

had joined the Church in England and emigrated to Zion, but he, himself, wanted to know whether or not there was anything in this thing called "Mormonism." Learning that David Whitmer was still alive, he went down to Richmond to interview him, and Brother Moyle writes that he never in his life cross-examined anyone so vigorously as he did David Whitmer.

As Brother Moyle related it, it strengthened my faith, and as I have contemplated it since, I have thought how easy it would have been for David Whitmer to say: "My boy, that was fifty-two years ago. We were mistaken; we were young. Joseph Smith had an influence over us, and we were mistaken." But he did not say that. He could have said it because he had previously been quoted by the Encyclopedia Britannica as having denied his testimony. He did not say that, but he did say: "I want to say to you once and for all that the testimony that I bore then is as true today as it was the day we uttered it." That was in the eighties, over fifty years since the testimony of the three witnesses had been inscribed on the flyleaf of the Book of Mormon.

### *Joseph Smith a True Prophet*

My brethren and sisters, my time is up. The Prophet Joseph lives as real a living Prophet today as he ever did. His motives were misunderstood then; they are misunderstood now, but there is no question about his integrity or his divine calling. When men like John Taylor and the Youngs and the Kimballs and others came to him and associated with him, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, who were cut off from the Church, who knew him and associated with him intimately—I repeat—when men such as these associated with him and recognized in him a Prophet of the Living God, then we may say that critics of the Prophet today need also to take cognizance of these testimonies as well as of men who questioned his motives and who vilified him and maligned him as did apostates of his time and as is done in our day by those who do not have the spirit of the gospel.

God bless us and help us to appreciate that he was a Prophet of the Living God, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The congregation and the Choirs joined in singing the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel," Hymn Book page 194, L. D. S. Hymns No. 231.

### ELDER MARVIN O. ASHTON

#### *First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

Some of you will never know what volumes of humility encompass some of us about twice a year. I sincerely trust that whatever I say will be in keeping with this conference and the spirit that is here. Someone has said something about "goose flesh". I have been so thrilled in this conference, that I think the above expression is a good

one. I wish to express my appreciation at this time to my Heavenly Father for the gospel and for the thrill that we get in its contemplation.

#### SUGGESTIONS MADE BY BISHOPS

The last few conferences that I attended in the stakes, I have taken the liberty, if you please, of calling on each bishop in the leadership meeting and of putting the question to him this way: "If you were in our position, that is, we who are conducting this conference, what would you like discussed in the meetings that are to follow?"

One made one suggestion and one the other. One bishop said this: "Once in a while I think it is a good thing to remind members how much the Church appreciates what they are doing." Now, I suppose there is nothing new about that; but it is very, very timely.

#### PRAISE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

We have all come here to have our "batteries charged," as the common expression goes. I want you folks in the stakes and the wards to know that we who go out to see you get our batteries charged from you. Inspiration comes up the ladder, and it comes down the ladder. We get inspiration from you in your lives when we see the tithing you people pay, the meeting houses you build, the fast offerings you make, donations to the welfare, and whatnot and whatnot. It goes on and on. But may I say this: Don't ever worry about that. I was talking to a railroad man the other day. He said: "The most dangerous thing on the track is an engine and a coal car." What he meant by that was this—I suppose he was referring to the observation that has been made by Brother Callis—we sometimes run light and that is where our trouble is. An engine and a coal car trying to make the curve at fifty or sixty miles an hour can't do it, and they tip over.

Don't worry if you are loaded too heavily. It will do you good. That is what the world needs. You will always find those people that come up to you and sympathize with you, and a lot of people who do nothing themselves but go around with a chip on their shoulder. Someone has said:

You can bet your life when someone goes around with a chip on his shoulder, there is more wood farther up.

#### MESSAGES FROM LEADERS

The meeting yesterday morning impressed me emphatically in two ways: first, the message of our dear President—that message which he generally gives. He is the embodiment of it. I am not trying to compliment him too highly—I do not believe in that stuff. I mean his message of good will—that this is one great big world, a great big stage, and all the people on it are God's people. If we could just eternally burn that into ourselves, we would all be better off. That is the spiritual side of things.

Second, as you heard President Clark read the financial statement, he read it as if he knew what he was talking about. And he does. His message to us breathed stability. It emphatically indicated watchdog care in the spending of Church funds. In the message of our two leaders we were reminded of a balance of the spirit and the temporal. When this Church thinks of nothing but money, it is a "goner." When this Church thinks of only spiritual things, and we haven't our feet on the ground and we won't hold water financially, we are on dangerous ground. Thank the Lord for that balanced condition of this Church, and may it always be that way.

#### PRACTICAL BALANCE NECESSARY

What is true of the Church is true of an individual. Are you balanced? Am I balanced? The man that thinks of nothing but the hereafter and stumbles over the practical things of life is really a picture. It is sad. I am not talking about the man that has his troubles financially—I am talking about the man who eternally looks over the horizon and never watches his feet below. That fellow, in an exaggerated case, is a leech. He is like the cuckoo bird that lays its eggs in another bird's nest. Yes, others have to hatch the eggs and raise these additional children. What gumption this impractical fellow lacks has to be furnished by someone else.

You know there has been nothing so interesting to me the last two months as this thing they call mistletoe. Mistletoe you find largely in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. I guess you find it up this way sometimes, too. But you see some trees festooned with the mistletoe; that mistletoe is a leech. I don't know why they ever connected the mistletoe with affection, because every time that mistletoe gives that tree a kiss, if enough mistletoes do the same, the tree is a "goner." Yes, in using mistletoe language you can kiss the tree goodbye. And that is going to be the trouble with our nation if we are not very careful. I saw some trees down in Texas that were just a mass of mistletoe. A tree so burdened is going to get the ten count. Those things are leeches. A man that is not practically balanced is like the mistletoe; he is like the cuckoo bird. A man, on the other hand, who thinks nothing but money, money, money, is also a "goner".

#### ADVICE AGAINST GREED FOR RICHES

The observation I would like to make here to you is that many people holding positions in our Church are getting this money bug. I take my hat off to the man who has insurance and provides for a rainy day. A man is a coward if he doesn't do that. I am talking about the man who has accumulated plenty and gets the disease or bug so that he eternally chases after more, more, more, and in that chasing he neglects his duties. Some men take the cream of their energy for making money, and when they come to the Lord's work, they've got nothing but skim milk, and some of it is awfully blue.

He who longs to be rich is like a man who drinks sea water; the more he drinks the more thirsty he becomes and never leaves off drinking until he perishes.

I remember a story in the scriptures. It was an observation of the Christ. A certain man built huge barns and jammed the barns with grain and the necessities of life. He had enough to last for years. He shut himself off from the world and sat down and chuckled to himself that he had so much. I think that it was then that God said this unto him:

Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. (Luke 12:20.)

You know, I like a cartoon—it says so much without talking unmercifully. Down in Arizona I saw this cartoon:

It was of an elderly gentleman on his deathbed. I guess he had placed for his comfort his stocks and bonds and his money all around his bed. You can scarcely see him for his accumulations. The whole picture told the story that the end was near. The doctor with watch in hand held the old fellow's pulse, and the nurse from the expression on her face was ready for the ultimate. In that tense moment so vividly pictured, the old man, with his hands on his gold, tenaciously blurted out: "Doc, I'm not going to go until I can take these with me."

Now, when you go, you will leave everything. Some men get their minds so much on cattle, so much on stocks and bonds, so much on sheep that they crowd everything else out. Some of our leaders in our organizations get that disease. I once heard of a fellow that got so in love with sheep that he just kept grabbing, grabbing, grabbing, and finally a bishop's court was held to settle to whom a certain herd of sheep belonged. And the court decided against him. When the trial ended, he shook his fist and said: "Well, you've got the sheep, but I'll have those sheep in the next world." Well, now, I don't know too much about those things, but I'll bet that if he has those sheep in the next world he'll have to put some asbestos blankets on them so they will stand the heat.

Some people get this grabbing habit so intensified in their systems that it becomes second nature for them to grab, grab, grab. It so permeates their being that it works with them like reflex action. May I be pardoned for a little repetition? Let me illustrate what I mean:

A fellow of this grabbing disposition was working on a ripsaw in a lumber mill. In the course of his ripping a two-by-four; "bingo," off came a finger. Instead of letting his companions in the mill rush him to first aid, he persistently dug into the sawdust to find the lost finger. But in his efforts to repossess the one finger, "zip," away went another. Notwithstanding the efforts of his companions to pull him away so that he wouldn't bleed to death, he now persisted more feverishly than ever to find the two lost fingers in the sawdust.

At this point in the story a workman came to the scene that knew of his grabbing friend's potentiality. He asked them what was the

matter. They told him. He said, "If that's all you are worried about, I can get that for you very easily." The newcomer to the scene put his hand in his pocket, pulled out a quarter, flipped it into the sawdust, and both lost fingers came up and grabbed the quarter. That's what I call reflex action.

Some organizations succeed in spite of the men at the head, in spite of what they do and what they don't do. I remember a cartoon of an old negro fishing. They sometimes say the operation of the gospel is like fishing. He was fishing, half asleep. The line jerked and the colored man was brought to his feet with a terrific pull. He felt the boat pulling in the direction of the large fish on the end of the line. The fish was so big that our colored fisherman was really being taken for a fast merry-go-round around that lake. In his bewilderment, he looked down at the splash the fish was making and cried out: "Am I fishin' or am you niggerin'?" Some of you people who hold high positions, you are not fishin', you are just niggerin'. Some of you want titles, the honor, but you go to sleep holding the line.

#### HELPFULNESS A DUTY

I want to come back to this thought again, the things that count in this world are written over the horizon. Let us be kind to one another and think of something besides money and ambition. That is the trouble with the world.

Ike Eisenhower, the beloved general, was giving a talk to the navy boys the other day, and he made this observation:

Cultivate mutual understanding of anyone you have to get along with.

Some good writer commenting on it—I wish I could recall his name so I could give him credit—told this little parable I leave with you. The parable is as follows:

A newspaper man interviewed a farmer who had won many blue ribbons in raising corn. The newspaper man said: "I understand you are the winner of some blue ribbons." "Yes." "But," he said, "what gets me is that when you win a blue ribbon you take your select corn and pass it on to your neighbors, and they are competing against you for the ribbons. What is the sense in it?" The old man replied: "These neighbors all around me have been raising corn, and if I don't give them select corn, their bad corn is going to pollinate my good corn."

I read a strange story of a man by the name of Pheister. While experimenting in the raising of a hybrid corn, when the corn was in the flower or tassel stage, he tied paper sacks around the tassels so he could govern the pollinating of it.

You can't do that in life. Your neighbors are there scattering their pollen, as it were, or influence, and so are you—you are living with them. As you help them they help you.

. . . give to the world the best you have, and the best will come back to you. (*Life's Mirror.*)

A month ago, going down towards the Mexican line, down where the lizards, as the boy puts it, lay on their backs and fan themselves, we stopped in a little food shop. We didn't get much bodily food, but we did come away with some food for the mind that was hanging on the walls. First:

What a wonderful world this would be if I loved others like I love me.

The one that went right with it read:

Some people think when they cast their bread upon the water it should return toasted and buttered.

Now wait a minute. You may think that is rather ridiculous. That man who sent his corn, his select corn to his neighbors, was casting bread upon the waters, but he got it back toasted and buttered.

May the Lord help us to be kind. Let us remember what is ahead of us. Let's not look gloomy these days. Let's face our problems. Our grandparents did it. Let's keep our chins to the sun and face whatever is ahead of us. We play our greatest tunes in time of trouble, and the challenge is there. You do your duty; let me do mine; and let's smile—smile if it kills you, and if some people smiled it would kill them.

May the Lord bless us. Amen.

## PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Last Sunday was fast day. I attended fast meeting in one of the wards in this city and heard some faithful testimonies borne. One young woman in her testimony intimated that she did not know so very much about the gospel but this one thing she did know, that the gospel brings peace to the soul. I thought that was a wonderful testimony, and I concluded that that woman is living her religion, for those Latter-day Saints who are living their religion do have peace to their souls, and those who are not living their religion I am afraid that their souls are frequently very much disturbed. This is one of the great blessings that the Lord has for the faithful of his children, peace to the soul.

As this congregation stood up to sing, I thought what an awe-inspiring sight this is. It is inspiring as we sit, but when we stood it seemed that there were more of us, and then I thought, "Why, we are only a sprinkling of the faithful members of the Church," and I thank the Lord for them, and I certainly do pray that he will bless them and reward them for their faithfulness. And there are some who are not faithful for which we are sorry. God bless them that they may see their mistakes; that they may take advantage of their opportunities of receiving the saving ordinances of the gospel they have not yet received; and that they may learn to know that the Lord