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IN ADVANCE.

Saturday, . . . March 25, 1893

AN ADDRESS.

*To the Officers and Members of the
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
day Saints:*

The ear approach of the date for the dedication of the Temple of our God moves us to express with some degree of fullness our feelings to our brethren, the officers of the Church who with us bear the Priesthood of the Son of God, and to the Latter-day Saints generally; to the end that in entering into that holy building we may all be found acceptable ourselves, with our households, and that the building which we shall dedicate may also be acceptable unto the Lord.

The Latter-day Saints have used their means freely to erect other Temples in these valleys, and our Father has blessed us in our efforts. Today we enjoy the great happiness of having three of these sacred structures completed, dedicated to and accepted of the Lord, wherein the Saints can enter and attend to those ordinances which He, in His infinite goodness and kindness, has revealed. But for forty years the hopes, desires, and anticipations of the entire Church have been centered upon the completion of this edifice in the principal city of Zion. Its foundation was laid in the early days of our settlement in these mountains; and from that day until the present, the eyes of the members of the Church in every land have been lovingly directed toward it. Looking upon it as the Temple of Temples, the people during all these years have labored with unceasing toil, undiminished patience and ungrudging expenditure of means to bring it to its present condition of completion; and now that the toils and the sacrifices of forty years are crowned so successfully and happily; now that the great building is at last finished and ready to be used for divine purposes, need we say that we draw near an event whose consummation is to us as a people momentous in the highest degree? Far-reaching in consequences as that occasion is certain to be, what remains for us to say in

order to impress the entire Church with a sense of its tremendous importance!

On this point, surely nothing; yet may we offer a few words upon a phase that directly touches it. No member of the Church who would be deemed worthy to enter that sacred house can be considered ignorant of the principles of the Gospel. It is not too much to presume that every one knows what his duty is to God and to his fellow man. None is so forgetful as to have lost sight of the admonition that we must be filled with love for and charity toward our brethren. And hence none can for a moment doubt the supreme importance of every member of the congregation being at peace with all his or her brethren and sisters, and at peace with God. How else can we hope to gain the blessings He has promised save by complying with the requirements for which those blessings are the reward!

Can men and women who are violating a law of God, or those who are derelict in yielding obedience to His commands, expect that the mere going into His holy house and taking part in its dedication will render them worthy to receive, and cause them to receive, His blessing?

Do they think that repentance and turning away from sin may be so lightly dispensed with?

Do they dare, even in thought, thus to accuse our Father of injustice and partiality, and attribute to Him carelessness in the fulfillment of His own words?

Assuredly no one claiming to belong to His people would be guilty of such a thing.

Then must those who are unworthy cease to expect a blessing from their attendance at the Temple while sin unrepented of still casts its odor about them, and while bitterness or even an unforgiving coolness exists in their hearts against their brethren and sisters.

On this latter subject we feel that much might be said. In the striving after compliance with the apparently weightier matters of the law, there is a possibility that the importance of this spirit of love and kindness and charity may be underestimated. For ourselves, we cannot think of any precept that at present requires more earnest inculcation.

During the past eighteen months there has been a division of the Latter-day Saints upon national party lines. Political campaigns have been conducted, elections have been held, and feelings, more or less intense, have been engendered in the minds of brethren and sisters upon one side and the other.

We have been cognizant of conduct and have heard of many expressions that have been very painful to us and have grieved our spirits.

We know they have been an offense unto the God of peace and love, and a stumbling-block unto many of the Saints.

We feel now that a time for reconciliation has come; that before entering into the Temple to present ourselves before the Lord in solemn assembly, we shall divest ourselves of every harsh and unkind feeling against each other; that not only our bickerings shall cease, but that the cause of them shall be removed, and every sentiment that prompted and has maintained them shall be dispelled; that we shall confess our sins one to another, and ask forgiveness one of another; that we shall plead with the Lord for the spirit of repentance, and, having obtained it, follow its prompting; so that in humbling ourselves before Him and seeking forgiveness from each other, we shall yield that charity and generosity to those who crave our forgiveness that we ask for and expect from Heaven.

Thus may we come up into the holy place with our hearts free from guile and our souls prepared for the edification that is promised! Thus shall our supplications, undisturbed by a thought of discord, unitedly mount into the ears of Jehovah and draw down the choice blessings of the God of Heaven!

As your brethren, sustained by your vote and in your faith as the First Presidency of the Church, we have this to say to the Latter-day Saints, in our individual as well as our official capacity: If there is a single member of the Church who has feelings against us, we do not wish to cross the threshold of the Temple until we have satisfied him and removed from him all cause of feeling, either by explanation or by making proper amends and atonement; neither would we wish to enter the sacred portals of that edifice until we have sought an explanation, or amends, or atonement from any against whom we may have either a real or fancied grievance.

In now announcing this course for ourselves, we say to all the other officers of the Church that we desire them to follow our example. We wish them from highest to lowest and throughout all the Stakes and Wards of Zion to take heed of this counsel. Let them invite all who may have feelings against them to come forward and make them known; let them then endeavor to correct any misapprehensions or misunderstandings which may exist, or give redress for any wrong or injury that may have been done.