

being accepted by thousands. And so shall this great and mighty power which has been revealed in our day—the Holy Ghost—come to man, and the authority of Almighty God be spread abroad, until all mankind shall be redeemed from their sins, when it shall be a pleasure for men to adopt the truth in their religions.

You Latter-day Saints ought to praise God; but in your thankfulness for the greater blessings which you enjoy, you ought not to denounce others because they have not so much good as you have. No; our whole souls should be filled with pity because of their condition, and we should sympathize with them because of their ignorance and blindness because they are being led by blind guides. We should go forth among them with the sole desire in our hearts to manifest unto them that which God has revealed unto us, and carry to them that which has made us free and happy, and which has made us in very deed the Church and people of God. That should be the feeling of the Latter-day Saints. I feel so at this present time, my brothers and sisters. Sometimes I feel otherwise, because the spirit of humanity and the weakness of the flesh overcome me and cause me to do and say things which are not in accord with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May the Lord forgive it, and help me to become so strong that I may overcome it, so that I may see in all men the children of God, and that I may understand that it is the desire of our Father in heaven that all shall be saved in His kingdom. May I feel a great pleasure and joy in doing my part, and a greater pleasure and joy in seeing all the Latter-day Saints doing their part towards carrying this grand Gospel to all the nations of the earth, that they may hear and, if it please God, yield obedience to the truth. May the Lord bless the Latter-day Saints. May He bless the people of the world. May His Spirit be poured out in more abundance than it has heretofore been. May the people of the world seek after truth to a greater extent than they have already done. May they desire to serve God. May the spirit of good, and

not of evil, of love, and not of hatred, of philanthropy, and not of envy, be poured out upon the people, to the consummation of all the righteous purposes of the Lord, and may we live long to see the accomplishment of much of it, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Elder Thomas Ashworth sang a sacred song, of which Sister Mary Kelly is the author. The music is the composition of Brother Joseph J. Daynes.

ELDER B. H. ROBERTS.

Testimony—Prophetic character of Elder Pratt's hymn—Recent literature on Mormonism—Philosophical attempt to account for it—Accounting for Mormonism tested—The Church the witness of its own divinity—Home ministry of the Church—Concluding reflections.

My brethren and sisters, I desire to bear you my testimony that during this conference there has been a rich outpouring of the Spirit of God upon His servants; my heart has been made glad, and I have rejoiced in the truths we have received. I do not bear this testimony to you because I think it is necessary to confirm the words that have been spoken, nor in the hope of adding emphasis to what has been said, nor to convince you that you have listened to the truth. The Spirit of the Lord, I am confident, has borne record to your souls already as it has to mine, that what we have heard in this conference is true, is precious, and is the word of the Lord unto the people. I merely bear you my testimony that you may know that in my heart also the Spirit has given witness of the good things we have received from God, and that I am one with you in the enjoyment of these blessings.

I am now called upon to address you for a short time, and I desire to be under the same influence that my brethren have enjoyed while speaking. Yet when I come to view my own life, I confess that it is with some degree of fear and trembling that I ask God in my heart for this blessing; for the reason that I cannot feel altogether that I merit it, but am under the necessity of trusting in the mercy and grace of God. Such is the weakness of human nature that I presume—at least I speak

for myself—if it were not for God's goodness and grace and for His willingness to help those who are striving to overcome and to be His servant's, it would be almost beyond man's power to approach God with sufficient confidence to obtain the outpouring of His Spirit and power. It is in this spirit, my brethren and sisters, that I approach the Lord on this occasion—with fear and trembling, acknowledging my own weakness and imperfections before you all; and if God in His mercy will pour out His Spirit and grant us a blessing through the words I may speak, then shall the honor and the praise and the glory be accorded unto Him. Moreover, we desire, in this way, that is, through His Spirit, to be taught of God, and not of man, nor by the spirit of man.

Many beautiful thoughts were awakened in my mind by the singing of that splendid hymn composed by the late Elder Parley P. Pratt, and sung by his grandsons in this conference. The hymn was originally published upon the cover of the first number of the "Millennial Star," in the month of April, 1840; and if I were going to take a text on this occasion it would be the first verse of that hymn:

The morning breaks the shadows flee;
Lo! Zion's standard is unfurled,
The dawning of a brighter day
Majestic rises on the world.

Sixty-three years of experience has demonstrated the inspiration of God in that utterance. If in thought you will go back to that time—1840—and take account of the progress made by the nations of the earth since then, you will find that there has been more advancement in arts, in sciences, in mechanics, in scientific and religious thought, than in any five hundred years previous to that time. Truly the dawning of a brighter day has arisen majestically on the world! The dawn of that day began when God once more renewed divine communication with men. When He graciously revealed Himself and His Son Jesus Christ to a Prophet and announced the incoming of the Dispensation of the

Fullness of Times, in which should be gathered together all things in one, even in Christ, whether they were things in heaven, or things on earth. That was the beginning of the dawn of that brighter day. Since that event flood upon flood of light has come to the earth, making it radiant with intelligence. The direct result of the dawning of that brighter day has been the restoration of the holy Priesthood of God—the power of God given to man, by which man may co-operate with Gods and angels in bringing to pass the purposes of Jehovah. Also with the restoration of the Priesthood has come a profounder knowledge of the things of God; a better understanding of the character and being of God; of the relationship which man sustains to Him; the establishment of the Church of Christ; together with broader views of the plan of man's salvation and the redemption of the earth. I believe also that with this flood of knowledge concerning these highly spiritual things, there has come into the world, almost imperceptibly, a more generally diffused and brighter spirit of intelligence than was known before; like collateral rays shooting off to right and left from the more direct light of God's revelations which ushered in the great work of the last days. By those collateral rays of light men have been led to those great discoveries in the arts and sciences and in mechanics, which make our age so wonderful as an age of progress and enlightenment. If I am right in this conjecture respecting this diffusion of a more general spirit of intelligence in the world as a result of the renewed direct communication between heaven and earth, then we should not be surprised, and I am sure that none of us are envious in the matter—we should not be surprised, that the sects and parties in the world, outside of the organization known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, should partake of some of the rays of light emanating from this central spiritual sun. Why, in olden times, even the beggars and strangers were welcome to the crumbs that fell

from the Master's table and so the inhabitants of the earth, now if they cannot accept the fullness of the Gospel, are welcome to such fragments of that truth as may penetrate their understandings. I rejoice that they are partaking in a measure of these things; and while I believe with Elder Cowley that perhaps they are not designedly accepting them in order to honor God, still I am of the opinion that such is the wisdom of our Father that He will overrule their partial acceptance of the truth to His glory, and ultimately to a more rapid moving forward of the great work that He has in hand. After awhile, those who are now taking up fragments of the truth into their creeds will be under the necessity of comparing notes and tracing things to their source, and when they do that they will learn that these great religious truths are not man's discovery, but God's revelation unto the inhabitants of the earth, and that they were revealed through His chosen instrument, the Prophet Joseph Smith.

It is not, however, in this direction that I would lead your thoughts on this occasion. I want to speak, if I shall enjoy the liberty of God's Spirit, upon another subject. Some of you perhaps are aware of the fact that I have been giving some attention of late to the literature on "Mormonism;" not only that which we ourselves publish, but that also which is published by others. The publications on "Mormonism" during the last five years, I believe, are more numerous than in any 20 years previous to that time. The last five years have witnessed an awakening of thought upon our religion. More, and ever more attention is being given to it. More newspaper articles, more magazine articles, more volumes—some of them quite pretentious—have been written on "Mormonism" than ever before, and indicate the universal interest taken in the subject. The books and magazine articles have been written from various standpoints; some of them in the old spirit of bitterness, and some of them are intended to be written in a spirit of fairness. Yet I marvel at their

ideas of fairness. One work, written by a noted professor, pretending to be an impartial history, and issued by one of the first publishing houses in the United States, with the view evidently of establishing a standard history of "Mormonism," gives full credence to everything that has been said against us, but the author invariably cautions his readers against every quotation he makes from our own works—and yet that book is put forth as an impartial history of "Mormonism!" Some have attempted to write from a philosophical standpoint, but with the result that they plainly manifest that they have not yet reached foundation principles upon which they can satisfactorily account for Joseph Smith the Prophet, and the great work that he accomplished. Whenever I see my enemy shifting his ground; whenever I see that his eye is not steady, but shifts to the right or to the left, or looks behind, that evidence of uncertainty, of indecision, tells me that I am his master. So, too, with reference to the great work of God. When I see men shifting their grounds, and advancing first one theory and then another to account for "Mormonism," and there is confusion among them, uncertainty, indecision—I know that the citadel of our mighty faith is secure from harm from their attacks; that "Mormonism" cannot fall a victim to their philosophies or their arguments.

Let me, for a little while, draw your attention to at least one of the so-called philosophical solutions of "Mormonism;" a scientific accounting for Joseph Smith. The work I allude to was offered to Yale University as a thesis upon which the author hoped to secure, and I think he did secure, the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy. He candidly confesses that it is an effort to account for Joseph Smith upon some other hypothesis than that he was a conscious fraud, bent on deceiving mankind. When an intelligent man makes such an announcement as that, I know, and you know, that the theories heretofore advanced to account for Joseph Smith are unsatisfactory, that they

have failed. The theory that Joseph Smith was a conscious fraud has fallen to the ground. The charges frequently made and persistently urged that "Mormonism" had its origin in deception and conscious fraud have failed of their purpose. The floods of falsehood with which some men have sought to overwhelm "Mormonism" have not accomplished the end proposed. The Latter-day Saints, after about three-quarters of a century of existence, stand above all the floods of falsehood that have been belched out against them. The work of God has not broken down, it has survived; and the Saints smilingly pity those who would make use of such contemptible means with which to combat the truth of Almighty God. Now, however, we are to be treated philosophically. And the philosophy that is advanced is, unconscious hallucination in the mind of Joseph Smith; partly unconscious and partly conscious possession of hypnotic power, by which the minds of those around him were dominated and made to see things which in reality had no existence; and while the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and others testify of visions and voices from God honestly enough, still as a matter of fact those revelations had really no objective existence, but were mental hallucinations. And as for Joseph Smith, he was deceived by epileptic conditions. The author I am considering is at great pains to trace the ancestry of the Prophet, pointing out their mental peculiarities and supposed defects, leading up to the conclusion that these defects of mind in his ancestors culminated in epilepsy in Joseph Smith. And hence, we have as the explanation of "Mormonism," epileptic fits in its Prophet, whose hallucinations are honestly mistaken for inspired visions, with partly conscious and partly unconscious hypnotic powers over others! And this theory is presented seriously to one of the first institutions of learning in America as a rational explanation of how "Mormonism" came into existence!

Ernest Renan, the French philoso-

pher, when considering a similar hypothesis to account for the Lord Jesus Christ, overthrew all that kind of sophistry with this simple statement: "It has never been given to the mere aberrations of the human mind to result in the establishment of permanent institutions that influence any considerable number of people." In other words, the dreams and hallucinations of the epileptic end in mere dreams and hallucinations; they never crystallize into great systems of philosophy or into rational religious institutions. They never crystallize into great organizations capable of perpetuating that philosophy and that religion in the world. No matter how nearly genius may be allied to madness, it must remain genius and not degenerate to madness if it exercises any permanent influence over the minds of men.

There is much glamor of sophistry, which may be taken for profound reason and argument, in the work to which I call your attention. But one word answers this philosophical accounting for our Prophet. The work accomplished by him, the institutions he founded, destroy the whole fabric of premises and argument on which this theory is based. Great as was the Prophet Joseph Smith—and he was great; to him more than to any other man of modern times was it given to look deep into the things that are; to comprehend the heavens and the laws that obtain there; to understand the earth, its history, and its mission. He looked into the deep things of God—always, be it remembered, by the inspiration of God—and out of the rich treasure of divine knowledge he brought forth things both new and old for the instruction of our race, the like of which, in some respects, had not been known in previous dispensations. Hence I repeat that Joseph Smith was great; but great as he was, rising up and towering far above him is the work that he accomplished through divine guidance; that work is infinitely greater than the prophet—greater than all the prophets connected with it. Its consistency, its permanency, its pow-

er, its institutions, contradict the hallucination theory advanced to account for its origin.

Let us look at this work for a moment. If one could but draw it clearly in outline, and present it in its originality and greatness, it would be its own witness of its divinity; for in all things it transcends the mere wit of man. Take the Church organization for illustration; and look at it with reference to its being and assemblage of means to the accomplishment of an end. As I understand the Church of Christ its mission is two-fold: first, it is to proclaim the truth; second, it is to perfect those who receive the truth. I think these two things cover, in a general way, the entire mission of the Church. Is its organization competent to attain those two mighty ends? Let us see; and first as to the proclamation of the truth—the work really of the foreign ministry. What provision has God made for that? He has in His Church, first of all Twelve Special Witnesses, the Twelve Apostles, who were chosen in the first instance, by the Three Special Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. I remark in passing that there is a peculiar fitness in the Twelve Apostles—the Twelve Special Witnesses being chosen by those who had been made Witnesses for God by the great vision and revelation He had given them concerning the absolute truth and correctness of the Book of Mormon. Upon these Twelve Apostles rests the responsibility of being witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ in all the world. That is their special, peculiar calling. You can see, however, if you take into account the extent of their field of labor—for it encompasses the whole round world—that twelve men would not be adequate to meet all the requirements of the foreign ministry. God knew this, and hence He called into existence other special witnesses, to labor under the direction of these twelve, they holding the keys to open the door of the Gospel to all the nations of the earth; for all must hear it, from the greatest to the least. The Twelve, I say, hold the

keys of this foreign ministry; and hence whenever there has been an opening of the door of the Gospel to a foreign nation, one or more of these men holding the keys have been sent to do it. It was for this reason that Heber C. Kimball, one of the Twelve Apostles, was sent to Great Britain in 1837, to open the door of the Gospel in that land; why Elder John Taylor was sent to France and Germany; why Elder Lorenzo Snow was sent to Italy and Switzerland; why Erastus Snow was sent to the Scandinavian countries; why Parley P. Pratt went to Chili and opened the door of the Gospel to the South American Republics; why, more recently, Elder Heber J. Grant was sent to Japan to open a mission. Whether he has accomplished, in his own estimation much or little, it was for the reason that he held the keys of this ministry that he was sent to the great empire of Japan, to open the door of the Gospel in that land; and to open the door of the Gospel to so great an empire is of itself a very great work; and will be accounted as one of the chief items in Elder Grant's career as an Apostle. The Twelve then hold the keys of this ministry, and upon them devolves this responsibility of opening the door of salvation to the nations. But after them, other witnesses are chosen. These are the seventy apostles, or special witnesses, the assistants of the Twelve; under whose directions they labor. At first, two quorums of Seventy only were organized; but with the promise of the Prophet that as the work should expand other quorums would be organized, not only till seven times seven quorums should be brought into existence, but until seventy times seven; "aye," said he, "until there shall be a hundred and forty and four thousand seventies chosen, if the work of the ministry shall require it." So we have continued organizing quorums of Seventy, to labor in the foreign ministry, until now we have one hundred and forty-three quorums in the Church—a body of nearly ten thousand men. They are special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world, and when their

numbers are considered, together with the privilege we have of increasing them, you can see that ample provision is made, in this respect, for the work of the foreign ministry.

But now let us consider their organization for a moment. Sixty-three members with seven presidents, when the quorum is complete, constitute a quorum. Suppose you were to send an entire quorum of Seventy bodily into the world—I hope that will be done some day—you could break that quorum into groups of ten. You could send with each group a President. It should be remembered here that these Presidents are equal in authority. The council of a quorum of Seventy is made up of seven Presidents, not one President and six Counselors—but of seven Presidents equal in authority. For the sake of order in administration, however, the right of initiative and presidency in the council is recognized as being vested in the senior member by ordination, not of age. And this principle is observed not only in the case of the first or senior president, but all down the line in the First Council, and in all quorum councils of the Seventies. By this simple arrangement all confusion as to the right of presidency is obviated; for no sooner does the Council of a quorum, or any part thereof, meet, in any part of the world than each President knows at once upon whom the responsibility of initiative, of presidency, rests. But to return to the groups of ten into which the quorum can be divided, with a President for each group. You could break each group of ten into five pairs, and scatter them out among the people, to bear effectual witness of the truth of the Gospel under the provision of the law of the Gospel; for it is the law of the Gospel that the Elders should travel two and two, mainly for the reason, I suppose, that God has declared that He would establish his word in the mouth of two or three witnesses; and it is good when bearing testimony to the world that there should be the legal number of witnesses provided for in the law of God. Moreover, there is a very much needed companionship

and sympathy provided for when the Elders travel two and two; and they are a protection one to the other. You could scatter these groups of ten in one or more states or countries; and they could occasionally meet in group conferences, exchange experiences, give advice and counsel; after which refreshing they could again divide into pairs, scatter and so continue their ministry. Occasionally the seven groups of the quorum could be brought together in general quorum conference, to take counsel for making their ministry more and ever more effectual: to readjust methods; to plan new campaigns; to strengthen each other by a mutual exchange of experiences and sympathy; and do whatever else their combined wisdom, helped by the inspiration of the Lord, would suggest as right and proper to do in the furtherance of their high aim in bringing to pass the salvation of men. Such are the possibilities of a quorum of Seventy. It may become a veritable flying column of witnesses for God, sweeping the earth with the testimony of Jesus, and calling the inhabitants of the earth unto repentance! Can you think of this beautiful arrangement for the foreign ministry as having its origin in the alleged epileptic hallucinations of man? Such a conception is palpably absurd, and utterly revolting to reason.

Turn now for a moment to the home ministry of the Church, and what have you? You have your stake organization, with its Presidency of three presiding High Priests, aided by their counsels and labors by the High Council of the stake, consisting of twelve High Priests. This council also constitutes a judicial body for the settlement of difficulties that may not be satisfactorily adjusted in the Bishop's courts. It is, however, an ecclesiastical court of original as well as of appellate jurisdiction. You have a Bishopric in the respective wards of the Church, constituting the local presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood, with quorums of Priests, Teachers and Deacons to aid them in the work of their ministry. The Deacons take care of

the house of the Lord, and are to be assistants to the Teachers when occasion requires. The Teachers are the watchmen upon the towers of Zion, and it is their business to see that there is no iniquity in the Church—no backbiting, no faultfinding, and that the members attend to their religious duties. The Priests' duty is to visit the homes of the people and instruct them in the Gospel. Parenthetically I might say that I marvel sometimes that the Saints do not avail themselves of this help in the management of their households. Where they have sons or daughters who will not be amenable to the instructions of parents, the priests with very great propriety could be invited to meet with them and teach the sublime truths of the Gospel. In addition to these officers of the wards and the stakes, there is in each stake a quorum of High Priests, and one or more quorums of Elders. These constitute the standing ministry in the stakes of Zion, and are authorized to teach the Gospel, to warn all men against evil, and to invite and persuade all men to come unto Christ. These are the provisions made for the home ministry, in the Church organization proper. Time will not admit reference to the auxiliary organizations—the Sabbath schools, Improvement associations, Relief societies, Primary societies, and Religion classes. But from the fireside of the people to the public assembly of worship; from the cradle to the grave, every provision is made for carrying on the work of the ministry, at home, instructing the Saints in the things of God, inviting all to come unto Christ; the object of the Church being to lift to higher, and still higher levels the lives of the Saints of God, until they shall become perfect men and women in Christ Jesus the Lord. Such are the arrangements, in brief, for the home ministry.

Notwithstanding the clear distinctions between the foreign ministry and the home ministry, the lines that separate them may be crossed on occasion. You remember how Paul compares the Church of Christ to the body of a man, and insists that every mem-

ber and every organ is necessary to the perfect working of that organism; that the head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee; neither can the feet say to the head, I have no need of thee; nor the hand to the eye, I have no need of thee; all the members of the body, he argues, are necessary. Now, what would you think of a body that possessed a right hand and left hand, yet the right hand would not at need come to the help of the left hand; or the left hand refuse to come to the aid of the right hand? You expect the two hands and arms of a man's body to help each other, under the direction of the intelligence of the mind. And so in the Church of Christ. The home ministry and the foreign ministry cross the line of separation as occasion requires, and come to the assistance of one another in accomplishing the purposes of God. Sometimes the officers who are particularly charged with the foreign ministry help at home; the home ministry sometimes help in the foreign ministry; but all work harmoniously together.

Rising above both these great divisions of the Priesthood stands, as the keystone in the arch, the Presidency of the Church, having control over both departments, and directing the work of God in all the world. Their jurisdiction extends to every corner of the earth. No branch of the Church, however remote, is beyond their oversight. No Elder, let him be traveling where he will, is outside the pale of their authority. Talk of catholicity being one of the marks of the true Church of Christ, as our Catholic friends sometimes do, they shall find here in the Church of Christ a catholicity such as they have never dreamed of. The Church is the church universal; and the President of the Church holds universal jurisdiction. Moreover, as Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the Church he is the source through which God speaks, not only to this people, not only to the Church of Christ, but to all the inhabitants of the earth, and God will hold them accountable for the use they make of the words

He shall speak through His appointed mouthpiece. Do not think that this man's authority is limited to this Church alone. All the inhabitants of the earth are children of God, and He will deliver His word unto them through His prophet. I rather like the idea that all the inhabitants of the earth belong to us—they are God's children, though some of them are in rebellion and will not heed the commandments of their Father just now. But here in the Church of Christ is the center of ecclesiastical government. Here shine forth those rays of light that will grow brighter and brighter until all the inhabitants of the earth are enlightened by them.

Now, what do you think of this effort of philosophy to account for "Mormonism?" How insipid, how foolish, how contemptible, how inadequate are the theories of men to account for even the organization of this Church! The Church is its own witness! As the stars, "singing ever as they shine, proclaim the hand that made them is divine," so, too, this work, the restored Gospel—the Church of Christ—proclaims that it has a divine origin, and that there is in it a divine power working out the purposes of God. Then let the imitators go on. Let them choose Apostles, if they want to—and some of them have them; let them have Seventies, if they want to, and some of them have them; let them accept this doctrine and that doctrine until they shall have the complete organization and the complete doctrine in form, if they want to; but there is one thing they never can get, worlds without end, and that is the spirit of this work, which gives it life and power. This work will always be distinguished from the works of men, in that there will be imminent in it the Spirit of God working His sovereign will. And that is something they cannot imitate.

My brethren and sisters I rejoice in the truth. I rejoice in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It satisfies me completely. It responds to the hungering of my spirit. It meets the demands also of my intellectual nature. And as I see the growth of intelligence among men,

an increase of scientific knowledge, a broader understanding of the universe, a comprehension of the extent and grandeur of the works of God, I see in "Mormonism" that which rises up to meet this enlarged knowledge of man. "Mormonism" teaches man that he is a child of God; it tells him that he has in him divine elements that partake of the nature of God; that he may live forever, and that he may go on from one degree of excellence unto another until he shall attain unto something that is truly grand, truly great, worthy of a God to give, and worthy of a Son of God to receive.

I rejoice in these truths. They cannot be accounted for by any theory that refers their origin to hallucinations of an epileptic's mind. They are too substantial, too grand, too rational, too sublime, too soul inspiring, to have any such contemptible origin. Their own intrinsic value—their own self evident truth—the institution to which they are committed as to a sacred depository for the benefit of mankind—The Church—all this proclaims their divine origin.

May God seal the truths of the Gospel upon our hearts, and make them precious to us, is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

While I realize, as you all do doubtless, that it may be wholly unnecessary for me to say what I am going to say, yet I feel prompted to say it, and let it go for what it is worth. I have been delighted with the most excellent discourse that we have listened to; but I desire to say that it is a wonderful revelation to the Latter-day Saints, and especially to those who were familiar with the Prophet Joseph Smith, to learn in these latter days that he was an epileptic! I will simply remark, God be praised, that there are so many still living who knew the Prophet Joseph well, and who are in a position to bear testimony to the truth that no such condition ever existed in the man. He was never troubled with epilepsy. Of course, this may be unnecessary to say,