

Saturday, April 4

First Day

with justification we have talked of our culture and refinement—a culture developed through faith in God and a devotion to high purposes. The Church has had a refining influence on all who have lived up to its teachings and participated in the strength of its organization.

Now a great transition is taking place. Our boys are having to leave the influences of their youth, and are being transplanted into a life that has for its goal, not peace, but war; not the refining influences of the gospel, but the hatreds, and coarseness that can only come from the cruellest war of all time. Then, too, we are witnessing an industrial transition that is fast changing our heretofore pastoral communities into active humming commercial centers. These new enterprises are also bringing an altogether different influence into the lives of our youth.

These changes should give all of us great concern for we have never had to meet these influences before, but this is only part of the problem. We cannot picture what the transaction will be when the war is over, and our boys return from the army, and from the mills and factories, back to the farms, where returns for their labor may not be very remunerative—and where many of them will find no work at all.

Lack of time will only permit the suggesting of the problems. We, who have the responsibility of the directing of Priesthood activities of the Church, need to be thinking of this. It will require all of the ingenuity and organiza-

tion at our command to meet these problems. May we keep in touch with our boys and help them in their thinking and in the adjustments that are to come.

One other thing, and that is this: We are already beginning to feel the animosities and the hatreds that are being engendered because of the war. President Clark warned us of this a long time ago, and we are beginning now to see and feel it, and we are feeling it with our own people. We have in our midst people who belong to the Church, who have come from foreign lands, people who have sacrificed, and whose faith is just as firm as those of us who were born and reared in this land, and yet they are becoming the victims of these hatreds. May we be cautious about this, and may we use all the influence we have to preserve the love of the gospel in the hearts of the people, and to caution them that the feelings of our Saints, who are the victims of these unfortunate circumstances, are tender, and that they should be safeguarded against these hatreds.

May we always remember that there is a difference between sin and the sinner. If we can do that, it will help a lot. There isn't a stake of Zion that isn't feeling this thing, and as this war continues, and the casualties begin to come in, this spirit is going to become intensified, and the problem is going to become acute.

May God help us, that we may not fail in our responsibilities, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

As I looked into your faces today, brethren, the question occurred to me, "I wonder what it is that motivates these men to render such a generous, splendid service?"

I noted that some of you have come as far as two thousand five hundred miles to attend this conference, leaving your families and businesses. The spirit that has motivated you to attend this conference and to carry on in the

work of the Lord that has been assigned to you, is the same spirit which has built up the Church in these, the last days—the spirit of testimony.

In considering our achievements in the valleys of these mountains, I always think of our pioneer fathers and the pioneer leadership who were willing to sacrifice life itself and all they possessed for the gospel's sake. And why were they willing to do it? Because in

the heart of each and every one of them a testimony burned that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God and all of those who succeeded Joseph Smith are prophets and apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. The great spirit of testimony is the power that stimulates all of us to serve in this great cause.

Some few months ago I had the privilege of reading a diary of one of our pioneer brethren, and he tells how he first heard the gospel in Canada, and of the great desire that burned in his heart to meet the leadership of the Church and of the long trip made from Canada to Nauvoo.

After being among the leaders of the Church and becoming acquainted with the people, as he was taking leave of them to return to Canada, he said: "I turned and looked back and wept, for my heart was with the Saints; and I said, 'I'll soon see you again.'" As he crossed the wide prairie, very thinly settled, he would sit down and rest, singing the hymn "Hail to the Prophet Ascending to Heaven." "I would then get up and go on my way, rejoicing."

He was convinced that the leadership of the Church was in the hands of inspired men and those who embraced the gospel were indeed His Saints. He then returned to Canada, gathering up his few belongings, and with his family, made the long trek back to Nauvoo, just in time to suffer many of the tribulations and hardships of the Saints as they were driven across the Mississippi River on the ice and onto the bleak plains of Iowa.

Arriving in the valleys of the mountains, he immediately erected a log home for his family. With his brothers, he built saw mills and grist mills, cultivated some land, indicating in his diary that he felt rather prosperous.

But "soldiers of the cross" in his day were minute men, and in 1857 he was called by the First Presidency to return to the Eastern States Mission with a handcart company of missionaries. He spent one year in the missionary service when word came that Johnston's army was on its way to Utah. Shortly there-

after, the First Presidency called the missionaries home.

The army had preceded the arrival of the missionaries, and their families had moved to the south. This good brother found that his farm had gone to weeds, and his mill was in need of repair.

His family returned from the south; and, again in the words of this pioneer:

I went to work again in good spirits to make home pleasant. I had plenty of house room and had all my family under one roof. We ate at one table and had plenty to eat. This was the happiest time of my life, for all was peace and good feeling.

After three years of hard work, this brother found himself in good circumstances financially, saying that he calculated he was worth about \$10,000. But another call came from the First Presidency—this time to dispose of his property and surplus livestock, being requested to take a few head of livestock, some furniture, and with his family make the long trek to the land of Dixie and assist in establishing communities there.

He said, "I scratched my head; . . . thought; and said, 'All right.'" Something in the heart of this man bore witness to the fact that the men who had called him to make the long, arduous journey to southern Utah were servants of God; and with that testimony burning in his heart, he could not refuse the call.

To make the story short, this grand character went to southern Utah. He assisted in the erection of the St. George Temple. He ran mills in the mountains and filled every assignment given to him, with willingness. The remainder of his life was spent in hardship. He passed through the trial of burying several of his children in the sands of southern Utah. But not once in his diary did I discover any feeling or word of complaint, only expressions of gratitude for the privilege of serving in the cause of the Master, grateful for the testimony that burned in his heart.

I am sure, brethren, that the same

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spirit of testimony exists throughout the Church today. This is the spirit that is in your hearts. As long as that spirit endures within us, God will bless us, He will sustain us, and this work will roll on to its final destiny and objective, which is to preach the gospel of Jesus

Christ to all people, that the world will be prepared for the second coming of the King of Kings, which event I pray will soon come to pass that we again shall know peace, harmony, and good will among men, which I pray for in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I AM almost tempted to say that the short talks are better than the long ones. I don't know whether I dare say it or not.

I was interested this morning in hearing Brother Thomas E. McKay report conditions in the European Missions, and particularly was I interested in hearing that the local missionaries in Great Britain had reported sixty baptisms. You presidents of stakes each has a mission in your stake. In spite of the intensive activity of this day, and some shortage of personnel, I am sure that if the missionaries of England, in the conditions in which they find themselves after this length of time, can do this kind of work, we can ably man and conduct our stake missions. Scattered throughout the length and breadth of the British Mission there are not to be found as many members of the Church as there are in many of our stakes, and their resources and opportunities cannot compare with ours—and yet they are going forward. We do appreciate the cooperation we have received from you stake presidents and we ask you for a continuance of this cooperation in this highly important obligation which the Lord has placed upon us, and which should have yet greater emphasis and attention.

The radio mail brings in a good deal of interesting comment from many thousands of people. One listener sent in a clipping from *The Christian Advocate*, three or four days ago. *The Christian Advocate*, according to its own masthead, is the official magazine of Methodism. This is the opening sentence of the clipping:

If the prophets had kept out of politics,

they would never have gotten into the Old Testament.

It struck me rather forcibly, and also the thought struck me that if this had appeared in our own publications someone would have criticized it as "politics," but since it appeared in a Methodist publication I suppose it is all right to present it here without hearing it derided as "politics." (Laughter) Seriously, I believe the time is opportune to leave just this thought, since we are not now in the midst of any political campaign, since we face no immediate election, and since the heat of such things is not with us at the moment:

As I looked back to those prophets who would never have gotten into the Old Testament if they had kept out of "politics," I suddenly became aware that the Philistines certainly didn't like the "politics" of the Israelites; I am sure that the Pharaohs didn't like the "politics" of Moses when he led the children of Israel out of bondage. I am equally sure that Saul didn't like the "politics" of Samuel when, at the Lord's command, he anointed David king; and I am sure that the captains and kings didn't like the "politics" of Jeremiah, or any of the other prophets of God.

But this fact is fundamental: The principles of religion enter into every activity of life. Should the activities of politics extend themselves into every activity of life, we must be increasingly careful to weigh every issue of politics according to principle, and not according to politics, if you please. I am sure that politics were attributed to the President of this Church, by many, when he took his stand, courageous and out-