

THE WORD OF WISDOM IN PRACTICAL TERMS

Extracts from addresses
delivered in the Tabernacle
at Salt Lake City, Utah

Prepared by the
General Campaign Committee of the Church
of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Against the use of Alcohol and Tobacco
Salt Lake City, Utah

Services in the Tabernacle, Sunday, May 24, 1931, culminated the campaign of one week conducted by the auxiliary organizations and the Board of Education of the L. D. S. Church against the use of tobacco. The move bore the endorsement of the First Presidency.

Among others Elder Paul C. Kimball, who had been a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, England, and Dr. Creed Haymond, delivered addresses, extracts of which follow and will be read with intense interest.

EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESS BY ELDER PAUL C. KIMBALL

In the fall of 1927 I went to Oxford University, England, and entered a university that is entirely different from anything that I know of in this country. It is a university of six thousand students, nearly all of them men. Most of these students previously attended what are called public schools. We would call them private schools. There they are subjected to the severest kind of discipline. They have to be in bed at certain hours at night, specified hours are set for study and also for play, and they are all watched very carefully that they do not smoke or drink. If they are found doing either, they are expelled from their school. They finish public school at about the age of eighteen; then they go to Oxford University, if they are fortunate in gaining admittance, and there they have no supervision whatever. You can imagine the condition that arises when approximately three thousand young men are released from the supervision of public schools and are sent away to the university where they have no supervisor over them.

As A Result

The first thing they discover is that they don't have to go to class unless they want to—one of the delightful things, perhaps, about Oxford University. Also there are no rolls called in the classes that are conducted. If a man wants to spend all his time reading novels, that is his prerogative. They don't have to take any examination at the end of each quarter. The only time they have to take an exam-

ination is at the end of three years, four years or ten years, or such time as they feel they are ready to take the degree that they are after. As a result, a great many of these boys go in for smoking and drinking on a large scale; and I think a condition exists there that has not its equal in any of our American colleges.

When I arrived at Oxford I found that everyone played some kind of game. I thought of playing English rugby, but soon found that it is entirely different from our game. In the first attempt I made to play it I held the ball under my arm when I was tackled and went down as we do here. The rest of the players on the field crowded around me shouting, "Heel it! Heel it!" That's all I remember. I came to later and found that they had kicked at the ball and kicked my head instead, trying to get the ball away from me, and then after carrying me off the field had gone on with the game. After this try I decided to play some other game. So I started to practice rowing in the fall of 1927. In the spring I rowed number five in one of the fastest college boats that has raced at Oxford—a boat that entered in six races and won them all. When I returned to the Varsity the following autumn, a number of groups wanted me to coach for them. You see, at Oxford there are no professional coaches, and a man who has rowed with a successful crew is usually asked to take on a coaching job the following year.

Rather Weak

One group of young men came to me and said, "We would like you to coach our crew for rowing. None of us has ever rowed before, but we think you

can teach us the rudiments." Truthfully, I felt rather weak at that sort of an offer. I had never done any coaching. However, I accepted their invitation, but said to them, "Now, if I am going to coach you, I am going to make you train according to my rules. I will not have a thing to do with you unless you will promise to obey them implicitly." The group said, "Well, that is all right with us. What are your rules?" I said, "First of all, you must stop smoking." They murmured at that and pointed out that they had just left school and apparently thought it would be "big" if they could smoke. I then said, "Secondly, you must refrain from the use of alcoholics of all kinds." Having left their prep school and entered the Varsity, they believed it was their right to have their pint of beer for lunch. I said, "You must cut it out. You must also stop using tea."

More Like Mud

Finally I said, "You must also stop using coffee." But that did not hurt them so much because they said that English coffee was more like mud than anything else.

After the boys had agreed to my training rules (and it took them a week to make the decision), I took them in hand at about the middle of October. I worked with them every afternoon for three hours till February, when they competed against crews from all the other colleges of Oxford. There were approximately fifty crews in the races. My boys were competing against crews composed of men who had been rowing since they were tiny tots. This group that I had was made up of inexperienced

boys. From October to February those boys trained. Not one of them, so far as I know, used a cigaret during this period; not one of them had a cup of tea or coffee, or drank any alcoholic drink. Then came the day of the first race. No one thought that they had the remotest chance of a victory.

The race was on the Thames at Oxford, over a mile and a quarter course. Two cannon were fired, starting the race. Every crew went as hard as it could. As coach, I had to run along the bank and shout words of encouragement to my crew through a megaphone. By the time I had gone about half the distance I was so tired I could not run much farther. My particular crew had not gained anything, nor had they lost anything thus far during the race; they were just even with their competitors.

By Three Hundred Feet

I thought, "Well, that's a good thing; I will give them my last word of counsel and advice, and sit down and rest." So I shouted through my megaphone, "Sprint!" They sprinted beautifully and within a minute had stretched out a hundred feet between them and their nearest competitor. They won their race by three hundred feet, and with ease. Everybody said that the next day they would be beaten.

The next day we tried the same tactics and won the race handily. On all six days, a race being slated for each day, they won by large margins, but not because they were experts. They were not as finished a crew as most of the others, nor were they polished in their technique, but the best thing about them was they had stamina. They had some reserve, even after a hard race.

These boys won their races hands down. People came up to me after and said, "Mr. Kimball, how did you manage to get such success with that crew? They were just novices, and yet they made better crews look weak." I answered, "I made those boys live right. I made them cut out tobacco, alcohol, tea and coffee. When the sprint came their lungs were clean; their systems were clean; their blood was clean, and their nerves were strong."

The London Times

The London Times gave a most creditable report on that particular crew, saying it was one of the fastest crews ever developed among the freshmen groups at Oxford. Their success was due to their hard work and clean living. I have seen this formula work so many times.

I took another group the next year. When races came we had the same results as in 1929. I also had an opportunity to help coach the Oxford swimming team for two years. I coached two distance men who were victorious both years. I saw success come so many times from living the Word of Wisdom that nothing can change my belief in its value. It is not a teaching particularly limited to our Church. I saw the Kent school from Boston in the largest rowing regatta in the world at Henley on the Thames. There they defeated some of the best known crews in the rowing world. Just a high-school crew from Boston, but they had trained as this group of boys trained that I taught to row.

In 1928 the University of California sent a crew to the Olympics, at Amsterdam. They raced against crews composed of picked men of wide and long

experience, gathered from all parts of the world. They won their races because they had the stamina for a driving finish. They had lived the Word of Wisdom and really trained.

Another Incident

Another incident that happened immensely strengthened my knowledge of the value of the Word of Wisdom. You know that Oxford is a university of tradition. According to historians, it was founded 900 A. D. Among its traditions is that of the annual boat race against Cambridge on the Thames in London. They first raced in 1829 and have since rowed against each other 83 times.

Last year the Oxford crew was reported by all of the newspapers to be the fastest crew that had ever been developed at either university. There were in this crew more men with experience than they had ever had previously.

The races stood forty-one wins for Cambridge and forty for Oxford. Everyone thought that this time Oxford would win the race and even things up with forty-one wins for each university.

A week before the race was to take place another tradition was carried out. The Oxford crew went to Eastbourne on the coast of England for the week-end. This crew had been in strict training since October, and it was by then the latter part of March. At Eastbourne that week-end they broke training, giving as their excuse the same argument so often made by young men who are in athletics: "Well, if I don't break training I will be stale, and I will not be able to put forth my best efforts when the race comes."

Fallacious Tradition

The whole crew broke training; they had their liquor; they smoked their cigarets. Contrary to tradition, however, Cambridge did not break training. They maintained just as strict training right up to the time of the race as they had at any time during their training period.

The day of the race came. It is one of the largest sporting events in the world. Estimates are that over three-quarters of a million people watched that race over the four-and-a-quarter miles course. At the start of the race the Oxford crew, as anticipated, went ahead with a spurt, and at the halfway mark had established a time record for that part of the course. Had they been racing the fastest crew that had ever been on the Thames river they would have been leading by ninety feet at that point. They were leading Cambridge by slightly more than that distance and were increasing their lead slightly. After they had rowed three-quarters of the course, Cambridge was even with them, and Cambridge won the boat race by three full lengths, better than two hundred feet.

People wondered why Oxford had "cracked up." It was clear to me, and it was clear to a great many other people over there; they had broken their training. All of the reserve that they had built up over five months had been destroyed. Just once they had broken their training habits, but it was that one incident that destroyed their victory. At the end of the race the Cambridge crew was fresh enough to row their boat very smartly to the landing platform, get out, turn their "eight" over and dump the water out that it had shipped, and go in and change. It was fifteen minutes before the Oxford crew had suffi-

ciently recovered from the strain of the race even to row their craft over to the side of the river and get out; others had to lift the boat out of the water and put it on the saw-horses to dry.

I have mentioned but a few of the incidents that I have experienced and seen. When I returned to Salt Lake people said, "You have been in England and Europe; you have been away from here for three-and-a-half years; has it changed your belief in the Mormon Church?" I replied, "The longer I was away from home the more thoroughly convinced I became that we have the truth."

In Canada

I want to tell of just one more experience. While I was a missionary in Canada I saw a man lying drunk in the gutter one night as we went to hold a street meeting. We propped him up against a telephone pole so we could start our meeting, because we had permission to speak on that particular corner and couldn't go to any other. We found him at our corner the next night, and he kept coming for several weeks. Finally we asked him to attend our other meetings, and I had the opportunity of baptizing that man into the Church before I left Canada. Then I lost sight of him.

When I was traveling in England last summer I met some of our missionaries and they said, "Didn't you baptize a man named Blank in Canada? He is living in our branch over here now. We'll take you to see him." I was awfully glad they did not know what he was like when I first saw him—dirty, ragged, emaciated, hands deeply stained with tobacco. When I went to visit that man I found that he owned a

little shop in a wonderful old city in south-western England, and was a very prosperous man, well thought of by his friends. His hands were clean and white; his body was just as strong and vigorous as any man could be at his age and he said: "Young man, when the three Mormon missionaries first taught the Word of Wisdom to me I saw a new light, and all that I am right now is because I have learned that principle. Smoking was not the worst dissipation that I was indulging in, but it was the beginning; it got me started on other things." That, I believe, was the most thrilling incident of my whole experience in Europe, and the one that impressed itself most vividly upon my mind.

A Saving Principle

I want to bear you my testimony that I know the Word of Wisdom is a saving principle, one that we can all apply. We may not be rowing; we may not be running; but all of us are striving to be successes in life. Competition is so keen now that even the little things count. Just one item like not being a smoker or not being a drinker is enough to give us the edge and let us win.

EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESS OF DR. CREED HAYMOND

The effect of tobacco upon the boy and the girl before they reach adulthood is the thing we are striking, although tobacco is good for nobody; but we are working particularly for youth. Homer Christensen, a most beloved friend of mine, was coach of the West High School. He died in 1925.

In his routine work he examined every boy's heart in the West High School, a total of twelve-hundred boys; and over a period of four years he made a finding which has been corroborated by the head of the physical laboratory of Yale University, with practically the same result. He found that the boy who was smoking cigarets had an average heartbeat of ten above normal; but in order not to exaggerate, to be on the safe side of the ledger, let us say that the average heartbeat was five above normal for the boys who smoke. Five extra heartbeats in one minute means three hundred in one hour; it means seven thousand two hundred extra heartbeats in twenty-four hours.

Extra Heartbeats

The heart is the life-giving pump which forces through our bodies food and oxygen by means of the blood. The heart is not an organ of half-way action: It gives a complete contraction every time it works; and if that heart is called upon 7,200 extra heartbeats each twenty-four hours, how long do you suppose it is going to last? The life of the smoker is certain to be shortened and his vigor while life lasts will be decreased. (See Dr. Raymond Pearl, Johns Hopkins Medical School, "Science", Mar. 4, 1938; also "Improvement Era", May, 1938.)

I have been asked to tell you a story. I shall do so, for to me it is a testimony.

Up To Harvard

In 1919 I was captain of the University of Pennsylvania track team. I had won the two-twenty yard dash and placed second in the hundred the year

before. We took a big squad of men to Harvard for the championships of Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America. In the qualifying heats we qualified seventeen men. Cornell placed second with ten, and Princeton third with nine.

I had always been taught to obey the Word of Wisdom. When I was seven years of age my mother took me to Provo, where Apostle Reed Smoot gave a sermon on the Word of Wisdom. On the way home my mother elicited the promise from me that I would never break it. When I arrived home Joseph J. Cannon was there. My mother told him about the promise, and he took my twin sister and me out in the front yard, and there we made a pact that we would never break the Word of Wisdom, never taste tea or coffee, tobacco or liquor, unless we were all three together and would be able to get the consent of all.

I went up to Boston with our men to the track meet. I was in good condition. The night before the meet I had a conversation with my coach, who stands as possibly the greatest coach living today. He coached the last three Olympic teams and is coach for the Olympic team this year. He came to me and said, "Creed, you are captain of this track team. We have qualified more men than any other school, but it depends upon you to win this championship tomorrow. You have trained faithfully and hard. I want you to forget your funny Mormon ideas about drinking tea and coffee this time—I want you to drink this glass of wine."

"I Can't Do It"

I didn't suppose that glass of wine would hurt me. It might make me sick, because I wasn't used

to it; but I had made a promise with my twin sister and Joseph J. Cannon, and my mother, that I would never break the Word of Wisdom. I thought more of my coach possibly than anybody living, excepting my own family. I said, "Robbie, I can't do it. I would give anything in life to do it because this is my supreme moment, but I can't."

He said, "All right. You have been a good trainer. You better go to bed." So I went to my room. I felt pretty low. I had always been taught to pray. I got on my knees, and I said to the Lord, "Father in Heaven, I have been taught a principle of health. It has been taught to me that it was revealed of Thee to a prophet of the latter days. I want to know for myself if it is true."

I felt consoled, and got into bed. The next morning I was awakened by a rap on the door. I jumped up and opened the door; and there was the coach. He said, "How are you feeling?" I replied, "I am feeling fine. Why?" He was pale. He said, "Every man on the team is vomiting; they are all sick." He had given his men wine before—just as a tonic, mind you. The men had been training hard, and he was afraid they would be stale. He had done it before, but this time they were sick.

"And I Passed Him"

Then a series of very peculiar events occurred. I went out in the hundred-yard dash. I was to run six races—three hundreds and three two-twenties. I won my trial heat and my semi-final, and I came into the final heat of the hundred. Mr. Johnson of Michigan, a man six feet two inches in height, had the second lane in the semi-final, and I happened to pick that lane in my final. You know when runners go out to their marks they dig holes in the ground.

His holes were made further apart than were mine and were filled in with soft dirt. As the gun flashed I made a terrific lunge, as all runners do, and as I went out of my holes both holes broke, and I slipped. The men were three or four yards ahead of me before I got going. I went after them as hard as I could go. At fifty yards I was in last place; at seventy-five I was in last place. At eighty I had caught one man; at ninety I had caught three more; but I had Johnson of Michigan to overtake. I didn't realize it and I don't remember passing him, but I did. I was congratulated on every hand upon the fight I put up.

On the Marks

We came to the semi-finals of the two-twenty. In eleven years of competition I had never seen the field events finished before the track events; but this day the field events, for some peculiar reason, had been finished before the semi-finals of the two-twenty. They called us to the semi-finals, and announced that I was trying for the world's record. I went out and did all I could, but instead of running straight forward I ran up and down, and only did twenty-one and three-fifths seconds. I was in the next to the last semi-finals and had less than five minutes to rest before they called the finals. The rules say that no finals shall appear under 25 minutes after the semi-finals; but there was a crowd of about twenty thousand people calling for the finals, and the referee said, "You will have to go back and run it." Billy Moore, Harvard captain, ran up and said, "Haymond, you are the intercollegiate champion; you have the right to speak to the starter and ask him to give us time."

Of course, we were all out of breath; we were

panting and very tired. I went to the starter and asked, "Mr. Reynolds, you must give us time; we can't run this final now." He replied, "All right, we will give you ten minutes." But right at that instant the telephone rang, and the referee said, "You must run the race. The people are anxious to go home." So he called us to our marks.

"I Won the Race"

But as the starter said, "Take your marks," every feeling of weariness disappeared; my breath was normal, and as the gun flashed I went with it. I won the race, and as I went off the field my coach came down to me and said, "Creed, I want to tell you one thing; regardless of what the timers say, you ran the fastest two-twenty that any human ever ran—twenty-one seconds flat."

The Lord gave the promise in the Word of Wisdom to those who were obedient: "They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." But the peculiar thing about it was that we had several men on the team who should have won first places, but not another man won a first. I don't say this in any spirit of boasting; I say it to you in a spirit of humility.

I went to my hotel room and went to bed. It was dark, but a light came into my mind. I asked myself, "Have your prayers been answered?" Then I reflected upon the events of the day—of the men being sick; of not a man winning a first place; of my winning the two-twenty in world record time, when exhausted; of my winning the hundred yard dash after slipping and against the five fastest men in America. Do you believe they were answered? I bear you my testimony—that the revelation given to the Prophet is verily and indeed true.