

commandment was extant, "Thou shalt not kill," yet when the voice of God came to him commanding him to kill he stood not quibbling, or questioning with God, he manifested His readiness to sacrifice even his son unto God's commandment; but when it was clear that Abraham would not even withhold his son from God—when the test was completed, the trial passed, the ram in the thicket was provided, dragged out, and bound in thankfulness upon the altar to take the place of Isaac. How sweet must have been the communion of Abraham with God after that! What confidence must have been his in the presence of God even after that! And how grand the words that came from the lips of Jehovah must have appeared to him, saying: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Oh! my friends, God indeed calls, nay, demands, sacrifice; but God is able to reward men for their sacrifices, even to the uttermost. You need not doubt it. From that day on, what blessing is there in heaven that Abraham cannot command? What power in the old patriarch now and forever! Marvel you that it is written here in the Doctrine and Covenants that Abraham hath passed by the angels, and is no more an angel, nor a servant, but one of the Gods in the council of the Father? He had the strength and power of it in him, because he had made the sacrifice.

Try Job; test him; find out how he got this spiritual strength and power. Why, when he saw his houses tumble about him; when he saw sons and daughters slain; when he saw herds of camels and asses and sheep run off by the enemy, he stood calmly in the midst of these ruins, and he said, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away blessed be the name of the Lord." And when his body was racked and afflicted with pain and suffering, his wife comes to him, you remember, and importunes him to curse God and die. Job, with that grand faith that makes him akin to Abraham, answers, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Then the hand of the adversary was lifted. Tell me, what is there that Job cannot do after that? What strength must have been his—born of this consciousness that God approved of his course of life? I tell you, such men are able to move the heavens, to bring down blessings for the children of men.

Regarding the case of Hezekiah, king of Judah, a most illustrious example of this glorious principle, Isaiah was commanded of the Lord to say to him:

"Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live."

When he told that to Hezekiah, the good king was stricken with sorrow. It is written that he turned his face to the wall and wept; and after Isaiah left he commenced pleading with the Lord, and said:

"Remember now, O Lord, I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." And Hezekiah wept sore.

Isaiah had not yet reached the middle court of the king's palace, before the word of the Lord came to him, saying:

"Turn again and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David, thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: Behold, I will heal thee:

on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

Tell me, what would an unrighteous king be able to do in such a crisis as this? Could he exercise faith to call down the blessings of God? No; but this man could marshal in support of his petition his righteous life, and the heavens could not withhold their blessing. There was strength; there was power born of righteousness.

How beautifully all these principles blend together! How grand is the doctrine of faith as set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants by the Prophet Joseph.

A few days ago a man who has lived for twenty years among our people and who knows that we hold these doctrines, and who has witnessed the labors of the Saints and their sacrifices for their religion, undertook to say that our religion is unspiritual and unscriptural! I challenge the gentleman to produce, in all the homilies that have been written upon religion by all the ministers of his faith, anything to match these doctrines, at once both spiritual and scriptural, and in all respects philosophical. God bless you. Amen.

UNITED STATES SENATORS IN CHINA

Washington, D. C., Jan. 27, 1898.—During the past summer and fall three United States senators have been traveling through China and Japan investigating the commercial and industrial conditions of the people, and looking into all matters of interest to the United States. This senatorial trip was made up of former Senator Dubois of Idaho and Senators Frank Pettigrew of South Dakota and Frank Cannon of Utah who are still in Congress. These men left for China at the close of the last session and arrived home just before the present session began. During their travels they have visited nearly every part of Japan, have spent some months in central and north China, consulting with Li Hung Chang and other nabobs in Peking; and taking an overland trip to the great Chinese wall. The men are noted for their practical business sense and their observations cannot but be of the greatest value.

I had a long interview the other night with Senator Frank Cannon about his trip. He has come back impressed with the greatness of the Chinese and full of new ideas concerning their future. Said he:

"We people of the western world know but little of the Chinese. We have thought that they were sinking back and going into a decline. My impression is that they are simply crouching to spring at the rest of the world. I think that they will have all the rest of mankind by the throat inside of a generation. If Russia, Germany and England divide up China, they will only stimulate her productive powers. They will organize the Chinese, and the 400,000,000 people of the Chinese empire will become producers. The foreigners will introduce modern machinery, and this will multiply the possible amount of production from five to a hundredfold. I tell you it will revolutionize the world, and the change will be almost instantaneous."

"Don't you think you exaggerate the ability of the Chinese, senator?"

"Not a bit," replied Senator Cannon.

"They are a wonderful people. Take a little incident that happened while we were in Peking. We were going to visit the astronomical instruments of what is called the Chinese observatory on the wall which runs about the city. There are magnificent spheres and hemispheres of bronze there which were made about 300 years ago, and which are almost perfect now. We

had as a guide a half-naked, dirty Chinaman, not more than fourteen years old. He looked meaner and more ignorant than any ragamuffin you can pick up on the street here today. When he had guided us to the top of the wall, he climbed upon the great celestial globe and with his dirty finger pointed out to us the various constellations. He seemed to know all about astronomy and described what every instrument was for. The Chinese can learn anything. Some of them have come here to school. They stand high in their classes. They can handle machinery and they are, I believe, the best raw material in the way of man to be found in the industrial world today."

THE RESOURCES OF CHINA.

"Speaking of raw materials, senator; did you learn anything about the natural resources of China?"

"They are wonderful," replied Senator Cannon. "China has a greater variety and wealth of mineral resources than any other country on earth. My special attention was called to the provinces of Shansee and Honan the first of which is just a little larger than New York, and the second of which is smaller than Kansas. Those two states support by farming a population of nearly forty millions, and at the same time they have more coal and iron close together than has ever been found in any part of the United States. The people are living now by what they get out of their soil by agriculture. If the foreigners divide up China, they will add to this a manufacturing product far greater than the agricultural one. China has soil that will produce cotton in any quantity. They can raise long staple cotton and their latitudinal range for cotton is three times that of the United States. The cotton manufactured in China is all native cotton, and they are putting up many new cotton mills. Why, they raise cotton, wheat and beans in the same field, and I was told they had been doing this for three thousand years."

"Did you find any railroad building going on, senator?"

"Some, but not a great deal," replied Senator Cannon. "We went over a railroad from Tientsin to Tung-Chow on our way to Peking. The cars were very good. They were built in China and they cost less than any cars in the world. The new roads are well built and those which are now planned will open up a country containing more than a hundred million people. The Chinese patronize the roads, and I have no doubt but that they will pay well. As yet, however, boats and wheelbarrows form the chief freight and passenger cars of the country. In going to the Chinese wall I rode most of the way on a donkey. I took a short ride on a wheelbarrow, and during a part of my travels I rode in a Chinese cart, which is about the hardest method of travel I have ever known."

"By the way, senator, did you meet Li Hung Chang during your stay in China?"

"Yes," was the reply, "we spent an afternoon with him, and had a long chat about Chinese and American matters."

"Where did you see him?"

"In Peking," said Senator Cannon. "Li now lives in a Buddhist monastery there. For twenty years whenever he has been in Peking he has stopped at this monastery. He has his secretary, an American named Petkitch, with him and he watches from there the affairs of the world with his eagle eye."

"Is it true that he has been degraded?"

"No, I think not," replied the senator, "although he has not the power that he had in the past. He is a sort of a sentimental dictator of China in regard to foreign affairs. The Chinese