

[From the Portsmouth Journal.]

## BRASS.

I've tuned my harp to various themes,  
But ne'er before to brass;  
Have racked my brain with many schemes,  
To claim through life a pass—  
But Nature made my face of clay,  
Which seems misfortune dire—  
A brazen front we need each day  
To help us to aspire.

A man untaught with the ore  
Should not be left at large;  
He may not earn enough on shore  
To pay his parish charge.  
'Tis folly in this flaunting age  
To show a modest face;  
Brass is the crown, and brass the rage;  
It leads off in the chase.

The cabbage grows the daisy down—  
Poppies out-scent the rose;  
Brass dignifies the brainless clown,  
And gives him great repose.  
The pumpkin far out-swells the peach—  
The burdock scorns the pink;  
Brass often fancies it can teach  
Real flesh and blood to think.

Then why may I not bravely sing  
In praise of staring brass?  
It seems, in this mad age, to ring  
To raise to power an ass.  
The voice of gold breaks on the air,  
And says, "I'm King of Earth;"  
But brass, which hoots down all despair,  
Claims prior right by birth.

Brass stares unflinching in the face  
Of e'en "Old Nick" himself,  
And mocks all modesty and grace  
While clamoring for pelf;  
He wears a self-sufficient look,  
And swings with such an air  
I've half a mind to write a book  
On brass!—it would be rare.

Yes, I have sung on many themes,  
But ne'er before on brass;  
Have racked my brain with many schemes,  
To claim through life a pass—  
But Nature made my face of clay,  
Which seems misfortune dire;  
A brazen front makes clear the way  
For ninnies to aspire.

## DISCOURSE

By President BRIGHAM YOUNG, Tabernacle, February 17th, 1856.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

We have just heard bro. Morley's testimony concerning the religion that we have embraced. The extent of knowledge incorporated within the salvation extended to the children of men, will vastly exceed the researches of the human family, and when they have passed the veil, they will then understand that they have but just commenced to learn. Bro. Morley says he never expects to be too old to learn; I believe that doctrine. That which is to be learned in the eternities of the Gods pertains to life, and that life is exhibited to the human family in the degree which they are capacitated to receive it, that they may be taught as we teach our children, that they may learn the first rudiments of eternal lives.

Could we live to the age of Methuselah and eat the fruits which the earth would produce in her strength, as did Adam and Eve before the transgression, and spend our lives in searching after the principles of eternal life, we would find, when one eternity had passed to us, that we had been but children thus far, babies just commencing to learn the things which pertain to the eternities of the Gods.

We might ask, when shall we cease to learn? I will give you my opinion about it; never, never. If we continue to learn all that we can pertaining to the salvation which is purchased and presented to us through the Son of God, is there a time when a person will cease to learn? Yes, when he has sinned against God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost, God's minister; when he has denied the Lord, defied him and committed the sin that in the bible is called the unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost. That is the time when a person will cease to learn, and from that time forth, will descend in ignorance, forgetting that which they formerly knew, and decreasing until they return to the native element, whether it be in one thousand or in one million years, or during as many eternities as you can count. They will cease to increase, but must decrease, until they return to the native element. These are the only characters who will ever cease to learn both in time and eternity.

A number of items occupy my mind pertaining to the saints, I may say, a great many more than I could tell in one day, in one month, or in one year. Those who are well acquainted with me, know something of the action of my mind. To explain it, let me say to you, if you wish to tell me a long story, one that will take you two hours to get through with, a key word will at once give me an understanding of all you could say, in that long time. All who are acquainted with me know this. Bring any business matter before me, and the brethren with whom I am associated in business transactions know that I need but a word to know the nature of it. So it is with regard to my preaching to the people. If I could put into them the same spirit and understanding which I have, they could see and understand things without a long detail of explanation. But this is not the case with all the people, therefore I am, in a manner, compelled to use the time I do in speaking to them upon the various subjects, at least so far as I can possibly spare it. If I were disposed to, I could train myself

to get up here and take a text and explain it, and dwell upon one little item just as long as any other man, but what is the use of it? Upon this principle it would take us more eternities than we shall ever see, to learn what we have to learn, consequently when I speak to you I speak the few words I have to say, as I already have upon the subject of intelligence and learning.

We shall never cease to learn, unless we apostatize from the religion of Jesus Christ. Then we shall cease to increase, and will continue to decrease and decompose, until we return to our native element. Can you understand that? It is a subject worthy the attention of the eminent divines of christendom, and they may search into it until they are tired, and still know comparatively little about it, while I preach it to you in a few words.

I will here introduce a subject that we all should be acquainted with, I allude to morality. Have you been taught morality? Yes, every one of you have been taught not to use profane language, to be honest in all your dealings, to be courteous to all at home and abroad and to be strictly upright on all occasions. All this you have been taught from your youth.

Many think that all which was taught them by their fathers and mothers, school teachers and priests, ought to be removed, laid aside, dispensed with, and that they should begin anew to learn every principle of civilization. This is a great mistake. I make these remarks because I have heard elders preach that there was not a sectarian priest, not a man living upon the earth, or that had lived upon it, neither a reformer nor a professed christian, from the time the priesthood was taken from the earth until Joseph Smith came, but what went straight to hell fire when he died. Yes I have heard them preach just as absurdly as that. I have heard many say, I will dispense with this, and I will dispense with that; and many of our elders actually dispense with praying, and say it is nothing but a sectarian notion.—Were you taught by your fathers to pray? "Yes, but that is a sectarian notion." Were you taught not to lie? "Yes, but that was a sectarian notion." Were you taught not to pilfer? "Yes, but we think we won't say it aloud, it is nothing but a sectarian notion, and we have to learn every thing over again." This is a mistaken idea. There is only one thing which the people lack on this point, in order that their traditions and former education may do them good, and that is to know how to sever the good from the bad, how to assimilate to themselves every good trait of character they have seen in their fathers and mothers, teachers and neighbors, and every good thing that has been taught them from their youth, and how to gather to themselves every good principle they have been traditioned in, and store that up as their individual property, and then dispense with every erroneous idea and every inconsistency. Many things which have been taught us in our childhood, or in our early lives, are truly inconsistent, lay them aside and cleave to the traditions which actually tend to virtue, holiness, chastity, loveliness, kindness, honesty and truthfulness in every respect, and gather all the good into our own store house, and let each one say, that belongs to me.

Some imagine that they must begin and unlearn the whole of their former education, but I say, cling to all the good that you have learned, and discard the bad. This leads me into a field, the gate to which I wish to have closed up, locked up, and passed by; I do not wish to say any thing about it. I will say this much, however, if there are not all kinds of fish in this gospel net I should like to see the kind that is not in it, and I think that would be something new under the sun.

Treasure up in your hearts that which tends to virtue. You say, "I want an explanation upon virtue." I wish I could so give it to you, that you could understand it when I am done talking; I will do my best to do so. Learn the will of God, keep his commandments and do his will, and you will be a virtuous person. Can you understand that? If you can know the will of God and do it, you will be a virtuous person. You say, "perhaps I should be led to do that which is contrary to my former traditions, and to do that which is really wrong." No matter anything about that; if you can know the will of God and do it, you will be a virtuous person, and will receive knowledge upon knowledge and wisdom upon wisdom, and you will increase in understanding, in faith and in the light of eternity, and know how to discriminate between the right and the wrong. I know the people say that they do not understand, that they do not know what the Lord requires of them. I say keep the commandments of the Lord. We were taught that the commandments of the Lord were this, that and the other, in our former lives, but when we can know and understand, by the revelations of Jesus Christ, the will of our Father in heaven and do his will, he will make us pure and holy, and fit for the society of angels and himself.—Will we not be virtuous then? yes, in the highest sense. Many say, "I don't know the will of the Lord, I wish I did." I do really wish I knew what the Lord requires of me, but I do not know, and do not know how to find out.

I will now refer you to the scripture, where it reads that we shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body. If I do not know the will of my Father, and what he requires of me in a certain transaction, if I ask him to give me wisdom concerning any requirement in life or in regard to my own course, or that of my friends, my family, my children, or those that I preside over, and get no answer from him, and then do the very best that my judgment will teach me, he is bound to own and honor that transaction, and he will do so to all intents and purposes. I have often reflected with regard to people knowing the mind and will of the Lord by revelation. My thoughts turn within me in a moment, in my reflections upon what has hitherto been and that

which actually now comes before me concerning the saints in the last days and in the former days. For instance, Jesus when upon the earth called twelve men to be witnesses that he was the Christ. Then there were a great many others who believed that fact, but he showed to those twelve men things that he showed to none else; he convinced them in a degree that he convinced no other person, that is, in some instances.

My mind then reflects in a moment, did Jesus have the power to make his disciples believe that he was the Son of God by raising the dead, by laying hands on the sick, by walking on water, by multiplying the particles of bread and fish set before the multitude, or by any other miracle? Did he convince and prove to twelve men that he was the Christ, by the miracles he performed?—He did not. He did not convince them by one or all of the acts, which were called miracles, that he performed upon the earth. I know that many think that they are a great proof, that it is astonishing that people will not believe, when they read over the history and miracles performed in the days of Jesus and his Apostles. Let me tell you that if his apostles were here in this our day, traveling through the country raising the dead, laying hands on the sick, casting out devils, walking upon the water, or doing whatever they might be able to perform, it would all be no proof to the people that they were sent of God. I know that some of you think this is strange, and if so, I have strange views upon these subjects. It is no proof to me, it is no proof to any person else, and often serves to throw persons relying upon it into temptation, and to cast them still further into darkness. "Have you any proof of this?" Yes, right here in our midst. Men who have professedly seen the most, known and understood the most, in this Church, and who have testified in the presence of large congregations, in the name of Israel's God, that they have seen Jesus, etc., have been the very men who have left this kingdom, before others who had to live by faith. I have a witness right before me, and I am fearful every time that a man or woman comes to me and relates great visions, saying "I have had a vision, an angel came and told me thus and so; the visions of eternity were opened and I saw thus and so; I saw my destiny, I saw what the brethren would do with me; I foresaw this and that." Look out for that man or woman's going to the devil.

I ask, is there a reason for men and women's being exposed more constantly and more powerfully, to the power of the enemy, by having visions than by not having them? There is, and it is simply this. God never bestows upon his people, or upon an individual, superior blessings without a severe trial to prove them, to prove that individual, or that people, to see whether they will keep their covenants with him, and keep in remembrance what he has shown them. Then the greater the vision, the greater the display of the power of the enemy, and when such individuals are off their guard they are left to themselves, as Jesus was. For this express purpose the Father withdrew his spirit from his Son, at the time he was to be crucified. Jesus had been with his Father, talked with him, dwelt in his bosom, and knew all about heaven, about making the earth, about the transgression of man and what would redeem the people, and that he was the character who was to redeem the sons of earth, and the earth itself from all sin that had come upon it. The light, knowledge, power and glory with which he was clothed were far above or exceeded that of all others who had been upon the earth after the fall, consequently at the very moment, at the hour when the crisis came for him to offer up his life, the Father withdrew himself, withdrew his Spirit, and cast a veil over him. That is what made him sweat blood. If he had had the power of God upon him, he would not have sweat blood; but all was withdrawn from him and a veil was cast over him, and he then plead with the Father not to forsake him. No, says the Father, you must have your trials, as well as others.

So when individuals are blessed with visions, revelations and great manifestations, look out, then the devil is nigh you, and you will be tempted in proportion to the vision, revelation, or manifestation you have received. Hence thousands, when they are off their guard, give way to the severe temptations which come upon them, and behold they are gone.

You will recollect that I have often told you that miracles would not save a person, and I say that they never should. If I were to see a man come in here this day and say, "I am the great one whom the Lord has sent," and cause fire to come down in our sight through the ceiling that is over our heads, I would not believe any more for that. It is no matter what he does. I cannot believe any more on that account. What will make me believe? What made the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ witnesses? What constituted them apostles, special witnesses to the world? Was it seeing miracles? No. What was it? The visions of their minds were opened, and it was necessary that a few should receive light, knowledge, and intelligence, that all the powers of earth and hell could not gainsay or compete with. That witness was within them, and yet, after all that was done for them, after all that Jesus showed them, and after all the power of the spirit of revelation which they possessed, you find that one of them apostatized, turned away and sold his Lord and master for thirty pieces of silver, in consequence of his not being firm to his covenant in the hour of darkness and temptation. Another of them was ready to say, "I do not know anything about the Lord Jesus Christ," and denied him with cursing and swearing.

Some are apt now to say, "I don't know anything about this 'Mormonism,' I don't know about the priesthood." Did you not once know? "I thought I did." Did you not once know that Joseph Smith was a prophet? "I thought I did." Did you not once know that this was the king-

dom of God set up on the earth? "I thought I did, but now I find myself deceived." What is the reason? Because they give way to temptation; they may have had great light, knowledge, and understanding, the vision of their minds may have been opened and eternity exhibited to their view, but when this is closed up, in proportion to the light given to them, so is the darkness that comes upon them to try them.

Are you going to apostatize when you are in darkness? That is the time to stand firm. I know there are some people right in our midst only about on a par with good quakers; say they "I pray when I feel like it." Have you prayers in your families? "Yes, sometimes, but I do not always feel like praying, and then I feel as though it would be a sin."

Let me tell you how you should do. If you feel that you are tempted not to open your mouth to the Lord, and as though the heavens are brass over your heads and the earth iron beneath your feet, and that everything is closed up, and you feel that it would be a sin for you to pray, then walk up to the devil and say, Mr. devil, get out of my way; and if you feel that you cannot get down upon your knees for fear you will swear, say, get down knees; and if they don't feel right when they are down put something under them, some sharp sticks, for instance, and say, knees come to it. "But I dare not open my mouth," says one, "for fear that I shall swear." Then say, open mouth, and now tongue begin. Cannot I say Father? Yes, I can: I learned that in the days of my youth. Suppose I say, Father look in mercy upon me,—do you think the devil is going to snap you up then? If he is still by, and you dare not open your eyes for fear you will see him, tell him to stand there until you have done praying, and bring the body to a state of submission.

I have taught you that the spirit is pure when it comes into the tabernacle. The tabernacle is subject to sin, but the spirit is not. A great many think that the spirits of the children of men, when they enter the tabernacles, are totally depraved; this is a mistake. They are as holy as the angels; the devil has no power to contaminate them, he only contaminated the bodies. When your spirit wishes to worship the Father, and your body is so full of weakness, or wickedness, that you feel as though you could not do it, go to and bring your body into subjection; bow the knee and confess that Jesus is the Christ, if it is darker than 10,000 midnights in your minds; say, "I am for the Lord, anyhow."

That makes me think of a great many Christians in the world, when they are sick and in trouble they will pray; if they are in fear of starving to death for want of food, or freezing through lack of raiment or fuel, then they will call upon the Lord. I know the old prophet said, "In the day of trouble they draw nigh unto me." Get out, say I, in my feelings, in regard to such a religion. When I am starving to death it is time for me to be diligent in getting something to eat; when the ship is in a storm, it is then time to look out for the rigging. One may ask, "Are you not going down below to pray, in this dreadful storm?" No, I have no time to pray now, I must take care of the ship. So it should be with every Latter Day Saint. By and bye the storm is over, then let us go down into the cabin and do up our praying in fair weather. That is what 'Mormonism' teaches me; and when it is dark as midnight darkness, when there is not one particle of feeling in my heart to pray, shall I then say, I will not pray? No, but get down knees, bend yourselves upon the floor, and mouth, open, tongue, speak, and we will see what will come for us, and you shall worship the Lord God of Israel, even when you feel as though you could not say a word in his favor. That is the victory we have to gain, that is the warfare we have to wage. It is between the spirit and the body, they are inseparably connected. The spirit was not made here, it was organized in eternity, before the worlds were, with the Father and with angels before they came here.

When the devil got possession of the earth, his power extended to that which pertains to the earth. He obtained influence over the children of men in their present organization, because the spirits of men yielded to the temptations of the evil principle that the flesh or body is subjected to. This causes the warfare spoken of by Paul when he says, "the spirit warreth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit." Paul explained it as well as he could, and I am trying to explain it as well as I can. Often when the spirit would do good the body overcomes, then one does the evil that brings into subjection the spirit. When the spirits of men are subject to the body and continue to be, and commit the amount of evil necessary to fill up their cup, they are cast out and their names will be blotted out from the Lamb's Book of Life.

You know that it used to be a great saying, and I might say worthy of all acceptance, among the Methodists, "I know that my Redeemer lives and my name is written in the Lamb's book of life." Their names were always there, and never will be blotted out, though they may be up and down, warm, hot and cool, and though they may sin to-day and to-morrow repent of it, but their names will remain in the Lamb's book of life until they sin the sin unto death. And when their names are once blotted out they will never be written there again; they will then be numbered with those who will cease to increase, cease to learn, to multiply and spread abroad.

But again to the witness, that is on my mind. It was necessary for Jesus Christ to open the heavens to certain individuals that they might be witnesses of his personage, death, sufferings and resurrection; those men were witnesses. But as Jesus appeared to the two brethren going out of Jerusalem, he was made known to them in the breaking of bread. Now suppose he had eaten that bread, and gone out without opening their eyes, how could they have known that he was the Savior who had been crucified on Mount Calvary?