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REMARKS

Made at the Semi-Annual Conference, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, Wednesday Morning, October 6, 1897, by

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I feel very humble, my brethren and sisters. I have discovered in my short career that I don't amount to very much; that all that I have tried to do within myself I have failed in. The only blessing of real comfort that I have received is in laboring in the ministry. Some men are more easily tired than others, and as far as I am concerned, I desire to be free in what I say, and I hope that I may be moved upon by the Holy Ghost, for I can testify to the children of men that I know what the Holy Ghost is, that is, I know what its influence is. I know that I have felt that joy, that peace, that satisfaction, that burning within me that comes from the influence of the Spirit of the Lord.

I have labored for the past six weeks in company with Apostle Lyman through the southern part of the State, largely in the interests of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, and I discover in associating among the people that there is a great missionary work to be performed here at home. There are something over twenty-five thousand young men, from fourteen up to my age, and only a very small percentage of that number are laboring earnestly and ardently to gain information and knowledge pertaining to this great work. Talk about your missionary fields of labor, talk about the nations of the earth; I comprehend that the angel came with its message that the Gospel might be preached to every nation, to every kindred, to every tongue and people; but I want to testify to you, my brethren and sisters, that the rising generation at home are being neglected. They are not being reached by the Priesthood of God; and if there is any place on the great earth where there needs an awakening and an uplifting, it is right here in Zion, and I want to say to you, the fathers and the mothers are helpless, and they know not what to do. I know the cause, too, and the sin will rest upon the parents. They have not followed this counsel, to instruct their children when they are young. President George Q. Cannon said we were in bondage, to a certain extent, because we had not followed counsel, and I want to testify that it is true, and I want to say that there is a great sin resting upon some of the fathers and mothers, because they have not taught their children faith, repentance, baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost when they were eight years old, and they are now reaping the sorrow of their neglect. We need missionaries. I take the position that we need one hundred to start out with, to commence this mission here at home; and I don't know, before they

get through with it, but they will have to preach on the street corners like the Elders do in the states and in Europe.

A part of our labors in the southern part of the State were in the interest of a new magazine; for the general board of the Young Men's Associations have discovered that it is absolutely impossible to reach the four hundred and ninety-one associations in the Church without a magazine. But in that number of associations, we have 16,580 young men that are enrolled, with an attendance, perhaps, of eight thousand. There is something like ten thousand that are not enrolled, and this missionary work must be begun.

In our associating among the people, we discovered, and I want to testify to what one of the brethren spoke in reference to that matter, that our people are not a reading people, they do not diligently read the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. I want to say to you that I was so surprised that I have not language to express it, when we discovered how few of our people, with the numerous hosts of children, there are that are taking the Juvenile Instructor. Why, we found places where a few years ago they took thirty or forty Juveniles, in some instances they are only taking three or four now. If that is not proof enough that they are not reading, why, I don't know what other proof you want. We have, however been sustained by the people of the south, and in the Stakes of St. George, and Kanab, and Panguitch, and Parowan we have met with a very kindly reception; and I believe there has been a re-awakening.

But I want to say to the people, if you will permit me, something I have on my mind here. I would like to read to you a little from the Doctrine and Covenants, to show you the condition that we are in, some of us. It is a revelation given to Oliver Cowdery. It seems that he had the gift of translation, and he was somewhat impatient; and the Lord spoke to him in this manner— and I want to apply this to the rising generation, I want to apply it to the Latter-day Saints, from the age of fourteen to ninety—we expect all of them to join the Young Men's Association between those ages, and as Apostle Lyman said, there is not anybody permitted to join the association who is older than President Woodruff. We believe that men who are aged should study just as much as young men. I want to ask the Latter-day Saints if that is a true doctrine, that when a man gets old he should quit learning and stop studying, and cease to progress. I want to read you what the Lord has said in this line, speaking to Oliver Cowdery: "Behold, you have not understood. You have supposed that I would give it unto you when you took no thought save it was to ask." Have you misunderstood, my brethren and sisters? Have you fancied that all you have to do is to ask

and you shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you, and if you lack wisdom, ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and that you can sit down and make no other effort? As one of the brethren expressed it: "I fancy that the minds of some of us are chloroformed," and we have imagined that we would be saved in our ignorance, when the Lord has said, "Whatever intelligence you attain unto in this life will rise with you in the resurrection." Now He taught this lesson to Oliver Cowdery: "But, behold I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind. Then you must ask me if it be right; and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore you shall feel that it is right." Now these are the last days spoken of by the prophets; these are the "perilous times." And I want to say to you that mountains of obstructions will be placed before this people, and if you have not been tried, you will be; if you have not been tested, you will be, before you gain eternal life. And before we pass our opinion unwisely, as we do, it is well for us to "study it out in our minds."

I am fearful that some of the Latter-day Saints simply come to the leaders and listen to the servants of God, and they never study it out in their minds; they never go to the written word, and compare it with the servants of God in their doctrines and teachings, and consequently they are unable to judge righteously, and they are losing confidence. Their confidence is being shaken, and they are unable to judge, because they have not first studied it out in their minds, because, as a people, we are mentally lazy. I will say that, because I do not expect to preach here again for a long time. If any of us have got a bad taste in our mouth for anything that has transpired, why, let us repent, let us study it out in our minds, and then go to our Father, in humility, and ask Him if it is right, and if it is right He will cause a burning within our bosoms, and we shall know that it is right; but if it be not right, we shall have no such feelings, but we shall have a stupor of thought. And how greatly blessed are we in that direction! We are all blessed, more or less, with a stupor of thought.

But I pray the Lord to bless this people. Why, you are a wonderful people. The Lord has blessed you as He has blessed no other people. He has given you the Holy Ghost. Remember how particular He was with His Apostles, with His servants that He sent out to preach the Gospel. He promised them the Holy Ghost, "whom the world cannot receive," and we are in a different situation to what the world is. As Paul says: "What! know ye not that ye are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that ye are not your own; and if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Now I want to say to you people, in soberness, and with