

SECOND DAY.

WEDNESDAY, 10 A. M.

Choir sang,

“ The morning sun has chased the night
And brought again the cheering light.”

Prayer by Counselor D. H. WELLS.

Choir sang,

“ Let those who would be Saints indeed
Fear not what others do.”

ELDER LEVI W. HANCOCK

Said he was seventy-seven years old to-day, and nearly fifty years ago he was baptized after receiving the testimony of the Prophet Joseph, who received the word of the Lord and was slain by the professed followers of Him who died for his fellow man. He was familiarly acquainted with the Prophet, lived with him for three years, worked under his direction; and he was one of the most pleasing spirits he had ever been associated with. He then bore testimony that this gospel was true; the Book of Mormon was true; the Twelve were true; he heard Joseph say that this work could not be built up without Twelve Apostles and the Seventies following in their wake. Their decisions, if made in righteousness and unity, were as valid as the decision of the first presidency in the days of the Prophet, as was declared in the Doctrine and Covenants, and if there were no divisions among them their voice would be the voice of the Lord, and all Israel should say amen to it. He exhorted all the Saints to works of righteousness, and invoked the blessings of God upon them.

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR.

As I stated on the opening of the Conference, there were some things of considerable importance that we wished to lay before the Saints, and especially before the authorities of the Church to-day. We have had in operation for quite a length of time, what is known as the “Perpetual Emigration Fund Company,” and a great many of you that are present have contributed to that Fund. And as it is a jubilee year to you—although I suppose the forty-ninth year would be the proper jubilee—it is really the fiftieth anniversary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It occurred to me that we ought to do something, as they did in former times, to relieve those that are oppressed with debt, to assist those that are needy, to break the yoke off those that may feel themselves crowded upon, and to make it a time of general rejoicing. And as it is a matter in which you are all interested, it is thought proper to lay the matter before you, because we have contemplated to release one-half of the indebtedness of those who are indebted to the P. E. Fund Company. That is one subject.

There is a variety of other things, which I mentioned to my brethren of the

Twelve, and they all join in the feeling with a hearty co-operation, all being desirous of seeing something of this kind done which will tend to produce happiness, joy and comfort, and a feeling of relief among many of our brethren.

We wish the brethren who have contributed to this fund, and all the officers of this Church, to have a voice in it, because it is our act; and we want to make it the act of the whole people, that all may have a voice, which we consider they ought to have in all these leading prominent actions wherein they are concerned.

The proposition is to release one-half of the people's indebtedness to the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company. I may say, I have also spoken to Brother Carrington on this matter, who is the president of this company, and learn that it meets his views. I would further state that to the best of my knowledge nobody has hitherto been oppressed or crowded on account of this indebtedness at all; they have been called upon and requested to meet their engagements, which is certainly just; because others were interested in these matters besides ourselves, who had a right to expect a return of means appropriated, that they also might be relieved, and partake of the benefits of this fund, which was properly named perpetual; that is, many of the poor for which the means were subscribed formerly, under the direction of President Young, who was the originator of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company.

I have some figures which I will read to you; they will show what has not been returned again by those who have been benefited by it. The amount of the original indebtedness is \$704,000. The interest, extending along for many years at 10 per cent. per annum, is some \$900,000, which interest, in many instances, has had to be paid by us. The whole of the amount is \$1,604,000. That is the amount of the whole indebtedness, principal and interest.

Now, we propose to forgive those who are poor and that are struggling with difficulties in life, who have not been able to meet their engagements in this matter; not half the amount that they are due, but the whole; and to those who are forgiven the debt it will be blotted out; not partly, but entirely; and the remainder will be left to those to pay who are able to and have not done it. And we shall expect that those who have not met their engagements to meet them; that is, when half has been forgiven to the poor. For in former times they did not release the rich, it was the poor. The rich can always take care of themselves—that is, so far as this world is concerned, I do not know how it will be about the next. [Laughter.] I wish it distinctly understood that it is one-half of the whole amount, which we wish to relieve the poor from. It will be a little start on the year of jubilee. This is one item. All of you who are in favor of this release signify it by holding up your right hand. [The congregation voted unanimously in favor of the motion.] I will state that, as to the manner in which this will be done; it will be provided for hereafter; and a circular will be issued by the Twelve to the authorities, instructing them how to act in relation to this matter.

There is another thing we want to do at the same time; that is, there is a large amount of indebtedness on tithing account. You heard something about that yesterday; it was then averred that all the indebtedness was not reported; that is, if we had it all down it would be a great deal more than is here stated.

We as a people believe in paying our tithes and offerings to the Lord—and when I get through I want Brother Hardy to get up and talk on tithing; he is quite a hand to talk on this subject. We believe it is proper for us to pay one-tenth of our increase, or one-tenth of our time, as the case may be, to the Lord regularly. And a great many men do this, and do it very promptly; but a great many more do not do it, only a very little—about that much sometimes [measuring the end of the finger. Laughter.] I think it will be a tight squeeze for some of them to dig through. I am not talking about this because I care anything about it personally; but because of the interest of those who ought to do it, but do not. There are a great many who have neglected the payment of these things partly through carelessness, partly through poverty and a variety of circumstances, and it begins to feel oppressive to them. Now, we want to break off this yoke too, that is, off those who are worthy; the others we do not care much about—that is unless they turn about and reform and take another course, live their religion and act as Latter-day Saints. But we wish that there shall be a release of the poor and those who are unable to meet it. The amount that is behind, according to the bishops' records—which many of the people owing it signify their willingness to pay but are not able to—is \$151,798. We propose releasing half of the amount to the deserving poor, and that will be \$75,899. This of course will have to be managed by the proper authorities, the same as the others; that is, first on the recommendation of the bishop of the ward, approved by the president of the stake; and then to receive the sanction of the Presiding Bishop. The P. E. Fund matter will be subject to the recommendation of the bishops, the sanction of the presidents of stakes and also the President of the P. E. F. Company, sanctioned by the Council of the Twelve; so that those that are really worthy may be released, and those that are not, ought to pay it. And then, we who have got a little behind in our tithing, will try and pay it up and thus keep the record right between us and the Lord; and then we may look for blessings from his hands.

I will call a vote on this subject that I have mentioned. All who are in favor of releasing the obligations amounting to \$75,899, on tithing, signify it by holding up the right hand. [Unanimous vote in favor.] All right, we knew that would be the feeling of the brethren.

Another thing. We have had a great scarcity of water the last year, and consequently short crops. It is proposed that inasmuch as there may be suffering more or less in some places—we hope, however, that our brethren will not allow our poor unfortunate brethren to suffer, I have not heard of anything of the kind; but still a little help will not do any harm. And where people have been in straitened circumstances through the loss of crops and of stock—and some people have lost, perhaps, their last cow, and some have lost many of their stock, and yet have a good many left; but there has been quite a general loss. Now, we propose to raise 1000 head of cows—not old cows that do not give any milk; nor any one-teated cows, but good milk cows, and have them distributed among those that may be destitute in the different stakes, under the direction of the authorities thereof. And the Church will put in 300 of this 1000. I spoke to Brother Sheets and told him that we did not want any one-teated cows. The balance of this number, namely, 700, we

would like the Stakes to make up. We have been informed by the presidents that this can be easily done. It would have been quite hard a while ago, before we lost so many of our animals; but now it seems we can do it quite easy. [Laughter.] It is much better to give them to the poor than to have them die, and they have not all died yet, so we may as well begin to dispose of them.

I want to call upon the presidents of stakes and the bishops to know if you are prepared to furnish the balance—you that are in favor of doing it, signify by holding up the right hand. [The presidents and bishops voted unanimously in the affirmative.] To the congregation—all you Saints who approve of this motion, signify it by holding up the right hand. [The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.]

Now, we are going to come to our sisters. Some people think that the sisters cannot do anything; I will show you what they can do. President Young reorganized the Relief Society—it having been organized by the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo—and inasmuch as the brethren had been careless and slow to heed the counsel of President Young in relation to storing away wheat, he requested the sisters to do it, and some of we “lords of creation” thought it was a very little thing for our sisters to be engaged in. But we find now they are of some use, and that the “ladies of creation” can do something as well as the “lords.” I spoke to Sister Eliza R. Snow, who is the president of the Relief Society, and asked what her feelings would be, and that of her sisters, in relation to the distribution of their wheat, for those who are in need of seed, letting the people have it as a loan, for which the bishops should become responsible and see that it is returned after harvest. She replied that it would meet her entire approbation. The sisters have not had the opportunity to meet yet to get an expression of their minds in relation to it; but I will guarantee that they will do what they are requested to do, for they have already been doing something in that line, as I understand it. Is not that so Brother Hunter? [Bishop Hunter: “Yes, sir.”] Now, we want to show you, what the sisters can do. I will guarantee that they will do it, and that we will have a report from them before we get through. They have 34,761 bushels of wheat. Who of you men can raise that much? Where’s your wheat? [Laughter.] Now, those 34,761 bushels of wheat will be of considerable importance judiciously managed, and loaned out to some of our poor brethren. It will furnish seed wheat, and after harvest they can return it again. We do not want any more harsh talk about the woman question after this. [A voice: “May they vote now?”] O yes, they may vote now if they choose to; everybody is willing that they should vote now. [Laughter.] That is, they are willing the sisters shall vote on the wheat question. [Renewed laughter.] We may as well call a vote on this question now, our sisters are present whom we will ask to vote. All you sisters who are in favor of carrying out this request, hold up your right hand. [A forest of hands went up.] There they go, you see. [Laughter.] I think that is the most hearty vote yet. I knew they would do it. [A voice: “Is it to be loaned without interest?”] Somebody asks if it is to be loaned without interest. Why, of course it is; we do not want any nonsense of that kind; it is the time of jubilee.

There is another thing. We have got through with many public matters, I will say something else. It is no more harm for private people to forgive

one another than for public ones. If you find people owing you who are distressed, if you will go to work and try to relieve them as much as you can, under the circumstances, God will relieve you when you get into difficulties. I will tell you that in the name of the Lord. Let us act on a kind, generous, brotherly principle, doing good one to another and carrying out the principles of the everlasting gospel in our lives.

We talk sometimes about the United Order. There is a little of that spirit manifested in our operations to-day, is there not? Operating together for the welfare of all; that is what we ought to do; that is what the gospel teaches us.

I speak of these things for your reflection, and they are matters we will leave in your own bosom. And I would like to see Z. C. M. I. and our bankers, merchants and other creditors scratch off a few names of their debtors; and I think they feel disposed to do it; I have spoken to some of the directors of Z. C. M. I., and find that they feel about as we do. We expect to hear a report from them before long. While God is blessing us, let us bless one another; although we are not suffering, neither do we intend to suffer; God will not let us if we will not let one another suffer. We will go along as if we had no drouth or dead cattle, or any other stop, and everything will be prosperous. There is now every prospect of a good harvest; the grain is not all in yet, but we have snow in the mountains, and things look quite prosperous. And if we take good care of one another, God will take care of us; and he will deliver us and stretch out his hand in our behalf, and we will be his people, and he shall be our God; and we will treat one another as we wish to be treated by one another, and then we are prepared to receive blessings from his hands. Amen.

BISHOP L. W. HARDY.

The principle of tithing I heartily believe in, for the reason that the Lord instituted it himself, and, therefore, it is not a new thing on the earth. It is an old doctrine. Even Abraham paid his tithes to Melchisedec when he met him, because he held the higher priesthood of God. We have had many lessons on this subject, so many that it is almost useless to talk about it now. The time was, since we came to the valleys of the mountains, when the Saints had nothing to pay tithing in but labor, hence they devoted every tenth day to beautifying and building up this city and other cities. Every tenth day the Bishops called upon those that lived in their wards to go to work on the public works and streets, and the call was generally very promptly responded to. Thus when the tithing came to be made up at the end of the year, the tithing paid in this way amounted to about \$48.00 each man. As time wore on, however, the people became more numerous, and as they had so much to do for themselves, they began to pay a tenth of what they raised, whatever that might be—say butter, cheese, eggs, or anything else they might have about their farms, and this amounted to a large sum when it was all brought in. Now, we find, in looking over the schedules for 1879, men that we know are doing a pretty good business—we find that they have paid from \$3 to \$5, whereas it ought to be from \$300 to \$500. It is a mockery to attempt to pay tithing to the Lord in this way. Had we the honest tithing of this people