

ELDER CHARLES H. HART

Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Canadian Mission

It has been a pleasure to share with you, my brethren and sisters, the instruction and inspiration of these Conference meetings. Some of the meetings have not been broadcast, some of the best. Last evening, for instance, we had very wise and rich instructions from the Presiding Bishop of the Church and from the Presidency of the Church, each of those four individuals, and again this morning at the Assembly Hall at the M. I. A. gathering where our President spoke under the inspiration of the Lord and was very greatly blessed.

I had the opportunity of attending the Canadian missionary reunion last evening, and I was a bit late in getting around to the Assembly Hall meeting this morning, but did get there in time to hear President Grant. He spoke of the wonderful instruction contained in the *Era*, particularly some of the short editorials. I read one a short time ago entitled "The Disappearing God." That title is one that had been used in an article published in Scribner's for June, in which the author, Mr. Henswood Ward, in his concluding sentence said:

"The God that used to hear my prayers is disappearing, is being nebulized out of existence by the Holmes, the Ames and Millikins."

Mr. Ward refers to a book written by a former minister and now the editor of a Christian magazine and says:

"After I have read it I can think of nothing but the massacre of God that is being made by the best religious thought of the day."

The editor of the *Era* goes on to say that a great educator from California, standing near the Seagull Monument and listening to the story of how the seagulls saved Utah, remarked: "I can believe that the Almighty intervened to save a people as prayerful as were the pioneers."

Then he went on to say:

"The trouble with the world today is that to be considered educated a man must know all about the gods of mythology, but he need know nothing whatever about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the true and living God."

And so the world today does not believe very strongly in a personal God, although there are some Christians who are coming to believe in a personal Deity. There are too many of them that believe in that God expressed by the Russian poet Derzhaven:

"O Thou Eternal One whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;
Unchanged through time's all devastating flight!
Thou only God—there is no God beside!
Being above all beings! Mighty One,
Whom none can comprehend and none explore,
Who fill'st existence with thyself alone—
Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er;
Being whom we call God, and know no more."

Not the God of the Old Testament, nor the God of the New Testament. Not the God of John, as recorded in his first chapter:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

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"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," etc.

It is not the God of Paul, as described in the first chapter of Hebrews, first three verses:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Paul is considered even a little "off" by some modern Christians. It was an eye specialist to whom I took one of our missionaries for special treatment who characterized Apostle Paul as a neurotic—Paul, of whom it was eloquently said by Bossuet: "He went into polished Greece, the mother of oratory and philosophy, and there established more churches than Plato had acquired disciples, by an eloquence that was thought divine. He pushed his conquests still further. Rome even listened to his voice. He brought the majesty of the Roman fasces to the feet of Jesus in the person of a proconsul;" then the declaration is made that the day would yet come "when her citizens would deem themselves more honored by an epistle of St. Paul addressed to them than by all the far-famed harangues delivered in the forum by Cicero."

In stopping at the home of Daniel Webster while passing through a part of our mission territory, in the State of New Hampshire, I found this sentiment being distributed, a declaration of the man who is voted by Harvard, the oldest university in America, as being one of the seven great orators of the world:

"I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are among the living; and if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared it and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and through the fire and blood of seven years revolutionary war, shrank from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted forever from the memory of mankind."

So if our Brother Kimball takes just pride in doing honor to his distinguished father, we can understand that that is a sentiment which the American people approve as shown in purchasing at a high price the few lines from the great orator which I have just read to you.

Joaquin Miller, the poet of the Sierras, paid one of the finest tributes to the Latter-day Saints that has been paid to them, in his

"Roundelay of Salt Lake," and apologized for some disparaging words that he had written against them in earlier years. He said of the pioneers of the middle west:

"But I say to you there is nothing in the pages of history so glorious, so entirely grand, as the lives of these noble Spartan fathers and mothers of Americans, who begot and brought forth and bred the splendid giants of the generation that is now fast following the setting sun of their unselfish and all immortal lives."

I thought this morning in the M. I. A. gathering when I witnessed those splendid young people coming forth from that meeting, and I knew there were many thousands more in the Church of like people, of what Professor Roswell H. Johnson said concerning us. Among the many good things that were given to us during the past year or two, he said this in reference to our Church:

"The eugenic situation in Mormonism is better than in other cults, because the Church has made, in its young people's organizations, a definite and systematic effort to teach better mate selection. This effort is superior to that of any other cult known to me.

"The Church is extraordinarily solicitous to provide buildings largely for the joint social use of the young men's and young women's societies, and to promote outdoor activities, to foster such companionship. In fact, in the Mormon Church every young person is provided a wider acquaintance with eligibles of the other sex than is to be found in any other cult known to me."

So last evening in meeting those splendid young missionaries I thought what a happy mating it would be if some of those young people, now that they had completed their missionary work, would begin mating. The young men would be assured of very noble and pure women and the same thing on the part of the young women, they would be assured noble men. I have congratulated some of those young people who have married since they returned.

We in the Canadian Mission are happily very close to the real shrines of the Church. I have often thought what other sects would do if they had a spot where the prophet of the living God was born and one where a sacred record was delivered to him, his boyhood home and the sacred grove where the Father and the Son appeared to him.

These young people in assembling at Vermont where we met in conference for the first time this year were very greatly exhilarated by the beautiful spirit of peace and of love which pervaded those places which are recorded as sacred precincts. The grounds are very beautiful and well kept by Brother Smith and his family, and the neighbors from surrounding places came there and listened attentively and respectfully to the things that were presented. The reactions that we got from our missionaries in having the privilege of going to the place where they realize that the prophet of this dispensation was born, the grove where he offered the prayer that brought to him the Father and the Son, the sacred hill where a volume of scripture was brought forth, and the place where that record was translated, all those things help to impress the testimony of the Gospel upon our young people.

I must not talk longer. I might read you some of the expressions of these young people who had the privilege recently, of visiting some of these places. We held conference for the first time at the monument in Vermont. They all testify of the strengthening of their testimonies and thank the Lord that they have had the privilege of standing on what they regard as sacred ground.

I know there are other shrines of other denominations within the limits of our territory, but I know of none of them that claims the distinction of having a place where a prophet of the living God was born or where an angel of God appeared or where God the Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared. May we treasure these sacred memories, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

I asked for a list to be furnished me of people prominent in the Church who had passed away since our last Conference. I am surprised to find that the name of P. Rulon Christensen, president of the French Mission, was omitted. He filled a very splendid mission and we are grateful for his fine labors. We extend our sympathy to his family.

I am also surprised that I myself did not think of one of the general officers of the Church, one of the assistant historians, Brother Junius F. Wells, the instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father, by direction of President Brigham Young, of traveling all over the Church and establishing the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. It fell to my lot to be one of the officers of the first Mutual Improvement Association of the young men, organized by Brother Wells. Three of the four officers are living today, Counselor B. Morris Young, Hyrum H. Goddard, the Secretary, and myself. Henry A. Woolley, the President, has passed away.

I was intimately associated as a partner in business and in a church capacity with Junius F. Wells, nearly all of my life. I never heard him speak an unkind word of anyone. If he could not speak good of people he said nothing. He did us honor and credit wherever he traveled at home or abroad. He was a worthy son of a worthy father. His heart and soul were wrapped up in Mutual Improvement work. He gave to that work the very best that was in him. It is a source of regret to me that I could not be present at his funeral. May the blessings of the Lord attend his family.

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Before beginning my remarks I desire to express the gratitude I feel this afternoon that my life has been prolonged and the privilege granted me of meeting again with this vast congregation of Latter-day Saints, these people of American birth, people of English birth, people from the Scandinavian countries, people from that wonderful nation,