

of devising schemes to take away from us the rights we have inherited, and which belong to us as a free people, and to bring us into bondage to those who malign us, and who would take delight in destroying us.

EFFORTS TO PROCURE PROSCRIPTIVE LEGISLATION.

Every effort possible was made during this last session of Congress to secure legislation of the most proscriptive and sweeping character against the Latter-day Saints. Not only was it the design to reach persons who believed in and practiced plural marriage, but our enemies went so far as to propose the complete annihilation of every political right belonging to those who were free from the charge of polygamy, and whose only crime was that they were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Congress adjourned without acting upon this measure. Already we hear the notes of preparation for a renewal of the campaign against us. Filled with anger at their non-success at the last session, our opponents are preparing for the onslaught at the coming session of Congress, and we are threatened with vengeance of the most dreadful description.

But in this, as in all other circumstances and conditions, our trust is in God. This is His work. He has thus far taken care of it and preserved it, and has delivered us from the many plots which have been framed against us. It has progressed thus far only by His power, and not by the power of man. Whatever glory there is connected with the establishment and progress of this great work is due entirely to Him. Man's wisdom, education, shrewdness, wealth and ability have not been the factors that have produced success; but it has been the blessing, the power, and the overruling providence of our God. We have had to trust Him in the past in the midst of unnumbered foes; we must trust Him in the future against the terrible odds that are pitted against His work and His Gospel. We know, and can boldly testify to the Latter-day Saints, and to the whole world, that the Lord hath founded Zion, and that no power beneath the Celestial King can prevail against it.

But those who fight against it will share the fate of all who have ever fought against it. Who is there that has prospered in his warfare against Zion? Who can point to the laurels which have been won in fighting the work of God? What man or what nation has gained credit and glory in the earth for successes achieved over the feeble Latter-day Saints? We have seen generation after generation of our opposers pass, one after another, into cold oblivion. They have strutted their brief hour upon the stage, appearing to think that they were accomplishing wonders. But they have passed away, and the memory of their deeds only lives in our historical archives. So it will be with those who now occupy so large a portion of public attention as crusaders against the Saints, and who imagine themselves to be such doughty heroes.

THE SPIRIT OF SCANDAL.

Not only has Satan sent forth his lies outside of our society, but he uses his influence in this direction among us. The tendency in our settlements and cities to listen to and believe in every wild and slanderous rumor which may be put in circulation is to be deeply deplored. No matter how unfounded and destitute of even the semblance of truth such reports may be, there are those among us so silly and credulous as to readily believe them. The injury that is thus wrought is not easily measured. Many of the evils from which we have suffered have been greatly aggravated by this disposition on the part of some who call themselves Latter-day Saints. The man who frames a lie is a great sinner; but the one who loves a lie, and who circulates a lie after it is told, is also under condemnation. Many stories go from mouth to mouth concerning the truth of which those who repeat them know nothing. But it seems as though the constant repetition of a falsehood impresses many people as though it were a fact. Where Latter-day Saints, so-called, are found telling that which is untrue, they should be called to an account. It is written that whosoever loveth and maketh a lie shall not be permitted to enter into the Holy City, nor to have a right to the tree of life, but they are to be without, with dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and idolaters. The Lord has said, "He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Latter-day Saints should be warned upon these points, that they may not grieve the Spirit of the Lord, nor do injury to their friends and neighbors, by indulging in this pernicious habit of repeating and attaching credence to every slander and false rumor that may be put in circulation. But every one should be careful, when they hear a story about their brethren and sisters, to refrain from repeating it until they know it to be true, and then not to do so in a way to injure the person about whom it is told. The reputation of our neighbors and the members of our Church should be as dear to us as our own, and we should carefully avoid doing anything to another or saying anything about another that we would not wish done or said about ourselves. We testify that those who give way to this influence, who take delight in reading lies which are published about us in papers circulated in our midst or outside of our Territory, who delight in listening to the false and malicious representations which are made concerning the serv-

ants and people of God or His work, or who themselves gossip about and aid in the dissemination of these things to the injury of their fellows, will, unless they speedily repent, lose the Spirit of God and the power to discern between truth and falsehood, and between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. Their own minds will become so darkened by the spirit of falsehood that the Spirit of God will cease to have power with them and will flee from them.

SABBATH-BREAKING AND RECREATION MANIA.

Among the sins into which some who are called Saints have been betrayed is Sabbath-breaking and over-indulgence in useless pleasure. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." But it is the Lord's day and should be spent as He directs. We are not left to the doubts and queries which enter into the polemics of sectaries on this important matter. We have the word of the Lord upon it, direct. He has declared to us through His Prophet:

"And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy."
"And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and pay thy devotions to the Most High;

Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times; But remember that on this the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full."

These commandments of the Lord do not admit of Sunday excursions to the lake or the cañons or other places any more than manual labor. That day will be held sacred to the service and worship of God by every true Latter-day Saint. Those who desecrate it reject the word of the Lord and will not be held guiltless. We admonish all members of the Church to obey this commandment and the officers of the Church to see that it is not broken with impunity.

The mania for recreations of various kinds which has seized upon many of the people is harmful in several ways. It unfit them for the regular duties of life. It renders them restless and impatient of proper restraint. It obstructs business. It tends to contract habits of dissipation. It throws our young folks into the company of persons whose society should be shunned. It cultivates worldliness. It conduces to many evils, and the spirit of purity, temperance, holiness and peace will not abide in resorts such as have been established for the purpose of enticing the Saints into folly. Many thousands of dollars have been worse than wasted during the past summer on excessive amusements and sometimes unseemly diversions. The influential men and women of the Church should discountenance this evil, and with all wisdom and prudence endeavor to check it and prevent its increase among the Saints.

We have no disposition to deprive either young or old of proper amusement. It is necessary to perfect health and rational enjoyment. It should be provided by those who have the watchcare of the people, especially for the young, and conducted without sinfulness and without excess. But in these times of trial and distress to many, it is seemingly to indulge in frequent and hilarious junketings and to act as though we disregarded the afflictions of our brethren and sisters who are placed in difficulty and jeopardy. When most of our leaders are in exile, when good men are thrust into prison, when many families are plunged into grief at the enforced absence of those who are dear to them, when the cords of oppression are being drawn more tightly and the small liberties remaining to us are being gradually taken away, when our enemies are forging fetters for our feet and planning for our utter destruction, and when Satan is working with all his forces to weaken our ranks by leading the Saints into sin, is it a time to waste our days in useless pleasure and spend our nights in noisy revels? Rather, should we not humble ourselves before the Lord and seek by faith and devotion to good works to obtain power that we may prevail against our foes? We do not believe in long-faced sadness or the piety that consists in a sanctified appearance. There is no need for drooping heads or a sad countenance. A cheerful spirit should be cultivated and hearts should be gladdened by words of cheer. But these are serious times and the sorrows of the afflicted and the carousings of the thoughtless seem utterly incongruous when all profess to be brethren and sisters. Let unseemly levity be abandoned and let the solemnities of eternity rest down upon those who are called the Saints of the Most High God.

SACRED VICARIOUS WORK.

Notwithstanding the violent and unabating opposition which is arrayed against us the work of ministering in the ordinances of the Lord's House continues, and the blessing of the Heavens still follows these administrations. As we have so long expected and so frequently been warned, Satan rages as he views his domain trampled upon, his captives delivered, and the souls of men wrenched from his grasp by the labors of the living for the dead in and through those sacred ordinances that belong alone to the Gospel

of the Son of God, administered in holy places by His chosen servants and handmaidens. And it must not surprise us if the rage of the arch-enemy of mankind increases and his emissaries grow more relentless and cruel, more brutal and inhuman in their efforts to stay this work, as the number of temples increases and the thousands of Israel go in there to minister the ordinances of salvation for their ancestors and departed friends. We further rejoice that the work of erecting the Salt Lake and Manti Temples goes steadily forward, and that the latter is nearing its completion with all the rapidity that could reasonably be expected when we consider the condition of the Church and the people and the difficulties under which they labor.

TRAINING THE YOUNG.

It is pleasing to notice the increased feeling of anxiety on the part of the Saints to have their children educated in schools where the doctrines of the Gospel and the precious records which God has given us can be taught and read. Our children should be indoctrinated in the principles of the Gospel from their earliest childhood. They should be made familiar with the contents of the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. These should be their chief text books, and everything should be done to establish and promote in their hearts genuine faith in God, in His Gospel and its ordinances, and in His works. But under our common school system this is not possible. In Salt Lake City, we understand, an effort is now being made to establish a school of this character, and we are informed, the prospect for its success is very encouraging. The Brigham Young Academy, at Provo, and the Brigham Young College, at Logan, are both doing excellent work in this direction and should be patronized and sustained by the Latter-day Saints. In no direction can we invest the means God has given us to better advantage than in the training of our children in the principles of righteousness and in laying the foundation in their hearts of that pure faith which is restored to the earth. We would like to see schools of this character, independent of the District School system, started in all places where it is possible.

SACREDNESS OF THE FAMILY RELATION.

The life of a saint is not simply a personal perfecting. It is also a factor in the entire scheme of earth's redemption. No one can be saved alone, by himself or herself, unassisted by or unassisting others. The weight of our influence must be either for good or harm, be an aid or an injury to the work of human regeneration, and as we assume responsibilities, form ties, enter into covenants, beget children, accumulate families, so does the weight of our influence increase, so does its extent broaden and deepen. The Scriptures inform us that God created this earth as a habitation for man and he placed man on it that he might have joy, a joy that is to be eternal. To accomplish these purposes, the preparatory one of peopling the earth, and the ultimate one of man's eternal happiness, He, the Creator, established marriage, and commanded those he first placed here on earth to be fruitful and multiply. This institution he regulated by strict laws given through his servants to His people in their various dispensations; and His Son, our Savior, emphasized these commandments by most unequivocal teachings with regard to the sacredness of the marriage covenant, and of the sinfulness of divorce for other than the most grave departures from the spirit and intent of that covenant. In this is wisdom, for the experience of the world, in all its ages, proves that where lax ideas exist with regard to marriage and divorce, more especially where those ideas find expression in lax legislation, there we discover peoples and nations whose code of morals is inferior, and where sexual irregularities and sins increase, until that righteousness, which has been so truthfully said "exalteth a nation," ceases to have an existence in their midst. To a people who believe as we do, that true marriage was divinely instituted for the multiplication of mankind, and is not a union for time alone, but reaches into the eternities, the disruption of families by divorce is an evil of no ordinary character, not only bearing a harvest of sorrow and suffering in this life, but also having a far reaching influence into the world beyond the grave, and possibly involving others in the ruin who had no voice in the separation or power to avert its occurrence. For this reason the Latter-day Saints of all people should be most loath to sunder sacred ties once formed, and most determinedly opposed to the severance of unions made in holy places in God's appointed way, for light and truthful causes; and the efforts of Teachers and Bishops in their labors amongst families where differences, alienation or quarrels exist, should always be to effect reconciliation, promote union, inspire mutual forbearance and increase love. Only when every kindly counsel and ministrations fail should that last resort, a divorce, be permitted. And in such cases those who have received of the sealing power of the Church should also be separated by the same authority that bound them together: until this is done new alliances are sinful.

SELF-MURDER DENOUNCED.

There is another evil that is growing amongst the peoples of the world that is not unfelt amidst the Latter-day Saints. It is the crime of self-murder.

Should be made odious among the people of God, it should be emphasized as a deadly sin, and no undue feelings of tenderness towards the unfortunate dead, or of sympathy towards the living bereaved, should prevent us denouncing it as a crime against God and humanity, against the Creator and the creature. It is true that the exact enormity of the act is not defined with minute detail in the Holy Scriptures, or the limits of its punishment given; but to believers in the God whom we worship it has always been regarded as a sin of great magnitude; and in many countries special pains have been taken to discourage it, by refusal to bury in consecrated ground, by indignities offered to the lifeless remains, or by such lack of funeral observances as would produce a peculiar and horrifying effect upon the survivors. Now, while not advocating measures of this description, we do not think that the same laudations and panegyrics should be pronounced over the self-murderer as are so freely uttered over the faithful Saint who has gone to his eternal rest. There is a difference in their death, and that difference should be impressed upon the living, unless the deceased, at the time of the rash act, was in such a mental condition as not to be wholly responsible for his actions; but again, if this condition be the result of sin, of departure from God's laws, then the unfortunate one, like the inebriate, is not altogether free from the responsibility of acts committed while in this state of mental derangement; if he is not censurable for the act itself, he is for the causes that induced it. In such cases the mantle of charity must not be stretched so widely, in our desire to protect our erring friends, as to reflect dishonor on the work of God, or contempt for the principles of the everlasting Gospel. There is an unfortunate tendency in the nature of many to palliate sins by which they are not personally injured, but we must not forget that such palliation frequently increases the original wrong, and brings discredit on the Church and dishonor to the name and work of our blessed Redeemer; in other words, to save the feelings of our friends we are willing to crucify afresh the Lord of life and glory.

MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

The reports of our Elders engaged in missionary labors in foreign lands are far from discouraging, when we consider the tempest of misrepresentation and abuse that has flooded the lands of civilization with regard to ourselves, our objects and our methods of evangelization, as well as the prejudices that have to be overcome and the persecution which has to be met by those who have sufficient moral courage and stamina to obey so unpopular a doctrine as the fullness of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet were the results even less encouraging than they are, we have still imposed upon us the duty of warning the peoples of the earth of the judgments of Almighty God, which in his own due time must surely come. The divine injunction given to the servants of God in former dispensations and reaffirmed in this, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," has never been abrogated nor annulled; and our duty to carry the Gospel's warning voice to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, to the Gentiles first, and then to the House of Israel, still remains unchanged.

PROMINENT BRETHREN.

President Woodruff and the members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles still continue in the active performance of the duties appertaining to their Priesthood and calling, occasionally hampered, it may be, in certain directions by the unrelenting attacks of our persecutors. Almost without exception they have enjoyed good health, while the more aged ones, including Elder Lorenzo Snow, in prison, have been blessed with a vigor and with powers of endurance remarkable for men of their years. Brother Lorenzo Snow bears his unjust imprisonment with much fortitude and patience and is a source of great comfort and strength to his fellow-prisoners, deprived of liberty for their obedience to the requirements of God's law.

President Joseph F. Smith continues to send us words of faith and encouragement, of patience and brave endurance, and so far as his position and surroundings will admit, he is zealously furthering the interests of God's holy Church and Kingdom.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

We hear favorable reports of the good done by our Sunday Schools, Primaries, Improvement Associations and Relief Societies, and we feel to abundantly bless the brethren and sisters who so diligently and faithfully labor therein for the instruction of our youth and the benefit of the poor. We desire to encourage all engaged in these duties to continue with unabated zeal and disinterestedness in these labors of love and mercy, that the institutions under their charge may rise to yet greater heights of excellence and usefulness, and the scope of their influence for good in the midst of the Saints continually increase, and upon parents we urge the wisdom and desirableness of fostering by their faith, influence and example these admirable institutions for the benefit of their children.

In consequence of the unusually dry summer the crops have not been so abundant as in some former seasons. Although the yield of wheat is comparatively small it commands but a low price in the market. Wisdom and economy suggest that our farmers should not be anxious to make imme-

diately sales. Every kernel of wheat is precious. It should be stored carefully for future use, in such a manner as to preserve it from destructive insects and the action of the elements. The warnings which have been given to Israel on this point were not uttered in vain, as coming time will abundantly establish. Let no grain be wasted nor thrown heedlessly upon a depressed market to continue the depression and fritter away the fruits of arduous toil.

Preparations should be made for the proper care of stock during the approaching winter. Too many animals are permitted to perish for the lack of food and shelter. After the Lord has blessed the flocks and herds of His people, it is useful to allow them to wander on the bleak prairies or snow-covered benches to die of cold or starvation. Unless provided with shelter from storm and inclement weather loose stock should be gathered up and sent to warmer localities for winter range.

The wool crop of the past season has been very large and sheep-owners have made fair profits on their products. But domestic economy recoils at the spectacle of 7,000,000 pounds of wool being shipped out of the Territory to be returned in the shape of inferior cloth, and be purchased at high prices by woolgrowers and others. Factories among our own people should utilize the whole of this product, employing hands that are now idle to manufacture honest goods, and thus retain in the Territory much money that goes to build up industries afar off. Our home factories are turning out most excellent articles at reasonable prices; these should be purchased in preference to foreign made goods, because they are more durable and because home industries ought to be patronized.

On the same principles and for the same reasons the hides and pelts which are now shipped away to be brought back manufactured into articles that can be made in this Territory, ought to be retained and worked up for home use. Factories for this purpose, carefully conducted, would soon return fair profits, while the whole community would share in the resultant benefits.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, we say to the Latter-day Saints: Put your trust in God, as you ever have done. He will not fail you. Continue to live in strict conformity to His Gospel. Humble yourselves before Him in mighty faith and prayer. Confess your sins one to another; and go to your God and confess to Him, and obtain His forgiveness therefor. Live in close communion with the Holy Ghost, that it may be your constant companion, and that through its heavenly influence you may be prepared for every coming event. The Lord is holding a controversy with the nations, and He has said "after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes."

And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunders, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea, heaving themselves beyond their bounds. And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people." Already His words upon this subject are being fulfilled. The elements are joining their voices with the voices of His Elders in testimony of the near approach of the end. And woe to the people or the nation that fight against Zion, for, as we have often had occasion to say, God will fight against them. His wrath will be poured out upon them. Babylon will fall, and the refuge of lies will be swept away; and truth and righteousness will cover the earth as with a flood, in fulfillment of the words of the Prophets. Greater signs will appear in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, bearing awful testimony of the near approach of that great day when our Redeemer will be revealed from heaven in power and in great glory.

With continued prayers for your safety, and for your prosperity in the work of God, and with most earnest desires that every man, woman and child will be faithful to the trust which God has reposed in us, we remain

Your brethren and fellow servants,
JOHN TAYLOR,
GEORGE Q. CANNON.
Of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President's Office,
October 6, 1886.

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