

think of me or Brother Richards, those that associated with the Prophet and heard him talk, and drank of the inspiration that fell from his lips—what would you think of us if we fell? We certainly should be faithful. And those, therefore, that have not seen, but have been faithful, blessed indeed are they. It is now just as the Savior said to Thomas. When the other disciples told him they had seen the risen Redeemer, said he, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days the disciples met again and Thomas was with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace be unto you;" then said He to Thomas: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless but believing." Then it was that Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." But Jesus said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." And so it is with you. You have reason to believe that the voice of the Lord has been heard, and we have the testimony of those that heard the voice of God, and we have believed. Let us continue to believe and to act upon it; and continue to believe every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God; so we shall prosper and build up Zion upon the earth; for this is our mission, and the work of your mothers and daughters of Zion—the mothers now, and by and by the daughters, who will, in turn, be mothers in Israel. Great responsibility rests upon you. Upon you depend the training and the direction of the thoughts and the inspiration of the hearts of your children, for they drink into the spirit of their mothers, and the influence of the mother over the children is the most enduring impression that can be made. There is nothing so imperishable as the influence of the mother; that is when she is good and has the spirit of the Gospel in her heart, and she has brought up her children in the way they should go.

This principle endears the mother to the children, and the children always look upon such a mother with a reverence the next thing to worshiping her. I know it is so with me.

I can remember my mother in the days of Nauvoo. I remember seeing her and her helpless children hustled into a flat boat with such things as she could carry out of the house at the commencement of the bombardment of the city of Nauvoo by the mob. I remember the hardships of the Church there and on the way to Winter Quarters, on the Missouri river, and how she prayed for her children and family on her wearisome journey. I remember, again, the fatigues and sufferings of our short stay at Winter Quarters. Then, again, I can remember all the trials incident to our endeavors to move out with the Camp of Israel, coming to these valleys of the mountains without teams sufficient to draw our wagons; and being without the means to get those teams necessary, she yoked up her cows and calves, and tied two wagons together, and we started to

come to Utah in this crude and helpless condition, and my mother said—"The Lord will open the way;" but how He would open the way no one knew. I was a little boy then, and I drove team and did my share of the work. I remember coming upon her in her secret prayer to God to enable her to accomplish her work and her mission. Do you not think that these things make an impression upon the mind? Do you think I can forget the example of my mother? No; her faith and example will ever be bright in my memory. What do I think! Every breath I breathe, every feeling of my soul rises to God in thankfulness to Him that my mother was a Saint, that she was a woman of God, pure and faithful, and that she would suffer death rather than betray the trust committed to her; that she would suffer poverty and distress in the wilderness and try to hold her family together rather than remain in Babylon. That is the spirit which imbued her and her children. Would not her children be unworthy of such a mother did they not hearken to and follow her example? Therefore I say God bless the mothers in Israel. And O, let God Almighty judge and deal with that man who would defile a woman. That is how I feel, feebly expressed, in relation to these matters.

We are engaged in the work of God. If you will only continue faithful to the covenants you have made with the Lord all will be well with you. If you falter, if there is anything that can turn you aside from the truth, I am sorry for you; for there should be nothing beneath the celestial kingdom that could separate us from the love of God, or turn us from the great work we are engaged in; for it is the work of the Lord.

In this Gospel the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord. In this Gospel the man and the woman are joined together for time and eternity in the Lord. In this Gospel the children and the parents are united together forever in the Lord. In this Gospel eternal life may be gained, which is the greatest gift of God. In this Gospel everything that can minister to our joy and happiness in time and eternity can be obtained. Beyond it nothing but the pleasures of the world can be found. This is the way I look at it; and I exhort you to be faithful to your duties as members of the Relief Societies.

Do your duty to your neighbors. As I said, it is not enough for your Relief Societies to confine themselves to seeking to clothe the naked and feed the hungry. These are only the smaller matters of our duties. You ought to be co-workers with and assistants to your husbands and the Elders of Israel. You ought to seek to elevate the spiritual and the moral condition of your associates—your sisters. And this I conceive to be your uppermost duty. I conceive this to be a duty that as far exceeds the duties of feeding the poor and clothing the naked as the sunlight exceeds the shining of the moon. For, although you feed the hungry, if they are not enlightened in regard to the things of God, if they have not the truth, you only feed the body, you minister to the carnal appetite; if you clothe the naked, you simply shield the

poor, frail body from suffering; but when you can also take the perishing soul and minister to its eternal joy and comfort, by imparting knowledge and understanding of God's eternal truths and righteousness, you are not only feeding and clothing the hungry and the naked with that which will perish, but you are feeding the famishing soul with the bread of life that never perishes, and clothing the naked with clothes that will not wear out.

I think if the Relief Societies should undertake to help those who have not had experience with children, those that do not know how to keep house—if the sisters will take hold of such as these and show them how to feed their children with wholesome food, and how to clothe them properly, they will do a great deal of good and save having paupers for the saints to feed and clothe by and by, because they lack the knowledge and wisdom to do it for themselves. And I think anything of a spiritual character that will fit the sisters for all their duties and bring them nearer to the Lord and the standard of righteousness and intelligence in the earth—anything that can be done by the sisters in this work will be blessed of God and will be in the line of their duties.

When you see your sisters wasting their substance in headgears, jewelry and gewgaws, be kind enough to show them that they will be just as happy and admired if they dress comfortably, cleanly and neatly, and not waste their substance upon baubles. I believe the Lord will approve of that; and a great deal may be done in the midst of Zion in this regard. The Lord said in a revelation to this people, "Let your garments be plain, and their beauty the workmanship of your own hands." I think this is good counsel. I do not want anybody to stint herself in anything that is good, or in any blessing. I do not want to see any sister deprived of any blessing or privilege that is good and proper for her. But I do not like to see mothers and daughters extravagant or wasteful. And I think it is proper for the Relief Societies to bring their gentle, matronly and kindly influence to bear upon our young ladies, and upon our matrons and the daughters of Zion, to get them to be comely, cleanly, neat, tidy and beautiful in the sight of God, without loading themselves down with adornments that spoil their beauty. And I think the Relief Societies have jurisdiction over these things in all kindness. People must not be cut off from the Church because of such weakness, but when rich people want to exhibit their vanity and pride in ostentatious display the Lord will hold them accountable. We should not condemn them and cast them out because of that. But we should try to exert an influence over the sisters of Zion to be wise and prudent in their dress, as well as in their habits.

May the Lord bless you, and may He prepare you who are officers in the Relief Societies for the duties that devolve upon you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 3.—Representative Mills has so far recovered his health as to be able to undertake a trip to his home in Texas, whither he started today, accompanied by his son.