

The Presiding Bishop of the Church, Edward Hunter, with Leonard W. Hardy and Robert T. Burton as his counselors.

John Taylor as Trustee-in-Trust for the body of religious worshippers known and recognized as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to hold the legal title to its property and contract for it.

The Twelve Apostles, their two counselors and Bishop Edward Hunter as counselors to the Trustee-in-Trust.

Albert Carrington as President of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund for the Gathering of the Poor, and F. D. Richards, F. M. Lyman, H. S. Eldredge, Joseph F. Smith, John W. Young, Angus M. Cannon, Moses Thatcher, Wm. Jennings, John R. Winder, Henry Dinwoodey, Robert T. Burton, A. O. Smoot and H. B. Clawson as his assistants.

Orson Pratt as Historian and General Church Recorder, and Wilford Woodruff as his assistant.

Truman O. Angel as General Architect of the Church, and T. O. Angel, Junr., and W. H. Folsom as his assistants.

As Auditing Committee—W. Woodruff, E. Snow, F. D. Richards, J. F. Smith.

George Goddard as clerk of the General Conference.

ELDER ALBERT CARRINGTON.

At any time at your pleasure, by turning to the Second Book of Nephi, 11th chapter, 15th paragraph, in the last sentence of that paragraph, you can read these words: "But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish." I presume all of you have read, or have heard read, the decree of Jehovah; but have we fully realized that inasmuch as we, his covenant people, are not always careful to observe his requirements with due strictness, but unduly labor for that which perisheth, and spend too much of our time, means and influence for that which only pertains to this time, we also run great risk of disappointment? If we do not realize this, I really think it behooves us to comprehend that our father in the heavens has decreed that we shall labor for Zion—for the upbuilding and establishment of his kingdom upon this the earth of our Father in heaven. Some of us were aware of this plain declaration nearly fifty years ago, but have we diligently striven, to the utmost of our powers, to carry out that requirement? Have we observed it with all care and singleness of purpose, in connection with many other like texts?

Our Father has also taught us, through his revealed will, that inasmuch as the inhabitants of this land of Zion will seek unto him and learn to do his will, they shall prosper spiritually and temporally—in their persons, in their habitations, in their families, and in all that pertains to them: but inasmuch as they will not do his will, they shall be cut off from his presence. Are there any exceptions to that decree and that wise purpose of our Father? Will he for our sakes, when he has not for the sake of our forefathers, change his unalterable purpose and his fixed times and decrees? I think not. Is it not then obligatory upon us to diligently comply with all these plain requirements, and to more faithfully bring ourselves in accord with other requirements like unto them, wherein we are required to love one another, to do unto others as we

would they should do unto us, to love the Lord our God with all our might, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves? Are we careful on these points? Or do we flatter ourselves that these plain, righteous requirements will be changed to suit our views, our convenience, our carelessness, our indifference, and at times our niggardly, selfish, covetous feelings?

As I do not deem it proper to occupy much time, to the exclusion of others, I will confine my remarks more particularly to a matter that I have been much interested in from the day of a vote in the Temple in Nauvoo—the gathering of the Lord's poor. In 1849 President Young initiated the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, and in 1850, if I correctly remember, that Company was organized on a plan to be perpetual so long as it may be needed by the poor of scattered Israel. From that date it has aided thousands upon thousands from the bondage of oppression and poverty in far off lands to peaceful and properous homes in these valleys of the mountains, and above all to the blessings of the ordinances of the Gospel. Has not that been one of the greatest blessings and privileges to all who have thus been relieved?

When I reflect upon these facts, and bear in mind that much care has been taken for a right application of the funds, even all possible care, so far as I know, and then turn to the treatment that so many have meted, not only to the Fund, but also to their brethren and sisters yet ungathered, many of whom are in more adverse circumstances than were some who have been aided, at times I should almost become discouraged. But I know of no such feeling as discouragement in the operations of the Fund, for it will accomplish its work as the Lord may will, however much individuals may fail in complying, when able, with their agreements. But how those who have been and are able to repay are so slack, careless and indifferent in regard to their obligations so thankfully undertaken, I am at a loss to comprehend. Should they not, for their own sakes and the sakes of the ungathered poor, be more diligent in repaying?

So far as I am aware, there has not been the least oppression exercised in trying to collect indebtedness to the P. E. Fund. Do we now wish to crowd, or oppress, or infringe upon the comfort of any one indebted to the Fund? No; but we are very anxious that the Fund shall be able this season to aid many from the adverse circumstances in which they are. Many have no expectation of deliverance except under the blessings of the Lord through this Fund. And can we help them unless those pay who are indebted? Some may say, "Solicit donations," and may wonder why donations to the P. E. Fund have not been solicited for some time past.

In 1869 the P. E. Fund expended some \$60,000 to \$70,000 for the emigration of the poor. The next season it was hoped that, having used so large a sum to aid those who had but little, and frequently no means, the Fund would be able to assist those who had the nearest enough for their emigration. This would have been a stimulus for all to save as much as possible, and would have gathered a much larger number with a like disbursement. But from that day to this, with our utmost striving, we have not been able to get beyond the suffering poor, for that class increase beyond our means. This I have regretted. This regret may arise from a lack of understanding on my part, for our Father in heaven orders all things wisely, and his hand is in all these matters.

He rules and controls, not only in the armies of heaven, but in the midst of the affairs of the children of men, disposing the results of their acts according to his own good will and pleasure. Realizing this, I have not felt to worry, but I have felt somewhat grieved that we have not been able to more effectually encourage those who are doing so much for their own deliverance. In the meantime, the poor, the worthy, faithful, deserving poor, have been accumulating, in spite of all the Fund can do. We endeavor, all in our power, to collect the means due the Fund, and then to expend the payments and donations in the best manner possible.

It may be asked, "Have you not aided some who have not proved faithful Latter-day Saints since they arrived here?" Yes; and how can you foretell who will apostatize, unless you have direct revelation in each case? We have all been anxious, and have taken all possible care, not to aid any who would not prove worthy. But have we not been mistaken in some instances, after exercising all the care in our power? Yes; some whom we thought to be good, faithful Latter-day Saints, and who, so far as we could learn, were so there, and had been all the while, have, since their arrival here, made shipwreck of their faith; and at the same time have not had enough manhood, or principle, to pay back the means advanced to help them out of bondage to a land of liberty. Can we help that? Not that I am aware of; and it seems impossible for us to do so, try we ever so hard, from the fact that this kingdom is likened to a net which is to gather fish of every kind. If we could keep out the garfish, catfish, suckers, and every other kind of coarse fish, it would not be the Gospel net. Aside from this, I think there are some who, if they had remained in their native lands, would never have apostatized; but gather them here and they apostatize! That also seems to be in the economy of this great latter-day work, so I have not felt to critically question the wisdom or good judgment of those who have recommended this, that, or the other one for assistance, even when those assisted have apostatized.

President Taylor, the Trustee-in-Trust, has presented to our votes the question of releasing a large amount of back tithing indebtedness, due from those who are aged and infirm, and others who have no prospect for paying. The Bishops, upon due examination, will recommend for relief, stating a few chief reasons therefor; then the Presidents of Stakes will examine the recommends made by the Bishops, and add such comments as they may please, and forward the lists to the P. E. F. Office in this city, where they can be carefully considered and then submitted to President Taylor, under whose direction the Fund operates. I rejoice that the worthy poor, struggling with adversity, are to be so kindly treated, and are to be left free and untrammelled, when they cannot possibly free themselves in any other way. I know of no just way of becoming clear of a fair indebtedness, except by payment or forgiveness.

That reminds me of another class of Fund debtors. When I speak to them they say: "Oh, yes, we are abundantly able to pay, but you cannot collect the debt by law, because it is outlawed." I am well aware that I cannot compel you by law to pay that indebtedness, neither would I had I it in my power; that is not the way the Fund does its business. All its business is conducted on the broad principle of fairness and liberality, wronging no one, benefitting every one as far as possible. But consider, inasmuch as you are

able to pay the indebtedness which you incurred in being delivered from bondage and placed where you can provide yourselves with the necessaries and comforts of life, whether you are even worldly wise in being unwilling to repay that amount and thus prevent others enjoying the privileges you once esteemed so highly. And what has been said to the Saints abroad when they have importuned and plead, and promised to repay soon after arriving here—they know how they plead, they know how they promised—many professing to be willing to bind themselves for a lifetime if they could only be gathered to these mountains. What has been said to them? You do not understand what you are talking about. You may not find things altogether as you anticipate. You may meet with disappointment and misfortune. We will help you, we will send you through as comfortably and as cheaply as we can; and when you arrive there and find employment, just pay your tithing faithfully and promptly, provide yourselves with shelter, comfortable clothing, food and fuel, all of which things you will need; then, please, when you have done all this, begin to pay your indebtedness to the Fund; pay one dollar, two dollars, ten dollars, as you are able, without depriving yourselves of the necessaries of life, and in that way you will all the while keep the spirit of the work which you now measurably enjoy, and it will grow and increase, because you will be complying with the requirements of the Gospel. And others in like, or worse, circumstances can be helped through your paying the obligations you are so strongly pleading to be allowed, and so energetically promising you will pay as fast as possible. Ought not these fair requirements to be complied with by those who have been aided, as soon and as far as may be in their power, through their faithfulness?

After all indebtedness to the Fund has been remitted, that ought to be, there will still be a large sum due. Will we be able to collect all of that? I am afraid not; for some Fund debtors who had property have apostatized, and others have accumulated property since they apostatized, without sufficient manhood to repay the means that enabled them to be here. They worship the world, have apostatized and gone with the world. I pity them, because they are traveling on a road of exceeding darkness; and they cannot see things as they are, or they would pay their Fund indebtedness.

As to interest on sums advanced, has any one been crowded in the least in regard to payment of interest? Not to my knowledge. Have some paid their indebtedness with interest, without grumbling, and preferring so to do? Yes. Who are they? Those who rejoice in the light, life and intelligence of a goodly measure of the Holy Spirit, which is beyond all comparison as to value. Others, when making payment, have said: "With regard to the interest, I do not like that." Has not the interest been put at the lowest rate? Could you borrow a like amount from any one, during all these years, for less? You cannot borrow money in small amounts to-day for so low an interest, and scarcely large amounts at so low a rate, except with the very best security. The Fund has never asked more than ten per cent., and it was placed at that rate under the instruction of President Young. How long it will so remain I do not know. Some will say, "I am willing to pay a little interest." Very well, how much are you willing to pay, and feel well about it? "I am willing to pay five per cent." Very well; Bro. Anderson, cast the interest at five per

cent. and give up the note, though the other five per cent. belongs to the Fund by his own gladly undertaken agreement. Another says: "I am willing to pay the principal, but I will not pay any interest." That is not very polite, though it certainly is plain. Pay us the principal and you can have your note. And lately some have gone so far as to ask us to forego a portion of the principal, which we have not felt at liberty to do; but now all such persons can apply to their Bishops, and they will report. Can any one discern any crowding or oppression in these cases? Now, in all kindness, in all sincerity, I earnestly solicit the debtors to the Fund, for their own sakes, for the sake of the work they profess to uphold and sustain, and for the sake of the ungathered poor in their poverty and bondage, to wake up and help this season, so far as they may be able, that more of the Lord's poor may also rejoice in their deliverance.

As to the application of the funds in assisting, it has been the custom, as a general practice, to use the very best information to be had as to the disposal of any given amount. On that plan, last season and the season before, most of the means were directed from the P. E. Fund office. This season they have the best information at the office in Liverpool, or can obtain it, with regard to the condition and circumstances of the Saints, for which reason all the means we receive, except small amounts loaned to those who have nearly enough, and to be returned in time for this year's emigration, are forwarded to Liverpool, to be distributed as the authorities there may deem best. But with all our efforts since the close of last season, after paying off an indebtedness incurred in helping a number of Saints from the East who had been mobbed, we had only £112, or \$543, to send to Liverpool for the April company. That would not emigrate one large destitute family; it is a mere drop in the bucket. But it was all we had; and we were obliged to instruct that the amount must not be exceeded, because we have no right to fall back upon the Trustee, and ask him to pay indebtedness incurred by the operations of the Fund. Will we be able to forward any money for the May company? Only a very small amount, so far as I know, though this rests with those who are due the Fund.

Some may wish to know why the making of donations has not been urged more than it has. In 1869 there were so many assisted that it interfered with other arrangements, not known at the time; and before there were means for overcoming that difficulty, the financial crash of 1873 occurred. When I spoke to President Young about donations, he said: "Wait a while; the people are poor just now. Try and collect the indebtedness, as far as you can." And since then, among other reasons, I have not felt to solicit donations, because it is well known that there is a very large sum due to the Fund, so large that, if we could only receive one-half of it, we could gather all that any one would say ought to be gathered, and then have much money left to go on with; and were I to solicit aid under such circumstances, I am of the opinion that I might be advised to collect what is due to the Fund. And what could I say? I have yet to learn what I would be able to say.

I deem the gathering of scattered Israel to be a part of the work that belongs to us as Latter-day Saints, in building up the Church and Kingdom of our God upon the earth. I think it is part of our labor, the same as building temples, sustaining the poor, sending missionaries abroad and sustaining their families when necessary, and all that tends to spread the principles of truth

and righteousness the wide world over. But do I wish to give the gathering of the poor an undue share of the means, of the labor, and of the time that pertains to this great latter-day work? I do not know that I do. But I feel anxious for the debtors to the Fund to so far honor our God and themselves as to free themselves from this indebtedness as speedily as they may be able, and thus free the scattered poor from bondage, and bring them here to enjoy the blessings we enjoy; and I can not see how we are going to entirely escape a measure of the condemnation made known in the paragraph I have quoted, except we are a little more diligent in attending to these matters. And I trust you will not blame us when we entreat those who are able to pay their indebtedness to the Fund as soon as possible.

God bless you. Amen.

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR.

In relation to the subject that I referred to this morning pertaining to the Co-op, I am informed that they are very busy with their affairs and have not had time to make any specific statement pertaining to this matter; but they feel disposed to unite with us in relieving the necessitous and worthy, as far as they would be justified in the premises, and in accordance with correct principles, to do their part. I would here remark that the same kind of feeling would be very commendable on the part of other store-keepers, bankers, or any one of us to relieve each other.

I would make a statement in relation to the Co-op. I have had reports from the north, that some parties who ought to know better, had said that the Co-op. was no longer a Church institution, and that it was managed, directed and controlled by a few monopolists, and that we were asking the people to sustain them in their operations, which I consider very infamous talk, and especially coming from men who profess to be men of honor. The Church, I will here say, holds an interest in that establishment to the amount of \$360,000, and then there are 580 stockholders, who are Latter-day Saints, in it, besides the interest which the Church holds. And when men make such statements I consider it infamous and contrary to correct principles; and I should recommend their bishops and the authorities of the Church where they live to bring them up for slander and treat them accordingly. That enterprise was started as is properly implied by the initials of its name. What is it? "Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution." They had for sometime difficulties to cope with; perhaps things might not have been managed as well as they could have been. There may have been errors in judgment. For sometime they did not pay dividends; but latterly they have paid what might be considered a fair dividend, and the Institution never was in a better condition than it is today. I speak of this that you who are stockholders in that institution may not be imposed upon by speculators who would seek by false representations to get from you your stock at less figures than it is really worth, I think it is our duty, as Latter-day Saints, to sustain that institution; and then, on the other hand, I think it is the duty of that institution to sustain the Saints, and let us get closer together in our relationship, and act honorably and uprightly in everything we engage in, then we can secure the blessing of the Almighty. I thought I would say so much in relation to this matter.