

ELDER SYLVESTER Q. CANNON

Associate to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I deem it a privilege, my brethren and sisters, to be with you in this great conference, and partake of the spirit that has been manifest in all the meetings thus far. I rejoice in the wonderful spirit of testimony and instruction that have been given to us. I have been delighted with the beautiful music that has been rendered. I have been greatly impressed with the song that was sung this afternoon, that we should still appreciate the sacrifice established of the Lord, that we should have a broken heart and a contrite spirit, love him and serve him, and not forget the covenants we have made with him.

It is a pleasure to hear our President bear the splendid testimony he has given, and to receive the fine report that was made at the beginning of the conference with regard to the splendid condition of the Church, and the work that has been done in the past year.

There is a great responsibility that rests upon every one who stands up to speak to this people. It is a fact that this is the people of the Lord, that this is the work of the Lord and that every one who is engaged therein has a responsibility to do his part in the advancement of this work. My desire is to help in the very best way I can to accomplish the designs of the Lord, in the advancement of his purposes and the welfare of the people.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

I was interested this morning in what Elder Smoot was saying about the subject of divorce and the degenerative effects of divorce upon civilization today. Honorable marriage is of fundamental importance to the progress of civilization, and divorce is one of the most serious problems in the state of our civilization. In examining the records of marriage and divorce in the United States and in the Church, it appears that the average marriage rate for the nation—the latest year in which I have complete information—was 10.28 per 1000 population as compared with 17.3 per 1000 population for the Church, or about 70% more for the Church. In the matter of divorce, the national rate averaged 1.61 as compared with 0.76 per 1000 population for the Church, or about 53% less for the Church. In the instance of divorces after Temple marriages, the rate was 0.30 per 1000 population, or about 82% less than for the nation. Comparison of marriage and divorce rates in each case shows that in the nation the divorce rate was 15.6% of the marriage rate, in the Church generally the average divorce rate was 4.4%, and after Temple marriages, the divorce rate was about 1.7% of the marriage rate.

TEMPLE MARRIAGES

A study of this information reveals the fact that of those married in the temples there are relatively very few divorces. It is to be ex-

pected that such should be the case, and that those married under such impressive conditions and under a covenant with such sacredness and holiness, would not break the contract. When it is realized that such a covenant involves the unity of man and wife for all eternity, it is natural that each of the parties should not be hasty in taking this important step, but should seek to be fully prepared through love and faith to continue this sacred relation throughout this life. To fulfil most fully the requirements for a happy marriage the two must be filled with true love, charity, forgiveness, mutual consideration and patience. They must have love for children, and be willing to bear children, and train them in faith and righteousness. It is evident that there are some cases where those who have entered into this covenant were not prepared through long-suffering, forgiveness and love to be united forever in harmony and happiness. The young people everywhere throughout the Church should be impressed with the great advantage that will come to them throughout their lives through being prepared to go to the Temple and enter into this covenant of marriage. From the information submitted above, it will be evident that temple marriage covenants are most helpful in maintaining happy homes, and love, peace, unity, patience and forgiveness between parents and children, all of which are most effective in developing the finest civilization.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

One of the greatest obligations resting upon the parents is that of parental responsibility. The duty of the parents to bring up their children in the faith and knowledge of the Gospel is co-equal with the duty of the Church to preach the Gospel in all the world. I desire to read to you a few words of scripture revealed by the Lord in the restoration of the Gospel in the 19th century, as contained in the 68th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ, the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.

And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.

And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.

And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

May I also quote from Proverbs, the saying of the wise man:

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

One of our speakers yesterday commented on the fact that to train a child comprehends much more than teaching, because the training involves not only the instruction but the application thereof also in the life

of the child, and the observance of those principles and habits that will enable him to establish himself in the right way. In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin declared (Mos. 4:14, 15):

And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another, and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, * * *

But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.

HOME THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY

The home is the foundation of society, and to the extent that there is a proper spiritual influence in the homes of this people, depends the right living of the families of the Church. Someone has said that "Home is the weakest link in the armor of the American nation," and a rather prominent educator from the East, who spoke at the commencement exercises of the University of Utah some years ago, declared that "the greatest contributing factor to vice and evil in America today is the average father and mother." Such serious indictments of the average family bring home to us, particularly, how important it is that no Latter-day Saint home should be included in such a category.

PREPARATION FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

I desire to appeal to every Latter-day Saint parent—father and mother,—to be united with each other and their children in observing the principles of the Gospel, in the training of their children to take active part in Church service, and in seeking the Lord often in prayer. Can we not, all as parents, teach our children faith in the Lord and repentance from the follies of youth, and prepare them to be baptized when they are eight years of age? Can we then not continue to encourage them in the performance of their Church duties? Can we not maintain the spirit of the Gospel in all our homes, and imbue the hearts of our children with a love of divine truth? The Church is greatly blessed in the splendid service being rendered by the various auxiliary associations for the benefit of the children and older members. These organizations are and can be of great advantage to all Church members. But, at the same time, it must be realized that parents cannot escape the responsibility that is theirs—the prime obligation—to teach and train their children to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in devotion to the Gospel truths, in order to maintain thereby happy, peaceful, united homes.

AN ARMY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

It would appear that the number of young people in the stakes of Zion under the age of twenty-one years approximates one-third of a million souls. What an army of splendid young men and women this is, and what a challenge to all the parents in all the stakes of Zion to exemplify the high standards of the Church, and to train their children in faith and righteousness!

TRAINING OF CHILDREN

The correct training of children is of fundamental importance to the child and to the happiness and peace of the parents. From its infancy up every child is entitled to the love and spiritual care which it deserves and which will establish it in faith and confidence in the Lord and in his purposes. As every boy and girl approaches eight years of age, they should be taught clearly and lovingly the atonement of the Savior for us all, and the first principles of the Gospel. This spiritual development should be carefully and wisely continued. Every young person should be encouraged to take part in the various Church activities. They should learn the value of prayer and of faith and the blessings which follow. It is a splendid practice for families to discuss Gospel principles and the application of the same in the lives of family members. They should be encouraged to read the Standard Church Works and to discuss incidents in ancient scripture and in Church history. They should learn the importance of gaining a spiritual testimony of the divinity of the Gospel restoration, and realize that such testimonies come through living the Gospel principles and observing the commandments of the Lord.

HEALTH TRAINING

In like manner, everyone of the family in childhood and in their growth to man or womanhood should be taught principles of health, and learn to observe health habits. They should be shown how much better and finer they will be through resisting the use of narcotics and stimulants. They must learn to differentiate between false, misleading advertising of stimulants and narcotics, and true statements. No one needs to be misled by such alluring advertisements of cigarettes, for example, which are pictured as soothing and upbuilding the body, whereas in fact they are destructive to health and cause weakening of the vital forces of the body. Yet, because of the very extensive advertising campaigns carried on during the seven years from 1930 to 1937, the sale of cigarettes in this nation increased $18\frac{1}{2}$ times. Young people should be encouraged to read and study the word of the Lord as given in the Word of Wisdom. They should learn that the control of the physical appetites is one of the greatest lessons to be learned and practiced in order to maintain for their welfare the high standards of the Church.

MORAL STANDARDS AND MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

It is just as vital, also, that every member of the family should be shown, by precept and example, the obligation, for his welfare, to observe high moral standards by cultivating clean thoughts and virtuous living. Parents have wonderful opportunities in the home to fortify their children against unclean thoughts, and to train them to occupy their minds with noble thoughts and good habits, to keep their minds and bodies occupied with positive ideas and activities and to put them on the way to a life of righteousness.

The training of the mind of every child can well justify the attention of every father and mother, even though the education of the child is the responsibility of the State. It is a matter of excellent mental exercise to converse frequently with our children on the various courses of study in which they are engaged. It is well to get the viewpoint of the child on all matters taught in the schools, and to advise and assist the child to differentiate between theory and fact, and between prejudice and sound instruction on the part of any teacher. Every young person needs specific training in all the virtues—honesty, dependability, confidence, kindness, patience, self-mastery, etc.

DEVELOP LOCAL INDUSTRIES

There is another phase of preparation for life of all young people that justifies careful attention on the part of parents, and indirectly of cooperation on the part of our families in the various communities. That is the matter of the economic welfare and progress of every young person in all our communities. It is just as important that every young man and woman shall receive specialized preparation for life in the trades or the professions as it is that all should be taught subjects for their general education. It has been said that "the primary and important aim of education is not character building, nor learning, nor culture, but the development of the power to understand, and of the knowledge that understanding must precede wise action." It is unfortunate when young people are not given standard specialized training in some particular direction that will, in general, permit them to secure employment requiring some particular skill and knowledge, instead of having to depend upon common labor or untrained employment.

In that connection, and in order to provide greater opportunities for such employment, there should be a concerted effort on the part of all men and women in the various communities, particularly in the intermountain territory, to unite in efforts to develop possible local industries that will employ local raw products in the manufacture of commodities that will serve the immediate needs of the communities, and permit the sale of surpluses elsewhere.

PATRONIZE LOCAL PRODUCTS

Associated with such undertakings, and of immediate concern to the progress of these communities in providing more local employment, is the importance of patronizing to the full the local industries already in operation. Many purchases now being made by the housewives in these states are those from outside localities, whereas, in many instances, the same products are produced in our midst. If every mother could realize that every article locally produced will provide more employment for local young people and will probably be as wholesome and pure as, or more so, than outside products, and available at no greater cost, she would doubtless be more greatly interested in learning of all the industries now in operation locally. Leaders in the various communities

should carefully consider every feasible means of developing our resources in every direction, in order to promote employment of local people and avoid, as far as possible, the exodus of young people to other localities for lack of work at home.

The challenge, then, is to all parents in the Church to lead their children into right thinking, clean living, specialized training, and in the faith and testimony of the restored Gospel; and then to sustain all worthy efforts put forth to build up local undertakings for the economic welfare of our people.

May we sense and improve our opportunities and may we strive constantly for better temporal and spiritual progress is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A vocal solo, "Holy City," was sung by Byron Openshaw.

ELDER JOSEPH F. MERRILL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

REASONS FOR CHURCH-WIDE CAMPAIGN

All over the Church it is known that there is in progress a Church-wide Campaign for the Non-use of Liquor and Tobacco. No thinking person will question the need of this campaign. Perhaps never in our history did "evils and designs—exist in the hearts of conspiring men" to induce the consumption of these narcotics to as great an extent as today. Subtle propaganda was never more widespread, deceptive, or costly. In our country alone cigarette advertising during 1937 cost more than 30 million dollars. The result is that cigarette smoking was never so general, particularly among women and girls. And sad to say, the debauchery of youth by deceptive marijuana appears to be growing.

The situation with respect to alcoholic beverages is no better.

NEWSPAPERS VOICE WARNING AGAINST LIQUOR

A recent dispatch from Chicago carried by the public press, stated "more time and effort must be devoted to combatting the liquor problem among youth, according to recommendations made to the International Council of Religious Education by a committee on social issues, thoroughly aroused over the lethargic attitude of the people as to prevailing conditions among our young people."

This statement recalls other news items that appeared a few weeks ago. An investigation conducted by Allied Youth, Incorporated, found that 49 per cent of 4,000 high school seniors in eleven different states were drinkers. Further, the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education found that 52.9 per cent of 13,528 young people questioned in Maryland, used liquor in various forms.

The *Christian Science Monitor* recently published an informative article on the liquor situation from which the following are extracts: