

Poetry.

GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD MORNING.

A fair little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work, and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, good night, good night!"

Such a number of rooks came over her head,
Crying "Caw! caw!" on their way to bed.
Said she, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things, good night, good night!"

The horses neighed and the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "Bleat! bleat!" came over the road,
All seeming to say, with a queer delight,
"Good little girl, good night, good night!"

She did not say to the sun "good night,"
Though she saw him there like a ball of light,
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep.

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head,
The violets courtesied and went to bed;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said on her knees, her favorite prayer.

And while on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day,
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good morning, good morning, our work's begun."

REMARKS,

By President Brigham Young, in the Tabernacle, in
G. S. L. City, June 3d, 1866.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

I wish the few remarks which I may now make to be comprehensive and instructive.

The subject upon which br. Wells has spoken this afternoon is a very intricate one to define. It is very difficult to convey even the ideas which we may have respecting the operations of, to us, invisible spirits upon the hearts of the children of men; and it is very difficult to frame in the mind a system of thinking and reasoning upon this subject that is at all satisfactory. It is very difficult to form in the mind an even and unbroken and correct thread of ideas, which will truthfully and satisfactorily explain the variations which we see in the motives and actions of mankind, and to understand the varied motives and feelings of the people, and what they design in performing such and such acts. There are some who have a correct and clear thread of ideas framed in their minds relating to this subject; but cannot convey them to their fellow beings. This is a weakness that I believe is inherent to a greater or less degree in each and every one of us.

The opposition which we find in the hearts of the children of men to the gospel of life and salvation, br. Wells has been setting before us this afternoon in a very able manner. Upon this subject I have my own reflections, and my own way of revealing those reflections to others.

The opposition which we see manifested against truth in this our day has been manifested in every day and age of the world wherein the gospel of the Son of God has been preached to the children of men. There is no difference to-day in this respect from what it was formerly. Our opponents tell us that were it not for the doctrine we believe, teach and practice there would be no difficulty—no strife between the Latter-day Saints and those who call themselves gentiles. We are all gentiles by birth, who are not of Jewish descent. We who are called Latter-day Saints are gentiles by birth—we are nationally so. The opposition which we have to meet is not because we believe in polygamy. That principle is not the real bone of contention, but it is the power of Satan against the power of Jesus Christ here upon this earth. It is no matter what the doctrines are, it is no matter by what name they are called, in what manner they are presented, or by whom they are believed; it is the power of God on the one hand, and the power of Satan on the other. We can see the workings of the two spirits upon the hearts and dispositions of the children of men. Opposition to the truth is made manifest by those who render themselves servants to obey false principles, or false ideas, and their actions are directed by the power of Satan against the truth of heaven in the persons of those who love and advocate it.

We have been told that when error is introduced it is generally done in a most genteel, religious, scientific, and most refined and civilized manner. The servants of sin should appear polished and pious. It is necessary they should be learned, and be able to call to their assistance the accomplishments and elegancies of science and art, and the subtle, persuasive power of rhetoric.

Jesus Christ describes this class of deceivers very forcibly in the following words: "But all their works they do to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." This external polish is really necessary for them as a covering to make successful the introduction of false theories and false principles, and to cover up licentious and wicked lives.

The servants of God have truth, and nothing but truth, to present to the world, that the world may be sanctified by the truth. The truth needeth no polish to make it lovely and desirable to those who love it. The principles of truth and goodness, and of eternal lives and the power of God are from eternity to eternity. The principle of falsehood and wickedness, the power of the devil and the power of death are also from eternity to eternity. These two powers have ever existed and always will exist in all the eternities that are yet to come. Although in relation to this earth, sometime in its future history there will be no death, and him that hath the power of death will be destroyed. It is written in the Book of Mormon, "For it must needs be that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, righteousness could not be brought to pass; neither wickedness; neither holiness nor misery; neither good nor bad."

When man is born into the world he is at once subject to the influences of life and death, and to the innumerable and varied vicissitudes which he meets in his passage from birth to the grave, to give him an experience which will prepare him to enter into and enjoy life everlasting. He is endowed with agency to choose either life or death, and must abide the consequences in the next life of the choice which he makes in this. Were it not that evil existed with good, man could not have been an agent unto himself. When the spirit of man enters the earthly tabernacle it is as pure as an angel of God. When man, as a child, is brought forth to the light, and begins to live, move and have a visible and an individual being in this world, he is brought in contact with the principle of evil—he receives the mark of sin, and as he passes the usual stages from infancy to manhood, he learns to become disobedient to the requirements of heaven, disobedient to the laws of man, and disobedient to the laws of his own nature; he engenders the spirit of hatred, malice, wrath, strife and all that class of evils which render him unfit to return again to the presence of his Father and God; but if he will obey the gospel, and walk in the ways of the Lord, his mortal existence and his proneness to sin, which he has inherited through the fall, become profitable and essentially, necessary to the full enjoyment of salvation and eternal life.

These ideas may be profitable to the Saints and aid them in understanding to some extent why things are as they are.

Then the opposition to the truth is not because we have no wife, because we have one wife or many wives; it is not because we are Socialists and have all things common; it is not because we believe in or practice this or that doctrine as individuals and as a people; but it is the spirit of him who is an enemy to all righteousness that is in the hearts of those who yield themselves to obey false principles. Paul in his writing to the Romans, says, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" When truth comes, error comes also. When the gospel of the Son of God is introduced among the children of men, it comes with light and intelligence, with pure and holy principles. It embraces all morality, all virtue, all light, all intelligence, all greatness and all goodness. It introduces a system of laws and ordinances, and a code of moral rectitude which, if obeyed by the human family, will lead them back to the presence of God. As we were exhorted this morning to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, be baptized for the remission of sins, receive the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, receive the spirit of prophecy, the spirit of discerning of spirits, the gift of healing, and in short all the gifts and graces and laws and ordinances of the gospel, which are for life and salvation. Now, the power of Satan is opposed to all this.

Now, let me state somewhat the reason why the devil appears as a gentleman when he presents himself to the children of men. The children of men have good principles dwelling within them. When their spirits came into this mortal flesh, they brought with them the love of all truth, virtue and goodness; but the sin that has contaminated the mortal tabernacle through the fall creates what the Apostle Paul, when writing to Timothy, calls a "warfare." When Joseph Smith first preached the gospel to this generation, the Spirit of God attended it, and that Spirit met an opposing spirit, which was the spirit of Satan, exerting his power to lead away mankind from the truth to everlasting ruin; while the spirit of the gospel, the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, sought to lead to exaltation and everlasting life. Here are the two powers in opposition to each other.

Now, remember that it is not because we are called "Mormons," or Latter-day Saints that we meet opposition; there is nothing odious in mere names and titles. Joseph Smith has as good a right to his name, as John Smith has to his. There is nothing criminal in the simple name of Joseph Smith, yet he being a servant of God and a preacher of righteousness, his name became odious to the wicked, and the three simple words "Old Joe Smith" were sufficient to arouse in their hearts every vindictive and blood-thirsty desire. It was not, however, this simple name that aroused the worst feelings of the human heart against those who loved and obeyed the truth; but it was the spirit of Satan working in the hearts of the children of disobedience against the truth. Why was Joseph Smith, and why are his brethren, so odious to those who are not of us? Because we have the words of eternal life to offer to the world. The devil is opposed to this, and offers resistance to the progress of the spirit of the gospel by arousing the wicked, who are under his influence, to hate and persecute and annoy in every possible way the true followers of the Lord Jesus.

Let me say to you, my friends, (and if I have foes here I say it also to them,) there is no spirit inhabiting a mortal tabernacle, (that has not sinned away the day of grace,) but what naturally loves and adores the truth, and would bless and honor all those who seek to walk in the way of the Lord, were it not for the influence and power of evil by which they are controlled. There is a constant warfare between the good and the evil. The mortal tabernacle is of the earth earthy, and came forth for the express purpose of being prepared to serve as a dwelling for the eternal spirit; and the spirit has come here for the express purpose of getting a tabernacle; and the sin that is in the fleshy tabernacle is against the good that is in the spirit. The Apostle Paul, when writing to the Romans, says, "For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

It is not the name of a man or the name of a sect which inspires this warfare, but it is a war which has always existed, and will always continue to exist, between the good and the bad, between the power of God and the power of the devil. To those who are not instructed in the things of God it appears to be a warfare between sects and parties. The votaries of the bad excuse themselves for their persecutions of the good by supposing that they, themselves, as individuals, or their nations, are about to suffer some great wrong from the upholders of the good. As an example of this I will quote from the gospel according to St. Luke: "And the whole multitude of them arose and led him (Jesus Christ) unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a king." This is the cunning of the devil, and a means by which he leads down to destruction great numbers of the human family. He gets the political world to believe that they are or are going to be infringed upon; he makes the religious world believe that the sanctity and rights of their holy religion are in danger, and thus he gets them to make his cause their own; they are lashed into a frenzy of excitement and hatred against the Saints; every high-toned, honorable and truthful feeling of the human heart is blunted or entirely subdued in them; they plan for the destruction of God's people, and, in many instances, the blood of the Saints—the blood of innocence—has been shed by their hands. It is written in the book of Revelation: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:

he was cast out into the earth, and his angels with him."

Paul in view of the power of this great deceiver and his host exhorted the Saints anciently to "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." A great number of those who oppose the truth, and mob and rob and kill the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, know not what they oppose, but they are moved to commit depredations against the people of God by men who are desperately wicked; these are among the bitterest enemies of the truth. The multitude in the days of Jesus cried out: "Crucify him." The chief priests had delivered him up from envy. Pilate knew this; "but the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barrabas unto them. When Pilate inquired what evil he had done, they cried out more exceedingly: crucify him." They knew not what they did.

Wherever the gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached, either in these or in former days, it has met with a class of men to whom the truth looked lovely and God-like, and the spirit within would prompt them to embrace it; but they find themselves so advantageously connected in the world, and have so many interests at stake if they should embrace it, they conclude that it will not do, and here comes the warfare again. Some few will overcome the reasonings of the flesh, and follow the dictates of the Spirit; while the great majority of this class of persons are won over by sordid considerations and cleave to their idols. The good spirit tries to overcome the wayward will of the flesh, and the flesh, aided by the cunning and power of the devil, maintains a strong warfare; but, notwithstanding this great power against which the spirit has to contend, the power of God is greater than the power of the wicked one; and unless the Saints sin against light and knowledge, and willfully neglect their plain and well understood duties, and the Spirit of God is grieved and it ceases to strive with them, the spirit is sure to prevail over the flesh, and ultimately succeeds in sanctifying the tabernacle for a residence in the presence of God.

The spirit which inhabits these tabernacles naturally loves truth, it naturally loves light and intelligence, it naturally loves virtue, God and godliness; but being so closely united with the flesh their sympathies are blended, and their union being necessary to the possession of a fullness of joy to both, the spirit is indeed subject to be influenced by the sin that is in the mortal body, and to be overcome by it and by the power of the devil, unless it is constantly enlightened by that spirit which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which is imparted through the gospel. In this, and this alone, consists the warfare between Christ and the devil.

It is not in my being called a Quaker, a Methodist or a "Mormon" that is the true cause of contention between these two great powers—Christ and Belial; but it is in the fact that God has established His kingdom upon the earth and restored the Holy Priesthood, which gives men authority and power to administer in His name.

It has been told us this afternoon, and was this morning also, that we must be baptized in order to be saved. Much remains to be said on the means necessary to effect salvation in its completeness. We might as well say that a beautiful temple could be built and all its details completed and finished in a day, as to say that we can tell all we know about the plan of man's salvation in a short hour and a half or in a day. It is plain to every enlightened person that the Lord has introduced fit and proper laws by which he will save His children and exalt them into his presence. If these laws are not obeyed by the human family, they cannot be saved, nor be exalted to the presence of God. What will become of all those who will not obey the laws of salvation? Will they be confined throughout an endless eternity in that bottomless pit, where their worm dieth not, and where their fire is not quenched?

It is necessary that men should become acquainted with the laws of God, and the ordinances of His kingdom, and receive of the power of the world to come in order to fit them to become angels of the devil, and that the devil may have full power over them; and these are the only ones who are cut off from every degree of salvation. Jesus said, "now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."