

where they are sent. But they do not travel to and fro on their own account, independently of the authority above them; and they do not take their instructions from every Tom, Dick and Harry who thinks he understands their duties better than they do themselves. They are ready to go and come under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church—God's servants, the only ones empowered to direct their labors. In conclusion let me read to you a little paraphrase of my own upon the beautiful verse that I quoted at the beginning. This expresses my spirit, my attitude, and the spirit and attitude of my brethren:

"I'll go where you want me to go,  
 dear Lord,  
 I'll go whenever you say;  
 But till I am sent, I'm not going  
 to go,  
 I'll stay where you want me to  
 stay."

#### PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

I hope you will pardon me for expressing a single thought. It is well understood that there are in the world two great principles or powers, and these two are opposed to each other. One is the principle or power of truth; the other is that of error and ignorance, which is evil. That is, God's truth and its adversary. It is too true often that the adversary of truth has been compelled to adopt or mix a little of God's truth with his errors and heresies, in order to better prevail over the whole truth, and more effectively to defeat it. These apparent improvements on the part of error are no great evidences of concurrence in the purposes of God; and we should not forget it!

The choir and congregation sang: "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet."

Elder William J. Kuhre, president of the Jordan stake of Zion, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION.

The conference was called to order at 2 o'clock p. m. by President Joseph F. Smith who presided.

The Juab stake choir, under direction of Carl Nelson, sang: "Let the mountains shout for joy."

The opening prayer was offered by Elder Richard W. Young, president of the Ensign stake of Zion.

The Juab stake choir sang the anthem, "Praise the Lord."

#### PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

If I were to express my present wish and feeling, I would say, the Lord bless the Juab stake choir.

#### ELDER DAVID O. McKAY.

God is Love—He is not causing the misery of the war-torn world; disobedience to his laws lies at the root of the misery—It is God's desire to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man—Man, with his free agency, must choose his own course, and the results of his follies cannot be charged to our loving Father—He would have men and nations choose the right, and not the wrong path. Indulgence in strong drink is destructive of manhood—When the nations wanted efficiency they were compelled to abandon drink and thus to obey a commandment of God—Comparison of loss of life through war and

intemperance—The hand of God in the rise and fall of nations, the whole pointing to the preaching of the peaceful gospel of Christ to all the world—Our obligations to bear the message of the Love of God to all mankind.

As I came to conference this afternoon, one of the presidents of stakes accosted me, saying: "Well, are your nerves shattered because of the war?" I answered, "No, not because of the war, but they are pretty well unstrung at the thoughts of having to speak this afternoon," and that is a fact.

I seldom, if ever, approach this duty of standing before an audience without a feeling of timidity; and I sincerely pray that the Spirit of the Lord will remove that feeling from me now as it has on other occasions. I desire to keep in harmony with his Spirit, and with the spirit of this most excellent conference. I testify that we have received the word of the Lord, and I am sure that all of those who have been in attendance at these meetings will bear the same testimony. I rejoice in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I rejoice in the faith and assurance I have that God is guiding this people, and that he will over-rule the destinies of nations so that the gospel of Jesus Christ may be preached in all the world as a witness before the end shall come.

John, the beloved disciple, once wrote, as we find in first John, 4th chapter and 16th verse, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love," and, in harmony with this truth, the poet sings:

Earth with her ten thousand flowers,  
Air with all its beams and showers,  
Heavens infinite expanse,  
Sea's resplendent countenance,  
All around and all above,  
Bear this record, God is love."

I am not one of those who see in this world catastrophe the hand of God as its cause. I do not believe that God has caused the misery, the famine, the pestilence, and the death that are now sweeping the war-torn countries of Europe. I do believe that the conditions of the world today are a direct result—an inevitable result, of disobedience to God's laws. I was surprised to read recently, in a current magazine, the expression that came from a school of free thinkers in London. Prominent men in that city were discussing the problem as to the effect that this world-war would have upon Christianity. One of those men recorded his views as follows:

"Never have the souls of men been more sorely tried than at present. Across Europe rolls the roar of guns. Peaceful villages burst into flames. Ships of death sail the midnight sky and rain murder on the innocent. At every moment brave men are slain. Under the weight of overwhelming calamity the world staggers and groans. Was this all designed before the foundations of the earth were laid?" Then he asks:

"How then can one worship the designer? Is it a by-product, and undesigned and unexpected result of creative power? How then can omnipotence exist? Does not the state of Europe make the belief in God a superstition? *In the shadow of the immense disaster the figure of the living Father recedes into dim and formless outlines. Trust in his care grows faint and feeble. Human tears blur the vision of eternal bliss as human love has quenched the fires of hell.*"

Such men, certainly, have lost the vision of the Creator as being a God of love. In answer to

this gentleman, I cannot but repeat the words of the Redeemer: "Ye do err, not understanding the scriptures." I think, too, the words of Shakespeare are appropriate in which he said:

"This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behavior,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; as if we were villians by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; \* \* \* and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on."

I believe that God is love, that he is our Father and desires the happiness and eternal life of his children. Indeed, this is his glory, "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." He has placed man upon earth and, as he revealed to the Prophet Joseph, as recorded, in the 19th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, "he gave to man that he might be an agent unto himself." Men may choose the right or they may choose the wrong; they may walk in darkness or they may walk in the light; and, mind you, God has not left his children without the light. He has given them in the various dispensations of the world the light of the gospel wherein they could walk and not stumble, wherein they could find that peace and happiness which he desires, as a loving Father, his children should enjoy, but the Lord does not take from them their free agency. The Prophet Lehi, in speaking to his son Jacob, bears testimony to that truth in unmistakable terms. He says: "Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was

enticed by the one or the other." And then, in the 27th verse: "Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh, and all things are given them which are expedient unto man, and they are free to choose liberty and eternal life through the great mediation of all men, or to choose iniquity, and death according to the captivity and power of the devil, for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself."

God is watching over the destiny of nations. Someone has said, "there is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may." We may "rough-hew our ends," we choose our course, but God will overrule our acts and the acts of nations for the consummation of his divine purposes. If what that free thinker in London says were true, that God *designed* all this misery to come upon the nations, we should read the maxim, just quoted in this way: "There is a divinity that shapes our ends rough—hew them as we may."

God is standing in the shadow of eternity, it seems to me, deploring now the inevitable results of the follies, the transgressions and the sins of his wayward children, but we cannot blame him for these any more than we can blame a father who might say to his son, "There are two roads, my son, one leading to the right, one leading to the left. If you take the one to the right it will lead you to success and to happiness. If you take the one to the left it will bring upon you misery and unhappiness and perhaps death, but you choose which you will. You must choose; I will not force either upon you." The young man starts out and, seeing the allurements and the attractiveness of the road to the left, and

thinking it a short cut to his happiness, he concludes to take it. The father knows what will become of him, he knows that not far from that flowery path there is a mire hole into which his boy will fall, he knows that after he struggles out of that mire hole he will come to a slough into which he will flounder. He sees others who have chosen that path in that same slough, and he knows that in their struggle to get on dry land there will be fighting. He could see it long before the boy reached that condition, and he could, therefore, foretell it. The father loves the boy just the same, and would still continue to warn him, and plead for him to return to the right path. God, too, has shown the world, through his prophets in ages gone by, that many of his people, individuals, as well as nations, would choose the path that leads to misery and to death, and he foretold it, but the responsibility is upon those who would not heed God's message, not upon God. But in his infinite wisdom, he will overrule these transgressions for the good of all his sons and daughters. His love for them is already manifest, for great as is the destruction that is now sweeping the world, greater will be the good that will come out of it through God's love for his children. When, for example, these nations, prompted by bitterness, some of them, selfishness, enmity, fear or other feelings contrary to the spirit of the gospel and the spirit of love, began to grapple each other's throats, they could see that to succeed they needed the highest efficiency of the manhood of the country, so what did they do? Russia forbade her people to drink vodka, France prohibited the use of absinthe. England, Italy and

other nations restricted their people in the use of intoxicants, thus testifying to the world that indulgence in strong drink is destructive of the manhood of a nation. It matters not, as far as the lesson is concerned, whether after the war those nations again throw down the bars, the testimony to the world is already given. When they needed young manhood at its highest efficiency they had to accept one of the commandments of the Lord as he revealed it. They do not call it that, but you know what it is, and the world will never forget after this, that we need efficiency of manhood in times of peace just as much as we need it in times of war. It is my opinion, however, that they will never go back to it, never. Thus, in this one great thing of temperance, a great blessing will come to the world. Suppose, as it is estimated, that perhaps an average of fifteen hundred men die on the battle field every day, and will continue to die at that rate until the war is over. Half a million men a year, not counting those who are missing and who are wounded—it is a terrible loss. But do you know that in America alone the violation of God's law by indulgence in strong drink is rushing to a premature death over two thousand every day? It is estimated that every year in America alone more men are sent to a premature death by alcohol than have been killed on the fields of battle for the last two thousand years. At a convention of insurance men held recently, men said that through the prohibition of vodka in Russia alone, that nation is saving fifty thousand men annually. Can anyone, in view of that, stand aside and not see the hand of God working?

Another thing. The other day, almost within twenty-four hours, the shackles of dynasty were torn from the limbs of Russia, and millions of people set free. One hundred thousand prisoners are now either at home, or are marching over the snows of Siberia back to their homes and freedom; and it looks as if Russia will have a government "by the people, of the people, and for the people." Many years ago the Lord said to the prophet, speaking of America: "No king shall ever rule this land." It was the land of the free; and it has become an ensign to the whole world. In this land was first revealed in this dispensation, the gospel of Jesus Christ. As thrones topple and monarchies crumble, you will see that the people who are given their free agency will begin to appreciate the principles of self-government, preparatory to their accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the perfect law of liberty. I can see in all this a step toward a truer brotherhood—a preparation for the millennium. It may yet be far in the future, no one knows, but I can see Divine influence over-ruling the destiny of nations, at least preparatory to the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

One of our poets sees the same thing, and writes:

"Oh, Lord, God of Hosts, whose hand  
 Dominion holds on sea and land,  
 In peace and war thy will we see,  
 Shaping the cause of liberty.  
 Nations may rise and nations fall,  
 Thy changeless purpose shapes them  
 all."

In conclusion, fellow workers, men holding the priesthood of God, what is the responsibility resting

upon us as God's servants? Oh, how happy we should be that we are living in this land, the best in all the world,—this nation, the most glorious, guided by the constitution, inspired by God. Thankful? Why, that fact alone ought to make every American bow down and thank his God for the blessing of liberty that he enjoys. In addition to that, however, you and I have the greatest blessing that can come to man—membership in the Church of Christ and a testimony that God lives and that he loves his children. If we do appreciate it, I think we cannot shun the responsibility or fail to sense the responsibility that rests upon us to bear that same message to the suffering people in the world. People in distress are going to look for liberty, they are going to look for succor. Not all men and women in those war-torn countries are going to say that God is not omnipotent. Only a few of the skeptics who do not know God and who are struggling in blindness can draw that conclusion. The honest millions are going to look for relief; and you, my fellow workers, must give that message which will lead them to peace, happiness and salvation. Only a few thousand may have the privilege of bearing that testimony abroad, but all the membership of the Church will have the opportunity to live in obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and show that they are using their freedom, and their free agency in treading the path that leads to life eternal. We can do this by the observance of a thousand little things, especially by keeping our lives pure and unspotted from the sins of the world. Refrain from speaking ill of our neighbors, of creating contention, and of stirring up strife.

The responsibility and opportunity comes to us to be an example to all the world. God help us so to be, that in thus conducting ourselves the Church may be an ensign to the nations, such as will indeed be a guide to them as they try to get back into the presence of their God, whom they will recognize, some day, as a God of love and not one of destruction and hate. In the words of the poet, let us pray:

"For those who minister and heal  
And spend themselves, their skill,  
their zeal,  
Renew their hearts with Christ-like  
faith,  
And guard them from disease and  
death;  
And in thine own good time, Lord,  
send  
Thy peace on earth 'til time shall  
end."

May the Lord grant this to his people, with his Holy Spirit to guide them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Members of the Juab stake choir sang a trio: "To thee, O Father."

#### ELDER ANTHONY W. IVINS.

The definite and unchangeable purposes of God to be accomplished—Priestcraft and the divine right of kings to be stricken down and the civil and religious liberty of all men to be recognized—The uniting of the sturdy and intelligent peasantry of many nations, in America, the land of destiny, a beginning to help bring about this purpose—The establishment of the true and world-wide Church of Christ in America, having the greatest moral code ever known, also a contributory means to this end—America has thus a Government and a Church founded upon principles of eternal truth—These Civil and Church truths applied to the great issue before the world to-

day—It remains for us to live and, if need be, to die, for them—These civil and religious liberties, shall not be destroyed, but shall prevail from the rivers to the ends of the earth.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

Since this conference commenced, as I have listened to the remarks made, I have been thinking of these words of the Redeemer, and applying them to the past, present and future, as they are related to the country in which we live, the government to which we profess allegiance and service, and the Church to which the great majority of us who are present, belong as members.

The foundation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as has been repeatedly stated at this conference, is laid in God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. The Church recognizes God as the creator of the universe, and that he dominates, governs and controls the destiny of all nations. It is not a doctrine of the Church, as has been stated by Brother McKay, that all of the events which have signalized the history of the world, the rise and fall of nations, the war, the bloodshed and devastation which have occurred, have been by God's decree, or with his approval, but rather that man, because of transgression and disobedience has brought these great judgments upon his own head. We do believe, however, that God has had, and now has foreknowledge of all that has occurred among the nations of the world from the beginning, that which is now occurring, and which will occur in the future. That he has certain definite and unchange-