

FOURTH DAY

MORNING MEETING

Conference reconvened at 10 o'clock Wednesday morning, April 9th.

President Heber J. Grant presided.

The music for this meeting was furnished by the Ogden Tabernacle Choir, Lester Hinchcliff, director.

The hymn, "How firm a foundation," was sung by the choir and congregation.

Elder Frank Y. Taylor offered the opening prayer.

The choir sang the hymn, "If you could hie to Kolob."

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

An old darkey minister was about to address a congregation. He chose for his text: "Bressed am dey what expeks noffin, for dey shant be disappointed." I apply this to myself, for I certainly did not expect to be called on to address this congregation. President Grant has been so kind to me already, in permitting me to read my Centennial poem at a previous session, that I was not looking for any additional honor and pleasure. I am thankful for it, however, and esteem it a precious privilege to be not only a reader, but also a speaker at this great conference—the greatest one I have ever known.

AN AGE OF WONDERS

We are living in an age of wonders. Events and achievements that would have been deemed miraculous a hundred years ago, have become to us almost commonplace. Had we lived two centuries earlier, and expressed a belief that men would fly through the air like birds, or dive in the sea like fish, it would have provoked skepticism, if not prejudice; would possibly have been regarded as bordering on witchcraft or a disposition to encourage it.

ERRORS OF SUPERSTITION

Two or three hundred years ago, in certain parts of New England, notably Massachusetts, if a poor woman was accused of witchcraft, she was put on trial in a most peculiar manner. They tied her to a plank and threw her into the water. If she sank she was innocent—which of course was a great comfort to her! If she floated they took her out and burnt her for a witch.

A LAND OF LIBERTY

But thank the Lord, we are past those bigoted and cruel times. We live in a day when men have the right to think—to think aloud and utter their thoughts, without being beheaded for it, or burnt at the

stake. God be thanked for this Land of Liberty, for the freedom to worship him as conscience dictates—not the conscience of our neighbors, but of ourselves. I am proud of my country, proud to be an American citizen, and proud to be a Latter-day Saint.

A STRAW IN THE WIND

Speaking of wonders, I am reminded of an incident that happened right here, in this Tabernacle, a year or more ago. Elder B. H. Roberts was speaking, standing as I am now, just in front of the microphone, and I was sitting in the next seat below. He was rather husky. He always was a "husky," you know; but this time the huskiness was in his throat. He cleared it once or twice, and then I reached to him a cough lozenge, and President Grant, from the seat above, did the same. Said Brother Roberts in a low tone: "I'm afraid I'll swallow them." And I, in a whisper—a whisper, mind you—replied: "Well, that's what we want you to do." And that whisper went all over the world. At least it went as far as the City Cemetery; for a woman living near there said to me next morning: "I heard it over my radio. I heard what Roberts said, and I heard your whisper." That is only a straw, but it shows the direction of the wind.

THE MARVELOUS WORK AND WONDER

I repeat: We are living in an age of wonders. The wonders of science, invention and discovery; the marvels of steam and electricity, the miracles of the telegraph, the telephone, the wireless and the radio—what are they but parts of the "marvelous work and wonder," predicted centuries before the birth of the Savior, and begun in this the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times? And strange to say, the most marvelous part of it all—that pertaining to the restoration of the Everlasting Gospel, with the powers of the Eternal Priesthood and the gifts of the Holy Ghost—is the part that the world overlooks and passes by as a thing of naught.

THE SIGNS THAT FOLLOW BELIEF

The Savior said to his ancient Apostles, and he has repeated it to his modern Apostles: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned (or condemned);

"And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. They shall take up serpents; they shall lay hands upon the sick and they shall recover."

I am a living witness to the fulfilment of this divine promise. These miraculous "signs" follow belief now, the same as in days of old. I have seen devils cast out by the power of the Priesthood. I have seen and heard manifested the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. I have seen the sick healed with a touch, and have been healed myself by the laying on of hands, accompanied by the prayer and power of faith.

A TYPICAL INSTANCE

I will cite one instance, as typical of many. About twelve years ago I was in the town of Sandy, ten miles south of Salt Lake City, to deliver a lecture. Just before starting for the hall where I was to speak, I received an urgent message from the Bishop of the Ward, asking me to come and bless his daughter, a girl in her sixteenth year, who was lying at the point of death, having been given up by the family doctor, who declared that she could not live till morning. Taking another elder with me, I proceeded to the Bishop's home, gave the girl a blessing, and went on my way. Next morning, a telephone call from Sandy to my home in Salt Lake, informed me that a marvelous change had taken place in the young girl's condition. Before we blessed her, she had had no sleep for days and nights; but no sooner had she received the administration, than she fell into a restful slumber and slept for twelve hours, waking up normal and so remaining.

When the Doctor came next morning he was amazed. "Something has happened here," he said. Yes, something *had* happened, indeed. "The prayer of faith" had "saved the sick," according to the promise of the Lord.

Now, the Doctor had been right, from his viewpoint. Medical science had decreed that girl's death, or had decided that she could not live; and if some power greater than man's had not intervened, she would have died, according to the doctor's prediction. But something more powerful did intervene. A greater Science than the science of medicine was brought to bear. The Spirit of the Lord said: "She shall live." And she did live. This girl who, twelve years ago, could not live till morning, is alive today, a happy wife and mother. I, myself joined her and her husband in eternal wedlock in the Temple of the Lord.

I could relate many such incidents, if necessary. They are of frequent occurrence in the experience of the Elders of Israel. "These signs" truly "follow them that believe," and they are only wanting where there is no faith, or not enough to justify them.

TESTIMONIES OF THE TRUTH

We call them testimonies—and testimonies they are; for testimony means evidence. Anything that furnishes evidence that this is God's work, is a testimony concerning it. But healings are not the greatest evidence—they are but parts of a supreme testimony, greater than dreams, visions, prophecies, healings, tongues, and all other manifestations combined. The greatest of all testimonies is the illumination of the soul by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. How well I remember when it came to me. It showed me my place in the divine scheme of things; it showed me where I came from, why I am here, what is expected of me while here, and what awaits me in the Great Hereafter. That is the greatest thing that God ever did for me. This is my testimony, brethren and sisters, and I bear it here and now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.