

thers must fall unfulfilled. Elders Ammon M. Tenney and — Christopher- sen accompanied me on my visit to these villages. Brother Tenney, three years previous, had visited the inhabitants of these villages, and had formed an acquaintance with them and assisted in baptizing one hundred and fifteen of the Zunis.

I feel to thank the Lord that I have lived to see this day and time; that I have lived to see the Fiftieth Anniversary of the history of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and brethren and sisters, whatever little time we have to spend let us spend it in laying aside iniquity, let us labor to build up the kingdom of God. Our position after death will depend upon the little time that we spend here in the flesh, and when I consider—when I can get enough of the Spirit of the Lord to guide my mind to comprehend the blessings of life and salvation—when I consider the great difference between being in the kingdom of God and out of it—I think it will pay any man or woman to keep the commandments of God. Blessed is that people whose God is the Lord. The Latter-day Saints profess to make our Heavenly Father their God.

I do not wish to detain my brethren and sisters any longer this morning. I rejoice again to see you, and again to walk the streets of Salt Lake City. And I hope while we are together in this Conference the Spirit of God may be with us, that our hearts may be enlightened, our minds opened to comprehend our duties, and that we will be inspired to teach the Saints of God in the path of righteousness and truth, which is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER MOSES THATCHER.

I have been very much edified with the remarks to which we have listened. I feel that we are a blessed people in being privileged to meet and worship God under so favorable circumstances; and while listening to the remarks of my brethren it has been very apparent to my mind that God's kingdom is increasing, that the stakes of Zion are being extended and her cords lengthened. We are engaged in the work of God, our Heavenly Father. We are, as a people, in the enjoyment of privileges that are very great; indeed, we live in that day and age of the world to which the prophets anciently looked with joy and rejoicing. God's kingdom is being built up, never again to be thrown down nor given to another people. Whatever may be the reflections of the people of the world in regard to the Latter-day Saints, there is one fact that is apparent to them, and that is that we are growing, that we are increasing in numbers, that while our mission is "peace on earth and good will to men," the powers of God are being made manifest, and the principles of the Gospel are being preached to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

We have been seeking for years to extend this knowledge to the Lamanites, to the remnants of the House of Israel, to the fruit of the loins of Jacob through Joseph, but until recently it has been apparent to us that their hearts have not been opened to receive the testimony which is contained in the Book of Mormon.

I have listened with much pleasure to the remarks of Elder Woodruff which we have heard this morning, in regard to the experience he has had in laboring among the people of Arizona and New Mexico, and it might be of

some interest to the Latter-day Saints to have a short sketch of my experience during the time I have been absent. I have visited the capital of the Republic of Mexico for the purpose of preaching the gospel to the people there. We were courteously received, kindly treated, had the Spirit of God to be with us and the Lord to be our Friend; and notwithstanding the reports that have been circulated through the medium of the press, we feel that a good work, a great work, will be accomplished in the Republic of Mexico. More than one-half of the entire population are of the pure Indian stock, numbering, I believe, a little in excess of five millions. They are different in many respects from the Indians who roam in these mountain regions, having at no time in their history, so far as we can trace it, been so steeped in ignorance, slothfulness and destitution as have been the Indians in this country. At the time they were subjugated by the Spaniards under Cortez, commencing in the year 1520, they were to some extent an enlightened race of people. They had a fair knowledge of the arts and sciences, and were particularly well versed in architecture; while their notation of time was quite equal to that of any nation then living. Their traditional history, as well as their written history, is very interesting, and had it not been for the disposition—doubtless through ignorance—of the Catholic priests who followed up the conquest, we might have had knowledge that would now be valuable to the world. But as Cortez bore down heavily upon the thirty millions of people who then lived in what was called Mexico proper, so the priests who followed his camp bore heavily upon their works of art, and particularly in the destruction of their libraries, which were burned in great heaps, while the poor Indians gathered round, and, gazing upon the destruction of their treasures, wept like children. But there has been enough preserved to bring forth remarkable historical evidence in confirmation of the truths contained in the Book of Mormon.

There are many interesting things connected with these historical works that I might mention if I had time to do so, but at present I will simply say that their history clearly portrays that they had a full knowledge of the creation of the earth, of the garden of Eden, the deluge, the ark, the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and their construction of eight boats in which to cross the great waters. They also had a knowledge of the birth, ministry and crucifixion of the Savior, and a person answering the description of the Son of Man was well known in their midst. He taught them the arts of peace, and all those higher elements of learning which the Aztecs were found in possession of at the time of the conquest. We find that preceding the conquest they were highly educated, highly instructed in the arts and in some of the sciences, and their forefathers had what was called a sacred book. An aged Indian, when asked in reference to this sacred book by one of the early Catholic priests, replied that it contained to some extent the knowledge that they, the priests, sought to teach them; and when asked where that book was, the Indian replied that they had a tradition which had come down from generation to generation that it was buried in the earth. But I do not wish to take up time this morning upon these points, but desire to speak of the Indians as we find them now. They are the laborers of Mexico. Where there are railroads constructed, they construct them. Where there are cities built, they build them. They are an industrious class of people, many of them being skillful artisans

and mechanics. They are docile, slow to resent an injury, but will remember an act of injustice for a long time. They are true to their promises, quite different in this respect from many who claim a higher civilization. If you can secure their word and their friendship they will be true to you. It is very remarkable to notice in the general cast of their features the resemblance to the Jewish race, even more striking than we find it here among our Indians; and when crossed with the white or Spanish race, you would almost in every instance take them to be Jews. Thus, when I first arrived in the city of Mexico I observed to a gentleman, "You have a great many Jews here." "No," said he, "they are not Jews, they are Mexicans." They are a very polite people. The common Indian laborer on the street is as polite as almost any one you meet in this country. As to the educated class—such as congressmen, judges, and members of the Cabinet, you invariably find them well informed. Most of them have traveled extensively, and many of them speak German, French and English, as well as Spanish. The educated portion of the Mexicans are not ignorant with reference to the history of the Latter-day Saints. They have traced them up from the day of the organization of the church. They are familiar with our wanderings, our drivings, and our persecutions. They are also familiar with the indomitable courage which has been exhibited by the Latter-day Saints in redeeming this barren waste, and as a prominent Mexican gentleman expressed himself to me—"Why," said he, "you Mormon people have a poor country, and yet you seem to prosper, while we have a very rich country, but as a whole a very poor people." This I have no doubt is mainly attributable to the nature of the climate. For it has been observed that where God has done much for man, man does very little for himself. I believe this is the case to some extent in Mexico. The climate at the capital does not, it is said, vary more than 10° the year round. Thus they have there what you might call perpetual spring. The result is that the people lack enterprise, and therefore it would be a delight to the leading men of Mexico if a population composed of the Anglo-Saxon race could be induced to locate themselves in that country, in order to develop its latent resources, because the undeveloped resources of Mexico are very great. The mines are not only numerous, but are rich. The land is also very productive, and is capable of growing anything you can name that can be produced in any other part of the world. We have no climate here to be compared with that of the Gulf Coasts of Mexico. I was down there on the 14th of December; the heat was certainly not comfortable; indeed, it was so intense that we felt we must at once change our clothing and assume lighter garments. But, on leaving the city of Vera Cruz about eleven o'clock in the evening, and in passing up to the tablelands, we found that in a few hours we required heavy overcoats in order to keep us comfortable. The valley of Mexico proper is 7400 feet above the level of the sea. Thus you can see the altitude is much greater than ours.

Referring to our missionary experience there, I will say, when the article appeared in the New York Sun stating that we had gone to Mexico to arrange with the Mexican Government officials for the purchase of land for the colonization of our people, of course it brought to us a great many inquiries, and while we had before desired that we might become acquainted with leading

men and government officials, we had not up to that date had the privilege of doing so. But after the publication of this article, which was copied into the leading journals of the City of Mexico, we then had numerous callers, many having valuable tracts of land to sell, in which, as Colonel Sellers would say, "there's millions in it." Indeed, one man was anxious that we might secure twenty million acres; another, that we might secure an entire State; and they exhibited a good deal of anxiety that we might colonize in the Republic. But I told them we had no such mission, and that indeed if we had come to buy we had not yet seen sufficient of the country or people; adding that our mission was to preach, and to publish the word of the Lord to the people. Through the politeness of some of these gentlemen, we became acquainted with many influential officials and men of eminence, whose courtesy and kindness we shall not soon forget.

We found on inquiry that the Mexican Constitution was much the same as our own; in some respects a little more liberal. It guarantees freedom of the press, of speech, and full religious toleration. It recognizes churches as no portion of the governmental power; while all are free to preach in their houses of worship, they are not free to perform religious ceremonies in the open streets, highways, or market places. The act prohibiting any manifestation of religious worship on the public highways and streets was caused to be passed by the late President, Juarez—who was a pure-blooded Indian, there being not a drop of white blood in his veins. He was a great statesman and a thorough soldier. His name will pass down into history as being a great benefactor of his race and people. He was a liberal-minded man, whose heart beat for the highest human liberty. Being a foe to tyranny in every form, he traced the sufferings of Mexico very clearly, and comprehended that they were mainly traceable to the influence which the clergy exercised over the minds of the people. From this thralldom he labored with all his might to free his race, and sought to place them upon the solid basis of civil and religious liberty. Now the churches are entirely free to perform their ordinances within the walls of their buildings; but there was a time when, if a Catholic priest should happen to be moving along the street in his robes, the people were required to bow down. It was the oppression and not the rights of religious powers that Juarez sought to crush, and he succeeded. The second Judge of the Supreme Court of the Republic, who was for a number of years the leading man in the House of Representatives, predicted about ten years ago that the clergy in that land must be tolerant, and follow in the future, better than they had done in the past, the examples of the lowly Nazarene, or they would have to march out of Mexico by thousands. That prediction—although it may not have been looked upon as such at the time—was noticed by some eminent writers, and has been literally fulfilled. The clergy have, as I have been informed, had to leave in great numbers. Nunneries have been abolished, and churches have been sold by hundreds, so that in the space of a few years \$200,000,000 have been confiscated in this way. God has moved in the midst of the nation, and I believe a great work will be performed among the remnants of the House of Israel in that land. The power of God in the manifestation of their faith is greater perhaps than you will find among some of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is true, they have been under bondage for nearly

400 years. They may see the power of God made manifest to-day, in the healing of their infirmities, and to-morrow forget the blessings of the Lord. But in that respect wherein are they different from the children of Israel? Did they not witness the power of God in the separation of the waters of the Red Sea, and in various other ways? Did they not hear the voice of the Lord, and yet longed for the leeks and onions, and threatened to do evil to their leader, Moses?

In this regard the Mexican people are much the same. They have ideas, ways and manners, peculiar to themselves. They are in their expressions very kind, and wherever we met influential men—men connected with the Government of Mexico—we met with uniform kindness. Our reception was warm and genuine, and we felt to bless such people. We believe that the Lord will yet open up the way by which thousands and hundreds of thousands will receive a knowledge of the truth. We have baptized some twenty in that land, and have a little branch already formed, and the manifestations of the power of God among them are not wanting. The second member baptized into the branch is an Indian. It is very clear that he is of the House of Israel. After he was ordained to the office of an Elder, he began to read, to some extent, our works. He was very much interested in the Book of Mormon, so far as it is published in the Spanish language, and he has full faith in the ordinances of the Gospel. One day a woman was found in the street suffering under the influence of an evil spirit, being sadly deranged. The police were seeking to allay her feelings and quiet her, while a great crowd was attracted by the occurrence. The Indian happened to be there at the time, and, perceiving what was the matter, made his way through the crowd to the woman, and in the name of Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, whereupon she was quieted, and, to the astonishment of the people, walked away without uttering another word.

Before closing my remarks it might be somewhat interesting to the congregation to learn the cause which led to sending the Elders to the city of Mexico. I will tell you briefly how it occurred. There is a Dr. Rhodacanaty, who is, I believe, a Greek on the side of his father and a Mexican on the side of his mother. He had been engaged in a socialistic work, having for its object the benefitting of the poorer classes—seeking to organize a system, in some respects like our co-operative system here, for the intelligent direction of labor, and, having used his influence in this direction for a short time, he became perplexed, and his mind seemed to close down, so that he could not see how to make further progress. He therefore felt to pray to the Lord to give him wisdom to proceed. During the night he dreamed that a person came and presented to him a book, pressing it emphatically upon his forehead. On the following day, while teaching his class in the college, wherein he was Greek Professor, a little boy entered and asked him to buy a book. "No," said he to the boy, "I do not want your book." "But," says the boy, "you do want this book, and it is only a riel" (twelve and a half cents). He told the boy again that he did not want the book, but the boy still insisted that he did, and finally he took it. When he came to read the book, it proved to be that part of the Book of Mormon which has been translated into the Spanish language. From this time he received light daily, and finally communicated with Presi-

dent Taylor, and the result was that the Elders were sent and the mission was opened in Mexico.

I will relate another circumstance to show you how the wisdom of the Lord is greater than that of man. We became acquainted with Professor Sherwin, an American from the State of Iowa, who was also teaching in the Presbyterian College, and who frequently visited us at our rooms. When we had prepared the "Voice of Warning" in manuscript for publication he desired that the Presbyterians should have a chance to bid for the printing of it. Elder Stewart told him that they would not print the work. "Why," said he, "they surely will not carry prejudice into business matters." "Well," replied Brother S., "to please you we will give them a chance to bid on the work, but I am satisfied that they will absolutely refuse to publish anything about 'Mormonism.'" He went to the printing establishment and offered the work. The young men who had charge of the printing office readily assented to bid upon the work, and asked until the next evening, in order that they might bid intelligently. In the meantime they submitted the matter to the head of the Presbyterian and other churches, (for there they work together—Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists), and when the matter was submitted to the Bishop, he scouted the very idea, and said we had not money enough to hire them to print our works. The young men were astonished, and desired to see us in reference to such prejudice. They came and we talked with them, saying that it was because of the ignorance of the world in reference to us and the principles we advocated, that caused much of the prejudice which existed in the minds of many who neither knew us nor the object of our mission. We pointed out to them different texts of Scripture, and read from the Bible for some length of time. After we had talked with them an hour or two they desired us to pray with them, to which we readily assented. Closing the door of our room, we gave these two young men a chance to pray; and they did so, asking the Lord, if they had been deceived all the days of their life, to manifest it and to impart to them a testimony as to whether we spoke by the power of the Holy Ghost or by the wisdom of man, and that they might know by revelation for themselves that Jesus was the Christ. We endorsed their prayer, and prayed the Almighty most earnestly that they might have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand the truth which we sought to impart. The last we heard of these two young men was that they were preaching "Mormonism," and were in a fair way to convert themselves if not others.

As another instance of the hatred shown towards the "Mormons," I might mention that there was a young friend who crossed the Gulf of Mexico with us, being in company with the nephew of the American Minister, Mr. Foster, and who remained in Mexico with us several weeks. This young friend of ours met a Methodist Minister one day in the streets of Mexico, and happened to mention that there were "Mormon" missionaries in the city. "Oh, yes," said the devout Minister, "and I would to God that the American Government would drive all the "Mormons" into the bottom of the sea." I simply mention these matters to show how ungenerous and uncharitable are the feelings of many religious denominations, or the members thereof, towards us as a people. They may never have known a "Mormon," they may never have met one; they certainly have received no unkindness at the hands of our people, and they

have never placed themselves in a position to receive the courtesies of the people. I believe that as a general thing where men, influential, intelligent and honest men, have visited Salt Lake City, or other parts of the Territory, they have almost invariably spoken kindly of the "Mormon" people. I of course except a certain class, namely, those who make it their mission to persecute, hate and despise us—such men of course exhibit bitterness; deprive them of that and there would be little left of them. But the best thing we can do is to pass them by. In doing so I do not know that we can say in their case what the Lord said to the Jews, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." I fear many of them too well know what they do; but they have their mission, let them fill it. As an individual, I do not feel that we can afford to bestow much time or attention to what such may do or say. I learned one thing during my early boyhood, and that is that I cannot hate man and at the same time love God; therefore I pay little attention to what those evil disposed persons may do. They are in the hands of the Almighty, who will meet to them a just punishment. Let us pity rather than despise them.

This I know, God will establish his Kingdom and carry it off victorious; he will redeem his people and make Zion to shine. But when I think of the benighted condition which the nations are in, it fills my heart with sorrow. I feel to thank God that he has placed in our hearts these compassionate feelings. To us he has been compassionate, and filled us with tender mercy. Therefore it becomes our duty as Elders to go to the ends of the earth to preach the Gospel. To the Lamanites? Yes; to every part of the habitable globe, to say to every people that we know that Jesus is the Christ, and he only can say this truthfully who has the spirit of prophecy upon him, because as it is written, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Let us then make it the mission of our lives to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth, to extend to them this knowledge which has made us so happy, and which has made us the people that we are.

There will be a great work accomplished in Mexico. I feel that the Lamanites in that land will receive the Gospel by thousands. God will give them the power to heal the sick, unstop the eyes of the blind, and to open the ears of those that are deaf. He will manifest himself unto them as he did to their forefathers, the children of Israel. They have been downtrodden for more than three hundred years. They filled the cup of their iniquity, and thirty millions of them were killed off in about forty years. He permitted this to come upon them because of their iniquity and the sin of their fathers in slaying the prophets. The Spanish nation was once a great nation, but God has humbled them. In the work of death that nation filled a fearful mission among the Indians of Mexico and Peru, since when they have been treading the downward track. To-day what is Spain? A fallen, broken, Catholic-ridden nation that cannot understand the whisperings of the Spirit of God. But the remnant of Israel will come forth and manifest that they have faith in their forefathers, who knew Jesus, and when their children hear his voice a stranger they will not follow.

May God bless the mission in Mexico, and the poor Indians whom our own great nation has seemed determined to exterminate, but who will yet arise and prove to the world their worth. May God bless them to this end.

We have no mission save that of peace. We do not go to teach them the art of war, although many of them are soldiers. You can frequently see the streets of Mexico crowded with well drilled Indian regiments, but our mission to them or others is not war, it is peace and good will to all. And may the Lord give us power to extend this to them, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang an anthem.

Elder CHARLES C. RICH dismissed with prayer.

2 P. M.

In the afternoon the Hall was densely packed, and hundreds went away disappointed, not being able to enter the building.

Singing by the choir.

Prayer by Counselor DANIEL H. WELLS.

ELDER ORSON PRATT.

It is many months since I attempted, except on one occasion, to address a public congregation. On account of ill health and other circumstances, I have refrained from public speaking, except at the former meeting held in this house last winter. I do not know whether I shall be able to raise my voice to that loudness that the congregation will be able to understand; I will, however, do the best that I can. I pray my Father in heaven to pour out his Spirit upon me, that what I may say—whether it be a few words or many—may be indited by the gift and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without which all our preaching is in vain.

I certainly, for one, was very much instructed in our forenoon meeting, especially in regard to the remarks of the first speaker on the fiftieth anniversary since the organization of this church; and I was also very much instructed in the remarks made by the following speaker.

It is a great delight to me, as an individual, to look forth upon the large congregations of the Latter-day Saints who are assembled from time to time in these mountains, in the capacity of a General Conference. In all these assemblies and conferences I remember the early rise of this church; I remember when we were a small people, when we could assemble ourselves in a very small room, and that in General Conference. I remember the first Conference that I attended, on the 2d day of January, 1831, consisting perhaps of some seventy or eighty members in all, assembled in the house of Father Whitmer, whose sons were chosen to be especial witnesses in relation to this great latter-day work. I remember our trials, our difficulties, our gathering, our persecutions, our afflictions, more or less, from that day until the present time. Then I was but a boy nineteen years of age; now I am over sixty-eight, and in a few months more fifty years will have passed over my head since I was first baptized into this church. How thankful I ought to be that I am still