

and that we may recognize in this strained and trying condition that besets us the privileges which are ours now, and that will be, for they were given by the Lord, even as He says: "Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence" (D. & C. 107:99).

I pray that God will give a keen desire to each man to serve in his own sphere to the best of his ability, that His work may roll on and that these blessings which are ours may be given to others, which I do in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER THOMAS E. MCKAY

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

It is a wonderful opportunity that we brethren have of meeting together twice a year in these great gatherings. Personally, I am very thankful for the privilege. It is a great strength to me to associate with you brethren. I love to meet with people and shake hands with them. I have enjoyed meeting you leaders in the stakes of Zion that I have had the privilege to visit, getting better acquainted with you and your good people. I appreciate the welcome I have received, and also commend you for the welcome that has been given as a rule by you or by a committee representing you to the people, especially the newcomers and the backward members, as they come into your chapels or your tabernacles at these stake conferences.

STRENGTH COMES FROM PRAYER

In visiting your conferences I have taken the occasion, usually in the Priesthood session, to call attention to the responsibility resting upon each one for the success of the conference. I have felt the need of the support, as I do this morning, of you brethren, of an interest in your faith and prayers; and I have suggested, and I hope I will not be presumptuous in suggesting now, that it is a good thing for every person present to offer up a silent prayer for those who are called upon to speak, I know each one will be strengthened by so doing; it will help you to concentrate and keep your mind upon the things that are being said, and I am sure the speakers will be benefited. I am a firm believer in the power of prayer. I love to think of and repeat the first verse of the song:

Ere you left your room this morning,
Did you think to pray?
In the name of Christ, our Savior,
Did you sue for loving favor,
As a shield today?

Oh how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day:
So when life gets dark and dreary,
Don't forget to pray.

Life is dark and dreary already for many families whose sons have

been reported "killed or missing in action" and I fear it will be "dark and dreary" for many, many more before this terrible war is over, so, please, "don't forget to pray."

Speaking of prayer, I should like to recommend to all here that they get the sermonette that was given by Brother Richard L. Evans at his broadcast a week ago Sunday, March 28th, and also I am sure you will want a copy of the timely remarks that were given by him yesterday on the increasing use of profanity. In fact all of his sermons are worth listening to and reading.

Yes, I believe in prayer, and I have always been grateful when those who are called upon to pray remember our members in war-torn countries. Our brothers and sisters appreciate these prayers; they appreciate what the presidency of the Church is doing for them in financial ways as well as being remembered in their prayers. There is seldom a letter that I receive from the presiding brethren in those missions that does not express appreciation for the prayers of the Saints here in Zion. These letters are getting fewer and farther between; it is getting increasingly more difficult to receive letters; in fact from the Netherlands, the German, and the Czechoslovakian missions we have not heard anything since the United States entered the war. Up until a month or so ago we did hear occasionally from Belgium and France by way of Switzerland. The past few weeks, however, even the letters from Switzerland have stopped coming and our letters returned, marked: "Service suspended; return to sender." We still hear regularly from Sweden and once in a while from Denmark and Norway via Sweden. The last word that we received from France came from Paris, not to me directly, but through a member who received a letter by way of Geneva and then reported to me.

HEALING THROUGH FAITH

I should like to take time to make reference to my meeting of this member. From 1909 to 1912, I was presiding over the Swiss-German Mission. France at that time belonged to this mission; in fact, we have five missions now where we had only one then. We had just held a splendid conference in Lausanne for the French district. After the concluding session, we were invited to a home where one of the family was very ill, a beautiful girl, just in her teens, always cheerful and full of faith; we most earnestly and fervently desired to help her. We had prayer with the family and then administered to her, and in that administration we promised her that she would get well. She had tuberculosis and had been confined to her bed for years. Returning that night from Lausanne to Zurich, our headquarters, I must confess that I was worried because of the promise that we had made. She had so much faith, as did also her family, and I was afraid if that promise was not fulfilled it might shatter that faith. I prayed humbly that the Lord would make that promise good, and again before retiring that night I prayed and I continued to pray. A few months following that conference in Lausanne I was released to come home. About two years later I was in the annex

of the temple preparing to go through, when a lady came up to me and grasped my hand in both of hers and said: "Oh Frere McKay, Frere McKay" (Brother McKay, Brother McKay). It was the same young sister completely restored to her health; and now to show her appreciation to our Heavenly Father for the restoration of her health she is devoting as much time as she possibly can in doing temple work. She was the one who delivered to me the good news from Paris that our members there are still holding their meetings. Her sister is living in Paris, and the letter stated that our few members there gather in her home and hold their meetings.

REPORTS FROM MISSIONS IN EUROPE

We also had a very interesting letter from Switzerland, not to me directly, but to some of my friends from Zurich. A very splendid Relief Society conference was held. About one hundred women were present. We have a photograph of them, and are having it printed in the *Relief Society Magazine*. They all look happy, but in that letter it was stated that thousands of people in some of the neighboring countries to Switzerland are dying.

We also received a very interesting letter, from Aleppo, Syria, I think a lot of it, and I know it took the brother hours to write it in English; it was mailed November 13, 1942, and was received March 17, 1943. I quote it as written:

I and all the Saints much happy that we hear from you and able to answer to our President our condition in this war time that is Heavenly Father's grace thank to the Lord, that He is keeping us true to His earthly guides.

I send three months' report of the branch, and we making ready to send our yearly reports. You can know our conditions from reports. Relief Society and Mutual meetings start Oct. 1st. Nearly two months was vacations.

We are much thirsty to hear from you all the time if possible. That helps us to much. All members are fine and praying to our dear prophet to bless and improve his health to guide his people in this dark days. Give our best wishes to missionaries who are in this continent. We pray to the Lord to strengthen our Church guides, our presidents, members, and all honest in heart.

May I read just a brief statement from the last letter received from the Swedish Mission?

The work in the mission started with renewed vigor by all the organizations with the commencement of this month. The unity was especially good and the offer willingness great. The living cost was in constant rising. If one compares the prices of the summer of 1942 with those of 1935, it is found that fish has increased at an average of 125%, meat 95%, root stuffs and fruit 109%, groceries 54%, bread 41%, dairy products, eggs and margarine 38% and flour 25%. Altogether this makes an increase in provisions of 63%. With respect to heat and light, clothes, etc., it will be found that the cost of living since immediately before the war broke out in September, 1939, has risen about 40%.

They have received very favorable reports in two of the leading papers published in Stockholm. These are the headlines, "Training

Fields and the Barracks at Salt Lake," "Christian Cooperation," "Seventy Welfare Centers." Then the president says the article was well written throughout. Also the *Svenska Dagbladet*, another leading Stockholm daily paper, had these headings—"The Mormons in Utah, a Religious Sect but also a Cooperative Organization," . . . "The Pupils of Brigham Young, Pioneers in the Domain of School Affairs and Welfare Work." This article was also very good and closed:

The Mormons, their Church, and their activities, all of which are sometimes called humbug, but it is a fact that there is much to study in Utah on the domain of education, the social activities, the industry, and co-operation.

Of course we receive letters regularly from the British Mission. Their annual report for 1942 shows:

Membership, 6491, number of branches increased from 71 to 75, number of branch Relief Societies from 46 to 51, Sunday Schools from 53 to 62. The M.I.A., Beehive and Primary organizations made progress during the year . . . 51 baptisms, slight decrease; 52 deaths, increase of 20. Other statistics remain about the same as the year 1941. Harvest Festivals, Union Meetings, Priesthood activities, Branch Reunions, cottage meetings, and other district and branch activities have been greater than previous year.

The Lord has been merciful and kind to us in the British Mission. There is no hardship among our members as far as we know. Our homes have been blessed, although two families have suffered from enemy action in losing some of their belongings. Their lives have been miraculously preserved.

In the British Mission they are doing a very splendid missionary work. They have had ninety-two full-time missionaries since the beginning of the war and nearly four hundred part-time missionaries (many of them sisters), most of them working in the seventy-five branches.

DEFINITE NEED FOR WELFARE WORK

I think sometimes, brethren, when listening to the reports of Welfare workers in our Welfare meetings at the quarterly conferences—not so very often, but occasionally we hear a discouraging note sounded—everybody is working now, busy earning money, and we do not see the necessity for following the advice of the brethren and planting crops, the Priesthood taking the lead. We will give the money, they say. I hope you brethren who have this attitude will remember that we have thirty-two thousand members of our Church, our brothers and sisters, in these war-torn countries, just in the European missions alone. I hope to see the day, and that soon, when we can use the bombers to carry wheat over there, and other foods and clothing, instead of bombs. That time will come, and when it does it is not the donations of money that will feed the needy, brethren; they cannot eat the money nor can they buy food, because it will not be there, even if they had the money. So remember it is food that they will need. This remark comes to me and I will give it in closing; my father often had occasion to use it with us boys. One of the boys is conducting the exercises today, and I think my father used it on him just as often as he did on the other three

brothers, if not oftener. When we would complain a little because we could not play baseball or perhaps go fishing on Sunday, he would talk with us, and would generally end up with: "Remember this boys, 'The path of counsel is the path of safety.'"

May God help us all to remember that, and keep all the commandments of God, that we may have joy in this life and exaltation in the life to come, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER CHARLES A. CALLIS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Softly beams the sacred dawning
Of the great Millennial morn,
And to Saints gives welcome warning
That the day is hasting on.

Splendid, rising o'er the mountains,
Glowing with celestial cheer,
Streaming from eternal fountains,
Rays of living light appear.

(John Jacques, "Softly Beams
the Sacred Dawning")

CHRIST'S COMING THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

I do not believe that hope has bade the world farewell. I think, I firmly believe that in this huge, ugly mass of evil that is rolling and swelling there is some good, imprisoned temporarily; that this good is working towards deliverance and triumph.

This earth, according to the scriptures, is moving towards a glorious ideal. We believe that Christ will reign personally upon the earth and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory. By prophets this glorious condition has long been foretold. Christ's reign on earth, when He will establish the millennium—and it will not be established before He comes—has been the consolation of martyrs and the hope of suffering saints. It is the hope of the world. The mission of this Church, I understand, is to preach the gospel, to prepare a people for the great millennial reign. This Church has been established and dedicated for that very purpose, and in his first visit to the Prophet Joseph, the angel Moroni told him that the preparatory work was about to commence, to prepare a people for that glorious event. We do not hope to convert all the world before the second coming of the Son of God, but through this gospel and the government that God has set up in the Church, it is our destiny, our bounden duty, to prepare a people to meet the Savior.

PREPARATION FOR THE MILLENNIUM

We talk, and justly so, of the greatness of our Priesthood quorums and all of our auxiliary organizations, and I would not for the world underestimate their strength and power and the great work they are