

THE DESERET WEEKLY.

Truth and Liberty.

No. 25-

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, JUNE 6, 1896.

VOL. LII.

REMARKS

Made at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Monday, April 8, 1896, by
PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

The spirit that is enjoyed in this conference is a very sweet and heavenly feeling; it produces pure happiness and contentment, and our hearts are filled with joy. These are the evidences of God's favor; that He accepts of us and approves of our course. There has been a great deal of curiosity indulged in by different members of the Church as to the spirit of revelation and how it manifests itself. It is true that in the Church the Lord has given, among other gifts, the gift of the ministering of angels, also the gift of visions and dreams, and some people imagine that the Church is led of God by the ministering of angels. Now, angels do minister unto men in our day, and we can testify to this. We can testify that Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer, has visited the earth and has ministered unto men. Some can testify of this from their personal experience. But the Church is led by the gift of revelation through the Holy Ghost. And how is it known to be from God, that which comes, sometimes with power, sometimes with the still small voice of the Spirit? It is known by its fruits. Questions arise upon various matters; differences of views exist and are expressed; for the men whom God has chosen to lead the people are men of independent thought and of positive character, and they do not consent without being convinced; but there is a way by which the truth and the right can always be known. Darkness is not one of the manifestations of revelations from God; it is light—light which removes darkness and doubt from the human mind—that is the evidence that a thing is right or that it is revelation from God. If you read what the Prophet Joseph had revealed to him concerning Oliver Cowdery connected with the work of translation, you will get a key to the spirit of revelation that God has placed in His Church. Just as Brother B. H. Roberts quoted this morning, the Lord told the Church that they should receive the words of His servant Joseph "as it from mine own mouth." It is in this manner that the Church of Christ is guided; it is this that constitutes its strength; it is this that has given it its success. Men wonder at its success, but if they could see how the Lord operates and how He brings things about to accomplish cer-

tain ends, they would understand it. Why, if it were not so we would be worried to death. We never could stand up under the pressure if we had to care for this work, or if we had to indulge in fears concerning it; it would kill the strongest man that ever lived. But it is not necessary to worry, or to take trouble; it is only necessary to do our part and leave the result with God. He will take care of His work. He has not gone to sleep; He has not gone on a journey; He has not forgotten this work that He has established. Not in the darkest hour, not in the deepest dilemma does He forget us. We can go to bed and sleep without worrying over the work of God. And I do not believe that that keeps the servants of God awake. Financial troubles may have worried some; but so far as the work itself is concerned, that does not disturb the servants of God. They know that He is taking care of it; and when the burden appears heavy and oppressive the only course then is to ask God to make it light and to lift the burden, and He never fails to do it in his own time and way. There is no reason in the world why we should not live if not forever in the flesh, at least, till we are all satisfied with life. I was going to say if I live till then, I will be very old; for I am very fond of life. There are so many opportunities to labor, I would like to live and work; and I suppose we all have that feeling.

We have had a good time at this conference, and I want to say a few words that are in my heart. I want you, my brethren and sisters, to bear with the First Presidency. Think us honest men. Think us true men. Think us men that are not schemers, and designers, and full of tricks. Do not think of us as bad men—men that are ever ready to take advantage. What right have you to entertain such a thought about any of us? What right has any man or woman in this congregation, or in the Church, to have such an estimate about Willford Woodruff or George Q. Cannon or Joseph F. Smith? Have we ever done anything in our lives to furnish the least foundation for such a view of our characters? I declare to you in the presence of the Lord Almighty and all the holy hosts, that we have never done anything in our lives to justify any suspicion of this character. Go through our entire lives, in secret and in public, and in our transactions with the children of men, you cannot put your finger on where we have done intentional wrong. I do not say this to boast, but because of what has occurred in the past months. At the same time, in another light, we feel that we are unworthy of that responsibility and that honor which God has, in His wisdom, seen fit to place upon us. Now,

I want to say to all of you who are here—and I wish all Israel could hear my words—go away from this conference carrying with you a feeling of confidence and love in and for the First Presidency of this Church, as well as the Twelve Apostles, and if you will do so God will bless you. If you do not do it, I will not say what the consequences will be. I do not want to predict evil; but I say that God will bless you if you love the men whom He loves, and whom He has chosen out of all Israel for these stations. They have not chosen themselves; they have not sought the offices themselves. The Lord knows this; and many of you ought to know it. It is bad enough to have the world to fight. I have been willing through my life to battle and to stand up and take all that men would heap upon me that did not belong to the Church; but I have been wounded to the very soul when my brethren and my sisters have said things that were false concerning me, and concerning my brethren—for their reputation is as dear to me as my own is. There is where it wounds; there is where it cuts; there is where it hurts. Why, I have felt as though I could fight the whole world, if I only did what God wanted me to do. I have suffered from mental fear as very few men in the world have; but I have not suffered from the other fear. I thank God for that; and I thank Him that the men who stand at your head are men whose knees have never trembled, whose hands have never shook, whose hearts have never failed them in the hour of peril and danger. The Lord has stood by them and has made them valiant in the truth. Now, whether you know it or not, I know it, and I bear testimony to it this afternoon. We have not paltered with the word of God; we have not temporized with the enemy of the Church of Christ; but when peril has come we have been ready to meet it and to face it, and to stand all the consequences, with the Lord to help us. Now, we should esteem these men. We are unworthy of the blessings of God if we do not do it. I have had some experience before I was a member of the First Presidency, in traveling with President Young, and listening to complaints from married people. It is surprising how lenient a man will be with his wife when he loves her; but if he does not love her, he is apt to be suspicious of her, and perhaps unkind and hard towards her. So, on the other hand, when a woman becomes alienated from her husband, and her affections are drawn from him, how wonderfully suspicious she grows and how she distorts and misconstrues her husband's words and acts, because of jealousy. Her mind becomes so filled with jealousy that she illustrates the truth of the words of Shakespeare.