

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH

Semi-Annual

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OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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thrilled to hear their testimony, glad to take them in and feed them and help them.

Brethren and sisters, let us be loyal to our Church, and to the men who lead us. Let us remember that our Heavenly Father is not very far from us, and his promise is very definite, for he tells us that "the obedient shall eat the good of the land." Let us therefore not feel to criticise, but feel to be obedient, that the blessings may come to our families, to our homes. That will come through obedience.

God bless and keep us all in the line of our duty, loyal, constant and true to those who preside over us, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

It is a source of great satisfaction to the leaders of this Church, who have at heart the welfare of the Latter-day Saints, to see the many evidences of faithfulness on their part. I thought this when I saw men and women rushing toward this building this morning, anxious to attend the opening session of this wonderful conference, and I have thought since that there are many other ways in which the Latter-day Saints are evidencing their love of the truth and their support of the authorities of the Church. The generous response that is made by our young men and women who leave their homes and loved ones and go out into the world, representing the Church and the Lord in the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, is an evidence of faith on their part and also on the part of their parents.

EVIDENCES OF FAITHFULNESS AND DEVOTION

The response made to calls to various positions of trust and responsibility in the ministry of the Lord at home, in the various organizations of the Church; the faithfulness and devotion manifested by men and women in the various positions which they occupy in the Church; the reports from wards and stakes and missions of accomplishments there and of the faithfulness of the members of the Church—all these are very gratifying.

We cannot help but realize however that these evidences of faithfulness are confined to but a portion of our people; that there are others in the Church who are very indifferent to the faith of their parents and the responsibility that rests upon them as members. This is a source of much regret.

THE LORD'S PURPOSE

The Lord made known to his servant Abraham the purpose he had in the organizing of this earth and his purpose in placing men here:

And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell.

We will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord God shall command them.

Now, brethren and sisters, that is the end that our Father in heaven and those associated with him had in view in the creating of this earth—placing us here to see if we would keep all of his commandments. I wonder how well we are meeting that obligation.

OUR CAPTAIN'S PLATFORM OF PRINCIPLES

Aside from the commandments, we read also in the Pearl of Great Price—in the Book of Moses—about a great controversy that took place in the world of spirits, and that one noble spirit came forth who was the first-born in the spirit—afterwards the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh—and presented a platform of principles which was accepted, couched in simple terms: "Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." There was a sufficient number of those spirits of men that stood with him, our Captain, upon that platform of principles, to prevail. We were among them, brethren and sisters, and we upheld the standard of principles: "Thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." That principle had reference to this life as well as to the spirit life.

When the Savior came to earth he renewed his declaration and repeatedly stated that he came because his Father had sent him, that he came to do the will of his Father. On one occasion, when he was addressing the Nephites when he visited them on this American continent and preached the Gospel to them, after his crucifixion and ascension into heaven, he stated that he had come because he was sent of the Father, and that he came to do the will of his Father. Then he asked them: "Now, what manner of men ought ye to be?" And he answered the question for them: "Verily I say unto you, even as I am."

THE WILL OF THE LORD

I do not know how we could read any other meaning into it than that the Father sent Jesus our Lord and Savior here to do his will, and that we were all sent here for the same purpose. So to me—and I think it should be to all Latter-day Saints—the expressed will of our Heavenly Father is as forceful as a direct command, and when he says in the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom it is his will that we observe and keep that word, refraining from the use of intoxicating drinks and hot drinks, and the use of tobacco, we should be obedient thereto. Notwithstanding there is no mention of tea and coffee in that revelation we have known from the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the present time that every leader of this Church who has been the mouthpiece of God has interpreted the revelation to mean that tea and coffee are in-

cluded among those things which are forbidden. In other words, it is the will of the Father that we should not use tea and coffee.

GOD'S MOUTHPIECE UNTO US

And recently, because of the prevalence of the sale and use of legalized beer, the President of this Church and his associates have considered seriously that problem, and have declared that the use of beer is a violation of the Word of Wisdom, hence a violation of the expressed will of our Father in heaven.

Are we willing, as Latter-day Saints, to sustain and to support the President of this Church as God's mouthpiece unto us—a prophet, seer and revelator—and sing with sincere heart and purpose:

We thank thee, O God, for a prophet,
To guide us in these latter days;
We thank thee for sending the Gospel,
To lighten our minds with its rays.

When the President of the Church stands up in general conference and declares in favor of prohibition, it has been a source of great regret to me that prominent, leading, faithful men in this Church have felt justified in voting in favor of the return of liquor as against the expressed will of the President of the Church, who I believe expressed the mind and will of God unto this people.

CONSISTENT AND CONSCIENTIOUS ACTION

We are here, brethren and sisters, not only to be proven to see whether we will keep all of God's commandments, but to see whether we will do his will and permit the authorities of the Church to interpret his mind and will to us. Is not that consistent?

May the Lord help us, brethren and sisters, to be consistent, to act conscientiously.

I have thought that there are some doctrines taught by some of the religious creeds of the world which many men and women of intelligence cannot subscribe to, when they answer according to their own conscience, but do so because they are the creeds of the church to which they belong, and I place these religious organizations and political parties in the same class.

God help us to live according to the light which has come to us, to support and sustain those whom the Lord has given unto us, for they are prophets in very deed, and they will be so to this people if we will follow their lead. No man or woman has ever gone astray, or ever will do so, when in full accord with the Presidency of this Church and the Twelve Apostles.

My admonition to the Latter-day Saints is that we heed the advice and counsel given us in this general conference, that we take the same

home to ourselves, and that we be resolved that we will be doers of the word of God, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.

May the Lord help and bless us to this end, I pray earnestly, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Sister Judith Anderson Beard sang a solo, "How beautiful upon the mountains," after which, at the suggestion of President Heber J. Grant, the congregation arose and sang two verses of the hymn, "O say what is truth?"

ELDER DON B. COLTON

President of the Eastern States Mission

These words from the 128th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants come to me as I rise before you this afternoon:

Now, what do we hear in the gospel which we have received? A voice of gladness! A voice of mercy from heaven; and a voice of truth out of the earth; glad tidings for the dead; a voice of gladness for the living and the dead; glad tidings of great joy. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that bring glad tidings of good things, and that say unto Zion: Behold, thy God reigneth! As the dews of Carmel, so shall the knowledge of God descend upon them!

And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah! Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfilment of the prophets—the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca County, declaring the three witnesses to bear record of the book!

The outstanding event during the last six months in the Eastern States Mission was the dedication of the monument on the Hill Cumorah, near Palmyra, New York. Reference was made this morning to this event. The work of the mission has centered, during the summer, largely around that place. Our missionaries visited every home within a radius of twenty miles of the Hill Cumorah. More than seventy thousand people live within that area.

We are deeply grateful to the Lord for the blessings that have been given to us in our mission. We are especially grateful for the fine publicity that was given through the newspapers, magazines, and over the radios concerning the dedication of the monument. Thousands of articles were published. The Hill Cumorah has continued to be a place of interest for many people since the dedication services were held. No day has passed, since the dedication of the monument, that has not seen many people come to that hill. Forty, I think, is the smallest number, and we have had as high as seven hundred and seventy in a day visit the monument and listen to the message of the missionaries who have been stationed in that locality.

I do not know whether you fully appreciate, as we do, the blessings of publicity. The messages of our brethren who visited us were written in detail and printed in literally hundreds of the papers in that mission.