9 TO 12

DESERET EVENING NEWS.

PART 2

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1897, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

DISCOURSE

Delivered at the Weber Stake Conference, Ogden, Monday, January 18th, 1897, by

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

These reports to which we have listened, made by Brother Ballantyne and Brother Wright (representing the Sunday schools and the Mutual Improvement Associations of the Stake,) are exceedingly interesting, because upon the success of these organizations, their influence, and that which they accomplish, depends to a very great extent the future of this people and of the Church. I often think of the remarkable results that have attended the organization of the Sunday schools, as well as the Mutual Improvement Associations. What a condition we would have been in had the brethren not been inspired to organize Sunday schools! It has proved a most timely organization, and has occupied the field to the exclusion, it may be said, of those sectarian organizations and influences which would have been brought to bear upon the Latter day Saints. There was a Bishop of the Episcopal Church, who was the Bishop of this diocese, visiting New York, and it came to my knowledge that in the circle where he was one evening he stated that Brigham Young was a very shrewd man and a very capable man, but he did not know the influence of education; he was not aware of how potent education was in forming a people; and he said there was a most excellent opportunity in Utah to start schools. "Many of the young people," he added, "manifest a great eagerness to acquire knowledge and education, and if we can raise the funds and establish schools there, we will do a great work in converting the Mormons. It is no use to attempt to convert the adults, but by furnishing the children facilities for receiving education, we can accomplish quite a work there." Acting upon that idea, schools were started in some places, in Salt Lake City, for instance, and some of the children of the Latter-day Saints attended them. The result was that in every instance that has come to my knowledge, the pupils at those schools imbibed false ideas concerning religion and became aliens to the faith of their parents. I do not know that they ever had much faith, but if they did have they lost it; and if they did not have it, they never obtained it, but had other ideas instilled into their minds. You can see the results now in the families of those who in their eagerness for education were careless as to the medium through which education should be obtained. Now the Catholics have large edifices in Salt Lake City; I suppose you have one here; and the Episcopalians and other denominations have established educational institutions in the midst of the people, and teachers have been sent by the different denominations for the purpose of indoctrinating the children of the Latter-day Saints with their views. But through the organization of the Sunday schools a great field was occupied that was very tempting to people of this character, and through this organization they were discouraged from attempting to organize Sunday schools. I believe there have been some attempts made, but they have not resulted in anything that has been very noticeable, and the field is now well occupied by our own people; and our schools are improving, and they are gathering in, as they should do, all the children. In many places there are young people appointed to go and labor with children who do not attend the schools, to induce them to come to school, and I think myself that this is an excellent thing to do. We have many very rude boys in some of our settlements, and perhaps rude girls. If all these could be induced to go to Sunday school, it would have a tendency to soften their manners and teach them proper deportment and good behavior. I think it is an important duty devolving upon Sunday school teachers to teach their children good manners and to give them the training which they may not in every instance receive at home. Our children need instruction of this kind; for in many places there is a great deal of neglect upon this point, and children are allowed to grow up in a manner that is not very creditable to their parents, nor to the community. I am very thankful that there are so many children in the Sunday schools, and I am thankful also that the Sunday schools are becoming so efficient. Of course, as the Sunday schools grow, so will the Mutual Improvement Associations grow; and I think there is likely to be a more thorough and efficient organization of the Mutual Improvement Associations from this time forward than there has been, because some of our leading brethren are taking great interest in these associations, and they feel the necessity of adopting methods that shall be more thorough than those that have heretofore been in vogue.

My brethren and sisters, I think it is of the utmost importance that we should pay attention to this question of the proper training of children. I feel deeply impressed myself with its importance. I hear, as no doubt you all do, of families who have been a long time in the Church, and you ask about their children, and in some instances it is really painful to learn that the children are not growing up in the faith of the Gospel; that the young men and the young women, especially the young women, marry out of the Church, and that the young men grow up without faith in the Gospel. I do not know anything scarcely that I hear that gives me greater pain than to hear this; because the parents of this Church have made great sacrifices, in many instances, for the truth. They love the truth, and they have shown their love for the truth by that which they have done, and to think that their children should grow up without faith in the Gospel, and careless and indifferent concerning it, is quite saddening. And much of this is due to us as parents. It is true that Satan is in the world, and his power is felt by all; and even with the best of care we have no guarantee that all our children will be faithful to the truth and grow up free from wrongdoing. There is no guarantee of this kind. But we are assured, from experience and by the word of the Lord, that parents who take proper pains with their children will have their reward in the improved condition of the children and in their preservation from sin.

I feel that this is something that should address itself to all of us; it should come home to every parent. There has been a disposition in the Church, I have sometimes thought so, at least—to have a large family. Men were proud of the number of children that they had; but some seemed to be careless as to the quality of their children. They went in for quantity more than they did for quality. I have often remarked that one Isaac was better than a great crowd of sons who were untrue to the Lord and who did not live so as to receive His blessings. Isaac is the progenitor of a wonderful race of people, and through his faithfulness blessings are felt by us who are here today. They have come down to us from him, and from his father, and from his son Jacob from whom sprang the twelve tribes of Israel. It is better to have a worthy faithful son, well cared for, well brought up, well trained, than to have any number that grow up without proper knowledge and without proper care. I feel that this is important for the women of this Church. It is a trite saying, and it is proved by all history, that the women have the forming of the characters of the children to a very great extent. It is often said that there is scarcely a great man to be found who did not have a great mother—that is, a mother of good qualities and who took care in rearing her children. I have noticed in my experience that where girls are indifferent about whom they marry, and with whom they associate, it is very frequently traceable to the influence of the mother. A mother may have a careless husband; she may have a man that is indifferent to the duties of his religion; but if she be a faithful woman herself and exercise proper control, and does have control over her children, she can bring up her children to be faithful men and women in the Church. Go where you will and examine the households of the people, and you will find that the mother's influence is a very wonderful influence, not only upon the children, but upon her husband; but particularly so with her children. She can teach her children to pray in early life, and she can instil into them feelings and desires that remain with them throughout their life. At least, I myself can testify to this. I can see features in my character that are the result of my mother's teaching, although she died when I was quite young. Myself and brothers and sisters were left orphans at an early age; but the effect of mother's teaching is visible in all of us, although the younger ones do not remember her scarcely. I want to speak a little of my own experience, because it will illustrate the principle upon which I am speaking. My mother had a great abhorrence of anything that would lead to intoxication or drunkenness, and she impressed upon me this feeling. When I was a child she said she hoped I would never touch anything of an intoxicating nature, and I remember that when I was about twelve or thirteen years of age she said to me, "If you will not take anything to drink of an intoxicating nature till you are fifteen, I will give you a silver watch." Patent levers were then just coming out, and she bought one and put it aside for me to have when I was fifteen years of age. She died, however, before I received the watch; but I got it after her death. Now, the impression made upon me by her remarks has been indelible. She did not want me to drink tea or coffee either, but to observe the Word of Wisdom. I am today at my present age, and I never have drunk tea and coffee. I scarcely know the taste of either tea or coffee, and I have never touched tobacco, nor anything intoxicating. This is the result, at least to a very great extent, of her teachings, and the impressions she made on my mind concerning articles of this kind. Now, I notice that where people have indulged in these habits and then broken off, they are always tempted to resume them under some circumstances. While the smell of coffee is very fragrant to me, I never had the least inclination in my life to taste it, for the appetite was never awakened. The same with liquor and with other things. I walk along the street on a frosty morning and if I should happen to be following a man who is smoking a good cigar, the smell of the cigar is agreeable to me in the open air; but I never had the least inclination to touch it. If I had drunk coffee to any extent, or perhaps smoked, I have no doubt that when I would smell these things my mouth would water for them; but never having had the taste awakened, of course there is no temptation.

I think it important, brethren and sisters, that we should teach our children not to touch these things. A story was told to me by a very estimable man in this Church. He said he was brought up not to touch anything of an intoxicating nature. By a mere accident he one time tasted brandy. He was with a lot of young men and they gave him brandy, and I think they told him it was cider. Under this impression he drank some of it, and he said from that time up to the time he was talking to me—some seventeen years—he had always had that taste to contend with. It had awakened within him a fondness that had always slumbered until he tasted it, and would have continued to slumber probably throughout his entire life if it had not been for that unfortunate drink. I believe there is in many people a latent fondness for liquor, for tobacco, for tea and coffee, which they have inherited and when they taste it or drink it, this fondness is awakened. It is like a demon in the blood that is unchained by the taste of these articles. I have heard men say that when they heard the gurgling of whisky or liquor poured out of a jug, it would make their whole frame tremble and their mouths water; they wanted it so badly. Now, it is far better never to have that feeling awakened, and this can be done by teaching our children never to touch, never to taste anything of this kind. Mothers should not teach their daughters to drink tea. They should not allow them to touch tea or coffee. Fathers should not allow their sons, when they can prevent it by their influence, to touch anything of an intoxicating nature, or anything like tobacco.

I had this illustrated in my own family a few years ago. I was going off to Washington, and I called my children together and gave them some instructions, and after a while I got to this subject. It is something I rarely ever talk about in my family, because we set them examples. We do not drink tea or coffee, nor use these things in my household. But I happened to have my mind directed to them, and I asked the children—a number of them were grown—about their habits, and whether they had ever drunk anything of this kind, and I found that there were only two that had ever tasted either tea or coffee. One of these was my baby boy, the baby of my first wife who is dead. When he was a baby my wife was sick, and she used a little tea, and this child had tasted the tea, and his sisters had told me how much he liked tea. Now, that boy, if he were not careful, no doubt would always have an inclination for tea. One other boy had tasted coffee. But none of the others had ever tasted tea or coffee. I think children brought up in this way do have advantages over children brought up where there is looseness or carelessness. I have noticed in my association with men and women who have once been in the habit of drinking tea and coffee, that if they are tired, or cold, or sick, and there is tea or coffee brought forward, they are tempted to take it. The old desire is awakened, and they are apt to yield to the temptation. So with liquor, so with tobacco, and so with all these things which the Lord has told us are not good for us.

Have not we as a people been organized long enough to do away with these things, and to live a better life? This Church has been in existence for sixty-six years now, and it seems to me that the teachings we have received on these points should be observed by all the people. I have traveled, as many of our young men have in the early days, and been exposed to a great deal of hardship. I have traveled across the plains to and from California, when our water was so bad, being full of alkali, that some of the brethren could not drink it, and they made it into coffee. I have traveled when it has been so cold that when we have sat around eating breakfast the water would freeze in our cups. But I always took water. And I noticed that I was able to endure cold better, if anything, than those who drank the warm drinks, and I was better able under other circumstances, to endure hardships than the boys who drank liquor. I proved that by experience, and I know that it is better in every way for us to be free from the habit of using these stimulants. I am sure we are healthier, and I am sure it is better for our brains as well as our bodies. A man that uses stimulants is not likely to be so well balanced in his mind, so clear in his judgment, as the man who does not have recourse to them.

I do not like to talk about personal affairs; but it seemed to me that by relating my personal experience in this direction I could give point to my ideas on this subject. I would like to see every child in our community taught by their parents to refrain from the use of these articles, from touching them, and I am sure we will be a happier, a healthier, a more even-tempered and in every way better people. It will contribute to the development of good qualities and the repression of evil inclinations by following the course that the Lord has pointed out as the best among us. Mothers should take pains with their children in these things.

Children should be taught in early life to pray to God. They should be taught that there is a God who will hear and answer their prayers. When they are sick they should be taught to ask their father or the Elders to lay hands upon them; and if neither the father nor any Elder is near, to have their mother lay her hands on them and pray for them; for this is not sinful, it is not wrong. Women do not have the Priesthood like men have, but they can pray for their children, and their prayers are heard just as much as the prayers of the men are heard, though they may not have the authority to rebuke disease as men have who bear the Priesthood. And children should be brought to their mother's knees and taught to pray, and be brought up in a way that they will understand the nature, and the power, and the efficacy of prayer. If you will do this with your children, you will fortify them against the days of trial and temptation which will come to them when they grow older. Where this is done, you will have boys and girls that will be a blessing, a comfort and an honor to you, because their faith will be developed in early life, and they will know for themselves that there is a God. It is very delightful to witness the faith of children and to hear their expressions concerning these matters when they are properly taught. I am sure that if mothers would take this course with their children, they would have much more comfort from their children, their children would be easier governed, and they would develop in the children the best qualities of their minds; for every child is open particularly to these good influences, and children can be governed by appealing to their better natures, especially when they have been taught in the way I have spoken.

There is one thing I have sometimes been led to speak upon to the Saints, and that is in relation to family prayers. In many families that I have been acquainted with no one was ever asked to pray; the father did all the praying himself. He never asked the wife, nor the son, nor the daughter, to be mouth in family prayer, and I have seen in cases of that kind that the boys, instead of desiring to attend family worship, would generally get off, because it became wearisome to them. There is a story told—I do not know how much truth there is in it, but it is not improbable—that a crowd of boys were together one evening around a house, and one of the boys was in a position where he could hear what was going on in the family. The family were at prayer, and the son of the family asked the boy that was in a position to hear, what he was praying for now (speaking of his father.) "Well, he is praying now about Jerusalem." "Oh, well," says the son, "we can go all for some time yet." He knew the prayer so well and the routine that when his father had got to praying about the return of the Jews to Jerusalem there was a good deal to pray for yet. I do not vouch for the accuracy of this story, but I have heard just such prayers myself, and where this is the case, and boys hear this day after day, day after day, long-winded prayers, praying as though it was the only chance they had had for a month to pray and it would be the last chance they would have for another month, making them so long and dreary, I do not wonder that boys get tired, and their knees ache, and they feel as though it was tiresome. Religion is made repulsive to some by such things. We ought to make our religion attractive to our children, and one way to do that is to have every member of the family pray. Some men seem to think that their prayers alone are heard; that the prayers of their wives or their children are not listened to. If any entertain this idea, they are much mistaken, because the Lord hears the prayers of women just as much as he does of men, and He hears the prayers of children just as much as he does of grown people. Every child should be taught to pray in the family circle. As soon as he can lisp or talk, or taught to frame a prayer, he should be asked to pray in the family circle; and the Lord hears the prayers of these little children, and they take interest then in family worship, because it is a part of their service as well as their parents. And when a child can ask a blessing, if he or she can only say, "O Lord, bless this food, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen," it is better to let them commence even with these few words than not to have them pray. It is pleasing to see the interest children take in asking blessings. They feel as though they were honored, and they take pleasure in it. So in prayer. And it is not the multitude of words that the Lord pays attention to. He does not listen to our fine, flowery sermons and our fine, flowery prayers; He looks at our hearts and the sincerity of our desires. It is not telling Him how great a being He is that draws his attention. You hear some of these sectarian preachers, and they will commence and extol the Lord and tell Him what a great being He is, going on in a way—what is it? To tickle the ears of their hearers; and if they thought the Lord had ears to hear, to tickle His ears by telling Him what a fine fellow He is. Now, this is all ridiculous. This is not the way the Lord ought to be worshipped. We ought to worship Him with our hearts, and not with these long, flowery sentences. Another thing: If we pray in secret, we will not want to make such long prayers in public as some do, because we shall have relieved our hearts in our secret prayers to a very great extent. We can pray by ourselves and we can take as long time as we wish to, and we do not wear anybody out unless it is ourselves. It is not probable that those who listen to us are wearied by our devotion. But when others are kneeling down with us, we ought in our prayers to be direct and brief, and not pray about everything there is on the earth, and imagine that we must mention everything in detail or the Lord wont know about it. He does know, and we do not need to mention everything as though He had forgotten and would not take notice unless we mentioned it. If we pay attention to the Lord's prayer that He taught His disciples, we will see the beauty of that, how simple it was and direct; contained no superfluous words, but it was to the point, asking for that which they needed. Now, you will hear the sectarians uttering that prayer. Some people teach their children that prayer. Well, that prayer is not appropriate for many of us, "Give us this day our daily bread." We have got our daily bread. That prayer was given to the Apostles. They were taught it because they needed daily bread. If you will notice in the Book of Mormon the Lord taught the multitude and He also taught His disciples. He gave instructions to the latter which were adapted to them, and were not for the multitude. This distinction, which is so plain in His teachings as recorded in the Book of Mormon, is not made in King James's translation of the New Testament, and hence many of the sectarians stumble over the teachings of the Savior, not knowing how they could be made applicable to ordinary life. They were applicable to the disciples who were preaching without purse and scrip, and who were living different lives to the ordinary multitude. If you will read them properly as they are translated in the Book of Mormon, you will see how different they are, and how clear these matters are when you understand the people to whom they were addressed.

It is a good thing to know how to pray; and we are not heard for our much speaking in prayer. It seems to me we should be full of the spirit of prayer, and we should pray in our hearts as well as with our lips and on our knees, and cultivate the habit of praying in our hearts. We cannot stop always to get down on our knees to ask for that which we need; but we can ask the Lord in our hearts, no matter what we are engaged in. We may be going to meet somebody that is of importance, and have not time to stop to pray, but we can ask God to give us wisdom. If we are going to transact some business, we can ask God to be with us in the transaction, to give us His Holy Spirit to enlighten us, and enable us to do the right thing. I do not know how I would have got along in life if I had not done this, because there are many times we are thrown in circumstances where the wisdom of heaven is needed, and it is a good thing to cultivate the habit of asking the Lord for that. I believe if I was going to break a horse, or do some work in my field as a farmer, or anything of this character, I would want to ask the Lord's blessing upon it. It would not probably be convenient to kneel down and ask Him right then for that special occasion; but I would ask Him in my heart. Of course, in our family and secret prayers we ask the Lord to be with us in all matters; still it is a good thing to ask the Lord for these special things. You are called on to speak suddenly, or to do something suddenly; it is a good thing to ask the Lord to be with you when you are doing that, to guide you. When we have a decision to make, we should ask the Lord to enlighten our minds, that we decide aright and come to a correct conclusion. A mother going to have an interview with a child that is unruly, should ask the Lord to give her His Spirit to talk to the child, and to pour out His Spirit upon the child that it may be softened. When I have anything disagreeable to do, I always feel to do this; to pray that the Lord will soften the hearts of those with whom I am brought in contact, give their hearts the right feeling, and give me the right feeling. I believe a great deal of the success of my life has been due to the Lord hearing this kind of prayer; for I know he does hear such prayers.

In all these matters we should constantly remember that we are the people of God, and not take any step hastily, but do it prayerfully. Then we will not say things that we ought not to say, at least, we will not be likely to do it. We will not do things that we ought not to do. We will not come to wrong conclusions. We will not say improper things of our brethren and sisters, and we will control our tempers, because the Lord will give us strength and give us His Holy Spirit to enable us to do it. And if any of us are not happy, depend upon it there is something wrong, because it is the Lord's design to make every soul happy. If there is any spirit and feeling about us that does not contribute to happiness, we should ask the Lord to remove it. We should stop and see what is the cause of this. "Why am I disturbed? Why is this feeling of unhappiness and unrest in my heart?" Because whenever it is there, there is something wrong; we have done something, or said something, or thought something that has disturbed the Spirit of God. Our minds should be like a placid lake, undisturbed by every influence, as smooth as glass, so to speak, and without ripples upon it, and everything clear. This is the condition we should be in, and then the Lord, by His Spirit, can operate upon our minds, and He will reveal himself to us, and teach us, and give us revelation and knowledge, and increase His power and His gifts upon us. We should start out in the morning with this feeling; not leave our bedroom still we feel that we are leaving right. "But," one says, "I am so crowded I have got to do it; I cannot stop to pray even." Well, better to neglect the business, whatever it may be, than to neglect prayer, than to neglect getting the right spirit before we commence our work. I have been a busy man all my life; but I have noticed this: that when I have started out with the right feeling, everything has worked along easily and smoothly, and I have accomplished far more than I would have done if I had felt hurried so I could not ask the blessing of the Lord upon that which I was engaged in. We make a mistake when we do this, because there is a power that the Lord exercises and there is a blessing which He bestows by which everything comes right, and we accomplish more in the end than we possibly could do without that blessing. Have you not noticed it yourselves, how some days everything goes right, and you accomplish more, and you feel gratified with that which you have accomplished, because everything has seemed to work together to enable you to accomplish it? The blessing of the Lord will do this. Our mothers, our wives, if they would take a little more time, their house work would go along much more easily and much more pleasantly, and they would be less ruffled and disturbed in their dispositions than they sometimes are at the present time.

We should be a prayerful people, because we are the people of God; and we should be a people that live so near unto Him that He will hear us. He has said that He will draw near unto us if we will draw near unto Him, and we should feel His presence constantly, and feel that He is not far off, but that He is near at hand. Then when sickness comes, we can ask Him in faith for His blessing, because we are living in the way to exercise faith before Him. And sickness will come, because the Lord has said it. We can read of the plagues that are going about now, and there is a feeling of terror running throughout Great Britain and Europe at the present time respecting this plague that is in the East Indies, and that is carrying off so many people. There is a dread lest it should come to Europe and do as it did three hundred years ago. You have no doubt read about the great London plague. Plagues were common in those days, and they spread and the people apparently could not prevent them. The Lord has revealed to us that pestilence will come in the last days, and that there will be an overflowing scourge, to use the language of our revelation. Well, this will be a very serious thing, and we should live so that we shall be prepared for it, and that we shall be in a condition that we can exercise faith in our families; for this is one of the purposes for which God has instituted the gathering of the people, that they might stand in holy places when the judgments shall go forth that shall destroy the inhabitants of the earth. And these judgments will come, because the Lord has said they will, and we shall see them, and we are as liable to have them as other people if we do not keep the commandments of God and if we do not live in such a manner as to have faith in Him and in His ordinances. We should teach our children to be administered to when they are sick, so that they also will have faith. I have seen children that whenever they are sick they are healed immediately, because they have faith. They say, "send for father,—send for somebody,—I want to be administered to," and they are healed. Now, this faith, if it grows up with children, will grow to be a great power and a great influence with them; and it should be cultivated in our families, because as the Lord has said, there will be plagues go forth, pestilence will go forth to scourge the inhabitants of the earth, and we are as liable to them as any people if we do not live so as to have them averted and taken away from us. Hence we should exercise faith in the Lord. There will be trouble of various kinds. There will be famine. I came up here last week through Nebraska, and I saw vast quantities of corn on the ground stacked up, uncovered, exposed to the elements. And this almost at every farm. They are burning the corn because it is cheaper than fuel. The corn cribs that they have are full, and then there is this quantity besides, thousands of bushels in some places, which is left exposed to the elements. Now, it struck me that this is a terrible condition of things, and I felt almost as though it was a foreboding of famine, because when food is wasted in this way it does not seem to me to be right in the sight of heaven; and I had these thoughts as I came along. Then when I got home I was told that men, because of the increased price of wheat, have sold their wheat until some have barely enough left to seed the ground this coming spring.

Brethren and sisters, I do not know that it is an improper thing to allude to this on this occasion. If I were you farmers, I would have some wheat stored up. We have talked about it a year after year, year after year; maybe your ears are pained with hearing it so often, as you have heard it in past years especially, because before the railroad was completed it seemed a very necessary thing that we should have some wheat stored up. Since the railroad has been completed, however, we have not felt that necessity to such an extent, and I believe many have grown very careless on this point, thinking we could get supplies from the east or the west if they were needed. But there will be famine. It is only a year or two ago since all through western Nebraska and western Kansas there was a famine for food, and many hundreds of people abandoned their homes and went off. The drouth had caused their places to become valueless. Since then they have been paying some little attention to irrigation in that region in order to save their farms. But we are liable any time, even in this great country of ours, so fertile and so rich with all that is necessary for life, this choice land, as it is called in the Book of Mormon, above all other lands,—we are liable to have famines, and it would be no injury, at least, if we should provide against it, even if the famine does not come. If we do not find a need for it, it certainly is not an unwise thing nor a costly thing, to save our grain. Every family ought to have two or three years' supply of grain ahead in all our settlements, as a precautionary measure; and we can change our grain when it grows old and there is danger of weevil and put new in. But that which ought to be done is that every settlement should have one or more elevators in it. I wonder myself, say, for instance, in a county like this, with numbers of shrewd business men as you have, why you do not combine together and build a granary for yourselves. I keep some 1200 bushels of grain on hand for myself, but I would like to have about 3000 bushels of grain put up for my own use; and if my son Abraham had lived, I suppose this fall we should have had a granary. There ought to be public granaries. They would be of great advantage to all the farmers. Then if you wanted to borrow—which I hope none of you want to—but if you should on a pinch want to borrow, if you had a granary certificate, certifying that you had so much grain on hand, you would find it would be of great convenience to you in this direction as well as an excellent way to preserve the grain. There is a great deal of grain wasted in our country through vermin and poor granaries. The grain is not properly cared for. We ought to try and take care of our grain, and have grain on hand all through the country. It would be no harm, but might prove a very great blessing to everybody. I would therefore suggest to you business men that you combine together. Lumber is cheap now, labor is cheap, and everything that is needed to construct granaries is conveniently obtained, and you would find it of great service to you if it were done. It seems to me that if I were the President of the Stake here I would appoint a committee of practical men to do this—that is, to effect an organization that would accomplish this, and all to contribute a little, so as to have stock in it; those that had not much to contribute, could put in according to their means, and everyone take an interest in it, and put their grain in where it could be moved by elevators and changed so as to keep it in good condition, and be sold from time to time and replaced with new grain.

My brethren and sisters, I have talked on these everyday topics, and I hope they will be of profit to you. We want to make the Latter-day Saints the best and the most perfect people on the face of the earth, and I want to say to you here today—to repeat something that was said yesterday. God has chosen this people with the express purpose of making them a great people. We shall be, if we fulfil the destiny that is assigned to us. We shall be the saviors of our nation, and we shall save the nation through the Priesthood that God has established in His Church. This may come in contact with some of your ideas. You may think it will be done through party conventions, through politics, or through political leaders. It will never be done in that way. It will be done through the power of God, through the revelations of Jesus Christ. It will be done through the medium of that authority He has placed on the earth, and which he recognizes as His. That will be the way in which this will be brought about. It will be brought about in God's own time and God's own way, and these Latter-day Saints—you who are here today, with other Latter-day Saints throughout these valleys—will be the people that will accomplish this, under the direction of the Almighty. I heard one of the leading men of this nation a few weeks ago talk to the First Presidency concerning the position we occupy in the minds of leading men. We sat and listened to him with the greatest interest. If he had been familiar with the predictions—which he was not—made by the Prophet Joseph and by the Prophet Brigham and by other leading men among us, concerning the future of this people and the destiny that was in store for them, he could not have described in more forcible language than he used the position we occupied and the light in which we were viewed by the leading men of this country. I have letters also in my possession, written by leading men in the East, describing the position that we occupy and the influence we have. Their words are in direct fulfilment, as far as we have gone, of the words of the prophets concerning this people and our influence; and I know I say that which I understand when I say that if this people would only listen to and be governed by the wisdom that God has given, by the intelligence that He has bestowed, by the revelations that He has given, we could begin now to do that, in a small degree at least, which has been predicted concerning us; for it is admitted now that with our union—of which we have got very little now—but with the union that we have been credited with having, with the influence that leading men have been credited with having among us in holding things level, in steadying things, we can do an immense amount of good, and perhaps be the saviors of this nation. But a blindness has seemed to seize our people. It is one of the most astonishing things that I have ever seen in all my life, the spirit that has seized the Latter-day Saints. I know the Lord is overruling and controlling everything for good, and that He will teach us by experience. But what I have feared is that we may have to be scourged to get the experience. It would seem so, there is such—I would not like to call it stupidity, because that would seem offensive, but there is a blindness that to me is almost incomprehensible. And one thing that is wonderful; only a few years ago every effort was made that was possible by certain parties to take away from us our votes and to leave us in the condition of Chinamen and Indians. We should have been stripped of the right to vote if it had not been for the exertions that we made and the blessing of God upon those exertions. There was a determination on the part of a great many people who are now in this State to strip the Latter day Saints of their franchise, and you can imagine what a condition we would have been in then by looking at the Chinamen. They have no rights that a white man is bound to respect. Has an Indian any rights that white men are bound to respect? Why, they are merely tolerated, and all that is done for them is that which would be done for an animal. Men would not abuse an animal, and they would not abuse a Chinaman or an Indian—that is no rightly constituted man or woman would. But there are lots of men that would rob them, because they know they are defenseless before the law. They have no votes, they cannot make themselves felt. Imagine the condition we Latter-day Saints would have been in if this had occurred, and there is nothing in the world prevented it but the most extraordinary exertions on the part of some of the Latter-day Saints and the blessing of God upon those exertions. And yet, for some time past, the very men that were most active in trying to bring about this dreadful consummation, are the men that Latter-day Saints turn to, and listen to, and take advice from, and are controlled by. To me this is the most extraordinary spectacle. I remember very distinctly the condition we were in when we came to these valleys, and for years afterwards. President Young was the President of the Church. He was listened to as a man of God. He had great influence among the people. They saw he was a wise man, and that the Lord blessed his counsels. His word went through among the people, and as I said to you yesterday morning, they abandoned all their homes again, because he counseled it—ready to destroy them and to go out into the wilderness and take their fate there. And he had that influence that the people all obeyed him without hesitation. Today President Woodruff occupies the same position, holds the same keys; but instead of being listened to, are there not those who almost shun him? Do they not look upon it as uniting church and state and as almost criminal to listen to him or to ask his counsel, as though it were a violation of some rule of propriety to have anything to say to him about many things concerning which, as a pioneer and as one of the founders of the commonwealth, he might be supposed to know a great deal? Now, this is not what I expected would be the case fifty years ago. I expected that the influence of the Prophet of God, instead of decreasing, would increase; that it would spread, and it would be felt all through the land more and more. I never expected that it would decrease. I got a letter a week or two ago in ten days from Liverpool. I got a message from Liverpool that came quicker than the revolution of the earth—that is, it reached me before it left Liverpool several hours. The Queen of England used to have children and we would get the news of their birth before they were born. We can stand at the telephone and talk great distances, and we have a great many wonders of this kind. You can talk to a machine and you can put away the roll, and months and years afterwards, after the man has died that talked, you can put that roll or cylinder in the machine, start it, and you can hear his voice, although he may have been dead years, and you can hear the tones of his voice and that which he said. You can also hear songs that have been sung in distant lands years ago, the singers now dead; and you can hear music in the same way. Now, if I had been told when we came to the valley that the time would come when I could travel from New York—as I did last week—to Salt Lake City in a few hours less than three days; that I could receive a letter from Europe in ten days; that I could receive news of events that took place in Europe hours before the time of their occurence there; that I could hear the voice of the dead speaking the very things that they said, the very songs that they sang, the very music that was played, or that I could stand at a little machine and be heard miles away, and I could hear the voices of others, and could distinguish the tones of their voices and tell who they were that were talking—if I had been told all these things at that time I should have said, "Yes, that is the Millennium, if those things can be done. They are so miraculous, that must be the time spoken of by the prophets; the Millennium must have dawned upon us." Then if I had been told that which I see now concerning the President of this Church, and the influence he has, the way our people treat him, and the manner they go to others for advice and counsel, and had got a description or seen that which is now taking place in our midst, I should have said, "That is hell!"

Notice to Sunday Schools.

Leaders of the Sabbath school choirs in all wards of the city and vicinity are requested to teach their members the following songs from the Deseret Sunday School Union song book:

Song of Praise, Is There Anything That We Can Do? What Prize Shall Be Your Reward? God Speed the Right, and the chorus from Our Lovely Deseret. Songs to be sung by them at the afternoon services at the Tabernacle Feb. 28th in honor of President Woodruff's birthday.

First rehearsal of all choirs combined, Feb. 14th at the Tabernacle at the close of the afternoon service. Bring books.

E. H. BARNETT,
Of the Committee.

For February 28.

To the Sunday Schools of Salt Lake Stake:

The superintendents of the Sunday schools of Salt Lake Stake are requested to have the members of their schools prepared to recite in concert the Lord's prayer and the Articles of Faith, on the occasion of their gathering together in the Tabernacle on the afternoon of Sunday, February 28th, 1897, to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the birthday of our venerable leader, President Wilford Woodruff.

THOMAS C. GRIGGS,
RICHARD S. HORNE,
WILLARD C. BURTON,
Superintendency Sunday Schools of Salt Lake Stake.