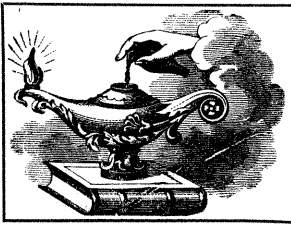


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Cannon, Jan. 10th, 1898

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*Salt Lake City, Utah, Jan. 10th, 1898*

Senator Frank J. Cannon,

Washington, D. C.

My Dear Son:

I am using Hugh as an amanuensis as I wish this letter to be strictly confidential and for your own private eye.

We have not heard from you for several days, and I am becoming somewhat anxious, as we all are I think, for there seems to be a crisis almost in our affairs. Since Thursday last I have passed through the saddest time that I have had for years. On that day there was some very plain talk by some of the Twelve in relation to myself, my management of affairs and my undue influence in the First Presidency. I was told that I was responsible for a good many of the conditions that exist, and the remark was made that I had too much influence. On the part of some it was very apparent that I was looked upon as accountable for the existing indebtedness, that the enterprises that we were connected with had been entered upon because of my zeal and determination. The impression appeared to be that in consequence of our entering upon these enterprises the Church was heavily in debt. The Pioneer Power Company came in for a very large share of comment in this connection, and of course the Saltair Beach and the mining ventures all received their share of criticism.

I did not mind any of the criticism of these enterprises if it had been applied to all three of us alike, but to single me out and endeavor to separate me from my brethren I did not like. I thought it unfair

and a great piece of injustice. One of the brethren said afterwards that he did not look upon me as being responsible any more than the others. I said if that were the view that all took I had no feelings. This was the second day and after there had been considerable discussion and we were about to partake of the sacrament.

I have no objection to bearing my share of responsibility with my brethren, but where we are united in a council I think each one should bear share and share alike, unless there is some peculiar circumstances connected with the case.

These criticisms, however, were not the most painful part of the proceedings. We were told that we put confidence in men that were not worthy of our confidence, that the Twelve were excluded from our confidence and other men taken into our confidence. It had been learned that you were our accredited agent. One man, saying he spoke the sentiments of others, said that if they had been consulted they would not have consented for you to occupy such a position, that your past conduct, referring as I understood to your habits, did not warrant or justify your selection. Col. Clayton was also named as a man whose habits were not good and as a man to whom business men would not entrust their business.

The management of the News was taken up also, and strong feeling was expressed concerning John Q., although his name was not mentioned, that he was unsuitable to occupy the position he held; that the News being the Church organ ought to be edited by a man of the highest repute John Q's associations were improper, and his writing lacked the essential qualities which the writings that ought to appear in the Church organ should have.

I have refrained from writing to you for a day or two, as I have shrunk from doing so. It is painful to me, and I know it must be to you

President Woodruff and President Smith have not expressed a doubt to me or in my hearing concerning you or your integrity. I shall propose to them that as we the First Presidency have appointed you to this position, that we ask the men to prove what they have said concerning you. There has been no definite statement made, only a general statement concerning your habits. I know it will make you weak in your feelings and sick to hear this from me, but I think it better to let you know it. I look upon this as a ~~trial~~ <sup>trial and</sup> it comes from the Lord, or at least He permits it, to test us. I know these men to be men of God; I know they would not do a wrong knowingly, and while sometimes men may not be able to substantiate their views, there may be something nevertheless in the spirit of their feelings. At least I am trying to look at it in this light. I feel that we have exposed ourselves, or I have particularly, to criticism, not to call it attack, by attempting to do too much and not realizing that men are jealous when one man assumes too important a role. I feel that I have blundered in this respect ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> hope to profit by what has taken place.

I want you to look at this in the true light. If you will feel as I do you will accept this as from the Lord and humble yourself contritely before him. I have never felt in my life more humble, it seems to me, than I have done in the last few days. I can see myself in a new light, as it were, and realize the benefits which come from hearing others talk as I have listened to them about our operations. I know this, my dear son, that you have been greatly blessed in your labors for us and that these labors will bear honest investigation. I hope nothing has occurred to justify the statement which has been made concerning your conduct, that is of late.

I have told John Q. that he is likely to lose his position on the News. What he will do I have no idea. Opportunities for men like

him are very few, and it affects me very much on account of him and also on your own account. I know this will seem to you a poor return for the exertions you have made and the labors you have performed.

The canvass of our affairs originated in it having leaked out that we were endeavoring to effect a large loan in the East and trying to bond the Church properties. <sup>(the First Presidency)</sup> Today we had an interesting meeting examining what we could do with our income. We have divided the income, setting apart such and such a per cent. for one thing and such a per cent. for another and setting aside \$93,000 for a sinking fund and \$93,000 for interest. Our intention is as soon as we get this well digested to invite President Lorenzo Snow to deliberate with us as to this apportionment. I do not know how he will be affected by our proposed reduction of the expenses of the temples, particularly the Salt Lake Temple, but our minds are quite clear that this plan must be adopted in some form or other if we ever hope to emerge from our present condition.

Whether you succeed in getting encouragement in relation to your plan or not something of this kind will have to be done. Of course if you can work it upon the lines upon which you are working, it will simplify matters very much. I have prayed very earnestly for you since Thursday as I have for myself and my entire household. The Lord has prospered me greatly through my life; He has been my constant friend and I have not the least reason to doubt His goodness in the future. I know He will have mercy on me and deliver me and not suffer me to be overthrown.

We are going to have a dinner tomorrow of the family, it being my birthday. Your mother has been the chief one in arranging this. I know nothing much about it, not having been consulted as to details, but merely informed that they intended to have a dinner and asked whom I wanted to be present. I did not want anyone but our own folks and

Uncle Angus and Aunt Mary Alice.

I had an interview with your mother yesterday in which I related some of what I here write to you, and I proposed to her that instead of *we should have a fast and* having a dinner that we should distribute our viands to the different members of the family who were not so well situated as we, but this she did not feel to consent to. I told her I talked with her because Aunt Elizabeth was dead and I could not communicate with her about John Q. and I wanted to speak with her as she was the mother of the other boy who was affected. I was very much pleased with her spirit, and when I heard her expressions I dismissed all thought of putting off the dinner.

I hope, my dear boy, that you will not allow this to dishearten you nor to oppress you more than to make you humble and feel the necessity of seeking the Lord in prayer and faith.

After reading this you will see the necessity of its being kept strictly private. It is not a very safe operation to write anything of this kind, but I feel that it is only due to you and a relief to my own feelings to let you know the situation.

I shall await, in fact we are awaiting with great interest, reports from you as to your progress in the work assigned you.

Give my warmest love to Mattie and accept same for yourself. May the Lord bless and uphold and deliver you is my constant prayer.

I am,

Your loving Father,

(Signed) *GLC*