

in the hearts of the people? No; no such feeling was manifested. If any deserted then, they were so few as not to be remembered. The people had a mission. Each man, woman and child (that was old enough) felt that God had entrusted to him and to her a mission; and with unswerving integrity, with unfaltering courage, they maintained their foothold there until the time when they could start further west.

It was that same spirit and intensity of devotion that inspired them in coming to this land. And what was it that kept the people here? What influence was there operating upon them? Was there anything inviting in this land? To look at it now, and to imagine that this was its condition when the brethren and sisters came here in the first place, you would say, "this is an inviting country, a delightful place to stop." But no such sight as we now witness was beheld by them. Everything was forbidding. It looked as though the people might starve to death; and after the crickets came it certainly looked for a while as though they would starve to death. Did the Latter-day Saints falter then? No, they did not. What was it that sustained them? It was this same spirit of prophecy that I have alluded to—the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of prophecy. The Elders testified that this was the place which God had chosen, and which He had appointed as a place of gathering for His Saints; and they themselves had the same testimony, the same spirit. A peculiar love sprung up in the hearts of the people for this land, even in those days. There was something most attractive about its mountains and valleys and these clear streams of water that flowed from the mountains. One thing that added to its charm was, it was a land of liberty, a land of freedom, a land where mobs could not come and attack us, as they had done in the past; a place where the families of the Saints, and the leading men among them, could go to bed in peace and quietness, undisturbed by the fear that they would be attacked during the night. This brought a strange and delightful feeling of relief. If they only had bread to eat, or sufficient to sustain life; if they had only water to drink, I believe that the great bulk of the people—with scarcely an exception, I may say—would have been content to remain here even under those circumstances. The idea of having fruit such as we now have, and in such abundance, was scarcely anticipated. If anticipated at all, it was by but very few, because the seeds that were sown and the little trees that grew up were frozen down the first two or three years. But there was a contented and a happy people here. They went to bed with their doors unlocked. There was no fear among them. They had been relieved from a terrible fear. Those who came under those circumstances could recall the nights and the hours they had spent watching and fearing for a mob to come upon them to drive them out of their homes, to burn their houses, perhaps to inflict upon them personal violence. They remembered, too, that not one of their leading men could go to sleep in his house without having a guard to watch him. The relief from that condition of affairs was such as to bring happiness in and of itself. But I say again, it was the spirit of prophecy that rested upon the Elders and upon the people that sustained them. God revealed by His Holy Spirit the future that awaited the people. The people knew, as they knew that they lived, that this work was bound to triumph, that it was bound to be successful, that those who clung to it would be successful with it, and that there was a great and glorious triumph awaiting them, not only in

this life, but in the realms of bliss in the life to come.

It has been that same spirit that has rested down of late years upon the people. They have been comforted and sustained by the Spirit of God and the predictions of the servants of God. It is a wonderful blessing, my brethren and sisters. It is well for us to think of it today as the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; think that we are in this happy condition; that the heavens are in communication with us, because it is from heaven that we receive these blessings that are so delightful and that have such an effect upon us and upon our movements. It is a blessed thing to think that the heavens are with us in this; that we are guided by the revelations of the Lord Jesus; that the gift of prophecy has been restored in our day, and has been received and enjoyed by men. Not a prediction has been uttered concerning this work, so far as the work itself is concerned, that has not been fulfilled. Not a hope has been inspired, not an encouragement has been given to the Latter-day Saints by the prophets of God, that has not up to the present hour been abundantly fulfilled, as far as we have gone. Much yet remains to be fulfilled. It would be impossible for the human mind to conceive of that which remains; but we see the fulfillment of the predictions as we progress day by day. They are fulfilled in our sight, when our eyes are open to perceive them. Therefore, our hearts ought to be filled with gladness and exceeding thanksgiving to the Lord our God that we are in this condition; that the Lord has not forgotten us; that He has not closed His ears against us, nor His mouth, so that He cannot speak to us; that He has not turned His face away from us; but that He smiles upon us, that He gives unto us the comforting, cheering and enlightening influences of His Holy Spirit to be with us.

Now we are passing through other trials. We have emerged from those that environed us a few years ago. A great change, as I have said, has taken place in public feeling concerning us. Our Elders are treated generally with a great deal of kindness. Of the thousand Elders that are now laboring in the United States, the report comes from most of them that they are treated with kindness. Traveling without purse and scrip, they are entertained, friends are raised up to them, doors are opened to them, and they are treated kindly, and not persecuted to anything like the extent they were a few years ago. The same report comes from the five hundred Elders who are now engaged in the ministry in Europe. Their testimony agrees with the testimony of the servants of God in the United States. This is particularly the case in the German empire. There was a time when it was almost at the cost of personal liberty that men preached the Gospel there. They had to do so in secrecy, in places where the police could not punish them because of the nature of their gatherings. But now this is changed. Religious freedom has dawned in many of these countries, and the Elders now can preach without being put in jeopardy as they were a few years ago.

On the islands of the Pacific there are some two hundred Elders laboring, and their labors are also attended with good results. They speak of the manifestation of the power and blessings of God in their behalf, and of the kindly feeling that is manifested towards them by those with whom they are brought in contact.

Thus these seventeen hundred Elders are laboring now with an efficiency and with a success that is unparalleled in the history of our Church. At no time has this Church held an annual Conference where there was greater cause

for gratulation and thanksgiving than there is today in this Sixty-eighth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Never before were there so many Elders in the field. Never before did they meet with such success. Never before were there so many baptized in a single year apparently as there have been during this year. These causes of thanksgiving ought to be remembered by us, and we ought to thank our God from the bottom of our hearts for that which He is doing for us, for the fulfillment of the words of the servant of God in the Temple when it was dedicated; for he then prophesied what would be the result of that dedication and the glorious effects that would follow that work.

In our own country here we also have cause for thanksgiving. It is interesting to the Saints, no doubt, to know, as many probably do know, that Brothers Lyman and Cowley have visited the conferences and the Elders in the Southern, Eastern and Northern States, and their ministrations among those whom they have visited have been attended with good effects, in regulating affairs, giving instructions, correcting anything that was improper or that was likely to become improper. We have been greatly gratified at hearing the reports which they have given to us of the results of their labors. The Presidents and Elders in the Southern, Eastern, Northern and Southwestern States missions are doing excellent work.

As you know probably, Brother Anthon H. Lund has left here since our last Conference for Palestine, accompanied by Brother Hintze (who formerly labored in the Turkish mission and who has a knowledge of the language) and an Armenian brother, who wished to return to his own country. The object of their going is to endeavor to secure a place of gathering for the Saints of the Orient, so that they may not be subjected to the restrictions that are imposed upon immigrants to this land from those countries. We do not know how successful they may be in their labors; but the word we have received is hopeful and encouraging. The Elders have been greatly blessed so far in their journey, and have been successful at their first meeting in baptizing quite a large number of people who were prepared to receive the Gospel, and also confirming a number who had been baptized, but who had not been confirmed because of the absence of a bearer of the Melchisedek Priesthood. The brethren write very encouragingly on these matters, and we hope they will be successful in finding a spot, if it be the Lord's will, where the Saints of the Orient can commence to gather in that land, so that the principle of gathering, which the Lord is impressing strongly upon the minds of the converts to His Gospel, may be carried out there.

The Twelve Apostles at home, as you all know, have been untiring in their labors in visiting the various conferences and laboring with the Saints to the extent of their ability. Brothers John Henry Smith and John W. Taylor, during a few weeks' absence, held 100 meetings with the Saints in the various Stakes where they visited, and the reports that come to us show that these labors have been attended with excellent effects.

The Seven Presidents of Seventies, also, either accompany the Twelve or go themselves. They are a traveling ministry, laboring very assiduously in their calling among the various Stakes—those of them who are home. As you know, two of their number are now in Europe, presiding over the European Mission—Brothers Rulon S. Wells and Joseph W. McMurrin.