

## GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The Sixty-eighth annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. on Wednesday, April 6th, 1898. President Wilford Woodruff presiding.

Of the general authorities present on the stand there were of the First Presidency—Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith; of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—Lorenzo Snow, Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant, John W. Taylor, Marriner W. Merrill, Matthias F. Cowley and Abraham Owen Woodruff; Patriarch John Smith; of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies—Seymour B. Young, C. D. Fjelstead, B. H. Roberts, George Reynolds and Jonathan G. Kimball; of the Presiding Bishopric—William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton and John R. Winder.

Conference was called to order by President George Q. Cannon. The choir and congregation sang the hymn which begins:

How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word.

Opening prayer by Elder John Nicholson.

All hail the glorious day,  
By Prophets long foretold,  
When with harmonious lay,  
The sheep of Israel's fold  
On Zion's hill his praise proclaim,  
And shout Hosanna to His name,  
Was sung by the choir.

**PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF.**

I feel very thankful this morning at having the privilege of meeting so many of the Latter-day Saints in this the sixty-eighth annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I had feared that I should not be able to attend this Conference, as I have been quite unwell the past month; but the last day or two I have been blessed with better health. It is a great satisfaction to me to have this privilege; and I am satisfied in my own mind that there are many, including the Prophet Joseph Smith and others of the leaders of the Church in the spirit world, who are quite as deeply interested in the Conferences and our work today as we can be ourselves. And I hope that while we are together we may have the enjoyment of the Spirit of God, and that our minds may be open, and our teachings and instructions may be led in that channel which will be to the edification of the Saints and the benefit of us all.

The signs of the times show that the Lord has not forgotten His promises given through the inspiration of the Prophets and Apostles in days that are past and gone. There has been a great change in the world with regard to Mormonism in the last year of our lives, and there has been a great increase of the labors of the Elders of Israel among the nations of the earth, where they have been called to travel. And I hope and trust that we may be in a condition that we may comprehend and understand our duties today, and what there is lying before us; and all that we have to perform in order to do the will of the Lord and carry out His purposes in placing us on the earth.

I hope and trust that the Spirit of God may be with us all; not only those who speak and teach during Conference, but also those who hear. I pray to God that His Spirit may be over us, that our minds may comprehend our duties during this Conference, and all those things required at our hands; and that we may be true and faithful

while we dwell in the flesh; and when we are called to give an account of the deeds done in the body, that we may feel justified in the blessings of God that have been given unto us, and in the privileges we have been able to enjoy in our day and generation. I say, God bless you; and I pray for His Spirit to rest upon the Saints of God, and those who may address us. This is my desire in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON** was the next speaker. He expressed gratification that so large a number of the Saints had convened at the opening session; also that President Woodruff was present and we could see him and hear his voice. He then spoke of the wonderful change which had recently taken place in the position occupied by the work of God. In dark hours of the past, when its destruction had been threatened and hoped for by its enemies, the servants of the Lord had predicted brighter and better times. They had been sustained by the Spirit of prophecy. The deliverances which had been wrought out showed what God could do for a people to enable them to carry out His purposes. The discourse throughout was devoted to showing the wonderful events associated with the Church in its entire history, with special reference to the overwhelming proofs of the existence with it of the Spirit of God—the spirit of prophecy.

Some of the predictions of the past related to the expansion and efficacy of missionary work. President Cannon showed how these were being fulfilled. The number of Elders now in the field was about 1,700, and they were being received with unprecedented good will and meeting with unparalleled success. It was stated that, under proper conditions women of the Church would, in the future, take part in missionary labors. When converts shall be made abroad it is now deemed advisable that they should remain until they are grounded in the faith, and that strong branches may be built up to assist the Elders in their work.

President Cannon likewise spoke commendably of the labors abroad of members of the quorum of the Twelve, and made special reference to the fact of Elder Anton H. Lund of that quorum, accompanied by Elder F. F. Hintze, having gone to Palestine, the chief object of their mission being to establish a gathering place for the Saints of the Orient. Allusion was likewise made to the faithful labors of the Presidents of Seventies.

**PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH** was the next speaker. He testified from his own experience and the whisperings of the Spirit, to the truth of the remarks of the preceding speakers; and followed this testimony with an address devoted chiefly to these subjects. The beneficial temporal, as well as spiritual nature of the work of God; the need of the guidance and blessings of the Lord in all the labors of life; the unfailing mercies of God to the faithful and their withdrawal from those who forget God; the unfortunate tendency toward recklessness and unfaithfulness on the part of many members of the Church; manifested in the non-observance of the Word of Wisdom, and other laws of consistency; the danger attending the display of bigotry and narrowness.

The choir sang the anthem.

Jesus, I my cross have taken.

Benediction by Patriarch John Smith.

#### Afternoon Session.

Opening hymn:  
"High on the mountain top  
A banner is unfurled,  
Ye nations now look up,  
It waves to all the world."  
sung by the choir.  
Prayer by Elder Anthony Ivins.

Singing by the choir:

"Awake, ye Saints of God, awake!  
Call on the Lord in mighty prayer,  
That He will Zion's bondage break,  
And bring to naught the fowler's snare."

**PRESIDENT LORENZO SNOW,**

of the council of the Apostles, was the first speaker. The privilege of the Latter-day Saints to exercise faith in behalf of the speakers to the end of drawing out instructions of benefit to them, was referred to. Without that assistance of God it was impossible for any man, no matter how competent, to minister in spiritual things; and the advantages of such work were within the reach of all.

Individual labor, each man working for himself, was the rule marked out in the spirit world, for the guidance of men in their second estate, to the end that salvation might be gained through the faithful performance of every duty. No one should be discouraged on account of not being able to accomplish at once all his desires; but he should press on to the mark of his high calling. Advancement then would be inevitable, as the work of God was characterized by perpetual progress. None should be idle, but all should exercise the privileges of enjoyment under proper bounds, while in the performance of their daily labors. The highest enjoyment could be obtained by study and reflection upon things past, present and to come. There was great enjoyment in the memory of the past, in consequence of having done our full duty, and, in the reflection of accomplishing what was necessary in the present. Much vexation experienced by the Saints was unnecessary. It was a consequence of not knowing whether they were accepted of God. When a man understands the nature of the glorious promises conveyed through the Gospel of Christ, it was an incentive for him to strive to obtain their fulfillment. When we shall get into the future life and look backward to what we accomplished in this, it will be a case of happiness. Our minds should be in a constant state of activity in the lines of truth, that progress in righteousness might go on unceasingly. The time would come when the Saints would go back to Jackson county, Mo., and we should be preparing for that time and the conditions that would then exist. In that time there would be no poor among the Saints. The Lord would fully reveal a system in relation to temporal affairs that would be perfect. We were now fairly well agreed in spiritual things, but there were wide differences with regard to financial matters. Yet we would some time be as fully united on the one subject as the other.

**ELDER HEBER J. GRANT,**

of the quorum of the Twelve, followed. He had enjoyed the spirit and teachings of the Conference, and rejoiced in the testimonies and evidences he was continually receiving, of the truth of the Gospel and the goodness of God. All the faithful Saints had great cause to feel grateful for the favorable conditions now surrounding them, and their escape from the great trials and tribulations of the past. He regretted that the remarks of the officers of the Church to the people, had to take the form of a constant repetition of the commandments of God. Notwithstanding the general testimony of the Saints to the truth of the Gospel, and the righteousness of its laws, very many who held this testimony seemed unwilling to live up to those laws. Practice did not always keep pace with profession. Self-sacrifice for the advancement of the cause of God was not general enough. Deliverance from financial bondage could be confidently looked forward to, if the Saints would