

FARMER JOHN.

BY E. L. E.

In a nice new cottage lived Farmer John,
With his boys so trim and neat,
And his girls just patterned by mother Jane,
Bright and womanly sweet.

There was love in the cottage of Farmer John,
There was reverent household prayer,
It was thrifty without and bony within;
Save for one falling there.

The ample store-house of Farmer John
Was packed from sleeper to peak;
His purse had rounded out full and deep,
But for a single leak.

One sorrow there was for Farmer John,
His neighbor over the way;
Was one who tarried long at the cups,
And he tarried day by day.

Now, it moved the heart of friendly John
To a kind, persuasive word;
He pleaded as man may plead with man,
Till the drunkard's soul was stirred.

Fald neighbor Nat: "You're a good man,
John, but you'll never preach;
Or I wouldn't bear your speech;
Your sermon—it has a right, true ring,
But I in turn must preach."

"Say you, the bottle that makes me mad
I must to my thirst deny;
The weed that smatches to my Christian face
Is never denied, say I."

"I'll pledge you honors, my good friend,
John, if you'll but pledge me, too;
If you will not drink another dram,
If you'll never smoke or chaw."

It touch'd the marrow of Christian John,
And he dare not now be loth;
He quickly answered, "It shall be done;
And may God help us both!"

And now he reck'ned, good Farmer John;
The cost of a vice so dear:
How health and sweetness had dribbled
Away.

With dollars year by year.
He wanted more acres—ambitious John—
For his boys and girls to share;
But quid and pipe had drivelled and smoked
The acres into the air.

"We've footed our tyrants," cried earnest John;
"By the grace of God we'll kill!"
Now neighbor Nat is a sober man,
And John is a victor still.

—[From the Congregationalist.

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

In the Ogden Tabernacle, on Sunday afternoon, October 21, 1877.

REPORTED BY GEORGE F. GIBBS.

I am happy to meet with the brethren and sisters at this conference. Since I was last here we have had to suffer the loss of our venerated and beloved President Brigham Young, which cast a gloom over the feelings of the saints throughout the Territory, and made us all feel sorry. His demise, with that of others, however, is among the evidences that are necessarily associated with human affairs, and is something over which we have no control, for the Lord manages such things according to the counsel of his own will.

I remember the time very well when Joseph Smith was taken from us, not however in the manner that President Young was, but by a ruthless mob, meeting his death at the hands of assassins. But these things are matters, although of great importance to us, yet relatively they have not a very great deal to do with the building up of the church and kingdom of God upon the earth, and with His work in which we are all engaged.

When the Lord revealed the everlasting Gospel to Joseph Smith, he unfolded unto him his purposes and designs in relation to the earth whereon we live, and gave unto him a knowledge of his law and the ordinances of the gospel and the doctrine thereof. It was not for the object simply of elevating him, as a man; but it was done for the interests of society, in the interests of the living and the dead, according to the decrees, and designs of Jehovah, which he formed before the world rolled into existence, or the morning stars sang together for joy. The Lord had his designs in relation to the earth and the inhabitants thereof; and in these last days he saw proper to reveal and restore, through his servant

Joseph Smith, what we term the new and everlasting gospel: new to the world at present, because of their traditions, their follies and weaknesses, and their creeds, opinions and notions; but everlasting because it exists with God, and because it existed with him before the world was, and will continue when change shall have succeeded change upon this earth, and when the earth shall have been redeemed and all things made new, and while life and thought and being last and immortality endures. Therefore, although the gospel is new to the world, it is everlasting. And it was introduced, as I have stated, in the interests of humanity—our fathers, the ancient prophets and apostles, and men of God who have lived in the various ages of the world, who have administered in the holy priesthood while they lived upon the earth, and who are now administering in the heavens, and who had a hand in the introduction of this work, together with God our Heavenly Father and Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant; and to-day they feel interested in the rolling forth of this work; and in the accomplishment of these purposes which God designed before the foundation of the world. And it is to God and his Son and to these men that we are indebted for the light and the intelligence that has been communicated to us, and to them we shall be indebted through all time for the same kind of knowledge and intelligence to sustain and direct us.

We talk sometimes about the organization of our church, and about a First Presidency and about Apostles, and Patriarchs, and High Priests, and Seventies and Elders, etc.; but who knew anything about any of these offices, their rights and privileges, etc., until God revealed it? Nobody. And this is not only so with regard to the several offices of the Melchizedek or higher priesthood, but it is also the case with those of the Aaronic or lesser priesthood. These are things that were not originated by man; they came through revelation to us from God, and hence we are indebted to the Lord for them, and also for all the knowledge we possess in relation to them. Who taught us anything about the Gathering, and why are we here to-day? What brought us here, and under what influence did we come and by what principle were we united, as we find ourselves at the present time? You who are familiar with the history of the church know that there was a Temple built in Kirtland, Ohio, and that while the prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were seated in their proper places in that Temple, there were several important personages appeared to them, and gave unto them several keys, powers and privileges; and that among these heavenly beings was Moses, who represented what is termed the Gathering dispensation. His mission to earth was to restore the keys of the Gathering dispensation, which should gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also restore the ten tribes. You who have not may read this for yourselves, you will find it in the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants; I refer you to it and recommend you to read it. Moses conferred these keys of authority upon the prophet Joseph Smith, and he afterwards conferred them upon the Twelve Apostles and others, who when they were ordained received them as part of their ministry and priesthood, to prepare them for the work that was to be done. And when these elders went forth in the performance of their duties, calling upon the people among whom they traveled to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins, promising believers that they should receive the Holy Ghost, in obedience to the gospel requirements, they laid their hands upon their heads confirming them members of the church and also conferred the Holy Ghost, and they received it; and among other things they received was the principles of the Gathering. And it was universally the case, and they hardly knew why it was, that among their first desires after their confirmation, was a wish to gather to Zion; and no one that remains faithful to the cause ever remained satisfied until he did gather with the saints. I would defy the world and all the Elders of Israel to have gathered this people together, as we now are, unless these keys of the Gathering had been restored to earth, and the people had received the spirit of it

through the proper channel. But as it was, there was no trouble at all, so far as their willingness was concerned. I have seen many of them after baptism almost ready to sell themselves in order to have the chance of coming to Zion. And you elders, who are my hearers to-day, have witnessed the same, and many of you were doubtless numbered among those of whom I speak, who were so extremely anxious to gather.

We are living in what ancient men of God have been pleased to term the dispensation of the fullness of times, which embraces all previous dispensations and all the priesthood that has ever before existed on the earth. And among other means that God will make use of to accomplish his purposes is that of Temples; and the spirit of Temple-building comes in the very same way, as that of gathering together, and this accounts for our desire to assist in erecting Temples. The Lord, through the prophet Malachi, in referring to this feature of the great Latter-day work says: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children; and the heart of the children to the fathers; lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Did Elijah hold these particular keys of the priesthood? He did. And did he confer them upon Joseph Smith? Yes, he did. An account of this too will be found in the reference I have already given you. Did the Latter-day Saints generally manifest any particular desire to build Temples before the prophet Elijah came? No; but ever since this desire and feeling has existed in the minds of the Latter-day Saints. It might appear very foolish to other people, but to us it is both consistent and necessary. The first Temple we built was in Kirtland, Ohio; the next was in Nauvoo, Illinois, and a foundation of a third was laid in Far West, Missouri. Since our coming to Utah, we have built one Temple in St. George, and a beautiful building it is; and in that Temple are now performed ordinances for the living and the dead. And let me ask, if any present in this large assembly to-day regret in the least having contributed to it. I do not think for a moment that there is a man or woman that does. We have already expended a large amount of means on the Temple now being constructed in Salt Lake City; and still we have commenced two other such buildings, one in Mantano and the other in Logan, all of which will be magnificent buildings when completed; I suppose there are not less than five hundred men employed on these buildings, in this Territory. It looks odd and simple, the world does not know what it means; but we know, for God has revealed it to us; and he has not only revealed it, but he has put it here (pointing to the heart), and we cannot get rid of it.

In the year 1876 President Young was strongly impressed with this feeling, and he requested the Twelve to call upon the High Priests, and Seventies, and the Elders to subscribe towards carrying forward the Temple in this city. Was the call responded to? Yes; the various quorums throughout the length and breadth of the Territory willingly contributed and a very material advance has been made in the construction of that building. Why did President Young feel so? Because the spirit of God rested upon him, prompting him to move in this direction. Why did the brethren of these several quorums so readily respond to the call? Because the same spirit rested upon them; and hence we find that the First Presidency, the Twelve, and the saints generally are all interested in this movement, evincing the same desire to accomplish this work of Temple building, as the saints of foreign lands do to gather to Zion. What object have we in view in doing this? That we may administer the ordinances which the Lord has revealed unto us, and which, according to his command, must be done in Temples built to his name. If we were to turn over to-day these buildings to the religious world, they would know no more how to use them legitimately, than a baby would know what to do with algebra; neither would we had not the Lord taught us by revelation from heaven. The gospel brings life and immortality to light; it places us in communion with the heavens, the

priesthood there and the priesthood here working harmoniously together, we being taught of them are enabled to accomplish what the Lord requires of us.

We, as intelligent beings, made in the image of our Creator, are placed here upon the earth to accomplish a certain work, that we may operate with the Gods in the eternal worlds, through the light of revelation that God has given unto us, and that he will continue to give us, until all things designed by him pertaining to this earth and its inhabitants shall be accomplished. In other words, they are helping us to do our work, by communicating to us principles we require to know, and also by operating in our behalf, while we are operating for them, and their children, who are our fathers. As the Scriptures say, "that they without as should not be made perfect," it is requiring a union of the heavens and the earth, forming a grand co-operative society, if you please, connected together by indissoluble ties, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, the light of revelation and the power of God. Thus we are united to each other and to them, and are able to act intelligently, doing works that will be approved in heaven which are connected with the interests of God and the interests of humanity.

It is not our work, it is not anything we have done, but it is God that has done the whole of it, he having called upon us to help him a little in our weak way; and inasmuch as we seek continually to do his will, he will help us, for in and of ourselves we can do nothing, no not any of us, for we are all poor, weak, erring human beings, constantly needing his sustenance, aid and guidance.

The various quorums of the priesthood, which have been presented to you this afternoon, give a more perfect representation of your Stake than has been given before. And I am pleased to say that this extended organization of the priesthood exists among all the Stakes—some twenty in all—throughout the Territory. It may be proper on the present occasion to refer to some things connected with the organization of our church for our information; although I presume a good deal of similar instruction has already been given you by Brother Richards, who is very conversant in such matters. Yet it is very desirable that the saints generally, as well as the Twelve and leading elders, should become familiar with these things and have a correct understanding of them; and it will do no harm to again talk on some of them.

In Kirtland, Ohio, a great many things were revealed through the Prophet. There was then a First Presidency that presided over the High Council, in Kirtland; and that High Council, and another which was in Missouri, were the only High Councils in existence. As I have said, the High Council in Kirtland was presided over by Joseph Smith and his Counselors; and hence there were some things associated with this that were quite peculiar in themselves. It is stated that when they were at a loss to find out anything pertaining to any principles that might come before them in their councils, that the presidency were to inquire of the Lord and get revelation on those subjects that were difficult for them to comprehend. And I would make a remark here in relation to these things, that all High Councils, and all Presidents of Stakes and Bishops, and in fact all men holding the priesthood, who are humble and faithful and diligent and honest and true to the principles of our religion, if they seek unto God with that faith that he requires of us, he will give them wisdom under all circumstances and on all occasions, and the Holy Spirit will never fail to indicate the path they should pursue. This is the order of God in relation to these matters, that every man holding any position in the church, through his faithfulness, shall have his Spirit commensurate to the duties devolving upon them, to enable them to magnify their calling to the acceptance of God and their brethren. And if such men do not enjoy this blessing, this divine assistance, it is because they do not "live godly in Christ," because they do not seek unto him in humility and lowliness of heart, making it their daily study to observe the laws of God and the rights of their fellow-men. It is true, we all of us have certain infirmities and foibles; and as you

heard this morning, God has placed them upon us that man should not glory in himself, but that he might depend upon and glory in the God of Israel; but it is our duty to overcome them, and learn to subject our will to that of our Heavenly Father, and continue on in the way to perfection.

There is a matter that has of late become a subject of a good deal of conversation, and it occurs to my mind to refer to it, namely that of the High Priesthood, or the place and calling of a high priest. In the revelation on this subject I find these words: "And again, I give unto you Don C. Smith, to be a president over the quorum of high priests, which ordination is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents or servants over the different stakes scattered abroad." What are they organized for? It is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents over the different stakes scattered abroad. A sort of a normal school, if you please, to prepare men to preside, to be fathers of the people. Have they fulfilled this? Hardly; perhaps many of them have not thought about it; but if they had reflected more upon these things, and humbled themselves before God, and met together often to talk over the principles of the gospel, manifesting an eager desire to become acquainted with doctrine, and using due diligence in seeking for wisdom from the best of books and every available source, I do not think we should have taken so many men from among the seventies and elders to make of them presidents and bishops and counselors, as we have been obliged to do. But instead of the high priests pursuing this course, many of them have indulged in much unnecessary talk about which was the biggest, a high priest or a seventy. I can answer that question for you, my brethren: If you will take a little child among you, and on comparing yourselves with it, can find the one most like unto it—the one who is the most honest, truthful and child-like, such a man should be classed among the greatest in the kingdom of God. It is not talking about these things that qualifies men for positions, but doing them.

We are only just starting in on the great work before us. Zion is bound to spread and grow; her cords will be lengthened and her stakes will be strengthened; but we must be energetic and alive to the duties devolving upon us, always keeping in mind the object to be accomplished, and in order to facilitate things and to meet the mind and will of God, and that his work may be cut short in righteousness, we must operate together. And not, what? "Lullaby baby on the tree top, when the wind blows the cradle will rock." We have had enough of that; let us now begin more earnestly to seek after the wisdom and power of God and the light of revelation, so that the love of God may burn in the hearts of the people, and awaken them up to an understanding of the principles of eternal truth. This is what we want. And if they do this, magnifying their calling, then when other stakes are to be organized and other changes made, all we will have to do will be to go to the high priests for such persons to fill such offices that rightly belong to the high priesthood. And the question that has agitated the minds of the Seventies and High Priests will no longer trouble them, for all will then more clearly perceive that the church or body of Christ is as the body of man, composed not of one member, but many. For instance, there is the head, there are the eyes, there is the nose, the mouth, there are the ears, the arms and hands, the legs and feet, all of which are members of the human body; which of these would you like to be without? Supposing you had to part with one of your legs, or one of your arms, you would of course want to retain the most useful of the two; but if you will tell me which of the two is the most useful to the human body, then I will tell you which is the most useful to the body of Christ, the High Priests or the Seventies. I do not think, however we need discuss this question; but rather let us magnify the priesthood we hold, seeking to acquire a proper fitness for the positions we occupy.

Now, I will tell you something I have noticed lately. We call upon Seventies, and sometimes upon High Priests to perform missions