

tle with life. They become better fathers and mothers, and better citizens of the United States or of any other country. I can testify to this, and thousands that are before me, who have been through the house of the Lord could bear me out in this testimony, if called upon. There is nothing done there in any manner that has a tendency in the least to harm any individual, but everything that is done is for the best good and salvation of the people.

I rejoice in these things, my brethren and sisters. I am thankful to the Lord that He has given me a testimony of the truth of this Gospel. I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that he laid the foundation for this great work. He it was that laid the foundation of all these organizations that we have heard about this morning, and this work will increase and multiply upon the earth. May the Lord help us all to be faithful and true always to the covenants that we have made with the Lord, that we may keep them faithfully and never do anything that would bring His displeasure upon us. God grant it to all of us. Again I express my thanks and praise the name of my Heavenly Father for His continued mercies and goodness unto me, and for extending my life until I am now nearly eighty-three years of age. I thank the Lord for all these blessings, and dedicate myself unto Him with a determination to serve Him as long as I live upon the earth. I ask Him for His blessing upon you all, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT ANTHON H. LUND.

The Character and Extent of the Priesthood
—Beneficial Results of Fast Offerings—
Unselfishness of Missionaries to the World
—Intellectual and Religious development
of the Children.

While our President was addressing us these words came into my mind:

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

It occurred to me that the Apostle Peter, in addressing the Saints formerly, looked upon a people who were similarly organized to the Latter-day Saints, and he called them “a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation.” Those who contemplate the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be struck with the number who hold the Priesthood. The Priesthood is conferred upon all male members who are worthy to receive it. This is a great blessing which the members of this Church enjoy, and it makes them a peculiar people, a chosen generation, holding the royal Priesthood. There is no priestly caste in our Church. Contrary to the opinion of many, such a thing does not exist with us, unless you will call the whole Church a priestly caste, because all participate in the blessings pertaining to the Priesthood.

There are in the Church two Priesthoods—the Aaronic and the Melchisedek. The Aaronic Priesthood is the lesser, an appendage to the higher. It embraces the offices of Deacons, Teachers and Priests. Those who hold these offices are called to labor amongst the people, to teach them, to serve them, to watch over them, and to see that there is no hardness of heart or ill feelings among them. We call our young men very early in life to bear the Priesthood. When they are 12 or 13 years old we ordain them Deacons or Teachers, if they are worthy. We give them something to do in the Lord's house. We call upon them to look after the meeting-houses and to visit the Saints. In some places Deacons look after the widows, and see that they are furnished with fuel, and attend to the chopping of wood for them. Being called to the Priesthood, they feel that these services are honorary ones. They are called on also to collect fast-day offerings from the people, many of whom may not have ready money to give unto the poor. If they have not the cash they give provisions and other things which they can spare, and which the poor need. In many stakes the Deacons are called upon to perform

such duties as these, and this gives them in their youth a love for doing good and for helping the poor.

Here let me say, in this connection, that in our Church a custom prevails which I consider a beautiful one. It is this: The Saints are called upon to remember the poor when they fast. They show their reverence for the Lord in fasting, and fit themselves better to approach Him in prayer, showing that they can overcome the strong wants of nature by abstaining from food for one, two, or three meals. Our fast-day comes on the first Sunday in each month; and while the members of the Church deny themselves on that day, they are asked to remember the poor, and to give unto them at least the value of the meals that they refrain from taking. If this be done conscientiously throughout the Church there is no need of any of the poor suffering. We have not a great amount of poor anyhow in our midst outside of the populous centers. In some of the stakes they have none that need support. The people may not be well-to-do, they may not have much of this world's goods, but they are sufficiently blessed not to need any support from others. In Salt Lake and the larger cities, where so many people gather and have to depend on day's labor, we have quite a number to support. Now, I would admonish the Saints living in stakes where they are not called upon to do much towards supporting the poor, that they do not slacken their efforts to collect fast-day donations or to contribute them, for it is a duty laid upon all the members of the Church to remember the poor. The Lord delights in those who remember the poor. And so the beautiful custom has been instituted in our midst of imparting of our substance to the poor, to make the poor glad, on the day that has been set apart as a day of fasting and prayer. One of the old Church fathers writes that in early days it was the custom among the Christians when they fasted that they took the money they would have had to expend for the meals which they did not partake of, and gave it

unto the poor. This same custom has been revived in our Church. I do not suppose, however, that the Prophet Joseph Smith ever read anything of this kind, but he was inspired to institute it in our midst. In looking over what the Saints have done in regard to fast-day donations, I think there is great need of improvement, and that all should be more conscientious in observing the fast-days and remembering the poor. When we do this to honor the Lord and to keep His commandments, we have a claim upon His blessings and He will not forget us.

As a general thing, the Saints respond cheerfully to all the calls that are made upon them; and in looking back upon our history, one cannot help seeing that they have been called upon to make many sacrifices. But take the men in our midst who have made the greatest sacrifices, and you will generally find the men who have been the most greatly blessed. From the beginning of the Church the Lord has called upon His people to do something.

Our religion is one in which we are called upon to show our faith by our works. The Latter-day Saints have shown their faith this way. When they are called upon to go out amongst the nations to preach the gospel, they do not ask how much their pay will be, but they at once commence to regulate their affairs so that they can betake themselves to their mission-field and perform the labor required, without any remuneration. They feel that they owe the duty to the world, to warn them of what is coming, to tell them the glorious message that God Himself has revealed in our day, and to declare unto men that there is an opportunity to enjoy the blessings of the Gospel today as they were enjoyed formerly. Therefore, when they are called upon to go out into the world they almost invariably answer that they will be ready to go at the time appointed. Thus our missionaries go to the different parts of the earth, and you will find them in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Australia and New Zea-

land, in the islands of the sea, and on this great continent of ours. Wherever the call is, they go, trusting in the Lord to sustain them, and to give them power to perform their mission. Though they have not studied philosophy and are not learned in the systems of men, they go feeling and knowing that they have the truth, and they are desirous to make every man acquainted with what they have received. This they do not do by being coerced or forced, but by their own free will; and when they return from their missions (which generally last from two to four years or more) they are ready to report that the time spent in their missionary fields has been the happiest period of their lives. When their work is completed they love to return to their homes, because they love their families and relations. They do not go on missions because they like to be away from home, or because they love to ramble around the world, but they go because there is no joy so great as that experienced in devoting oneself entirely to the cause of Christ. And how happy they are to find those who will listen to their words and receive them with honest hearts! They feel then that the Lord is rewarding them for their labors and for the sacrifice they have made in leaving home and loved ones. The preposterous idea has been set forth by our enemies that our Elders are paid so much for every convert they make. How ridiculous this sounds to us here! Nearly every man in our midst has been away upon a mission. He knows what he has received—or rather what he has not received. He has gone with means which he has labored for with his own hands, and has spent the same for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, and all the pay he expects to receive is the inner conviction of having done his duty and filled the call which the Lord has made upon him. He knows that the promises are unto such as are willing to keep the commandments of the Lord and labor for His cause.

I stated that our young men early

receive the Priesthood. Some are ordained Teachers and Priests and as such go among the families of the Saints to labor in their calling. They are generally accompanied by an older person. The families gather around ready to listen to the teachings of these bearers of the Priesthood, and the time they spend in the homes of the Saints is devoted to talk upon the topics pertaining to the kingdom of God and to the duties of the members of the Church.

Besides the Aaronic Priesthood, we have in our Church the Melchisedek Priesthood. An Elder holds this Priesthood. A Seventy, a High Priest, an Apostle, the President of the Church, all hold the same Priesthood. There are only the two Priesthoods, but there are different offices in the same Priesthood. You heard our President speak this morning concerning the organization of the Church, stakes and wards, and about presidents of stakes and Bishops of wards. All these men holding the Priesthood, have been placed in charge of the flock of Christ, and they are watching over them. As a general thing, they spend all the time they can spare ministering for the good of the people. In most cases they are men of business and under the necessity of providing for their own families, but they take what time they can to look after those the Lord has put in their charge.

Such are the Priesthoods, and such the offices therein. Then we have the auxiliary organizations in the Church. They are not exactly parts of the Priesthood, but auxiliary thereunto. They are helps in government. We commence with the little children in the Primary association. We call upon good sisters in our midst to take these in hand, and once a week they meet with our little children and teach them concerning right and wrong, and concerning the crucified Savior; they inspire their young hearts with a love of God, and teach them to sing praises unto Him. This organization takes in the smallest of our chil-

dren. Then when they get to be about 14 years of age they join the Mutual Improvement association. There they meet once a week and take a course in theology and other necessary branches. The aim of this organization is to build up the young people, to warn them of the pitfalls in the way of the youth, to strengthen them in their resolve to serve God, and to teach them the principles of the Gospel, that they may have a foundation for their faith. After this the young men join the quorums of the Priesthood, and the young women join the Relief societies, which were established by the Prophet Joseph for the good of the people. The sisters of the Relief society do a good work in our midst. We have the societies organized in every ward in Zion and in the branches abroad. They gather means for the poor and they look after the sick. In many cases you will find the sisters watching night and day at the sick bed. Indeed they are, as the name of the society indicates, persons of another organization not an auxiliary organizations in the Church.

Before I conclude, I want to speak of another organization not an auxiliary organization of the Priesthood, but an organization pertaining to the Church school system. I mean the religion classes, which we are trying to establish in our midst. This meets opposition, both from without and, I am sorry to say, from within. The object of these classes is to teach our children what they cannot be taught in the district schools, namely, the principles of the Gospel. We do not want in any way to interfere with the rights of our fellow citizens who do not belong to our Church. We do not want to force any of this religion class work upon their children. We do believe, however, that an education without a God is a faulty one. We do believe that children should be taught morality and faith in God. But as the laws of the land are, this cannot be done in our district schools. We must keep the public schools free from all theological doctrines. No one need to fear this movement of ours. It is not intended for

propaganda amongst those who are not of us. But we claim the right to teach our own children what we want them taught. We believe that there is a great necessity of teaching them morality, principles of sound conduct, faith in God, and doctrines of salvation. The children may be taught the secular branches by the most polished teachers, but if they are not taught morality and faith their education will be deficient and they will not know how to reach the object for which they have come upon the earth. We like our children to receive a good education and to become mentally strong, and we encourage all the Latter-day Saints to take advantage of the district schools, of the high schools and the universities for the branches that are taught there, but we do feel that our children need more than they can get in those institutions, and for that reason we have established religion classes. Now, we have no objections to our friends of other denominations establishing classes and teaching their children the principles that they believe in. Our Catholic friends set us a good example in this respect. They will not let their children be neglected in religious instruction. We do not object to others teaching their children so long as they do not teach our children what we do not want them taught. We want our children to receive the kind of instruction that we know to be all-important to them. This is all there is to the religion classes. We are not attempting to mix church and state; we do not want to intrude our religion into the state schools; but we do claim the right to have our own children taught in the principles that we believe; and for this purpose we gather them together. In places where there are but few, if any, non-"Mormons" we may hire the schoolhouse after the school has been dismissed; but we particularly urge those in charge of the religion classes not to interfere with the children of non-"Mormons." I want to say to the Latter-day Saints, do not underestimate the importance of having your children taught the principles of the

Gospel in early life. We have church schools established, but as a general thing the children do not go there until they are out of the grades. Now, from seven to fourteen years of age is the time when the child's mind is plastic, and when you can make lasting impressions upon it. We do not want that time to go by without our doing something for the spiritual growth of the child; we want to teach our young children faith in Christ, and have them well grounded in His doctrines. I see it is time to dismiss the meeting. May the Lord bless you all, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang the anthem:

Lift up the voice in singing.

Benediction by Elder Collins Hakes, president of Maricopa stake.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The choir and congregation sang:

We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet

To guide us in these latter days.

Prayer by Elder Joseph E. Taylor.

Singing by the choir:

Hark! listen to the trumpeters!

They sound for volunteers;

On Zion's bright and flow'ry mount

Behold the officers.

ELDER DAVID H. CANNON,
(President of St. George Temple)

I feel honored this afternoon in having the opportunity of appearing before this vast assembly to represent the labors performed in the first temple erected in Utah—the St. George Temple. The labor commenced in the St. George Temple on the ninth day of January, 1877, under the direction of our late beloved president, Brigham Young. President Wilford Woodruff was appointed at that time to preside over the temple. For the first few years the work performed in that house of the Lord was very great, many people flocking from the northern settlements to attend to the labor necessary for the redemption of their dead kindred; but as the temples in other parts of the country were finished, the work in the St. George Temple very materially decreased, until we had very few in at-

tendance, so few in fact that at one time it was thought proper to close the house in consequence of the small amount of ordinance work that was being performed. This was in the time of President Woodruff's presidency over the Church. When it was mooted, President Woodruff made the remark to us that he expected to keep the temple open so that the people might have the opportunity of entering its sacred precincts and laboring for the redemption of their kindred dead, and if they failed to avail themselves of the opportunity then the responsibility should be upon the people and not upon him; for it was the Lord that had established the work with which we are identified, and he was satisfied that it would triumph. The work in the St. George Temple has been increasing for the last few months, and I believe there is an awakening among the people in regard to this great duty. Notwithstanding the fact that Elijah did come, in fulfillment of the prediction of Malachi, wherein he said that before the great and dreadful day of the Lord Elijah should come and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest the earth be smitten with a curse—I say, notwithstanding the fact that Elijah has come, and to a very great degree the hearts of the fathers have been turned to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, as manifested in the many genealogical societies that have been established in the earth since that time, be it known unto you, my brethren and sisters, that before the appearance of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple there were very few societies of that character and very little genealogical data that had been compiled in form in order to be made available for the Latter-day Saints; but since that time men have been moved upon, without knowing what power it was, to spend means in collecting genealogical records and publishing them to the world, and the Latter-day Saints have been able to avail themselves of the information thus afforded. The work of the Lord