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## DISCOURSE

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ber 6th, 1896, by

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

My Dear Friends—Today I feel as much as I ever did in my life the force of these words which were used by one of the ancient worthies when he said, "Now, O Lord, I know that man is nothing in Thy sight, except Thou by Thy Spirit dost strengthen him." I thank President Joseph F. Smith and my brethren of the Twelve who are present for their kindness in granting me liberty to be a listener this morning, and I wish to testify that while I was rested and refreshed in my person, I was refreshed, blessed and strengthened in my spirit. I always rejoice in the midst of the Saints, and I realize that the Spirit and power of God were with the brethren who spoke unto us this morning. And now, if you will graciously lend your faith in my behalf, I will strive in my spirit to obtain of the Lord that measure of the Holy Spirit that shall still enable us to have edification while we are together.

The work of the Lord in which we are engaged is not only great, but it is wondrous. I was thinking this morning as I sat here, and as I now behold you, what a contrast between the present Davis Stake conferences and what they were thirty years ago! Well may we feel as the celebrated Morse said concerning the revelations of science to him, "Behold what hath God wrought?" We live in a century of time which has developed and is developing to the human family most wonderful disclosures, or revelations of various sciences, especially the science of true intelligence, the knowledge of God.

The highest order of intelligence known to man has been revealed and proclaimed in our day, and we are the joyous recipients of that superior knowledge and intelligence which the heavens have vouchsafed to man—the knowledge that the Lord, honoring and glorifying himself and His own ways, has restored again the Gospel, the order and power of the Priesthood; has taught the boy prophet how to translate by the Urim and Thummim, and how to organize His church on the earth and set in order all things that were wanting. It seemed to have opened up not only to those who were believers and who were looking for the coming of the kingdom, as many of our fathers were at that time that this was the last dispensation, but that it was also the set time for the opening up

of these various scientific revelations, inventions and discoveries with which we in our conditions now so greatly abound. While the Lord revealed to Joseph the most important truths concerning the way of salvation—the way of our return to the presence of our Father in heaven, He also gave knowledge and revelation to men who were not so devoutly inclined, but whom He found to be of such excellent spirit, in some cases, as to acknowledge His hand in those discoveries, concerning other revelations and developments; as, for instance, the discovery of steam and of electricity as great instruments of power.

The revelation of the knowledge of God through the Gospel was the great leading topic, and the moving forward and accomplishing of this work is the great supreme object of the heavens and of the righteous on earth. The Lord, in His mercy and wisdom, revealed these other matters of science as help-metres to spread abroad this Gospel to the nations of the earth, to bring the human family to nearer relation with each other, so that the work of God might be hastened in its time and, in His infinite wisdom, be cut short in righteousness. In the beginning our Elders taught about going to the nations in swift vessels, "swift vessels of bulrushes;" and about those times the Lord was teaching certain men to arrange so that we could cross the ocean by steamship, when it used to take some three weeks to go by some of the choicest sailing packets. This is only one instance of His movement to hasten the gathering of the Saints by the steam-power upon the sea and upon the land. Speedily following, came the discovery of the use of electricity, by which means intelligence and testimony have been imparted to the nations of the earth, and will be until Israel is gathered.

The great work that is upon us in these latter days was so laid out before us this morning in its magnitude and importance, by President Joseph F. Smith, that all of us must see who have sight, and all must hear and feel who have our senses, that it is upon each and every one of us to endeavor to honor the high position which the human family are today willing to accredit us with in the earth. Next to the gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth, one of the wonders of the world, is how the people are assimilated in their faith and feelings into that unity of spirit which is necessary for us all to possess. It is a standing miracle in the eyes of the world, and it commands the admiration of the noblest minds among the statesmen of the nations.

When I was in England, and the Gospel had to be carried to the people of

South Africa, the Cape of Good Hope, one of our brethren was returning from that place, having finished his stay, and going to Zion. I do not recollect his name, but I recollect well the circumstance occurring at the time. He came and stopped with us a few days in the English mission. He was by marriage a relative of the distinguished statesman, Lord John Russell, and, of course, in going through the country he took the opportunity to have an interview with this honorable gentleman. Lord John received him kindly and cordially as a relative, but he wondered at so sensible a man as he joining so unpopular a people as the Latter-day Saints. There was one thing, however, that touched him. He said it was the greatest wonder in his mind how Mr. Youg could gather together a people of such various notions, such varied habits, such prejudices of education, and could make them to be so united in accomplishing the work which they seemed to be carrying on at that time in America. This thing is a standing wonder to the human family. It is a wonder to us when we stop to think of it. But it is only accomplished by the power of God, by the authoritative administration of the ordinances which confer remission of sins and baptism by the Holy Ghost into one spirit as well as by water.

About that same time, soon after this great extent of territory west of the Missouri river had been acquired from Mexico as a part of the United States domain, and then called Upper California, some of you will recollect that there was a great stir as to which part, if any, of this great acquisition should be allowed to become slave states and which part of it should not. There was also a great stir in Congress as to how to adjust the slavery question, and there was appointed in Congress a committee of thirteen, representing in number the thirteen original colonies, and these men were entrusted with the duty of harmonizing, of compromising and of arranging and submitting to Congress such a method of procedure as should be if possible satisfactory to all sections, the north and the south, the east and the west.

About this time I had a dream, and about this time also our people were being turned out of the United States to seek a resting place where they could get the farthest from their friends. In my dream I was called upon by a gentleman who said he wanted to talk with me and to introduce me to a committee of men. He took me into a place where there were thirteen men. I can recollect the countenances of quite a number of them to-day. When I had been introduced to them, the chairman said to me, "Mr. Richards, we want to