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## REMARKS

MADE BY

**PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON,**

*At the Opening of the Sixty-fourth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, Friday Morning, October 6th, 1893.*

(REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.)

By request of President Woodruff, I arise to make the opening remarks to the Conference. This is our Sixty-fourth semi-annual Conference, and we meet together this morning under circumstances that, in some respects at least, are exceedingly favorable to us as a people. We have our trials and our difficulties to contend with and overcome; but we are in a state of probation, and it is not to be expected that we shall be free from the ills that trouble humanity and that are consequent upon an earthly existence; in fact, as Latter-day Saints, we have been assured, among other things, that we should have trials to contend with, and they would come in various forms, to test our faith, to prove us and to give us that experience which is so necessary for us in our future careers.

We have had, since we last met, considerable trouble in financial matters. You all are doubtless aware of this. You have no doubt felt it individually, as we have felt it as a Church. Probably at no time in our previous experience have we had to contend with pecuniary embarrassments as we have had of late. It is not necessary that we should dwell upon the causes that have produced these embarrassments; they are familiar to you all. You know the burdens that the Church has had to bear. But the people, in very many instances, have responded willingly to the calls that have been made upon them. We know of brethren who have run in debt in order to furnish means that they subscribed for the completion of the Temple, and the burden was borne, I may say, joyfully by the brethren and sisters. We resolved that with the help of God we would finish the Temple and dedicate it to the Most High on the sixth day of

April, 1893. The Lord helped us to keep that resolve and He abundantly poured out His Holy Spirit upon us, in testimony of His acceptance of that glorious work. But the people have felt this burden—that is, they have felt the debts that they have been compelled to incur. The Church collectively, represented by the trustee-in-trust, has also felt this. Nevertheless we have been greatly blessed in having abundance of food in our valleys, and sufficient shelter, and comfortable houses in which to dwell. Contrasting our circumstances in these days with the past, we have abundant cause for thanksgiving and for glorifying our God.

It is very interesting to see the favorable condition of affairs abroad, so far as we are concerned. The wrath of man has been turned aside from the people of God. Who could have thought a few years ago, when we were surrounded, it might be said, by a feeling of intense enmity and hatred, and a spirit that seemed anxious for our destruction, that such a wonderful change would occur within so short a period in regard to public opinion? The recent visit of the choir to Chicago, with the First Presidency, has been most gratifying in its results. I believe it has done more good than the preaching of a large number of Elders could have done, and we were received with the utmost consideration and kindness. I cannot mention anything that is more illustrative of the changed feeling than to state that the House of Representatives has passed the bill returning to the Church its personal property. This shows the disposition that is being manifested to treat us with that consideration and fairness with which other citizens of the Republic are treated. Well, we can praise our God for His mercy and kindness to us, because this is in fulfillment of the promises which He has made. He has told us that when we should pass through the deep waters He would be with us, and He would sustain and deliver us; and we this day, in this conference, can praise and glorify His name with all our hearts for having fulfilled His promises to us. We are living evidences of the truth of that which He has told us.

Throughout our valleys we have reasonably good crops. In some places they may be a little short; but there has enough been raised to sustain us and all who are dependent

upon us, including our flocks and our herds. I do hope, as we all must, that throughout all these valleys no cry of distress shall ascend to God our eternal Father, not even from an animal; but that we will administer of that which the Lord has given to us to supply the wants of all the children of men who may be brought in contact with us and be destitute, and especially to those who belong to the household of faith. Our Teachers, our Bishops and our Relief Societies should take great pains to see that there is no want, and that there will be no want this winter, for fuel, for shelter, for food or for necessary clothing. We can in no way better show our gratitude to our Father in heaven for that which He has done for us than by administering to our fellow creatures; for if we do not love our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? How can we better show our love for our great Creator than by taking care of His children, and thus return to them, in some measure, the kindness that He has shown to us?

We have, as you know, done all in our power to promote the manufacture of sugar in our Territory. The First Presidency and Twelve have taken upon themselves individually, as well as in their organized capacity, very heavy burdens in order to carry this project out. We were impressed and impelled to do this by the manifestations of the Spirit of God through our President and to each one of us who received that testimony. We felt that this was right, that it was an enterprise that should be taken hold of; and though we have had many obstacles to contend with, the greatest of which has been the difficulty of raising money, nevertheless we have carried the load as best we could, and we have the gratification this season of feeling that the Lord has been very kind indeed to His people. He has blessed their fields. He has blessed the crops of beets. We are told that they are yielding very generously of saccharine matter, and that the prospect is we shall have good returns in sugar, and begin to be able to meet the obligations which rest upon us. We want to speak favorably of this enterprise. We want to urge it upon the Latter-day Saints. We want to say everything in its favor to sustain it and make it a success, to furnish employment to our people, and to give our farmers remuneration for their labor, helping them to