

in the dispensation of His providence He gives unto us. That is all He asks, and that we should have our ears open to the cry of the widow and the fatherless, that we should be generous and large-hearted, that we should not be covetous. Can you not understand this principle? We want to give Him half, or a quarter, or we want to bite a piece off the apple and give it to Him. Anything but what is due Him! Do not, for our own sake, make this record. As we value our happiness and our own advancement, let us be true and faithful in the discharge of our duties, and not rob the Lord our God; for everything that we have is given unto us by Him. And He has declared that if we will love Him and keep His commandments, we shall prosper in the land. "Do you believe it? I bear testimony that the law of tithing is true. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." [Mal. III, 10.]

I can bear testimony to the truth of the remarks of Brother Merrill, that if a man will love God and keep His commandments, He will deliver him from all evil and from all his financial troubles. We exhort the world to do this; but here are a number of people, gathered from the north and the south, the east and the west, and they demonstrate that they do not appreciate it. How do they demonstrate it? By robbing Him in tithes and offerings; by being slothful in their duties; by being indifferent to the magnifying of the Aaronic and Melchisedek Priesthoods. And Zion can never be redeemed under such a condition. I say to all, especially to myself, repent, and let us turn over a new leaf; let us cease our slothfulness, our indifference, and let it be manifest to Almighty God that we appreciate His loving kindness, that we appreciate His redemption, that we appreciate the glorious hope of everlasting lives, in a glorious resurrection, by our works being coupled with our faith to the glory of the Father, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER JOHN HENRY SMITH.

Impetus to mutual improvement—Organization of home beneficent societies—The crisis in our National affairs.

I do not remember having heard a single word, either read or spoken, by our brethren during this Conference that I did not endorse. It seems to me that each one of the brethren has presented some item that should cause us to reflect seriously upon the goodness and mercy extended unto us by our Heavenly Father. The aged who heard the cry in the land from whence they came, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," should rejoice, and their children and their children's children should continue in that rejoicing. One suggestion contained in the remarks of Elder Merrill this forenoon, of the brother who would have been pleased to have taken from his swill barrel the food that was applied in the direction of providing for domestic animals, is one, probably, that hosts of young people whose homes have been in this mountain region, cannot as yet fully appreciate. Fathers and mothers of mature years may appreciate this suggestion; some of our brothers and sisters who have been unsuccessful in securing proper labor, within recent years, may have been made to taste in some limited degree these conditions, as did the early Pioneers in their experiences—the blessing that a well-stocked swill barrel would present to the hungry man or woman. Each suggestion presented for our consideration during this Conference has been of a practical character, whether applied directly to the temporal conditions that surround us in life or to those conditions that we speak of as spiritual. The labors and ministrations of the past few months by quite an army of young men, under the direction of President Woodruff and his aids, who made a tour of the various Stakes in Zion, and visited the homes of the people, interviewed their sons and their daughters, and awakened an interest in the minds of those sons in those associations established in connection with the work of God, and the calling in, as suggested

in the remarks of one of the brethren, of about 13,000 souls, give to us the possibilities of missionary work among the covenant people of God and present before our vision the opportunity to consider the possibilities that attend the spread of the truth among those spirits who have been forgotten and reared among that gathered Israel who have been called to come forth from among the people of the world. Many received and believed the testimonies of our young brethren whose hearts and minds were bent upon arousing to life by nurturing it, the Gospel that had been planted in the breasts of the number that I have named. It cannot be anticipated that the brief but earnest efforts made during the winter season to gather the young men into these associations organized for them can have accomplished all that should be desired in connection with this matter. But it is a matter of joy to those who have been engaged in this ministry, that our Father did sweeten their words and arouse to reflection the hosts of young men who will remain earnest and devoted laborers within this fold, and who, perchance, will be found whenever they will be needed in connection with the development of the work of God, using the talents with which their Maker has endowed them for the furtherance of His purposes. There remains, without doubt, large numbers who may have been aroused temporarily to reflect upon the sacred obligations of the Gospel, and who may have fallen temporarily from grace to be followed by the laborers in these various fields with a devotion and earnestness that shall cause them to continue, at least, to strive to know more fully of the work of God. With their hearts gladdened and their minds aroused, their understandings educated, the spirit of truth distilled upon those minds shall fasten there, that none of them, perchance, may fail in the receipt of the impress of the Spirit of the living God in such form as to brighten their entire lives.

I trust, my brethren and my sisters, fathers and mothers, Bishops and counselors, Presidents of Stakes and High Councilors, that the work that has been inaugurated in this direction

—which calls from the den of infamy, from the places where loafers congregate and from the places where evil and crime is begotten, through the gathering together of young men and young boys, assailing each man in the spirit of that missionary labor which has called so many during the brief period of the last winter season to at least enroll themselves in the hope of a nobler and better development of themselves, and all maintaining the spirit of that work who have been aroused from the sleep of idleness to the understanding of the relationship of the Holy Spirit, will continue their ministrations until every son and every daughter in Zion, every stranger within her borders in every home shall hear the voice of testimony making its declaration that God indeed does live, and that His holy truths restored in these latter days are surely among the children of men. I trust, my brethren and sisters, that the same spirit that has actuated these young men who have gone forth to prove Zion, to test the faith of parents, to scatter the seeds of life, to point out the way of the Gospel of the Son of God, will have touched your hearts in such form that in no home where the truth of the Gospel has come shall the father or mother, the son or daughter fail in any degree, having received the sweet influence, heard the still small voice of the spirit, to nurture and care for and develop its force and its power within their breasts.

There is another item that I have upon my mind, upon which I wish to speak for a few moments, as I discover in my associations among the people that there is a continuous tendency for our young men, as well as many of our middle aged men, to ally themselves with the various organizations, clubs and societies formed outside of the Church, many of them for the purpose of insurance, that they may be enabled to secure, perchance, a few hundred dollars in the interest of their families, should accident happen them, or in their own interest provided they are enfeebled and unable to discharge the duties and responsibilities that attach to them. It seems to me that in every Stake of Zion there is ample capacity to organize mutual aid soci-

eties within our own circles, among our own members, and retain at home any profits that may arise from such organizations. All the organizations of this character within our State are sending off hundreds of dollars to aid in the maintenance of people in other sections of the land. We have the skill, we have the ability, we ought to have the practical common sense, to be able to form and adjust these associations within our own circles. One hundred men, or three hundred, paying their dollar a week or dollar a month into a fund manipulated and managed by themselves, within their own circle, and thus utilize to profit and aid their brother who may be afflicted, or to pay to a sister should a brother be removed from the home circle. As it is, these organizations are receiving their money and sending a certain percentage continuously to the heads of the various societies from which they receive their organizations, and keeping a portion of it possibly at home. I believe that care and attention should be bestowed upon these matters, and the formation of membership in those organizations that look after and guard you in some measure should not occur among the Latter-day Saints, but I would not arouse a spirit of antagonism in this respect. It is just as legitimate, just as proper for you to form your organizations in your circles in which you legitimately move as that others should form them and you pay tribute to them.

I desire to raise my voice in commendation of the position that has been assumed by President McKinley and his cabinet on the question affecting Spain, and to say to you, my brethren and sisters, it should be the prayer of the Latter-day Saints that our nation be preserved from war, and that the efforts to maintain peace should be carried to the utmost limit before bloodshed should be resorted to. I trust that this feeling pervades the hearts of the people called Latter-day Saints, and that all of us feel within our souls a determination to stand for the principles of right, and sustain our government in every proposition of liberty, justice and mercy and the maintenance of these principles of righteousness, the prevention of the

shedding of blood, to the most reasonable extreme. I feel, my brethren and sisters, to thus give utterance to the sentiments of my own heart and mind upon this question, and that the prayers of the people should go up in an appeal that God shall guide the destinies of this great government in such form that its mission of liberty to the human race may be accomplished, in that way that life and property, and happiness and peace, and not bloodshed, shall come to the children of men. We recognize our Father's purpose in connection with the development of this work, and the world receiving the message we have to bear will be remembered by Him in the wars and rumors of wars that shall exist among the nations, and in the seas heaving themselves beyond their bounds. But we claim, with hands lifted to high heaven, that we believe the Constitution of the United States was a revelation from God, and opened the door of liberty in such form that His sons and daughters should be permitted to possess every right and every privilege that mortal should be permitted to enjoy in the flesh. The extension of these sentiments and these views lie dearest to the heart of every man and every woman who has become conversant with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I trust that we will not permit ourselves in the midst of the excitement that arises to shout for bloodshed, but on the contrary to desire that God shall direct the hand that has been placed to guide the destinies of this nation at the present time, and make the minds of leading men of the nation wise and broad and firm upon the principles of right.

May heaven's peace and blessing abound in every heart; may God be glorified, the truth spread, liberty increase, justice and mercy abound, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

At the conclusion of Elder Smith's remarks the great congregation arose and, with the choir, sang, with deep feeling,

"My country 'tis of thee,  
Sweet land of Liberty."