

be Elbert R. Curtis, former secretary of the European Mission, former president of the Western States Mission, president of the Sugar House Stake of Zion and recently sustained as general superintendent of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I am very grateful, my brothers and sisters, for the emphasis that has been placed, in this session and in this whole conference, upon the youth of the Church. With you I love the youth with all my soul, and I desire with all my heart that they may love the truth and live it that they may be saved here in the earth. There is nothing that I shall ask more of life than that my children shall love the gospel and serve the Lord, and I know that there is nothing more that you will ask in behalf of yourselves.

CONTRAST AT FUNERAL SERVICE

Yesterday as I listened to Elder Bowen in his masterful way deliver that great address on stability, my mind went to a funeral service I had attended just previously. In that service I saw a lovely Latter-day Saint family bowed down in grief. One of their members had been taken away. She had died in faith. The other members of the family, surrounding that casket, also were filled with faith and that blow of death which had struck in that home was greatly softened because of the faith that those people had the knowledge and the testimony concerning immortality and what the gospel does for us. I saw sitting in the audience a direct contrast to the scene around that casket, for there I saw two men who had once been faithful in the Church, men who had had the pearl of great price within their own hands, and then, because they loved worldliness more than they loved spirituality, they sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. They gave up their membership in the Church. They loved darkness more than they loved light, and there they sat looking at this faithful family. I thought, oh, what a contrast! Oh, what stability in their characters might have done for them! Oh, if they could have been in the position of those faithful ones who, though mourning at the passing of a loved one, had remained true and faithful and stable in the faith. Had they really appreciated their membership in the Church?

Our main object in life is to be good Latter-day Saints. To be good Latter-day Saints means that we work out our salvation here in the earth, through the facilities of the Church, and teach our children to do likewise. In order to obtain that objective we must so plan our affairs that everything we do in life will bring us nearer that goal. We must choose from life those things which will so affect our thoughts and habits as to bring us nearer the Church

into closer harmony with it and its program. It is by cooperating with the Church and its program, laboring in its organizations and sustaining its institutions that we work out our salvation here in the earth.

THE RIGHT OF CHOICE

As we choose those things which shall become a part of our daily lives, let us remember that there is an opposition in all things. We have our free agency, as Elder Moyle taught us. We have our right of choice. If we choose certain things in life, they will drag us down and tend to separate us from close affiliation with the Church. Such things become barriers between us and our life's great objective. On the other hand, if we choose those things which will bring us closer to the Church, we will live the gospel better, and we will be better Latter-day Saints. Every day we must make decisions affecting our lives. Some of those decisions may seem small, but nevertheless they affect our thinking and either bring us nearer to God or help to remove us farther away.

GOOD READING HABITS

One of the men who have influenced my life for good and to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude is one of my former bishops, John C. Duncan of the First Ward here in Salt Lake City. I love that man because of his great stability. He measures up to what Elder Bowen was talking about yesterday. I remember his teachings so well. He always has been, and still is, a great advocate of good reading habits. He has always told us that what we read helps to make us what we are. Naturally, what we read affects our thinking, and as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Bishop Duncan has always taught us that we should read the periodicals of the Church, because of the wholesome influence those periodicals have in our lives.

There are, I suppose, about a quarter of a million Latter-day Saint homes. Every one of those homes would be a better home if the people who live there would read and study and digest the messages that are carried in the periodicals of the Church. There would be in them a greater respect for virtue, better observance of the high standards of the Church; there would be greater love and brotherhood; there would be more spirituality.

Every one of you desires to know the mind of the leaders of the Church, the advice of the First Presidency. We do not often come into their presence. We do not often have the opportunity of hearing what they have to say. But every one of you may feel their influence and receive the messages they have to give if you will take the periodicals of the Church and read those messages.

THE IMPROVEMENT ERA

President Smith is widely loved. When he goes to speak in a meetinghouse, the building is overflowing with people. You love

him because of his love for humanity. You love him for what he tells you and the spirit and the influence he carries with him. But you cannot be in his presence every day, nor every month. But President Smith is the editor of *The Improvement Era*, and every month there is an editorial from him in *The Improvement Era*, which would do you and your family much good if you would read it. I wouldn't for anything pass by that *Era* every month. I love it, and I love the messages it carries. I wouldn't for anything miss the editorials that appear there under the name of the President of this Church. I always get great stimulus out of it. I am a better man because I read what he says, because I love the influence he carries. Although I cannot be in his presence every day, I can read what he has said, and through it feel his influence.

President Smith is assisted in the editorship of *The Improvement Era* by Dr. John A. Widtsoe and President Richard L. Evans. These men are a great inspiration to the Church. You are in excellent company when you are in their presence, and if you want to have their influence about you and the children in your home, then take *The Improvement Era*.

I do not know what the exact circulation of *The Improvement Era* is, but I know that it is not what I would like to see it. I think that if we have a quarter of a million homes in this Church we ought to have nearly a quarter of a million circulation for *The Improvement Era*, because it ought to be in every home for the good it will do to you and to your children.

THE RELIEF SOCIETY MAGAZINE

I feel exactly the same way about the *Relief Society Magazine*. I do not know anywhere where you can find a magazine that will do you as much good, as a woman and as a mother, as does the *Relief Society Magazine*. It is published and edited by women of great faith and great spirituality as well as of great mentality. Every woman in this Church should have the *Relief Society Magazine* and read it. Wherever there is a Latter-day Saint home, there should be the *Relief Society Magazine*. Wherever there is a Latter-day Saint mother, there should be the *Relief Society Magazine*.

You will be a better Latter-day Saint, and you will be a better mother if you will take the *Relief Society Magazine* in your home. Your husband and your children likewise will be benefited by it because it does carry the spirit and the very essence of the gospel of Christ right into your home.

If you want better homes such as President McKay has been talking about here, then you bring into your home these magazines which help you so. I again say that I believe that the *Relief Society Magazine* should be in every home, and therefore that magazine also should have a circulation in excess of two hundred thousand.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND

And then, we are also interested in our little children. Don't you love your little ones and don't you fast and pray for them, and don't you hope that they will be converted to the gospel of Christ, and don't you hope that they will grow up to be stalwart members of this Church? Then place in their hands every facility that you can to help them to get this faith deep in their hearts and to establish habits and customs which will be in compliance with the teachings of the Church. Do you know one of the greatest and best helps you can get to place in the hands of your children? It is a magazine published by the Primary Association of this Church, and it is called *The Children's Friend*. It is the grandest, by all odds the best, child's magazine, that I have ever seen anywhere. It will do a great service for your children. The children of the Church love it. It provides wonderful things with which to build faith and character. It also gives them entertainment. It gives to the children of the Church that something which they love and which they need.

It is indeed a mistake to suppose that *The Children's Friend* is only to go into the homes of those people who happen to be workers in the Primary Association. Every child in this Church is entitled to the benefit that can come to him or her through the use of that wonderful magazine. If you love your children and if you desire to build faith in their hearts and to develop character, put in their hands this valuable child's magazine. Whether you yourself happen to be a Primary worker or not, your children need the increased faith and strength that can come to them through the use of that magazine. Take it. It is one of the helps that God has given to you to assist you in teaching and rearing your children.

Then there is another magazine, *The Instructor* which is provided by the Sunday School, primarily for teachers. It, too, is designed to build faith and character and stability here in the Church.

THE DESERET NEWS

There is another publication which I love with all my heart, and that is *The Deseret News*, a publication which is owned and operated entirely by the Church. As President McKay said the other night, *The Deseret News* is your newspaper. It belongs to you, and you should be interested in it. You should be interested in seeing it grow and develop.

One of the great merchandising experts in the United States is a man named Amos Parrish. I have always enjoyed reading his magazine. One of the things he teaches merchants is that they are to sell their products for what they will do for the people, and he tells the buyers to buy products for what those products will do for them, for the type of service they will render.

What does *The Deseret News* do for you?

In the first place, *The Deseret News* brings to you a fine high class news and feature coverage which is in keeping with the very highest traditions of American journalism. That newspaper has been very greatly improved in the recent past. It is a first-class newspaper, one of which you may well be proud, one which will serve you well in your home and one which will serve your children equally well.

What else does *The Deseret News* do for you? *The Deseret News* stands for Americanism. Whether you are a member of this Church or not, *The Deseret News* will help to make you a better American, and everybody needs to be better Americans today. So I commend to you that newspaper which builds patriotism, genuine Americanism in your hearts. It stands for the Constitution of the United States which has been referred to here today, and its editors believe with all their hearts that the Constitution was God-inspired. It promotes greater and finer communities, and better family life. You are all of you interested in cleaner communities, in higher standards of living. You would like to see reduced the vice that is so apparent in so many of our communities. I would like you to know that *The Deseret News* stands for the high standards of the Church. It stands for clean communities, clean government, and clean living. If you want to be a good citizen and enjoy clean community life, *The Deseret News* will help you to do so.

Much has been said here about the youth. I tell you that *The Deseret News* will serve your youth. You know and I know what faith-destroyers cigarets are. You and I know that a cigaret will help to destroy the faith and, if it continues on, the very salvation of your children. You may place *The Deseret News* with confidence and safety in the hands of your children, because the pages of that newspaper will never tempt your children to take a smoke. Likewise it never will tempt your children to drink beer or hard liquor, because such advertisements are not there. *The Deseret News* is a clean newspaper, and it will help you and your children to live the gospel better if you have it in your homes.

You come here to these conferences and you want to know what the Authorities of the Church are thinking and talking about. *The Deseret News* brings to you almost daily the attitude of the leaders of this Church. I would not have you think that they read and study everything before it goes into the newspaper, because, of course, that could not be. But the general policy of *The Deseret News* is the reflection of the policy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and if you want to know what the general attitude of this Church is on most subjects, *The Deseret News* will bring it to you.

The Deseret News also will give you another great service in that it brings to you its Church Section which, in my opinion, is one of the very finest things this Church has ever produced in periodical form. Every Church worker will do his work better if he has that Church Section. Your homes will have more faith if you read that

Church Section. Your children will love the gospel better if they read that Church Section. I commend it to you with all my heart and all my soul.

SUPPORT OF CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

There are many other things that I could say about this newspaper, but time is fast going on. My brethren and my sisters, some of you say, "We cannot afford to take all these Church publications." I ask you in all seriousness how can you afford not to take them? An investment in the Church publications costs but very little, but it is an investment in good living. You cannot go to the corner store and buy a dollar's worth of character or a quarter's worth of faith. Yet these are the things above all else for which we strive in life. Are we going to count our dimes so carefully—dimes that so many times otherwise we throw away for far less valuable things—that we are going to keep from our children and our homes these faith-building, character-building influences? How can we afford not to take them?

I remember Paul once said that the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of thee." The head cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of thee." (See I Corinthians 12:14-25.) Is there one of us knowing the dangers that surround our children in this day of lax morality, in this day of smoking, drinking, and carousing, is there one of us who will say that a single safeguard of the Church is unnecessary?

These publications are safeguards of the Church and I pray that we may have the vision to see them as such, and that we may not say to any one of them, "I have no need of thee," and for this I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ELBERT R. CURTIS

General Superintendent of Y.M.M.I.A.

I wonder if any of you know how far it is up those stairs. As President Smith referred to some of the past privileges and responsibilities that have been mine, if he had just added, "and presently frightened almost to death," he would have brought you up to date.

This has been a wonderful conference. The spirit of it has been such that it almost takes the fear from my heart. Surely you appreciate that a man may not respond to such a calling as has now come to me without a spirit of humility and a desire to serve the Lord to the utmost of his ability.

In his remarks, Bishop LeGrand Richards suggested that as a man gives of his time and his efforts to the work of the Lord that the Lord makes it up to him, puts thoughts into his mind. In fact, he suggested thoughts that will make money. I have not prayed and do not for the temporal blessings of the earth,