

ELDER CHARLES W. NIBLEY*(Presiding Bishop of the Church)*

This is a very wonderful gathering; and I believe that those who have attended the meetings of this conference have been well paid. I don't remember having attended any conference for lo, these many years, where I have been so thrilled in my spirit with the remarks of the brethren, the testimonies of the divine Spirit, and the singing as well, and the prayers that have been uttered, as at this conference.

THE CHURCH IS OUT OF DEBT

For the short time that I shall occupy I should like to turn from the feast of spiritual matters with which you have been fed, to the temporal. First of all I want to congratulate you, my brethren and sisters, and the whole Church, for to it I extend congratulations, also and especially to the Trustee-in-Trust of the Church, on the fact which was announced by the President on Friday—that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is entirely out of debt. This result has been accomplished much more quickly than I had ever hoped it could be. I did hope that I would live long enough to see the Church once again out of debt; but I thought, in the very nature of things, it must take several years. Now, in a year and a half from the time the Trustee-in-Trust was compelled to borrow large sums of money to save certain institutions in which the Church and the people of the Church were largely and directly interested, that debt has been wiped out. Now the Church has enough means to pay every dollar, and more than enough, and it is entirely out of debt, except for little current matters of a few dollars. I praise the Lord with all my heart for this great blessing; and I hope that never during my lifetime, will I see, or be under the necessity of seeing, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will ever be in debt again.

STAY WITH THE FARM

At the opening session of our conference our President gave us a splendid talk on practical affairs, advising the Saints to stick to their farms. Too many people who are reared on farms say, "Well, I want my children to have a better chance than I have had. I've had to work pretty hard, and I think we will move to town where the children will grow up and be educated, and they will have it a little easier than we have had it—than father and mother have had it." Well, now, there is such a thing as a man working too hard, and many of us, many of you farmers, do work altogether too hard. I was brought up on a farm myself, and I had to work very hard, and many of you in these times, I am sure, work too hard. There is wisdom in working; but, after all, isn't work a good thing? Is it not written that "in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread." I don't think it is a good thing to instil into the hearts of our children that they should find some

soft snap, or easy job, which does not require much work. Let me say, my brethren and sisters, that the man with a nice little farm—not too large, but large enough—out of debt, is the king among men. He is an example to us all. He produces possibly all that he and his family require to live on; what clothes they need he has a chance to get for himself and family just as well as anybody else. And I heartily endorse the counsel of President Grant, to stick to the farm. It is good, sound counsel. It is wrong to run off into speculation; to get our farms heavily mortgaged so that we finally have to get up and leave them. The counsel to secure good, comfortable homes for our families; to own our own homes, and to keep out of debt, has been the counsel from this stand from President Brigham Young down to this very day, and it is just as good and sound advice today as it was in the days of President Brigham Young.

LET US FOSTER THE RIGHT KIND OF EDUCATION

Then, again, I think at times that we are too anxious that our children should shine in educational matters. I am a friend of education; I have always felt the lack of schooling, for I never had any. So I am proud when statistics are read, as they were here the other morning by our President, showing the excellence of the work of our schools and the large number of children attending our colleges and universities. But sometimes I think that even as there is reason in working, so also there is reason in schooling. We ought not to go school-crazy. When a boy goes through the eighth grade and then the high school, then three or four years in a university, and then in a finishing off school, or something of that kind, the boy is twenty-five years old. There is a quarter of a century of his life spent in educating him. Somebody else has worked for the food he has eaten, and for the clothes that he has been supplied with for a full quarter of a century, which has been all spent in giving him education. He comes back home and he knows a lot; bless your soul, he can tell you pretty much about everything, but he doesn't know how to do scarcely anything. (Laughter.) I believe it would be better if our children did not have quite so much book knowledge, and had a little more practical knowledge of hard work, being taught how to do things. If they knew how to make an acre of land produce double what it has hitherto been producing, wouldn't that be something to be proud of? I remember riding from here to Kaysville a few years ago with Brother John R. Barnes, a very splendid practical man, whom most of you will remember. We were talking about raising sugar beets, and I said, "Brother Barnes, how is it you can afford to raise sugar beets on your land here in Kaysville, land worth three or four or five hundred dollars an acre, raising ten, eleven, or twelve tons of sugar beets." "Oh, bless your soul, Brother Nibley," said he, "I could not afford to farm that way. My land has to produce twenty and twenty-five tons of sugar beets to the acre; that is the way I farm." Now, if his land could be made so productive, can't

yours, if it is cultivated in the same intelligent manner? We can increase production. President Grant emphasized the fact that the producer, the man who produces something, is the man to be looked up to, and we take our hats off to him. The man who merely makes his living by speculating and never produces anything, is not the kind of man, after all.

TEACH THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE THRIFTY AND SELF-DENYING

Another thing—and I see by the clock I must hurry—how many children are there who are taught the habits of thrift and saving in these days; taught to deny themselves? Why, they don't know what self denial is. They go to picture shows four or five or six times a week. Do they save anything? Do you tell them: "You can go to a picture show once a week, and not any oftener"? Why they would think, that is awful. "Oh, you are just persecuting us." I want to say that it would be infinitely better if they could be restrained from going to excesses in amusement. You do not learn very much at picture shows, anyhow. There are some pictures that are educational, but most of the pictures that I have seen would make the angels weep! (Laughter.) They are not worth looking at; nothing but trash. Then, your children would be better at home. Teach your children to put that money in the bank and deny themselves something. I want to say, brethren and sisters, that in the process of education, if you put them through the eight grades, then through the high school, and then send them on a mission of two years or more, you will find the mission infinitely better, as an education, than all they will get at any school; unless, indeed, it is some one person here and there, one in a thousand, who has some special faculty or aptitude in some given direction, who should be trained. With these exceptions, I think a mission is better than excess of school books—the missionary education is the best in all the world.

IMPORTANT ITEMS FOR GIRLS TO KNOW

Teach them to be saving, to stick to the land. Teach the girls what girls should be taught. I don't care how much money we have, the girls should be taught how to work and earn their living; how to make a batch of good bread; how to make a bowl of good soup; what to do with baby when it has the colic. (Laughter.) They don't know. Where is there one in a hundred who is taught these things? Oh, bless your soul; oh, no, not that, but only book learning! Why, these are some of the most important things in the world for a girl to know. If I were a young fellow seeking a girl to marry I wouldn't care whether she could tell me all about these book things—how far it is, say, from here to the moon—what do I care about that? What I would want to know is: "Can you make good soup?" (Laughter.) "If you can't you're not the kind of a girl I want."

YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN SHOULD MARRY

Another thing: I think that we should be taught that our young

people should marry. This way of putting marriage off until you are twenty-five or thirty years of age, or longer, is all wrong. Young folks claim that it is because they have not the means to get married. Haven't you any faith? Won't the Lord open up the way, if you try to keep his commandments? Well, that is one of his commandments. Why not have some faith and then work, and get the girl to consent and share it with you in the work—to be a real help meet, not altogether a help eat. (Laughter.) I once heard of a young fellow who had married a girl—she had a fair education, but he got tired of everlastingly eating baker's bread. One day he said: "L'arie I wish we had some real biscuits like my mother used to make." She said: "You *can* have, I guess. If you will buy a sack of flour I will put it to soak tonight." (Laughter.)

CONCLUDING ADMONITIONS

My time has expired. Stick to the farm. Render obedience—willing obedience, loving loyalty, to the counsel of the President of this Church. Stick to the farm; stay with your land; teach thrift; teach the principles of the gospel by sending your sons and daughters on missions when you can, for it is the best education in all the world. I bear witness that this is the work of God; it is not man's. I thought here today if we were dependent, this great organization, if we were depending, upon the wisdom of man to manage it, my goodness, what a fix we would be in! The Lord God Almighty is at the head. He it is who is managing and directing, and all honor and glory and power to him, forever and ever, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

MODERATION THE MARK OF A GENTLEMAN.

There is an old saying that "Moderation is the mark of a gentleman." I have thought that with certain limitations that attribute might consistently be applied to and accepted by Latter-day Saints. It is our excesses which give us our chief concern and trouble. Moderation begets tolerance, and tolerance lies at the foundation of sympathy and charity. These qualities underlie love, which is the crowning attribute of both men and God. I wish it were possible for all of us to enjoy in moderation the splendid things which God has given to us. Nearly every good thing can be carried to excess. Good practices often become bad practice by too frequent indulgence, just as has been pointed out here this afternoon.

We have had most excellent counsel, with reference to the manner in which we should conduct our affairs. We have been admonished to be thrifty, to be saving and to keep out of debt; and yet I do not interpret these instructions to mean that we should necessarily