

TUESDAY, 2 P. M.

Choir sang,

“From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand.”

Prayer by Elder ALBERT CARRINGTON.

Choir sang,

“Ye Gentile nations cease your strife
And listen to the words of life,”

Elder L. JOHN NUTTALL read the financial report of the Trustee in Trust, containing a detailed statement of the receipts and disbursements during the year 1879.

President TAYLOR stated that vouchers were on hand for all the accounts read, and thought that the Auditing Committee should examine them.

Elder LORENZO SNOW moved that we accept the report, and that it be referred, with the accompanying documents, to the Auditing Committee. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The financial report of the Logan Temple was then read, also of the Manti Temple.

An exhibit of the receipts and expenditures of the Perpetual Emigration Fund for the past six months, was presented.

ELDER ERASTUS SNOW.

I am somewhat weary from journeying, but I will try, if the congregation will be as quiet as possible, to make myself heard the short time I may speak.

I congratulate myself, my brethren and the people generally on this auspicious occasion—the end of our fiftieth year in our organized capacity, as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and on the general outlook, the prosperity that is attending our efforts, the general peace that prevails throughout our land, the goodly degree of unanimity and fellowship and brotherly love existing among the people as shown in the general good feeling that is manifest in all the quarterly conferences and Stakes of Zion, as well as in the interest shown by the people at large on this occasion. The financial reports which we have heard, coupled with the general reports of school superintendents and other public functionaries to the Legislative Assembly during the last winter, tend to show the general advancement and progress of the people in all that is calculated to elevate and exalt a nation. The great number of meetinghouses and schoolhouses, and pupils in attendance in our district schools, and also in the more advanced schools of the Territory, are very gratifying; and the general health of the people at large, and all sources of gratitude and thanksgiving, calling forth our devotion to our Father, the Creator.

The discourse this morning by Elder F. D. Richards foreshadows what was anciently figured by the year of jubilee, and as understood and practised by ancient Israel, namely, the severing of the bonds with which the people were bound—the breaking of the yoke from off their necks, and setting the captive free, and the proclaiming of liberty throughout the land unto all the

inhabitants thereof. The general recommendation to exercise mercy and forgiveness of sins, and release the poor of indebtedness, extending relief to the needy, and making the hearts of all the people glad; it is to be hoped that in this good work of liberality, of kindness, of charity, of love—love unto God and unto all his children may make itself manifest more abundantly among all Israel than it has in times past—notwithstanding the Latter-day Saints have been proverbial for their self-abnegation, for their devotion to each other's interest, for their brotherly kindness and charity, for their ministering unto the poor, and gathering their poor brethren, and uniting and co-operating together and in promoting each others general interest and welfare—we hope to see a renewal of our efforts in this direction; and that from this time we may date more rapid progress, renewed efforts, more earnest devotion to the sacred principles of our holy religion, to this spirit of oneness and unity which we look for and pray for, and which has been prophesied of by all the holy prophets, that is necessary to prepare a people for the coming of the Son of Man to reign in the midst of his people. And we might offer a few words by way of reminder and exhortation unto those that have been delinquent in their duty in times past, and in their efforts to live up to their privileges and to exemplify the principles of the Gospel in their lives and conduct. When will they have a better time than the present, and what period of the history of the Church of Christ so suitable as the present—the commencement of the second half century of our existence—as the period to date their reformation of life and the allaying of all that lethargy and apathy which has prevailed?

Touching our P. E. Fund indebtedness, the books of the company show a vast amount due from those who have been emigrated during the last thirty years in which we have been laboring to gather the poor from distant lands and countries. I am informed by those better acquainted with this matter than I am, that the amount of indebtedness amounts to sixteen hundred thousand dollars. With all this vast amount due from the people all over the land, we find their operation during the last six months limited to about ten thousand dollars; when in reality the operations of this company in the gathering of the poor ought and might, if all did their duty, reach a hundred thousand dollars every year, extending relief to many thousands of those who are praying for deliverance in the downtrodden countries of Europe and elsewhere where the poor have the Gospel preached unto them. For as it was in the days of the Savior, so it is now—the poor have the Gospel preached unto them. This fact Jesus announced to the disciples of John who were sent by John while he was in prison, to the Savior to inquire about the rumors which he had heard of him. The Savior was preaching and baptizing, performing miracles, etc., and as John was in prison he could hear nothing but general rumor, and therefore he sent his disciples to seek this Jesus of Nazareth, who was making such a stir in the land, and to ascertain who he was and what his message to the people was. And in answer to their inquiry—"Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, etc., and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." By this John was to know who he was and what his message was. The same answer is before the world to-day in the message of the Latter-day

Saints and their labors throughout the earth, wherever this Gospel has been sent and preached by the Elders of this Church. The sick have been healed by the prayer of faith and the laying on of hands, and devils have been cast out, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them, and many of the poor have been gathered. And very many of these have shown themselves worthy—they have paid their indebtedness as fast as they could; others have been willing and desirous of doing so, but adverse circumstances have prevented them; while another class have been ungrateful, and have not sufficiently realized the rock from whence they were hewn, nor the pit from which they were digged, allowing years to pass without an effort, or even a righteous desire, to pay this just debt, thereby preventing the means thus due to go on its errand of mercy to bring other poor.

Now, it is contemplated that this year of jubilee shall be made a year of release and comfort to those who are indebted to the Fund, who have striven to do their duty and discharged it as far as able to do so, but whose circumstances have been adverse, preventing them from doing as their hearts listed. It is proposed that such be set free; and while we feel it is a privilege the Lord has given us of speaking comforting words to such, and of loosing the bands from their feet and set them free, we feel, on the other hand, it to be equally our duty to remind those who have been negligent, that if they also would enjoy the riches of Christ and the forgiveness of their sins, they must bestir themselves and come up to every duty, and cease from all hard speeches and from worldly-mindedness and pride, and from a desire to get rich before they are just, and to accumulate wealth before they have signified their gratitude for past favors.

We might also refer to the reports of tithing, but from the observations of the Bishops and others, perhaps I might be permitted to repeat their observations, founded on the experince of years, in receiving and disbursing the tithes of the people, and the general accounts from the various wards and stakes and settlements throughout the land; and in repeating their observations I might add my own testimony and experience and observation, formed by the experience of many years in ministering among the people, examining reports and accounts, and receipts and disbursements, and lists of those who do tithe themselves and those who do not; and the general expression of the presiding Bishop and his Counselors and men of observation and experience; bears out a declaration once made by President Young in his lifetime, in effect, that there was not more than half an honest tithing paid in the midst of Israel; and that if an honest tithing were paid by the people generally, we should have an abundance to build our temples, our meetinghouses, to provide for the poor and relieve the needy, to gather the Saints, and accomplish what may be necessary for the benefit of all the people, without calling on them for extra donations. But from the Logan and Manti Temple reports we learn that about \$170,000 has been expended upon these temples within the last year; while about twenty-eight to thirty thousand of this sum has been appropriated out of the tithing, the balance being the free-will offering of the people. We have no report of what has been done in the way of donations in this temple district, but the presumption is that while \$140,000 of the tithing has been expended upon the Salt Lake Temple, that perhaps an equal sum has been donated; but

of this we are not informed, and not being myself in a position to be able to speak of it, of course I will leave it to my brethren residing here in this temple district to speak on this matter, as it might be gratifying to the people of the Salt Lake Temple district to be represented in our General Conference, and that it might also be known what they are doing in the way of free-will offerings in the building of this temple, as well as their brethren in other temple districts. But I repeat what President Young said, and which I believe to be true, that if an honest tithing were paid by all the people, according to their professions, these extra offerings and donations would be unnecessary. You perceive from the financial reports that the aggregated sum of the tithes and offerings seem somewhat large, yet considering the various sources of disbursement, as well as the character of the property received—being all kinds of produce and labor, and comparatively but little money—that the disbursements in the various directions have been sufficient to exceed and consume the income together with the offerings. And with some it would seem as though they were not making progress as fast as the people could desire or wish; but if we are not in our public improvements moving as fast as the people could wish, you will perceive it is not the fault of the Bishops and others who have the direction of these financial affairs. Nor does there appear to be a wastefulness or unreasonable expenditure in the receiving and disbursing, as a rule; though there may be in isolated cases, which do not come, perhaps, sufficiently manifest to be noticed in order to be corrected; but as fast as any thing of the kind does appear it receives proper attention. And the people have reason to feel a measure of satisfaction and congratulation in the great amount of good that is being accomplished from these small revenues gathered from this vast people in all parts of the land, and extending as we are new settlements on the east and north and south and southeast, and in various directions, occupying new regions of country and bringing into use fertile fields, preparing homes for the Saints, and thus fulfilling the words of the Prophet Isaiah—“Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” That our nation should be somewhat jealous of us is not to be wondered at from the very nature and character of our institutions and thrift of our people. The same jealousy manifested itself in Missouri in early days, when the Saints were broken up and driven from that place because of their thrift, their provoking industry, the extent of their mechanism, the skill of their artisans, and the thrift that was manifested in turning the desert into a fruitful field, making a great contrast in northwest Missouri between the settlements of the Latter-day Saints and other regions of Missouri at those early times. Not that the Latter-day Saints in these mountains by anything they or their institutions are doing are menacing the general interests of the country, only they are provoking many people upon this American Continent who seem rather inclined to dwindle and live in voluptuousness and ease, and spend their vast incomes in gratifying the pride of life and lusts of the flesh, ostentation and show; while the Latter-day Saints seek more enduring wealth—and fill the land with an enterprising population; and are content to provide the common necessities of

life—essential elements to the growth and development of a people—and the training and education of their spirits. By our statistical reports we find that nearly one-third of the population are under eight years of age; while another third are between eight and twenty years—children who have been born and grown up in these mountains, and are being educated in our common schools. While the reports of our Sabbath Schools show in the neighborhood of 40,000 children belonging to our people who are enrolled in the Sabbath Schools—more than twice the number of all the other Territories combined, with some of the minor States thrown into the bargain.

Our nation is inclined to find fault with us because of our marriage relations—not that they have reason to believe that the people of Utah are not virtuous—not that licentiousness or looseness of morals prevail, or that there is a disregard of sexual purity—not that wives and mothers are not honored as they deserve to be—not that children are not beloved and cared for and trained and educated; but that there is a disposition under the teachings and sanction of our holy religion to amplify the doctrine (which was also sanctioned by the fathers and practised in ancient Israel, and nowhere disallowed in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ) that every healthful, virtuous woman desiring to fulfil the law of God, ought to have the opportunity of becoming an honored wife and mother, and to partake of those conjugal blessings and enjoyments that are interwoven with our nature and our being, and thus fill the object and purposes of our creation. We believe that where this opportunity is not afforded, where the institutions of the State, or the tenets of religion, or the morals of the sterner sex forbid or interfere with this privilege, there is something wrong. It is a state of Society that is unnatural, and ought not to exist; that a remedy ought to be sought for and found. Some ancient nations recognized the correctness of this principle and attempted to compel the male population to marry, while some of the ancient Gentile nations, under the leadership of Rome, sought to establish monogamy; they also sought to remedy the evils to which I have referred, by compelling the males to marry. If they could enforce such a law, I should think it imperative upon any State that forbids polygamy. A large-souled man who cherishes a proper respect for his mother and sister, and for every other man's mother and sister, and is disposed to marry and deal justly with more than one woman, he ought to have the privilege so to do; but if the State forbids him so to do, then the State ought to compel delinquent bachelors to wake up and do their duty. President Young in his lifetime often made this banter to the United States; if you will not remove your narrow-contracted laws, be consistent, and compel the bachelors to do their duty, and compel every man to confine himself to his own wife and let other men's wives and daughters alone, then we will wait and see the result, and shall be satisfied if the women shall have no longer cause to complain. But while the tens of thousands of the daughters of Eve are left in our large mercantile towns and elsewhere to fall a prey to the brutish lusts of wicked men, and afterwards to be cast off to die, rotten with disease, in gutters and in dens and hovels, and in this state to be swept away from earth—we say while tens of thousands of the fair daughters of Eve are thus victimized and made to suffer from this unnatural state of things in modern Christendom, it seems to us the sheerest hypocrisy for the solons of our nation—backed

by the clergy of the land—to decry the honorable marriage of the Latter-day Saints, with the example before them of 40,000 children attending our Sabbath Schools—which I repeat is more than those of all the other Territories of the United States and half a dozen of the minor States thrown in.

There is an ancient doctrine which God established in ancient Israel and commanded, namely, that the adulterer should be put to death. We ask ourselves the question, if it became necessary for God to command by Moses that Israel should not suffer the adulterer to live, but that whosoever should be caught in the act should first be tried before the elders, and if found guilty the elders should declare their sentence and bring them to the gates of the city and call upon all the people to pick up stones and join in his execution, that by all throwing at the same time no one would have it to say that “Your stone killed him,” or that no relative could charge his death to any one person, neither could the ignominy be fastened upon an executioner, as it is in our day, but the whole people signifying their contempt for the transgressor, joined in administering the penalty until he died the death of the dog. But the natural sequence of the law is—liberty for honorable men of the earth to absorb the surplus female element in honorable marriage, though it should be under the plural system practised by the patriarchs and prophets of old. And while this privilege was extended—so long as there was a surplus of female element to be absorbed—the man who tampered with his neighbor’s wife or daughter suffered death. Brother Woodruff related in my hearing a short time since, an account of his visit among the village Indians of New Mexico, on the Rio Grande, and of a conversation between him and the governor of one of the chief villages, numbering some 3,000 souls, who were partially civilized maintaining schools and also maintaining purity in their social relations. The governor assured him that they had for many generations kept themselves free from mixing with the Castilian blood, and that the death penalty was scrupulously enforced upon the man guilty of adultery among them. He said the railroad was approaching their town, that the whites were crawling upon them, and it would be but a short time before they would be overrun with them; and that though they boasted of far greater intelligence, greater wealth, and were a powerful people, they were given to many crimes, to drunkenness and whoredom, and, he said, they feared the result of their approach and their “civilization” in their midst; for, he said, if any of them were to take liberties with our women, and our men should execute the penalty of the law of our fathers, which has been in force among us for centuries, and put to death the guilty adventurer, what would be the result, said the old gray-haired patriarch of the village? I suppose, said he, they would send their troops upon us and slay us. Such are the reflections and such are the rebukes of the chieftain, who is called a savage, upon the civilization of the age.

As a people, we are exceedingly anxious to acquit ourselves as good citizens in every department of life, with honor and credit before our nation and the world. We look forward to the time when the great tree that has sprung up and spread abroad, over-shadowing the land in this rocky mountain region, this great people the Latter-day Saints, when their influence will be felt in all the land. We are striving, in our weak way, to conduct ourselves and the rising generation under our care for the great work in the earth. The bigotry

and the superstition, and the self-righteousness that to-day reign in the breasts of the ignorant, will, by and by, begin to break and give way as the Latter-day Saints become better known, or when the time comes spoken of by the ancient prophet, when Zion shall break forth on the right and the left, and she shall possess the gates of her enemies. How will that be done? We are doing it by purchase—as we approach the gates of our enemies we buy them out, buy out their ranches, their little settlements and towers, and in this way will that prophecy be accomplished. And as we spread abroad, the cry will be, "Give us room, that we may dwell;" and it is in this sense that we are an aggressive people—not aggressive by war, not aggressive by abridging the rights of our fellows, but in the sense that we are growing—in the same sense as the potato is aggressive when planted in a fruitful field. And this reminds me of a remark made by the late Dr. Willard Richards, when, in 1847, we came to the top of the Big Mountain and began to descend through the quaken-asps in the black soil, says he, "Brethren, methinks I hear the Irish potato crying out, lie over, give me room." Such, indeed, are the Latter-day Saints; the cry will be, "Lie over, give me room." We are extending and spreading abroad, and we continue to gather our brethren and sisters from distant nations and provide for them homes and means of employment; and we are marrying and multiplying and endeavoring to encourage the fulfillment of the commandment given to our first parents—multiply and replenish the earth. And when I look back to New England—the cradle of American liberty—and see the majority of the New England families dwindling—for go where you will among the wealthy, the banker, the merchant, the wealthy farmer or the well-to-do mechanic in the more well-to-do portions of the New England States, if you find any children at all, as a rule it is not more than a son and daughter, or an only son or only daughter—two or three children at the most in the majority of cases, and they, generally sickly and short-lived. During my last visit to that country I often spoke of it and referred to it among my kindred and acquaintances, of whom I have many, that being the land of my nativity, and therefore I may be permitted to speak of the land and home that gave me birth, and refer to what I regard its degeneracy. In referring to this state of affairs the answer of my old aunt who ranks herself among the aristocracy of the land, "Oh," said she, "it has become unpopular to have large families." And in looking over the newspapers of New England and those of other Eastern States, I was not a little shocked to see the advertisements of abortionist doctors, male and female, unblushingly put forth before high heaven and in the face of civilized humanity—pardon the expression, shall I say non-civilized humanity? I should offend the pride of the world; but if the Gods and the angels were to speak, they would blush at the term "civilization." And these papers containing such advertisements, are scattered throughout the land broadcast, read by families, and before the gaze of every woman and every girl, as well as every profligate of the land; and these point out the ways and means developed by "Christianity" to prevent the fulfillment of the first great command of God to our first parents. The way to destroy the fœtus in the womb, to produce premature birth and abortion, and lastly, when this fails to secretly smother the offspring or cast them into sewers—anything to be relieved from being burdened, *burdened*—God save the mark!—burdened with the offspring,

the spirit that came from heaven, as if it were a burden. What false education is this? What false religion is this that has poisoned the human heart, that has turned their brain, that has turned all common sense out of the Christian world into beastly lust, and that patronizes and sustains these vampires of society, and makes them palatial residences on Broadway and on the Fifth Avenue of New York? The price of blood.

These iniquities cry unto heaven, and God will visit them in his own due time with judgment upon those who uphold them, and those States that defend and protect this wickedness, and at the same time cry out against the institutions of the Latter-day Saints, and say, crucify! crucify and imprison them, and put them to death if necessary. Will the Lord not lend an ear? Will he not take cognizance of such doings? And will he not judge between his people in the mountains and their accusers and those who rail against them and who at the same time are connected either directly or indirectly with the many sinks of iniquity that flourish on this so-called Christian land? Shall the Latter-day Saints assimilate themselves with these abominations? Shall they too give themselves up to whoredoms and lust? Shall they encourage infanticide, fœticide and all their kindred evils? Shall we forbid honorable marriage and leave the surplus female element a prey to libertines and reap the consequences, in the foul and loathsome diseases that taint society and ruin future generations? No, God forbid! the heart of every Latter-day Saint, man and woman in the land says no. We will pray for our people; we will pray for our nation, we will pray God to soften their hearts and stay their hand and hold their arm, and not permit them to execute their narrow contracted laws which they have framed in the days of their bigotry and ignorance, under the traditions of their father, and in violation of the great principles on which American liberty is founded. We know full well that the old Puritan States of New England and the other commonwealths of America—grew up under the monogamic system, and that their hearts have not become sufficiently enlarged to comprehend the final result of this tree of liberty which they planted in the land, they consequently retained in their new colonies and the States formed out of them, the old Roman system of monogamy that made laws against bigamy. But the bigamy which their laws contemplated and which the laws of England contemplated, after which they patterned, was not the plural marriage of the Latter-day Saints, regulated as it is under the sanction of religion, its duties and obligations, and religiously observed by the people. But their laws against bigamy were based upon the principle of fraud, fraud practised by a man or woman, who, believing in monogamy, enter into that relationship and then secretly violate the sacred covenants entered into with each other, and unbeknown to each other, contract a marriage with another and clandestinely carry it on. The crime in this instance was not in the religious doctrine of plural marriage, but in the fraudulent manner in which it is contracted and carried on and the violation of their covenants and the law of the land. But the Constitution of the United States is a broad instrument, framed to suit the growth of the country and the expansion of liberal ideas in the land, containing no provision looking to the establishing of monogamy as an institution of the common country; there are no provisions in the Constitution requiring or empowering Congress to enforce such order of society; on the contrary, the princi-

ples of social, civil and religious liberty are engrafted upon it and made institutions of our country by that charter of our liberties—I say all these provisions are so ample in their character that they will admit and protect the Mohammedan, the Jew, the patriarch Abraham himself if he were here with his wives and concubines, and Jacob and Joseph, and all the ancient patriarchs as well as the Khedive, if he were to come here with his wives and people, and form colonies in our midst. The true spirit of that glorious Constitution of our country as understood by us, is illustrated in the hymn which we so frequently hear sung, composed by Elder Parley P. Pratt on the occasion of the first celebration of the entry of the pioneers into this valley, held on the 24th of July, 1848. The first great feast was celebrated, called the harvest feast, commemorating the first anniversary of the arrival of the pioneers in this land and the following is part of the hymn sung on that occasion:

"Come, ye Christian sects and pagans,
Indian, Moslem. Greek and Jew,
Worshippers of God or Dagon,
Freedom's banner waves for you."

These are the sentiments of the Latter-day Saints as to the nature of the liberty our fathers fought for, and which we desire to maintain in the land, namely, freedom for all people of every land and clime. Nor does it require them to leave behind their wives and children and adopt the narrow-contracted, bigoted laws of monogamy. It was a New England bigot, Mr. Morrill, of Vermont—my native State, disgraced on account of it—who introduced that bill known as the anti-polygamy bill of 1862, which was adopted by the solons of our nation, under the last priestly influence and sectarian bigotry of the land, of which the noble Mr. Lincoln was ashamed. And when the bill was enrolled and sent to him, knowing the pressure under which it had passed; and with a war upon his hands, he lacked the moral courage to express his real sentiments of disapproval of the bill, but quietly pocketed it, refusing to sign it, but allowed it to become law by limitation. If there was any one act in the life of Mr. Lincoln in which he will be found faulty and for which he will be found wanting when he shall be weighed in the balance, it was for declining to express his honest sentiments to the Congress of the United States in disapproval of that bill. And if there is anything in which Presidents and Senators, Congressmen and judges will be found wanting before the heavens when weighed in the balance, it will be in their future endorsements of that bill and their efforts to enforce it.

May God have mercy on them and spare them the consequences; and may grace abound in Israel, that we may abide in the truth and honor God our Father, and at last be found worthy of an exaltation in his kingdom, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Choir sang the anthem,

"Glory to God."

Adjourned till 10 a.m. to-morrow.

Dismissed with prayer by Elder WILFORD WOODRUFF.