

tithing. You ought to keep what you have." She said to him, "William, you don't know what you are talking about. I pay my tithing that I may be blessed." "Would you deprive me," she said, "of a blessing?" "No," he said, "I would have you keep your tithing and bless yourself with it." Said he, "There are a number of able-bodied people here that are well qualified to work and produce their living, but they are living from the tithing, and I don't see that a widow should be required to pay her tithing to feed those that are not working for it." Now these are about the words of this man, who was employed at the tithing office. But "no," said the widow, "I propose to pay my dues to the Lord; I propose to pay my tithing, and any man that would prevent me from doing this would deprive me of a blessing." Where is that man and his family today? He apostatized. He didn't last long in the Church. He turned away, and went back to the east somewhere and took his family with him. He probably long since has gone to his rest. And not one of his family is in the Church. I bear testimony of these things because I know what I am talking about. I want to tell you a little more: While this widow was paying her tithing and being blessed, there was a little boy who really thought that tithing office clerk was about right. That widow's boys had to work very hard, and they knew how those potatoes were raised. They knew how the corn and other grain was raised, they knew what it was to take care of the sheep, and the horses and the cows that were tithed, and all about it. They knew how it was done, for they had it to do. And one of the little boys of that widow thought that clerk was more than two-thirds right about it. By and by the widow died, but she left very comfortable property for her children, dug out of the desert here: the children were young, and I confess to you that they were not as faithful in paying their tithes and their offerings as their mother was; they had lost their mother, and what was the result? In a few years, everything that she left them had gone to rack and ruin. That was the result. The cattle were turned out upon the range, and that was the

last they ever saw of them. The neighbors' cattle broke into the fields and destroyed the crops, and they did not reap the harvests they had done before; and it was only a few years after the death of the widow when the children had not much to show for what was left them, and it was not until they became old enough to appreciate the truth, and to commence to obey the laws of God and keep His commandments, that the Lord began to bless them again, to build them up, to increase their substance, and to give them what was necessary for their good. And as they have obeyed the commandments of God, the Lord has blessed them. He will continue to do it while time endures, if they continue faithful; and throughout the countless ages of eternity they will reap the reward of fidelity to the cause of truth and to the laws of God; and so will all the people of Israel. I testify of this to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn commencing:

Come, let us anew our journey pursue.

Benediction was pronounced by Elder Edward Partridge.

The choir sang the hymn which commences:

Com.e, dearest Lord, descend and dwell,

By faith and love in every breast.

Opening prayer by Elder Abram Hatch.

Awake, ye Saints of God, awake!

Call on the Lord in mighty prayer,

That He will Zion's bondage break,

And bring to naught the fowler's snare,

was sung by the choir.

PREST. GEORGE Q. CANNON.

Importance of sustaining the Authority of God—
Good effects of reading the Written Word—
Skepticism in secular literature—Evil results of
ignoring the Counsels of God's Servants.

In standing up this afternoon to address you, my brethren and sisters, I do so with the hope that I shall have your faith and prayers, and that the spirit that has rested upon our brethren who have spoken thus far during the Conference will be given unto me

also. To arise before a congregation of this size is almost appalling, and no man that realizes the responsibility of teaching the people, it seems to me, would dare do so unless he felt that the Lord would assist him and be with him.

We have heard a great many excellent instructions during yesterday and this morning. We have had spiritual instructions, and also instructions concerning practical duties, although there is nothing connected with our religion that is not really practical. We can apply that word to all the duties that devolve upon us as individuals and as a people.

We have heard considerable concerning the authority that God has restored. I feel that this is an important theme, and one that cannot be dwelt upon too much in our hearing. There has been noticeably, it seems to me, considerable change in the Church in relation to that authority, and its claims upon and its standing among the people. Anything that contributes to weaken that authority or to lessen its value in the minds of the people is something to be avoided and, I believe, to be dreaded. The success and the triumph of the work of God thus far can only be attributed to the fact that the Lord has placed in His Church His Priesthood, and has given it authority; for to its guidance, to its influence and activity among the people, can be ascribed the prosperity of this work of our God. To no other cause can we attribute the deliverances that have been wrought out in our behalf. Its operations have been most beneficent. We have heard considerable concerning it in the remarks that have been made. But I have noticed myself among the Latter-day Saints that where the people of God pay attention to the written word, and cherish and observe the written word, they are always better prepared to hear the oral instructions of the servants of God; they are better prepared to receive those instructions; they have greater interest in seeking to obtain instructions, than they have when they are careless about the written word of God. I have felt for some time that there is an indifference, not to call it by any

stronger name, among the Latter-day Saints in regard to the word of God. I would like to ask this congregation, how many of you read the Book of Mormon, the Bible, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and the discourses of the Elders as they are published? How many of you make a practice of reading the word of God as it is in these records, and as it appears in published discourses? I am afraid that if you were interrogated upon this point many would say, "I have not read the Bible for such a length of time; I have not read the Book of Mormon for such a length of time; I have not read the Book of Doctrine and Covenants for such a length of time; I do not read the discourses of the Elders that are published; I do not take the paper that contains them; I prefer other papers."

I hope I am not doing the people of God injustice in making this statement; but I believe that comparatively few of the Latter-day Saints are in the habit of reading the words of God that He has given to us in the records that have come to us. I believe there are families, from what I hear and what I notice myself, that do not open the Book of Mormon, or the Bible, or the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, from one month's end to another. These books, if they are in possession of families, too frequently lie covered with dust, untouched, and not read. Do I do any injustice in making this statement? If I do, I am glad of it—that is, I would be very glad if what I say is not correct, and that the Book of Mormon, the Bible, the Doctrine and Covenants and the discourses of the Elders are perused regularly, and sought for with avidity. If we talk about the living oracles and want to pay respect to them, how shall we do this? Shall we do it by never reading their words—by paying no attention to that which they say? That is a very poor way of doing. We ought to listen to their words. When we cannot hear their words, we should read them; for they are the words of the authorized servants of God. I feel that there is a great neglect among us in this respect. I notice it in my own family, I notice it in other families, and still in my own

family I do the best I can in these matters. But you will find that, among certain classes, scientific works are more read, magazines are more read, novels are more read, publications that do not contribute to faith are more read, and the result is that we are in danger of a wave of infidelity and unbelief sweeping through our land, to the injury of the faith of the rising generation. It is a thing that fills me with more fear than almost any thing else concerning ourselves and our children. You cannot take a magazine up—the best and most popular magazines—without finding articles in it that are—I was going to say designed—but their purport and the drift of their arguments are opposed to the truths that are contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants. Talk with young men who go to universities and colleges, and you will find that many are more or less imbued with these ideas. I need only refer to a few—the age of the earth, prehistoric man, the creation of man, man's entrance upon the earth, the nature of man's descent. The truth concerning these principles, is being undermined and weakened so that at the present time, if it were not for the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, we ourselves would be at sea. But those who do not receive the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as divine are in a deplorable condition; they do not know what is true. Many of the clergy are in the same position as the rest of the world; they have adopted the new ideas concerning these scientific discoveries. Hundreds of clergymen, who call themselves ministers of the Gospel, do not believe in Adam and Eve and their creation; do not believe in the Mosaic account of creation; do not believe that man is a son of God, descended from God; but they believe that the earth has been in existence and peopled by man ages before the period given in the Mosaic account. There is no doubt that the earth is much older than many of us think it is. But they mingle truth with error, and they build up fallacies, and they are propagating them; and the Latter-day Saints, who

read this literature, and do not read the word of God, are in danger of losing their faith.

We have in these three books to which I have referred the pure word of God—at least in two of them—uncorrupted, undefiled; and we can read them with a knowledge that they are true. We have the word of God in the Bible; but it has been translated by uninspired men. And no matter how men may pile up arguments and build theories—they may build them as high as these mountains of ours, and they may appear to be true, yet we know they are not true where they come in contact with these records of ours, because we know that these records are true. God has revealed them, and the Book of Mormon has been translated by a man of God and has come to us in purity. Therefore, when we read about our father Adam and our mother Eve, read about the fall of man, the creation of the earth or the peopling of the earth, about the Son of God and His agreement to redeem us from the fall, we know that those principles are true and from God.

It is important that we as a people should understand these things, and that we should build our faith impregnably upon the rock of revelation, constant revelation; not alone the revelation given two thousand years ago, but also the revelation given today, and which comes to us in its purity.

I have been impressed very much of late with the danger to which our young people are exposed. When the parents neglect to read the word of God, when they prefer novels, magazines, or any kind of light reading, and do not set the example by reading that which God has given to us, you may expect the children to do the same. They will not take up the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants to read, because when they read these illustrated papers, these catchy prints, these light novels, everything of a serious nature loses its interest. To people who are fed on highly seasoned food, a plain diet is not inviting; men who have been accustomed to stimulants crave stimulants. People who read the

class of literature I refer to are in the same condition mentally; they desire the sensational, and reading which does not have some of this element in it possesses but little interest. The result is, our books and our discourses,—that which God reveals—go without being perused.

I do not want to dwell on this—it is not necessary. I leave it with you to reflect upon it. I look upon it as a most serious matter that should be called to the attention of this Conference. I wish I had language to make you all realize the danger we are in from mischievous literature, and the necessity for a reformation in our reading habits. Do not wonder at your sons and daughters going astray and losing the faith, when they do not read the word of God.

Do you know what I believe about the living oracles? I believe that the bondage we are in today—I want you all to hear what I have to say, for I want to say it considerably—the bondage we are in today is due to the neglect of this people in listening to counsel; and not only in not listening to it, but in not seeking it. We are in bondage—in debt. As a community we groan under a load of debt. We have, it is said, hundreds of unemployed people. I do not know how many there are, but reports come to the effect that they are numerous. Why is it? If this people had listened to the counsel of the servants of God, or had sought it, would this be the case? Certainly not, in my opinion. God has not led us here to these mountains to starve. He has not given the spirit of gathering to these Latter-day Saints in the remote parts of the earth and brought them here to walk the streets in idleness, with their hands in their pockets. He has not given his spirit to such an extent that the authorities may have to repress it, and say to the Elders abroad, “Restrain the people; do not let them come here for the present.” Why, what an incongruity, what a strange thing, to say that God would give the spirit of gathering to the people to come where they could not get employment, and where they would go hungry and have to live on charity; or, after they had come, return to their own lands, as some have

done. To me, the very sight of this condition is an evidence that there is something wrong, or something has been wrong.

Let me refer to the railroads here. How many Latter-day Saints are employed on the railroads in this State? I wonder who can answer. Who built these railroads? How many railroads are there in this State that the Latter-day Saints did not build and own? There are but few in this State of Utah that they did not build and own or control. Hundreds of Utah men were employed on these railroads. Suppose that every man that had owned any share in them had said to himself, “I shall not part with my stock in these agencies, if I can help it; I shall maintain my holdings in these roads, so that my fellow citizens can get employment on them, and the policy not been adopted in our State of sending to remote states for people to do the work that our own citizens can do,” what would have been the result? Why, today, instead of our people walking around unemployed, as many have to do, they would find abundant employment. I do not want to risk a guess at the number that would be employed; you can guess as well as I.

Herein we are reaping the consequences of our selfishness and want of prudence. Do you wonder at it, when God has told us so plainly what we shall do? When God has placed men to guide us and to counsel us, and their counsels have been neglected and disregarded? I wonder that God has been so merciful with us as he has been in these things, and that He has not scourged us more than He has. I look upon the highest duty that I have in connection with the service of God—after personally laboring to make myself pure and to conform to all the requirements of the Gospel—my first duty after that is to build up Zion. God sent me to earth for that. He has given me His Spirit for that. He has gathered us together to build up Zion. It is the highest, the noblest, the plainest duty that God has assigned to us, as a people and as individuals. Up to this hour I have never labored for anything else. I would not go anywhere to build up anything else. I have never had the inclination to do it. I wanted every

minute of my time, every faculty of my mind and body, every power and talent that God has given me, to be devoted exclusively to the building up of Zion. I have no other aim in life, and I want no other aim. Now, if this be my motive, I should not do anything at any time to injure Zion. If I own stock in a railroad, or in any other public enterprise, and am offered a good price for it, I should first ask myself, Is the sale of this consistent with the building up of Zion? Through the invitation of President Young, I was one of the original incorporators of one of our railways. I could have sold my interest in that at several times for a considerable sum of money. But I desired the control kept here, and I said, No, I will not sell. But the control passed out of the State, and though the stock has decreased very greatly in value, I have had the satisfaction of knowing that I have not contributed in any manner to the bringing about of the condition of things which I now deplore.

Now, when I say "building up Zion," do I mean by that, building up a system that is peculiar to the Latter-day Saints, and that will exclude all but Latter-day Saints? No. There is where the misconception arises in regard to our views and aims. Whenever Zion is built up as it should be, we will have a condition of things that will be the admiration and the attraction of the whole world. There will be no heavy taxation. There will be no officers working for enormous salaries. There will be no bribery. There will be no unthrift, money being spent lavishly, improvidently, and in a way to oppress the people. Whenever Zion shall rule, the very opposite of this will be the condition of society. The widow can live on her lot, and not be taxed to deprive her of it. The workingman can have his acre and a quarter, with his improvements on it, and can hold it without being taxed out of it. That will be the condition when Zion shall prevail. There will be no oppression. There will be no sin permitted that the law can reach. There will be a condition of society that all honest, virtuous and upright men will admire. I labor with all my might, and have

done since I was old enough, to bring to pass that happy condition. I pray for it with all the faith I can. It is my constant thought, by night and by day. I labor for it as well as pray for it. For I want a reign of righteousness to be ushered in. I want to see a condition of things in this State that shall be such as I have feebly attempted to describe. And I know that the Latter-day Saints have the same desire. We may be mistaken at times; we may be misled; we may do foolish things; but underneath, underlying all our thoughts and all our acts, is the intense desire to see a better condition of things brought about, not for ourselves alone, but for all. And I want to say to you here to day that it never will be brought about until the voice of experienced men, especially inspired men, will be listened to. In any other community, where right prevails, men would not say concerning these men that are around here what they do about us. It is because we are members of a church that we are assailed; because they do not want the influence of that wisdom and that experience felt among the people. Here are men on this stand who have helped build this commonwealth. They laid the foundations of it. They carried it forward. They helped enact the laws that have governed it. And when this Territory passed out of the control of those who were influenced by the policy of these men, it was in a condition that was most admirable. It was out of debt, and lightly taxed. It was in a condition that people look back to now and admire, and regret that we cannot have such a condition exist today. Do not mistake me, and think that I mean the Latter-day Saints should have exclusive control of civil affairs; not so; no more than others should have exclusive control.

Brethren and sisters, we talk about listening to the oracles of God. Do you listen to them? Do you think them entitled to your support and your confidence? If you had offered to you a good bargain in selling out some important enterprise, would you ask yourselves, "How is this going to affect the interests of Zion?" Or would you say, "I can make money out of

this, and I will take care of myself?" I say to you that whenever Latter-day Saints come to the latter conclusion they will lose by it. The money that they get will not do them nor their children good. I only state a truism when I say this. To prove it we have only to look around us and see results. The men that have sought counsel and followed it have been blessed in all they have done. The money they have made has been prospered, because it has been made properly—it has been made with a view to carrying out the purposes of God.

I would like to bring these questions home to us in a practical manner. Let us look at them as practical men. We are here in the State of Utah. It is our duty to build up this State. Not for the Mormons alone—do not mistake my position—not for the Mormons, but for every man and woman that wants to live an honest and upright life and to be a good citizen. With the views and the knowledge I have, I should deplore a feeling that would prompt us to build it up for ourselves alone. We are in the world, and a part of the world. God has given us a mission in the world, and we know how to fill it. We cannot be accused of egotism if we say that we know how to build up this country. We know what policy to pursue to make this community a happy and prosperous community. The proofs are in sight. We do not talk as men who have not had experience. We understand the question. And we know that if the people would listen to the counsels that are given to them, they would be led in a path of safety, a path of peace, and a path of prosperity. But there is every effort being made, and has been for some time, to destroy this influence, and many of the Latter-day Saints, apparently, have not had discernment enough to discover the spirit that actuates those who are making these attempts.

I pray God to bless us in this Conference, to fill us with the Holy Spirit, and to give unto us the words of life and salvation and cause our hearts to rejoice. I want us to see our errors. I want to talk about these errors. I want to warn, where we need warning—and we do need warning. I know we are not as we should be. I am not

satisfied myself with my own condition. I am not satisfied with the condition of the Latter-day Saints. I do not want to say anything to lull you to sleep. I do not want to sing any siren songs in your ears. It is pleasant enough to talk about those pleasant things; but here is a condition of things before us that we cannot close our eyes to. How shall this condition be remedied? How shall this people be led and guided out of the difficulties in which they are involved? What can we say to you, to point out the dangers that you are in, and to show you the path that you should tread to escape these dangers, and to be the people that God designs we shall be. There is only one way—and we will all have to come to it—and that is to listen to the voice of God in our midst, and ask for it, and not be as some are, "Don't talk to me. I don't want any church interference. I don't care how much you know; you may have all the experience in the world; but I don't want to talk to you, you are an officer in the church, and I don't want any ecclesiastical interference with me." Why, that spirit—where will it lead us to? You can answer that question yourselves, each one of you. I believe in the principles of government. I have my views concerning them; you all have, no doubt. But shall we, who know what we do, accept party as the paramount issue among us? When I heard the proposition that the Latter-day Saints should divide on party lines, I advocated it. I have not changed my feelings in regard to it. I know that it is better for us. But we need not set up party as an idol and worship it, as though it was a new-found idol, which we should bow down to and worship. That is the other extreme. We should not go to these extremes. We should act like wise people, and do that which is the best for us in every way. I do not, in saying this, wish to say one word about politics, only to clear myself from any suspicion of saying anything in opposition to the maintenance of party lines. As I have said, I believed in the division on party lines when I heard it was being attempted. I knew it was the right thing to do. I have

been glad ever since that we did it, and I would not have it changed if it could be helped—and it can be helped. We should not interfere with each other in our party rights, our party beliefs, or party allegiance. But do not go to such extremes; do not be carried away by them.

I pray God to bless us with his Holy Spirit, that during this Conference we may have a time of rejoicing. I humbly ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

THE GENERAL AUTHORITIES.

were presented to the Conference by President George Q. Cannon, as follows:

Wilford Woodruff, as Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in all the world.

George Q. Cannon as First Counselor in the First Presidency.

Joseph F. Smith as Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

Lorenzo Snow as President of the Twelve Apostles.

As members of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles—Lorenzo Snow, Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant, John W. Taylor, Marriner W. Merrill and Anthon H. Lund.

The Counselors in the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles as Prophets, Seers and Revelators.

Patriarch to the Church—John Smith.

First Seven Presidents of the Seventies—Seymour K. Young, C. D. Fjeldsted, B. H. Roberts, George Reynolds, Jonathan G. Kimball and Rulon S. Wells.

William B. Preston as Presiding Bishop, with Robert T. Burton as his first and John R. Winder as his second counselor.

Franklin D. Richards as Church historian and general Church recorder, with John Jaques and Charles W. Penrose as his assistants.

As the General Church Board of Education—Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, Karl G. Maeser, Willard Young, Anthon H. Lund, James Sharp, Joseph F. Smith and John Nicholson.

As Trustee-in-Trust for the body of religious worshippers known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Wilford Woodruff.

John Nicholson as Clerk of the General Conference.

All of the voting to sustain the authorities was unanimous.

In presenting the names to fill the vacancies in the quorum of the Apostles and the First Council of Seventies, President George Q. Cannon said:

It is well known to the Latter-day Saints that there are two vacancies in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, one through death, and another through the severance of a person from the quorum. We now propose to fill those vacancies, and present to the Conference the name of Matthias F. Cowley to be one of the Twelve Apostles.

It may be well to state to this Conference that Brother Matthias F. Cowley is at present the second counselor to the President of the Oneida Stake of Zion. He is a man that has labored in the ministry very zealously, and is known, to all acquainted with him, as a man of worth.

(His name was then put to the Conference, and he was sustained by unanimous vote.)

It is now proposed that Abraham Owen Woodruff be ordained one of the Twelve Apostles.

He has been a missionary to Germany, has acquired the language there, has labored very zealously in that mission, and since his return has been very zealous and indefatigable in his labors here among us. He is a youthful, but a promising man.

(His name was then presented, and the vote to sustain him was also unanimous.)

I may say, before sitting down, that the mind of the Lord was diligently sought for in relation to these appointments, and we can say to you that the mind of the Lord was obtained, and we know that the men who have been chosen are the men whom the Lord has designated to us to fill these positions.

There is a vacancy in the Seven Presidents of the Seventies. It is now proposed that Joseph W. McMurrin