

to each and all as they stand in relation to one another in the alphabet; and after mastering that, learns to arrange and re-arrange and change and modify the relationship of those characters, producing various results according to the principles of orthography and orthoepy. Thus he acquires a knowledge of the language he speaks. So with every other branch of knowledge in like manner, the study of theology being no exception to the rule.

So far as our history is concerned: so far as the opposition which we have met in propagating this message of mercy, and of heralding forth to the world the glorious news and "glad tidings of great joy," which shall be unto all people, namely, the plan of redemption, we anticipate opposition; it is nothing new; it is nothing marvelous when we understand human nature. Not at all. We sometimes speak unadvisedly; we sometimes marvel at things which happen, but of which, upon more deliberate reflection, we would not, because there is nothing strange in this. We see rivalry in all things, in all the various phases of society; we see competition and rivalry in the present crude and undeveloped state of human intellectuality, in the present—if I may be allowed the expression—immoral state of society; and I maintain that society is in an immoral state when the good of all is not contemplated, when the greatest good to the greatest number is not the dominant principle, is not the inspiring motive, is not the moving and propelling incentive urging men forward in the various concerns of life. I say again, that unless there is a motive which pervades all our actions, taking into contemplation the good of the whole and not of a part, society so conditioned is not, in a proper sense, in a moral condition. The condition of society contemplated in the Gospel embraces this expressed injunction, that we should help to bear each others' burdens; that we should do unto others as we would have others do unto us. And requires, moreover, that whatever other gifts, whatever other qualities, whatever other characteristics may be distinguished in our conduct toward our fellowmen, or whatever other features may disappear and subside in the rolling tides of the ages in the developing of our nature, assimilating it more and more in the image of God, that there are certain attributes that will never fail, namely, faith, hope and charity. These will forever abide.

And when I consider these facts as inseparably connected with the system of salvation left by Jesus our elder brother, our Lord and Savior, what are we to think of the attitude of the Christian world toward us? How very uncharitable they are! How very unlike the Savior in His conduct, in the judicial murder of the crucifixion upon a Roman cross—"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Do our Christian friends feel so towards us? Do they who think we are deluded; that we are beguiled by false conceptions of righteousness, that we have been decoyed by some impure motives to the maintenance of institutions that are damning in their character upon man—do they exercise this forgiveness towards us? No, my friends. But as there is a kind of Christianity referred to in the Scriptures whose propagandists appear in sheep's clothing, garbed with all the sanctity of innocent lambs, but within are ravening wolves, we are confined to the Savior's rule of judging men and things—"By their fruits ye shall know them." But it is our duty to emulate the examples given us by Him in whom was no guile. When Jesus came into the world, did He seek to exterminate everybody? Or His followers, poor fishermen, did they seek to destroy and institute persecution against those who differed from them in opinion? No. Have the Latter-day Saints exhibited this spirit towards the world? No, they have not; and we modestly and friendly challenge the universal world to cite us to any feature or trait that may be found in any chapter of our history wherein we have sought to wage war against man or woman because they did not believe as we did; to coerce them to the acceptance of our faith; to drag them into prison or drive them with the sword because we could not make disciples of them. No, my friends, such a disposition even is contrary to the genius of our faith. We have invited respectfully, the most competent expounders of the doctrines of the various sects when they have chanced to come among us, to enunciate their views from

our pulpits and in our lecture rooms, to our own congregations. We have never closed our door against them, although we have been so very exclusive; although we are so peculiar a people, and so arbitrary in our priestly rule as charged by our liberal accusers. But when our missionary Elders have gone forth to the world, it has been a very rare thing, indeed, to meet with such a favor; and when such an opportunity has been proffered, we have known how to prize it. When ministers have opened the doors of their meeting houses or churches, offering us the use of the same to preach to their assemblies, we have acknowledged most respectfully the receipt of such favors. Who do you think is the more charitable? Where are we to draw the line of demarcation between the charity of the "Mormons" and that of other dissenting Christian churches, and their feelings and sentiments towards us? It would not be a difficult thing to draw this line; but I forbear this afternoon.

I will simply say, it affords me pleasure to realize that God has thus far presided over our destinies; that we have been held, as it were, in the hollow of His hand. We have been a handful of people with the prejudices of an unbelieving generation running high tide against us. We have been looked upon as unworthy a passing notice. But a change has come over the vision of their minds. Now everybody is giving us notice. God has permitted us to gather strength and that, too, in the face of the bitterest persecution and the fiercest opposition which we have had to contend with and that which God has designed to develop and establish in the earth will triumph all the more by being thus opposed. The more the effects of resistance are brought to bear against it, like the shaking of the forest tree, very frequently promotes its growth: it disturbs its roots; it loosens the soil around it and it commences to put forth fresh energy, increasing in strength and size; and like the mustard tree, the more it is kicked the farther the seed is scattered.

Now this is the view I take of the results of opposition which we have had; and we have excellent precedents for believing this, not only in the day and age in which we live, but all past history contributes to the support of this belief and its supply of material is ample for the argument. Now this is not only the case with reference to the truth itself, but it is a principle inherent in nature, that sometimes a bad cause is also fostered by the opposition it meets with. So that those of our friends whether here or elsewhere who suppose that opposing the truth will produce an arrest of its growth, and extinguish the life it contains, the vitality embodied in it, are simply poor readers of human history, are simply ignorant of the facts of history, and are ignorant of the various phases of human nature, as that human nature has been developed in the varied schemes that have sprung into life during the centuries past and gone. But when we take these indestructible principles that outlive the ages; when we take a truth that is universally so, one that is a truism in its nature, and when we take our association of those truths together and constitute a system, and then undertake to wage war against that system, my friends, it is a very costly experiment; it is a losing game. For "truth though trampled to the earth will rise again." You cannot destroy that which cannot die. You cannot put life out of that which is life itself. You cannot extinguish the power that is limitless in its resources. You cannot do it.

Now, I do not purpose occupying your time but a few moments longer. I have directed your thoughts over quite a breadth of ground in quite a rambling manner. I have not felt disposed to take a subject and direct your thoughts specially to it; for I am aware when subjects are spoken of and questions are sprung the mind involuntarily follows out and conducts itself through a series of reasons and deductions until it arrives at legitimate conclusions, satisfying itself or otherwise as the case may be; but I have brought up a number of questions showing the general character of the work in which we are engaged. I am convinced that God has directed our destiny, and that His hand is still over us for good; and that we are the happy recipients of many proofs of His divine favor. He has withheld from us the chastening rod of our enemies; He has dispelled the clouds

which have gathered around us in sable thickness, and has shed forth the light of heaven upon us, which has caused our hearts to rejoice in the God of our salvation. We have received the doctrines of Jesus Christ: faith in Him; repentance of sins; and baptism for the remission of sins; and we have essayed and covenanted to live a new life in Christ Jesus; to seek to do good to all men, and evil to none; and like Daniel of old, to be faithful to the statutes and to the decrees and behests of Jehovah, the decrees of man against us notwithstanding; we having come to the conclusion in our own minds that God and a few good men form an overwhelming majority. And we shall see and yet learn that truth will triumph and prevail. But it may be—and we have promises moreover to that effect—that clouds of darkness will gather; that threatening storms will rise; that the impending dangers will be so imminent as to cause the countenance of some to pale and their knees to tremble and their faith to falter. But, then, the darkest hour is before the dawn of day. So shall we find that God, when He shall have been fully convinced of our integrity, having proven us as gold is purified through fire, will abide by the results of obedience to His covenants; that we shall come off more than conquerors through Him who loves us, even Jesus Christ our Savior.

May His Spirit and His grace sustain us in the discharge of every duty, in the developing of every divine institution and in maintaining every correct principle, and in promoting peace and righteousness upon the earth, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

DISCOURSE
BY
ELDER CHAS. W. PENROSE,
At the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake
City, Sunday Afternoon,
Jan. 30th, 1881.

REPORTED BY JOHN IRVINE.

I have listened attentively to the remarks made to us by Brother Bywater this afternoon. He has presented to us a great many things that are true and profitable for us to reflect upon. I always take pleasure in listening to my brethren when they say something. I take pleasure in reflecting upon the ideas which they present and in carrying them to their legitimate conclusion. When we hear a truth presented to us by the spirit of the Lord, it is of this nature; that we are not only instructed in that particular truth for the time being, but it leads us to reflect upon truths that grow out of or are connected with it. One truth seems to lead to the contemplation of other principles, and they to others, until the great field of truth is open to our view, and we see that we know but very little, but that there will be an opportunity afforded us to advance and learn that of which we are now ignorant.

Bro. Bywater has to some extent this afternoon drawn the line of distinction between the faith of the Latter-day Saints and the creeds of the various denominations, expressing himself to the effect that whereas each of them take in but a part of the gospel of Jesus Christ as declared in the scriptures, in their creeds, the Latter-day Saints embody in their faith the whole of it; that whereas the different Christian denominations are founded upon some few peculiar ideas and tenets, the faith of the Latter-day Saints is based upon a broader foundation—that we take in the whole of the gospel, the whole of the revealed will of God to man. This is correct so far as it goes. But the faith of the Latter-day Saints is not comprehended alone in that which God has revealed and is placed on record. The creed of the Latter-day Saints is not comprised by a certain number of tenets; we are not limited to a certain number of articles of faith; we are not confined to the things which are laid down in the book called the Bible, which all the professing Christians of the times declare they believe. We are not bound up by the Old Testament, nor the New Testament, nor by both combined. We have received certain principles that can be found within the lids of the Bible. A great many of our principles can be found existing among the various Christian denominations. One sect believes in

some things which we believe in; other sects believe in other things in which we believe. But there are principles connected with our faith which go over and beyond and above all that which is comprehended in the Christian world, and all that which is contained within the lids of the Bible. And yet at the same time there is nothing in our faith, there is nothing in our creed, which contradicts that which is in the Bible. There is no principle in our faith which contradicts anything that can be demonstrated by known truth. Truth always harmonizes with itself. And when a person grows in the knowledge of the truth and advances to higher principles, he does not receive anything that contradicts any truth he had previously learned, for truth is never discordant with itself. Truth is eternal; truth, as we have been told this afternoon is indestructible and never contradicts itself.

The great distinction, as I view it, bringing it down to a small point, existing between the people called Latter-day Saints and all other bodies of professing Christians is this: That our creed is founded upon doctrines and principles and a spirit which have come from heaven in our own times. The doctrines of our faith, most of them, can be found laid down in great plainness in the books of the Bible and were revealed aforetime. Yet we have not received our training, our ideas concerning them, from the Bible. They have come to us from heaven direct. Every doctrine and principle of our faith has been sent down to us in our own times. These doctrines have come by present revelation. Now in that there is a marked difference between us and the rest of the people who profess to believe in the Christian religion. The various sects of modern times draw their creed—or profess to do so, from the Bible; they take it from the written books; they do not profess to have received any direct communication from the heavens. Take all these various sects of modern times and examine into their different creeds and the foundation of their belief in them, and you will find that it rests upon the hypothesis of the divinity of the Old and New Testaments. They trace their doctrines—or profess to do so—to these books, and they believe in the various doctrines which exist among them because they consider that they can find them in these books. The book is the foundation. The Bible the written word, the dead letter, is the foundation of all their creeds. Perhaps the Roman Catholic Church, as it is commonly called, is the only exception in that respect. But even the Roman Catholic Church, who look to the Pope as the great earthly head of the church, do not believe in present revelation, they did not obtain their creeds through direct communication with the heavens. Although the Pope professes to be the direct descendant of St. Peter, he does not even profess to have that great gift which made Peter a veritable Apostle—that is, the gift of revelation. Peter received communication from on high; so did his brethren of the apostleship. This was the real source of their light, this was the real power by which they instructed the people. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, the spirit of revelation; they were in communication with the great unseen Head of the Church, Jesus, who was crucified and had departed from their midst.

But all the various sects that compose modern Christendom more or less repudiate the idea of present revelation. They do not believe that in these times man can commune with his Maker. They believe, to use one of their favorite expressions, that "the awful voice of prophecy is closed forever; that the canon of scripture is full;" and they believe that when John the Apostle wrote the book of Revelation, that was the last sacred record committed to man.

Now you see there is a great difference between the whole Christian world and the Latter-day Saints. Whereas we also believe in the Bible; whereas we also believe that God inspired holy men of old and that they wrote as well as spoke by the Holy Ghost; while we believe in the merits of Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant, believe in his atonement, believe in the work he wrought out for the salvation of mankind; and believe in the teachings of his inspired Apostles, yet we do not found our faith upon that which is recorded in the sacred book called the Bible. But our faith is founded upon communications received in

our own times, in the nineteenth century by living prophets and living apostles—by men who to-day hold that authority which the men held who wrote the things contained in that book. In that, then, is a great distinction between us and all the rest of the Christian world.

And there is another distinction, as I remarked just now; that whereas these various Christian sects are confined within certain narrow limits of faith, tied up within a certain number of articles or principles, our faith is not tied up by any number of tenets. The revelations which have been given to us at the present time do not constitute the whole of our creed. True, they constitute our creed so far as we have advanced to-day, but we stand ready to receive still further communication from the same source; the way is still open for us to receive still further light, further principles, further admonitions, further counsels, and further plans for the rolling forth of the great work of God on the face of the earth. So that our creed—although it is true it can be likened to the blossoming of that flower which Brother Bywater has so beautifully pictured before us, but which will fade and fall away—is to me more like the tree of life, which shall never perish, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, whose fruit bears the flavors and the juices of immortality, whose leaves never crumble or decay, whose roots are grounded in eternal soil, and that shall never wither and never die. This everlasting gospel which we have received is the tree of life that shall flourish for ever. And the same power which has revealed faith, repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands, and the holy Priesthood, and has made known unto us the plan for the redemption of the living and the dead, and has inspired us to our works up to the present time, is still ready to communicate line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, that we may be ready for every emergency, prepared for every event in the work of our God as it rolls forward on the earth. And when we, as individuals, depart behind the veil, we shall find the same opportunities there. We shall not lose the power to receive revelation. Our Priesthood will go with us. We will continue to grow in the knowledge of correct principles. That same Holy Spirit which has revealed a few things to us on the earth, and stamped the truth of them upon our hearts, will continue to open unto us the great things of the boundless universe; for it is the spirit of truth and it will guide into all truth.

This is the condition that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in, and in that respect it stands distinct from all other bodies of so-called Christians now extant upon the face of the earth. But in this respect it is exactly the same as the old Church we read about in the Bible.

The beginning of this great latter-day work was when the Father and the Son revealed themselves to the Prophet Joseph Smith. God spake from heaven. God opened up the communication that had been lost for centuries. Ages had rolled along and there was no voice from above. But the Lord spake to Joseph saying, "This is my beloved son, hear him." The Lord, the Great God, the Eternal Father, who spake in ancient times by the prophets; and in the meridian of time by His Only Begotten Son, has spoken in this age of the world and has pointed to His Son as His mouthpiece as standing between him and the inhabitants of the earth, and this work in which you and I are engaged, is under the immediate direction of that holy being, our Elder Brother Jesus Christ, whom we are commanded to hear. We are not to go after the vain traditions of sects, nor the vagaries of men; we are to "hear him." God has said so. Every doctrine and every principle that has been revealed to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has come from the Father through the Son, and by messengers who have been sent to this world by the Son, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, which bears witness of the Father and the Son. It is as it was in that revelation given to St. John on Patmos. Read the first two verses of the first chapter of the book of Revelations: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John." That is the order. God, our Father, is the author of all things here upon