

REMARKS

By President BRIGHAM YOUNG,
delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt
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[REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.]

I understand that many of the brethren and sisters in the old country lent money to their friends now here to assist them to emigrate; quite a number of letters have been sent, stating that those friends covenanted before leaving that they would repay that means with the first money they earned after arriving here, and that they would also send more than they had borrowed, in order to assist those who had previously assisted them. A number of our elders who have been from here on missions to England and other countries, have been in the habit of borrowing money or of getting it in some way. Some of these elders, when asked to refund what they had borrowed have said, "We did not borrow it, it was a gift to us." I wish to say to such elders, return the money with interest. If it was a gift, return the gift that it may go back and help many instead of one.

I do not wish to spend much time on this subject. I wish to give instruction, and to tell you my mind with regard to those elders who have borrowed money from the Saints in Europe. They may pretend to say that it was given to them to excuse themselves for not repaying it, but if they do not refund it, they are unworthy of the fellowship of the Saints, and I ask their bishops to cut every one of them from the Church, without favor or affection. If the bishops do this, they will be doing their duty. Disfellowship them, they are not worthy of a standing in the Church and Kingdom of God.

I wish to ask my brethren, the elders of Israel, to give liberally to help home our brethren and sisters who are now in bondage in the old countries. We have not said anything to the people for a long time with regard to donations. A year ago last fall we commenced a subscription to bring home the Saints. By the following February the amount reached, I think, some nine thousand dollars. Our agent left here about the 27th of February, and about ten days before he started we gave notice that he was going, and between that time and the time he left, the nine thousand had swelled to about thirty thousand; and in the course of three months from then the amount had increased to seventy-six or seventy-seven thousand dollars. With this amount a great many were helped here who could only raise part means, some were brought all the way. The brethren and sisters continued to give through the summer, and if I recollect rightly, we have now over thirty thousand dollars in money to help home the poor. Most of this has been sent to Liverpool, but we have some in this city. Now we wish the charity of the brethren and sisters to be extended to bring home the poor Saints, and perhaps it would be as well for me to commence the list. I will say to our clerk he may put down two thousand dollars for Brother Brigham; also one thousand for Wm. H. Hooper, our delegate in Congress, who told me before he went away that he would give another thousand. Now we are ready to receive your thousands or your hundreds, and we will not refuse a five-dollar bill. We got a great many of them from the sisters last fall, more than the people would imagine; if the list were read of the sisters who put in five dollars, ten dollars, and some twenty-five, it would astonish you. This is a short sermon on this subject. The brethren here from the settlements throughout the Territory can carry it home, and it will become generally known.

I have thought of proposing certain conditions in relation to those who are helped here from abroad; but whether it would be prudent and consistent to do so, I leave the Latter-day Saints to judge. The cogitations of my mind on the subject of bringing home the Saints are somewhat strict. I have thought it would be as well, before helping the poor to emigrate, to have them covenant that after arriving here they would be Saints in every sense of the word. Now, to particularize, I will say that we gather a family here consisting of father,

mother, four, eight or twelve children, as the case may be. They are Latter-day Saints; they wish to gather to Zion and to enjoy all the blessings of Zion; they are anxiously waiting for every gift and blessing God has in store for the faithful, and to be numbered with the Church of the First-born; but when they reach here, if we go into their houses, we shall very often find, if they have the means to do it, that they will perfectly soak their systems with tea and coffee, and are perhaps chewing tobacco and doing a little tippling, a little swearing and so on. This is the way with some who were gathered last year. Now, whether it is better to leave such people to die in the faith in their native lands, or to bring them here to apostatize and deny their Lord and Master, is a question. I think if I had the knowledge and the power I would never gather another member of the Church who would apostatize; but I have not this knowledge. I cannot say to a man, you stop and let your family come to Zion. I cannot say to a woman, you stop where you are, you are in the faith now, but if you gather you will apostatize; but your husband and family can gather, they will stick to the faith. I cannot say this, I have not the power, and hence we see many after they arrive here, turn away from the holy commandments. I do not know but what it would be perfectly reasonable to make every man and woman, before leaving their native lands, covenant before God to observe the Word of Wisdom, let liquor alone, use no language unbecoming a Saint, and, in a word, live their religion after arriving here. Whether it would be reasonable and consistent to lay such injunctions on the people before assisting them to gather I do not know. If we were to say to them, before leaving their homes, "Now if we gather you home, will you live your religion?" they would jump up, clap their hands together, shout "hallelujah," and say "Yes, we will do anything you require if you will only gather us to Zion."

Do you not see that I am perfectly tied up? and so are all the elders of Israel in this respect. We might lay all these injunctions on the Saints and some would break them all. All these things are turned over in my mind, and I look at every side of the question, sound every principle and behold the people as they are. Well, what is to be done? I do not know any better way, perhaps, than to gather the Saints and try to sanctify them after they are gathered together, for when they are baptized they virtually covenant to observe all these rules. When we see the course that the Saints, or those professing to be such, have taken in, feeding, clothing, and making our enemies rich here in our midst, it makes me feel that it is time to cease gathering those who will not be Saints indeed. I know as well as I know that I am a living being that there is not one professing to be a Latter-day Saint, who has the spirit of his calling, who would not cease this course as quick as he would draw his hands out of the fire, if he thoroughly knew and understood that it tends to the overthrow of the Kingdom of God; and the fact that he helped to sustain the enemies of the Kingdom of God must be attributed to his ignorance. The people have eyes, but they see not; they have hearts, but they do not understand. I will ensure that there are scores, and perhaps hundreds, looking at me while I am speaking who think "Brother Brigham, you are a fool; we have as good a right to trade with one man as another; and we will go to what store we please, and do what we please with our means, and we will trade with those who will do the best by us." Yet there are hundreds who, and in fact, the most of the people, understand the folly of this course, as the experience of the past six months has proved. During that period we have done wonders in guiding the minds and the movements of the Latter-day Saints. Still there are some who seem to have no understanding. I will venture to say they are the foolish virgins. I was going to say they are like the foolish virgins; but they are the foolish virgins, and by and by they will find they have no oil in their vessels, and nothing to prepare them to go and meet the bridegroom, and they will be found wanting. But so it is, and we must cultivate the wheat with the tares; the sheep and the goats have to run together. Here I am thinking of exacting a covenant from men

and women before they are gathered, that they will be Saints indeed afterwards; but while I have such feelings the question stares me in the face, How do you know whether they will be or not? You see men and women here who have been in the Church thirty years, and the most trifling, frivolous, foolish little circumstance imaginable will throw them off the track, and they will go to the devil. It is astonishing, it is marvellous! When I think of these things it recalls a saying that I have sometimes made, that I do my swearing in the pulpit, for they make me think that we have those in our midst who profess to be Latter-day Saints, but who are damned fools. You may say that is swearing; but they are damned and the wrath of God is upon them, just as much as it was in the days of the old Apostles. Men and women would take a very different course if they could see and understand things as they are. But I will take back the expression "if they could see and understand." I say they can see and understand if they have a mind to cast out of their hearts the love of the world, the love of riches and the little frivolous traits of character they so often manifest. The love of fashion, for instance, which darkens, beclouds and casts a shade over the spirits of our sisters. They can not have this, and they do not like that, and the next thing, anger creeps into their hearts and they feel revengeful, and "I wish I could do somebody an injury; I wish I could come up with my husband; I wish I could do something or other to mar his peace, inasmuch as mine is marred, because I cannot follow somebody else's fashion." Such little, trifling, contemptible, frivolous things cast a dark shade over their feelings, and the first thing they know they give way to a revengeful, vindictive, wicked spirit, which leads them to destruction.

Now, I will go back again to my text,—whether we should exact the injunctions I have named of the Saints before gathering, or whether we should not? I leave it to the people, for I do not care much about it, for the simple reason that I do not know enough to decide, and yet I know as much as anybody else. I might pick up this man and that woman, and this family and that family, and leave others because I might not think them worthy, when those who are left behind would probably stick to the faith, while those who are gathered might apostatize. I do not know how to do any better than we are doing, unless the Lord reveals it. I will say to the brethren and sisters we are ready to receive your donations. Open your hearts and your purse strings. I leave this matter now for your action.

I spoke a little here yesterday and the day before; but I have not really said what I wish, and whether I shall be able to answer my own feelings with regard to our success in our co-operative system of merchandising I do not know. I want to say to the Latter-day Saints we have wrought wonders. It was observed here by one of the brethren that to guide the minds of the people and to govern and control them is a greater miracle than to raise the dead. That is very true. The Lord Almighty could resuscitate a corpse lying before us a thousand times easier than He could control the congregation in this house. He has the material on hand, and He knows every process, and He could give life to a lifeless being, with ease, by the elements He would operate upon and with. This is a great miracle in our estimation; but it would be no miracle at all to the Lord, because He knows precisely how to do it. There is no miracle to any being in the heavens or on the earth only to the ignorant. To a man who understands the philosophy of all the phenomena that transpire there is no such thing as a miracle. A great many think there are results without causes; there is no such thing in existence; there is a cause for every result that ever was or ever will be, and they are all in the providences and in the work of the Lord. It would be no particular miracle for the Lord to resuscitate a person whose breath had left the body. By bringing the elements to bear on the system He could make that system breathe again and live, but to control this people can only be done by persuasion. We have the privilege of choosing, refusing, acting, rising up, sitting down, doing this or not doing; we are just

as independent in our sphere as the Gods are in theirs, and our agency is our own, and we can do as we please. We can govern and control ourselves, and when we do this by the law of truth it produces life within us and leads to eternal life; but when we take the opposite course and yield to principles that tend downward the result is death and destruction. Now I will make the application, that you and I have done just as we please. We have traded with whom we pleased. We shall do so as far as we can. We cannot all do just as we please, because a great many times we want to and cannot, and that is what produces misery, which is called hell. We have done as we please with regard to trading. We requested the people last Conference in this room to cease trading with their enemies. Do you see the effects of this? Yes they are apparent to every inhabitant of this Territory; they are apparent to the passer-by, to the transient person and to the world; and the commercial world has said "this is the first thing we have ever seen in the character of you Latter-day Saints, that manifested that you knew enough to take care of yourselves." It tells also upon our enemies. Suppose we had not checked this trading with outsiders, and had not turned the stream into another channel, you would have seen, perhaps, one hundred merchants in this city now more than last year. They would have brought their clerks and friends and a great number who would have operated against us. Not but what there are many here now, and have been, who have been very gentlemanly and kind; but where is their friendship? Is there a man who does not belong to this church who would not vote for a man out of the church for mayor of the city, and for men who do not belong to the church for aldermen and councillors? No, there is not one amongst them but what would do this. And what would they not do? They would not do right and righteously that is what they would not do. But anything on the face of this earth to remove power and influence from the Latter-day Saints, and to remove them from their homes, many of them would do. We have been able to check this, and it is for our advantage. Many of us have suffered the loss of all things several times. I have been broken up five times and left a handsome property, and have taken the spoiling of my goods just as patiently as I could. I do not want to see these things enacted again. I know how to avert them. If the people will harken to the counsel which God gives through His servants, they will never experience any such thing again; but if they will not, they will, perhaps, suffer just as they have heretofore,—the good with the bad, the righteous through the evil deeds of those who profess to be righteous and are not; the simple, the honest and the good will have to suffer with the hypocrite and the wicked. I am thankful to God that the ears of the Latter-day Saints have been open to hear and their hearts open to receive and act upon good counsel as far as they have been.

The sisters in our Female Relief Societies have done great good. Can you tell the amount of good that the mothers and daughters in Israel are capable of doing? No, it is impossible. And the good they do will follow them to all eternity. If we get the sisters on our side with regard to trading in stores, with regard to donations, or with regard to improvement we have gained all that we can ask. What do men care about fashion? You will not find one man in a thousand that cares anything about it. Men have their business before them, and their care and attention is occupied with that. You will find that the farmer, the blacksmith, the carpenter and even the merchant, where it not that he is compelled to appear decently in society—care nothing about fashion. They want the dollars and the dimes. The lawyer cares nothing about fashion only to gain the feelings of the people and have influence over them that he can bring them one against another so that he may get their dimes; that is all he cares about fashion. The doctor cares nothing about fashion. If he can make the people believe that he knows it all, and that they know nothing, he would as soon wear a hat with a brim six inches wide, and the crown, an inch and a half high, as he would wear one with the crown six inches high and the brim an inch and a half wide. He