

## REMARKS

BY

## ELDER WILFORD WOODRUFF,

At the General Conference, Sunday Afternoon, Oct. 10th, 1880.

REPORTED BY GEO. F. GIBBS.

THERE are many times when I feel a great desire to speak to the people because I have things in my heart that I would like to say. I cannot say at the present time, however, that I have any great desire to speak, still I will bear my testimony and express a few thoughts in my reflections that are upon me to-day.

I am happy and greatly pleased in what I have witnessed, and I feel that the heavens are pleased with our proceedings this day. I feel that they are right. The kingdom of God is onward; it is not backward. It is wisdom that we perform what we have done this day.

The act of organizing the council of the first presidency of the church and kingdom of God, I have regarded as a most solemn scene, to see this mighty host of priesthood who are assembled in this house vote in such unanimity, and to see this vast congregation rise in a body with uplifted hands to heaven, it is like the rushing of many waters—there is power in it; there is power with this people; there is power with the priesthood and in the ordinances of the house of God. And what we have done to-day will have its effect it will have its effect in the heavens and on the earth. The responsibility that we bear as elders of Israel, before the heavens and before the earth and before each other, is very great. We are called of God; we have been chosen, we have been ordained as men who have been called to bear the priesthood and to attend to the ordinances of the house of God, to preach the gospel, to warn this generation, to build up Zion, to redeem the earth, to erect temples unto the name of the Most High God, to redeem the living and the dead and to carry out those great purposes which have been fore-ordained before the world was. It is a great calling, it is a great responsibility; and I feel that we, as servants of God and as elders of Israel, that we should try in our minds to comprehend these things.

I reflect a good deal with regard to our position, as was described to us to-day by Brother Pratt. It has been my faith and belief from the time that I was made acquainted with the gospel that no greater prophet than Joseph Smith ever lived on the face of the earth save Jesus Christ. He was raised up to stand at the head of this great dispensation—the greatest of all dispensations God has ever given to man. He remarked on several occasions when conversing with his brethren: "Brethren, you do not know me, you do not know who I am." As I remarked at our priesthood meeting on Friday evening, I have heard him in my early days while conversing with the brethren, say, (at the same time smiting himself on the breast) "I would to God that I could unboomer my feelings in the house of my friends." Joseph Smith was ordained before he came here, the same as Jeremiah was. Said the Lord unto him, "Before you were begotten I knew you" &c.

So do I believe with regard to this people, so do I believe with regard to the apostles, the high priests, sevens and the elders of Israel bearing the holy priesthood, I believe they were ordained before they came here; and I believe the God of Israel has raised them up, and has watched over them from their youth, and has carried them through all the scenes of life both seen and unseen, and has prepared them as instruments in his hands to take this kingdom and bear it off. If this be so, what manner of men ought we to be? If anything under the heavens should humble men before the Lord and before one another, it should be the fact that we have been called of God.

I believe the eyes of the heavenly hosts are over this people; I believe they are watching the elders of Israel, the prophets and apostles and men who are called to bear off this kingdom. I believe they watch over us all with great interest.

I will here make a remark concerning my own feelings. After the death of Joseph Smith I saw and conversed with him many times in my dreams in the night season. On one occasion he and his brother Hyrum met me when on the sea going on a mission to England. I had Dan Jones with me. He received his mission from Joseph Smith be-

fore his death; and the prophet talked freely to me about the mission I was then going to perform. And he also talked to me with regard to the mission of the Twelve Apostles in the flesh, and he laid before me the work they had to perform; and he also spoke of the reward they would receive after death. And there were many other things he laid before me in his interview on that occasion. And when I awoke many of the things he had told me were taken from me, I could not comprehend them. I have had many interviews with Brother Joseph until the last 15 or 20 years of my life; I have not seen him for that length of time. But during my travels in the southern country last winter I had many interviews with President Young, and with Heber C. Kimball, and Geo. A. Smith, and Jedediah M. Grant, and many others who are dead. They attended our conference, they attended our meetings. And on one occasion, I saw Brother Brigham and Brother Heber ride in a carriage ahead of the carriage in which I rode when I was on my way to attend conference; and they were dressed in the most priestly robes. When we arrived at our destination, I asked Prest. Young if he would preach to us. He said, "No, I have finished my testimony in the flesh I shall not talk to this people any more. But (said he) I have come to see you; I have come to watch over you, and to see what the people are doing. Then (said he) I want you to teach the people—and I want you to follow this counsel yourself—that they must labor and so live as to obtain the Holy Spirit, for without this you cannot build up this kingdom; without the Spirit of God you are in danger of walking in the dark, and in danger of failing to accomplish your calling as apostles and as elders in the church [and kingdom of God. And, said he, Brother Joseph taught me this principle." And I will here say, I have heard him refer to that while he was living. But what I was going to say is this: the thought came to me that Brother Joseph had left the work of watching over this church and kingdom to others, and that he had gone ahead, and that he had left this work to men who have lived and labored with us since he left us. This idea manifested itself to me, that such men advance in the spirit world. And I believe myself that these men who have died and gone into the spirit world had this mission left with them, that is, a certain portion of them, to watch over the Latter-day Saints.

I feel myself as though we are blessed of the Lord, and that we ought to be satisfied. I feel that we should humble ourselves before God, that we should labor to magnify our calling, and honor this priesthood which we received before we came here while we live out the few days appointed to man in the flesh. And I do hope and pray God that we may magnify our priesthood and calling while we tarry here, so that when we get through our earthly mission and go into the spirit world, we may meet with Brothers Joseph and Brigham and Heber and the rest of the faithful men whom we knew and labored with while in the flesh, as well as Father Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and apostles who have had their day and their time and their generation, and who have finished their work here below and gone home to glory. Do you not think they are interested about us? I tell you they are. And I desire when I die, and my spirit goes into the spirit world, to meet these men and to go where they are; and I wish to live in that way and manner so as to be worthy of this blessing. And when I say this of myself I wish it to apply to all Israel. It will not pay us to apostatize; neither will it pay us to sin, it costs ten thousand times more than it is worth from beginning to end. Therefore, let us be true and faithful to God. And inasmuch as we have voted to-day to sustain the presidency of this church and kingdom, let our prayers ascend night and morning into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth in behalf of the men who now stand at our head, and also in behalf of the apostles and in behalf of all the priesthood of God in their place and station. And inasmuch as we do this we will grow, we will advance, the Spirit of God will be poured out upon us which will reveal unto us the mind and the will of God concerning us. And Zion will continue to increase in power on the earth, and eventually accomplish all for which it is designed, which is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## HON. GEORGE Q. CANNON INTERVIEWED.

Our Delegate's Views of the President's Message.

His Refutation of Hayes' Statements about Utah.

All Filtered through the Chicago "Times."

[From the Chicago Times.]

Washington, 10.—"Our trust is in the Lord," said Mr. Cannon to-night when asked by the *Times* correspondent what he was going to do to protect himself against the new anti-Mormon movement. Mr. Cannon is a man of medium height, stout, heavily formed, and in the neighborhood of 60 years of age. His head is large and very peculiar in its shape. His forehead is bulging and very full. His nose is a strong thick Roman. The lower part of his face is lengthened by a quite long iron-gray beard. The face is shaved smooth down to the line of the jawbone. His eyes are blue, very large and very open. When he becomes excited they have the bright gleam of

A RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIAST.

The Mormons are very much excited over the chapter in the President's message relating to them, and the evident intention of Congress to do something in the way of carrying out the President's suggestions. Mr. Cannon's sole reliance in this contest is in the Lord. He concedes that if the Lord permits polygamy to be broken up in Utah, and the Mormon people scattered beyond the hope of recall, the religion professed by him is wrong. He charges President Hayes, in the message, with

PERVERTING PLAIN FACTS.

He thus particularizes his charges:

The President says in his message, that "faithful and zealous efforts have been made by the United States authorities to enforce the laws against it. Experience has shown that legislation upon this subject, to be effective, requires extensive modification and amendment. The longer action is delayed the more difficult it will be to accomplish what is desired. Prompt and decided measures are necessary." Mr. Cannon says: "That is not true, for this reason: Officers have been holding back, taking no steps in this direction, so as to bring about the very thing President Hayes recommends—legislation by Congress. They are trying to make it appear to the country that they are prevented by existing laws from enforcing the

STATUTES AGAINST POLYGAMY,

and under this pretext they come to Congress for legislation to deprive the people of Utah of their rights."

The President again says in his message: "The Mormon sectarian organization, which upholds polygamy, has the whole power of making and executing local legislation of the Territory." Mr. Cannon says that this is also untrue, for the reason that the legislature of Utah, no matter if they are unanimous, cannot pass a single law without the approval of the Governor, who has the absolute veto power. Therefore when the President says Mormons have the whole power of making and executing local legislation of the Territory, he states what is not true.

The President also says: "By its control of the grand and petit juries it possesses large influence over the administration of justice." This is not true, Mr. Cannon replies. It is provided by

THE POLAND BILL,

which passed in the Forty-third Congress in 1874, that the clerk of the District Court and the Probate Judge of the county where the District Court is held shall each make a list of jurors. The clerk of the District Court makes out invariably a list of non-Mormons and the Probate Judge a list of Mormons, and, although Mormons outnumber non-Mormons in many places eight to one, still they have no greater representation than non-Mormons on either the grand or petit jury. Of course, in drawing the list from the box sometimes one side will predominate. It has been a subject of comment that in the management of the box non-Mormons in every instance outnumbered the Mormons.

The President says: "In consequence of the fact that Mormons are on the juries, the law against polygamy is not enforced." The fact, according to Mr. Cannon, is that in

every instance when charges have been brought against Mormons for polygamy, these

MORMON JURIES,

whenever evidence has been sufficient, have brought in a verdict of guilty. They did so in the cases of Reynolds and Miles, and in all cases where the evidence warranted a verdict of guilty. "I have been asked by Mormon citizens," continued the delegate, "whether they had not better decline going on juries on account of their religious views. In every instance I have urged them to serve, and where the evidence presented was sufficient to justify them in bringing in a conviction they have done so. A Mormon looks upon this subject as a matter of religion, and he is willing to suffer martyrdom for it, and does not want to be convicted upon insufficient evidence."

In answer to a question in regard to

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO UTAH, Mr. Cannon said that Prest. Hayes was met at Ogden by citizens, both Mormon and non-Mormon, and was treated with all consideration and kindness. Nothing was wanting to give him all honor due his station. The authorities of Salt Lake City telegraphed to him extending the hospitality of the city. A dispatch had been sent also by Gov. Murray, inviting him to Ogden, saying that everything would be done to entertain him. He chose to accept this invitation in preference to that of Salt Lake City; but he had full, free and frank intercourse in going from Ogden to Salt Lake and returning with leading Mormons, among them Prest. John Taylor, the Mormon leader.

"What was the substance of what the President said to Mr. Taylor?" was asked.

A friend of Mr. Cannon's here replied as follows: "He spoke in terms of great admiration of the development of the country and what had been done. In

SPEAKING OF THE MORMON RELIGION.

he said: "Perhaps the time may come when we shall see it in the same light you do, when we may be converted to your religion." That is the idea which Mr. Taylor had of the conversation. That is the way the President misled him. Mr. Taylor is a man of perfect truth. He is over 70 years of age, very venerable and fine-looking. His hair his white as wool. The talk between him and the President lasted upward of an hour, and in that conversation the impression was left on his mind that

PRESIDENT HAYES' VIEWS WERE GREATLY MODIFIED

on the Mormon question, especially on polygamy. The President spoke in high terms of the schools of Utah, and what was being done to educate the children. I was with them awhile, but did not choose to stay. I thought it would be better to leave them alone. The President's manner was very kind and gentle, and he talked with Mr. Taylor as a friend rather than an enemy."

"What is there back of all this, on the part of the President?" was asked.

Mr. Cannon replied: "It is to

SATISFY THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT of the country. He is bidding for it for some reason."

"What is the motive of those people who are against you in Utah?"

"Nothing but possession of the government of the territory—control of affairs there. The territory is out of debt. There are no bonds. Everything is in a flourishing condition. Taxation is low. There is the finest opportunity for plunder ever offered. A prominent federal official said to me the night before I left: 'There is the damndest crowd of infamous scoundrels out here I ever met in all my life, among the people who are raising the cry against you, Mormons.'"

"You have said that you would

PREFER A MILITARY GOVERNMENT. to this proposed plan?"

"Yes. If civilians are not to be trusted in the management of Indian affairs, there are far greater reasons why they should not be selected, as he proposes, by appointment by the President and confirmation by the Senate, to govern us. Speaking for myself, I would much prefer being under the rule of military and having my people transferred to the care of the War Department."

"Suppose the government indicated by the President be approved by Congress, how much would it depreciate your property?"

"Real estate in Salt Lake City would be comparatively useless. No man of property or prominence would be safe for a single moment. Innumerable pretexts would be made to seize property of our people."

"What hope have you for preventing this?"

"As a Mormon, I would say our only hope is in the Lord."

THE WONDERFUL DELIVERANCES

we have had in the past, notwithstanding numberless schemes to injure us, give our people immense confidence in the Almighty. I think it is the most remarkable thing in the history of the past fifty years, the manner in which we have escaped oppressive laws, and the many schemes devised for our destruction. Our folks throughout the entire Territory every night and morning pray earnestly and constantly, feeling that there is a crisis in our affairs."

"Would the Mormons be willing to make a compromise with the United States authorities, relinquish plural marriages, and put themselves in harmony with the rest of the people of the country?"

"I fear that they would not, as a people, be willing to abandon polygamy."

"For instance, if the government should not prosecute for polygamy or attempt to render illegitimate

FAMILIES ALREADY FORMED,

but simply forbid the practice in future, would they observe the statute in that case?"

"I do not know of a single case myself of a violation of the statute since the rendering of the decision by the Supreme Court. I would not like to say that the whole people would do it."

"Would you counsel it?"

"I should say if any man practices plural marriage he should take the consequences. It is a principle of our faith. If a man believes in it and is willing to make of himself a martyr, I should say let him do so. There should be no shirking or attempting to evade the statutes. We are all prepared to suffer any penalty rather than yield."

## AMATEUR CRITICISM.

SALT LAKE CITY,

Dec. 9th, 1880.

Editor Deseret News:

I am glad I am not a musical critic, and still more glad that I am not one of the criticised. Perhaps I should qualify those expressions by saying, I congratulate myself on not being possessed of such an exalted standard of musical susceptibility as the musical critic of the *Herald*, as I am, therefore, enabled to derive a considerable degree of pleasure from performances that fail to please him, and I certainly do not aspire to the place of those whom he sometimes honors with public criticism, as the effect of his notices upon such persons is something like the sensation of having a bucketful of cold water poured down one's back this weather, it is rather chilling to the ambition of the recipient; the result has been, in some instances, to my knowledge, that individuals of undoubted musical ability have declared their determination to never again attempt to sing in public, and many others shrink from the ordeal.

Although disclaiming any musical talent myself, I am an ardent admirer of it in others, and earnestly desirous of seeing it encouraged and developed in this city. This is my apology for intruding again with an earnest protest against the character, and effects, of some criticisms in your esteemed morning cotemporary upon the efforts of those who unpretentiously do their best to gratify the public, and at the same time seek to improve themselves in the divine art. I do not object to the critic's severe censure upon the conceited and assumptive persons who parade themselves before long-suffering audiences, with the airs and claims of professionals, and who are generally ridiculously lacking in ability to represent that which they aspire to. Such are manifestly proper subjects for the keen punctures of a critic's pen. I claim that the ladies and gentlemen who have appeared in concerts given by the Philharmonic and Zion's Musical Societies should be exempt from any comments that might have the effect of causing them to relinquish their efforts to assist in promoting the interests of music.

The *Herald* critic is, I consider over-anxious to find reasons for at-