

through them we may go back to our God, for one of these institutions is religion, and our religion, as we understand it, and as we hold it sacredly in our souls, comes in its purity, in its dignity, in its power from God whom we worship. And so, we are Americans, and the words of Lowell will be true so long as America is Christian; so long as we live to the ideals of our fathers America will live and it will be preserved forever and ever. The Abby Genty, the great French lecturer and scholar of the time of the French revolution, when he was noticing the beauty and grandeur of the new American government, in contrast to the government of France, declared that the new nation across the Atlantic would not only be the nation that will usher in the new political and civic liberty of all the world, but it will be the nation to re-establish the gospel of peace and the laws of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER CHARLES H. HART

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

We have been instructed, admonished, and at times thrilled, by the exceptionally good talks we have heard, even from the beginning of this conference. Our thoughts have naturally turned, at this centennial season, to the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Those not of us have tried to account for the phenomena of "Mormonism" upon some theory other than the true one, just as they attempted to explain away the Savior and his works. The argument against the Savior has been briefly stated and answered thus:

"Upon the theory that Christ was a mythical person, the result of the fancy and fairy stories of his disciples after his death, then we must conclude that the leader of the greatest movement for the converting, purifying, inspiring and uplifting of the race which the world has ever known is the product of myth, fancy, overwrought imagination, and pious disposition. If this be true, then it is also true that error is better than truth, and the race moves upward under the beneficent influence of falsehood. But this absurd and untrue theory which forces such conclusions must be rejected."

The same argument may be applied to the rise and growth of so-called "Mormonism," said by Professor George Trumbull Ladd, of Yale University, to be one of the most remarkable phenomena of the Nineteenth century. It has been peculiar in the way it has announced foundation principles, contrary to the belief held by the world. Let me illustrate: Judge Samuel Chase, a United States Circuit Judge, in passing the death sentence upon one John Fries, convicted for treason, at the beginning of the last century, used this admonition, which fairly expresses the Christian doctrine as held at that time, as to repentance after death. Said Judge Chase to the prisoner:

"I suppose you are a Christian, and as such I address you. Be assured, my guilty and unhappy fellow citizen, that without serious repentance of all your sins, you cannot expect happiness in the world to come; and to your repentance you must add faith and hope in the merits and mediation of Jesus

Christ. These are the only terms on which pardon and forgiveness are promised to those who profess the Christian religion. Let me, therefore, again entreat you to apply every moment you have left in contrition, sorrow and repentance. Your day of life is almost spent and the night of death fast approaches. Look up to the Father of mercies and God of comfort. You have a great and immense work to perform and but little time in which you must finish it. There is no repentance in the grave, for after death comes judgment, and as you die so must you be judged. By repentance and faith you are the object of God's mercy; but, if you will not repent and have faith and dependence upon the merits of the death of Christ, but die a hardened and impenitent sinner, you will be the object of Gods justice and vengeance. If you will sincerely repent and believe God has pronounced his forgiveness, there is no crime too great for his mercy and pardon."

This expresses the supposed Christian doctrine that "as the tree falls, so must it lie." Judge Chase afterwards became a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Enemies sought his downfall, and he was impeached and tried before the United States Senate. At least two counts in the indictment against him grew out of the trial of the Fries case; but there was not one word of criticism as to this sectarian doctrine just quoted. I thought last evening, as we listened to the beautiful compilation of our scriptures by Brother Widtsoe and presented in the oratorio, what a striking contrast between the old dogma of no repentance after death and our present conception of the Spirit of Elijah.

They have sought to explain away so-called "Mormonism" upon various theories. Years ago we had to meet in discussion of the myth of the "Manuscript Found." To-day, we need pay no attention to that. For example, in the late popular history of the United States, issued from Washington, D. C., in eleven volumes by the American Educational League, with Doctors Willey & Rines as the learned editors, no attention is given to this old "Spaulding romance" except to consign it to the rubbish heap. As an illustration of the futility of the efforts of those who fight the Church, it must seem like the irony of fate to such men as Theodore Schroeder—a lawyer of this city of a score of years ago, who spent much time and money in developing the false theory that Sidney Rigdon was the author of the Book of Mormon,—that his writings should be cited as authority for the rejection of the Spaulding myth but his own theory not so much as mentioned by the United States history referred to.

We heard this afternoon from the article read by President Ivins the statement that the Latter-day Saints place reliance in the Book of Mormon. Well, we have learned that it does throw light upon the Hebrew Scriptures. For instance, in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The Book of Mormon version is: "Blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And again, "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." The Book of Mormon adds, "with the Holy Ghost." And so we

might go on with several other examples. During the past month the *Literary Digest* presented four translations of the Beatitudes in parallel columns. It seemed to me that no additional light or beauty are thrown upon the earlier translations; and yet through the Prophet Joseph we have the significant version I have referred to.

In connection with what President Grant said, in reference to spiritual manifestations at certain European conferences, it is easy for me to understand how that could be. If I may have a moment more, I would like to give a personal testimony of coming into the presence of the late President Joseph F. Smith, on one occasion at a quarterly conference held at Logan. I had just returned from a long itinerary and was as weary as it has ever been my experience to be—both in body and in mind. As a result of the influence of the Holy Spirit which was enjoyed by President Smith and his audience, at the close of that meeting I was as free from all sense of weariness as I had ever been. In a studied effort I could not detect the slightest indication of fatigue either in body or mind. My time is up. May the Lord bless us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

My brethren and sisters, when I look out upon the faces of this vast congregation, I am deeply impressed with the power and the influence that seems to be felt by all who are present. There must be something peculiar about the Latter-day Saints, for whenever they gather together there is a power and an influence that is felt by all who are present, that is peculiar to us. I have been led to reflect: what is it that is different from the gatherings of those who are not of our faith and the gatherings of a nature other than these religious conferences? And the answer has come to me: It is because the great multitude of people that congregate, that come together upon these occasions are men and women who have faith in God and have repented of sin, who have received a remission of those sins in the waters of baptism and after that they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. It is then the presence of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, that animates these general assemblies of the Latter-day Saints and characterizes them as different from all other gatherings of people throughout the entire world; for in no other church are there people who have been thus blessed and favored of the Lord, for they have not received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Among the different things that were contained in the message of the Angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith on that notable night of September 21, 1823, was the reference to the holy scriptures, wherein it was set forth that the day was nigh at hand when Elijah the Prophet would come and restore the keys of the turning of the