

January 14, 1931

President Rudge Clawson
and Members of the Council of Apostles

Dear Brethren:

December 10, 1930, Elder B. H. Roberts wrote to the First Presidency asking them if certain remarks made by me before a gathering of Genealogical workers in Barratt Hall, April 5, 1930, were given as an "official declaration of the Church," or was but an expression of my personal opinion. In case it was my personal opinion then Elder Roberts entered objection "to the dogmatic and finality spirit of the pronouncement" on the grounds that Elder Smith is incompetent to utter such dogmatism either as a scholar or as an Apostle."

Elder Roberts' communication, which did not set forth the nature of the objections he raised, was placed by the Presidency in the hands of President Rudge Clawson with the request that the Council of the Apostles investigate the matter. Acting upon this request President Clawson invited Elder Roberts to appear before the members of the Council with a detailed statement of his objections and there make such presentation of his views as he might desire. On January 7, 1931, Elder Roberts appeared before the Council and in some detail registered his objections, which have to do with certain statements that were made pertaining to the questions that there was no death upon this earth before the fall of Adam, and that the theory of pre-Adamites is not a doctrine of the Church. At the conclusion of Elder Roberts' statement I was invited to prepare a statement which would also be given a hearing before the members of the Council.

That I am surprised that Elder Roberts, with his experience should question what I said, is stating it mildly, for, let it be understood, I ~~can~~ lay no claim to originality for anything proclaimed in that discourse. What was said on that occasion has been said, just as dogmatically, in my judgment, as I declared it, and that too by Apostles and leading brethren of the Church from the beginning. All my life I have been taught these doctrines and believe most firmly that they are imbedded in the revelations given to the Church, and hence in perfect harmony with the plan of salvation. For these reasons, I made the remarks I did in a positive and dogmatic manner, in answer to questions asked me at the time, and in full confidence that they are true. I am perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of my brethren, when I am through with this paper, whether or not I have sufficient grounds for speaking as one who has authority rather than as one of the scribes.

We are living in a most wonderful age of discovery and invention, Ancient prophets saw our day and wrote of it. Daniel proclaimed that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." But no knowledge or discovery, by which the world is benefited, has come to light, except the Lord has willed it. We all know that great benefits have come to mankind through these discoveries, and I fully affirm what Elder Roberts has said, that there are many truths made known that have not been proclaimed by direct revelation. With my brethren I ~~stand~~ ready to accept any truth, from any source it may come; but that which comes through the researches of men, must conform to and harmonize with, the revealed word of the Lord to his

servants the prophets. The Latter-day Saints are not bound to receive the theories of men when they do not accord with the word of the Lord to them, no-matter how great the weight of evidence may appear to be in favor of the theory, or how many men of world renown may accept it as established truth. I firmly believe that the "key of truth" which I proclaimed in that discourse is perfectly sound. The revealed truth from God, is the measuring rod, the test tube, the crucible, by which we may prove all things advocated by man.

While considering the great volume of light which has come through man's research, let us not be unmindful of the fact that the adversary of righteousness is also giving revelation and poisoning the minds of men. Never in the history of the world has he raged in the hearts of men and stirred them up against that which is good more than he is now doing. Never has his dominion appeared to be so firmly established. He has poisoned the minds of the mighty with false theory, philosophy and doctrine, so that we may verily declare that the time spoken of by Paul is here: "And for this cause (i.e. because they hearken to Satan), God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thes. 2:11.

It does not always follow that it takes the "competent" and the "wise" in the learning of the world, to confound the mighty. The Lord said he would call upon the weak things of the world to "break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not * * trust in the arm of flesh." (D. and C. 1:19.) Moreover, said the Lord, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." (1, Cor. 1:19.)

I believe in the doctrine that there are "worlds without number," which the Father has created and that they have been, are now, and will be for ever, peopled with sons and daughters "begotten unto God." This is the great work of God. The doctrine of organic evolution which pervades the modern-day sciences, proclaiming the edict that man has evolved from lower forms of life through the Java skull and last, if not least, the "Peiping man," who lived millions of years ago, is as false as their author who reigns in hell! Well, that's dogmatic, and its true!

I believe that there are many worlds that have passed away, that is to say, they have filled their mortal existence and have been crowned with eternal glory; that there are worlds now passing through the mortal probation, and when they pass away and are raised in their resurrection, others will come, for there is no end to the work of the Lord. I do not deny, but firmly believe, that men have lived and died and passed through the resurrection on other worlds in similar scenes we are now enacting. My remarks in the discourse are, I believe, in strict accord with the word of the Lord and pertain solely to this earth and its inhabitants.

THE WEAKNESS OF GEOLOGICAL TESTIMONY

The greater part of Elder Roberts' paper has to do with the testimonies of the world's eminent scientists in relation to the story told in geology. I shall not, at this time, endeavor to enter into a lengthy discussion of this phase of the question. However, it may be well for us to consider some of the salient features taught

geologists. Geology is a modern science. It is that branch of science which endeavors to solve the problems relating to the structure of the earth; its behavior in its various parts and its physical and biological history. In it like in other branches of science, theories have been advanced, discarded, changed and modified. "No one can judge fully of the weakness of the present geological theories, or forecast the future development of the science, who does not have clear and somewhat full ideas regarding the history of the science with which we are dealing," says one eminent geologist, who adds: "In geology, facts and theories are still in-extricably commingled and in the ordinary college text book of the science, the most absurd and fantastic speculations are still taught to the students with all the solemnity and pompous importance which might be allowable in speaking of the facts of chemistry or physics." - George McCready Price, Professor of Geology, Union College, Nebraska - The New Geology, p. 587.

Professor A. G. Werner (1749-1817), is the originator of the "uniform-coat" theory of Geology. This theory had undergone some changes but still forms the basis of geological lore in the orthodox school in the study of this science. For one hundred years the remains of plants and animals embedded in the rocks, and known as fossils, have formed the basis for determining the age of the rocks and their history. These fossiliferous rocks have been named and classified according to the fossils which they happen to contain. This is purely an artificial arrangement. Speaking of this arrangement, Professor Price remarks:

"A card catalogue or index is a very useful thing in a library, but it would strike us as highly absurd if some antiquary should come along and solemnly assure us that this card catalogue showed the real history of the order in which the books listed had been published. Suppose he should affirm that all the books listed under A and B had been issued first, while those under X, Y, and Z had been issued last. Would we not think that this antiquary ought probably to be put into some institution for his own protection, if not for the protection of the public?"

"But the geological classification as currently taught, based on the grade of fossils contained in the various rocks, is just as purely artificial as the card catalogue of a library, and has no more time-value to its subdivisions. It is merely a convenient working classification, that is all, something to help us to name and handle the numerous fossiliferous deposits in different parts of the world. It has been made a fetish, and evolutionary theories about the development of the various types of life have been allowed to take possession of it. But they do not own it, and we who have had our eyes opened regarding the folly of trying to tabulate all the rock deposits in a serial order according to the grade of fossils they contain, can still make use of this classification, even though we have discarded the traditional time-values so long associated with these systems." The New Geology, p. 294.

FATAL MISTAKES OF GEOLOGISTS

One of the fatal mistakes made by geologists is to approach their work with the bias that the present day rate of change and condition has been the same which have prevailed always in the past. They make no allowance for difference in conditions during all the million of years which they claim for the age of the earth, contrary to a little common sense.

Another fatal mistake is in their conclusion, upon which all their deductions are based, that this earth and all upon its face, have continued from the beginning in their present form and condition as respecting life and death: That all animate things upon the earth have always lived in the midst of the struggle for existence, hatred, and enmity of each other; war, strife and death, both among men and animals. In other words that the doctrine of Manichaeism, or that evil has existed from the very beginning of things, and is coeval with the good is the basis for their conclusions. We will have more to say of this anon.

The geological periods are grouped as follows: The Primary or Primitive, known as Archaean and Algonkian, in which few or no fossils are found. The Paleozoic, which is divided into the following system: Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian, Devonian, Carboniferous and Permian. In this group, we are informed, the invertebrates, fishes and insects, coal-plants and amphibians appeared. Then the Messozoic group, containing the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous. During the periods of this group, we have coming on the earth, palms, conifers,

reptiles. The next group is called Cenozoic, and is divided into the Tertiary, Quaternary, or Post-Tertiary, or Pleistocene. During these ages mammals and man are said to have made their appearance on the earth.

ORTHODOX GEOLOGISTS ARE EVOLUTIONISTS

I have listed these ages that we might discover how closely interwoven this grouping is with the theories of evolution. Moreover, to point out the fact that these eminent geologists are organic evolutionists. It is not clear to me how any geologist of the orthodox school can possibly be anything but an evolutionist. The eminent authors quoted by Elder Roberts endeavor to show that man has evolved through inferior races, the Heidelberg man, the Piltdown man, and others. Carried back to its final analysis, we have the doctrine that all life commenced in the Primitive or early Paleozoic ages, and therefore man has come up from the invertebrates. How are we going to accept part of their inductions, especially that relating to time, and discard the rest and maintain that all men, whether pre-Adamites or Adamites, are begotten sons and daughters unto God? If we are going to accept the theories of geology in relation to time it is inconsistent to reject their theory of evolution for the two are inseparably connected. Yet, surely, no Latter-day Saint who accepts the revelations of the Lord can believe that the Lord placed man on the earth millions of years ago in a body unfit for exaltation, for he has declared that man, on this earth and on millions of other earths, is his offspring. What are these scientists trying to do in their researches, such as Roy Chapman Andrews is carrying on in Mongolia at this time? They are trying to strengthen their theory the lower animals forms may be linked with human beings walking the earth today.

FOSSILS DO NOT TELL THE AGE OF THE ROCKS

According to the theory of geology fossiliferous rocks tell the story of the age of life upon the earth, as one group might be related to another. It is a logical view to take, if we follow that theory, that we should find always, everywhere, upon the face of the globe, where there are natural stratigraphic formations, the older fossils below, and the younger above. This was verily believed to be true when the theory was advanced, and, with orthodox geologists it is still an obsession in the face of abundant evidence to the contrary. In various parts of the earth, there are comparatively great areas where the younger fossiliferous rock are below and the older on top in natural conformity, apparently undisturbed from the day they were laid down. Let us remember that, "All the stratified beds, or those containing fossils, are of quite limited extent, varying from a few square yards to a few acres to a few hundred square miles in area." New Geology p.). These beds may be a few inches or several feet thick and are usually spread out over one another in successive layers. But they are not found with the "older" rocks always below. There is extending from Montana into Alberta from the Glacier Park and including the Chief mountain seen from the Cardston Temple, a distance of five hundred miles Cretaceous beds below the Cambrian and other Paleozoic rock. In India, England, various parts of Europe, in Florida, California, Utah and Idaho, and many parts of the earth, Tertiary beds were laid down before the Cambrian. "Are we not then," says one

learned geologist, "face to face with the possibility that samples of all these various types of life may have lived contemporaneously in scattered localities all over the world? In other words, how are we to prove that there were not distinct floral and faunal districts and regions back at the earliest period of which we have scientific knowledge?" (Price, New Geology, p. 612.)

That fossils are found in the rock is a fact. That the grouping and classifying of these fossils in what is called geological ages, determines their relative relationship as to time, is not a fact, but a theory. This theory held almost complete sway during the nineteenth century, but there is arising in the twentieth century a new school of geologists, who show that this is not a fact, and based on new discovery, or more intelligent consideration of facts, they have propounded the following formula: "Any kind of fossiliferous beds whatever, 'young' or 'old, may be found occurring conformably on any other fossiliferous beds, 'older' or younger."—The New Geology, p. 638.

When we consider these facts we are brought face to face with the thought that after all, geological ages, as they have been expressed in the terms of millions of years, must be greatly modified. Thomas Henry Huxley, an advocate of evolution, had himself said: "all that geology can prove is local order of succession." (Discourses Biological and Geological, pp. 279-288.)

Professor George M. Price, in his lecture before the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain, of which society he is an eminent member (which lecture won the Lanhorn Orchard Prize in 1925) has this to say to that body of world renowned educators:

