

wax strong in the presence of God, and the doctrine of the Priesthood shall distil upon our souls as the dews from heaven; the Holy Ghost shall be our constant guide and companion, and our scepter shall be a scepter of righteousness and truth; our dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, which without compulsory means shall flow unto us forever and ever." God grant that we may attain these blessings, my brethren and sisters, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER CHARLES H. HART

(Of the First Council of Seventy)

There has been a passage of scripture upon my mind today, one given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, to this effect:

Therefore strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, and in all your prayers, and in all your exhortations, and in all your doings.

I feel that we have been strengthened during this conference by the prayers and by the exhortations of the brethren. It has been a source of continuing satisfaction to me that the spirit and teachings of this conference have been in accord with my own spirit and feelings. This text goes farther than the mere praying or preaching in a meeting. It goes, you will observe, to our daily walk and conversation—to our doings. A sociologist of national repute, in a friendly spirit of constructive criticism, pointed out to me sometime ago, as I was preaching the gospel to him, some weaknesses which he had observed in communities largely made up of Latter-day Saints. I feel that the instructions of this conference will correct, or tend to correct in the fullest, the weaknesses which he pointed out.

One of Tennyson's characters, "wearing the white flower of a blameless life," was one "who spake no slander, no, nor listened to it." Slander and the receiving of slander are condemned not only by the Holy Scriptures as presented in this conference, but by other writings, and by the laws that have been formulated against wrongdoing. The Talmud of old is strong against it, perhaps too strong. It says: "He that slanders, he who receives slander, and he who bears false witness against his neighbor, deserves to be cast to the dogs." Again, "All animals will one day remonstrate with the serpent and say: 'the lion treads upon his prey and devours it; the wolf tears and eats it; but thou, what profit hast thou in biting?' The serpent will reply, (Ecclesiastes 8:2) 'I am no worse than a slanderer.'" The same writings represent Deity (I think it is a misrepresentation) as saying to the prince of hell: "I from above and thou from below shall judge and condemn the slanderer." I accept the idea so far as it represents even the prince of evil as condemning slander. One of the things about slander is the difficulty of correcting it, although the defamer may be penitent. Someone has given us the suggestion of one stand-

ing upon a tower, in a wind-storm, scattering feathers by the pound and then after becoming penitent, undertaking to gather the scattered feathers. So, a poet has said:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds,  
But remember, you can't do that way when you're sailing words.  
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,  
But God himself can't kill them when they're said.

I may add: unless he works a miracle, which he may not be willing to do for our benefit, although we become penitent.

The slogan or keynote of this conference correlates nicely with the course of instruction given to the parents of the Church through the Sabbath Schools, an elaboration upon the ten commandments. Months of time have already been spent upon a single command: "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother," and so forth; and in view of the fact that the other commandments which will be studied later are so largely negative in form, it is very timely that the instructions of this conference should be given.

There is modern revelation teaching the spirit of forgiveness and tolerance. My time is very brief and I shall read only a few of these verses given in connection with the Lord pointing out the weaknesses of his people at Kirtland, just as, at a later time, the shortcomings of the Saints in Missouri were declared to them:

Now I speak unto you concerning your families; if men will smite you, or your families, once, and ye bear it patiently and revile not against them, neither seek revenge, ye shall be rewarded;

But if ye bear it not patiently, it shall be accounted unto you as being meted out a just measure unto you.

And again, if your enemy shall smite you the second time, and you revile not against your enemy, and bear it patiently, your reward shall be an hundred fold.

And again, if he shall smite you the third time, and ye bear it patiently, your reward shall be doubled unto you four fold;

And these three testimonies shall stand against your enemy if he repent not, and shall not be blotted out.

And further:

And again, verily I say unto you, if after thine enemy has come upon thee the first time, he repent and come unto thee praying thy forgiveness, thou shalt forgive him, and shall hold it no more as a testimony against thine enemy,

And so on unto the second and third time; and as oft as thine enemy repenteth of the trespass wherewith he has trespassed against thee, thou shalt forgive him, until seventy times seven;

And if he trespass against thee and repent not the first time, nevertheless thou shalt forgive him;

And if he trespass against thee the second time, and repent not, nevertheless thou shalt forgive him;

And if he trespass against thee the third time and repent not, thou shalt also forgive him;

But if ye bear it not patiently, it shall be accounted unto you as him, but shalt bring these testimonies before the Lord, and they shall not

be blotted out until he repent and reward thee four fold in all things wherewith he has trespassed against thee.

Some of us are less tolerant with our brethren than the custodians of the law are with the condemned criminal. In the first place, he is not convicted until either eight men or twelve men after hearing all the evidence, and arguments and instructions, have an abiding conviction to a moral certainty that he is guilty. Then, when he is imprisoned in modern times, he is treated as a human being, and not as an unforgivable outlaw. These are some of the facts developed by our social committee in the recent course of instruction at Provo. They found that the old regime of punishment is being done away with, and that men are treated as human beings in our penal institutions; that some offenses that used to be severely punished—the taking of a piece of bread from the table or the indulgence in conversation at the table, are no longer made punishable and the men, as they go to their work now, go singing and joyous with the humane treatment and the hope they have of redeeming themselves. They are not escorted to their road-work by an armed guard as formerly, but by an unarmed foreman. When these men are strengthened by their custodians, by conversation, by exhortations and by the fair treatment they receive, they are reformed and graduated. They look upon the prison as a school graduate does upon his Alma Mater, and they write back kind letters of appreciation for the consideration shown them and for the opportunity given to redeem themselves. The thought is that surely we can be as generous and as charitable to our brethren and to our sisters as the law is, and as the custodians of the law are, to those whom they may have in hand for correction.

May the Lord bless the proceedings of this conference and may we all be able "to strengthen our brethren in all our conversation and in all our prayers, and in all our exhortations and in all our doings," is my prayer, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG

(Of the First Council of Seventy)

I have been interested in everything that has been said at this conference. May we all give our faith and prayers to the work of the Church in the missionary field of all the world, for the gospel of Jesus Christ must be taught to the children of God in every nation and clime. We have heard the humble testimony of Elder Serge Ballif who is leaving for Germany and Switzerland to preside over that great mission. Brother Ballif is a man of few words but wonderful spirituality, and he will do a good work in spreading the word of the Lord in Europe. I had the honor and pleasure at one time of presiding over the Swiss and German mission, and I want to add my testimony here that those Germanic peoples will accept the truth,