

to be ordained Elders, in relation to their duties, notably that of attending faithfully their quorum meetings. He thought it was more or less of a reproach that the brethren had to be specially requested to attend these meetings, and pointedly asked how long an Apostle, one of the quorum of the Twelve, would be sustained by his quorum, or permitted to hold his office, if he persistently neglected to attend his quorum meetings. The members of other quorums should be just as diligent and faithful in this respect as the Apostles, and if they continued to be derelict they should be labored with and, if need be, further dealt with, according to the laws of the Church.

Answering a question put by Bishop E. F. Sheets, as to what was the duty of Bishops in regard to those who left or came into their wards without recommends, President Cannon said, as to the latter class, that they should first be invited and requested to procure their certificates and then if they failed to do it they should be reported to the authorities of the wards from which they came; and if they were unable to procure recommends, he would advise that they renew their covenants in the ward where they then resided. If they proved incorrigible, he would recommend that they be suspended from fellowship, or dealt with in such a manner as to impress upon them the importance of manifesting their allegiance to the Church. He exhorted the Bishops to "trim up" their wards and prune off the dead branches. President Young used to say to the Bishops that through their failure to deal with transgressors in their wards, they had lost many souls that might have been saved. Every member of the Church owes it as a duty to take with him or her, when they remove to another ward, a note of standing, and thus avoid confusion, misunderstanding and trouble. If they fail to do it, they should be dealt with in a proper manner.

#### ELDER GEORGE GODDARD

thought much of the trouble complained of arose from the fact that the ward Teachers failed to visit and instruct the people as thoroughly as they should. The Bishop was supposed to know the members of his ward and keep informed as to their condition. But how could he know these things if the Teachers were not faithful in visiting the members and faithfully reporting their condition. In his opinion a faithful corps of Teachers could do more to correct the evil complained of than anything else.

#### PRESIDENT CANNON

coincided with the view taken by Brother Goddard and exhorted the Teachers to renewed diligence. The trouble was we were too much occupied with our private affairs and not interested enough in the things of God. When the Saints were driven out of Nauvoo and in the midst of poverty and adversity, they had plenty of time to serve God, and the brethren were as spry as crickets in

attending to their duties as Saints, but wealth and prosperity had brought neglect and slothfulness in relation to such things. The Lord will stir us up if we continue in such ways. He can strip us as individuals, as well as a community, until we are as naked as when we came into the world, and He may do it if we are not more faithful. And better would it be, if we might then have the fellowship of the heavens, than to roll in wealth and luxury and be without the favor of God.

#### BISHOP JOSEPH POLLARD

added a few words in relation to the duties of Bishops and Teachers. He had found it very difficult to get men who would act thoroughly and faithfully as Teachers. One reason was that the best men had too much to do, too many offices to hold, too many meetings to attend, and they could not be expected to be in five or six places at once. Most of those whose services could be had, either did not understand how to act as teachers, or were unwilling to go at it with their whole hearts. Brother Goddard had struck the key-note of the difficulty. It was the need of good and efficient teachers. He believed his ward (the Fifteenth) was a fair example of all the rest.

#### PRESIDENT CANNON

added a few words of wise counsel, the substance of which was to be faithful in all things, and the meeting was then adjourned until the first Saturday in January, 1890.

#### DEFINITION OF LIBERTY.

Liberty may, perhaps, be defined as the right of every person to act as he pleases, so long as his conduct is not prejudicial to others, or, to speak politically, to the common weal. This may be regarded as the ideal with which it has always been found impossible to render conformable the selfish passions and interests of men and their honest opinions, always exceedingly variable. For instance, the titled and the rich have, with rare exceptions, always inclined towards centralized forms of government, in which they might participate and their property be better protected, while the poor have, according to their intelligence, desired a greater amount of freedom, with the double desire of ameliorating their condition and participating in the administration of affairs. The original government was that of the strongest. The patriarchal system of rule of the head of the family or clan was never general, or, if so, only for a brief period, and prevailed only in parts of the world where the population was sparse and nomadic. The strong held the weak in a state of slavery. Slavery passed into serfdom in the Middle Ages, and from this modified form developed into the varied systems of government that we have today. No distinction is made here between slavery, as usually understood, and the absolute rule of monarchs of nations and chiefs of tribes. They were in reality the same. A king, like

the builder of the Pyramids, who sacrificed hundreds of thousands of his subjects in that colossal work, had that complete control over the liberty and life of his subjects, possessed in those times by the owner of a score of bondmen.

It is only natural that every thinking person should ask himself, not whether slavery is right in this enlightened epoch, but whether it was ever right. If we accept the dictum that whatever is is right—which no one does precisely—the answer would be emphatically in the affirmative. Slavery doubtless takes its natural place in the evolution of liberty. The blind man whose sight is restored can only gradually bear the light. Degraded beings like the primitive savages who peopled the world, being destitute of the moral sense, could not understand liberty nor the manner in which its blessings could be enjoyed. Left to themselves they would have devoured one another. This mutual destruction, a chief, in his own interest, needing warriors, would endeavor to prevent, and the decimation under his guidance would probably be less than if the individuals were left to themselves. So also when a monarch united under his sway several tribes, who, if left to themselves, would have annihilated one another. The cause of humanity was thereby better served. The mortality was diminished, and though a tribe's liberties were abridged, its individual privileges were often increased. The same principle may be regarded as applicable during the Middle Ages, when, the nobles having grown cruel and arrogant under the system, dukes and barons were compelled to submit to the rule of kings, as in France and England. In making a united France, Louis XI., whose character was in many respects detestable, may be regarded as a sort of public benefactor.

Liberty, then, may be regarded as a relative term, shifting and adapting its meaning according to circumstances. Many men are like children, who, in their innocence, cannot understand why they should not be permitted to make themselves into erable to every one by their noise, or to tread on the toes of the whole world. Students believe in the right to invade the liberties of others by violence, especially on the class below them. Yet there is a certain generosity in the student character which has often enabled them to serve the cause of liberty, sometimes usefully, at other times to the detriment of some noble cause. There are thousands of grown men who do not know when they are free. They are at liberty to do all sorts of reasonable things, but it is the useless and trivial act the law forbids that they desire especially to commit. It is with liberty as with curiosity that feels always an irresistible impulse to explore the guarded secret. Liberty has, of course, nobler motives, but this simple tendency of man to do a thing simply because some person or some authority has told him he could not do it explains many