

I wish to leave with you this testimony and to say that I dedicate my life and my services to the Lord, and I desire to serve him by serving my fellow men. I rejoice at the opportunities that have come to me to labor in the ministry abroad. I have said before, and I stated this to our missionaries with whom I recently held a conference, that if I held no anticipation of reward in the future, I have been an hundredfold paid, more than perhaps I deserve, through the knowledge I have that through my teachings, I have brought hope into the lives of people who, before they knew me, were without hope, and that hope has been brought through the teaching of the principles of this everlasting gospel that is dearer to me than my life.

May the Lord help us to be faithful and to be true to the great knowledge that has come to us, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

It is not considered indelicate to speak in laudation of one's country and extol its institutions and people. By the same token I am sure that it ought not to be considered indelicate to speak of one's church and his people, and to commend their achievements and their greatness. It seems to me desirable, particularly at this time, that attention should be called in rather liberal manner to the greatness and the richness of our people; this, at least in part, because an insidious and subtle effort seems to be made, and is now in progress, to underestimate the achievements of this people and, in consequence, to undermine the faith and the confidence of those who study us and give some favorable attention to us, and in particular the faith and the confidence of our young people.

#### THE ATTITUDE AND SPIRIT OF OUR PEOPLE

I believe that without arrogance and undue presumption, I am justified in saying that we are the greatest people on the face of the earth today. I recognize the fact that in making such a statement I should bring myself under some condemnation by those who set themselves up as critics of our work, our faith and our people. The most charitable consideration of them, however, I think is that they do not know and do not understand the genius of our work, and the attitude and spirit of our people. They cannot understand our great endeavor to follow in the footsteps of the Master and teach his gospel, unless they possess the spirit of the gospel which comes from the Lord himself. For while the things of man may be understood and comprehended by the spirit and intelligence of man, the things of God cannot be understood except by the Spirit of God; and when men in criticism of our work, ridicule our members and belittle our high conceptions, they do not understand the import and significance of these conceptions or else, understanding them, they are prompted by an evil spirit to attempt to undermine the work and thwart its great purposes.

## GREAT BY PROCESS OF NATURAL SELECTION

I say, we are a great people. We are great by process of natural selection. You have heard of the blood of the Pilgrim fathers extolled. Sociologists today are saying that the perpetuation of that blood, the blood of those men who came from England and Holland and established this great republic, is indispensable to the perpetuation of the great principles of liberty, equity and justice which underly this mighty nation, its Constitution and institutions. It is my belief that the men who were drawn from the Old World to found this Government have been selected with no more care and to no higher purpose than the people who have been selected from all the hamlets and the villages of the Old and the New World to come to Zion to prepare the foundation of the Kingdom of the Living God. The same great qualities of independent thinking, high manhood, power and strength, were indispensable in both instances; so that by the heritage which we have from our great ancestors we are a great people.

## IN WHAT WE ARE GREAT AS A PEOPLE

We have been great in achievement. The limited time at my disposal would in no sense justify me in attempting even to outline the remarkable accomplishments of the people of the Church within less than a century of time. You know in the main those accomplishments, and they bear witness to the integrity and the honor and the devotion of the Latter-day Saints.

We are great in the message that we have to give to the world. That message is the greatest message that has ever come to mankind. It is the same message that came in the beginning of the world. It is the same message that will come in the end of the world, for the salvation of humankind, and the establishment of God's Kingdom. It contains truths which are indispensable to life, to the knowledge of life, and to all that makes life worth living.

We are a great people in intelligence. I am fully aware of the fact that there might be many who would controvert that statement, because there are many today who measure intelligence by different standards and criteria than we set up for the measurement of pure, true intelligence. Intelligence, as I conceive it, is the power to grasp and assimilate the fundamental, essential truths of God and the universe, and those great truths which are embraced in the gospel of Jesus Christ are of such transcendent importance that they overshadow all other truths assuming that there is such a distinction so that the minds of men, which are capable of understanding, comprehending and knowing gospel truths, are possessed of the highest order of intelligence with which God has endowed the human family. In making that statement I wish in no sense to belittle that intelligence which is capable of grasping the great truths of science and of making application of the laws of nature to the betterment of mankind. I rejoice in education, in its

culture, in its refinement, and in the knowledge and power that comes from it, but I maintain that the highest order of intelligence is that intelligence which is capable of receiving and enjoying a testimony of God's greatest and highest truth.

We are a great people in power, not only in our own human power, although it is not inconsiderable; but we are great in the power that God has given to us. He has endowed us with a portion of his own power, with a portion of his own strength, and with that power and through that power, the Church is established, this work is maintained and the Lord prepares the way for the coming and establishment of his own kingdom. This great power of the Priesthood, is the power without which this work would be impossible. It is the greatest power bestowed upon humankind. It is given for the most important offices and service to humanity. It is in very deed a portion of Godhood, and you men and boys who are privileged to possess it more nearly approach God in your Priesthood than in any other attribute or way.

#### IN WHAT WE ARE RICH AS A PEOPLE

Not only are we a great people, we are a rich people; not so much in the things of this world, in money and possessions and property, but we are rich in those things which are essential to happiness and well-being. We are rich in humility. We recognize the power of the living God. We recognize our dependency on that power, and we subject ourselves to the laws of God and endeavor to be obedient to them. We are rich in virtue; thank the Lord! I believe there is no community in the broad land where there is so much of clean living, so much of pure thought, and a people so free from contamination by those practices which so generally prevail among mankind. We are rich in that great asset of humanity, health. We are rich in health because we have endeavored to live the law of health, spoken of as the Word of Wisdom. We are rich in the love of God, and that is a great source of wealth. I think that is the greatest source of wealth that any people may enjoy. I have felt for years and years that if the love of God could come to the inhabitants of our own dear country, we should be free from the disturbances and disorders, and the problems, at least in large measure, which now confront us; and having the love of God, we have in our hearts the love of man, illustrated and exemplified by our devotion to his interests and our sacrifices to teach him those vital things so essential to his welfare and his happiness. We are rich in our homes, in the places where we live, in this wonderful heritage, in this great land of Zion itself. We would not exchange our habitat for any other place in the world. We were led to it. It came to us through divine appointment. It is a part of God's blessing, and mercy to us. Then we are rich in vision, without which a people perish. We have been given to see ahead. We are not relying upon the predictions and prognostications of men. We know where we are going. Thank the Lord for that great blessing. We know that the

direction we take leads to happiness and peace and joy and salvation. We know that the commandments which God has given to us are the promises upon which we may build a structure of endurance. There is no uncertainty with reference to our future. We know that our destiny is high and great, and that our objectives are all worthy our best and highest endeavor, a blessing that transcends our comprehension.

#### OUR TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITY

A people so great and so rich are surely charged with tremendous responsibility. We are charged with the responsibility of establishing and maintaining this great Church, this great instrumentality with all its facilities and agencies, designed to save the human family and to exalt men. We are charged with the responsibility of preserving, inviolate and free from corruption, the great truths of the gospel, of which we are living custodians. That is a tremendous responsibility. If we in any measure fail to discharge it faithfully, the very essence of eternal life, the gospel itself, may be in its effect and application, lost to mankind. But we are to preserve it and to keep it sacred and inviolate for the generations to come.

We are charged with the responsibility of actually founding the kingdom of the living God; we are making it here, for I believe as I stand here that the work we are now doing is in preparation for the kingdom that is to be established and presided over by the Lord God himself. Indeed I look upon our own work and endeavor as indicative of the same kind of work that shall be carried forward when the Lord does come to reign and to conduct the affairs of his kingdom himself. What a responsibility! How much it means to us! Men of God, women of Israel, I know that you thrill as citizens of this great country when you hear the glorious strains of the Star Spangled Banner, or the sacred anthem of America, and see the great flag of the country raised aloft. But I tell you that, thrilled as you may be by patriotic impulse, you are exalted as you stand under the banner of Christ to carry forward his mighty work and establish his glorious kingdom. God help us to be faithful to our trust, and worthy of our riches, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER JOHN M. KNIGHT

*President of the Western States Mission*

*My brethren and sisters, my heart has been made to rejoice in the testimonies and experiences given this day. I have pleasure in representing the people of the Western states mission and bringing to you greetings from them, also from your sons and your daughters who are laboring there, preaching the gospel of repentance. I have never associated with a finer group of men and women than those who are*