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DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER JOHN HENRY SMITH,

At the Sixty-fourth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Friday afternoon, October 6, 1893.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

With Brother Heber J. Grant, I was very much impressed this morning with the services held in this Tabernacle. Every word, so far as I now remember, was to me the balm of spiritual life. The remarks that have been made this afternoon by Brother Grant in regard to the experiences through which we are going, in common with the rest of our brethren and sisters in this nation, I believe, are timely also. The Latter-day Saints should be an exceedingly industrious people in every direction that tends to their upbuilding in their faith and its observances, and in the development of every resource that is calculated to provide for the needs and necessities of our commonwealth. I have during the past few months done more worrying over the fear that from the conditions that exist throughout the land and the spirit of doubt and uncertainty that have been engendered in the breasts of so many people, a spirit of contraction would take too full possession of the Latter-day Saints, and many of them who are able not only to make provision for themselves and families, but to give employment to some of their fellow, would become so fearful of the conditions that surrounded them that a spirit would be engendered in them that would lead home to do that for which they would save regrets at some future time. I have discovered in my brief experience among men, in noting the growth and development of what we regard as the recent boom, that by talking in any given direction men are worked up to a fever, and many of our brethren and sisters have sold their property back and forth to each other, carrying by a little spirited talk the value from a very low price to an exorbitant figure. I have discovered also that when we regard the times as very hard we meet and shake hands and express to each other the feeling that the times are ex-

ceedingly trying, and the one spoken to retorts by saying that he is also pressed for means, and we begin talking and talking in regard to this matter until we work ourselves, in common with people in other parts of our land, into a feeling of depression. Men become down-hearted and depressed in spirit, and begin to withdraw in every way and to curtail themselves in the proper and legitimate exercise of those powers and that means which our Father has placed under their watchcare.

I am not one of those that can find special fault with any of my brethren and sisters for their extravagant habits. I believe many of us have been unwise in these matters; that we have reached out with an eye of hope, probably to an extent in some of these directions that we should not have done. But I say that the thinking men, the wise and prudent men of any community that do not devise plans and schemes and seek to create industries and give employment to their people, are unworthy of the confidence and esteem of the people who have chosen them to be their leaders. We are not all endowed with the capacity to preach the Gospel. There are Elders among us whose lives devoted to the ministry have been enabled to bring into the Church hundreds and thousands of honest souls, who hung upon their words as they would hang upon the word of the Lord. There are others in our midst possessed of material minds, endowed richly in the capacity to organize, to plan and devise, to create and suggest, and to point out the way. It was the design of Providence in the placing of men at the head of His Church in this dispensation to have them possessed of all the characteristics necessary to the upbuilding and development of a people that should become the head and the front of His children upon this planet; taking the crude elements as it were, untaught, so to speak, and unlearned, as the world has been pleased to regard us, He has brought to the front among His people men possessed of these capabilities, giving them the revelation of His will, pointing out to them the importance of the growth and development of His work, directing their movements, and showing the course in which they should move in planting the standard of our Father upon these mountain peaks and scattering His children within her vales. The Prophet Joseph, with his spiritual tendencies, is a sample. He, Joseph, gave the perfect plan of a spiritual life. The Lord also gave to this

people that wise and prudent statesman whom the world will come to regard as among the brightest minds that have ever lived, in the development of the material resources of a people—Brigham Young. His will of iron, his judgment and ability were such that what he set his hand to do, under the guidance of Providence, he never turned his face from the accomplishment of that purpose. Today the world, in studying the results of his labors to mankind, points to him as an example worthy to be followed in this respect. He used his skill and ability in seeking to make the people whom the Lord had called him to be a steward of a sturdy, capable and thorough people, possessing the force and power to develop the resources of the land that had been given them, bringing everything material in its proper use, and at the same time schooling and educating His people in the refining influences that come from the possession of everything that tends to endow men and qualify women to indeed be pleasant and joyful and acceptable to the Lord whom they would serve.

Now, my brethren and sisters, in the consideration of the conditions that surround us at this time, it is true that, with others of my brethren, I may have been unwise in seeking to gather together means to aid in the creation of industries and in the upbuilding of the temporal interests and wellbeing of the people of Utah, or the Saints throughout this mountain region; but Father in Heaven knows my heart, and I believe I know the hearts of my brethren; for I have been intimate with them in those councils looking to the accomplishment of their desires and wishes in these matters, and I know that President Woodruff in his soul has yearned to open every door possible, that the Saints might have that which was requisite to their comfort, provide for their children and their homes, and to give them that which was for their good and for their advancement. I know that this is true in regard to his counselors. I know this is true in regard to the members of my quorum. Whether I possess that feeling or not, I know they possessed it; and not one of them today holds one dollar in property or means that would not as speedily and as readily be put upon the altar for the development of this work as they speak to you proclaiming to you the truth this day and declaring that Jesus is the Christ, and that the Gospel we have embraced came from our Father, de-