

32 a pound. A man with eyes in his head and the business instinct of the average American will see avenues for profitable investments of money and labor in every direction, soon as peace is restored in the island.

It seems a pity to take advantage of the people's misfortunes, but many are the fine old casa in Havana and other cities which will be bought for a song. These stately palaces of impoverished grandeur with their marble floors and pillared corridors, and inner court yards, their fountains and palm trees, are fairly begging for purchasers, owing to the financial distress of their owners.

It goes particularly hard with the proud hidalgos to have to sell their property to the hated Yankees, who are looked upon as a horde of greedy shop-keepers. As if any nation under the sun could be more greedy for gain than Spain has shown herself since the earliest days of the Conquest! Everywhere in Spanish-America you hear a great deal about the invincible valor of Spain and the sordid character of the Yankees. Their literature tells us that Spanish patriotism is unconquerable while North Americans love dollars more than country, and that when the latter seeks to "meddle" in the affairs of Cuba, illustrious Spain will teach them a lesson in international manners. A pamphlet, widely distributed in Havana not long ago, furnished rich reading to the few Americans who remained in the city. It said that in the event of the aforesaid "meddling," all Europe would rush to the rescue of Spain, "whose ever-glorious history constitutes the grandest page in the annals of the world." It reminds the money-grasping Yankees that when it comes to war, valor is a necessary element, and that they must not think they can fight Spain's heroic soldiers with dollars alone! Then the little book goes on to give the denouement. It describes the invasion of Cuba by American troops; recounts battle after battle in which the immense superiority of American numbers is always overcome by the "invincible valor of our illustrious army." And finally after an unbroken chain of military triumphs, for Spain, extending over a series of months, and culminating in a stunning defeat for the United States, the Yankees humbly sue for peace, pay Spain a heavy indemnity, and withdraw from the island with many apologies, having learned that Spain is unconquerable by reason of the superb valor of her sons.

FANNIE BRIGHAM WARD.

BOXELDER STAKE CONFERENCE

The quarterly conference of the Box Elder Stake of Zion was held in the Tabernacle at Brigham City, on Sunday and Monday, April 24th, and 25th. The weather was most favorable and there was a large attendance at the meetings; especially was this noticeable at the Monday meetings, when the attendance is sometimes small.

There were present on the stand during the meetings, Elder Lorenzo Snow and Elder Abraham O. Woodruff, of the Council of Apostles; Elder M. S. Moench of Ogden, Elder C. D. Fjeldsted and the Stake authorities. Elder Rudger Clawson, Stake president, presided.

Sunday morning Elder Clawson reported the condition of the Stake, and spoke of the wonderful system of organizations found in the Church. He said that in Boxelder Stake there were 832 men bearing the higher priesthood, and touched briefly on the subjects of Sabbath breaking, Word of Wisdom, tithing and debt.

Elder Moench commended the Saints for their beautiful Tabernacle, and related some interesting experiences

where the Lord had blessed the faithful tithing payer.

In the afternoon the general and stake authorities were presented and sustained by the vote of the conference. Elder Snow then spoke of the preparation which each young man should make, either as preachers of the Gospel or defenders of their country, that God's blessings and protection may be with them.

Elder Abraham O. Woodruff then delivered a discourse on the signs of the times, and the necessity of having divine authority to preach the Gospel and administer in its ordinances.

Monday morning the time was occupied by Elders Adolph Madsen, W. L. Watkins, C. D. Fjeldsted and Bishop R. C. Jensen. Elder Madsen spoke on Temple work, Elder Watkins on the blessings enjoyed by the Church and Elder Fjeldsted of the degrees of glory promised to the Saints and how they could secure the highest. Bishop Jensen related some missionary experiences.

In the afternoon Elder Snow spoke of the spiritual growth and the relationship existing between God, the Father, and His children on the earth.

Elder Chas. Kelly spoke of the love manifested among the Saints, and of the great events in the near future.

Elder Woodruff directed his remarks to the young people and spoke of the necessity of marrying within the Church; also of the duties of parents and children to each other.

The tabernacle choir under the direction of Elder S. N. Lee, rendered some beautiful anthems and quartettes during the conference.

At the close of the afternoon meeting, Elder Fjeldsted met with the fifty-eighth quorum of Seventy and the vacancies in the presidency were filled. Brigham Wright, Nephi Anderson and John H. Forsgren were chosen and sustained for the position.

Thirty-six young men from this Stake are now ready to "go into all the world and preach the gospel."

NEPHI ANDERSON,
Stake Clerk.

CALIFORNIA'S BIG D DROUGHT.

A few words about California by one who has been favored to enjoy a circular tour down the coast from San Francisco and return via the San Joaquin Valley may interest the readers of the "News."

Coming down from the barren regions of Nevada to the green and fertile slopes of the Sierras has always excited the admiration of visitors, and those who have been fortunate enough to enjoy this experience have always looked forward to the leafy verdure and orange blossoms of the foothills of California; the transition is so sudden, and the change so remarkable, that it is not easily forgotten.

This year is the exceptional one; a merciless drought prevails from the latitude of San Francisco south. North of this region the fields are greener, and the aspect more agreeable to the eye. A difference of nearly twenty inches in the annual rainfall in and about San Francisco, will give an idea of the slight waterfall. Here in our valleys there is a difference of about three inches between 1897 and 1898; and we are dreading the prospect, and for the first time in the memory of man there is no water running down North Temple street in the waste flume on the first of May.

Along the line of the railroad there is an absence of the usual rank growth; the famous lily and other flowers are seldom seen, the wheat fields are thin, the roads dusty, the cattle lean, water-pools drying up and the sad visaged farmers look as though they would rather have had a war with Spain than a drought, but they have both

calamities to face now and this is something to be dreaded.

In San Francisco the effects are not so marked; it looks as it usually does, excepting that a few hard freezing nights in January nipped the flowers and retarded their growth. The question as to where their hay is coming from to feed their stock is the one that is worrying them very much now; already a shipment has been made from Utah, and if the railroad comes to the rescue by reducing rates, a vast amount will be shipped from our northern settlements, in fact, it is not saying too much when I assert that all our surplus hay, butter, wheat and other products will have a ready market in California. This fact will affect our Utah farmers materially.

Among the new features in and around San Francisco, none is more interesting than a climb to the summit of Mt. Tamalpais, located north of San Francisco bay. It overlooks the whole surrounding country for a great distance. It costs one dollar and forty cents to make the trip, which includes a sail across the bay, passing the fortress of Alcatraz to Sausalito, thence to Mill valley, and up the mountain on a steep but good grade, whirling and twisting around knolls and prominences, through canyons and eminences, ever climbing upward and onward until a point near the summit is reached, thence up an easy foot path to the top-most peak, and nature's map of ocean, headland, bay, cities, forts, forests, plains and other features is spread out before you. The elevation is 2,592 feet. Should a fog prevail, you can look upon a billowy ocean of clouds stretching in every direction—a scene of unusual beauty.

Just now the war spirit is very active in California; the quota of men needed by the government is ready—and more, if necessary. Near all the offices of the leading newspapers crowds surround the bulletins, eagerly watching for news. Long sheets of muslin, reaching from roof almost to the lower story on rollers, are written in plain reading, giving all the latest items. Many of the towns along the coast are without protection, and if one or two Spanish warships should come up the coast, they could make matters lively for a time, but should the same vessels run out of coal they would be helpless logs. Coal is a more potent factor to keep off warships than cannon on the Pacific shores north of Mexico. Privateers might do considerable damage.

My road to southern California was the coast line railroad and stage. Rail to Surf, thence by stage 75 miles to Santa Barbara. Excepting near Monterey and Templeton drought holds complete sway. The Salinas river usually a large one, contains a few ribbons of water, otherwise the bed is dry where salmon and other sea-fish are caught in seasons of plenteous rainfall.

After passing through the long tunnel at the head of the Salinas valley, you emerge on the slopes of the coast range still more dry than ever. San Luis Obispo, a city of considerable importance, is reached and from this point southward the rainfall decreases, all the stream beds were nearly dry with but few exceptions. The cattle that roam these hills have been shipped away to Nevada and northern California. The Southern Pacific railroad makes a clean cut of one half rate to enable the farmers to move their stock away; hardly a green spot is seen, save and except where a well is located or a tiny streamlet runs to the ocean near by.

Many of the canyons through which the stage line runs are very picturesque—on your right Old Ocean is seen most of the way; the stage service is very good. Were it not for this season of drought I am inclined to believe this gap