

President George Albert Smith:

The Choir and congregation will now sing: "I'll Go Where You Want Me To Go," after which we will hear from Elder Matthew Cowley, also of the Council of the Twelve.

As I announce that hymn, "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go," I can imagine there are many of the thousands of people in this congregation who have in mind a man who used to sing it so beautifully, who traveled all over the Church as a missionary of the Church, Elder Melvin J. Ballard. I always think of him when we sing this hymn.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn—"I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go."

ELDER MATTHEW COWLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, it is good to be back from wandering to and fro in the earth. I have long needed the inspiration of a general conference, and I have not been disappointed.

When we sustained this day, as the custodians of the kingdom, the men and women whose names were read, I was convinced within my heart that as long as men and women such as these are the custodians of the kingdom, the ordinances will never be changed, and the everlasting covenants will never be broken.

It is my privilege to serve as a missionary in some of the far-flung areas of the earth and in the islands of the sea. I am reminded of the last commission which the Master gave to his disciples and said unto them:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16:15.)

SIGNS TO FOLLOW BELIEVERS

And certain signs were to follow those who believed. Among those signs were these, that they should speak with new tongues, that they would lay their hands upon the sick, and they would be healed. About these two signs I would like to speak for just a moment while I visit with you.

On Friday evening I attended the reunion of the New Zealand missionary society, and as I stood before that group I could see more men who could speak the Maori language of New Zealand than there are among the million and a half white people residing in New Zealand who can speak the native language of their native people.

I attended the Tahitian missionary reunion, and I am sure that the same could be said of those men at that reunion. I believe there

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are here in this city more white men who can speak the Hawaiian language than there are in all the islands of Hawaii. I am sure that there are more white people here who speak the Samoan language than there are among the white residents of Samoa, and the same is true of the other islands of the Pacific.

They do speak with new languages, my brothers and sisters, when they accept the call to go into the world to preach the gospel to all creatures.

MISSIONARY LABORS IN NEW ZEALAND

I am reminded of President McKay's beautiful tribute to youth, the confidence he has in youth. I am personally grateful for the confidence this Church had in me in my extreme youth. I was just turning seventeen when I was called to go to New Zealand as a missionary. My first appointment there was to a little place called Judea, a wonderful place to go, for a young missionary. At the first meeting I attended in Judea, I could not understand the words that were being said, and after the meeting a sister who could speak English said to me: "Do you know what they said in there, and what they did?" I said: "I could not understand a word."

She said: "Well, you were called and sustained as the secretary of the Relief Society of the Judea Branch."

I made up my mind right there and then that the Relief Society was not going to take any liberty with my time as a missionary, without my knowing something about it; and so I determined to get the gift of the Maori language, even if I had to work for it, and I did have to work for it.

GIFT OF TONGUES

I studied eleven hours every day for several weeks. I read the Book of Mormon in Maori, and my studies were punctuated with fasting and with prayer; and on my twelfth Sunday I delivered my first sermon in the Maori language. They do speak with new tongues, those who accept the call to the ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I have seen young missionaries in Samoa and in Tonga and in New Zealand and in Hawaii who, within six months' time, could deliver sermons in the languages of the people among whom they were laboring — young men and women who did not have much scholastic training before they were called into the mission fields, but these young men and women, placed in the hands of God, and molded like clay in the hands of the potter, received the gifts which they had been promised.

I had a shoemaker on one occasion down in New Zealand say to me. "Oh, you Mormon missionaries think you are smart. You come out here and learn to speak the Maori language in two or three years." He said: "I was only here six weeks, and I could say "Kaore

au moriorio ki te korio Maori," which means absolutely nothing in the Maori language. What he was trying to say was that he did not know how to speak the Maori language, and he did not. I saw him three or four years later, and he was still trying to say he did not know how to speak the Maori language.

I have seen our young men in Hawaii, in the Central Pacific Mission, learn to teach the gospel in Japanese.

RESULTS OF ADMINISTRATION

Brothers and sisters, with the restoration of this gospel came the reiteration of Christ's commission: ". . . these signs shall follow them that believe." (D. & C. 84:65.) There is no question about it in my mind. "Lay your hands upon the sick, and they shall recover." (*Ibid.*, 66:9.)

In Tonga last year there came to the mission home a couple who had been married for twenty-seven years, and they had never been blessed with children. This couple wanted to have children, and so they requested us to lay our hands upon them and bless them that they might have children. And so President Huntsman and I laid our hands upon that couple, and we blessed them. They had the gift of being healed. They had the gift of receiving these blessings.

When my wife and I visited Tonga, I think it was last May, the child had been born.

Last year I went from Tonga to Samoa. Another couple who had been married for years and had had no children came to the mission home there to be blessed that they might have this greatest of all blessings. And incidently, brothers and sisters, the greatest calamity that can come to the home of a Polynesian is not to have children. It is such a great calamity when they do not have children that they go out and borrow their neighbor's children and rear them.

Well, we blessed this young couple, and when my wife and I were there in May, they brought the child to me to be christened and blessed, and asked that it might be given the name of my wife.

A lady came to me in the mission home suffering from what the Samoans call *mu mu* — or elephantiasis — her legs swollen out of all proportion. She said: "Brother Cowley, bless me and remove from me this dread disease." A month ago in Samoa she came to the mission home and she said: "Do you remember me?" I said, "Yes, you are Sister Purcell who was suffering from *mu mu* when I was here before." She showed me her ankles, and they were entirely normal. Then she said: "Now, I want the cataracts to drop from my eyes. Bless me now that I may receive this blessing through the priesthood of God, from God who has all power to heal."

FAITH OF POLYNESIANS

Down in New Zealand during my last mission—and incidental-

ly I have not reported my last mission to New Zealand when I was president there. I will wait six or seven years to do that and be in line with some of you other mission presidents. But I went to a place there one day. It was during the war years. A young man brought his child, an eight-month-old child to me, and he said: President Cowley, I want you to christen our baby." I said: "It looks like quite an old child to be blessed. Why have you not brought it before?"

"Oh," he said, "I just have not gotten around to it."

So I said, "All right, what is the name?" And he told me the name, and I was just about to bless the child and he said: "While you are giving it a name, please give it its vision. It was born blind."

Just like that—just as a matter of fact! "You have the authority to give this child a name and a blessing and you have the authority to give it its vision."

I was overwhelmed. I was doubtful, but I knew that within the being of that Polynesian there was the simple faith of a child, a faith not beclouded by psychology or any of the learning of men but a simple faith in God and the promises he had made through his Son Jesus Christ. I gave that child its name, and eventually I mustered up enough courage to bless it with its vision.

President Halversen knows the little boy. I saw it a few months ago. He is now six or seven years old, running all over the place, and he can see as well as I can see this day. "Lay your hands upon the sick, and they shall recover."

STORY OF PEARL SHELL DIVER

I would like to add a story or two here to those which have been related by Bishop Richards. Down in Tahiti where I have recently visited—and I could tell some stories about traveling on ships down there—our people down there have a seasonal occupation of pearl shell diving, and our men are the best pearl shell divers in the islands of French Oceania. Why are they the best divers? Because they keep the Word of Wisdom, and they can stay under the water longer than the others who do not. They stay under the water at a depth of ninety feet for upwards of two minutes and forty seconds. They dive to that depth and bring up the pearl shell which gives them part of their means of support for the remainder of the year until the next season approaches.

This one young Latter-day Saint placed his pearl shell on the shore in two piles, one was a large one and one a rather small one, and when the trader came around with whom he had the contract to sell his pearl shell the trader asked him about the small pile. He said: "Is that yours?" He said: "No, that is not mine."

The trader said: "Where did it come from?"

He said: "Oh, I dove for it."

"Well, why is it not yours?"

He said: "That is God's pearl shell."

"Who has the right to sell it?"

He said: "I can sell it."

"Well then, I will buy it."

"Yes, you may buy it, but not at the contract price. You will have to pay the market price for God's pearl shell"; because the market price had gone up since he had signed the contract.

And so he sold God's pearl shell at the market price and his own at the price for which he had contracted. And when I inquired what he would have done had the price gone down instead of up, he said: "I would not have segregated God's pearl shell. I would have left it with mine. I would always see to it that God gets the top price for his pearl shell."

How would you like to have a partner like that, brothers and sisters? When you men are dividing up your pearl shell what consideration do you give to the price which should be paid for God's pearl shell? I have a sneaking idea that if the price had changed as it did in that instance that some of us would have tried in some way to have obtained the market price rather than the contract price for our own.

HONESTY IN TITHE-PAYING

I had a little mother, and I still have her down in New Zealand. I knew her on my first mission when I was just a young boy. In those days she called me her son. When I went back to preside, she called me her father. I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Now, on one occasion I called in as I always did when I visited that vicinity, to see this grand little woman, then in her eighties, and blind. She did not live in an organized branch, had no contact with the priesthood except as the missionaries visited there. We had no missionaries in those days. They were away at war.

I went in and greeted her in the Maori fashion. She was out in her back yard by her little fire. I reached forth my hand to shake hands with her, and I was going to rub noses with her and she said: "Do not shake hands with me, Father."

I said: "Oh, that is clean dirt on your hands. I am willing to shake hands with you. I am glad to. I want to."

She said: "Not yet." Then she got on her hands and knees and crawled over to her little house. At the corner of the house there was a spade. She lifted up that spade and crawled off in another direction, measuring the distance as she went. She finally arrived at a spot and started digging down into the soil with that spade. It finally struck something hard. She took out the soil with her hands and lifted out a fruit jar. She opened that fruit jar and reached down in it, took something out and handed it to me, and it turned out to be New Zealand money. In American money it would have been equivalent to one hundred dollars.

She said: "There is my tithing. Now I can shake hands with the priesthood of God."

I said: "You do not owe that much tithing."

She said: "I know it. I do not owe it now, but I am paying some in advance, for I do not know when the priesthood of God will get around this way again."

And then I leaned over and pressed my nose and forehead against hers, and the tears from my eyes ran down her cheeks, and as I left her, I asked God in my heart to bring down upon me a curse if from that day henceforth and forever I did not return to God his pearl shell, one-tenth of all that should ever come into my hands.

I love this work, my brothers and sisters. I thank God for my missionary companions. The traveling which I do is sometimes hazardous, but I love it; I feel the protection of the Almighty God.

DIVINE PROTECTION IN TRAVELS

We left New Zealand three or four weeks ago, and I was on one of those fine clippers of the air. Two hours out of New Zealand we struck a violent storm. The first thing I realized was that we had struck something. As a matter of fact, we had been struck by lightning. The lightning had penetrated the nose of the ship, and that lightning ball bounced around the plane. How it missed the propellers, I do not know. It destroyed one stabilizer on the plane. We continued on our way. I believe from that moment until we landed at Nandi, Fiji, God was the pilot of that plane, and I was his servant, praying that we might be landed safely at our destination.

I had no fear in my heart. I know that God looks after his own.

I was on a little ship in Tahiti, a little submarine chaser of about fifty tons, a converted submarine chaser. The way that thing acted I am sure it had not been converted; not properly so. Eight days I was on that submarine chaser, and there was never a calm moment. There were a hundred and ten live pigs on the deck space, and they were closed in by crates containing chickens. I think Tahiti is the only place in the world where roosters crow all night. And then just ahead in front of these porcine quadrupeds and the fowl, were thirty-eight seasick natives.

President Mitchell and I were in a tiny cabin. That ship tossed and rolled. We never had our clothes off for six days. I had to lie on my bunk and hang on to some pipes overhead to keep from being catapulted out into whatever space there was there, and I have never heard such a symphony in my life. I will never forget it. Pigs squealing, roosters crowing, sick natives retching, and me hanging on for dear life. But I was not seasick. Never have I been seasick or plane sick or car sick or train sick. I have been sick, but it has never been caused by vehicles of transportation.

GOD OPENS THE WAY

I left Tahiti in a freight ship. I was a member of the crew of that freight ship. It was the only way I could get on the ship. I had to go to the captain and ask him if he would take me on as a passenger, and he said: "No, we are not allowed to take passengers."

I said: "May I sign on as a member of the crew?"

He said: "I think that can be arranged."

And so I signed on as a member of the crew, and I went from there to New Zealand. I never did find out what my duties were on that ship as a member of the crew. I thought for a time that I might be the chaplain, but we crossed the international date line Saturday night, and when I woke up it was Monday, so Sunday was scratched right out, and I could not even perform my duties as a chaplain.

When we arrived at Samoa, I was called to the bridge of the ship. The captain said to me: "Do you know where Apia, Samoa, is?"

I said: "Yes, you are just passing it."

He had passed our port of destination so we turned back and went into Apia. From there, we went on to New Zealand, and before they started doing the heavy work of unloading the ship, I signed off as a member of the crew.

God opens up the way, brothers and sisters, for his servants to accomplish their work.

LOVE ALL PEOPLE

I see sitting before me now one or two of our good Japanese members from the Central Pacific Mission. Some of the finest Saints we have in this Church are our Japanese Saints. I think sixty-five percent of them pay a full tithing. Most of them keep the Word of Wisdom, and so our erstwhile enemies are indeed among our best Saints. As President Kirkham said, let us love all people.

I love the people of my missions with all my heart. I love my missionary companions. They are doing a great work. They are the servants of God. Way down in far-off Australia, that great commonwealth, over in New Zealand and back up into the Polynesian Islands, your sons and your daughters are those who have gone into the world in answer to the commission of our Lord and Savior.

God bless you all. I leave my testimony with you that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, and these are men of God, endowed with the power from on high to be the leaders of God's children in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. May we sustain them as such I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.