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"PRESIDENT MRS. KIMBALL": A RHETORIC OF WORDS AND WORKS

by

Janelle M. Higbee

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of English

Brigham Young University

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Janelle M. Higbee

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Janelle M. Higbee in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT

"PRESIDENT MRS. KIMBALL": A RHETORIC OF WORDS AND WORKS

Janelle M. Higbee

Department of English

Master of Arts

Scholars of rhetoric and speech communications have suggested that the study of a women's rhetoric should focus on the "distinctly female modes of leadership" that may be found among women in "out-groups" that challenge established political authority. Such leaders must be especially inventive to be effective, and are thus likely to be talented rhetoricians. In looking for such leaders, the religious and political rhetoric of early Latter-day Saint women provides a noteworthy, unique study. Nineteenth-century Mormon women not only battled discriminatory political norms—arguing fervently for both universal woman's suffrage and for the freedom to practice polygamy—they did so from their position as members of a stigmatized and persecuted religious community.

One exemplary figure is Sarah Melissa Granger Kimball (1818-1898). A founding member of the church's Female Relief Society in 1842, Kimball was later instrumental in reestablishing the organization in Utah. In Salt Lake City she was called

to be President of her ward's Relief Society; she served over 40 remarkably influential years in that position, while instituting and organizing programs church-wide. During the same four decades she also served in two General Relief Society presidencies, as a member of the territorial committee of the People's Party, and as a national delegate and President of the Utah Woman's Suffrage Association. Kimball was a leader dedicated to stimulating thought in and provoking action from her Relief Society sisters and her fellow citizens, and she developed her own powerful voice as a communicator.

Kimball used her rhetorical skills and leadership strategies both to "educate and agitate" and to "instruct and happify" her audiences. This thesis is a historiography which examines Kimball's public discourse within its social contexts, analyzing samples of her rhetoric from several different genres: autobiographical sketch; political rally; ceremonial speeches; formal encomium; official minutes from weekly Relief Society meetings; and the text of her own life's actions. These various texts survey the broad range of Kimball's social and spiritual concerns, and showcase her discursive skill among her contemporaries. This textual analysis illustrates the strategies she developed to establish her noted effectiveness as a rhetor and widespread influence as a leader.

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Introduction

> We must never lose sight of the order of values as the ultimate sanction of rhetoric. No one can live a life of direction and purpose without some scheme of values. As rhetoric confronts us with choices involving values, the rhetorician is a preacher to us, noble if he tries to direct our passion toward noble ends and base if he uses our passion to confuse and degrade us. Since all utterance influences us in one or the other of these directions, it is important that the direction be the right one, and it is better if this lay preacher is a master of his art.
>
> - Richard Weaver,
> "Language Is Sermonic"
> (Bizzell and Herzberg 1054)

In the first place, there is the matter of definition. The term *rhetoric* has been used (and abused) as such a wide-ribbed umbrella in covering centuries of theory, practice, and schools of thought, that for me to make any workable sense of the word I have found it necessary to pare it down to its bare bones. In essence, I see rhetoric not as the much-maligned tool of verbal manipulation, but (as Richard Weaver suggests) as an art—and an art of great practical importance. Historian and composition scholar Richard Lloyd-Jones explains it:

> Place as well as time determines both ends and means in rhetorical systems. . . . Rhetoric remains a practical art. No matter how exotic the theory, the discussion resolves itself into practical choices about what bit of language to use when. (Lloyd-Jones 21-22)

Rhetoric therefore is an art both of language and of context—knowing "what bit of language to use when." And if it is also true, as Weaver says, that these practical choices are intrinsic in all of our communication and are themselves moral choices, then rhetoric is also an art of significant responsibility. Weaver's characterization of the rhetorician a

"preacher" will be a useful image to keep in mind during this discussion of Sarah M. Kimball's morally charged rhetoric. This thesis is intended to be a study of how one "lay preacher" mastered her art.

Place and Time

To put myself in context, I can readily trace this project to its origin in time and place. The summer before I began graduate school, I drove from Utah to Illinois to visit the Mormon pioneer city of Nauvoo, for a family reunion and an onsite lesson in early church history. For about a year I had been serving as Relief Society president to the women in my college ward; I had come to love and appreciate the purposes of Relief Society and was curious about its history. While in Nauvoo I felt a particular interest in visiting the home of Hiram and Sarah Kimball, which is where, in 1842, the Mormon women began to organize.

When I visited the newly-restored white frame house, I picked up a church-published pamphlet called "Sarah Melissa Granger Kimball: Woman of Charity," which outlined some historical background of the woman who was a founding member of and driving force behind the early Relief Society. I was impressed with her remarkable life, noting the fact that after re-settling with the Saints in Utah, Sarah Kimball was a lifelong leader in the church and a pioneer in the female suffrage movements of her time. Back home, I filed away the pamphlet and the information to share briefly with the women at church on Sunday, and didn't think much more about it. But within a few weeks of starting graduate school and beginning my study of rhetoric, I was rediscovering Sarah

Kimball in an unexpected place. It was in my introductory History of Rhetoric class that I made a connection which led to this project.

Until the twentieth century, I learned, women's voices had been largely absent from the study of rhetoric. Speech communications scholars Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter had suggested that the study of a women's rhetoric should focus on "women leaders who seem to have developed distinctly female modes of leadership" (Bizzell and Herzberg 1226). Karlyn Kohrs Campbell extended the argument by suggesting that such women may be found specifically in out-groups that challenge established political authority; such women must be especially inventive to be heard at all, said Campbell, suggesting for example that female abolitionists—doubly challenging to male political authority—are likely to be talented rhetoricians (Bizzell and Herzberg 1226). It was at this point in the margin of my Bizzell and Herzberg anthology that I scribbled a small note to myself—a little red-ballpoint-penned "who?"was my (rhetorical) question back to the scholars. On a second reading through the material, I penciled in a possible answer: "Sarah Granger Kimball?" (I have since erased the question mark.) If I were to go looking for such rhetorically talented female leaders, I realized I had a place to start.

The religious and political rhetoric of early Latter-day Saint women is a particularly noteworthy case. Nineteenth-century Mormon women not only battled sexism and political norms—arguing fervently for both universal women's suffrage and for the freedom to practice polygamy—but they did so from their position as members of a stigmatized and persecuted religious community. Despite their membership in a

patriarchically ordered society, their belief in a divinely directed but exclusively male priesthood, and their supposed subjugation in polygamous marriages, many early Mormon women were strong and inventive advocates of women's rights.

Sarah M. Kimball (1818-1898) was one exemplary figure, and presents an intriguing example of a woman's practice of leadership techniques and rhetorical strategy. Besides being a catalyst of the Female Relief Society's inception in Nauvoo, she was later instrumental in re-establishing the organization in Utah. In Salt Lake City Kimball was called to be President of the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society; she served over forty years in that position, highly influential and effective in instituting and organizing church-wide Relief Society programs. During the same four decades (1857-98) she also served in two General Relief Society presidencies; as a member of the territorial committee of the People's Party, as a member of the constitutional convention that composed Utah's petition for statehood in 1882 (Derr 24); and as a national delegate and President of the Utah Woman's Suffrage Association. Kimball was a spiritual leader dedicated to stimulating thought in and provoking action from her Relief Society sisters and her fellow citizens, and she developed her own powerful voice as a communicator. "President Mrs. Kimball," as she was often addressed, achieved considerable success in "directing the passions" of her audiences to accomplish the purposes she argued.

Theory and Practice/Theory as Practice

To better understand Kimball's rhetorical influence, this project studies her deep in the context of time and place. To situate Kimball's rhetoric within a historical

framework, I have taken the approach suggested by Gregory Clark and Michael Halloran in their study of the nineteenth-century transformation of oratorical culture. This collection of essays describing different historical practices of rhetoric complicates its own story by blurring the distinctions between *theory* and *practice*. By "embedding rhetoric deeply in its social contexts," this type of historiography "examines the symbiotic interaction of discourse and the communities in which it develops and works" (249). Similar strains of thought are found elsewhere, such as in John Bender and David Wellbery's pragmatic discussion of what they term *rhetoricality*—"a generalized rhetoric that penetrates to the deepest levels of human experience. . . . Rhetoric is no longer the title of a doctrine and a practice, nor a form of cultural memory; it becomes instead something like the condition of our existence" (25). This is a recognition of the mutuality of theory and practice which Foucault explained in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*: "Theory does not express, translate, or serve to apply practice, it is practice" (qtd. in Faigley 38).

As such a practical art, rhetoric shares a commonality with feminist criticism, a methodology increasingly concerned with valuing commonly overlooked particulars. Both rhetorical and feminist scholars have called for more work to be done in the arenas of women's public discourse. Historian Susan Jarratt draws the comparison: "Rhetoric has always been about practice, and as such parallels the historical association of women with craft and knack—the daily arts of lived experience" (3). Lines of distinction between theory and practice can be blurred to enhance a greater understanding of women's public discourse.

This connection between theory and practice—thought and action, words and work—is one which Sarah Kimball also recognized: "When through our spiritual nature we are in communion with God, we are drawing nearer and nearer to each other, and our words and works will blend more and more harmoniously," she explained. Her ultimate goal was the refinement of that interaction, both in spirit and in practice, between the individual woman, her community, and her God. By embedding Kimball's words in her social and historical context, we can examine samples of her discourse with this blending of rhetorical theory and practice in mind.

One Woman's Rhetoric

The history of early Mormon women is a growing field of study, but an area still relatively new to scholarly research, promising for further discovery. In the last two decades, research on Mormon women has included important works of biography (see Burgess-Olson, *Sister Saints*, 1978) and history (see Derr, Cannon and Beecher, *Women of Covenant*, 1992; Madsen, *In Their Own Words*, 1994), mixed with some cultural analysis and literary critique (see Beecher, *Eliza and Her Sisters*, 1991; Beecher and Anderson, *Sisters in Spirit*, 1987). Kimball's primary biographer has been Jill Mulvay Derr, a historian who has written extensively on the history of nineteenth century L.D.S. women. The primary source materials for studying these early Mormon women have proven to be remarkably rich: extensive official Relief Society records; *Woman's*

Exponent[1] reports; diaries and personal letters. What this thesis project will add is another layer to the conversation—a detailed examination of the rhetorical art of public discourse as practiced by a woman highly regarded by her contemporaries as a leader and a communicator.

Sarah Kimball presents a unique study, even among the "leading women" of the church and suffrage movement. There are very few of her private writings extant—no diaries, only a handful of personal letters. She was neither a poet like Eliza R. Snow, a professional journalist like Emmeline B. Wells, or a politician like Martha Hughes Cannon. But her public career is extraordinarily well documented, thanks to the detailed minutes kept in weekly ward Relief Society meetings over the 40 years of her service as the Fifteenth Ward President, and to various reports published in the *Woman's Exponent*, which kept a close watch on civic and religious affairs concerning women.

In studying Kimball's life and texts, I have considered several helpful methods that Abigail J. Stewart suggests in "Toward a Feminist Strategy for Studying Women's Lives." Stewart's strategies are: 1) look for what's been left out; 2) analyze your own role or position as it affects your understanding and research; 3) identify women's agency in social constraint; 4) use the concept of "gender" as an analytic tool; 5) explore ways gender defines power relationships; 6) identify significant aspects of her social position and explore implications; 7) avoid the search for a unified or coherent self or voice.

---

[1] The *Woman's Exponent* was an independent bimonthly newspaper owned and published by Mormon women from 1872 to 1914.

These questions are the sort posed by Catherine A. Dobris in her argument for a rhetorical theory accounting for gender. "A feminist perspective allows us to value, and therefore to study, communication that is ignored or discounted in traditional rhetorical theory," Dobris notes (150). Michael Presnell, in discussing the *oral/literate* models of narrative, cautions that if a literate model—which shows traditionally male characteristics —is adopted to study women's oral traditions, then "distinctive characteristics of women's communication could be systematically overlooked" (130).

However, it is debatable whether there can really be any category definable as a "women's rhetoric," as Spitzack and Carter have hoped to examine. Devoney Looser demonstrates how the category "woman" and the descriptive statement "as a woman" have come under scrutiny. Looser warns that feminist studies can become "essentialist" in attempting to define a universal women's experience. Much of feminist composition theory, says Looser, "assumes a stable and/or recoverable homogenized 'woman'" (55), and such insistence on feminist unity is "a theoretical and practical mistake" (66). Looser's argument is not that so-called "essentialist" work need be stopped, but rather:

> . . . it must be questioned for its historical and cultural assumptions and its assumptions about the category "women." Only then will we be able to talk about feminist composition theory that not only operates "in a different voice" but with voices that more productively accommodate questions of difference. (66)

This is an important distinction to make. I am skeptical about the feasibility of defining what is or is not exclusively a "woman's way" of discourse, or a "distinctively female"

mode of leadership. Therefore, it is not my purpose in this study to create such a definition based on Kimball's discursive patterns. Instead, my guiding questions become: *What are the patterns of discourse and rhetorical strategies practiced by this woman, among her contemporaries, in her unique historical and cultural situations? What aspects of her personal history were important in forming her communication techniques and social concerns? What strategies did she use to invest her words with the power needed to make her effective as a rhetor and influential as a leader? And how does Kimball's rhetoric compare with that of her contemporaries?*

Methods and Focus

This thesis is a historiography which examines Kimball's public discourse within its social contexts, analyzing samples of her rhetoric from several different genres: autobiographical sketch; political rally; ceremonial speeches; formal encomiums; official minutes from weekly Relief Society meetings; and the text of her own life's actions. These various texts survey the broad range of Kimball's social and spiritual concerns, and showcase her role as an effective and inventive rhetor.

Chapter one of this thesis explores the concept of a life's actions as a rhetorical text, examining significant aspects of Kimball's biographical details which were particularly influential in forming her effective strategies as a public speaker and social reformer. Chapter two focuses on some of the issues of authority that nineteenth-century women faced when fighting for the right to make their voices heard in a public sphere. Chapter three examines some of the issues of women's leadership, and what practices

Kimball used to advance issues concerning women and her goals of advancement. Chapter four is a more detailed examination of the language of agitation Kimball used in her activist reformer's rhetoric, to incite her audiences to action. Chapter five then focuses in detail on several less overtly activist samples of Kimball's public discourse, as examples of her more ceremonial literary style.

Joseph Smith once promised Sarah Kimball that her name would be "handed down in honorable remembrance from generation to generation." A few days after her death, the *Woman's Exponent* printed a tribute to Kimball which advised: ". . . [T]he younger generation should not pass by such notable examples as her life affords. Her name and life should be perpetuated in the memory of every young man and woman in Zion." A close rhetorical analysis of Kimball's life, words, and works provides some significant insight into a remarkable woman acting in an intriguingly unique historical role.

Although at times she disavowed her role as a writer ("I can better tell than write it"), an orator ("I am a suffragist, but not a lecturer"), and a leader ("Said she felt her weakness and incapability of acting in the position she was placed"), she did come to realize the responsibility of the rhetorical art she practiced:

> The pen is a power in the world, for the right or wrong use of which its wielders are accountable. God grant that mine may be actuated to harmonize with the greatest good to needy mortals in life's darkened pathway.

Kimball's articulation here echoes Richard Weaver's concern that the rhetorician be "noble if [s]he tries to direct our passion toward noble ends." A focus on the ends, means, and beginnings of Kimball's public discourse continues in the next chapter with a discussion on how even the actions of a "preacher's" life can be read as a rhetorical text.

Chapter 1

"A Representative Woman": Life as Text

> A personal economizer, she was liberal to the needy; a model homemaker, she was an advocate for women's rights; a devoted mother and foster mother, she was an innovator and entrepreneur, making the Relief Society a vehicle to increase opportunity for woman's development. Identified by one associate as "a statesman, a philanthropist, and a missionary," Sarah Kimball earned the respect shown her throughout her adult life, and she died having seen the fulfillment of many of her goals. (Madsen 190)

Six years before Sarah Kimball's death in 1898, Mormon apostle George Q. Cannon inscribed a short message in her autograph book: "What an amount of interesting history you have helped to make. Now you stand venerable in appearance, your head silvered, if not by age, at least by the trials you have endured, in an important station and as a representative woman among your sex" (Derr 17). Contemporary Relief Society and suffrage leader Emmeline B. Wells, a longtime friend and associate, described Kimball as a "true Yankee type" of Puritanical deportment and "a little cold in her manner," with a "decidedly positive manner that some might construe as aggressive." And yet she was widely respected and admired for her "unbounded charity and motherly care" of the needy and unfortunate, as well as for her championing of woman's rights. "Everywhere her works testify of her," noted Wells in reviewing Kimball's contributions (see Wells, "L.D.S. Women" and "President Sarah M. Kimball").

The rhetorical concept of *enactment* helps explain Kimball's effectiveness as a public speaker and social reformer. Enactment is in force when the speaker herself is proof of her argument. For example, Linkugel and Solomon's study of suffrage orator Anna Howard Shaw describes it this way:

> The rhetorical concept of *enactment* explains her [Shaw's] effectiveness as a public speaker and social reformer. Quite simply, enactment occurs when the speaker herself is the proof or her argument and incarnates her message. Kohrs Campbell in *The Rhetorical Act* stated that "enactment is powerful evidence because members of the audience see and hear the evidence for themselves, directly. The proof is particularly vivid—it is alive in front of them!" (Linkugel xiii)

In other words, the speaker is evidence of her argument. If her life's work reflects the same message as her words, then the rhetor's biographical history can be read as a creative text, as much as can any of her public oratory. This theory gives us some critical tools for examining life itself as a characteristic text. As Dinah Maria Mulock describes an anonymous nineteenth-century woman who "has simply done what it was her duty to do":

> Published or unpublished, this woman's life is a goodly chronicle, the title page of which you may read in her quiet countenance; her manner, settled, cheerful, and at ease; her unfailing interest in all things and all people. (Mulock 1605)

If actions really do speak as loudly as words do, then those actions may also be read as a text as influential in persuading followers as the rhetor's carefully crafted verbosity. In the next two chapters we will further discuss how the *ethos*, the trustworthy character, that Kimball presents helped make her effective as a leader. This chapter will examine how that *ethos* was created by the way Kimball lived her life.

Kimball was actively devoted to the principles she verbally espoused, religiously and politically. An overview of her life history puts her public discourse in context; her background—educationally, financially, socially and spiritually—made a difference in her goals and her approaches to achieving those goals. This chapter will examine significant aspects of Kimball's biographical details, focusing particularly on areas influential in forming her communication patterns and her social concerns. This is the type of historiography suggested by Clark and Halloran, a study of both Kimball's public discourse and the social context that helped to shape it and was influenced in return. Embedding Kimball's rhetoric in her social and historical context, I will examine samples of her discourse with this blending of rhetorical theory and practice in mind.

For the sake of organization, I have roughly divided the "goodly chronicle" of Kimball's life history into three broad stages, which will help show how her spiritual and social concerns developed. The three stages are: 1) the formative years (1818-40), which cover her childhood, family upbringing, and conversion to Mormonism, up to her marriage and settling in Nauvoo; 2) the transitional seasons (1840-1867), in which years Kimball moved from being a young bride in Nauvoo to a widowed single mother in Salt Lake City, saw the Female Relief Society grow from a fledgling grassroots movement to a highly organized and influential organization, during which time much of her theory of social reform originated and developed; 3) the public sphere (1867-1898), which covers Kimball's increased involvement and high profile in Relief Society administration, in public politics, and in the woman's suffrage movement, both locally and nationally.

The Formative Years: 1818-1840

Emmeline Wells neatly summarized Kimball's intellectual qualities and social influence by describing her thus:

> She possessed excellent power of concentration, something quite unusual in women, and she was well versed in the literature of the time, and the political questions that have agitated the minds of women much during the nineteenth century period; she was inclined to argument on points of law and political economy, and was quite independent and decided in her views on the woman question, could express herself particularly well, and never hesitated in giving her opinion upon equality of the sexes. In fact she would rank as a leader in the woman's movement, and in many respects she resembled the illustrious so called General, Susan B. Anthony. (Wells, "L.D.S. Women" 2)

Those individual characteristics and their manifestations in the central concerns of Kimball's public career—church, women's rights, and politics—began to be formed very early in her life. Sarah Melissa Granger was born December 29, 1818 in Phelps, New York—a small town midway between Palmyra and Seneca Falls, which was, as her biographer Jill Mulvay Derr points out, "a fortuitously appropriate beginning for a woman so committed to the gospel restored by Joseph Smith, Jr., and the principle of the equality of the sexes" (Derr 24). Phelps was also near Utica, New York, one of the centers of the spreading female benevolent society movement during the nineteenth century (Derr, Cannon and Beecher 26). The Granger family left Phelps when Sarah was

barely a teenager, but this early atmosphere of intellectual, spiritual, and social reformation may well have made a significant impact on her developing sensibilities.

Sarah was one of eight children of Oliver and Lydia Dibble Granger. Her childhood was evidently a stable one both emotionally and socially. The Grangers were a prominent family in Phelps, one of the town's pioneer families, and so well respected that many years later, Sarah Kimball would be invited back to deliver a commemorative speech at the city's centennial celebrations in 1889. The family was also prominent in local religious matters; Oliver Granger and his father Pierce were both licensed Methodist preachers. (A fact that would certainly have shaped Sarah's early opportunities for religious education.)

When Oliver Granger was introduced the Book of Mormon just a few months after its publication in 1830, he quickly became convinced of its truth and was converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Young Sarah was evidently very struck by her father's dramatic conversion. In her autobiographical sketch published some half a century later, Sarah includes no account of her own conversion and baptism into the church, but she describes at length Oliver's experience with a heavenly visitation concerning the Book of Mormon he had recently begun to study:

> My father was told by a personage who said his name was Moroni that the Book of Mormon, about which his mind was exercised, was a true record of great worth, and Moroni instructed him (my father) to testify of its truth and that he should hereafter be ordained to preach the everlasting Gospel to the children of men.

Soon after his baptism, the former Methodist preacher Oliver Granger was ordained a Mormon Elder by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young and became active in missionary work in Ohio and New York. This dedication to a new faith became a decisive turning point for the Granger family. As it did for many new converts, joining the Mormons meant the beginning of many upheavals in what had previously been a stable and comfortable existence.

Oliver moved his family to Kirtland, Ohio in 1833 to gather with the thriving community of Saints there. Years later, in a General Retrenchment Meeting in Salt Lake City, Sarah would remember the spirit of joy she associated with that time in a utopian Kirtland:

> Counselor Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball alluded to the time when the Kirtland Temple was being built, when the Saints all considered that what they possessed belonged to the work of the Lord; when the women would churn and cheerfully send their butter to the workmen on the Temple and eat without any on their own tables; then they were all hopeful and joyous; she had never seen happier days in her life that she knew of . . . . (v5:50 no.7 [1 Sept. 1876])

Young Sarah, barely 15 when the family moved to Kirtland, was encouraged and trained in both spiritual and intellectual inquiry during these years. As a teenager in Kirtland, Sarah was one of the few women to attend the School of the Prophets, a semi-regular gathering mostly comprised of priesthood-bearing elders—including her father (Thatcher 104)—to study gospel-related topics (Derr 25). Later in life she would proudly remind

her Relief Society sisters about that formative educational opportunity as a girl (RS minutes 11 April 1894), including her impressions on hearing Joseph Smith's doctrinally important Lectures on Faith (RS minutes 25 Nov 1896). In Kirtland, Sarah "had grasped an intellectual and spiritual challenge that excited her throughout her life" (Derr 26).

As social and financial pressures grew around the Mormons in Kirtland in 1838, the Grangers attempted to move to join the Saints in Far West, Missouri, but anti-Mormon mobs forced them back to Ohio (Derr 26). Of these troubles and the later expulsion of the saints from Illinois, Sarah's autobiography only notes briefly, "In the wanderings and persecutions of the Church I have participated . . . . To sorrow I have not been a stranger. . ." When the Granger family joined the resettled Mormons in Commerce (later renamed Nauvoo), Illinois, they became acquainted with Hiram Kimball, a transplanted Vermont merchant who had arrived in town some seven years earlier. At age 34, Hiram Kimball was a prosperous and well-respected businessman in mercantile and real estate; he was involved in buying and selling land, and it was in this capacity that Hiram, who was not a Mormon, became closely involved with the Latter-day Saints.

After only a year's stay in Nauvoo, Oliver Granger took his family back to Kirtland, where Joseph Smith wanted him to settle some remaining church business. But Sarah, now 21, didn't stay with the family there for long. She and Hiram Kimball were married in Kirtland on September 22, 1840, and the couple returned to Nauvoo three weeks later. More and varied social, spiritual, and intellectual spheres were opening for the young bride.

One of the analytical strategies that Abigail Stewart suggests in studying women's lives is to identify "significant aspects of an individual's social position and explore the implications of that position" (27). For much of her formative and young adult years, Sarah Granger Kimball was in a quite comfortable social position, with all the advantages that came with financial security. Emmeline Wells would note that Kimball "had been a woman of means and had the advantages of what is termed good society, as a young woman and matron; and after her marriage had a beautiful home of her own and pleasant surroundings" (2). This early affluence would be important in Kimball's development for two reasons: first, it gave her ample opportunity to develop the "capacities of mind" both intellectually and spiritually that she would later call upon as a religious leader and social activist; and second, these comfortable conditions would contrast sharply with the change in fortunes that would befall her during her first difficult years in Utah, and contrast even more sharply with the "degraded social conditions" she would see women battling all over the country. These were the factors that led to Kimball's becoming "very progressive along all lines of intellectual growth and educational attainments" (Wells 2).

The Transitional Seasons: 1840-1867

In the decades that followed after her marriage in Nauvoo, Sarah Kimball's fortunes would ebb and flow. She would bear three sons, and see her household expand to include (among others) two adopted daughters and her own widowed mother. She would be both rich and poor. She would spend eleven years in Nauvoo; it was a tumultuous time in church history, and a period especially important for establishing the

roots of Kimball's leadership skills and her devotion to the doctrines taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith—especially the principles of temple work and plural marriage. When Hiram's business fortunes changed, Sarah took over the family's migration to Utah, and shouldered much of the financial burden. Those early lean years in Salt Lake City did much to enlighten Sarah Kimball's mind about the social conditions facing women. And perhaps most significantly, both in Nauvoo and in Salt Lake, Sarah was a key player in the inception, organization, and expansion of the Female Relief Society.

As a young newly married couple, Hiram and Sarah Kimball were prominent in Nauvoo's social circles, both Mormon and non-Mormon, and were financially well off. One popularly recounted incident shows a lot about their relationship. The episode occurred in November of 1841, just three days after the birth of Sarah and Hiram's first child. Sarah describes how the Church was in need of help raising the walls of the Nauvoo Temple. She wanted to help, but "did not like to ask my husband (who owned considerable property) to help for my sake," especially since Hiram was not a member of the church. But she found a way around those difficulties, playing on Hiram's good nature, and showing her own sly humor and a shrewd business head. She described the interchange as follows:

> My husband came to my bedside, and as he was admiring our three days old darling I said, "What is the boy worth?" He replied, "O, I don't know, he is worth a great deal." I said, "Is he worth a thousand dollars?" The reply was "Yes, more than that if he lives and does well." I said, "Half of him is mine, is it not?" "Yes, I suppose so." "Then I have something to

> help on the Temple." (pleasantly) "You have?" "Yes, and I think of turning my share right in as tithing." "Well, I'll think about that." (WE v.12:51, no.7 [1 Sept. 1883])

Not long after that conversation, Hiram recounted his wife's proposal to President Joseph Smith. As Sarah describes Hiram telling the Prophet, "Sarah has got a little the advantage of me this time, she proposes to turn out the boy as church property":

> President Smith seemed pleased with the joke, and said, "I accept all such donations, and from this day the boy shall stand recorded, *church property*," then turning to Willard Richards, his secretary, he said, "Make a record of this, and you are my witness."

Joseph then gave Hiram the option of "paying $500 and retaining possession" of his son, or "receiving $500 and giving possession." Hiram, in turn, negotiated a trade in property, and instead donated a block of land he owned just north of the Temple site. Even more importantly, perhaps, was the Prophet's commendation to Mrs. Kimball on the incident. She carefully records his personal approbation to her:

> You have consecrated your first born son, for this you are blessed of the Lord. I bless you in the name of the Lord God of Abraham of Isaac and of Jacob. And I seal upon you all the blessings that pertain to the faithful. Your name shall be handed down in honorable remembrance from generation to generation.

This incident shows not only Mr. and Mrs. Kimball's partnership, but also Sarah's dedication to temple work, her frustrations at not owning her own property as a wife, and

her resourcefulness at meeting a difficult goal—all attributes that would influence her rhetorical goals and leadership techniques.

It was in the Kimballs' frame home in Nauvoo the first steps were taken toward organizing Latter-day Saint women into a service society in March of 1842. Sarah and her seamstress, Margaret Cook, were discussing ways to help workers who were building the temple and suggested the formation of a sewing society. This movement led directly to the church's official organization of the Female Relief Society, under the direction of Joseph Smith two weeks later. Sarah Kimball's role in that mobilization and her personal account of the Relief Society's origins will be discussed more in detail in Chapter three, but it's worth noting here that Kimball's close Nauvoo association with the Relief Society provided her with further educational, spiritual, and social opportunities and responsibilities.

For example, one of the stated purposes of the Relief Society was to care for the needy and ill in the community. Kimball was among several elite women called and authorized to nurse Nauvoo's ill:

> She [Emma Smith] was assisted in this work by such noble and lofty women as Mary Fielding Smith, and Mercy R. Thompson, Eliza R. Snow . . . Mother Whitney, Marinda and Mary Ann Hyde, Elvira Cowles and Sarah M. Kimball. The Prophet Joseph Smith laid his hands on these women's heads and set them apart to go about among the sick and minister to their wants. (History of Relief Society 85)

That Kimball continued to exercise this calling is much evident throughout the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society minutes in Salt Lake. Throughout her public career she would continue to draw on the doctrines and privileges that she had learned from the Prophet and others during those early Relief Society sessions.

Another particularly significant event took place while Sarah was in Nauvoo: her introduction to the doctrine of plural marriage. Early in 1842, Joseph Smith had approached Sarah on the subject, but as she herself would admit, she was not a receptive student:

> He said that in teaching this he realized that he jeopardized his life; but God had revealed it to him many years before as a privilege with blessing, now God had revealed it again and instructed him to teach it with commandment, as the church could travel (progress) no farther without the introduction of this principle. I asked him to teach it to someone else.

She never would enter into a plural marriage. Kimball's personal rejection of polygamy is especially noteworthy in considering the zeal with which she defended the practice throughout her life. Many times in her Salt Lake Relief Society meetings Kimball would testify of the doctrine's truthfulness: "Pres. Mrs. Kimball said she felt called upon to make a few remarks upon the principle of Plural Marriage. To her it was a sacred subject, one fraught with much interest, it was something for the righteous, but in the hands of the wicked it was an edged tool and would damn many. . . . Said she was a living witness [Joseph Smith] taught the principle of Celestial Marriage, most earnestly and solemnly" (RS minutes, 24 Feb. 1870). Her autobiographical account of this encounter with the

Prophet—written in 1883, some 40 years after the fact, so all the more impressive in its detail—continues:

> He looked at me reprovingly, and said, "Will you tell me who to teach it to? God requires me to teach it to you, and leave you with the responsibility of believing or disbelieving." He said, "I will not cease to pray for you, and if you will seek unto God in prayer you will not be led into temptation."

Her inclusion of this reproach is important in illustrating her continued acceptance of Joseph Smith as a prophet of God. She could continually reinforce that fact in testifying to her Relief Society sisters that she heard the prophet preach this principle from his own lips, and therefore it should be considered a divine commandment and privilege. She would draw on this conclusion in defending the practice as lawful and right, during the years of congressional punishments to polygamists and Utah women voters.

In Nauvoo, Sarah's husband Hiram was eventually baptized into the church in July of 1843 (Madsen 153 n.12); but when the Latter-day Saints were forced out of Nauvoo in 1846, Sarah and Hiram stayed behind to attend to Hiram's unfinished business affairs. There may also have been other reasons for the delay. A few years earlier Hiram had been involved in a public dispute with Joseph Smith over Nauvoo city ordinances dealing with the collection of steamboat wharfage fees along portions of the riverfront where Kimball owned land (see Faulring 451-53). Then in 1844 Hiram, along with Reynolds Cahoon, was one of the men most vocal in persuading Joseph and Hyrum Smith to surrender to the litigation that would lead to their imprisonment and martyrdom

at Carthage. It may be that Hiram Kimball was in no hurry to go west with a group of saints that remembered these grievances against him. Sarah makes no mention of these events anywhere throughout all her long public career, and recent (and contemporary) biographical sketches of Kimball's life make no mention of the discord, either.

It is this sort of telling omission that Abigail Stewart suggests researchers can turn up by "looking for what's been left out" of traditional accounts of women's lives. Stewart posits that changing our perceptions of what may be "important" in a woman's life can lead to significant insights when historians look for "what has been overlooked, unconceptualized, and not noticed, but that may be very central to women's experience" (14). In her public recountings, Kimball does show a tendency to skip over the episodes of her life that she does not consider necessary to "instruct and happify" her listeners (see "Auto-biography"). It's quite certain that any discord between her husband and the man she revered as God's prophet would have caused some level of private emotional turmoil, and must have disrupted her social circle to a degree as well. But for whatever the reason, Sarah kept her silence about this issue, and still managed to remain loyal to her husband and a staunch supporter of the Prophet.

In any case, Sarah Kimball appears to have been anxious to join the main body of the saints along the trail to Utah after the expulsion from Nauvoo. With Hiram away in New York City tying up business, Sarah wrote a letter to her friend Marinda Hyde (dated 2 January 1848) who was with the saints in Council Bluffs, Iowa:

> . . . how I wish you could visit me during my husband's absence. I shall feel very lonesome indeed. I sometimes flatter myself that I shall see you all next spring.

> Mr. K talks of having me take the children & mother & go on next spring & leave him to close his business & follow. I don't want to leave him but shall do as he thinks best. (Derr 28)

This was the course she would end up taking three years later. Traveling in company with her two brothers, her two young sons (Hiram and Oliver, both under 10 years old), and her widowed mother, Kimball would drive her own team across the plains, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in September of 1851. Upon her arrival she sold her wagon and team for a comfortable little home—a trade which she said she always considered providential. Into this home she soon welcomed a nine year old "wild Indian girl, whom I educated and raised" (see "Auto-biography) and who would stay with the family until she was nineteen. This type of extended household was not unusual for Latter-day Saints of the time; what was atypical was Kimball's unexpectedly becoming the sole breadwinner for her household.

Hiram had been detained by his business in New York City, and by this time had "become financially much embarrassed." By the time he joined them in Utah a year later, he was "financially ruined and broken in health," and Sarah would shoulder the family's financial burden while her husband recovered. As she explains: "I engaged in school teaching in the 14th Ward to sustain and educate my family. My salary was only $25.00 per month, but that was much to us at the time." It was during this time, as Wells notes, that Kimball became particularly aware of the challenges facing women in financial pursuits. She taught school

> under very trying circumstances, and while thus engaged in teaching she became even more than ever convinced of the need of changed conditions for women engaged in work that came in competition with men, and determined to push the matter to the utmost. (Derr 29)

When she was not rehired to teach in the ward school, Kimball resourcefully asked her husband and sons to haul timber from the canyons to build a schoolroom behind their house so she could continue to teach private students. She taught eight years, pausing only for a three month "maternity leave" when her youngest son, Franklin, was born in 1854.

By 1857 Hiram was prospering again financially, and Sarah's life became more increasingly involved in ward activities. That year she was called to replace her mother, Lydia Dibble Granger, as the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward Relief Society president. Because of the Utah War and the move south to Provo in 1858, local Relief Society activities were interrupted. They were not fully resumed until nearly a decade later (Derr 29). By that time, Sarah Kimball's situation in life had changed dramatically again.

Her two older sons married, and her Indian foster daughter, Kate, died at age nineteen. Kimball's autobiographical sketch describes the other major household changes with a characteristic matter-of-factness:

> My mother, who had lived with me 20 years, died in 1861, age 73.
>
> My husband was drowned March 14, 1863, in the Pacific Ocean by the wreck of the steamer Ida Hancock, off the coast of San Pedro, on his way to the Sandwich Islands [to serve a mission]; aged 62. . . .

In December, 1865, a little girl [Elizabeth] was brought to me whom I adopted.

By the time of the Relief Society's regeneration in Utah, the Kimball household and her responsibilities had changed dramatically. In 1867, at age 49, a widowed single mother, Kimball resumed her position as Fifteenth Ward Relief Society President. She would spend the rest of her life in an increasingly public position.

The years that had led her from Nauvoo to this period had been important in bringing to Kimball's attention many of the issues that she would later address. As a catalyst of the Relief Society's inception, she would be a mainstay in its expansion. She would have been closely observant of her mother's service as a ward Relief Society president, and likely drew on that experience as she took over that calling herself. Her changing financial status, and the necessity of her entering the workforce helped convince her of the need for greater opportunities and training for women in order to expand their sphere of usefulness. This was the background that led to Kimball's most public responsibilities and the well-documented causes she espoused.

The Public Sphere: 1867-1898

With fewer obligations at home, Kimball was unusually free to focus her attentions and efforts on public affairs in the church and in politics. Widowed for the last 35 years of her life, Kimball's unique singleness made her rather unusual among other "leading women" of the church (e.g. Eliza R. Snow, Emmeline B. Wells, Zina D.H. Young, etc.) who were often closely related—by blood or marriage—to prominent priesthood leaders. Kimball's ecclesiastical prominence was enhanced by her inherent

gifts as an organizer and agitator, but she was also valued for her longevity; having always been at the center of the Relief Society movement, she remained one of the elite few. While Kimball served in Relief Society leadership positions, the organization grew from its fledgling rebirth to become an expansive social, spiritual, and educational stronghold for women. Many of the following events will be discussed further in later chapters, but here's a brief overview of some important events that filled the years of her most public service.

By 1868, just a year after the Society's regeneration, Kimball was presiding over her ward's construction of the first Relief Society Hall in the church—a building dedicated to both the practical and spiritual advancement of women. Soon she would be overseeing a ward granary as well. During her 40 years of close, hands-on leadership with her ward Relief Society, Kimball also served in two General Relief Society presidencies, which oversaw the organization church-wide: she was Secretary (1880-87) to President Eliza R. Snow, and then Third Counselor (1888-92) and Secretary (1892-98) to President Zina D.H. Young.

Kimball's other great passion was civic duty. In 1870, the women of the Utah Territory were granted full suffrage rights by the non-Mormon governor of the territory. Kimball had always been involved in politics, but this is a point at which her involvement became even more extensive. She became well known as an advocate for women exercising their rights to vote. Later, when congressional legislation (the Edmunds Act in 1882) disenfranchised first, any person practicing polygamy and second, (the Tucker Act in 1886) all the women in Utah, Kimball was outspoken in her fight against the

unconstitutionality and unfairness of that legislation. Her leadership in this issue was one of the building blocks that the younger generation of suffrage rhetors in Utah would stand on after her.

In 1890, at age 72, Kimball was elected President of the Utah Woman's Suffrage Association; she was later voted in as an Honorary President for life. In 1895 national suffrage leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anna Howard Shaw, and Susan B. Anthony visited Utah in a show of support for the local women's efforts, and Kimball (looking frail and venerable in the company of other local leaders) sat for a photograph of impressive power. By 1896, Utah was granted statehood, becoming the second state in the Union to include full woman's suffrage in its constitution (Wyoming was the first). Kimball had been failing in health and was not at the forefront of this push, but rejoiced in the political victory.

She traveled a great deal during these years, including General Relief Society presidency visits to outlying settlements; trips to St. George and Logan, Utah to do temple work; several trips to California to visit her brother and her son; a trip to New York City for a national suffrage convention; and a trip back to her family hometown of Phelps, New York, as an invited speaker at the Phelps centennial celebration. Her travel must have made impressions on her; she regularly reported on her visits in weekly Fifteenth ward Relief Society meetings, discussing the state of the Relief Society in other cities, or the beautiful views in California, or sharing her impressions of leaders like Stanton and Anthony. Travel must have also broadened her outlook—it definitely gave

her opportunity to have her consciousness raised as she was very conscious of the state of women in the places she visited.

Despite several periods of ill health, Kimball remained as active as possible in church affairs, retaining the calling as Fifteenth ward Relief Society president until her death. She died at home on the evening of December 1, 1898, just a few weeks short of her 80th birthday. According to her own expressed wishes, there was no black worn at her funeral services. Her passing was well noted in the local press—both the *Woman's Exponent* and the *Deseret News* printed detailed reports of her funeral service, and tributes to her life. The *Exponent* tribute to "President Sarah M. Kimball," written by Emmeline Wells, notes Kimball's years of church and community service:

> . . . she has been . . . one of the most able presidents and indefatigable workers in the cause of all Zion. Perhaps there was no more judicious economizer of means, yet withal liberal in bestowing to the needy and unfortunate, than she has been. Her own ward can testify to her good works, her unbounded charity and motherly care of the sick and afflicted . . . . Everywhere her works testify of her, and the younger generation should not pass by such notable examples as her life affords. Her name and life should be perpetuated in the memory of every young man and woman in Zion. (15 Dec. 1898)

This high regard for "President Mrs. Kimball" was to be one of the greatest strengths behind her effectiveness as a leader, and her good works would become as well known as

her good words. The next chapters will continue the discussion by examining other factors that led to Kimball's political effectiveness and religious influence.

Chapter 2

"Both A Born Preacher and Prophet": Issues of Authority

> Mrs. S.M. Kimball said so much had been said for woman she wanted to advocate the cause of the brethren, but in the course of her remarks referred to the reasons why the women of the world had taken it upon themselves to represent their own cause; and said she was very forcibly reminded to-day of one of their meetings, when, after they had spoken strongly of the wrongs women had suffered, etc., some man arose to defend the sex, but the women cried out to him to keep his seat, they had been listening to men for all these hundreds of years, now they would speak for themselves.
>
> - Report of the Union (Salt Lake Co.) Relief Society
> First Annual Meeting, 9 August 1878
> (*Woman's Exponent* v.7:45, no.6)

Speaking for Themselves

On one of her political delegations to New York City, Sarah Kimball wrote a letter back to her Relief Society sisters in Utah mentioning a compliment recently paid to Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Stanton, the American suffragist, was praised by an English clergyman who described her as "both a born preacher and prophet." The concept of prophecy is a helpful one in examining historical instances of women's rhetoric, and in situating Kimball's rhetoric in a framework with other of her contemporary female rhetors. There are similarities among the passionate appeals of women who argue for the chance not only to speak, but to be heard. That the weak and simple may confound the wise as vessels of divine direction was an important tenet to women marginalized from public discourse.

For women rhetors in the Christian tradition, the question was not about the right or ability of a female to communicate with God. The complication came with the attempt to make public their personal insights. These women needed to find an effective way to

find opportunities to speak and to create circumstances which would allow them to be heard. For centuries, from early medieval times onward, many women invested themselves with authority in claiming obedience to specific direction: commanded by God himself to publicize their experiences and insights, they risk his displeasure rather than the trouble they may raise from being misunderstood or resented by men.

For example, when medieval English mystic Margery Kempe was brought before the Archbishop of York to acquit herself of charges of heresy, she employed a noteworthy strategy in defending herself. When one of the clerics quoted St. Paul saying that women should not preach, Kempe pointed out that her life was her message: "I do not preach, sir, I do not use a pulpit. I rely on good words and good deeds only, and that I will continue to do as long as I live" (in Petroff 322). As discussed in the last chapter, a life's actions can also be read as one form of this woman's rhetoric. But additionally, Kempe argued a place for her "good words" in a public sphere as well. She argued essentially, that a Christian's free speech should not be limited because of her sex:

> God Almighty does not forbid us, sir to speak of him. And also the Gospel mentions that when the woman heard our Lord preach, she came to him and said in a loud voice, "Blessed be the womb that bore you and the breast that gave you suck." Then our Lord replied, "Truly, they are blessed who hear the word of God and keep it." And therefore, sir, I think the Gospel gives me leave to speak of God. (322)

In this way, Kempe cleverly overcame the issue of women's authority to "preach" in public, and allowed herself to be a valuable voice in boldly and openly speaking of God.

Other religious women would follow similar strategies, defining and redefining boundaries of a woman's right to speak.

Since for many years women's voices were largely absent in the public sphere, the nineteenth century was still a time when women were fighting for their right to speak in public, and for ways to make themselves heard. Individual spiritual matters were one place where women had access to God as equal as men had; religious claims, therefore, became a toehold for their climbing into public discourse. Nineteenth-century social reformers like Sarah Grimke and Elizabeth Cady Stanton claimed the right to speak in public as a divine charge.

For Latter-day Saint women, the discussion was complicated by the fact that though the Prophet Joseph Smith said that he "turned the key for women" in the name of the Lord, the Female Relief Society was fashioned after the pattern of and under the direction of the male priesthood. Early Mormon "woman's rights" women were deferential to their patriarchal leaders, critical of "radical" feminist movements which undermined a mother's responsibility to her home and children; at the same time, they were outspoken in their beliefs in the equality and partnership of the sexes and firm in their conviction that expanded women's roles from church to state would be beneficial to humanity. In this context, where is Sarah Kimball situated in a tradition of fighting for authority? What were her justifications for women speaking out? She believed that "God loved his daughters as well as his sons" and wanted women to expand their sphere of usefulness. What strategies did Kimball need to invest her words with authority?

For a start, her life of action helped characterize her as a "true Christian" devoted to the gospel both intellectually and practically; her ethos was firmly established by her daily work. In addition, Kimball held a position of power into which she had been called by "proper priesthood authority," which meant not only by the influential male hierarchy of Church authorities, but through them, called by divine edict. This chapter will examine these and other circumstances that gave Kimball a trustworthy public voice, and the ways in which she claimed—or, just as importantly, did *not* claim—to speak as an authority.

Playing the Fool?

As communications scholars point out, female rhetors were doubly challenging to established authority when they were also members of "outgroups" marginalized from the centers of power and discussion. In considering Kimball and her contemporaries as talented "outgroup" rhetoricians, it is interesting to note Patricia Bizzell's discussion of the rhetorical advantages (and dangers) of being an outsider. In her article "*The Praise of Folly*, the Woman Rhetor, and Post-Modern Skepticism," Bizzell notes that female personae were common in Renaissance written orations and can be traced back through medieval and classical dialogues. She finds the personification of the female "fool" particularly useful for "finding a compelling version of rhetorical authority from which to speak on behalf of oppressed groups" (7).

By risking making "fools" of themselves by speaking out publicly in a society that was unreceptive, Bizzell posits that a female rhetor can cross boundaries and ignore

social distinctions without the care that a "reasonable" speaker would have to take. She expounds on William Willeford's cross-cultural study of the fool figure:

> [F]ools typically cross cultural boundaries that are supposed to be inviolable, or more precisely, fools wander over boundaries as if they didn't even know they were there. The posture of innocent transgression allows the fool to voice social criticism that would be forcibly silenced in the mouth of a more "responsible" rhetor. (16)

But Bizzell does warn that if women think of symbolically taking on the role of the fool, they should also consider "the implications of taking on not only the fool's disregard for social convention, which allows social criticism and the enactment of solidarity, but also the fool's embrace of marginal social positions as well" (17).

As a Mormon pioneer woman, Kimball was well aware of the danger of a marginal social position. Generally, she was cautious about knowing where the boundaries of social criticism were. But she also clearly appreciated women who were willing to adopt a posture of "foolish" transgression. In 1895, near the end of a long public career and as a well established voice of authority, Kimball praised Susan B. Anthony's courage in speaking out despite the early unfriendly reception (such as crowds who threw eggs and hissed at her during speeches):

> Now 52 years ago I would not have dared to say the bold, grand things that Miss Anthony said, it would have made me so unpopular and I hardly dared to shoulder it; but the seed was planted within my soul and I have been laboring for the same cause—I felt that it was uplifting, that it was

> necessary for the nation, and as time rolled on we were very careful. (WE v24:61, no.9 [1 Oct. 1895])

While Kimball became known as an outspoken and visible leader of women's advancement, she was able to do so as an insider within the outgroup of Mormonism. Perhaps because of her experience in the persecutions of the Mormons as a "peculiar" people, and also because of her respect for the male priesthood leadership of the church, Kimball was careful to keep within what she considered the bounds of propriety in her Mormon Utah context, especially during the early stages of her political activism. While she felt it perfectly acceptable for a woman to speak openly in the stewardships with which she had been charged by God (including the home, the Relief Society, and charitable social work) she was at first rather more hesitant to alienate any of her political audience by being labeled an extremist.

Timing was important to this strategy. Utah women were well aware of national efforts for female suffrage, including several unsuccessful congressional bills between 1867-69 that would have adopted woman suffrage in the territories (Madsen, "Woman Suffrage" 1572). Quietly mindful of those efforts (while concentrating her social activism in Relief Society matters), Kimball was finally a catalyst behind Mormon women organizing to make a political statement. When suffrage was granted, Kimball was exultant. The minutes of her ward Relief Society meeting record her reaction on February 19, 1870:

> Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball said she had waited patiently a long time, and now that we were granted the right of suffrage, she would openly declare

> herself a woman's rights woman, and called upon those who would do so to back her up, whereupon many manifested their approval.

This was one week after Utah women were granted full suffrage by the Territorial legislature (largely Mormon), with the approval of the acting Governor (a non-Mormon). Now justified by legislation and the apparent approval of influential male leaders in the community, Kimball publicly declared herself "a woman's rights woman." From this point on, she became more and more outspoken in her defense of women's rights in both the private and public spheres. Her openness on the matter is noteworthy especially when compared to some other Relief Society leaders such as Eliza R. Snow, who demurely insisted that Mormon women "had made no fuss about woman suffrage," and were given the vote only after God "put it in the hearts of the brethren to give us that right" (Madsen, "Woman Suffrage" 1572). Still, even through this filter of male hierarchy, Snow invested women with a God-given right. And in their society, God-given rights were the foundation to virtually every base of power.

"And Your Daughters Shall Prophesy"

The nineteenth century brought about a transformation in the numbers and extent to which women were speaking out in public, on matter not simply religious, but political as well. Women showed a changing perception of God and divine interaction, reflecting changing social conditions; changes in the relationship of self to society (roles, responsibility); matters of agency of self in transformation (of self and society). However, many initial efforts were met with predictable resistance to their reforming

sphere of influence. So many nineteenth-century women fell back on the arguments aptly applied by their foremothers, and based their claims on woman's privileged relationship with God.

When Quaker activist Margaret Fell, an Enlightenment-era feminist, characterized the *prophet* as "the woman speaking in public on matters of moral concern,"she opened up a vastly broader social ground for the female rhetor to tread. Many nineteenth-century women rhetors adopted a similar prophetic stance. Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Sarah Grimke, for example, all drew on their Quaker backgrounds to claim a woman's right to preach in public on a variety of social causes. But by defining woman as *prophet*, Fell was drawing on an already well-established claim. For example, when the medieval visionary Elisabeth of Schonau published her book of *Visions*, the volume included a scriptural justification. Elisabeth's brother and scribe, Ekbert, introduced the manuscript with an expression of concern over how it might be received by men who may be "offended and led into sin" because the words of revelation come from a woman: "Because in these times the Lord deigns to show His mercy most gloriously in the weak sex . . ." (159). But this danger can be overcome by placing Elisabeth in the tradition of Old Testament and Apocryphal women:

> But why do they not remember that something similar happened in the days of our fathers? While the men were given over to sluggishness, holy women were filled with the spirit of God, that they might prophesy, govern God's people forcefully, and indeed triumph gloriously over the

> foes of Israel: so it happened with Olda, Deborah, Judith, Jahel, and other women of this sort. (159)

In other words, Elisabeth's role as a mouthpiece of the Lord was not without precedent. The juxtaposition of her revelations alongside the canonical examples put her in a powerful company. By identifying themselves with the already established figure of the prophetess, many nineteenth century women would follow suit. The conceit was not limited to Christian tradition, either; in the mid-1800s social activists Jane Addams and Margaret Fuller both drew on their classical educations to identify with the "intuitive Trojan prophet" Cassandra. Addams compared the contemporary state of women to Cassandra's tragedy: "always to be in the right, and always to be disbelieved" (Peaden 187). Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in an 1891Woman's National Council address titled "The Matriarchate or Mother-Age," mourned the loss of the "sacerdotal privileges"of the ancestral Teutonic woman who had "remained holy as priestess. She had charge of the tribal sacrifice and the tribal religion" (WE v19:162, no.21 [1 May 1891]).

But although in that same address Stanton condemned the "narrow Pauline doctrine" of the Christian religion, at that first historic meeting in Seneca Falls in 1848 she had drawn on the Christian tradition for another stirring comparison in justifying the gathering women's movement :

> The same religious enthusiasm that nerved Joan of Arc to her work nerves us to ours. In every generation God calls some men and women for the utterance of truth, a heroic action, and our work to-day is the fulfilling of what has long since been foretold by the Prophet—Joel, II, xxviii: "And it

> shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy." (Stanton 19)

Influential abolitionist Sarah Grimke had used the same scriptural authority to help establish her assertion that women were "bound to preach the gospel" (690) and were "anointed of the Holy Ghost to preach, or prophecy" (692), as she argued in her 1837 essay "Ministry of Women." Grimke refers to the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, who explained that day's spiritual manifestations by saying, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (692).

Grimke also hearkened back to the scriptural tradition by discussing "Anna, the (last) prophetess under the Jewish dispensation" (692). Again and again, women's rights advocates would turn to Biblical precedent. Suffrage orator Anna Howard Shaw (herself the nation's first female ordained as a Methodist preacher) built one of her most famous and oft-repeated speeches, "God's Women," around this strategy:

> The women go to the Bible to prove their claim; and the one woman upon whom we have all laid our claim and our boast is that grand old woman who was able to cry out, in looking over Israel in its hour of peace, "There was trouble, there was dissension, there was unrest in Israel until I, Deborah, a mother in Israel, arose." We point to the fact that the judges of Israel were always understood by those people to be divinely selected for their position; and being thus divinely selected, we cannot assume that any human being could have taken the position who was not recognized, by the people at least, as having been chosen by God.

(WE 19:147, no.19 [1 April 91])

Furthermore, Shaw argues, "we cannot assume that God did not know what he was doing when He chose Deborah to be a judge in Israel":

> If, then, she was not God's woman, whose woman was she? And if God is not able to recognize His own, what will become of us at the last? Now, we believe that this judge in Israel was divinely ordained for the work, because otherwise she could not have done her work so well.

Shaw then goes on to other Biblical women—Miriam, Hester, Vashti—who did not hold a position of political power like Deborah, but were still raised up by God to fill vital roles. She catalogues the contributions of the New Testament Marys: "One was the mother of the Lord, doing the greatest public work for the race that has ever been done in the world. One was a woman who was a theological student learning at the feet of the Master. The other was the first divinely commissioned preacher of the resurrection." All of these, Shaw asserts, must be considered "God's women."

Sarah Kimball also drew quite naturally on this scriptural basis. For example, not long after being elected President of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association, Kimball publicly refuted the argument of a man who advised Utah women "Do not say it is your right to sit on the Judge's bench and listen to all phases of immoral life." Kimball's matter-of-fact response blended the ancient precedent with a modern incarnation:

> Why not? Deborah judged Israel forty years and Israel was blessed with a peaceful reign, our nearer neighbor Esther Morris occupied the judge's bench creditably in Wyoming Territory . . . . When she retired from the

bench she was crowned with the appellation of *a just Judge*. Our daughters and sons are taught to revere the names and deeds of such women, and hand them down to posterity with honor. (WE v.20:81, no.10 [1 December 1891])

Kimball presented this logical refutation just three months before hearing Shaw's speech on "God's Women" delivered in person. Perhaps after hearing Shaw's extensive treatise she would have relied even more heavily on the scriptural basis. Then again, maybe not; Kimball's characteristic brevity in debate was well known, and her straightforward approach was part of her rhetorical power. Even more importantly, Kimball always carried with her a tacit understanding that Mormon women were already invested with a great deal of spiritual authority. (This assumption, based largely on her experience in the Relief Society and on Mormon doctrine expounded by the latter-day Prophet Joseph Smith, will be discussed more in detail later in this chapter.)

Such scripturally based arguments obviously carried great weight among religiously inclined audiences, but their widespread use also offered an even greater tactical advantage: since many anti-suffrage arguments, for instance, were founded on the "narrow Pauline doctrine" that women were to "keep silence in the churches," scriptural examples refuting that interpretation were in great demand. Ironically, one of the most important liberal interpretations of this injunction was to come from Paul himself. As Sarah Grimke argued in "Ministry of Women," women have as much right to be called prophets as men have—especially when the term *prophecy* is defined, as Paul does (1Cor. 14:3), in its most inclusionary sense:

> We attach to the word prophecy, the exclusive meaning of foretelling future events, but this is certainly a mistake; for the apostle Paul defines it to be "speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort." And there appears no possible reason, why women should not do this as well as men. (Grimke 692)

This "prophetic" model of "speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort" was widely adopted as a rhetorical pattern and as a strategy for women establishing their right to speak. The eighteenth-century American poet Anne Bradstreet, for example, had sidestepped the issue of authority almost entirely upon this claim. Never questioning her right to examine her relationship with God, she also never showed any indication that her publication of such divine matters was an impropriety. God, she notes, "will not be tied to time nor place, nor yet to persons, but takes and chooses, when and where and whom He pleases" (288). Authority from God was a way to confound an earthly hierarchy (by appealing to a source "over their heads," as it were) and, perhaps more importantly, to *internalize* a sense of divine significance; that God found women's conversation as inherently worthwhile as their brethren's was the ultimate equality.

A Divine Prerogative

Mormon women have always been particularly emphatic on the subject of God-given privileges and equal access to divine communication. One early editorial in the *Woman's Exponent* makes it a point to respond to a reader's question on the topic by clarifying their stance in no uncertain terms:

> We are asked by the editor of the "New North West," "why it is that religious revelations always come to men." It is a mistaken idea that woman has not the same right to know for herself what the Lord requires at her hands, that a man has. The Latter-day Saints acknowledge no such theory. . . . [In volume 1 of this journal] "W.E." writing on woman's agency, very clearly illustrates that it is a divine prerogative belonging to woman to call upon the Lord, and receive answers to her prayers; . . . . Thousands of "Mormon" women faithfully bear the same testimony.

The editorial then goes on to reference an account written by Sarah Kimball that also illustrates this vital principle:

> Number 18, volume 1 of the *Exponent* contains "A Chapter in the Life of Naoma," —Mrs. Vilate Kimball, wife of the late President Heber C. Kimball—written by "B"—Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball (we give the names now by permission) in which it is shown that direct communication from God was given to the woman in answer to her enquiries, and that through this means only, she learned the law of Celestial marriage, or plurality of wives, as her husband, through sympathy had refused to teach it to her. (WE 2:65, no.9 [1 Oct 73])

These women not only advanced the argument for direct revelation, but they readily offered their own experience as immediate and substantial proof of the truth of their claims. A first-person testimony of divine communication was difficult to refute.

The authority to act as directed by God was not limited to a woman's personal sphere, either. Relief Society leaders continually called on divine power in their leadership roles. The discussion is complicated by the fact, however, that while Relief Society leaders spoke with increasing authority in their public roles, that authority was based largely on their claim to power as ceded them by their male priesthood leaders; it was through the "brethren" that the sisters had been called by God to preside.

But Kimball, for one, did not see this as a contradiction. While her official position as "President" and counselor to presidents came at the hands of a male priesthood holder, she believed that the priesthood power itself was an emancipatory one for women. Also, she freely drew on divine authority in her work as a political activist, a role to which no man had called her, but which she assumed on her own volition and merits. The next sections in this chapter will examine specific ways that Kimball drew upon and exercised her authority: by personal testimony, by priesthood ordinance, and by divine charge.

"Well-Fleshed Words"

As Bradstreet writes, "Many can speak well, but few can do well. We are better scholars in the theory than the practice part, but he is a true Christian that is a proficient in both" (272). Theorist Richard Weaver's concentration on the ethical considerations of rhetoric led him to assert that "the rhetorician is a preacher to us," and to agree with Quintilian's claim that the true orator is "the good man, skilled in speaking—good in his formed character and right in his ethical philosophy" (1054). As discussed in chapter one

of this thesis, the life of the rhetor—the daily embodiment of his or her values—is integral to the success of the message. Weaver suggests one reason for this importance: "Rhetoric always comes to us in well-fleshed words, and that is because it must deal with the world, the thickness, stubbornness and power of it" (1047).

Kimball, being of a decidedly practical bent, was never afraid to draw from her own experience in the world to illustrate her message. One of the reasons her rhetoric was successful was simply that she lived according to the maxim; she practiced what she preached, and this fact made her words even more "well-fleshed." For example, Kimball's heightened social conscience was based on her many face-to-face encounters with the horrors of a deprived social condition:

> Counselor S.M. Kimball in her remarks referred to having visited some of the dens of iniquity in other cities when she had heard the erring wail over their condition and it had taught her sympathy for the repentant and sorrowing, and she felt the mission of assisting in reform was the noblest one women could have. (WE v7:10 no.2 [15 June 1878])

In Kimball's travels, when she heard the "erring wail" raised, she could have been content with listening to the public outcry, and still come away with a vague desire to help. But she takes her involvement a step further, and goes into the "dens of iniquity" to learn from the situation for herself. Such involvement with the "repentant and sorrowing" gives her much more credibility as an eyewitness and makes her personal conviction all the more believable. Additionally, Kimball issues what is, in effect, a divine charge to her Relief Society audience here, simply by referring to the work of social reform as a

"mission." For women who were well acquainted with the concept and purposes of missionary efforts (usually filled by the male "Elders" of the church) this was a powerful image.

She would call upon herself as an example on many occasions. In the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society meeting where she jubilantly describes herself "a woman's rights woman," she follows up that declaration with a personal evidence: "She said her experience in life had been different from that of many. She had moved in all grades of society; had been both rich and poor; had always seen much good and intelligence in woman" (RS minutes, 19 Feb. 1870). Kimball's uniquely broad personal paths through society had not only helped form her feminist opinions, they were also useful as evidence to support her assertions of women's value.

She would also use her own self as evidence. In an 1873 Retrenchment meeting Kimball delivered a lecture on one of her pet subjects at the time, the study of Physiology. "If she had a 'hobby'" the account reports the 55-year old Kimball saying, "it was the importance of having a knowledge of one's self and the proper uses of one's powers. Self-knowledge was the first step toward self-improvement." Then, after advocating dress reform ("Tight lacing was a sin against humanity") and giving scientific evidence that "the breath was the life," Kimball issues this challenge:

> The speaker asked if we could not apply these and similar lessons to ourselves, and answered that we could; she had proven it: that twenty, thirty or even thirty-five years ago she had seemed older than now, had

> never enjoyed better health or been half so happy in her life before, as at the present time. (WE v.1:146-47, no.19 [1 March 1873])

Even her own physical state was a testament to the principles Kimball preached. The fact that she would never ask anyone to do something she wasn't willing to follow herself would become a well-established belief among her associates. And these personal witnesses were a source of strength and fellowship, as well; after this lecture on Physiology, Lona Cross Spencer, who was directing the meeting as President of the Young Ladies' Retrenchment Association, thanked Kimball for her "good works," and said she thought "that the faith of the sisters was strengthened by their joining their testimonies and speaking words of comfort and encouragement to each other."

"Called of God by Prophecy"

Another factor in Kimball's established authority was the Latter-day Saint belief that holders of the priesthood were authorized to act in the name of God in performing binding ordinances and administrating the organization of the Church. Again drawing on ancient scriptural precedent, Mormons accepted that a man or woman "must be called of God by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof" (Smith 541).

That doctrine meant that Kimball's office of Relief Society "President," and in fact the title itself, carried great weight. The Latter-day Saints were generally quite conscientious about calling their leaders by their ecclesiastical title: "President Sr. Kimball," "President Snow," "Bishop Burton," etc. In official functions especially, the

title was clearly used in address. Titles were both a sign of respect and an acknowledgment of sustaining the person's right to function as a leader.

In assuming leadership, Kimball relied on her assurance that she had been called of God to serve in that position. Especially at the beginning of her term of service, it was a strength to her that she had been "prophetically" appointed to the calling, and as such could rely on the blessings of God in fulfilling her duties. During the first week of January1868, the Relief Society was reorganized in the Salt Lake Fifteenth Ward and Kimball appointed to preside over it. On January 6, the third Relief Society meeting of that same week, the minutes record:

> Sr. Kimball said she felt her weakness and incapability of acting in the position she was placed unless assisted by the Spirit of God, and the faith, prayers, and good works of the Sisters, she had not placed herself in that position, but she was willing to do all the good she could that she might obtain the blessings that was promised to the obedient.

Kimball makes clear that she is willing to do much good, but that good would come not entirely of her own effort. She calls on God and on the women of her organization to sustain her in the position. This approach to leadership, a combination of confidence with humility and faith with works, was to be a trademark of her service.

Another important aspect of the "calling" to a position was the "setting apart" (also sometimes referred to in the early church as "ordaining"). This was the "laying on of hands by those who are in authority," and was a priesthood ordinance which effectually sealed upon the recipient the authority to function in that calling. Kimball had

many experiences of being ordained to different purposes. In Nauvoo, for example, Kimball was among several prominent Relief Society women called and set apart by Joseph Smith to be healers in the community, "to go about among the sick and minister to their wants" (History 85). Kimball would continue to exercise that calling throughout her life, including occasionally administering to her sisters in Relief Society meetings.

The "setting apart" ordinance was often highly valued as an opportunity to receive prophetic blessing. When the General Relief Society presidency was called in 1880 (with Eliza R. Snow as President and Kimball as Secretary), their blessings by President John Taylor were carefully recorded and published with the minutes of the whole meeting in the *Women's Exponent* for a broad readership. Before he performed the ordinances, Taylor briefly recounted the events of the first Relief Society's organization in Nauvoo, and took the opportunity to clarify what was meant by the term "ordination"in that instance and in the present case:

> The ordination then given [to Emma Smith and her presidency] did not mean the conferring of the Priesthood upon those sisters yet the sisters hold a portion of the Priesthood in connection with their husbands. (Sisters Eliza R. Snow and Bathsheba W. Smith stated that they so understood it in Nauvoo and have looked upon it always in that light.) (WE 9:53, no.7 [1Sept 1880]).

Whether or not Kimball was also nodding in assent isn't recorded. In any case, it's evident throughout her life that she felt the "rights and privileges" conferred upon her at

the hands of priesthood holders was significant. The setting apart blessing Taylor gave her is a good example of the "laying on of hands" ordinance:

> Sarah Melissa Granger Kimball. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by virtue of the holy priesthood I set thee apart to the office of Secretary of the Relief Societies in Zion; to record important events and keep a faithful record. Thou shalt be quick to discern and a ready writer. Seek more earnestly for the Spirit of the Lord, and thou shalt be blessed more than thou hast ever had power to conceive of. As thou hast been preserved in life, thou shalt continue to be preserved. I seal upon thee, thy former blessing, and thou shalt be honored in time and in eternity and have a seat in the Celestial Kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The setting apart thus served as not only a conferral of authority to function as a church officer, but also as an opportunity for receiving counsel, comfort, and other spiritual gifts (e.g., being "quick to discern") which would be beneficial in performing the duties of the position. On more than one occasion (such as the blessing given her in Nauvoo by Joseph Smith, praising her for the "donation" of her first son) Kimball made a point of carefully recording these blessings conferred upon her by men she revered as prophets of God.

"To Expound and Exhort"

Another key to Kimball's success as a female leader was her working relationship with the men who worked with her. More of this relationship will be discussed in the

next chapter, but here is a good place to point out that Kimball's religious sermons were often given a sort of "stamp of approval" by male priesthood authority. One enlightening example is an 1894 Davis Stake Relief Society conference in Kaysville. In the morning session of the conference, Kimball stood and pointedly asked for the crowd's faith as she spoke. She then read Doctrine and Covenants section 25 and made some remarks on the revelation. This scripture was the revelation given to Emma Smith through her prophet husband, and the section Joseph Smith had preached from in early Relief Society meetings in Nauvoo. Kimball's remarks appear to have been centered around the verses that told Emma she would be authorized to preach the gospel:

> And thou shalt be ordained under his [Joseph's] hand to expound scriptures, and to exhort the church, according as it shall be given thee by my Spirit. For he shall lay his hands upon thee, and thou shalt receive the Holy Ghost, and thy time shall be given to writing, and to learning much. And thou needest not fear, for thy husband shall support thee in the church; for unto them is his calling, that all things might be revealed unto them, whatsoever I will, according to their faith. . . . And verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my voice unto all. (D&C 25:7-9, 16)

This section was especially important as the only canonized Latter-day Saint revelation addressed to a woman. Considering its principles in terms of a "rhetoric of prophecy" make it even more significant; Emma Smith is here directed to speak "exhortation, edification, and comfort" to the church. Set apart by priesthood authority, she would be inspired by the Spirit of God to reveal his will, making her an instrument of divine

revelation. Additionally, her words would also have the endorsement of the Prophet to back them up.

Kimball picked up this theme and took the occasion to "expound scriptures" herself, as she followed her reading of the revelation with this interpretation:

> [I] think it a sermon within itself, I think the words that were spoken to Emma Smith meant all that are called to the same position, we should cultivate the best of our natures if we do we become more and more exalted and elevated, we all have capabilities far beyond our comprehension, I pray that you may be blest and comprehend what is best for you. (WE v23:215, no.11 [1 Dec 1894])

To the audience mostly comprised of Relief Society women, Kimball extends the liberating promise that all who are called of God to preach will be blessed by him. And she admonishes the sisters to cultivate their spiritual natures so that their understanding of such matters would increase. In another intriguing example of rhetorical *enactment*, Kimball herself both *expounds* and *exhorts*, embodying the charge given to Emma Smith and extended to all.

And like Emma, Kimball's interpretation of scripture was also supported by endorsement from male priesthood leadership. The speaker immediately following Kimball was Hyrum Grant, a counselor in the Davis stake presidency. He bore witness to the presence of the Spirit of God with the meeting, and a testimony to what Kimball had just said, Grant added his own example of how the spirit attends those who were called to teach. As the minutes record:

> "I have been very much interested in the remarks of the sisters and can testify the spirit of the Lord has attended those that have spoken," spoke about the power of God, referred to how he felt when he was first called to be a teacher. "I felt as though I wanted to shirk my duty but the good spirit prevailed, and I went and done my duty and I have felt thankful for the experience I had in doing it, sisters don't feel that you are getting too old to be useful. I pray that the spirit of the Lord will continue with us that we may be blest in meeting together."

Grant endorses Kimball's words, encourages the women to be useful in teaching the word of the Lord, and identifies with them by sharing his own experience and personal fears. Later that day, at the conference's afternoon session, Apostle Franklin D. Richards, whom Kimball identified many times as a supporter of women's advancement, stood and gave an apostolic validation to Kimball's interpretation of the scripture: "I appreciate very highly this privilege of meeting with you, I do think the spirit of the Lord is quite as ready to meet with the women as the men, I do not think they have as many bad habits they are not addicted to them, I was pleased with what Sister Kimball read to us." Additionally, Richards then extends the discussion by reminding the women that they also have a share in the Priesthood and were expected to fulfill their duties:

> Spoke about the early organization of this Society, exhorted the sisters to be more diligent and earnest in their duties, "you have the same blessings bestowed upon you as your husbands, and you must understand these blessings are yours in connection with your husbands, there is a great deal

> resting upon you, your calling is no mean one. Sisters lift up your heads and rejoice for you are blest of the Lord.

This episode is an enlightening one in view of the fact that so many women in America at that time were fighting for their rights to speak out publicly. Here is evidence that nineteenth-century Mormon women were both practicing prophetic rhetoric and being encouraged by both male and female leaders to extend their capacities in that regard.

"The Power We Have with God"

The forum which gave Mormon women the most opportunity to exercise their "prophetic" capacities was the Relief Society organization. Kimball considered the Relief Society a source of great power, and a manifestation of the rights and privileges that God had granted to women. At a Utah County Relief Society meeting in 1886, Kimball taught that Latter-day Saint women had both the right to improve their condition, and the power to influence their leaders. She alluded to the New Testament parable of the wise and foolish virgins, encouraging her sisters to make wise use of the resources they had been granted:

> She asked, "how shall we get this oil that we cannot buy without money. We are the only women on earth who have a stewardship conferred on them, and it should be our study and prayer that we may be enabled to magnify our callings honorably. Let us honor those who are called to preside over us and pray for them. It will be found a power in their behalf.

> We must seek to build up and not pull down. Let us cultivate a spirit of peace, for our strength lies in the power we have with God."

That power with God came in part because, as Kimball believed, Mormon women were "the only women on earth who have a stewardship conferred on them," meaning their responsibilities as Latter-day Saints and as members of the divinely directed Relief Society. Kimball believed that not only were Mormon women endowed with great spiritual power and authority, but as such they also had a responsibility to take up leadership positions among the rest of the non-Mormon world.

Kimball was convinced (and the belief was widely promulgated) that with the organization of the Relief Society in Nauvoo, women worldwide began to enter a changing and expanding public sphere. In 1892, while serving as President of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association, Kimball firmly asserted that "the sure foundations of the suffrage cause were deeply and permanently laid on the 17th of March, 1842, and the structure is far advanced" (WE v.20:81, no.10 [1 Dec. 1891]). The privileges associated with the restored church and the holy priesthood, which Relief Society women were taught they had a share in, meant their membership in the organization had far-reaching effects.

To better understand Kimball's confidence in her assertions, let's take a closer look at the Relief Society's origins as the source of Mormon women's power and influence. In four different published accounts of the early Relief Society, Kimball focuses on the fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith "turned the key" on a whole new dispensation of possibilities for women. The first account we will examine comes from a

February, 1878 Salt Lake County stake Relief Society meeting. In this context, Kimball draws attention to the women's movement originating in Seneca Falls in 1848 in order to compare it to the Relief Society's history and divine organization:

> The 19th of next month will be the Thirtieth anniversary of the first organization of women in the States—you will pardon me for referring to this, but it is to compare it with the date of the organization of women in this Church, which goes farther back. A few of us met together in my parlor in Nauvoo; we had a desire to do something towards helping to build the Temple. We had some by-laws written out by Sister E.R. Snow, and we showed them to President Joseph Smith, and he said he was glad to have the opportunity of organizing the women, as a part of the priesthood belonged to them. (WE 7:18, no.3 [1 July 1978])

This account is unique for her noting that Joseph Smith "was glad to have the opportunity of organizing the women, as part of the priesthood belonged to them." This statement is important for several reasons: first, it shows that Joseph Smith was pleased to include women in the organizational structure of the church; second, it also echoes Taylor's and Richards's assertions that women had a share of the priesthood; and third, it underscores Kimball's recognition that Mormon women were invested with a divine authority. Then she goes on to recount the fulfillment of a prediction that the Prophet had made some 30 years earlier:

> Our sisters in the States are seeking to improve their condition. Miss Anthony, one of the leading women among them, well known everywhere,

> has written to Mrs. Wells, Editor of the Exponent, saying the women of Utah as a body must fight for the maintenance of the right to vote, and also to get national guarantee for all women in the nation. President Smith the Prophet said women should ask us for advice, and the time should come when the women of this Church should lead in such matters.

It's clear to Kimball that Susan B. Anthony's request to the women of Utah for help in the suffrage cause is the fulfillment of Joseph Smith's prophecy to the Relief Society women in Nauvoo. To finish the sermon, Kimball issues a call to action, with her characteristic pragmatism in laying out a course for others to follow, drawing on her own programs as an example:

> We should make suggestions to each other for improvement. She then read some rules that had been written out for the Society over which she presided.

When Kimball encourages the sisters in Salt Lake to take an active part in filling that prophecy, she invests the Mormon women with a divine right to be active in women's concerns, by giving them the authoritative seal of approval. The Prophet Joseph, after all, had seen them as national leaders. Their authority to act obviously blended into civic duty as well as charitable service. Kimball argued that Mormon women were fulfilling prophecy and a divine charge by taking action in sociopolitical concerns as well as church affairs.

The second of Kimball's accounts of the Relief Society origins was prepared for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Society's organization "by the Prophet

Joseph Smith." Kimball prepared the 1882 historical sketch in her official capacity as Secretary of the General Relief Society, and the record is part of the official minutes of the Society. In this account, the role of Joseph Smith is reported thus:

> A Constitution and bye laws was prepared and submitted to President Joseph Smith. He pronounced it the best constitution that he ever read, then remarked this is not what the sisters want, there is something better for them. I have desired to organize the sisters in the order of the Priesthood. I now have the key by which I can do it.
>
> The organization of the Church of Christ was never perfect until the women were organized. He then said I want you (E.R. Snow) to tell the sisters who delegated you that their offering is accepted of the Lord and will result in blessing to them. He further said . . . I will organize you in the Order of the Priesthood after the pattern of the Church. (Madsen 192-93)

This account adds a new dimension to the story. For one thing, it emphasizes the catalyst role that the women themselves played in bringing about the organization of the Society, and that their efforts were recognized and approved of by God himself. It's also important that Smith says the church organization is not complete without the women more completely involved. And finally, the wording "in the Order of the Priesthood after the pattern of the Church" is significant in reflecting Kimball's emphasis on the part women held in the priesthood. The wording of this claim would be significantly different

in other accounts, perhaps an attempt to semantically clarify what may have been a misinterpreted claim.

The third account comes from Kimball's autobiographical sketch she published in the *Exponent* after a trip back east to Nauvoo had prompted her recollections of those early years. This version is less detailed and differently worded:

> "Tell the sisters their offering is accepted of the Lord, and he has something better for them than a written Constitution. I invite them all to meet with me and a few of the brethren in the Masonic Hall over my store next Thursday afternoon, and I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood." He further said, "The Church was never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized." (WE v.12:51, no.7 [1 Sept. 1883])

Again, the point is emphasized that being organized by the power of the Lord was better than any earthly organization. And the more moderately worded "under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood" slightly but significantly changes the degree of autonomous power implied. This version makes Relief Society sound more like an imitation of the priesthood quorums than a vital companion organization. Still, the importance of the women being organized according to God's pattern is central to the church as a whole.

Finally, the lengthy historical sketch Kimball prepared for the Jubilee celebration of 1892 (again in her official Secretarial capacity) does not recount the events that led up to the founding of the Society, but focuses more on what took place in the early Relief

Society meetings after its organization, relying heavily on the official minutes as recorded by Eliza Snow. But it is significant in underscoring Kimball's understanding of the divine authority conferred on the women of the Relief Society, and in fact also contains a controversial passage that was later corrected through official channels. Kimball opens the account with this introduction:

> By invitation of the President of the Church, a number of sisters convened in the Masonic Lodge room, on the 17th of March 1842, President Joseph Smith, Elders John Taylor and Willard Richards were present. President Smith stated that the meeting was called for the purpose of making more complete the organization of the Church, by organizing the women in the order of the Priesthood. (WE v20:141, no.18 [1 April 1892])

Again, the "in the order of the Priesthood" phrasing seems to imply a full acceptance of the women into that fellowship. By 1906, there was enough concern among church leadership over precise understanding of women's roles that General President Bathsheba Smith and Secretary Emmeline Wells published a clarification of the story. The Jubilee account had been reprinted in the *Exponent* in November 1905, and evidently Kimball's recollection caused some stir; Smith and Wells published a statement headlined "Correction," which pointed to the paragraph in question as containing "an error which we feel should be corrected. . . . We find by comparing it with the original record no such statement was made" (WE 34:44 [Jan. 1906]). As John Taylor had in 1880, many church leaders found it important to make a clear distinction between the authority women

receive and the priesthood offices to which men are ordained (Derr, Cannon, Beecher 49, 447 n.88). If Kimball had added this statement to her account based on her own memory of the event, it may signify her emphasis on the equality of priesthood privileges and necessity of the Relief Society organization to help make the Church complete.

Kimball's 1892 account is also important in showing another similar official editorial change made to the historical record. Joseph Smith's important April 28th, 1842 sermon to the Relief Society in Nauvoo focused on "showing how the sisters would come in possession of the privileges, blessings and gifts of the Priesthood, etc., and that they might attain unto these blessings by a virtuous life, and conversation, and diligence in keeping all the commandments" (Smith 602). Kimball copies from the official minutes this oft-quoted passage of direction from the Prophet:

> The Society is to get instruction through the order which God has established, through the medium of those appointed to lead, and I now turn the key to you in the name of God, and this Society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time, this is the beginning of better days for you. (WE 20:142)

Again, the phrase "turn the key to you in the name of God" implies an authoritative autonomy invested in the women of Relief Society. However, in preparing the official history of the church in 1855, under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the wording had already been edited to read "I now turn the key in your behalf" (Derr et.al. 49), again de-emphasizing the amount of power to be vested in those women. While the concern of church leaders over any misinterpretation of this principle was

certainly understandable, considering the social climate of the times, it is clear that these revisions were a significant change from Kimball's emphasis. In any case, there is no evidence that Kimball ever claimed that she or other women had been ordained to hold Priesthood offices (see Derr et.al. 446n.61). Whatever she understood her invested authority to be, it was clearly enough for her to consider it liberating and powerful. As recent historians have pointed out,

> Whether Latter-day Saint women were "ordained" or "set apart," whether the key was turned to them or in their behalf, whether they were organized "in the order of the priesthood," "after the pattern of the priesthood," or "under the[2] priesthood," seems to have been less important to them than the fact that they were organized by a prophet of God "according to the order of God." (Derr, Cannon and Beecher 50)

But in light of this discussion, it is interesting to note Joseph Smith's own account of his involvement in the early Relief Society, which is markedly downplayed from his perspective. In the official *History of the Church* his account of Thursday, March 17, 1842 begins: "I assisted in commencing the organization of "The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo" in the Lodge Room"(Smith 552). On March 24, he reports attending "by request" that day's Relief Society meeting, and adds "We had the privilege of being present at their organization, and were much pleased with their *modus operandi*, and the good order that prevailed. They are strictly parliamentary in their proceedings" (568).

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[2] For an excellent discussion of Smith's instructions to the Relief Society concerning "pattern, priesthood, and keys," the temple ordinances, and the ensuing semantic alterations, see Derr, Cannon & Beecher 42-58.

And while he told the sisters that "if they needed his instruction they could ask and he would be pleased to give it from time to time" (WE 20:141), the Prophet's confidence in the women's abilities to function on their own merits is very clear.

"Exhortation, Edification and Comfort"

Kimball, for one, was a woman who would continue to access the spiritual blessings and privileges associated with the priesthood power Joseph Smith defined. On several occasions Kimball exercised the spiritual gift of tongues, for instance. In June of 1887 her Relief Society associates arranged a surprise gathering in her behalf, as an expression of appreciation for her service. Near the close of the meeting Zina Young spoke, saying she felt that the spirit of the Lord was with them, and "felt if the sisters would unite their faith she would like to hear Sister Kimball bless the sisters in the gift of tongues":

> Sister Kimball expressed a wish that the Lord would give her His Spirit to bless the sisters in that gift; and she then spoke in tongues ["for some time," the 15th ward minutes of the same gathering note] blessing all. Sister Young gave the interpretation, which was full of instruction, comfort and blessings to the sisters. (WE v16:14, no2 [15 June 1887])

It was another quietly dramatic example of a woman functioning in the "prophetic" role of speaking "edification, exhortation and comfort." She was continually encouraging her fellow saints to take full advantage of the blessings they had been offered by the

restoration of the Gospel. At one monthly multi-ward women's meeting in 1886, Kimball noted:

> It has been remarked, we are in the position of the Israelites, if so, we have got to come to the very bottom of the ladder, and it behooves us to nourish and strengthen the germ of faith that is in us. We are aiming to rise to a higher sphere, and if we lose our light we are in a deplorable situation. God will help us if we try to help ourselves. He has a battle axe prepared for His people. (WE v15:23,no3, [1 July 1886])

Her confidence in God's battle axe would continue to sustain her. In the tradition of the prophets, Kimball herself would often be the one to wield that weapon. The strategies that Kimball would develop and follow over the years to "try to help" the Latter-day Israelites will be the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 3

"Honor Due Our President": Issues of Women's Leadership

> Women as a rule have listened to the asserting voice of men and have been led by their precepts too long. It has slowly dawned upon woman's understanding that man as a ruler is weak; in many respects very weak and unreliable, (remember we love him still,) and she has been compelled for the good of the great family to explore new paths leading to broader fields of helpfulness. Women will make mistakes, and profit by them, all along the unbroken pathway, but never so fatally disastrous mistakes as men have made while holding exclusive power.
>
> - S.M. Kimball, President U.W.S.A
> 30 November 1891

The Female Relief Society was organized as a mission of charity administering to men as well as women. But it began as a grass-roots movement of women; as an organization it was financially independent from the body of the Church for many years; and it was consistently devoted to the "advancement of women," intellectually, spiritually, financially and socially. Is there anything in Kimball's leadership techniques which may be considered "distinctly female," as scholars have hoped to identify? In any case, whether or not Kimball's leadership and rhetorical practices were distinctly a "woman's way," her immediate concerns in public life were focused on issues surrounding women, and her strategies for attaining her goals were of significant effect.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, my intent is not to define a whole "women's rhetoric" based on Sarah Kimball's techniques; instead, I am examining the ways in which this woman functioned as a leader and what strategies she employed to influence her audiences and mobilize her followers. This chapter will identify significant

goals and causes that Kimball advocated during her years as a Relief Society and suffrage leader, and will examine her methods of leadership among women and men.

The last chapter discussed ways that Kimball's words carried authority in her community. Beyond these issues of authority, what characteristics made Kimball an effective leader? She was an organizer who could identify a particular goal and then mobilize followers towards that goal. She was skillful at identifying her audience, building on commonalities of purpose to establish a relationship of trust, and finding an appropriate tone and pitch to incite her listeners to correct action. This chapter will look at several of Kimball's effective leadership strategies, including organization, delegation, collaboration, education, vision, and unity. In particular, the focus will be on Kimball's role as President of the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society, since that was the arena where she would have the most extensive personal involvement over the 40 years of her service in that position.

Intelligibility, Inclusion, and Power

Instead of trying to define a "woman's way" of leadership, I will instead look at Kimball's skills through a framework of the type Susan Jarratt, a historian of both rhetoric and feminism, suggests when she quotes Michel de Certeau's definition of "history-writing" as "intelligibility established through a relation with the other" (Jarratt 2). This strikes me as a definition highly applicable to Kimball's leadership. Throughout her entire public career, Kimball would repeatedly emphasize that her work—as a woman, as a suffragist, as a Christian—was to benefit humankind, "others" both male and

female. By focusing where she saw the most need, and where she was most qualified to speak, Kimball was working for a more harmoniously balanced relationship between men and women as equals.

Maureen Beecher summarizes Jill and Brooklyn Derr's study of organizational patterns in the L.D.S. church ("Outside the Mormon Hierarchy: Alternative Aspects of Institutional Power") as pointing out the differences between formal and informal power sources. They assert that authority is conveyed through formal organizations such as wards, stakes, priesthood quorums, and auxiliaries like the Relief Society, and in this formal structure, the male priesthood administration carries the ultimate decision-making power. This means that the formal structure shows women placed under the direction of their male leaders. However, there are also informal channels of power:

> Informal structures, on the other hand, also function in organizations, stimulating, facilitating, or interrupting the formal system when it proves inadequate to the need or counter to the best interests of the people it serves. It is in their use of informal methods, the Derrs demonstrate, that women have been most effective. (Beecher 130)

Beecher uses the origins of the Relief Society, springing from those first meetings in Sarah Kimball's parlor, as illustrative of "the informal undercurrent moving along with the mainstream as women bring about their desired changes in the system."

In recent studies of women's leadership, Sally Helgesen studied the leadership techniques of several female business executives. In *The Female Advantage: A Woman's Way of Leadership* (1990), Helgesen observed that these women excelled at running

organizations that fostered creativity, cooperation, and intuitive decision-making. Her findings suggested that management in organizations run by women doesn't take the traditional hierarchical pyramid shape, but instead is structured like a web—a web where the leader was located at the center of a central shared purpose, reaching out (not down) to those working with her: "The strategy of the web concentrates power at the center by drawing others closer and by creating communities where information sharing is essential." In 1995, Helgesen extended her discussion with *The Web of Inclusion*, a call for these innovative management strategies to be more widely employed. Instead of perpetuating the traditional nineteenth-century model of rigid hierarchy, Helgesen argues for using this "web" approach to create a flexible, inclusive, and interconnected management that values all members of the society, makes use of individual talents, and adapts easily to changing demands. These are characteristics that match speech communications scholar Catherine Dobris's outline of possible qualities of a female aesthetic, which may de-emphasize competition, and be antihierarchical and antitheoretical. But whether or not such qualities are inevitably "female," it is still valuable to study the rhetorics that have these less-privileged characteristics.

I would like to suggest that even *during* the nineteenth century, while working out of an organizational model sometimes considered the quintessential "hierarchy" (the priesthood structure), Sarah Kimball was in fact a leader who applied these sort of "web of inclusion" strategies in her organization. The ideals of community-building that she fostered—unity, charity, common goals—certainly echoed those ideals of inclusion. Kimball's work in politics, social reform, and religion not only focused on building a

mutual "intelligibility" through relationships, but did so by promoting a system of parliamentary process and utopian equality. The Relief Society, especially, under Kimball's direction functioned as a network of remarkable democracy, adaptability, and cooperation.

To see the Relief Society in this light, it is necessary to disrupt the mistaken view of an all-powerful male hierarchy in the Mormon church exercising its "priesthood power" of ultimate authority while the women merely followed obediently along after their example. As organized by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Relief Society leadership closely resembled the priesthood quorums in organizational structure and in procedure. As Derr, Cannon and Beecher point out, the Relief Society presidency (like the men were organized in stake presidencies, bishoprics, and quorum presidencies) would be patterned after the First Presidency with a president and two counselors. President Smith taught that the Relief Society presidency, "like the first Presidency of the church," would be elected "to continue in office during good behavior, or so long as they shall continue to fill the office with dignity" (Derr et.al. 42).

This comparison of male and female presidencies begins to allow for a different perspective on the organizational structure. Instead of viewing the Relief Society organization as a pale imitation of priesthood quorums, we can rather view it as a *parallel* quorum, assigned to different focus in tasks (*ministration* vs. *administration*, perhaps), working alongside of the men's organizational structure. A simple reemphasis in language may help to illustrate this concept: instead of viewing the Relief Society as being organized "under the [male] priesthood after the order of the priesthood," consider

it as an organization fashioned "in the order of the priesthood after the pattern of the church." This second phrasing is quite subtle in its redistribution of power, but it does effectively demonstrate the shift in perspective. As noted in the last chapter, Kimball herself used both different phrases to describe the organization's origins.

Although it is clear that nineteenth-century Mormon men and women didn't always accept this parallel organization as a full partner in power, there is certainly enough evidence to suggest the possibility of such an inclination.[3] Even at her most outspoken politically, Kimball would continue to refer to the Relief Society as being "under the direction of the priesthood"; but while her own experience shows that she highly respected the direction and authority of male priesthood leaders, she considered women equally as indispensable to men. Maureen Beecher points out that Joseph Smith's organization of the Relief Society was actually a fairly radical move in nineteenth-century America: "[H]is sense of the place of women in the cosmic order reinterpreted, in some ways, the traditional Christian hierarchy." When the women in Nauvoo approached him with their plans for a sewing society, "he broke them away from the Protestant model of ladies auxiliaries and established what from the minutes extant seems to have been a significant parallel to those priesthood quorums already in order for men" (88). Kimball would repeatedly draw on those early sermons of Joseph Smith in her leadership role, and clearly considered the Relief Society an instrument of divine

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[3] In fact, J. Reuben Clark, then a counselor in the First Presidency of the church, would say as much to newly-called President Belle Spafford in 1945, telling her to administer Relief Society affairs "with the concept that the Relief Society is a companion organization to the priesthood" (Derr, Cannon & Beecher 304).

liberation for women. Beecher describes how early Mormon doctrines further emancipated women to an uncommon degree:

> Both the Relief Society and the promised temple blessings gave to Mormon women a prominence within their community not common in nineteenth-century America. . . . Women hearing themselves set thus by the side of man had reason to question their traditional position beneath his foot. (Beecher 88)

Kimball, for one, was adamant about the ultimate divine equality of the sexes. She would refer to "the latter-day gospel of equality before the law" (see "Letter,"1891) and echo scripture by proclaiming, "The interests of man and woman cannot be separated, for the man is not without the woman or the woman without the man in the Lord" (RS minutes, 19 Feb. 1870). Let's take a closer look at how Kimball advanced these claims by her methods of functioning as a leader in her community.

"The Leading Sisters"

Maureen Beecher examines the female hierarchy among the Mormons in nineteenth-century Salt Lake by analyzing the makeup of the group identified as the "leading sisters" of the time—a group that functioned roughly parallel to the official male priesthood hierarchy. In 1884 biographer Augusta Joyce Crocheron had published a book of sketches naming 20 women she identified as *Representative Women of Deseret*; Beecher takes a close look at this group, noting that the "representative" appellation means not that these women were mainstream, but that they were selected to represent the

Mormons publicly. There were, in fact, "an elite, not only ecclesiastically, but socially and politically" (145). Among the powerful core group of influential women, Beecher identifies four significant commonalities: familial relationship (usually marriage) to General Authorities of the Church; participation in plural marriage; membership in the Nauvoo Relief Society; and the shared experience of spiritual bonds formed "under the adverse and isolated conditions of the pioneer camp" at Winter Quarters upon the Saints' expulsion from Nauvoo (Beecher 145-46).

Significantly, Sarah Kimball shares in only one of these commonalities—that of Relief Society membership in Nauvoo. Her leadership was developed according to different criteria. Kimball had enjoyed some notable social status in Nauvoo, but when the Relief Society was organized, she was only 24 years old (as well as married to a non-Mormon and having recently refused the Prophet's teaching of plural marriage). She did not hold a position of authority in any Church organization until her call as Fifteenth Ward Relief Society President in 1857, and her extensive involvement did not effectively begin until after the reorganization of 1868. From there, due to her innovative talent and organizational skills, she would increase in confidence and in stature in the community. She would continue to be involved intellectually and socially with the other leading sisters, especially joining prominently in the semi-monthly Ladies Meeting of the retrenchment societies. By the time she was called to join the first General Relief Society presidency in 1880, Kimball had long since established her reputation as an energetic and innovative leader; by the time she was elected President of the U.W.S.A. in 1890, she had spent 20 years as an outspoken "woman's rights woman." She may have been an

exception to the "Representative Women" rule in many instances, but by her own industry she would establish herself as a driving force behind (and out in front of) women in Utah.

Although Kimball was much loved as a charitable caretaker, a gifted conversationalist, and a "delightful traveling companion," it was no personality contest that made her popular as a leader. Rather imposing a figure, Kimball appears not to have had the approachable charisma of women like the lyrical Eliza Snow or the personable Emmeline Wells (affectionately dubbed "Aunt Em" by a whole generation of Mormon women). Wells, with the greatest respect for her friend, described Kimball as (among other things) "Puritanical," "a little cold," and possessing "a decidedly positive manner that some might construe as aggressive." There was "no stronger-minded woman in all Israel than Sister Kimball," Wells remembered, "She did not believe in half measures."

But Wells also noted the personal characteristics that were key to Kimball's success in leadership: she was "very progressive along all lines of intellectual growth and educational attainments"; she had "largely developed executive ability to accumulate property and to take care of it to the best advantage"; and she possessed "the attributes of a reformer along many lines." There was "nothing common place" about her, Wells concludes. From the time that Kimball was chosen to preside over her ward Relief Society in 1857, Wells asserted

> [S]he has been from that time one of the most able presidents and indefatigable workers in the cause throughout Zion. Perhaps there was no more judicious economizer of means, yet withal liberal in bestowing to the

> needy and unfortunate, than she has been.. . .[S]he has been one of the foremost in all progressive work of elevating, uplifting and advancing society and humanity.

Eulogizing Kimball just after her death in 1898, Wells added, "Her loss will be deeply felt by all her co-workers, she was wise in counsel, and her words were always fraught with meaning; her judgment on all subjects was excellent, and she never failed to give a word in due season and to sound the rising note." Kimball's forceful words were always backed up with integrity, and charitable good works. Her influence came from the way she applied these talents to the benefit of her community.

Shortly after being reappointed to lead the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society in 1868, Kimball expressed her initial hesitation in taking up the reins of leadership. It was a hesitation she would overcome decidedly:

> Pres. Kimball said it was her duty to instruct the Society but that she had never felt confidence enough in herself to say so before, that it was her counselors' duty to strengthen, and counsel with her, said it was the duty of the Pres. of the Committee to instruct them &c., that it was the duty of all the members to be good and virtuous. Said the responsibilities of those holding offices were very great, said she was highly gratified with the members and all concerned with their Society. (RS minutes, 31 July 1868).

Kimball would naturally grow more confident over the years as her leadership skills developed and she saw her responsibilities bear fruit. Now let's look more closely at how

she applied these skills and strategies—*organization, delegation, collaboration, education, vision, and unity*—to her public responsibilities, especially in the Fifteenth ward Relief Society, where she would make the most indelible marks as a leader.

Organization

Susa Young Gates—who was Brigham Young's daughter, writer of the ambitiously titled *History of Women*, and a prominent Utah leader in the early 1900s—wrote that "Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball was essentially an organizer" in the beginnings of the Relief Society in Utah (Derr 30). Kimball would guide the Fifteenth ward from a fledgling society to one widely considered to be a model of success. One reason she was so effective in this calling was that she was especially gifted at identifying needs and developing efficient, practical means for meeting those needs. It was Kimball who drew up the organization chart "Duty of Officers of Relief Society," a listing that Eliza Snow would follow, with a few minor modifications, when charged by Brigham Young to officially reestablish Relief Society organizations in wards throughout the church after 1866.

The central pattern that Kimball followed was a familiar one: president, two counselors, secretary, and treasurer. She also emphasized the importance of a self-contained quorum of Teachers whose responsibility it was to visit each family's home once a month to "inquire after the prosperity and happiness of the members . . . to speak words of wisdom, of consolation and peace . . . to know that the sick are properly taken care of and if any are in need of assistance from the Society" (RS minutes, May 1868. See

also Derr et.al. 98). And additionally, Kimball included the offices of "Deacons" to prepare the meeting rooms, "Messengers" to run any necessary errands, and "Superintendents of Work," a "Board of Appraizers," and a "Commission Merchant" to meet the business needs of the society.

Kimball was innovative and adept at adjusting organization to meet the changing needs of its members. She certainly must have remembered Joseph Smith's instructions to the Relief Society in Nauvoo, where she had heard him encourage the women be guided by continuing inspiration to its presidency, a "living constitution." For example, the presidency could determine to what extent additional officers might be needed, President Smith taught: "If any Officers are wanted to carry out the designs of the Institution, let them be appointed and set apart, as Deacons, Teachers &c. are among us." to perform various necessary functions (Derr et al 446, n.65).

Joseph Smith also promised that endowments of knowledge and discernment would be given "to those whom God has appointed to honor, whom God has placed at the head to lead" (Derr et al 47). Kimball would exercise those gifts of discernment in many forms, including an executive ability to lay out a course of action. One such example is her reaction to the "Grain Movement" in 1876. Brigham Young had asked Emmeline Wells to lead Utah women in a movement to create stores of wheat in case of a time of famine. Wells responded by asking Relief Society leaders to form ward committees to study possible solutions. At a general meeting of the central committees in Salt Lake, Kimball would report on her actions and ask for some further direction:

> Mrs. S.M. Kimball said: We have appointed a committee to visit in our ward. They report that the feelings of the people have been liberal and good. All we want to know is what steps we are to take in order to push the work forward. I feel that the Lord will bless us in our undertaking.
>
> (WE v5:99 no.13 [1 Dec 1876])

Evidently left to her own devices on what steps to take, Kimball formulated her own plan for building a ward granary, and then presented her recommendations to her ward priesthood leaders, Bishop Robert Burton and his counselors. There were three options, as she spelled them out: first, Emmeline's husband Daniel H. Wells had offered to let them use space in his storage building; second, the Relief Society could raise money (by selling stock subscriptions) to purchase the land behind their already existing store; or third, Kimball was willing to donate some of her own land if the ward members would help to construct a fireproof granary and stock it with 350 bushels of wheat. This last was the plan they would eventually follow, and the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society became one of the first two congregations in the church to complete their storehouse. As the *Exponent* reported the construction details:

> President Sarah M. Kimball informs us that the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society have recently completed a fireproof granary, built of rock with tin roof, brick floor underlayed with concrete, double door, inside nicely furnished bin, that may be subdivided as circumstances may require. The dimensions of the building are twenty feet square, holding capacity about

> one thousand bushels. . . . Total expenses $374.44. (WE 6:69, no.9 [1 Oct. 1877])

It was this sort of organized effort on Kimball's part that impressed one member of the Bishopric to remark that he "was always pleased with a plain statement of facts such as had been presented by Sister Kimball" (Derr et.al. 103). It could also be that this episode was the example of efficiency that Emmeline Wells had in mind when she described Kimball as being "original and independent in her ideas; and in public measures her plans were well-matured before she presented them, and therefore the more convincing."

Delegation

Kimball was notable for her habits of delegation; she was continually encouraging and training other women to also fill leadership roles, encouraging and training leadership skills and responsibilities in others. As her biographer Derr points out, Kimball, being convinced that every woman should have a sense of her own important abilities, "delegated significant responsibilities to the Fifteenth Ward sisters, and did not intrude upon such assignments," and such efficient administration in ward matters left her more free to fill her additional responsibilities in church and politics (Derr 33). Kimball was often absent from Salt Lake traveling on assignments with the General Relief Society Presidency, attending suffrage conventions, or traveling for personal reasons. There was at least one period when her extended absence lasted almost a year, from 1874 to 75, which she spent in California visiting her brother there and recuperating after a bout of

poor health. But during these absences, she trusted the work of Relief Society to the officers she left behind.

One such example is Elizabeth Duncanson, who served as President of the Fifteenth Ward Teachers Quorum for almost as many years as Kimball headed the ward society, her committee functioning essentially autonomously; the committee met separately and kept separate minutes of their meetings, though Kimball sometimes attended as a guest. On more than one occasion over the years, Kimball would make it a point to proudly observe that in 1857 Duncanson had been "elected and set apart by blessing and ordination to the office of President," noting that she was thus "the first in this dispensation to occupy such position" (RS minutes, 1 Jan. 1873).

Kimball also "used her ingenuity and expansive conception of women's abilities to create opportunities for them" (Derr et.al. 102) to expand their sphere of usefulness. She was always urging more involvement from the sisters in the ward, and was often anxious to get more sisters to attend the meetings. In the society's organizational chart with duties of the Relief Society officers, Kimball included a responsibility for all the members of the society, under the title "Duty of all": "It is the duty of all to uphold the Pres. and officers, to sustain the reputation of the Society and to hold each others characters sacred—to be just and truthful in all their saying and doing. To do all in their power to promote happiness at home, and to use every laudable means to extend the influence of the Society." Obviously, even the rank-and-file members were expected to do their fair share in the work. Kimball was serious about the importance of filling

responsibility, too; she would testify that "if we did not do our duty the Lord would scourge us individually and as a people until we did" (RS minutes, 16 Oct. 1884).

In later years, Kimball would further extend the responsibilities of the Relief Society members by asking women who were not presiding officers to take their turn at conducting the weekly meetings. At one such Fifteenth Ward meeting in 1884, Kimball would try to encourage one of the women who was evidently finding this public duty rather painful: "S.M. Kimball felt sorry to see A. Mcalister so embarrassed, hoped she would be over her embarrassment soon and realize the position to which she had been called" (RS minutes, 30 Oct. 1884). By the next month, the women appear to have adjusted to this new opportunity: ""S.M. Kimball was proud to see H. Foster & J. Parker fill their place with such dignity; thought it was a good experience for the sisters to preside at these meetings" (12 Nov. 1884). Over the years, virtually every member of Relief Society attending the weekly meetings would be called upon to lead a discussion, teach, testify, sing, or pray.

Collaboration

Kimball frequently and emphatically stated that her concerns were for all of humankind, both male and female. "Our cause is humanity's cause and it is to bless our Brethren as well as our Sister woman that we aspire," she should write to a fellow suffrage worker in 1891 (see "Letter"). When she was elected President of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association in 1890, her first official statement included an invitation for men to join the cause as well: "Believing that the best results follow the deliberations

of men and women, we favor the admission of men as members of the association" (WE 18:139, no.18 [15 Feb. 1890]).

She carried this idea through her working relationships with the men who worked alongside her over the years. For example, her relationship with Bishop Robert T. Burton, who oversaw the Fifteenth Ward for many years, was one of mutual regard and high respect, and she would often allude to their harmonious collaboration. Historians observe that Kimball and Burton "shared a compassion for all humanity," and "each valued in each other that certain independence of spirit which combined a willing cooperation with inspired ingenuity" (Derr et.al. 101). In 1876, after eight years of close work together in the ward, Kimball would observe that between them "as long as they had labored there had not been the least jar and that Brother Burton had always spoken in the most Fatherly manner" (RS minutes, 6 Jan. 1876). At Kimball's funeral in 1898, Burton would speak warmly of her "many virtues and of her magnificent capabilities, her motherly attention to all who needed assistance, whether of the household of faith or not, and of the great blessing she had been to all in the ward" (WE 27:78, no.14 [15 Dec. 1898]).

Kimball recognized that a united effort between the sexes was central to benefit all of the human family. At an 1877 Relief Society conference in Farmington, Utah (a meeting where "also some of the brethren met with us," the account notes), Kimball doesn't hesitate to admit the collaboration:

> Mrs. S.M. Kimball spoke of the interest of Sister Snow in trying to diffuse the spirit of home industry among the people; said it was necessary the

> sisters be united in their efforts, but yet the women cannot accomplish much unless they have the hand of encouragement reached out to them by the brethren. (WE v6:29 no.4 [15 July 1877])

She would advise women to call upon their male counterparts for help in accomplishing their goals, as necessary. But she was also mindful that the burdens should be distributed as evenly as possible; in her "Annual Message" as ward Relief Society President in 1873, Kimball referred to the redistribution of responsibility that had come about after the society was reorganized in the ward five years earlier: "Since our reorganization the Authorities of the ward have not, as they formerly did, put upon the society the entire burden of providing for the poor, but they have allowed us to be, what we think we should be, coworkers with them in this labor of love and duty" (RS minutes, 1 Jan. 1873).

Education

Undoubtedly shaped by her early experience in spiritual inquiry, Kimball held a lifelong commitment to women's education. Late in life, she would remind her Relief Society audience with pride that she had been a student at the School of the Prophets in Nauvoo. She also was committed to expanding women's opportunities to learn from practical experience, which is why she lobbied for an expanded women's sphere. Her commitment to women's education and activism were lifelong. All through her career she "urged the inclusion of substantive courses of study in her ward Relief Society, delivered strong addresses expounding doctrine, and spoke in tongues" (Richards 784).

Even before she took up the Suffrage cause, for instance, she was encouraging substantive courses of study for women, both spiritual and secular knowledge. During "Ladies Semi-Monthly Meetings" in the 1870s, Kimball repeated lectured on Physiology, and set up classes for not only Relief Society women, but the younger girls as well. She encouraged substantive topics for discussion in Fifteenth Ward meetings, on topics such as the Atonement, Faith, the Holy Ghost, and other significant church doctrines. It was one of her first great causes. In the first month after the Relief Society was reorganized in her ward, Kimball introduced what would become one of the principal features of the Fifteenth Ward meetings: "Sr. Kimball made some few remarks upon education. She wished reading to be introduced in the Society. Her taste was Literature, something that would improve the mind, asked the Sisters to select from different works, what would be edifying and instructive" (RS minutes, 8 Feb. 1868). Politically and civically, she always encouraged women to learn their rights then use them. Her first suggestion as President of the U.W.S.A., for example, was that each woman should read through the association's Constitution six times and take up the study of municipal government, since these steps "would lead to our advancement and the enlarging of our capacities" (WE 18:125, no.16 [15 Jan. 1890]).

Kimball wanted women to have unlimited opportunities for practical experience, and actively pursued avenues for those opportunities. One good example is the quick construction of the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society Hall. In the late 1860s, most Relief Societies were meeting weekly in the homes of individual members, or in ward schoolhouses or meeting houses (Derr et.al. 99). President Kimball had other ideas, and

immediately set about planning and constructing a permanent home for their labors: a two-story building with the ground floor housing a store "devoted to commerce and trade," and the upper floor "dedicated to worship, to art and to science" (RS minutes, 12 Nov. 1868). In the summer of 1868 her Relief Society purchased a lot from a Mr. Barlow—though he had "kindly offered to donate the land . . . the committee gratefully accepted his good will [but] they preferred paying for it" (RS minutes, 16 July 1868). By November they were ready to hold a formal cornerstone laying ceremony, and by the next April the building was open for use.

Kimball herself hired the contractors, oversaw the construction, and was justifiably proud of the efforts of the women in rasing the storehouse. She was also mindful of giving credit where credit was due. Brigham Young was in attendance at the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society meeting where Kimball gave her annual report, and she was quick to clarify a misunderstanding that had arisen about the manner in which the ward granary had come about: "In relation to the storehouse being erected, the echo has reached our ears that the Society wished the brethren to do the work, and for them to have the credit of it. We do not know where the sound originated, but we wish to inform all present that it is entirely a mistake" (RS minutes, 4 Feb. 1869).

Being personally familiar with the hardships facing professional women, Kimball encouraged women to take their places in the Relief Society store, saying she was "pleased to see ladies behind the counter and hoped they would prove able and competent to conduct mercantile affairs," and she encouraged preparation for work in other professional areas, urging women to cultivate their minds and talents, "preparing

themselves for any place they might be called upon to fill" (RS minutes, 23 April 1868). It wasn't just practical applied knowledge she would have cultivated, either. For example, in 1879 she would write to church president John Taylor about attending to the particular needs of her ward members:

> This year I am happy in believing that the needy poor in our city are supplied with a reasonable abundance of fuel, food and raiment. . . . But there are other hungers besides that for food, and the question is, Shall we take cognisance to these other legitimate hungers and try to supply the requisite nutriment that we may have joy in witnessing the *best developments* of our home talents?

She was referring to a young woman who had unselfishly shared her musical talents with church members, and who "hungered for musical advantages"; Kimball was seeking a way to finance this girl's study of music (Derr 35).

Vision

Kimball was a leader concerned about the present and the future. She repeatedly prayed for and predicted future opportunities for women. In 1881, acting in her capacity as General Secretary, Kimball prepared a memorial box, a sort of "time capsule" containing letters and photographs, to be opened by the Relief Society in 1930 as part of the centennial celebration of the founding of the L.D.S. Church. In April of 1930, in the presence of church President Heber J. Grant, Relief Society President Louise Y. Robison, and other church officials, and several of Kimball's own descendants, the Jubilee box was

ceremoniously opened. Kimball had included a brief note addressed to her future counterpart, the prospective Relief Society General Secretary of 1930. The note read

> Hon. Secretary: This is dedicated to you with the fond hope and firm belief you are enjoying many advantages and blessings that were not enjoyed by your predecessors. May God abundantly bless you and your labors. (History 43)

Her message was always one of hope for the future. She would repeatedly encourage the younger women of her ward to participate in Relief Society, and was concerned about the spiritual, social, and educational welfare of the children as well.

Unity

Building on a message she had heard Joseph Smith preach to the women in Nauvoo, Kimball always encouraged unity of purpose among her followers. A woman in a neighboring ward in Salt Lake is reported to have asked the reason behind the Fifteenth Ward's success. Kimball replied she thought it was because "we had acted in unison" and had "kept in motion that which we received" (Derr et.al. 99). Commemorating the Relief Society's anniversary in a message to ward members in 1868, Kimball wrote "It is a saying old and trite that Union is strength. We are united—therein probably lies the secret of our success. We strive to do what will be approved of by God—as well as to merit the approbation of the just and good" (RS minutes, 19 March 1868). That unity was not just some vague feeling of goodwill, either, but was grounded in practical shared experience, as Kimball would teach, "it unites us to be drawn together . . . in withstanding

the trials and cares of each other" and as a result she was "much in favor of Cooperative labor, that in learning to help ourselves we also aid our neighbors" (RS minutes, 11 June 1874).

This attitude naturally extended to all fields of labor. Kimball's extensive vision necessarily included those outside the borders of Mormonism as well. She "believed in charity that reached far and wide" (RS minutes, 1 Oct. 1874). At the biannual Relief Society general conference in 1893, Kimball spoke about a community-building experience she'd had recently:

> [T]here were many things that made us feel akin and reach out to all the brotherhood of man and the sisterhood of woman. Referred specially to the meeting of the Woman's Congress held on Sunday in the Art Palace in one of the great halls, when sixteen ordained women ministers sat upon the platform representing thirteen denominations, one was clad in the sacerdotal robes of the Episcopal Church, it was a beautiful sight to see these grand women thus assembled . . . (WE 22:78, no.10 [15 Dec 93/1 Jan 94])

Kimball once commented to her Relief Society sisters that "The liberal shall be blessed" (13 March 1881). We can imagine that Kimball's liberality included not only intellectual open-mindedness and political concerns, but spiritual and humanitarian concerns as well. It was that kind of far-flung appreciation of the "good and the just" that helped Kimball to build a society where power was not tied up in competitiveness, but in cooperation. The President of an organization and different officers in the church *could* work alone,

Kimball admitted, but there was a very simple reason they did not: alone, a single officer "could not have the faith of two or three" (RS minutes, 17 Feb. 1881).

"Honor Due Our President"

Kimball resigned her Presidency of the U.W.S.A. in 1894 due to her failing health (she was 76 years old). Not content to become merely a figurehead, she would withdraw rather than give only a partial effort. But the women of Utah wouldn't let her go without a fight; they kept her name and influence with the society by electing Kimball "Honorary President for Life." At the association's annual conference that year Emmeline Wells, the newly-elected President, proposed a resolution that "because of Mrs. Kimball's faithful and diligent labors in the interest of the association, she should be made Honorary President for life; which was carried by the entire assembly" (WE 23:221, no.12 [15 Dec. 1894]). Despite her declining health, Kimball would devote the rest of her energies to Relief Society affairs, continuing in her ward and General Board callings until her death in 1898.

Over the years, with all her expansive confidence and vigor, Kimball also showed very human signs of discouragement and frustration. During one Fifteenth Ward meeting Kimball admitted her duties were wearing her down,

> Sister Kimball said there was a great deal to talk about and a great deal to do, said she felt like there was something for her to go through with, felt like she would come out all right. . . Said she was not well in body. Felt like giving way and letting some one else go ahead for a while. . . .[S]poke

> of herself being depressed and prayed that God would bless her. (RS minutes, 1 Oct. 1874)

But even that admission of weakness created an opportunity for a bonding experience of increased unity and faith, when at the end of the meeting, "The sisters all laid hands on Sister Kimball and Sister Jones blessed her."

When Dr. Romania Pratt nominated Kimball as U.W.S.A. President in 1890, Kimball was not anxious to take on the job, but when elected she showed a characteristic willingness to approach the task with energy and focus: "she felt rather reluctant to accept the position to which she had been elected, but intended to take hold of the work with some system" (WE 18:125, no.16 [15 Jan. 1890]). Her "intentions" and her "systems" were part of what made Kimball an effective leader. She knew that "position gave eminence and eminence power and power is mighty" (RS minutes, 21 March 1889), but that the greatest power was possible only with divine direction, which spiritual power was available to anyone who sought it, as she taught in Relief Society:

> Said that all the gifts of the gospel should be enjoyed by the sisters in this meeting. Said that organization was not only to look to the wants of the poor but to save souls. Said that they who would be the greatest of all should be least of all and that if we wanted the spirit of God in our positions that we should seek for it in a proper manner and honor our positions. (RS minutes, 27 Jan. 1881)

That the women she worked with honored Kimball is evident from their many recorded testaments to her "constant and efficient work." In honor of her 79th birthday, the

Fifteenth Ward Relief Society planned a special gift and tribute to her, which included a poem written by her counselor, Rebecca Brown, and addressed to "Dear Sister Kimball." Notable for the sentiment, if not the verse, the lines reflect the fellowship and respect Kimball's leadership provided as a modern-day Deborah:

The council and the committee meet together
Regardless of what might be the weather.
We talked matters over and deemed it wise,
To give you just a little surprise.

We were not bound on furtive mischief bent;
Wishing only to give honor due our President.
We now beg pardon if we have given offense,
And we are all quite ready to make recompense.

In our eyes there is no one who can better grace
Or in our hearts usurp your place;
And ours are so full of love for thee
We must give vent to our feelings in some degree. . . .

Thus far the story of thy life is told,
And the fruits thereof will bring thee a hundred fold.

We wish thee many happy returns of the day.

May flowers in profusion strew thy pathway. . . .

The little token we present to you,

Is given by sisters who are tried and true;

And the accompanying wish is more of a prayer

That thy guardian angel may have special care.

And a new lease of life unto thee be given

From the courts on high, by our Father in Heaven.

To thy wise council we've listened, and we know full well,

That thou art, indeed, a Mother in Israel.

Chapter 4

"Weapons of Warfare": Rhetoric of Agitation

> What I insist upon, my brethren and sisters, is this: larnin isn't religion, and eddication don't give a man the power of the Spirit. It is grace and gifts that furnish the real live coals from off the altar. St. Peter was a fisherman—do you think he ever went to Yale College? No, no, beloved brethren and sisters. When the Lord wanted to blow down the walls of Jericho, he didn't take a brass trumpet, or a polished French horn: no such thing; he took a ram's horn—a plain, natural ram's horn—just as it grew. And so, when he wants to blow down the walls of the spiritual Jericho, my beloved brethren and sisters, he don't take one of your smooth, polite, college larnt gentlemen, but a plain, natural ram's horn sort of man like me.
>
> - Lorenzo Dow, 1777-1834
> Methodist revivalist
> (qtd. in Hirst 95)

During the nineteenth century, social activists frequently used the pulpit to reach the public; sermonic oratory was considered among the greatest agents of social change. In 1861, clergyman and educator Austin Phelps observed that the orthodox preacher

> preaches a system of truth which in its practical relations is correlative with all forms of human life, and with history through all time. Its genius is that of practical agitation and change. It is transforming, it is subversive, it is revolutionary. It cometh to send a sword on earth. Its destiny is to overturn and overturn and overturn. (Hirst 88)

Certainly this description can be applied to what we have already seen of the "prophetic" rhetoric in the exhortations of the "woman's rights" orators. Kimball, in championing social change, argued for "education and agitation" as tools of her trade, insisting that "if you can get the people to talk upon [a] subject, if you can get them to agitate the subject,

agitation produces reform." In a broader sense of the term *sermonic*, we have already discussed Richard Weaver's theory that all language serves the purpose of confronting people with moral choices, whether for good or ill, and that Kimball was well aware of the word's power "for the right or wrong use of which its wielders are accountable" and desired to use that power "to harmonize with the greatest good to needy mortals in life's darkened pathway" (WE 2:73, no.10 [15 Oct. 1873]).

How does Kimball's religiously devout, and burningly activist rhetoric fit in this context of sermonic oratory? This chapter will examine the language of "agitation" and the rhetorical strategies that Kimball used to incite her audiences to action, socially and spiritually. I will examine her style, diction and delivery, her methods of engaging her audience and committing them to action. From large public settings to the more intimate gatherings of ward Relief Society meetings, Kimball frequented the role of "exhorter," harrowing up her fellow saints to new levels of commitment.

Blowing Down Jericho

Austin Phelps is representative of the Protestant school of conservative homiletic preaching. Phelps was a professor of Sacred Oratory at the Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts from 1848 to 1879, and wrote widely on subjects such as *The Theory of Preaching*. Phelps's major theory, a widespread view in mainstream ministerial education, was that pulpit oratory was (or should be) "the most profound agent of personal and social change" by way of its focus on individual spiritual/moral/intellectual development, which was the basis for broader political

change" (Hirst 89). Here Kimball would certainly agree with him, since her devout Christianity underscored every cause; "true science and true religion walk hand in hand," she would teach (WE 1:106, no.14 [15 Dec. 1872]), and would note that "she had studied political matters all her life, and that they were a part of her religion" (WE 25:43, no.6 [15 Sept. 1896]). She would also appear to match Phelps's views on "the centrality of persuasion on the basis of shared values and beliefs, emphasis on audience analysis and on adjusting rhetorical appeals to the condition of the audience, . . . the art of making powerful rational appeals based on Biblical truth, [and] the necessity of controlling emotion in pulpit oratory" (Hirst 84).

However, there was one central matter in which Kimball would markedly disagree with more conservative homiletics. Phelps's theory of sermonic discourse advised a "temporary toleration of evil" for the betterment of the community while preaching individual improvement would affect the gradual change of society organically, "not suddenly, disruptively, violently." In this way, his approved method of "overturning" social wrongs differed noticeably from that of "immediatists" (Hirst 88). Phelps would likely have considered Kimball an "immediatist" in her activism.

Mormonism itself, particularly as Kimball knew it, was a radical religious and social movement that in effect sent a "sword on earth" among its followers by "overturning" established religious tradition in its restoration of the Church of Christ. Kimball, having taken part in all of the spiritual and social upheaval of her religion from its earliest days, was shaped by Mormonism's boldness and vigor, which would lead her to write of the "latter-day gospel of equality before the law" (see "Letter," 1891).

Rather than agreeing with Phelps's assertion that the preacher should be a highly trained speaker learned in classical theory, literature and liberal arts, Kimball was more likely to have agreed with the view expressed by the Methodist revivalist Lorenzo Dow[4] in the early part of the century, that the Lord could take a "plain, natural, ram's horn" of a speaker to "blow down the walls of the spiritual Jericho." As the daughter and granddaughter of Methodist preachers, Kimball would almost certainly have been familiar with Dow's sermons. And while she would likely have appreciated Dow's populist sentiment, she would also argue that education was an important part of learning to express oneself, even by the power of the Spirit. Kimball encouraged thoughtful expression, especially from women who didn't usually take the opportunity to voice their views in public. To the women of the Fifteenth Ward, Kimball offered the counsel that they "could comfort each other when you are called upon to speak. Rise and speak, not make any Apology, God do not require any thing more of us than what is in us" (RS minutes, 5 Sept. 1878).

But even in "blowing down Jericho," Kimball was not likely to give way to an over-emotional pulpit-banging, either. As she expounded on the difference between the quality of Faith compared to an excited religious fervor:

> Faith was an attribute of the Deity. It was also an attribute of man, the highest attribute, by which earthly things were linked with those above; it was indeed, the most elevated attribute mortals could possess. It should be

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[4] Eliza R. Snow's younger brother, born in Ohio in 1814 (four years older than Sarah Kimball) was named after the Methodist preacher Dow (Beecher 32). Lorenzo Snow would go on to become the fifth president of the L.D.S. church in 1898.

> cultivated; and the way to cultivate it, was to think, to read, to reason and to pray. . . . The difference between faith and excitement was manifested by the workings of the true spirit of the Lord and that of magnetism, as shown by the power a strong Methodist revivalist, could have over a congregation. (WE 1:138, no.18 [15 Feb. 1873])

Kimball, exposed early in life to the oratorical traditions of both Methodist and Mormon preachers, would—by thinking, reading, reason, and prayer—develop her own powerful voice as a communicator and reformer.

Education and Agitation

As newly-elected President of the Utah W.S.A., Kimball emphatically pronounced that, in the social advancement of women, "Education and agitation are our best weapons of warfare" (WE 18:139, no.18 [15 Feb. 1890]). When she recalled how she had been stirred by the early writings of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Kimball said one of the things that impressed her was the idea that "if you can get people to talk upon this subject, if you can get them to agitate the subject, agitation produces reform. Now this is going to be a reformation and we are going to do all we can to produce this reformation and we are going to labor in our own way" (WE 24:61, no.9 [1 Oct. 1895]). Let's take a closer look at how Kimball labored "in her own way" through her rhetorical strategies and personal tendencies in speech.

Emmeline Wells, who was Kimball's chief contemporary memorialist, characterized her thus: "As a public speaker she was concise and to the point, never made

long speeches[5], but said what she felt, forcibly and always with effect. It was invariably something to remember" (WE 27:77, no.14 [15 Dec. 1898]). Wells further remembered:

> She was a very good public speaker concise in language and expression, used as few words as possible to convey her meaning and invariably handled her subjects well. Her voice was rather incisive but she could be heard well and understood where a more fluent speaker might be misunderstood. . . . She was a woman one liked to talk with even if one could not always coincide with her views, and one was pretty sure to learn something by conversation with her, even if one was worsted in an argument, she was certainly well worth listening to, and excellent in debate. (Wells, "L.D.S. Women" 2)

"There was no stronger-minded woman in all Israel than Sister Kimball," Wells wrote. Though she was strong-minded, Kimball's debating style was likely one not so much pugilistic as (more to the purpose) a free and open exchange of thought. Once when expressing a wish that more of the young women would attend meetings of the Mutual Association, Kimball remarked that wish was because she believed "mutual improvement comes through change of thought" (WE 16:71, no.9 [1 Oct. 1887]).

At one W.S.A. meeting, Emily Richards, one of the leading Mormon suffragists of the second generation, expressed a wish that drew spontaneous applause from the audience: she hoped "President Kimball would be preserved twenty-five years to labor in

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5 In this respect, Kimball probably could have gained Mark Twain's appreciation. He was quite sure that "Few sinners are saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon" (qtd. in Wills 171).

the cause, for she had the courage to say what she thought" (WE 20:159, no.20 [1 May 1892]). Kimball would later compare herself to Heber C. Kimball in that he "always spoke on the subject most on his mind" when addressing a meeting, "and in this respect she was like him" (WE 25:22, no.3 [1 Aug 1896]). (Whereupon she spoke on the subject "uppermost on her mind" that day, which was genealogy.) She was also always aware of both time, place, and audience when making her remarks; in one Ladies Semi-Monthly meetings she said the thought that "the time was precious," and recalled that "President Brigham Young said he always felt a timidity in arising to his feet to speak, he thought why this was so, was that he saw a gleam of the Deity in the eye of each one before him." She rarely underestimated her audience.

But it's clear that while she encouraged considered views and expression of them, she never considered herself a polished elocutionist; to Kimball, content and purposiveness took precedence over form every time. She was more comfortable with spoken, face-to-face communication than with pen and paper. On her 1883 trip back east through Nauvoo and Kirtland to visit her childhood home in New York, Kimball she wrote back to Utah what appeared as an editorial note in the *Exponent*. "Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball writes from Belle River, St. Clair County, Michigan, that she is well and finds much of interest there, but she can better tell it after she returns home than write it" (WE 12:20, no.13 [1 July 1883]). At a meeting of the American Fork Suffrage Association, visiting as Territorial President, Kimball remarked that she "was a suffragist, but not a lecturer" (WE 20:87, no.10 [1 Dec. 1891]). Still, she took great care in choosing the right words for her remarks, as we will see in the following examples.

Speech communications researcher Michael Presnell, in studying the differences between male and female narrative styles, has developed a theory that distinguishes between characteristics of "orality" and "literacy" to ground an understanding of the traditionally categorized male/female differences. Qualities associated with *literate* discourse include linearity, context-independence, and abstraction; while *oral* discourse is characterized by episodes, situationality, and a high-context message system. Presnell posits that much of women's communication follows the *oral* model, and warns that "If a *literate* model is adopted to study women's *oral* traditions, distinctive characteristics of women's communication could be systematically overlooked" (130). What is important to this discussion on Kimball's communication is not that the characteristics of "orality" are traditionally female, as Kimball would show characteristics of both the oral and literate models of discourse in different circumstances. However, Presnell's distinctions are useful in outlining the different techniques Kimball applied in her public discourse. The selections this chapter discusses—her "agitation rhetoric"—are decidedly in the oral style, though they take different forms: extemporaneous speech, prepared political rally, and written editorial debate.

"We Unqualifiedly Protest": *January 13, 1870*

Years later, Emmeline Wells would recall "one or two of [Kimball's] articles that made quite a sensation at the time; upon subjects with which women are now quite conversant" (2). As a pioneer in the Suffrage movement, Kimball was often called upon to take the lead in addressing what she herself referred to as "sensational subjects." One

particularly interesting occasion was the "Great Indignation Meeting" organized to protest the Cullom Anti-Polygamy Bill that had just passed in the congressional House of Representatives. The idea for the mass protest had originated in the Fifteenth Ward Society Hall the week earlier; setting the tone for the meeting, Kimball told the assembly they would be "unworthy of the names we bear and of the blood in our veins, should we longer remain silent," and that if the proposed bill passed, it would make "menial serfs" of Mormon men, in which case, she posited, "and if they make serfs of them, what do they make of us?" (Derr et.al.110). Eliza Snow implied an official sanction from church leadership when she spoke of President Brigham Young saying women should take a "wide sphere of action" in the world.

The mass protest held on January 13, 1870, drew more than 5,000 women to the old tabernacle, "notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather," as the *Deseret News* reported. The handful of men present were invited members of the press, including a correspondent from the *New York Herald*. At the motion of Eliza R. Snow, Sarah M. Kimball was elected President of the assembly, and rose to address the crowd and lead off the speeches (there would be 13) with these remarks:

> We are to speak in relation to the government and institutions under which we live. She would ask, Have we transgressed any law of the United States? [Loud "no" from the audience.] Then why are we here to-day? We have been driven from place to place, and wherefore? Simply for believing and practicing the counsels of God, as contained in the gospel of heaven. The object of this meeting is to consider the justice of a bill now before the Congress of the United States.

> We are not here to advocate woman's rights, but man's rights. The bill in question would not only deprive our fathers, husbands and brothers, of enjoying the privileges bequeathed to citizens of the United States, but it would deprive us, as women, of the privilege of selecting our husbands; and against this we unqualifiedly protest. (Tullidge 380)

In this unique rhetorical situation, Kimball's argument shows her mastery of the appropriate discourse. She obviously knows her audience well, and purposefully includes them in the conversation by inviting their verbal response. Working towards agitation, she appeals not only the political ramifications of the proposed bill, but, more importantly, she raises the religious conscience of the group by reminding them that the lifestyle being threatened is one of obedience to the counsel of their God.

Significantly, Kimball notes that she is advocating "not woman's rights, but man's rights"; she chooses not to further complicate the issue with the problem of female suffrage at this point. She does, however, note that while a congressional bill could deprive the men of their constitutional privileges, the women would be deprived of an even more basic right—that of choosing their own husbands. Her outspokenness on this issue is all the more significant considering the fact that Kimball herself was never involved in a polygamous marriage. But she knew how to choose her fights. In this case, it is rather like Abraham Lincoln not mentioning slavery during the Gettysburg Address—by carefully avoiding a larger, more problematic issue, the speech meets is particular purpose without alienating its audience.

The *New York Herald* reporter's take on the meeting was that "in logic and in rhetoric the so called degraded ladies of Mormondom are quite equal to the woman's rights women of the East," and other complimentary press coverage also favorably compared the women with national suffrage orators. The *Journal of Commerce*, comparing the L.D.S. women to national suffrage orators, said that "in respect of good temper, and the absence of bitter personal allusions, the Tabernacle gathering will certainly carry off the palm" of victory (Derr et.al. 111). That meeting was the first of many such indignation meetings that would be held throughout the territory over the next few months. So while Mormon women were not yet raising a public outcry over their right to vote, they had still taken the opportunity of publicly defending their right to practice polygamy.

Just a month after this mass Indignation meeting, Utah women were granted full suffrage by the territorial legislature (comprised largely of Mormon men), with the approval of the acting non-Mormon governor, S.A. Mann. Kimball would publicly rejoice in this newfound privilege of suffrage, but it's safe to say that she was disappointed in the turnout of women at the first election they were eligible for. Election day was February 14, 1870, and only 25 women—about one percent of the total electorate—would exercise their vote (Derr et.al.113). Still, Kimball recognized that the tide had turned, and within a few days after the election, she would begin to speak out publicly on women's issues with a new boldness.

"A Woman's Rights Woman": *February 19, 1870*

A few months before the "Great Indignation Meeting," another movement had begun that proved of great importance to Mormon women over the next two decades. Brigham Young had asked Mary Isabella Horne to lead a "retrenchment" movement by encouraging women to simplify elaborate meal preparation and home decoration. Horne requested a meeting with President Young for clarification on the assignment, but that single meeting "appears to have been his total official involvement" in the setting up of a group that would become the "Ladies Semi-monthly Meeting" which brought together the "leading sisters" of Salt Lake to discuss agendas that "expanded far beyond the initial goals of the retrenchment movement" (Beecher 144). This group elected their own president (Sister Horne) and six counselors, and significantly, they became the "only continuous gathering of women which crossed ward and stake lines, was not accountable to local [priesthood] authority," and brought these influential women together "in a network which was capable of unhindered activity" (Beecher 144) due to geographical or political boundaries.

The Fifteenth Ward record includes the minutes from the second meeting of the "Ladies Co-operative Retrenchment Society" on February 19, 1870. With Eliza Snow's introduction that "It is our duty to perform all that comes within the province of woman," they reported on retrenchment plans underway in their respective wards. Then Snow arose again, and said that "to encourage the sisters on in good works she would read an account of our Indignation Meeting, as it appeared in the Sacramento Union." It was

after that report was read that Kimball took the floor with her extemporaneous declaration of feminism:

> Mrs. Sarah M. Kimball said she had waited patiently a long time, and now that we were granted the right of suffrage, she would openly declare herself a woman's rights woman, and called upon those who would do so to back her up, whereupon many manifested their approval. She said her experience in life had been different from that of many. She had moved in all grades of society; had been both rich and poor; had always seen much good and intelligence in woman. The interests of man and woman cannot be separated; for the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord. She spoke of the foolish custom which deprived the mother of having control over her sons at a certain age; said she saw the foreshadowing of a brighter day in this respect in the future. She said she had entertained ideas that appeared wild, which she thought would yet be considered woman's rights; spoke of the remarks made by Brother Rockwood[6], lately, that women would have as much prejudice to overcome, in occupying certain positions, as men would in granting them, and concluded by declaring that woman was the helpmate of man in every department of life.

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6 Probably A.P. Rockwood, a member of the Territorial Legislature whom Kimball worked with in political causes and eulogized after his death (WE 8:117, no.15 [1 Jan. 1880]).

Her timing is impeccable. Now justified by legislation and the apparent approval of religious leaders, Kimball publicly rejoices in declaring herself "a woman's rights woman." Again, she encourages verbal participation from her audience, a technique which prompts immediate action and both creates and acknowledges a community of like-minded activists. In an especially tantalizing moment in this passage, Kimball predicts further rights for women in the future (though we're left to wonder about the particulars) while noting that there were still prejudices for both sexes to overcome.

It is significant that Kimball felt confident enough to speak so freely at this meeting, when she had trod so carefully in the past. The setting—among a group of like-minded women—was conducive to her liberated exultation. (Though not all the women in attendance agreed wholly with Kimball; Margaret Smoot, for instance, noted that she "had never had any desire for more rights than I have.") She would grow more confident and outspoken over the years, of course, but this moment is an important one in her public rhetoric.

"Moral Courage, Energy of Purpose, and Power of Execution": *November 30, 1891*

In November of 1891, the *Woman's Exponent* printed on its front page an article titled "A Man's Advice About Female Suffrage,"written by D.P. Felt of Provo. Felt subscribed himself "an earnest advocate of your cause in public life" in addressing suffragists, but he had a point of advice he wanted to make. He felt that many of the suffrage movement's "prominent advocates" took "a wrong shoot and instead of laying a foundation for your noble cause, you branch out in leaves or small branches as it were,"

saying for example that calling for female police officers or judges was disillusioning and distracting supporters from the cause. Instead, Felt advised, the should change their tactics and "build a foundation that will require at least two generations to erect a structure on that will stand the storms of ridicule that today beat upon your frail house." To change established custom would "require ages" and therefore suffrage activists should "strike at the root of future generations" by turning their attention "to the education of your girls."

In making his argument, Felt follows Austin Phelps's model of "organic," gradual social change almost ideally: "Have as much pride in seeing [your girls] get their diplomas as you have for your boys," Felt suggests:

> . . . remember the future day when they will have daughters of their own—you know progression is nature and if you have these aims, theirs will be in a more advanced degree and ere long the sun of your dreams will have arisen and your great-granddaughters will be standing shoulder to shoulder with the men of the age, for the same labor receiving the same or better pay, they will be exercising their benign and refining influence on all the progressive ideas and customs of the age. So educate your daughters in various channels of public life that if it does not qualify them it will their daughters . . . (WE 20:73-74, no.9 [15 Nov. 1891])

In other words, several generations of time would be long enough for things to work themselves out naturally, without a radical social upheaval.

Kimball did not agree. Then completing her first year of services as President of the Utah Woman Suffrage Association, she took it upon herself to submit a rebuttal to Felt's advice. Her reply was printed on the front page of the next issue of the *Exponent*. "Your advice to suffragists, to turn their attention to the education of their girls is appreciated," Kimball writes, "But we have our own ideas about the nature of their graduating papers, the routine must contain lessons in moral courage, energy of purpose, and power of execution; these must be taught as among the womanly graces essential to success in life" (WE 20:81, no.10 [1 Dec. 1891]).

Point by point, Kimball answers Felt's concerns with a logical rebuttal to such counsel that comes "from such as have eyes open to popular prejudice, and closed to underlying principle." For a start, she argues, Felt's concern that suffragists must take generations to build a sure foundation, is a moot point, for the need has actually already been met:

> The sure foundations of the suffrage cause were deeply and permanently laid on the 17th of March 1842 [the date of the Relief Society organization], and the structure is far advanced. It is too stately and strong to be even depressed by any lingering effort with the weak weapon ridicule.

Kimball goes on to answer Felt's concerns by suggesting the need for (and creditable current examples of) policewomen, female jurors, and female judges. And finally, she answers the argument that women must not neglect their "true position" of motherhood:

> Suffragists esteem motherhood under proper conditions as woman's crowning glory; but for *millions* these conditions are not available. Many thousands are looking for room to earn their bread and apparel, and asking custom to allow them to choose their husbands, control their persons, and participate with their kinsmen in their highest aspirations for the good of the home, the church, the state, and for humanity. Such women will be helps meet, (suitable) for noble men, they will earn the sympathy, confidence and ever abiding love of their husbands, brothers, and sons, and the respect of the good and true as far as their sphere (influence) extends. Their noble, emancipated daughters will rise up and call them blessed. [emphasis in original]

Even in this written, linearly ordered discussion, Kimball uses techniques of oral debate, and uses a characteristic conciseness ("'We must not say it is our right to sit on the Judges bench.' Why not?" is Kimball's direct reply) to drive home the logic of her argument.

"A Place of Our Own": *October 3, 1896*

In Nauvoo, Joseph Smith had suggested donating some land to the women for a Relief Society headquarters. In Salt Lake City in 1896, leaders of the growing organization strongly felt the need for such a permanent headquarters, and presented the idea at the Relief Society general conference in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square, in October of that year. Relief Society President Zina D.H. Young opened the discussion by remarking that "Women had done so much to help build other public buildings and

temples that they had no means to build one for the Relief Society," and they hoped to raise their own building funded and owned by the women themselves. Kimball, who was serving as one of Young's counselors in the presidency at this time, also addressed the subject:

> Sarah M. Kimball confined her remarks to the subject of a house for the Society. She felt it a humiliation to be without a place of our own; we had contributed to all public places and at all times. Now we want to have a house and we want land to build it on and it should be in the shadow of the temple. It should be a place to receive strangers in when they come, a place where letters can be written from and information given. (History of Relief Society 126)

Kimball was speaking here from her established position as a long-serving advocate for women's advancement, a devoted leader of Relief Society, and an administrator with years of practical experience in raising funds, constructing buildings (e.g., the Fifteenth Ward Society Hall and granary), and rallying followers around a cause. It was with these talents that she was called on to issue this call for action. In a few short words, she appeals to the women's sense of logic and fairness (they always been willing to donate to other public church buildings) and to their emotions (calling the lack of their own office "a humiliation"). She defines the purpose of the building (to receive guests and disseminate information), and perhaps most importantly, offers a visionary demand—their house should be built on land "in the shadow of the Temple." It was a vision that would drive the Relief Society goals for over 50 years, until the women's auxiliary building was

finally a reality. But Kimball didn't stop at just offering this vision; continuing her remarks, she uses a characteristic technique of agitation to involve her audience directly:

> I think we should vote on this matter, whether you representative women want this building or not; we want to put it to vote. . . . Now, said Sister Kimball, I want to ask you sisters if you want such a building as I have described. The motion was put and the vote was unanimous. Sister Kimball added, If you want this proposition carried out, then see how much can be done.

Again, by asking for their immediate show of involvement, Kimball both builds a sense of unity in purpose, and commits her audience to taking action to reach their vision. Notably, the scene would be repeated in an almost identical manner nearly five decades later, at the annual Relief Society general conference of 1945, when President Belle S. Spafford followed the same rhetorical strategy by reminding the women in attendance of that early wish, then calling for a vote—which was, of course, unanimous in the affirmative for support of an independent Relief Society building (History 130). Various financial and political setbacks kept that goal from being realized fully for many years, but Kimball's vision of a place "in the shadow of the temple" would remain a cherished hope of Relief Society women as they lobbied for that goal. The building site announced in 1952 was located on the southeast corner of North Temple and Main Streets, on the diagonal corner across the street from the Salt Lake Temple's east face—about as close to "in the shadow of the temple" as could be arranged. The Relief Society building was

finally dedicated October 3, 1956, sixty years to the day after Kimball had issued the prophetic clarion call.

In summary, the strategies of Kimball's rhetoric of agitation include an awareness of her audience and a willingness to provoke them both with logical argument and emotional appeal, especially with an appeal to religious ideals. One important way Kimball provokes action is by drawing on the parliamentary process to involve her audiences directly in the cause, by inviting verbal support and physical involvement, which builds unity among community by drawing the audience not only to identify with the rhetor, but with each other as co-workers in the cause. Her two major tactics can be summed up under the categories of "education" (an intellectual foundation) and "agitation" (an emotional appeal to duty).

Chapter 5

"To Instruct and Happify": Rhetoric of Ceremony

SALUTATION.

DEAR READERS:

Finding my name listed as a correspondent, my heart fills with friendly greetings to those whose eyes are to scan, and whose minds are to weigh the thoughts and subjects that I may, from time to time, place upon paper. I trust that you will (mentally) return the proffered friendly grasp, that we may pleasantly explore together fields of thought and regions of instruction. . . .

It will be my privilege in this correspondence, to speak thus familiarly, upon religion, finance, politics, science, or any thing instructive in which we may or should take a mutual interest.

Hoping that this introductory note may lead to a lengthy and profitable acquaintance, I subscribe myself, EXPONENT'S correspondent and reader's friend,

SARAH M. KIMBALL.

(WE 2:73, no.10 [15 Oct. 1873])

In 1873, during its second year of publication, the *Woman's Exponent* editors announced that they had organized a Committee of Consultation to help in "promoting the interests of the paper, and rendering it still more valuable as a representative of the ladies of Utah" (WE 2:68, no.9 [1 Oct. 1873]). Kimball was one of the women named as a Special Correspondent on that committee, and she lost no time in beginning the discharge of her duties; the "Salutation" above appeared in the next issue of the paper. It was not Kimball's first submission to the *Exponent* (she had already written article on topics like physiology and polygamy, for instance), but it is illustrative of Kimball's approach to publication. Her general rhetorical strategies can be seen in force even in this short note—building a relationship of trust with her audience, inviting them to participate with her in a shared cause, encouraging thoughtful study and "profitable" exercise of their faculties. True to form, Kimball takes the opportunity to build a sense of community

between her and her as-yet unnamed readers, by offering them (as literally as possible through the medium of print) the hand of friendship.

While she was always filled with purpose, Kimball wasn't always overtly activist. In other instances, Kimball's public discourse served other functions–to educate, to praise, to build personal relationships and community. As she explained her purpose in writing a short autobiographical sketch, she intended "to instruct and happify" her readers. To use the concept of a rhetoric of "prophecy," these purposes would fall under the categories of "speaking to edification and comfort." This chapter will examine samples of what she termed a more "happifying" rhetoric: Kimball's autobiographical sketch; her ceremonial speeches at functions when she was a presiding official; her scripturally modeled encomium on the occasion of the Presiding Bishop's birthday celebration; and her very literate, mystical musing on "The Sense of Spiritual Understanding" that was read in Washington, D.C. to the Triennial Council of Women.

"I Can Better Tell Than Write It"

Kimball did not view herself primarily as a writer. Even when introducing herself as a newspaper correspondent, as seen above, Kimball fell back on the conversational form of letter-writing. Since Kimball was remembered as being "excellent in conversation," this is not surprising. It was also generally how she viewed whatever verbal skill she possessed. Once when she wrote a letter to a non-Mormon relative still in New York, asking for some genealogical information, she tried to explain the purpose of her request, which was collecting family history names and dates to do temple work for

the dead. As she tried to explain this practice of the "peculiar people" of her religion, Kimball found herself prefacing the request in these words: "I could better explain it to you in person than on paper why I wish these records. I hardly hope to be able to make you comprehend the importance this matter has for me" (WE 13:130, no.17 [1 Feb. 1885]).

Kimball was evidently talented at making people understand matters, particularly when she could discuss them in person. Emmeline Wells remembers Kimball had a talent for assessing the needs of her audience and giving them clear instruction:

> She had a good faculty for teaching, could simplify lessons and adapt them to the understanding of those whom she instructed. She possessed excellent power of concentration, something quite unusual in women, and she was well versed in the literature of the time, and the political questions that have agitated the minds of women much during the nineteenth century period; . . . (Wells, "L.D.S. Women" 2)

Those "powers of concentration" (however rare) were readily applied to literature, politics, and religion. Wells continues:

> Sister Kimball was a woman of high ideals about spiritual matters and was a deep religious thinker, and reasoner, and a student of the Bible, Book of Mormon and other Latter-day Saint books of a similar kind; and the writings of Orson and Parley P. Pratt and their Sermons she was particularly fond of reading.

These literary influences would help to develop Kimball's natural inclinations toward verbal brevity into a more figurative and fluid writing style. While Wells characterized Kimball as being excellent in conversation and debate, she had this critique of Kimball's literary tendencies:

> Sister Kimball was methodical and practical generally, but some of her writings on philosophical and spiritual subjects were rather extraordinary and although in speaking she was clear and comprehensive, yet in her writings she was abstruse and inclined to be mystical, and yet she was so strong-minded, and well-balanced that she would never be the least likely to go beyond her depth. She was really an advanced thinker and fond of diving into the unknown, or soaring upward to sublime heights.

These are the characteristics that will appear in the sample texts examined in this chapter. While some of them still show characteristics of *oral* patterns of discourse, they more generally fit the criteria of *literate* discourse as Presnell defines it: linearity, context independence, and (as Wells noted) abstraction.

To consider these writings as "ceremonial" in substance and purpose, though differing in style and form, it is useful to think of *ceremony* defined two ways: first, as the careful consideration of prescribed usage, form, or procedure (the text's literary composition); and second, as a formal act prescribed by ritual or protocol (its rhetorical function) and usually of a broad social or spiritual significance. Along with these definitions I also draw on of the theories of Walter Fisher's paradigm of narrative communication, and the work of Ronald L. Grimes on ritual studies.

"To Instruct and Happify"

Ronald Grimes, one of the pioneers of the field of ritual study, outlines the broad boundaries of the field by noting that students of ritual come from different academic traditions, but that "they have in common an interest in performative phenomena such as play, ritual, game, storytelling, dance, civil ceremony, and sports—in short, people and animals as they enact and embody meanings. Ritual studies scholarship asserts the priority of persons-in-action and interprets words and cultural objects in the light of this acting" (xxvi). In other words, the performance and context of the performance—much as I have defined rhetoric as the study of "knowing what bit of language to use when."

One difference between rhetoric and ritual studies is rhetoric does traditionally focus largely on verbal performance, while as Grimes defines it, ritual studies "is at its most distinctive when it attends to the performative elements of nonverbal action" (xxvi). However, Grimes also suggests that the focus of ritual studies best begins with a consideration of *style*: "Style is the total outcome of conscious and unconscious, intellectual and emotional, bodily and attitudinal aspects of a participant-observer. Style is the product of personal stance and cultural form" (6). In studying stance and form, then, ritual studies therefore gives us another tool to rhetorically analyze both the text and the context of Kimball's ceremonial rhetoric.

In addition, Walter Fisher posits *narration* as the central paradigm of human communication, asserting that *storytelling* is a defining shared characteristic of humanity. "It holds that symbols are created and communicated ultimately as stories meant to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them in order to establish

ways of living in common, in intellectual and spiritual communities in which there is confirmation for the story that constitutes one's life" (63). That last phrase is key—stories are used as rhetorical persuasion in building communities where everyone's stories and lives are validated. This seems important when applied to Kimball's populist politics and charitable care of people around her.

Fisher also quotes Karl Wallace that "One could do worse than characterize rhetoric as the art of finding and effectively presenting good reasons" (107) for action or choice. He further elaborates:

> I propose that good reasons be conceived as *those elements that provide warrants for accepting or adhering to the advice fostered by any form of communication that can be considered rhetorical.* By "warrant," I mean that which authorizes, sanctions, or justifies belief, attitude, or action—these being the usual forms of rhetorical advice. (107)

This is hearkening to Richard Weaver's argument that rhetoric's sermonic quality comes because language asks us to make choices based on a value system—the "good reasons" of the narrative paradigm. A rhetorician like Kimball (and hence a rhetorical analyst like myself, for instance), will be concerned with identifying and presenting those elements that will be the most appropriate to the subject and the most persuasive to the audience. It is in this role as persuader that the rhetorician most embodies Weaver's "lay preacher" in offering what Fisher terms "advisory discourse":

> When narration is taken as the master metaphor, it subsumes the others. The other metaphors become conceptions that inform various ways of

> *recounting* or *accounting for* human choice and action. Recounting takes such forms as history, biography, or autobiography. Accounting for takes such forms as theoretical explanation or argument. Recounting and accounting for can be also expressed in poetic forms: drama, poetry, novel, and so on. Recounting and accounting for are, in addition, the bases for all advisory discourse. Regardless of the form they are given, recounting and accounting for constitute stories we tell ourselves and each other to establish a meaningful life-world. The character of narrator(s), the conflicts, the resolutions, and the styles will vary, but each mode of recounting and accounting for is but a way of relating a "truth" about the human condition. (62-63)

It is worth noting that the narrative paradigm, therefore, neatly subsumes such delineations as Presnell's oral/literate categories. Storytelling can take both oral and literary form without losing its inherent narrative pattern. Whether the narrator chooses a more oral or linear pattern would depend, once again, on the context, as the purpose and the occasion of the "story" call for. In Kimball's ceremonial rhetoric she deftly mixes both patterns; though her "ceremonial" addresses were composed for occasion-specific events, and she uses her natural gifts of conversational organization and clarity to organize her speeches formally, she also sees in these occasions the opportunity to "instruct" (by offering some densely packed theological musings) and "happify" (by invoking the patterns of formal ritual to give a larger meaning to the occasions of

community gatherings). Her rhetoric therefore serves purposes of both *recounting* and *accounting for* in different circumstances, as the following samples illustrate.

"On This Interesting Occasion"

Storehouse Cornerstone Ceremony: November 12, 1868

Grimes proposes six modes of ritual sensibility, "embodied attitudes that may arise in the course of a ritual" (40): ritualization, decorum, ceremony, magic, liturgy, and celebration. Elements of each of the attitudes may be present in any single episode of ritual, but frequently one of the sensibilities dominates. It is "ceremony" that is the most apparent in this first example of Kimball's address delivered and part played at the laying of the cornerstone of the Fifteenth Ward Relief Society Hall in 1868.

Kimball briefly mentions the occasion in her "Auto-biography" by describing it: "a silver trowel and mallet were furnished me and, assisted by a master mason and surrounded by an assemblage of people, I had the honor of laying the corner stone of the first Relief Society building erected in this dispensation." While this brief retelling is important enough an event for her to mark it in that autobiographical sketch, the solemn importance of the event is much more evident when we examine the speech that Kimball composed for the occasion and delivered at the building site. The speech is recorded in the Fifteenth Ward minutes, along with an account of the choreography of the meeting. It was an important occasion for Kimball since, as her speech will shows, she considered this event not only unique in its historical significance to the Fifteenth Ward Relief

Society, but singularly important as a manifestation of God's plan of progress for women everywhere.

First, the minutes record how the episode is framed dramatically as an event separate from and notably set apart from the regular Relief Society meetings. The women of the ward met together as usual, but then they "formed into procession and repaired to the place where the corner stone of the store-house was to be laid." Once there, "the sisters had formed in line around the foundation" of the building, where they waited for Kimball and her presidency to arrive. There were "several of the brethren" also present (Bishop Burton gave a short address, encouraging the women to continued efforts by reminding them that "practice and energy strengthened and increased the abilities") but the symbolic power of ceremony belonged clearly to President Kimball at this event. As Grimes notes, "On a decorous occasion the ritual director is a host, but at a ceremonious event he or she is an officiant" (47). At the cornerstone ceremony, Kimball officiated both by performing the ritual act, and by performing the verbal seal of ceremony in her speech.

Grimes reminds us that, "When meaning, communication, or performance become more important than function and pragmatic end, ritualization has begun to occur" (41). With silver trowel and mallet in hand, the practical importance of laying a building's foundation is of less significance at this moment than what sets it apart as a ceremonial ritual. The significant nonverbal cues—the procession, the silver tools—set it off as a performance, and Kimball's address also marks the occasion as an act of broader social and spiritual significance. Ceremony has "imperative force" for the group being pulled

together by it, and "Ceremony symbolizes respect for the offices, histories, and causes that are condensed into its gestures, objects, and actions" (48). So the office that Kimball holds, along with the objects (silver tools) and the symbolic action of laying the cornerstone, all combine to make the rhetorical effect greater than the sum of its parts. There may also be an element of "liturgy" about this occasion, as Grimes notes that the liturgical sensibility of ritual refers to "any ritual action with an ultimate frame of reference and the doing of which is understood to be of cosmic necessity" (51). As Kimball frames this cornerstone event, she give the act a larger frame of reference and a place in the cosmic order of things—i.e., the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth and the increased benefits he has for his daughters.

Kimball begins, "I appear before you on this interesting occasion in behalf of the Female Relief Society to express thanks to Almighty God that the wheels of progress have been permitted to run until they have brought us to a more extended field of useful labor for female minds and hands." Immediately she marks this "interesting occasion" as a part of God's larger plan of the "wheels of progress." But she also quickly establishes that's not enough, that there is still a much larger sphere necessarily awaiting these women:

> It will be readily admitted that woman's allotted sphere of labor is not sufficiently extensive, and varied to enable her to exercise all her God-given powers and faculties in a manner best calculated to strengthen and develop the perfect woman. Nor are her labors made sufficiently

> remunerative to afford her that independence compatible with true womanly dignity.
>
> We realize that the practical part of this theory, unless wisely conducted, may subject us to criticisms and censure, but the consciousness that our efforts are in the direction of human progress and universal good will bring us the boon "Which nothing earthly gives or can destroy, / The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy."

Even more importantly, Kimball then goes on to identify this cornerstone occasion with other similar ceremonies she has attended, of even more spiritual significance to her Latter-day Saint audience:

> In the history of this people it has been my privilege to witness, not the laying of the corner-stone, but the ever memorable dedication, of the comparatively small but grand and imposing Kirtland Temple. I was present at the laying of the corner-stone, and the dedication of the more magnificent Nauvoo Temple and in our advancing history I witnessed the laying of the cornerstone of the great Temple now in progress in this City.

Here Kimball is setting up her ethos as a credible witness to the importance of such ceremonies by reminding her audience how many she has been a part of. But more important is the strategy she employs next—juxtaposing the Fifteenth Ward storehouse with those Temples that the Saints had worked so hard for and rallied around. The Temple stood as a symbol of the restored Gospel and the highest earthly blessings were

its ministrations. By association, Kimball invested her ward building with a similar importance, because in the next sentence she says:

> Another step, and with feeling of humility and gratitude I stand upon this consecrated rock and contemplate the result of the completion of this unpretending Edifice (which I will here call our store) The upper story of which will be dedicated to worship to Art and to Science. The lower story to commerce and trade. I view this as a preliminary or stepping stone to similar structures on a grander scale.

Was she already plotting the promised general Relief Society office and women's auxiliary building? In any case, she can't get away from being practical, as she next points out the immediate purpose of the building itself: "The object of the building is to enable the Society to more perfectly combine their labors, their means, their tastes and their talents, for improvements (Physically, Socially, Morally, Intellectually, Spiritually, and Financially) and for more extended usefulness."

In closing, Kimball extends the communal bond even farther by including the men in the group in the work, acknowledging their part in the community and paving the way for future communal efforts:

> Many gentlemanly citizens kindly proffer their aid in forwarding this enterprise. To them in behalf of the course for which we labor we extend heart-felt thanks. We feel that our friends who so kindly patronize us will expect much at our hands, we promise you our best endeavors to meet your warmest expectations. But we ask you mercifully to remember, that

> the merchants counting table is a new seat for us to occupy, hence as pioneers for our sex or as explorers in this department of female labor in this Territory we beg you not to be too severe in your criticism, but show your magnanimity by giving us an approving look and an occasional encouraging word. With such help, and the continued blessing of God we have all confidence that we shall be enabled to extend variously needed relief and make our labors a blessing to the cause of humanity.

Her humility is dual-edged here—even though she begs lenience for her untried workers, she calls them pioneers and explorers, which connotes an expansive courage applied to their labors.

Why consider this speech as a literate model instead of the oral tradition? It has a carefully crafted ordered development, and even though it was written for a specific occasion, it can still be read and appreciated on its own. This is because Kimball lifts the immediate purpose for the speech and makes the event more transcendent and timeless not only by emphasizing the importance of it as a historical moment, but also by connecting it with other important events of spiritual significance, namely, the cornerstone ceremonies of the great temples she had attended in Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Salt Lake City. By this juxtaposition and association she invests the Fifteenth Ward Society Hall with a similar importance and spiritual significance.

Her purpose here is not to agitate so much as to *invoke* and *consecrate*—which is the purpose of ritual and ceremony. It would be another dozen years before she would "openly declare herself a woman's rights woman," but Kimball still subtly uses the

occasion here to offer an understated, but unmistakable call for "a more extended field of useful labor for female minds and hands."

"A Sweet Voice from the Celestial Court"

"A Chapter in the Life of Naoma": February 1873

This text is notable for several reasons, but mostly for its singularity. It is the only example of pure narrative that we have from Kimball's writings; there is no obvious moral to the story, no call to action, no cause to rally around. Instead it is a simple story, illustrating an episode in the life of "Naoma," a woman who learns of the law of Celestial marriage (polygamy) by "direct communication from God . . . in answer to her inquiries" (WE 2:65, no.9 [1 Dec. 1873]).

Kimball published the story in the *Exponent* under the pseudonym "B," "Naoma" being a pseudonym for Vilate Kimball, wife of Apostle Heber C. Kimball. The names were published "by permission" eight months later as part of an editorial statement (discussed in chapter two) about women's prerogative to receive direct personal revelation from God. Why use pseudonyms in the first place? Perhaps there was some hesitation on Sarah Kimball's part, as this was one of her first submissions to the *Exponent*, and she wanted to see how it would be received. And also, it was a narrative form that was not her usual straightforward conversational style, so perhaps she felt a little out of her element. But more likely, it is because she wasn't sure she had the approval of the subject to share such a personal experience—Vilate Kimball died in 1867, just a few months before her husband's death, so neither of the concerned parties were

around to give their approval to the publication. However, when the editor wanted to divulge the names, Kimball evidently thought that its being a true experience of female communication with God was important enough that the real names could be attached.

The dramatized narrative essay is unique in Kimball's writings, and raises the question of why she would choose this style and form for the task. Again, perhaps she was experimenting with style. Perhaps it was the form that suited her best for a semi-dramatized episode, especially when keeping Naoma's identity private. It does work well for that purpose, so it shows Kimball was aware of the difference that form and voice could make in telling a story. Echoes of this narrative style would show up ten years later in her autobiographical sketch, but for the most part, the rest of her extant writings don't dabble in narrative again.

Whatever her reasons were for choosing this form, the narrative style gives is several important effects, as we can see by applying some insights from Fisher. For one thing, it's a very reader-friendly format; for a fledgling women's newspaper that might be important in reaching its readers. Fisher observes that the storyteller's rhetoric (tempting me to coin the phrase *storytellerhetoric*) "assume[s] an audience of poetic auditors rather than argumentative judges" (147). Given Kimball's subject matter and considering her intended audience was sympathetic Mormon women, this assumption is probably accurate here. She was writing to help fill what she saw as the aims of the *Exponent*, whose stated claim was "It is better to represent ourselves than to be misrepresented by others."

Fisher's narrative theory of communication points out several other beneficial features, which can translate to reasons why Kimball could use such a narrative to particular benefit in this instance: "First, the paradigm is a ground for resolving the dualisms of modernism: fact-value, intellect-imagination, reason-emotion, and so on. Stories are enactments of the whole mind in concert with itself" (Fisher 68). So the narrative is useful here in tackling an issue (polygamy and revelation) that juggle such dualisms: fact and dramatization, reason and faith, deep emotion and clear-headed value judgment (choosing to accept polygamy). Fisher also explains that

> In theme, if not in every detail, narrative is meaningful for persons in particular and in general, across communities as well as cultures, across time and place. Narratives enable us to understand the actions of others "because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of narratives." (65-66)

And finally, this widespread understanding is the reason that narrative rationality is such an egalitarian, non-exclusive mode of persuasive communication; people understand stories, when they might not understand a more traditional hierarchical rationalist argument:

> Traditional rationality prescribes the ways people should think when they reason truly or toward certainty. . . . Narrative rationality is, on the other hand, descriptive; it offers an account, an understanding, of any instance of human choice and action, including science. At the same time, narrative rationality . . . provides a basis of critique. Where freedom and democracy

> are ideals, narrative rationality will imply a praxis constant with an ideal egalitarian society. (Fisher 66)

Since freedom and quality were two of Kimball's core values, this narrative egalitarianism is certainly appropriate.

As for Kimball's adeptness at this form of literary style, the following passage gives an example of her tendencies: a beginner's awkwardness with pacing and development, a natural conversationalist's ear for colloquial dialogue, and a moralist's tendency to over-dramatize:

> Susan Dean called; Naoma received her kindly, even cordially, but the sadness that pervaded the atmosphere of her person, was sensibly felt by Susan. She said, "My dear friend, you are not well to-day, let me do something for you." Naoma tried to smile, said her ailment was only a fearful foreboding of an undefinable something that made her "so miserable" that she sometimes feared the Evil One had put his finger in her pie. But she could not eat in the morning; they would have a cup of tea, and then she would feel better. The water in the polished tea kettle was soon boiled, and a snow white napkin spread on the teaboard, on which was placed some temptingly nice bread, butter and plum preserves. Susan pronounced the tea was just the right flavor, but Naoma could not eat. Susan marveled, and bade her friend good bye.
>
> Naoma opened a book, it seemed mockery; no writer had ever felt as she felt—she hoped not—and if not, they could have no sympathy with

> her. What could she do? She folded her arms and gave her mind a few moments to a new train of thought. Why had she not brought the burden of the soul to the feet of Jesus? There she could be understood; there she had ever found succor, comfort, strength, as her circumstances had required. There she would bring this, her great sorrow.

The level of descriptive detail in this scene is much more developed than in any other episode of the narrative, which hints that perhaps "Susan Dean" was the author herself. If so, that would make this essay all the more noteworthy for providing Kimball's sole appearance as a fictionalized character. In any case, the "Chapter in the Life of Naoma" is itself a unique chapter in Kimball's public discourse.

"Among the Honorable Members of This Convention"

Tribute to Bishop Hunter: July 1879

In another example of a carefully composed "literary" speech, Kimball draws even more heavily on the prophetic rhetoric by adopting a scriptural tone and drawing scriptural parallels. On the occasion of Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter's 86th birthday, Kimball composed an address in his honor, which she read at his birthday celebration. As the *Exponent* reported, the event was a surprise party, "rather in the character of a literary entertainment" organized by local officers of the Relief Society, who had worked closely with Hunter in his capacity as Presiding Bishop. After the pattern of the sacred tradition, the tribute praises Bishop Hunter's "long and useful life, which has been devoted to God and humanity":

> Like Adam, you have been a granger, a tiller of the soil, earning your bread by the sweat of your brow.
>
> Like Abraham, you have tended the flocks of the field; like him you have taught righteousness and are an honored leader among the children of promise. . . .
>
> Before the final adjustment of rights and ceremonies is fully consummated, a Grand Assembly will convene, which will be presided over by Father Adam, the Ancient of Days.
>
> Among the honorable members of this convention will be Noah, Abraham and Joseph, the Prophet of the last days, with many others, including Edward Hunter, whom on this occasion we delight to honor.

Kimball draws heavily on Biblical language, to good effect. Comparing Bishop Hunter to the Old Testament prophets serves two functions: first, and most obviously, it fits the model of a traditional encomium by praising the leader at hand, by comparing him with acknowledged noble leaders of the past; second, the timeless scriptural rhythms and tones invoked by these allusions set the stage for the larger purpose of Kimball's address, which is to expound the doctrine of eternal reward for the righteous. Kimball lifts her rhetoric out of the oral moment by expanding her vision of the eternities:

> You have your probation in the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God will gather His obedient children into one grand harmonious family, where each, understanding correct principles, will be self-governing, and peace will reign in all the borders. The members of this family may enter

> the divine presence of the Father and Mother God with the scales of their mortal eyes unclasped and their perceptions revivified.

This is a theme repeated in other of her sermons, most notably "Our Sixth Sense, or the Sense of Spiritual Understanding." It was a favorite theme of Kimball's, to recognize the potential of perception as enlarged by spiritual vision. This extension of doctrine beyond the immediate application to Bishop Hunter is what moves the composition from being merely an occasional tribute, to being a ritual-like incantation of ceremony by investing it with a wider application.

Kimball's address was printed in full in the *Exponent* account of the party, which shows how it differed from many other short, extemporaneous speeches given at the party. There were three other occasional texts printed in the *Exponent* from the party, and Kimball's literary skill here is notable compared with those popularly-styled verses composed by Eliza Snow, Hannah King, and Emmeline Wells. Writing poems for birthdays and tributes was a common tribute, and these three of the leading Mormon poetesses turned their hand to honor Hunter as well. Each text's invocation and address to Bishop Hunter are telling; compare Kimball's understated "Reverend Father" to Wells's even-handed:

> We hail thee, as the hero of the day!
>
> A veteran in integrity and truth,
>
> An honest man, thy friends and neighbors say,
>
> Of sterling principle from early youth.

To Snow's classically Greco-inspired:

Bishop of Bishops!

We would humbly now,

A wreath of honor twine around your brow.

Let honor be to him whom honor's due—

This, worthy veteran, we concede to you.

To King's bouncy couplets:

Servant of God! the return of this day

Inspires my heart to compose a brief lay.

May the spirit of God shed it sacred fire

Through every chord I may strike on my lyre!

Not surprisingly (since it is the model of the panegyric), all four of the tributes follow a similar conceit of predicting the future life of Bishop Hunter, and placing him in a realm of glory, well rewarded for his good earthly deeds. Snow's final stanzas are the most succinct:

In Zion's cause you've labored long and hard;

By faith and works have earned a rich reward,

And hold, by legal claim, a Deed of Trust

Due in the resurrection of the just. . . .

When in the flesh your work is fully done—

Your battles fought and all your vict'ries won,

In cloudless glory may your setting sun

Go down in peace.

Kimball's vision reads thus:

> Then worthy father, you will in fullness, reap the just reward of your husbandry, gather your flocks into fat pastures on your everlasting inheritance, and give dominion and power to the righteous of your own house, subordinate to the eternal scepter which through faithfulness you have received by promises as sacred as those made to Abraham.
>
> . . . It is our fervent desire that all present on this memorable occasion, may be counted worthy to participate with you, our illustrious father, in the glory and happiness of that "feast" of "feasts," until which time, to our much honored, Presiding Bishop in Zion, we mutually say "The Lord be with thee."

As a combination of *encomium* and *eulogia* (both commending and blessing Bishop Hunter), Kimball's address fits into the epideictic—or ceremonial, as Aristotle classified it—rhetoric (Lanham 164). Lanham also quotes Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca pointing out that epideictic oratory "seemed to have more connection with literature than with argumentation" (qtd. in Lanham 164), which is another characteristic that sets this ceremonial text apart from Kimball's activist rhetoric of agitation.

"I Only Write This Short Sketch to Instruct and Happify"

"Auto-biography": September, 1883

Chapter one of this thesis reviewed the contents of Kimball's brief autobiographical sketch for its historical detail and insight into how her rhetorical style

formed. Literarily, the important thing about the autobiographical sketch to discuss here, is how it shows that Kimball's immediate context influenced her writing. Before writing the sketch, Kimball had just completed a trip to the eastern United States on her way to New York, for the purpose of collecting family history records for doing temple work. On the way, she had made stops in Nauvoo and Kirtland, where she had spent so many important formative years—formative to both her spiritual and intellectual development. This is why the auto-biography spends so much time on the experiences of Kimball's early life—her father's miraculous conversion story; her experiences in Nauvoo—donating her son to the Temple fund, being blessed and taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the circumstances leading up to the organization of the Female Relief Society.

By comparison, Kimball skips over the painful recollections in her history—her husband Hiram's business troubles, the "wanderings and persecutions of the saints," and so on. Since her stated purpose in the sketch is to "instruct and happify," she obviously does not consider these troubles necessary to that purpose. The remainder of the facts recounted in the sketch are brief, not so much narrated as listed, a string of factual events and dates. At first look it may be difficult to account for the abrupt switch in style, until you study the larger context of the piece—that she had just completed this trip east and the events of those days were fresh on her mind, and her purpose in writing this sketch for the *Exponent* was to share "those things that may be of interest"in her unique experience. As with the "Chapter in the Life of Naoma," this text shows off Kimball's narrative skill in her use of dialogue and her (rather rare) display of idiosyncratic humor.

"That Capacity of Mind in Which Woman Is Fitted to Excel"

"Our Sixth Sense, or the Sense of Spiritual Understanding": February, 1895

But compared to her less-common forays into the realm of narrative sketch, Kimball's final (and perhaps her greatest) public composition is a much more characteristic display of visionary outlook mingled with a call to action. "Our Sixth Sense, or the Sense of Spiritual Understanding" may stand as Kimball's manifesto in a way, since it beautifully incorporates and encapsulates so many of her favorite themes.

Many of Kimball's sermons focused on equality of esteem for men and women, and she also taught of the ultimate and divine equality of "the Father and Mother God." "Our Sixth Sense" was an address Kimball wrote to be read at the Triennial Council of Women in Washington, D.C. in 1895. Though it is unclear whether Kimball herself was actually in attendance at the conference to deliver her own words aloud, her voice is unmistakable in the composition, and her verbal persuasive skills are at their most fluent.

In the address Kimball insists that the spiritual sense she was discussing was "that capacity of mind in which woman is pre-eminently fitted to excel." A sample passage outlines her belief in eternal, unlimited intellectual potential:

> They that seek, by faith and earnest prayer, find the light that leads to the golden gate. They that knock with study and faith's assurance, have the narrow way opened to them, and are received into communion with the Infinite Father and Mother, are permitted to enter hallowed mansions to attend the school of the Prophets, and, by advancing steps to reach the school of the Gods, where they learn the processes by which worlds are

> organized . . . the uses for which worlds are called into existence; the manner in which they are controlled, and the laws of progression by which all beings and animate things are perfected, and glorified in their respective spheres.

Although it was meant to be delivered as a speech, this poetic text has more of the "mystical" quality which Wells ascribed to Kimball's writings on philosophical and spiritual subjects. Certainly this is one occasion where we see her fondness for "soaring upward to sublime heights." It sounds scriptural, but does not noticeably rely on recognizable scriptural language, or use overt biblical allusions. "Our Sixth Sense" is very much a sample of Kimball's unique patterns of thought and a succinct encapsulation of her values and goals. And even lifted out of context it is still an eminently readable, edifying, beautiful piece of prose.

In summary, the strategies of Kimball's "rhetoric of ceremony" include a highly developed sense of "ritual" purpose in the community-building opportunities of gatherings of the saints (both Mormon and suffragist). Her two major focuses that her strategies illustrated were to *instruct,* or to edify by teaching essential "doctrinal" truths, both spiritual and secular, and to *happify*, to comfort, identify with, and praise the members of the communities who were gathered as an audience. She achieves these effects by using techniques of formal style (classical encomium, etc.), a clear organization of ideas, and the linguistic patterns and figurative language (both metaphor and imagery) of scripture, with the end result being the creation of several very literate works of "occasional speech" that are also worthwhile for their stand-alone literary quality.

Conclusion

> We thought much upon this subject upon the pain of having our best feeling and endeavor misunderstood and censured, perhaps by those whose judgment and good will we prized the most. We thought of all this and of our inability to fight the battle and gain the victory. Then the doom of the unprofitable servant arose before us, and with a prayer for strength and wisdom we entered the list of female laborers for this cause of universal good, under the protecting banner of the holy priesthood, armed with such delegated powers and aided by such helps as we are proud to acknowledge from the gentlemen of the Ward, should we fail to accomplish much, we should prove ourselves unworthy of the trust you have confided to our care.
>
> When we think upon the magnitude of the work before the little handful of men and women here in the mountains, we sometimes tremble for the result, we are so slow to understand the ways of God and obey his commandments.
>
> "Pres. Mrs. Kimball's Annual Message"
> Salt Lake City, 1 January 1873
> (15th Ward Relief Society Minutes)

In her annual report of the new year in 1873 (addressed to an audience that included church president Brigham Young), "Pres. Mrs. Kimball" expressed her concern about the magnitude of the social and spiritual work she had undertaken by accepting the duties of Relief Society leadership, and a particular concern that the sometimes radical work of a religious women's organization would be misunderstood. But tellingly, Kimball also reveals, almost off-handedly, what may perhaps be the driving factor underlying her years of effort as a spiritual leader and social reformer. In the New Testament parable, the "doom of the unprofitable servant" was to be chastised and cast out by his lord, who condemned the servant's lack of effort in increasing the talents he had been allotted. By contrast, the "profitable" servant who took the initiative to increase his talents, was praised with a "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou has been

faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21).

For Kimball, this parable was particularly applicable to the conditions of womankind in the nineteenth century. She believed, especially with the organization of the Relief Society and its attendant prophetic blessing, that women worldwide were entering new spheres of opportunity and usefulness. Her life's work would be an effort to continually increase those opportunities for women--intellectually, politically, financially, spiritually, and in every way—believing that the more faithfully women increased their advantage in the "talents" at hand, the more would become available to them.

In May of 1895, Susan B. Anthony visited the Utah conference of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in Salt Lake City. Sarah Kimball, standing up at age 77 as the Utah Honorary Vice President of the National Association, concluded her remarks with this story that is also a fitting anecdote in conclusion to this study of Kimball's life:

> On the anniversary of Miss Anthony's seventieth birthday it was my privilege to be in Washington and I attended the grand banquet, at which Miss Anthony received the most distinguished honors that I ever saw extended to a woman and she has now lived until she has arrived at that position in which Napoleon was placed at one time when he attended a banquet. Someone criticized where his seat was at the table, they said, "Napoleon, you should have been set at the head of the table." He said,

"That is all right, I am Napoleon, and wherever Napoleon is there is the head of the table" (applause), and wherever Miss Anthony is there is the head of the Woman Suffrage Movement." (Applause.)

(WE 24:61, no.9 [1 Oct. 1895])

Kimball herself by this time was also venerable and much admired, and could be considered at a position at the head of the table of Relief Society and suffrage leadership in Utah at that time. Sarah Kimball was successful as a leader and rhetor because she knew her audience well, she was focused with her purpose, took advantage of timing, and developed leadership skills that allowed her to continually expand the "sphere of usefulness" both for herself and others.

Even in her most mystical rhetoric and her most transcendent actions, Kimball was always sturdily grounded in practicality by recognizing the needs of her audience/community, whether those needs were intellectual, spiritual, political, or temporal. In this way, she is illustrative of Walter Fisher's claim about rhetoric's essential purpose: "[R]hetorical experience is more usefully viewed ontologically than epistemologically. Put another way: rhetorical experience is most fundamentally a symbolic transaction in and about social reality." (Fisher 17).

In summarizing their collection of essays on nineteenth-century American oratorical culture, Clark and Halloran formulate a theory of how history can particularly enrich the rhetorical study of public discourse:

> History, in [Foucault's] terms, should not "recount the necessary birth of truth and values; it should become a differential knowledge of energies

> and failings, heights and degenerations, poisons and antidotes. Its task is to become a curative science" . . . . It can do that by tracing the descent of rhetorical theories and practices we have inherited in ways that foreground the cultural forces to which they were responses and the social purposes they served. Another way is to expose in particular cases the general principles involved in the relation of public discourse and its culture, principles that can help us be more judicious in our own rhetorical theory and practice. (249)

This thesis has been a study of the "particular case" of Sarah Kimball—of the "cultural forces" (the history behind and the context surrounding), of the "social purposes" that shaped the function and forms of her public discourse, and the general principles that shaped her rhetorical practice.

In an 1891 letter to a fellow Utah suffragist, Kimball echoes scriptural injunctions by calling down God's blessing on those who understood her mission of social and spiritual advancement for women—those "who have ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand and they understand the voice of the Good Shepherd who is calling his daughters into broader fields where they can breathe purer air and clothe themselves with more self respect" ("Letter" 1891). Both Kimball's ceremonial and agitation rhetoric draw on traditional sacred narrative, elaborate her own theological discussions, make use of sermonic power to enact social change, and establish her right as a woman to speak on any matter in which she is "fitted to excel."

Kimball speaks exhortation, edification, and comfort to her listeners. Certainly she always recognizes the connection between belief and action, which places her in interaction with her community and with the divine—always the appropriate position for a "preacher" to take. For Kimball, the purpose underlying her faith, her words and her works was always clear. Her ultimate goal, as expressed in her musing on the importance of "Spiritual Understanding," is the divine refinement of that interaction:

> When through our spiritual nature we are in communion with God, we are drawing nearer and nearer to each other, and our words and works will blend more and more harmoniously, until earth's dutiful children, recognizing universal spiritual kinship, hail the peaceful millennial dawn, and participate in the triumphant reign of our God and His Christ.

Appendix

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(*Woman's Exponent* v.23, no.18 [15 April 1895]: 251)

* Spelling and punctuation in all documents have been standardized, unless otherwise noted.

Fifteenth Ward Relief Society Anniversary Address

17 March 1868

Gentlemen and Ladies

You are perhaps all aware what our object is in meeting together this evening. Since the organization of the Female Relief Society in this Ward 2 Jan. 1857 the good that has been done if past my eulogism. It is something long to be remembered. The disadvantages under which they labored and the many obstacles that beset their way were not sufficiently great to deter them or retard their progress in their good work. We are now a new society although on the same basis. The Ward as most of the members of it have been greatly blessed through the beneficence of an all merciful "Father" since that time. We are all competitors for the same "Goal." Each striving to emulate the other in the good to accrue from our meeting together. We are laboring for the good of humanity-for our own advancement as well as for the good of others.

It is a saying old and trite that Union is strength. We are united-therein probably lies the secret of our success. We strive to do what will be approved of by God-as well as to merit the approbation of the just and good. For the world we care not. We live for those who love us and the good we may through our untiring efforts be able to accomplish. We wish to do what will secure for us a name and a place that will live after we have passed away. The "golden rule" says as you would that others should do unto you do ye even so unto them. If we remember to extend the hand of kindness to those who are needy and suffering we may not be forgotten by our God when the day of adversity comes.

To those who sanctioned and assisted us in our endeavors to establish a model society allow me in behalf of this society to tender to you our most sincere and heartfelt thanks. If in our endeavors that everything should be pleasant and agreeable we have overlooked that which we should have remembered-be lenient with us and know that it is an error of the head and not of the heart.

Written March 17th 1868
Read March 19th 1868
By Miss Hattie C. Jones
Sec'y for the F.R. Society
15 Ward

Address Delivered at the Laying of the Cornerstone of the Storehouse by President S.M. Kimball

I appear before you on this interesting occasion in behalf of the Female Relief Society to express thanks to Almighty God that the wheels of progress have been permitted to run until they have brought us to a more extended field of useful labor for female minds and hands.

It will readily be admitted that woman's allotted sphere of labor is not sufficiently extensive, and varied to enable her to exercise all her God-given powers and faculties in a manner best calculated to strengthen and develop the perfect woman. Nor are her labors made sufficiently remunerative to afford her that independence compatible with true womanly dignity.

We realize that the practical part of this theory, unless wisely conducted, may subject us to criticisms and censure, but the consciousness that our efforts are in the direction of human progress and universal good will bring us the boon

"Which nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine and the heartfelt joy."

In the history of this people it has been my privilege to witness, not the laying of the corner-stone, but the ever memorable dedication, of the comparatively small but grand and imposing Kirtland Temple. I was present at the laying of the corner-stone, and the dedication of the more magnificent Nauvoo Temple and in our advancing history I witnessed the laying of the corner-stone of the great Temple now in progress of erection in this City.

Another step, and with feeling of humility and gratitude I stand upon this consecrated rock and contemplate the result of the completion of this unpretending Edifice (which I will here call our store), the upper story of which will be dedicated to worship to Art and to Science. The lower story to commerce and trade. I view this as a preliminary or stepping stone to similar structures on a grander scale.

The object of the building is to enable the Society to more perfectly combine their labors, their means, their tastes and their talents, for improvement (Physically, Socially, Morally, Intellectually, Spiritually, and Financially) and for more extended usefulness.

Many gentlemanly citizens kindly proffer their aid in forwarding this enterprise. To them in behalf of the cause for which we labor we extend heart-felt thanks. We feel that our friends who so kindly patronize us will expect much at our hands, we promise you our best endeavors to meet your warmest expectations. But we ask you mercifully to remember, that the merchant's counting table is a new seat for us to occupy, hence as pioneers for our sex or as explorers in this department of female labor in this Territory we beg you not to be too severe in your criticisms, but show your magnanimity by giving us an approving look and an occasional encouraging word. With such help, and the continued blessing of God we have all confidence that we shall be enabled to extend variously needed relief and make our labors a blessing to the cause of humanity.

A Chapter in The Life of Naoma

Naoma was the daughter of _____of Rochester, New York, where some of her family still reside. She married. Her husband was a moral man, a skillful mechanic, and a good financier; she an industrious, frugal, and loving wife. A few short years of labor and love, crowned with the blessing of home, with all its endearing surroundings and appertunances, [sic] caused her heart to swell with uncontrollable joy as she contemplated the haven of domestic bliss in which she might now repose.

But a missionary came. He said, "My friends, I come to you in the name of my Master, to offer you a commission to labor in the vineyard of the Lord. But know that the Alter [sic] of sacrifice accompanies it-that you wil be required to sacrifice all that you now hold dear. The conditions imply that you, of your own free will, give yourselves, your affections, your time, your all to Him to whom all persons and all things rightfully belong."

They accepted the commission with its conditions, laid their friends and their possessions on the alter, and journeyed to Kirtland, Ohio, where a few who had accepted the same commission, had preceded them. Freely they had received, freely they must give. God was not respecter of persons; this commission msut be offered to all people. The harvest was great and the laborers few. Naoma's husband must take a mission to Europe. She must do the best she could in a little rented house, with three little mouths to fill, six little feet to shoe, and all the etceteras thereunto belonging. No matter. She had a light heart and a ready hand; her husband was on duty, he would honor his commission, and God would bless his labors. Her duties would be made light; they would be happy. And they were happy, as their letters filled with affection, confidence, and good cheer constantly testified.

Years sped swiftly by, and sacrifice was almost forgotten in the joys of the return. But once enlisted, the armor must not be laid off; sin must be combatted at home and abroad. A mission to the New England States came. Their neighbors did not like their commission.

Missouri would not be told that, if she sinned, the hand of an avenging God would be stretched out over her. These commissioners were driven into Illinois.

With an increased family, increased poverty, and decreased bodily health, our heroine was here. Her wifely confidence, motherly devotion, and christian [sic] resignation, were subjects of remark and admiration for her acquaintances. The light which they had received, must not be hid. The commission must be held up here. The world must be reproved for sin, and warned of a judgment to come.

Naoma's husband must fill another mission among the European nations. The peaceful trust that pervaded her bosom, made the little log cabin with its shake floor, in which she and her sick children were left, a kind of paradise to her; she could make the rough places smooth for his sake, and the causes they had espoused.

Again the husband returned. He erected a commodious dwelling, which they soon filled with home comforts. The blessed reunion had almost removed the

traces of anxious care that were becoming visible on Naoma's countenance. She thanked God that he had enabled her, if not joyfully, uncomplainingly, to take the spoiling of her goods, to endure the scoffs of friends, and breast the storms of adversity.

She felt that she had passed through the furnace of affliction, and no more could be required of woman.

Poor Naoma, she knew not all. The dregs of her cup were not yet drained. Her husband–he to whom she could ever trustingly confide any thoughts, and who had ever thus trustingly confided in her, became suddenly silent and thoughtful. His steps became heavier and his head more bowed. If she surprised a look of tender compassion bent upon her, it was instantly averted. Her heart was pained with the weight that she could see and feel, resting upon her husband's mind; but she could not discern its nature. She sought his confidence, he evaded her inquiries. She sought again, he said, "I cannot reveal to you the burden of my thoughts to make you unhappy!" Months rolled by. She sought his confidence the third time. He repulsed her. She tried to reason; her husband was a good man, and therewith she ought to be content. She would not be an exacting wife; she would try to discipline her mind to rest satisfied. Such a victory was easier sought than achieved. Her unconquerable heart would rebel; it would yearn for that reciprocal trust, which she felt was essential to preserve the oneness that constituted connubial bliss.

Was the equilibrium of her mind, which had been so long disturbed, never to be restored?

One morning in early spring, her husband went to a Southern settlement to preach. Susan Dean called; Naoma received her kindly, even cordially, but the sadness that pervaded the atmosphere of her person, was sensibly felt by Susan. She said, "my dear friend, you are not well to-day, let me do something for you." Naoma tried to smile, said her ailment was only a fearful foreboding of an undefinable something that made her "so miserable" that she sometimes feared the Evil One had put his finger in her pie. But she could not eat in the morning; they would have a cup of tea, and then she would feel better. The water in the polished tea kettle was soon boiled, and a snow white napkin spread on the teaboard, on which was placed some temptingly nice bread, butter and plum preserves. Susan pronounced the tea just the right flavor, but Naoma could not eat. Susan marveled, and bade her friend good bye.

Naoma opened a book, it seemed mockery; no writer had ever felt as she felt—she hoped not—and if not, they could have no sympathy with her. What could she do? She folded her arms and gave her mind a few moments to a new train of thought. Why had she not brought the burden of the soul to the feet of Jesus? There she could be understood; there she had ever found succor, comfort, strength, as her circumstances had required. There she would bring this, her great sorrow.

She retired to a silent recess. Tears of contrition filled her eyes, while with low and tremulous voice, she pleaded with the Father in the name of the Son to show her wherein she was unworthy, that she might repent, make a just restitution, and be enabled to discharge the duties she owed to herself, to her husband, family and to the world, in a manner acceptable

to God.

A sweet voice from the Celestial Court notified her that her petition was heard, that the offering of her contrite heart was accepted, and that the channel of communication was now open. On the holy communion I draw the curtain for half an hour.

Naoma appeared in the midst of her household with a new peace in her soul, which spoke its own language through her countenance. Her husband returned from the neighboring settlement where he had been to preach, and she met him with smiles and tears. He took her hand carefully in his, and asked, "what has happened to you during my absence." And she answered, "Only that the Lord has deigned to reveal to me the secret you sought to keep." They both wept. At length he said, "Naoma, could you bear it?" She replied, "The subject is so sacred, so solemn, that I cannot converse upon it now!" He said, "I will leave you for an hour, during which time we will pray for ourselves and each other, then peradventure, we may talk together."

There came an end to even "that' hour. Her husband entered her apartment and said, "How do you feel by this time, Naoma?" She replied, "I cannot define my feelings, farther than this; I know you to be a servant of the Most High; I know that the God of Abraham is your God; I know He is a wise dictator; and wherein His ways are not as my ways, I wish you to heed His dictations, regardless of me. In spite of all my good resolutions I formed before the Lord, I find myself weak before you. Bear with me, dear husband, a few months, and I trust you will find me stronger."

Three months later, Naoma caressed her fifth child. And her husband said, "can you now kneel with me at the sacred Alter and there, in the presence of God, Angels, and witnesses, of your own free will and choice give to me wives?" Naoma breathed a little shorter, but answered unhesitatingly, "yes, sir, and bless you, and bless them, and thank God that I have the privilege."

Did Naoma still love her husband? Her own words were that she "reverenced" him now.

B.

Physiology

It is not the object of the writer to present a code of physiological laws; but to call attention to the necessity of having this branch of science more generally taught in our schools.

Human physiology is a history of the functions (uses) of the various organs which constitute the human body, of their mechanism, their dependencies upon, and relations to each other.

Great need exists with a majority of people of all localities, of a knowledge of a correct system of physiology. No person can understandingly, apply grammatical or mathematical rules which they have never learned. Neither can a person make the most and best of life without learning life's science, physiology, and understandingly applying its rules. To derive from life the happiest results, is the object of all rational beings. The condition of "the house we live in" (the body) so materially affects all our life-interests that an understanding of its parts and functions is of more than ordinary importance.

A thorough system of co-operative education would require initiatory lessons to be given at home. Where can mild words be found in which to refer to the inexcusable ignorance of so many parents upon subjects which so vitally concern their happiness and well-being, in their present lives, and in their future generations?

We study the biography of noted men and women with interest, sometimes with profit; but if one study must be neglected, it should not be the study of our inner-selves, on which depends so much of the life, health, happiness, longevity, and consequently so much of the power of usefulness in earth-life.

Reader, if you are acquainted with the laws above referred to, you are required by the debt you owe to humanity to teach them. Hygenic table arrangements are among the most admirable and effective first lessons in this department of science. Other reforms which these laws require may be advantageously introduced at the fireside, and in social neighborhood intercourse.

"The field is white and the laborers are few." Dear reader, will you study and labor to help to improve the condition of our kindred–the human family? If so, you have the co-operation of

SARAH M. KIMBALL

Auto-Biography

I am the daughter of Oliver Granger, and Lydia Dibble Granger, was born Dec. 29, 1818, in the town of Phelps, Ontario Co., New York. Of my father and mother's eight children only myself and two younger brothers, (Lafayette and Farley) remain. My father, Oliver Granger, had an interesting experience in connection with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He obtained the book a few months after its publication, and while in the city of New York at Prof. Mott's eye infirmary, he had a "heavenly vision." My father was told by a personage who said his name was Moroni that the Book of Mormon, about which his mind was exercised, was a true record of great worth, and Moroni instructed him (my father) to testify of its truth and that he should hereafter be ordained to preach the everlasting Gospel to the children of men. Moroni instructed my father to kneel and pray; Moroni and another personage knelt with him by the bedside. Moroni repeated words and instructed my father to repeat after him. Moroni then stepped behind my father, who was still kneeling, and drew his finger over the three back seams of my father's coat (which my father felt very perceptibly) and said, "A time will come when the Saints will wear garments made without seam."

Moroni told him (my father) that he might ask for what he most desired and it would be granted. He asked for an evidence by which he might know when he was approved of God. The evidence, or sign, was given and remained with him until his dying hour, being more particularly manifest when engaged in prayer and meditation. I love the memory of my father. He died in Kirtland, Ohio, August, 1843, aged 47.

I was married in Kirtland, Geauga Co., Ohio, by Warren Cowdery Esq., September 22nd, 1840, to Hiram Kimball, eldest son of Phineas and Abigail Kimball, of West Fairley, Orange Co., Vermont. My parents had previously spent a year in Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Illinois; their present stay in Ohio was considered only temporary (my father sickened and died there the next year). I returned with my husband to his home in Nauvoo, Ill., three weeks after my marriage. We boarded six months in the family of Dr. Frederic Williams, then went to housekeeping. My eldest son was born in Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Ill, November 22nd, 1841; when the babe was three days old a little incident occurred which I will mention. The walls of the Nauvoo Temple were about three feet above the foundation. The Church was in need of help to assist in raising the Temple walls. I belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; my husband did not belong to the Church at that time. I wished to help on the Temple, but did not like to ask my husband (who owned considerable property) to help for my sake.

My husband came to my bedside, and as he was admiring our three days old darling I said, "What is the boy worth?" He replied, "O, I don't know, he is worth a great deal." I said, "Is he worth a thousand dollars?" The reply was "Yes, more than that if he lives and does well." I said, "Half of him is mine, is it not?" "Yes, I suppose so." "Then I have something to help on the Temple."

(pleasantly) "You have?" "Yes, and I think of turning my share right in as tithing." "Well, I'll think about that."

Soon after the above conversation Mr. Kimball met the Prophet Joseph Smith, President of the Church, and said, "Sarah has got a little the advantage of me this time, she proposes to turn out the boy as church property." President Smith seemed pleased with the joke, and said, "I accept all such donations, and from this day the boy shall stand recorded, *church property*," then turning to Willard Richards, his secretary, he said, "Make a record of this; and you are my witness." Joseph Smith then said, "Major, (Mr. Kimball was major in the Nauvoo Legion) you now have the privilege of paying $500 and retaining possession, or receiving $500 and giving possession." Mr. Kimball asked if city property was good currency. President Smith replied that it was. Then said Mr. Kimball, "How will that reserve block north of the Temple suit?" President Smith replied, "It is just what we want." The deed was soon made out and transferred in due form.

President Smith said to me, "You have consecrated your first born son, for this you are blessed of the Lord. I bless you in the name of the Lord God of Abraham of Isaac and of Jacob. And I seal upon you all the blessings that pertain to the faithful. Your name shall be handed down in honorable remembrance from generation to generation.

"Your son shall live and be a blessing to you in time and an honor and glory to you throughout the endless eternities (changes) to come. He shall be girded about with righteousness and bear the helmet and the breastplate of war. You shall be a blessing to your companion and the honored mother of a noble posterity. You shall stand as a savior to your father's house, and receive an everlasting salvation, which I seal upon you by the gift of revelation and by virtue and authority of the Holy Priesthood vested in me, in the name of Jesus Christ."

Early in the year 1842 Joseph Smith taught me the principle of marriage for eternity, and the doctrine of plural marriage. He said that in teaching this he realized that he jeopardized his life; but God had revealed it to him many years before as a privilege with blessing, now God had revealed it again and instructed him to teach it with commandment, as the church could travel (progress) no farther without the introduction of this principle. I asked him to teach it to someone else. He looked at me reprovingly, and said, "Will you tell me who to teach it to? God requires me to teach it to you, and leave you with the responsibility of believing or disbelieving." He said, "I will not cease to pray for you, and if you will seek unto God in prayer you will not be led into temptation."

In the summer of 1843, a maiden lady (Miss Cooke) was seamstress for me and the subject of combining our efforts for assisting the Temple hands came up in conversation. She desired to be helpful, but had no means to furnish. I told her I would furnish material if she would make some shirts for the workmen. It was then suggested that some of our neighbors might wish to combine means and efforts with ours, and we decided to invite a few to come and consult with us on the subject of forming a Ladies' Society. The neighboring sisters met in my parlor and decided to organize. I was delegated to call on Sister Eliza R. Snow and ask her to

write for us a Constitution and By-laws, and submit them to President Joseph Smith prior to our next Thursday's meeting. She cheerfully responded and when she read them to him he replied that the Constitution and By-laws were the best he had ever seen. "But," he said, "this is not what you want. Tell the sisters their offering is accepted of the Lord, and he has something better for them than a written Constitution. I invite them all to meet with me and a few of the brethren in the Masonic Hall over my store next Thursday afternoon, and I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood." He further said, "The Church was never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized." He wished to have Sister Emma Smith elected to preside in fulfillment of the revelation which called her an Elect Lady.

In the wanderings and persecutions of the Church I have participated, and in the blessings, endowments, and holy anointings and precious promises that I have received. To sorrow I have not been a stranger; but I only write this short sketch to instruct and happify, so I will skip to Salt Lake City, September, 1851, with my two sons, Hiram and Oliver, my widowed mother, Lydia Dibble Granger, Anna Robbins, a girl that lived with me nine years and married my youngest brother, and my two brothers, Lafayette and Farley B. Granger. My husband was detained in New York City, and had become financially much embarrassed. The next year he came to me financially ruined and broken in health.

I engaged in school teaching in the 14th Ward to sustain and educate my family. My salary was only $25.00 per month, but that was much to us at that time.

April 1st, 1854, my youngest son was born. I discontinued school three months, then opened school in my home. I taught eight years.

I should have remarked that on arriving here I sold our fit out (team, etc.) for a comfortable little home; this I have always considered providential. The Indian agent gave me a nine years old wild Indian girl, whom I educated and raised. She died at nineteen. I named her Kate.

My mother, who had lived with me 20 years, died in 1861, aged 73.

My husband was drowned March 14, 1863, in the Pacific Ocean by the wreck of the steamer Ida Hancock, off the coast of San Pedro, on his way to the Sandwich Islands; aged 62.

I was elected President of the 17th Ward Relief Society, February 7th, 1857.

In December, 1865, a little girl was brought to me whom I adopted.

November 13, 1868, a silver trowel and mallet were furnished me and, assisted by a master mason and surrounded by an assemblage of people, I had the honor of laying the corner stone of the first Relief Society [b]uilding erected in this dispensation.

SARAH M. KIMBALL

Phelps Centennial

Address by Mrs. S. M. Kimball, of Salt Lake City, Utah

Kindred Friends and Fellow Citizens.

On this centennial occasion, we assemble with hearts throbbing with sympathy, to honor the memory of our ancestors, the pioneers of Phelps, and the defenders of our national flag.

As I tread this, to me, sacred soil, I gaze in retrospect on scenes of childhood. I see my great-grandfather, Elisha Granger, he leans upon his staff, bowed with the weight of many years of earthly pilgrimage. He died in the home of my grandfather, Pierce Granger.

I remember the home with its large kitchen fire-place, with back-log and fore-stick, and before the fire suspended a revolving sparerib of savory smell. I remember the crane with its S shaped hooks, on which we hung the tea-kettle and iron pot, and on the coals in the spacious chimney corner bake-kettle and skillet were preparing their contributions for table supplies. Of the persons present, I only remember the face of my grandfather. My last remembrance of him is, in a log school house, in Sodus, worshiping at the cross of Christ, and trying to lead sinners to repentance.

Earlier than my day, an event transpired of which I am requested to speak. "Nature's forces, God's voice is ever prompting progressive souls to march forward and occupy new fields which lead on to physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual achievement. One progressive step ever paves the way for another."

Adam, after the garden was prepared and beautified, sent a dispatch for Eve, she came, and amid sorrow and gladness they planted their posterity on earth's virgin soil.

"The branches ran over the wall." Our forefathers in frail barks traversed the mighty deep, and if our foremothers did not accompany them, they followed, to this, to them, new world, they planted colonies amid great difficulties on New England's shore.

Some of New England's sons, among them my grandfather, Pierce Granger, impelled by the same progressive spirit, pressed their way onward through what was then the western wilds, to what is now proudly termed the Empire State.

As the pioneer fathers made their uncertain and many times perilous way, they thoughtfully and carefully marked the trees that their track might be followed. I am told that after the rough log cabin had been constructed, my grandfather [grandmother?], after the fashion of mother Eve, left the home of rest and plenty, to follow her earthly lord through the dark shadowed woodland. Hills, rocks and rivers obstructed the unbroken pathway. Poisonous serpents and ferocious beasts added terror to the journey, as the slow ox-team made its laborious way by the sunlight. But the darker picture is the night scene. The weary oxen must be unyoked from the wood-shod sledge, and as the darkness gathers around and the gloom deepens, the pilgrim woman tries to regulate the beatings of her agitated heart. The wolves begin to howl, the woman in the anguish of her loneliness, and with a sense of the

perilous condition, prays that the God of love and power, will protect her and hers. The howling wolves seem to be continually increasing in numbers and to come nearer and more near, none but the pioneers realize the tedious lingering hours of such experiences, nor yet the heartfelt insense [sic] of praise that ascends as the daylight appears.

The pioneer woman of Phelps, trusting in God, and such skill as the untutored Aborigines could afford, met the responsibilities of motherhood and made it possible that you and I might have existence in these earthly tabernacles. The record of such heroism is preserved in the archives of heaven. The true pioneer woman has an intuitive sense of the future, and she uncomplainingly endures such hardships, privations and self-denials, as her pathway may bring to her. She says, "Let the result of my pilgrimage redown to the good of posterity, and to thee, father and mother, God, be the glory given."

"In the heavens are parents single,
No, the thought makes reason stare,
Truth is reason, truth eternal
Tells me I've a mother there."

Of the memorial monument, precious, because of the affection which prompted its erection. The pioneers take special note, and the account will be found on the credit side of the great ledger.

The picture presented by the grand procession is sublime and awe inspiring.

As the hearts of the children are this day turned lovingly to the parents, so the hearts of the parents are lovingly turned to the children, in their spirit bodies they are present with us, and the smile of their approbation gladdens our hearts.

The remembrance of this centennial celebration, its greetings and reminiscences will be recalled by us, and the report will be remembered by our children for ages to come.

We can best honor the memory of our pioneer progenitors, by exploring and opening further fields of usefulness, and being diligent in the cultivation thereof.

Let us ever remember that our eternal interests are identified with those that have gone before, and that they cannot be made perfect without us, neither can we be made perfect without them. In closing, we bless the memory of our pioneer fathers and mothers, and ask the citizens of beloved Phelps to accept grateful thanks.

June 17, 1889.

Greeting

Fellow Suffragists of Utah:

In this first month of the new year I take pleasure in extending to you kindest greeting and sympathy in your labors for the re-enfranchisement of the women of Utah and for the enfranchisement of all intelligent women of every land and clime.

Education and agitation are our best weapons of warfare. We can best educate through organization; therefore the necessity of thorough organization and active interest in the different localities. Believing that the best results follow the deliberations of men and women, we favor the admission of men as members of the association.

Interest is awakened, and the best good seems to follow a systematic course of political study, commencing with the Constitution of the United States, followed by the study of municipal, county, territorial, state and national government.

Just and equitable government is essential to happy homes and refined society. We are steadily approaching the looked for time when women will, as they should, have a voice in the political conditions that so vitally effect them and theirs.

It [is] an important part of woman's work to help to establish purity in politics and to establish an equal code for men and women. Let the good work of the past year encourage us to further effort and perseverance. "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

S.M. KIMBALL,
Pres. Woman's Suffrage Association of Utah.
Jan. 15 ,1890.

Reply to "A Man's Advice About Woman Suffrage."

MR. D.P. FELT,

DEAR SIR:

My attention has been called to your "opinion of `Woman Suffrage'" published in the WOMAN'S EXPONENT of November 15th. Suffragists do not recognize what you are pleased to call "Horrid men." Hence you have no fear of being "laughed at," true suffragists love all men and all women, and labor as best they can, with the sickly tools they are allowed to use for the educational uplifting of humanity.

Women as a rule have listened to the asserting voice of men and have been led by their precepts too long. It has slowly dawned upon woman's understanding that man as a ruler is weak; in many respects very weak and unreliable, (remember we love him still,) and she has been compelled for the good of the great family to explore new paths leading to broader fields of helpfulness. Women will make mistakes, and profit by them, all along the unbroken pathway, but never so fatally disastrous mistakes as men have made while holding exclusive power.

You assert that suffrage advocates take a wrong shoot, start out on leaves, or small branches, they must change tactics, etc., this reminds me of early Colonial history. Did our forefathers when they struck for freedom, ask their usurping oppressors what shoot they should take, what tactics they should adopt? You complain that your suffrage friends turn from you "disgruntled" I think they turn pityingly.

You say in substance suffragists will amount to nothing until they lay foundations on which it will take, at least two generations to build a structure, that will stand the storms of ridicule, that today beat upon our frail house, and cause either depression or the entire crash of the structure.

The sure foundations of the suffrage cause were deeply and permanently laid on the 17th of March 1842, and the structure is far advanced. It is too *stately* and strong to be even depressed by any lingering effort with the weak weapon ridicule.

Your advice to suffragists, to turn their attention to the education of their girls is appreciated. But we have our own ideas about the nature of their graduating papers, the routine must contain lessons in moral courage, energy of purpose, and power of execution; these must be taught as among the womanly graces essential to success in life.

You say do not teach them to be burly policemen. My dear Sir, if the members of the police force are burly, there is a crying wrong to be righted, my daughter or yours may be placed in circumstances where they are liable to arrest, are we willing that a coarse ungentlemanly man should have this daughter, or sister in charge? This is one of the conditions in which the policeman should not be without the policewoman.

Again the police force have access to dens of infamy where husbands, brothers, and sons resort, you would have woman wear the long nights her health and her hope away in unavailing anguish of soul and have written on her tomb stone "*died of heart failure.*" I would teach my daughter to cultivate the womanly courage

to accompany the police to the den of vice and help to rescue the inmates. It is to be hoped that Provo has no need of women police, I sorrowingly write that at the present time Salt Lake City has great need of women police, Boston, Chicago and other cities have police matrons. Suffragists are next told not to teach their daughters that they should sit on a jury, we like to be consistently obedient by conscientiously we have to tell our daughters that such counsel comes from such as have eyes open to popular prejudice, and closed to underlying principle. Women jurists in Wyoming and in Kansas have made creditable records. No woman ever was or ever will be tried by a jury of her peers when the jury is composed exclusively of men, (consistency is a jewel); if there are any improper jury laws they must be amended. Any man suitable to sit in judgment on a jury trial, will be as much a gentlemen in a jury-box, or a jury-room, as in a theatre box or a ball room. Thirdly; "we must not say it is our right to sit on the Judges bench."

Why not? Deborah judged Israel forty years and Israel was blessed with a peaceful reign, our nearer neighbor Esther Morris occupied the judge's bench creditably in Wyoming Territory; she is reputed to have passed just judgment in all cases tried before her; she passed the sad ordeal of sentencing a man to the gallows, with this experience, she was no less the lovable and loving wife, mother and grandmother, nor the less discreet and hospitable keeper of the home. When she retired from the bench she was crowned with the appellation of *a just Judge*. At the ratification of the admission of Wyoming as a State with equal suffrage, Ex Judge Morris, aged and feeble, was wrapped in the National flag and brought to the front to receive congratulations and words of commendation from the Governor and other officials of the State, which were echoed by the multitude.

Our daughters and sons are taught to revere the names and deeds of such women, and hand them down to posterity with honor.

Lastly; we are told that woman's true position is that of mother. Suffragists esteem motherhood under proper conditions as woman's crowning glory, but for *millions* these conditions are not available. Many thousands are looking for room to earn their bread and apparel, and asking custom to allow them to choose their husbands, control their persons, and participate with their kinsmen in their highest aspirations for the good of the home, the church, the state, and for humanity. Such women will be help meets, (suitable) for noble men, they will earn the sympathy, confidence and ever abiding love of their husbands, brothers, and sons, and the respect of the good and true as far as their sphere (influence) extends. Their noble, emancipated, daughters will rise up and call them blessed. Life's environments will thus become purer and far more harmonious.

SARAH M. KIMBALL.
Salt Lake City, Nov. 30, 1891.

Our Sixth Sense, or The Sense of Spiritual Understanding

[Read at the Triennial Council of Women in Washington February 21, 1895]

"Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love,
In these cold hearts of ours."

It is proper on occasions like this, to consider such topics as shall be of the highest benefit to womankind; and to my mind, it is fitting to discuss here, that capacity of mind in which woman is pre-eminently fitted to excel. The contemplation of the sense of spiritual understanding first gives me a sense of my littleness and inability, then encourages me in the attempt to express a few thoughts on this absorbing theme.

This faculty, like our physical sense, is susceptible to cultivation. Its possibilities are limitless; it is the cause least understood; it is the divine of our nature; it brings to our understanding things not seen with the natural eye, or discerned by mortal mind; it extends our correspondences. With the eyes and senses of our physical self, we are in correspondence with our physical surroundings, with our spiritual eyes and senses awakened and cultivated, we come into communion with infinitude.

The sixth sense links mortal with immortal existence; it testifies in unmistakable language of the immortality of the soul. It educates, exalts, and refines those that heed its whisperings, and follow its guiding influence. This sense leads to blissful heights of superior understanding; teaches the secrets of ever-existent life; our relationship to the past, present, and future, and brings us into harmony with the infinite fountain of life and intelligence. It illumines the soul that cultivates it; purifies thoughts and actions; enlarges the sphere of comprehension, and exalts the aspirations. Its continued exercise brings its possessor nearer and nearer to the throne of the Almighty.

Those who answer the whisperings of this sense, are sympathetically drawn toward each other, as exemplified in the Religious Congress held in Chicago in 1893, where religious pilgrims and would-be reformers from all lands, and of all creeds, met and harmonized in a bond of love. This was notably true of the Woman's Department of the Memorable Congress.

The light of this sense has been foreshadowed in various ages of the world's history. In the nineteenth century, the search-light of Religion, Philosophy, and Science, have united in exploring an untrodden pathway toward the haven of light which is inextinguishable.

The legitimate exercise of spiritual power obtained through the operations of this sense, puts the individual in possession of keys of knowledge, and clothes him with additional responsibility relating to the enlightenment and elevation of the human family.

They that seek, by faith and

earnest prayer, find the light that leads to the golden gate. They that knock with study and faith's assurance, have the narrow way opened to them, and are received into communion with the Infinite Father and Mother, are permitted to enter hallowed mansions to attend the school of the Prophets, and, by advancing steps to reach the school of the Gods, where they learn the processes by which worlds are organized, by the combining of eternal, intelligent, obedient elements; the uses for which worlds are called into existence; the manner in which they are controlled, and the laws of progression by which all beings and animate things are perfected, and glorified in their respective spheres.

When through our spiritual nature we are in communion with God, we are drawing nearer and nearer to each other, and our words and works will blend more and more harmoniously, until earth's dutiful children, recognizing universal spiritual kinship, hail the peaceful millennial dawn, and participate in the triumphant reign of our God and His Christ.

EXPECTATION

Of the advanced thinkers and diligent workers who compose the Woman's Triennial Council much is expected. Your labors of preparation have been arduous; the whisperings of this sense have disarmed opposition, and brought you to a large measure of victory. The though wave of many a prayer is wafted to you as inspiration, and in reciprocal order the highest expression of your combined wisdom must radiate and inspire receptive souls in all the world, stimulating them to higher hopes, and stronger activities in the cause of more enlightened civilization, and a more perfect understanding of divine science, as revealed through our Sixth Sense, or the sense of spiritual understanding.

In closing, the writer, in loving sympathy, asks that increased spiritual light may illume the pathway of the various lines of good work represented in the Triennial Council.

SARAH M. KIMBALL

Salt Lake City, Utah
Feb. 1895

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