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All my life I have looked with the spirit of reverence upon this building. I never dreamed that one day I should be privileged to sit upon these red plush seats. Since living within a stone's throw of Temple Block, my mother was always anxious that we attend the two o'clock afternoon session each Sunday, and as a boy I used to say:

Mother, it does not do any good for me to go over there, I just go to sleep. I cannot stay awake in the Tabernacle.

Well, son, that shows there's a good spirit there. (Laughter)
There is nothing to be afraid of, and I want you to go.

But she was not speaking of today; for I am afraid.

CONDITIONS IN THE NORTHWEST

I come from the great Northwest where I am laboring with young men and women that are gloriously fine. There are about 130 of them in our Mission, and about 11,000 members of the Church that we have on record scattered throughout the Northwestern States—a glorious part of the world, the most beautiful perhaps of all the world. They are busy now because of the conditions that prevail in creating armament and ships, erecting airports and providing facilities so that the United States will be ready. There is not very much unemployment in the Northwest. Our farmers are having some difficulties up around the Missoula district, the rains have been so copious that the wheat is sprouting in the shocks; they are unable to thresh it. This has been a wet year.

The Saints in the Mission are living the Gospel. The tithes have almost doubled this year over last year, and the missionaries have distributed more Books of Mormon than ever before. The people are open-minded and kind to us. Rarely do we hear anyone criticise.

VISIT TO ALASKA

Recently it was my privilege to travel to the far north and visit Alaska, which is part of the Northwestern States Mission. We have established there in Fairbanks a nice Branch of the Church. The missionaries went there last winter. During the summer months we had six missionaries laboring in Alaska. The two that were assigned to Anchorage have been very successful in establishing a Branch which now is functioning on its own. The Branch President, Brother Joseph Tibbitts, is in charge, and the soldier boys, those of the airport, many of them members of our Church, are in attendance, and they find a great deal of comfort in being permitted to go to a Branch of the Church and participate there in the Sunday School and the Mutual Improvement organization.

The Government is doing a tremendous job in that part of the world. There is a great airbase at Fairbanks, hangars the like of which

I have never seen in my life. Likewise in Anchorage, a city of 2500 people, now they have 12,000 people living there. In three or four days they erect themselves little homes, hammering together some two-by-fours and nailing cellotex on the sides. They are taking their families into these places and are rearing them. Rents are very high and the Government is paying tremendous wages to the workers there.

As Brother Greenwood was talking this morning in the Welfare meeting, warning our people about leaving home and security to go away to work at jobs that will perhaps last but a few months, I thought of what happened when I was in Alaska. One man had taken his family all the way to Anchorage, and it takes a week on the ocean to get there—to get one of those big paying jobs that of course would be shortlived. He passed away and left his wife and three little children there with his mother-in-law, with no visible means of support, but thank God she had found a little Branch of the Church. We were able to finance her trip back to the States, where she was provided for, and where she had friends who could help her become located.

HAPPINESS IN THE GOSPEL

I am grateful for a Church that is practical, grateful for a Church that reaches into our everyday lives and makes us happy. No one can live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and not be happy. No matter what our difficulties may be or what our trials may be, there is always someone near by in our Church to help us. I found it to be true in Europe; in South Africa likewise, and in the far north of Alaska; always the same spirit, always the same love; always the desire upon the part of the presiding Authorities to bless and encourage and protect. What a Church is ours! What love goes out to the people! What love and devotion are expressed by the people and shown by the people for their leadership! How glorious it is to have men who are willing to sacrifice and give, as our leaders do, to be with us and to bless us!

I am grateful for the opportunity that has come to me and mine to associate with the young people of the Church.

FULFILMENT OF A PATRIARCHAL BLESSING

When I was a lad, the Patriarch, placing his hands upon my head, said that my life should be cast with the youth of the Church. As a Bishop I took that to be my responsibility and labored with the young people. I labored for some thirteen years on the General Board of the Mutual Improvement Association, and as a Mission President. The work with these lovely young men and women who come out into the mission field has been the joy of my life, and they keep my wife and myself buoyant in our spirits and feeling every day to thank the Lord for our opportunities. And so the Lord has blessed us and helped us in the work that has been ours to do, and we are so grateful.

THE TEMPLE AT CARDSTON PRAISED

I would like to mention that in the Northwestern States Mission

there is an institution that bears a great influence among the people there, especially the membership of our Church. The leader of that institution is President Edward J. Wood. I am speaking of the Cardston Temple. I have discovered that permitting the missionaries to have one trip to the Cardston Temple has revitalized their lives, for they have not realized just what temple activity meant until they came under the spell of that man.

A MISSIONARY HEALED THROUGH FAITH

Not so very long ago a group of our missionaries were leaving Vancouver to take this trip over to Cardston to the Temple. One of these missionaries had had a drooping eyelid from his birth, and had been operated upon by the doctors, and had come under doctors' care, but had never been helped in the slightest degree. In talking with his District President he was talking about that eye, it worried him a bit. The District President said:

Well, you know what happened to me. I had a blessing here last May and my eyesight has been restored and I do not even wear my glasses any more. Why don't you have your eye fixed while you are over there this time? Why not have President Wood give you a blessing?

The missionaries went over to the Temple and finished their visit and were just on the point of leaving. President Wood came into the room just before they were going out of the temple and said:

I understand there are some people here who want blessings. The spirit of healing is in the Temple, and if your faith is right, and if the Lord is willing, you may have the blessing you desire.

That young Elder stood there and heard those remarks, and then President Wood bowed his head and began to pray. This Elder said to me:

President Smith, while he was praying the most wonderful feeling came over me I shall never forget it all the days of my life. That eyelid went up, and I walked out of the temple with my eye healed.

As I stood and looked at him and noticed that that eye was more open than the left one, I marveled at his condition. A month had passed since the occurrence, I had heard about it and was wondering whether it would remain so, but it has remained so, and he has called in all his one-eyed photographs from the missionaries and says he wants to give them one with his two eyes open instead of just the one.

And so, my brethren and sisters, no matter what difficulties and trials come to us we always have access to our Heavenly Father who will always reward us if we are humble. Remember, when we do what He says then we have a promise.

May God bless us all to remember this fact, that it is through our faith and through our works that our blessings come, and not through what others may do for us. May peace be in your homes, and joy and happiness be with you always, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.