

The choir sang "All Hail the Glorious Day"—Stephens.
 (Theme: "Sweet Is the Work"—organ with humming choir.)
 (End of Broadcast)

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

We shall now resume the regular program of this Conference. You have just listened to an address by Elder Ezra T. Benson of the Council of the Twelve, who gave the *Columbia Church of the Air* sermon. Our next speaker will be Elder Stephen L Richards of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER STEPHEN L RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Dear brethren:

I hope that I may be pardoned if I express great personal gratification and pride in the lofty addresses delivered from this pulpit this morning by my recently sustained colleagues in the Council of the Twelve [Ezra Taft Benson and Mark E. Petersen]. I am sure that you also must have greatly enjoyed their timely, inspiring discourses.

There is a matter which has given deep concern to the presiding brethren of the Church for some time past. It is not a very popular subject for discussion, but its importance and its urgency are such that I have concluded to make it the subject of my remarks upon this occasion. By way of preface and as a part of the discussion, I venture to revive for you some old verses that were better known sixty or seventy years ago than they are today. They were written by Will Carleton, an American journalist, and published in a volume in 1873. The title is "Over the Hill to the Poorhouse."

Over the hill to the poorhouse I'm trudgin' my weary way—

I, a woman of seventy, and only a trifle gray—
 I, who am smart an' chipper, for all the years I've told,
 As many another woman that's only half as old.

Over the hill to the poorhouse—I can't quite make it clear!

Over the hill to the poorhouse—it seems so horrid queer!
 Many a step I've taken a-toilin' to and fro,
 But this is a sort of journey I never thought to go.

What is the use of heapin' on me a pauper's shame?

Am I lazy or crazy, am I blind or lame?
 True, I am not so supple, nor yet so awful stout;
 But charity ain't no favor, if one can live without.

I am willin' and anxious an' ready any day

To work for a decent livin', an' pay my honest way;
 For I can earn my victuals, an' more too, I'll be bound,
 If anybody only is willin' to have me around.

Once I was young an' han'some—I was, upon my soul—
 Once my cheeks was roses, my eyes as black as coal;
 And I can't remember, in them days, of hearin' people say,
 For any kind of a reason, that I was in their way.

And nobody ever hinted that I was a burden then.
 And when to John I was married, sure he was good and smart,
 But he and all the neighbors would own I done my part;
 'Taint no use of boastin', or talkin' over free,

But many a house an' home was open then to me;
 Many a han'some offer I had from likely men,
 For life was all before me, an' I was young an' strong,
 And I worked the best that I could in tryin' to get along.

And so we worked together: and life was hard, but gay,
 With now and then a baby for to cheer us on our way;
 Till we had half a dozen, an' all growed clean an' neat,
 An' went to school like others, an' had enough to eat.

So we worked for the childr'n, and raised 'em every one;
 Worked for 'em summer and winter, just as we ought to've done;
 Only perhaps we humored 'em, which some good folks condemn,
 But every couple's childr'n's a heap the best to them.

Strange how much we think of our blessed little ones!—
 I'd have died for my daughters, I'd have died for my sons;
 And God he made that rule of love; but when we're old and gray,
 I've noticed it sometimes somehow fails to work the other way.

Strange, another thing: when our boys an' girls was grown,
 And when, exceptin' Charley, they'd left us there alone;
 When John he nearer an' nearer come, an' dearer seemed to be
 The Lord of Hosts he come one day an' took him away from me.

Still I was bound to struggle, an' never to cringe or fall—
 Still I worked for Charley, for Charley was now my all;
 And Charley was pretty good to me, with scarce a word or frown,
 Till at last he went a-courtin', and brought a wife from town.

She was somewhat dressy, an' hadn't a pleasant smile—
 She was quite conceity, and carried a heap o' style;
 But if ever I tried to be friends, I did with her, I know;
 But she was hard and proud, an' I couldn't make it go.

She had an edication, an' that was good for her;
 But when she twitted me on mine, 'twas carryin' things too fur;
 An' I told her once, 'fore company (an' it almost made her sick)
 That I never swallowed a grammer, or 'et a 'rithmetic.

So 'twas only a few days before the thing was done—
 They was a family of themselves, and I another one;
 And a very little cottage one family will do,
 But I never have seen a house that was big enough for two.

An' I never could speak to suit her, never could please her eye
 An' it made me independent, an' then I didn't try;
 But I was terribly staggered, an' felt it like a blow,
 When Charley turned ag'in me, an' told me I could go.

I went to live with Susan, but Susan's house was small,
 And she was always a-hintin' how snug it was for us all;
 And what with her husband's sisters, and what with child'r'n three,
 'Twas easy to discover that there wasn't room for me.

An' then I went to Thomas, the oldest son I've got,
 For Thomas' buildings'd cover the half of an acre lot;
 But all the child'r'n was on me—I couldn't stand their sauce—
 And Thomas said I needn't think I was comin' there to boss.

An' then I wrote to Rebecca, my girl who lives out West,
 And to Isaac, not far from her—some twenty miles at best;
 And one of 'em said 'twas too warm there for anyone so old,
 And t'other had an opinion the climate was too cold.

So they have shirked and slighted me, an' shifted me about—
 So they have well-nigh soured me, an' wore my old heart out;
 But still I've borne up pretty well, an' wasn't much put down,
 Till Charley went to the poormaster, an' put me on the town.

Over the hill to the poorhouse—my child'r'n dear, good-bye!
 Many a night I've watched you when only God was nigh;
 And God'll judge between us; but I will al'ays pray
 That you shall never suffer the half I do today.

I read these old and homely verses to you because I believe they have a meaning for us today. They were written as a protest against the disintegration of family solidarity and the decline of filial affection and duty. It might be well for the families of America if this old volume could be reprinted and widely circulated and read and reread by the grown-up children of the land and their parents as well.

ETERNAL MARRIAGE THE FOUNDATION OF AN ENDURING HOME

I am happy to belong to a people whose concept of home and enduring family relationship lies at the very basis of human happiness here and hereafter. I have long felt that if the Prophet Joseph Smith had never made any other contribution to the world than the incomparably beautiful and satisfying principle of eternal marriage as the foundation of a good home, which, when projected into the life to come shall be the very substance of our heaven and our exaltation, he would have been entitled to a place on the very summit of man's esteem and acclaim. In all the history of the restored gospel of our Lord no doctrine or practice has been so distinctive. It is largely because we have such faith and confidence in the perpetuity of home and family that we have built our most elaborate and expensive structures—temples of God—wherein man and wife and children have been bound in an everlasting union transcending the limitations of mortal life.

How inestimable is the comfort this surpassing concept has brought to the families of the Church. Every aspect of home and individual life has been influenced by it. It has vastly increased love and respect for parents. It has induced deeper affection and more

mutual concern among the inmates of the home. One of the greatest deterrents of wrongdoing has been the fear of losing a place in the eternal family circle. In times of sorrow and bereavement this lofty principle has been the greatest consolation. It is today in these tragic times when Latter-day Saint parents receive the sad word that a son has been lost in battle. They know that he is not lost. They weep in the deprivation of his company, but they know that death cannot break the bond which binds their son to them. Only sin can do that. When the family is reestablished in the life to come, his chair will not be vacant. The cruelty of war and battle may have shortened his mortal existence, but the destroying angel has no power over his soul or the tie that binds him to his kin.

THE DUTY OF CARING FOR AGED PARENTS

Now, my brethren, and friends who listen, does it not seem strange that men and women who subscribe to such noble concepts of family cohesion can reconcile themselves to a procedure and a philosophy, which, when carried to its logical conclusion, would nullify those natural reciprocal feelings of devotion and obligation which children should manifest for good parents, who have striven all their lives to establish the closely knit family ties which I have mentioned? How can sons and daughters who owe everything they have—their education, their ideals of life, their capacity to acquire independent living and their characters—to parents who have worked, sacrificed, prayed, wept, and striven for them to the exhaustion of their bodies and their energies, be parties to a scheme which would make their fathers and mothers the objects of charity and cast the burden of their support on the community and stigmatize them with the loss of independence and self-respect? Is it any less than this when sons and daughters consent to and even advocate disposing of the old home or the farm, or the retirement from respectable, even though modest jobs, which yield at least part of a living and contrive in ways that will not always stand too close scrutiny to make the old folks eligible for the receipt of a public gratuity? Do you think that such a practice can in any way promote family unity and those emotions and feelings which must always underlie the mutual devotion that makes for a true home? I believe that you do not. For I believe that the great preponderance of all our families, on mature reflection and with a clear understanding of the ends to which we are heading, will reach the conclusion that this procedure I have spoken of is not calculated to promote our higher ideals of home and family.

I think my food would choke me if knew that while I could procure bread my aged father or mother or near kin were on public relief. I believe a decent family pride is a salutary thing with any people and in any nation. I don't mean a family pride built on aristocracy and vanity which makes for class distinction and which to-

day is one of the distinct deterrents to national progress. I mean a family pride in wholesome, self-reliant, and enterprising living—a family pride that promotes the utmost solicitude for each member of the family. It wouldn't hurt my feelings to hear a family boast that through all vicissitudes they had come to each other's help and had never received public assistance. I have known brothers and sisters to put each other through school by hard, self-sacrificing toil. I cannot imagine any of these permitting their father and mother to come to public relief.

I do not intend to discuss political aspects of this question. I can well conceive of circumstances which may warrant public assistance to old people who are without kindred, or whose near relatives are themselves destitute, especially where there are no such generous provisions for the care of the aged as this Church makes. It may be difficult to arrange to care for such cases without enlarging the scope of relief to an unwarranted extent. I would rather err on the side of mercy than otherwise.

My chief concern in the matter, as I have tried to indicate, is in the pronounced tendency observable all around us toward the disintegration of family solidarity. I know this is a bad omen for the Church and for America. I believe in family life. I venerate parental and filial love and duty. I worship at the shrine of the God-ordained eternal home. I pray that its genius of affection and unity may ever be preserved and that our families shall be endowed with the concepts, the courage, the pride and the natural affection that will keep our beloved parents from "going over the hill to (any form of) poorhouse," in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Perhaps we may be justified in surmising that the listening audience this morning, including the *Church of the Air* audience, has numbered over ten million. Every lover of truth has undoubtedly responded approvingly to the great messages that have been given by these three brethren, and all have had their souls lifted up by the inspiring strains of the Tabernacle Choir. Not many of those millions, however, realize that the members of this renowned musical organization come here every week to practice on Thursday, and every Sunday morning to render this service to the nation, without any monetary remuneration. It is a service of love. God bless them and continue to inspire them that they may be happy in the realization that their efforts are doing good, encouraging more people in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ than they realize. They have the blessing of the entire audience, the entire Church, and the approval of God.