasure to travel as we are now doing. It is a number of years since I had the opportunity of thus traveling in this county, visiting the people in the various settlements, and witnessing the changes and improvements which have taken place, which indicate the growth and development of the people.

It is only a few years ago that our enemies, in speaking of us, said, that we were a miserable, decrepit, weakly, dying-out people. They described us as very poor, miserable looking creatures, all bearing the impress of our polygamic practices upon our faces; and our children as being weakly, with poor intellect, etc. And this description of us went the rounds of the press, and was believed in by a great many. And some people were so credulous that they supposed that as soon as they came into a "Mormon" city they could easily tell the "Mormon" women by the sad, depressed expression of the countenances which they wore. For a few years this idea prevailed, having been voiced by the press generally; and lecturers, in speaking about us, dwelt upon this peculiarity. Of late, however, the tone has changed, and instead of entertaining the idea that we are about to die out, the feeling concerning us is one of fear, lest we should spread out and take possession of the surrounding country.

It has been the case for many years, in fact, from the beginning, that our Elders have been proclaiming to the world that we are a growing people, and predicting that God has a great destiny in store for the Latter-day Saints; that "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High," etc. And this and other predictions of a like import were testified to by the Elders of this Church wherever they went; but the people generally, who heard our brethren preach such doctrine, were reluctant to believe it, and did not believe it, in fact. Of late, however, there has been a great change; people who have all the time looked upon the "Mormons" as a lot of fanatics, whose race could not be otherwise than a short one, already begin to fear that there is some truth in these predictions.

During this last winter I found myself in a rather peculiar position—a position I had never occupied before—of being under the necessity of endeavoring to calm the fears of the public respecting our growth and increase, they had such ideas about it they were apprehensive lest we were not only going to possess Utah, but going to take possession of Idaho, Arizona, Nevada and cross into Colorado. And I myself was under the necessity of calming their fears in regard to the growth of the people, and of saying to them, we were not increasing so fast as to give cause for any reasonable apprehension. This shows a change that has taken place in the mind of the public with regard to the Latter-day Saints. And this morning while sitting under the cool shade of this bowery looking upon the faces of these children and young people, I thought that I never saw healthier children. And every countenance is cheerful; every one bespeaks health and our young women show that they have been born of healthy parents, and brought up and trained so as to develop their physical natures. I am glad to see this; I am thankful that we live in a healthy country and that we have the Word of Wisdom given unto us by revelation from God; and by observing it we are very likely to have an exceedingly healthy race of people who will also be long lived. I think it a matter of great importance to endeavor to train ourselves and our children so as to have health, and not only health but long life on the earth, so that we may accomplish that which God has given unto us to do. For there is an immense amount of labor to be performed in connection with this work. With good health we also have plenty. These fruitful farms; these teeming orchards; with flocks and herds of cattle, of sheep, of horses, with the dwellings and

everything else to show how comfortably situated the Latter-day Saints are. They have honey, they have butter and milk, and their bins are overflowing, so to speak, and in many instances actually so, with wheat the finest that is grown on the earth. And there is nothing to prevent our becoming physically perfect. But there are great responsibilities resting upon the parents among the Latter-day Saints; and not only upon the parents but upon the leading men in our settlements and cities and Stakes.

There is one thing that you who reside here—and in fact it may be said about every settlement in these mountains—that you should be particularly careful about, and that is, the education of your children. I hope in your general prosperity you will not overlook your educational interests. It is of the utmost importance to us and to our children and to the work of God which is entrusted to us, that we should give our children every advantage of education, including the training of them in the principles of the gospel; for it is of the first importance that all should have laid the foundation in their hearts of faith in God and confidence in the Holy Priesthood, and in the ordinances of the house of God. This is of the first importance, more important than anything else; more important even than teaching them to read and write. Train them in the faith of God and in the knowledge of God, so far as it can be imparted to them, until they can find out God for themselves, seeking him in earnestness in their closets and private places. And when we have laid this foundation in their hearts, then impart to them skill in education to read and write perfectly, so that every boy and girl in our community can read and write his and her mother tongue perfectly. Do it so that no one can find fault with it, that it may be ready for the press, if they should wish to address a communication to the press, without having to make a single correction. Our children have the brightest intellects of any I have ever met. God has given them this blessing; all that they require to develop themselves is the opportunity, and this they should have. God has given unto us means. There is no necessity for us to keep our children out of school, as was the case in early days. I think it a matter of the greatest importance that parents should impart to their children these facilities. Place them within their reach so that the talents of our boys and girls may be developed, for there is an abundant field for its exercise throughout our land, and also beyond, and in the countries to which they are being sent. We are spreading out, and we want men who are cultured; we want women of culture who can train their children in the spirit of true education, so that when visitors come to our land or our children go to other lands, those who see them will feel there is a superiority about the Latter-day Saints that they did not look for. Great pains should be taken in this direction. Parents, school trustees and educators should exercise themselves in behalf of education; nothing should be left undone to give every one, no matter how poor, an opportunity to obtain it. You know the difference between a well cultivated field and one that is poorly cultivated. You know the difference between carefully selected and bred cattle, and cattle that are allowed to run at large on the range without attention. You know the difference between fruit that are well selected and cared for by the hand of the skillful gardener, and those that are allowed to grow as they please. The lessons that may be drawn from these plain practical things is applicable in the rearing of these little ones. You need not think, you parents, because you have got through life with little or a meagre education that your children ought not to expect more than you possessed in starting life. You do not know anything about the future that lies before them. The boys and girls of to-day, if they are prepared for it, will have opportunities of moving in the higher circles of society; boys will be required to go among the leading men of the nations; and how embarrassing it would be for them if they should not be qualified for it. But they should be. Every day the prospect is widening, the field is opening up before us, and men of this kind are needed all the time. We need them for legislators; we need them for Apostles, Presidents, Bishops and Counselors; we need them for every department of life. They should be

cultivated so that they will be capable of discharging these duties and filling any position.

The Lord has bestowed upon us the temporal blessings which we have for a wise purpose. We should use them aright and not set our hearts upon these perishable things. We should hold them as the gifts of God subject to his counsel. The man that sets his heart upon riches cannot serve the God of Israel. No man can serve two masters, Jesus said. He said it 1800 years ago; it is true to-day. Whenever you see a man serving Mammon, you may know he cannot serve God as well. There cannot be a division in these services; half-hearted service cannot be acceptable to the Lord. We must serve God with all our hearts, our love and affections reaching after Him, and the things of this world must be looked upon by us as secondary considerations. They are good enough in their place; right enough to be attended to; but subordinate always to the love of God. That should be the first love, greater than every other love. A man that loves a wife, a man that loves a child, a man that loves anything upon the earth more than God is not a true Latter-day Saint. He may have a lovely wife, he may have a lovely child; he may have a rich farm, he may have stock, elegant residences, horses and carriages, together with an abundance of wealth to command all the comforts of the earth; but I tell you, as a servant of God, if he loves these things more than he loves God, he is not a true Latter-day Saint. He cannot serve God and mammon together. One love must predominate; it must be superior to every other love, and that is the love of our Heavenly Father, the keeping of his commandments and attending to the ordinances of salvation which he has revealed to us.

While Brother Woodruff was speaking about what President Young had told him in Winter Quarters, respecting the Prophet Joseph's teachings with regard to cultivating the spirit of the Lord, a thing came to my mind that I was taught in the same way in the beginning of my labors on my first mission, and the impression it made upon my mind has been a lasting one; I have never forgotten it; and through taking that lesson to heart I feel that I have been exceedingly prospered in my life.

There were ten of us, of whom I was the youngest, wind-bound in the Bay of San Francisco, and we had been thus delayed for nearly a week near the Golden Gate in consequence of head winds. I dreamed one night that this party of brethren were heaving at the windlass, having a rope attached to it reaching forward to the anchor at the bow of the vessel. We were working with all our might endeavoring to raise the anchor, but seemingly we made but little progress. While thus engaged I thought the Prophet Joseph came from the after part of the vessel dressed in his temple clothes, and tapping me on the shoulder told me to go with him. I went, and he climbed on to the fore-castle which was higher than the main deck and on a level with the bulwarks, and there he knelt down, also telling me to kneel down with him. He prayed according to the order of prayer which is revealed. After prayer he arose upon his feet. "Now," said he, "George, take hold of that rope—the rope we had been pulling on with all our might. I took hold of it, and with the greatest ease and without the least effort, the anchor was raised. "Now," said he, "let this be a lesson to you; remember that great things can be accomplished through the power of prayer and the exercise of faith in the right way."

I would like to impress this, with what Brother Woodruff has told you, upon the minds of the young, also upon the middle-aged and the aged of this congregation if they choose to take it; great is the power of prayer when properly offered to the Lord. Whatever success I have had upon my missions in battling with the adversaries of this people, in being able to hold my position when warred upon—and it seemed that nothing in the world but the power of God could save me or prevent legislation adverse to this people—whatever success there may be about this in the past, throughout my life—and I believe it was the case with my predecessors—it has been due to faith and prayer. I have remembered this always; I have endeavored to exercise faith in God through prayer, which has been heard by the

Almighty. Men have met in secret in holy places and have besought God in the appointed way, according to the holy order revealed, and deliverance has been wrought out for Zion, when it seemed that everything was dark before them and without one ray of light. At such times, when everything has been hedged up, the servants of God have met in secret places and have plead with God according to the holy order, and the heavens have been moved, and difficulties have vanished away, and our path has been made plain before us, and we have escaped the hands of our enemies.

My brethren and sisters, my young brethren and sisters present, remember this lesson. Cultivate the Spirit of God; keep it with you. Remember always, there is power in prayer greater than anything man can do. There is no power in monarchs, there is no power in armies, there is no power in legislators, nor in anybody nor anything else upon the earth that equals the power of God in prayer.

That we may always remember it and keep it constantly in our minds throughout our lives, in my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Correspondence.

A Cordial Reception at Kanab.

KANAB, Nov. 17, 1881.

Editor Deseret News:

Prest. Taylor and party reached this place yesterday afternoon, intending to remain over to-day. On arriving it was understood by the members of the company that a meeting would be held at 6.30 p. m., and when that hour arrived we proceeded to the meeting-house, entering by way of the vestry, expecting to find the people assembled for religious services. But to our astonishment we perceived they had met for another purpose; and hence the "surprise."

On entering the hall, a scene really grand presented itself. The building was well lighted and tastefully decorated with flowers, evergreens, pictures, mirrors, mottoes, etc., besides having stretched across the opposite wall from the stand a large banner bearing these words: "With joy we greet you. And lengthways of the hall, ran three long tables, spread with everything that man ought to desire here below by way of edibles, at which were seated the good people of Kanab. And crossways at the head of the hall, on the slightly elevated platform usually occupied by the stand, was one table set apart for President Taylor and party.

All being seated and grace said, the merry din of knives and forks, the rattling of plates, etc., commenced. And what followed I leave to the imagination of your readers, adding only that this gathering, consisting of some 300 persons was, in spirit and feeling the nearest to that of one family around the festive board, that it has been my pleasure to witness.

The tables having been cleared and removed Bishop W. D. Johnson, Jr., addressing himself to President Taylor, said, that the people of Kanab, realizing that they live on the frontiers, so to speak; that they occupy one of the outpost settlements of Zion, and that consequently they were deprived of the association and presence of their brethren, the presiding Priesthood, felt that they could not let so favorable an opportunity pass unimproved; hence they had co-operated heart and hand in getting up this social entertainment, which he hoped President Taylor and his party would take as a mark of their esteem and respect for himself and themselves personally, and of their appreciation of their presence with them, which was a pleasure they had long looked for. The Bishop then took occasion to thank his people that they had it in their hearts to do honor to the visiting brethren, whom he loved because of their long and devoted faithfulness to the cause of God upon the earth; and he thanked them and felt to bless them from the recesses of his heart for their own faithfulness, and the willingness they had ever manifested to sustain him, and to assist him in his labors among them.

In behalf of the people of Kanab he thanked President Taylor for the presence of himself and party in their midst; and hoped that he and they would accept of the good feelings of their hearts, which had prompted the providing of this social, and that God in heaven would

also accept of their humble efforts in doing honor to His servants on earth.

In response, President Taylor arose and said:

In behalf of myself and party, I will say that we feel to appreciate the sentiments expressed by you, Bishop, and also the kind and generous feeling manifested by you in getting up such an excellent entertainment in our honor. And trust that the time we may spend together may be pleasant, agreeable and profitable to all.

And while it is a pleasure for you to greet and welcome us, it is also a pleasure for us to meet with you, realizing as we do that you are our friends, some of whom, I may say I have known for 40 years and upwards. And it is this same feeling manifested toward us this evening that has prompted me and my brethren to come and visit you. And in doing this, we are only performing our duty, in our way, as you did in your way, in obeying the counsel of your brethren when they called upon you to come and settle here.

It was the desire of President Young, it is our desire, and also the desire of my brethren, to see that Zion is established upon a correct basis; and that everything having for its object the welfare and happiness of the Saints should be entered into. And if the people who have been selected from time to time to settle in these far-off places, can find it in their hearts to go in obedience to the counsel of those presiding over them, I think that we should find it in our hearts to come and visit them; for those feelings should be reciprocal.

I would say in behalf of my brethren, and also of others who are not here at the present time, that we have traveled quite extensively of late, visiting the settlements of the Saints. When we shall have filled all the appointments of the present tour, we shall have visited all the prominent settlements in Utah, besides going into Idaho, passing through a part of Wyoming, and also taking in a little corner of Arizona.

Our railroad officials have been very kind in offering us the use of their road on our travels south, and through their courtesies we might have gone to Milford as well as to Juab; but we felt it our duty to go round through the settlements of the Saints; and therefore left the railroad at Juab to visit them in their own homes, as it was not so much the railroad as the people that we wanted to see. We were desirous to associate with them, to talk with them, and feel after their spirits, as well as to give them the opportunity to feel after ours. And besides the pleasure it has afforded me in meeting with and administering among the Saints of God, we have been much pleased in looking upon the wild and grand scenery that everywhere meets the eye as we travel through this land of Dixie. The rugged and lofty mountains by which you are surrounded, and which occupy so much of this southern country, in their magnificent proportions, with their turrets and towers, their terraces and frework, etc., exhibit a grandeur and sublimity unsurpassed by the art of man. And these stupendous masses, even in their decay and ruin, present nature in her most picturesque and gorgeous aspect.

I do not know but that I owe you an apology for taking away from you your President, Brother Nuttall, and keeping him so long a time. But I needed the best help I could get; and if we had to thus rob you, you must content yourselves in the fact that he is where he is needed, helping us to bear off the burden of responsibility that rests upon us.

I feel at home among you, and am pleased to share in your generous hospitality, the good kind feeling that you manifest toward us.

Some of the St. George brethren were afraid if we returned by way of Long Valley that we would probably meet with very rough weather and perhaps heavy snow. I told them that we had met with snow before and expect to again, and that if the snow came we would have to shovel it away. (Laughter). We have been through a good many snow storms, and we expect to meet them yet.

We feel that God is on our side, and we know that He will sustain His Saints as long as we keep the commandments which He has given unto us. And we will go on from strength to strength, and from conquering to conquering. Zion is onward and upward, and we will accomplish the object required at our hands, He being our helper.