

RELIGIOUS.

Sunday Services.

Religious services were held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday January 30th, 1892, commencing at 2 p. m., President Angus M. Cannon presiding.

The choir sang the hymn commencing:

How are Thy servants blest! O Lord,
How sure is their defense!

Prayer was offered by Elder H. P. Richards.

The choir sang:

Lord, Thou wilt hear me when I pray!
I am forever Thine!

The Priesthood of the Eighteenth Ward officiated in the administration of the Sacrament.

President Angus M. Cannon introduced Elders Heber S. Cutler and O. D. Romney who had just returned from a mission to New Zealand and Australia.

ELDER HEBER S. CUTLER

then addressed the congregation. He realized, he said, in standing before the Saints, that he had received many blessings from the Lord, inasmuch as he had been preserved on his long journey and were permitted to return in safety to the Saints in Zion. He desired the faith and prayers of the congregation, in order that he might be enabled to say something of interest concerning the work in which we are engaged.

Having received a call to go on a mission, he left his home on April 6th, 1889, and arrived in New Zealand on April 30th. He was met by President Wright and a few days later attended a conference in Napier. There he met nearly all the Elders in the mission in that country, and about 500 native Saints, residing in that locality. He had a peculiar reception, one to be always remembered. The Book of Mormon had just been translated into the Maori tongue and the first printed copies were to be distributed among the people. This event was looked forward to with great interest and pleasure by the Saints, and an extra demonstration had been prepared on that account. When we arrived, hundreds of native Saints gave us a dance, and the cheers that accompanied it almost made the earth tremble. The just arrived Elders were then placed in a row, and the natives formed a line marching toward us. We did not know why this was done, but we should soon learn. The Maoris greet their friends by rubbing their noses, and we soon had the pleasure of performing this ceremony.

The conference lasted for three days, and then the Elders were appointed to their various fields of labor. The speaker was appointed to teach school in the Taupo district, which is situated in the central part of the country. There had been no school in this part before, and it was now started chiefly as an experiment. It was not well attended at first owing both to the difficulty in getting a place and lack of means. But after it had been kept for

about three months the Saints bought some books and the children made rapid progress.

It was remarkable to see how easily the children acquired knowledge of the English language. By the time the speaker left, most of them had gone through the First reader, and many had progressed well in arithmetic. It seems to be natural to them to write, and many of the little ones learn it very fast. The school was left in charge of Brother and Sister Dunford and was attended by children from surrounding districts.

Having been appointed to labor in the Bay of Islands, Elder Cutler left the Taupo district and proceeded to the new field, where he remained for eighteen months. There had been many baptisms in this district before his arrival and the work was therefore moving only slowly as regards new converts; yet the work is in steady progress.

The Maori people have many peculiar habits which the Elders have to acquire. It is necessary that they should make themselves as similar to the people as they can, in order to gain their respect and esteem. The native Saints are well aware that they cannot provide for the Elders the comforts which they had in their own homes, but they freely offer what they have. The Elders appreciate this and endeavor to live as the people, using their best judgment. The missionaries have to eat with the natives and often stay in the same room with a family of seven or eight members, or more.

There is some difference in this respect in the various districts. In the northern part of the country, the people are not well off. In the southern part, many of the Saints have large estates and considerable means. Here the Elders are given the best of everything. However, the variations in temporal circumstances do not effect the Elders. No matter in what locality they are placed, they endeavor to have the Spirit of God with them and to apply themselves to the work of doing good.

There are now about 3000 native Saints in that land. Many would be willing to emigrate to Zion. But the circumstances with which they are surrounded in their native country have had the natural effect upon them of making them to a certain degree unfit for a colder climate and the pursuit of our avocations of business. It would therefore probably not be wise to encourage emigration to any large extent. The probability is that they would become dissatisfied with their changed circumstances, and this would produce a bad effect in several ways. But when the time comes which the Lord may have appointed for their gathering, all this will be changed.

Having labored in this district for thirteen months, Elder Cutler was called to go to Australia. He arrived in Victoria January 20th, 1891. From there he went to Queensland where he met Brother Young. As it was very hot at the time they could not travel. But they had some tracts printed for distribution as soon as the weather should permit them to take up their travels. Eight months were spent in this field of labor.

The work of preaching the principles of the Gospel in Australia was attended with a great deal of pleasure, although there is much indifference among the people to all kinds of religion. They do not desire to hear the Gospel in any form. There are now four Elders located there, in that vast country. There are four large cities, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. The treatment which the Elders receive is generally kind. There is no persecution. Several converts were made, and the speaker left the field with fair prospects of more work to be done.

The speaker remarked that it seems as if the world had departed from the ways of truth and righteousness. People do not have much desire to associate with the servants of God, religiously. There is a great deal of sin committed in the large cities and it is hard to make people realize their position. They are doing very little to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To me it is a great pleasure to reflect on the fact that we are living in an age that is so near to the coming of the Son of God, even though mankind have no regard for it. The signs of the times indicate that great changes are taking place all over the world. There is a state of confusion everywhere, and people seek to close their ears to the testimony of truth. But we know, that if they do not repent and turn to God, they will have to suffer the consequences. We know that it is necessary for all to embrace the Gospel and follow its precepts. We know that those who are truthful, both the living and the dead, will meet the Savior in His coming. The Elders are blessed in their work notwithstanding the difficulties they have to meet. There is joy in endeavoring to save souls, and it is a work that is not lost, but which will end in a glorious result and bring great reward.

ELDER O. D. ROMNEY

was the next speaker. He remarked that it was with peculiar feelings he rose before the congregation, but he did so relying upon the assistance of the faith and prayers of the Saints.

He went on his mission over three years ago, on November 11th, 1888. This was his first departure from Utah. On reaching San Francisco, the largest city he had ever seen at that time, he was struck with the wickedness that could be seen in that place. He did not stay long there but soon found himself on board the "Almira" en route for his mission field. On reaching the Sandwich Islands there was an opportunity for him to partake of a banquet at the royal palace, but instead of availing himself of this, he attended a meeting of Hawaiian Saints. The stay at this port was very brief, and after a voyage of two weeks he landed in Auckland. He was appointed to labor in the Bay of Islands district and left the next day for his field where he met his brother George.

The reception was similar to that described by the previous speaker. The Elders have to do as the natives do, else they can have no influence with the people. The customs which at first seem very strange, soon lose this appearance and it becomes as natural to rub the noses as to shake hands.