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IMPROVEMENT ERA.

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[The transcriber bypassed the article on the History of the Prophet Joseph by his mother, Lucy Smith, to get to the lesser-known Ezra Thompson Clark's Testimony and Instructions.]

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TESTIMONY AND INSTRUCTIONS.

BY EZRA T. CLARK.

[The late Ezra T. Clark, whose testimony to his family and to the world is herewith presented, was a man of splendid character. He was one among those strong personalities in the ranks of the pioneers of Utah who seemed to be especially endowed with strength and faith to found commonwealths and redeem deserts. Faithful to his convictions, true to his religion, honest and upright, progressive and intelligent, his words possess great significance and weight. Elder Clark was born in Lawrence, Illinois, November 24, 1823, and died in Farmington, Davis County, Utah, October 17, 1901. With his wife and two children, he came to Utah in 1848, locating the year following in Farmington where he resided the remainder of his days. His possessions were hauled in an ox wagon over the plains, but, through industry and thrift and his natural abilities as a financier, he accumulated a competency, besides providing for his large family. He filled a mission to England in 1856, returning two years later when all the missionaries were called home owing to the Johnston army trouble. Later, he filled several missions in the United States. He was greatly interested in education, and among the last acts of his life was the donation of one thousand dollars to the Latter-day Saints' University, Salt Lake City, for the founding of "the Clark Library of Natural Science." As he felt that his days were about to end, he called his family about him, and on July 24, 1901, organized the Clark family association, when the testimony and instructions which follow were given. The ERA is indebted to Apostle Abraham 0. Woodruff for calling attention to the merits of the document, and Elder Amasa L. Clark for permission to use it. We believe every Latter-day Saint will be entertained, interested, and instructed in its perusal. —EDITORS.]

To my Wives and Children:

Feeling that I shall not enjoy the privilege of addressing you

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in a united capacity many more times during my earthly sojourn I am impelled by a husband's and -a father's love to offer you my final and parting instructions. I bear you this my testimony:

I. Before I left Nauvoo, I heard the Prophet Joseph

say he would give the Saints a key whereby they would never be led away or deceived, and that was: the Lord would never suffer the majority of this people to be led away or deceived by imposters, nor would he allow the records of this Church to fall into the hands of the enemy. I heard Joseph say this, and I also heard him say that he would roll the burden of the Apostleship upon the quorum of the Twelve. I heard Joseph preach many times; heard him, in the last sermon he ever delivered, bear testimony to the truth of the work that God had called him to; also that the Lord had never suffer him to be slain by his enemies, because his work had not been done, until a short time ago. He had now laid the foundation of this work, and rolled the burden of the priesthood upon the Twelve; and, having given them their washings and anointings, they would now bear off this work triumphantly, and it would roll on faster than ever before; and, if the Lord was willing to accept of him, he was willing to go.

This he spoke to the people. I was one who heard his voice, and know that he spoke like an angel from heaven. I never heard him speak with more power than then, and I heard him many times. I was satisfied. I knew him to be a prophet of God. I had heard him prophesy many times, and had seen his prophecies fulfilled, and had also shaken hands with him, and he had blessed me, and I had felt the influence and power of the Lord upon him and upon me, and I have never forgotten that blessing from that day to this, and I never shall. Two days later the Prophet was martyred, and two or three weeks later, when the saints held a conference, and Brigham Young arose as leader of the Church, I want to bear record that he spoke as Joseph used to speak; to all appearances, the same voice, the same gestures, the same stature. I bear this record to all the world, to my children and to my children's children, and also bear record that this work is God's work, and that it will roll on as it has done from that day to this.

I have never turned my face away, and have always had delight in keeping the counsel of His servants in every particular.

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I have had many privations, and many trying scenes traveling on the plains and on the desert, and I know that those men who have stood at the head of His Church are men of God, and also the men who now stand at the head, and they will bear off this work triumphantly, and I say to my children and to my grandchildren, if they will do right and keep the commandments of God, no good thing shall be withheld from them, and they shall have a testimony that God set up this work, and it will roll forth, and those who help it will stand, and those who fight against it will fall and crumble with the wicked.

I bear this testimony, and leave it for the benefit of tny children and my children's children, for I realize I have but a short time to live upon this earth. I have passed my seventy-seventh year, and it has been a pleasure to me to be associated during that time with the Prophet and apostles and those whom I know were men holding the holy Melchizedek Priesthood. I bear this testimony, and wish it written that my children and my children's children may know that I have finished my work, and bear this testimony before them, and all the world, in ,the name of the Lord Jesus, even so. Amen.

II. In order that the unity which has prevailed in my family, and the spirit of brotherly and sisterly love may endure, I desire that a family organization may be effected and made perpetual; that a meeting of my family and as many of my descendants as can possibly do so, be held here once a year for the purpose of maintaining the interest of the family and for keeping a family register and for mutual aid and encouragement.

In order that my wishes may be more fully understood, and the responsibility of carrying them out placed upon my family in such a manner as to leave no doubt or misapprehension in the minds of my wives or children and their families, I desire that the following organization shall be effected.

First—I desire that the following shall constitute an executive committee, Joseph S. Clark, Edward B. Clark and Amasa L. Clark, whose duty it shay be to act as arbitrators in all differences or disputes that may arise among members of my family; that the said committee by its chairman shall fix the dates for annual re-

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unions and such other meetings as he may think proper and desirable.

Second-I appoint as chairman, my son Joseph S. Clark, and I place in his hands the sum of $-- to be used as a genealogical fund and for such other purposes as the executive committee shall, in their judgment, deem necessary in making effectual these my final instructions to my family.

Third-I appoint hereby, Susy D. Clark [Susan Duncan Clark] as family secretary and registrar, and Horace W. Clark as assistant, whose duty it shall be to keep in order the family record and collect all items of family biographies, and such history as shall be thought desirable for such records.

Fourth-In case of the death or incapacity of any one of the executive committee to act, the other two may appoint a successor, and the executive committee is hereby authorized, in case of death or incapacity to act, to appoint a successor.

Fifth-I desire that when the family meet in their annual reunion that the executive committee shall hold special meetings for the purpose of hearing questions that may arise, and giving assistance by way of counsel and advice to members of the family who may be laboring under difficulties, or may be in any way at variance with any member of this organization.

Sixth-I desire that the membership of this organization shall consist of my wives, my sons and daughters, their wives and husbands and their descendants.

I am impressed in this the evening of life, to admonish my family of the importance of devoting some measure of their time to temple work, and it is my wish that a genealogical record be prepared, to include as many of my ancestors as it is possible to get information about; and when this record shall have been compiled, it is my most earnest wish that I may have, as often as possible, a representative in one of the temples of my Heavenly Father, to perform work for the dead.

If I could behold. the spirit of union and mutual love and support in the conduct of my family as I now look upon their future lives, I should feel that great satisfaction and pleasure that I have always enjoyed in the happiness that comes from family union; I desire to urge the mothers to teach their children to attend their

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primaries, Sunday schools and meetings, and to observe the law of obedience, and of baptism at the age of eight years; that they may also teach the Word of Wisdom, to pay their tithes and offerings, and to honor the Priesthood; and I promise the mothers that if they will do this, in the sincerity of their hearts, they will bring forth noble sons and daughters to bear off this work, and it will be a great honor to them and the family at large, and they will live long upon the earth to inherit it, and no power of evil shall prevail against them; and I seal these blessings upon them by power of the holy Melchizedek Priesthood.

I admonish those who are strong to be thoughtful of and helpful to those who are weaker; and I trust that it will never occur to any member of my family that any one of them shall ever be justified in taking any undue advantage of another. I warn my family against any spirit of dissension, and commend to them the spirit of fairness, justice and impartiality towards one another. I plead for the weak, because the strong will take care of them-

selves; and those who cherish the memory of their father, and honor the name he has given them in life, will feel the responsibility that they are under, and all the members of this organization should protect one another's good name, and avoid any unseemly gossip; be charitable, helpful, patient, kind and loving towards one another, and God will sustain you and your families as you have sustained me and mine.

While it has been my privilege, because of the natural endowments with which God has clothed me, to accumulate something of this world's goods, I would not have my family suppose that I esteem money as I esteem honor, virtue, and, above all things, fidelity to the Church of Christ; and I trust that no one of my family will ever seek and appreciate the treasures of this world above the treasures that come from an honorable and God-fearing life devoted to religious duties, and the obligations which men owe to one another and to their God.

I have accumulated since my earliest settlement in Farmington, as much property as I reasonably could along the street on which a number of my family are now living, and I desire, so far as my family can, consistent with their best interests, that they maintain their real estate, that they may be helpful to one another;

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and that the homes of my family here may always be a gathering place for those who may be scattered in different parts of this and adjoining states, and I especially commend the spirit of hospitality to my children.

These parting instructions have been the burden of my thought during the closing days of my career among you, and it is my wish that at every family gathering these my parting words be read before the assemblage of this family organization.