

## TWELFTH GENERAL EPISTLE

*Of the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, to the Saints in the Valleys of the Mountains, and those scattered abroad throughout the Earth, GREETING:*

## BELOVED BRETHREN:

Under the blessings of an overruling Providence for our preservation, we have renewed obligations of thankfulness and praise to our Father in heaven, whose protecting care has turned aside the shafts of death, and sheltered us, as with a mantle, from the scourges and devastations which have been poured out upon the earth.

We have truly realized that His power has been over us for good, and that these distant vales have thus far proved a safe retreat, wherein the saints have found quiet, health, prosperity, and peace, while the indignation of the Lord has partially visited the nations. Our hearts are full of joy when we reflect how kindly the Lord has overruled seeming evil for good, and turned the wrath of man to his praise, by delivering so many of his saints from wicked Babylon, and from the power of their enemies, before those scenes of woe, confusion, and distress spread desolation and affliction over the earth. At the same time we feel anxious for those faithful saints who are still obliged to wait for deliverance in the midst of such fearful calamities.

The indications of the times and seasons, as they rapidly roll, are truly fulfilling the words of the ancient prophet, that "the Lord has decreed a consumption upon the whole earth." In the dispensation of the last days, we are truly gratified with the faithfulness of the Elders in going forth to proclaim the fullness of the Everlasting Gospel to the children of men.

Although a great work yet remains to be accomplished, still it has been carried to the most distant portions of the earth; and been preached to many of the principal nations in their native tongue. In North America, and Great Britain it has been extensively preached and published. It has been preached and published in the French, German, Italian, Danish, and Welsh languages. It is also translated, and ready for publication in the Hawaiian language, and will probably be published the ensuing season. In addition to the foregoing, it has been preached to the Spaniards, Norwegians, Swedes, Icelanders, and the inhabitants on the Danube, the Nile, the Indus, and the Ganges. It has been freely offered, by the Elders of Israel traveling without purse or scrip, to all these nations, and to the people of Malta, Southern Africa, Ceylon, Slam, Australia, the largest and most populous of the Pacific Isles, and to many other nations and people in their native language. Among all to whom the gospel has been proclaimed it has found more or less of Israel; but it is worthy of remark that in those countries which were favored with the gospel in the early ages of christianity, that had the testimony of Jesus and his Apostles, we find the grossest darkness and idolatry, and the least susceptibility to the principles of our holy religion, while among the more enlightened portions, such as Western Europe, the English settlements in Australia, and America, and in the United States, it is more readily received by the honest and sincere enquirer after truth.

The Missions during the past year have been usually successful. We have received intelligence from Australia which shows a considerable increase of numbers, and a constantly increasing inquiry after a knowledge of the truth. From Br. Jesse Haven, who is still presiding and preaching in Cape Colony, we learn that quite a branch has been raised since his arrival, mostly among the English Settlers.

At Ceylon the missionaries were badly treated, and were soon obliged to leave the Island. In Slam they have been permitted to remain, but have made very little impression, except among the English, a few of whom have embraced the gospel. This Mission has been in the immediate charge of Br's Luddington and Savage under the presidency of Bishop Nath. V. Jones, whose location is at Calcutta. In this place also, as well as Bombay, Burmah, and the Northern provinces of India, small interest has been awakened, and that mostly among the English; but the majority of them being soldiers in the British Army, the Officers frequently prohibit their attending the meetings, or in any wise associating with the Saints. They also use a very powerful interest against our brethren in all their labors, even with the natives. In Hamburg, and in several of the European States, our Elders have frequently been imprisoned, and finally banished from their dominions. But in all of those places the word has been sown, and the native brethren, who have a right to remain, are preaching and teaching, as opportunity occurs, there by laying a foundation which will eventually result favorably to the cause of Zion, by opening the way for the spread of the Gospel, and breaking asunder the bonds of bigotry, superstition, and darkness, which have so long enthrallled the earth.

In England, Scotland, the Orkney Isles, Ireland, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Channel Islands, some portions of the United States, the British Provinces, and the Pacific Isles, the work has been, and is prosperously, continually adding to the Church, and opening new and more extended fields of labor.

In our own Territory we have been blessed with health, peace, and prosperity unequalled. Crops matured, and were more plentiful than ever before in these valleys, although much damage was done by grasshoppers in the month of July, and there was hard frost and ice on the 30th of May, and the 15th Oct. It is the first time since we settled in these valleys, that we could say there was a surplus of grain raised for the inhabitants, and although an unexpected, unusual, and large amount has been drawn for the U.S. troops who quartered among us during the winter, from the 2nd of Sept. to the present time, we still believe there will be an abundance to last until replenished by another harvest.

Our public works have steadily progressed. The adobe wall around the Temple Block has been completed, and a large amount of the stone coping prepared and some put on. The Endowment house on the Temple Block is finished, and a large share of the Temple foundation is laid. The Sugar Factory, on Big Canyon Creek, has been put into operation, and the South wing of the State House, at Fillmore City, is in progress of completion.

The Seventies have built a commodious hall which has been very constantly occupied during the winter, although it was not began to be built until the 13th of August.

Country and City improvements have been extensive, astonishing every beholder with the eminent success and prosperity which have attended all our exertions. How

truly may we attribute all these blessings to that kind Father who has shielded us from our enemies, and showered down his blessings upon us. He has caused the Earth to bring forth, in its strength, the grain and rich fruits thereof for the sustenance of man. The elements have also been propitious, and the moistening nurture of the 'early and latter rains' has not been withheld; neither have the mountain Streams failed to furnish their usual supply. There has also, a much greater supply of goods been brought into the Territory, than heretofore, for which however the demand seems constantly increasing, altho' large amounts of clothing are manufactured by the people. Home manufactures and productions have been a part and portion of our domestic economy, and should be practised by every Saint. It is the only path in which we can walk with any assurance of securing our freedom, and of perpetuating that liberty which we inherit, as a rich legacy, from our ancestors and our God.

Our Holy Religion brings us in contact with long established error, and the traditions of centuries, which are prevalent throughout the world; hence are we necessarily a peculiar and separate people, whose best interests and preservation depend upon union and self-dependence, upon practicing virtue, industry, and sobriety, and manifesting our faith by our works in magnifying our Priesthood, and in serving our God by keeping ourselves pure and unspotted in this wicked and adulterous generation.

For this cause we gather out from the world, and for this cause we should rely upon our own skill and ability to produce, from the native elements, every article of food, and raiment necessary for our use, or comfort.

Brethren be wise, and eschew foreign productions as articles not suitable or designed for Israel, and draw your supplies from nature's great storehouse, the rich and abundant though undeveloped, resources with which we are surrounded, and which are clearly within our grasp.

As wickedness, discord, and confusion continue to prevail and increase upon the earth, the Saints will discern that the time is not far distant, when they will probably be obliged to pursue this course for their own salvation. How much easier then for them to be preparing when surrounded with peace and prosperity. How much better to do what is proper, and necessary to be done, under the most favorable circumstances than to wait until stern necessity compels. We say then, to the Brethren and Sisters in all these valleys of the mountains, learn now, to make your own clothing, and encourage the home manufacturer and producer; and let those who intend to come here to reside bring all manner of labor-saving machinery, and such articles for its construction as cannot be readily procured here. Also bring cotton and tassel seed, and seeds for raising all kinds of vegetable dyestuff, and all kind of fruit and flower seeds, also grafts, and grape cuttings; procure and drive the best kinds of stock. And let those who have the things now named preserve them with care, that the best of all kinds of fruit and stock may be cultivated, and the poorer qualities improved, that in our midst may be found an abundance of everything that will contribute to use and comfort, or that will delight the eye or beautify the earth. For the encouragement of fruit growers, we merely mention the fact that, for the last four years, peaches have ripened upon trees growing from seed planted by us, since our location in these valleys, and apple trees, have, though in less quantities been bearing two years, and bid fair to produce much fruit the present season.

On the 27th of June the Conference appointed at the adjournment of the April conference, commenced and was held two days, during which many missionaries were sent to the United States, among whom, was Elder John Taylor, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles who was to proceed to New York City, with the view of there publishing a newspaper. John Smith, son of Hyrum, was chosen, presiding Patriarch over the whole Church, and was ordained to that office, with all the keys and authority thereof, on the 18th of February. This was to fill the vacancy which occurred by the death of our beloved and lamented Patriarch, Father John Smith, who died on the 22nd of May, 1854 aged seventy-three.

Father John Smith was the brother of Joseph Smith, Sen'r who was the father of the Prophet & was the first Patriarch in the Church. He was succeeded in that office by his son Hyrum, upon whom he conferred it before his death, and after his decease, father John Smith was chosen, Hyrum having no son old enough to fill the office at that time. The respected and beloved Patriarch went to his rest full of days and honor, having run the race with patience, and endured unto the end, and was lamented by thousands upon whom he had laid his venerable hands to confer a patriarchal blessing, by virtue of his holy office and Priesthood. He will long be remembered by the Saints as a Father whose blessings were counted of great value, and which will remain a comfort and consolation through all the various changes of life's pilgrimage in the flesh. Having suffered persecution in common with us and our brethren who have gone before, he was broken in body; and although permitted to live a few short years in quiet and peace in the valleys of the mountains, still the infirmities were upon him which were caused by the many exposures, and troubles through which it has been the lot of the Saints to travel; but the vigor of his mind and intellect remained unimpaired to the last.

Thus has another of the noble men of the earth gone to his rest, prepared to come forth with glory, immortality, and eternal life, when the Keys of the resurrection shall be given unto the Priesthood of the Almighty to again administer its power upon the earth.

During the past year we have enjoyed tranquility with the native tribes, having concluded a treaty of peace with the Indian Chief, Walker, whom we met for that purpose at Chicken Creek, in Juab county, on the 11th day of May last. We have great cause to acknowledge the hand of the Lord in restraining these savages from literally drenching our settlements with the blood of the Saints, and in preserving our brethren from utter destruction, for nothing but His almighty power has prevented such a catastrophe.

Some of the Settlements seeing, and feeling by sad experience, the imminent peril they were in, have undertaken to partially secure themselves by fortifications, &c; but we are grieved at being obliged to say that these defences generally remain in an unfinished condition, and many of them are of but little value. How long the Lord will continue to extend his protecting care, and indulge his people in such inexcusable carelessness, and indifference to his counsel and gentle admonition, remains to be seen. It appears that the very moment when peace

again smiles upon us, danger is forgotten, and we at once relapse into the same careless indifference which has always characterized our actions in these valleys, so far as regards our being well prepared to meet our steadfast enemies. We say unto you, brethren, do not longer indulge in such criminal neglect, do not longer trifle with the counsel and urgent entreaties of your brethren, but improve the present moment of peace and prosperity for making yourselves secure, and in preparing against a day of trouble.

Towards the Indians continue to exercise patience, charity, and forbearance; give them your faith for their reclamation from their low estate; pray for them, and teach them also, that the principle of improvement and enlightenment may possess their minds never again to be rooted out, that they may learn the ways of the Lord and rejoice in the true knowledge of the God of their fathers.

We realize that the Lord has been gracious, and is answering the prayers and supplications of the Saints in their behalf. We realize that His spirit is being poured out upon them, and to this cause we attribute the power which has restrained them from more extended and active hostilities. We exhort you to feed and clothe them as heretofore, but never lose an opportunity of learning them to work, in order to gradually teach them the way to industriously provide for their own wants, a course mutually more beneficial than to sustain them in idleness. Providentially, indeed, have we been thrown into their midst, bringing with us our holy religion, and our civilization. As we have been abundantly blessed with the good things of the earth since we came, let us impart freely unto these degenerate sons of Israel, of such as we have received, and not, as is too often the case in the conduct of the whites toward them, condescend to their level, thereby debasing ourselves and abusing their confidence, but seek to raise and exalt them to us, that they may in very deed become "a white and delightsome people," in whom the Lord can take delight, even as in days of old.

Indian chief, Walker, died after a few days' illness, near Fillmore city, on the 29th of January; and the Uta's have chosen his brother Sen-a-rock, commonly known among the whites by the name of Arrow-peen, to be their chief.

Owing to the ignorance of the Indians, and to their having so little understanding of the nature and obligations known to civilization, the laws have seldom been enforced against them. However, in the case of the unprovoked murder of two of the boys of bishop W eks, of Cedar valley, while engaged in getting wood and poles from the canyon, two Indians, the principal actors in that scene were hung on the 15th of last September; having been tried and convicted before the U. S. District Court, the Hon. Judge Shaver presiding. Again, in the case of the massacre of Capt. Gunnison and party by the Pahvan-te Indians, in the fall of 1853, a number of them were tried at Nephi before the Hon. Judge Kinney of the U. S. District Court of that district, which resulted in three of them being convicted of murder in the second degree, and they were sentenced to the extent of the law of the United States in such cases made and provided. In this case, we understand that there were many extenuating circumstances which appeared to mitigate, on the part of the Indians, the perpetration of this horrid massacre. It was a time of war between the whites and the Indians, and this particular band had just previously suffered the loss of one of their chief men by a party of white emigrants, who killed him while passing through their country, without even a cause of provocation. This so enraged the Indians, that although they had not previously participated in the war, they straightway commenced gathering up their forces to come against the settlements, and to join the other Indians already engaged in hostilities. It was at this moment that Capt. Gunnison and party arrived in their country, while prosecuting his duties in exploring a location for a rail way across the continent, thus furnishing them that opportunity for retaliation which they were so earnestly seeking, and which was so fearfully visited upon the innocent. This should prove a lesson to all travelers who wantonly shoot the Indians; for though they may pass in safety, peradventure the very next traveler may fall victims, as a consequence of their inconsiderate and worse than savage barbarity. All persons having knowledge of law, and at the same time treating the Indians so inhumanly, should be held responsible for the results of their acts; which, as in the case of the lamented Gunnison, are almost certain to be visited on the first opportunity, upon some who were entirely unconnected with the aggression.

It cannot be expected of the Indians, in their present low, and ignorant condition, with all their traditions and ferocious natures upon them, to understand and act in accordance with the provisions of law which they never had the least knowledge of, nor any opportunity for obtaining such information. Therefore it becomes those who profess civilization to set them an example, and not, while pretending to execute law upon them, be more brutal and murderous than they are with each other. Let all such persons consider these facts and act wisely, lest the blood of their victims be found upon their own skirts; and brethren, be careful lest you also trample upon the "oil and the wine," make shipwreck of your faith, and lose your salvation in the kingdom of our God.

At the October Conference several of the brethren, who had been absent on foreign missions, were present, having returned with many saints; and although the last company did not arrive until the 28th of October, it was a time of rejoicing with us all, but especially with those who, having safely passed through death and suffering, were permitted to associate in peace with those having a common faith with themselves, and to listen to the instructions of the servants of God in Zion. Every countenance beamed with joy, and nothing occurred, during the three days which the Conference lasted, to mar or in the least disturb the peace and unity which universally prevailed. Elder Horace S. Eldredge was chosen to take the place of Jedediah M. Grant as one of the seven Presidents of the Seventies.

Since the October Conference, but little has occurred differing from the usual routine of our business.

The winter has been unusually mild, and work has progressed in many respects, almost as well as in the summer.

The Legislature held their usual session of forty days, and adjourned to meet on the second Monday in December next, in the new State House in Fillmore City.

Various associations for religious, literary, and scientific

purposes have been formed, and much useful instruction has been imparted, as also in many evening and day schools, which have generally been kept in operation during the winter, in all the wards. Amusements have also had their time and place, and, with the exception of a little disturbance caused by a few disorderly U. S. troops, a general time of quiet, good order, and peace, has prevailed in all the settlements.

In accordance with their respective appointments, Elder John Taylor repaired to New York, Franklin D. Richards to Liverpool, Erastus Snow to St. Louis, Orson Spencer to Cincinnati, and Parley P. Pratt to California.

Owing to the irregularity of the Eastern mail, we have but little information concerning their success; but have learned that a stake has been established at St. Louis, and that a newspaper called the "Luminary," is published weekly. We have not yet learned whether other stakes have been established, or whether other papers have been published; though a press has been obtained in California which will be put in operation the ensuing summer, under the charge of Elder Geo. Q. Cannon.

Elder Amasa Lyman still labors at San Bernardino, California, and the remainder of the Twelve Apostles are at present with us, laboring as opportunity occurs in the various settlements of Utah. Elder Geo. A. Smith is still engaged on the History of Joseph Smith, and will in a few months, probably, have it finished and ready for the press.

At this April Conference just adjourned, the reports and exhibits of the financial affairs of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Co., and of the Church were fully presented, from which it appears, that the capital stock of the P. Emigrating Fund Co., amounts to \$71,005 14 2-4 although scarcely a dollar of it is at present in available means that can be used for the purpose of emigrating the poor saints. This arises from those who are in debt to the Fund neglecting to pay for their emigration. There is now owing to the Fund, from this source alone, about fifty seven thousand dollars, which, if it could be realized in available means, would very much increase the operations of the company, and assist many thousands to come, who are looking and praying for deliverance through this source.

By every light in which it can be viewed, the brethren who have been assisted by this Fund, for their own, for their brethren's, and for the kingdom's sake, should cancel their obligations thereto. The subject of emigrating the poor saints, taking them from the overpopulated districts of the older countries, where, with their utmost labor, they can scarce procure subsistence, and where lack of employment frequently renders life itself precarious, and bringing them to a land where by industry they can soon acquire a competence, and rise in the scale of intellectual existence; commends itself to all the Saints, and is worthy of their faith and most active benevolence.

The reports of the financial affairs of the Church show that the resources have been generally invested in buildings, and making public improvements, such as the Council and Endowment Houses, Tabernacle, wall around the Temple block, store houses, Temple, &c. In order to successfully prosecute our business, we find it necessary to have a considerable amount of active capital to enable us to furnish materials, and supply clothing and articles necessary for those who are constantly engaged in the public service.

The tithing furnishes our resources for all of our public improvements, and this is generally paid in grain, vegetables, stock, wagons, labor, and other property, and but very little in money, and with the exception of what is needed for the use of the men employed, has to be turned into cash to procure such other articles as are necessary for properly prosecuting business. The constant investment of the funds of the Church in permanent improvements, trouble of changing, and delay in converting into cash, sometimes unavoidably involve us in debt; but if the brethren will be faithful and punctual in paying their tithing in kind, it will relieve us of all embarrassment, and furnish sufficient for all the needful purposes for which it is used.

Brethren, as you wish to hasten the building of a Temple, and the rolling forth of the work of Zion's King, put your shoulders to the wheel, render effective aid to her cause, and make her interest your own. Remember that all you do to favor Zion is only favoring your own interest, that it is for yourselves that you are laboring and toiling in the kingdom of God; rejoice therefore in your labors, and consider the reward which is laid up at the end of the race. It should be deemed a blessing as well as duty, to have this privilege. No greater favor could be bestowed upon this people than they enjoy in having a part and lot in this matter, in being the humble instruments in the hands of the Great Jehovah, in bringing to pass His purposes upon the earth in these the last days, in being the recipients of the eternal truth, light, and knowledge emanating from Heaven's King, in whom is all excellence, power, and glory.

Incomparable delight and happiness fill the soul of the faithful saint, who has the testimony of Jesus and the spirit of the living God to enlighten his understanding. Happiness supreme and love divine fill his bosom, as he seeks to impart the glad news of intelligence to his fellow species, that they also may be partakers with him in the glorious cause, and share in its blessings. Thus our Holy Religion absorbs every feeling, desire, ambition, motive and action of our natures, and renders every association in life tributary thereto; it forms the vitality of our very existence; it enters not only into our spiritual but also into temporal organization, and controls us in all our affairs. This is true of every person who has tasted the good word of life, has received the Holy Ghost, and continues to walk in the light, and be led by its gentle influence. This is salvation in the kingdom of God, it is glory celestial, and exaltation. This is the work that makes angry the adversary, who fears the overthrow of his kingdom and power upon the earth, that causes Satan to rage and seek to destroy the Saints of the Most High, as he did in the days of Jesus and of his apostles and followers.

Hence the persecutions and martyrdom which wasted the faithful from the earth, and caused the apostacy, of the ancient church. The world overcame and destroyed them, and seeks to overcome and destroy us, for they are actuated by the enemy of all righteousness, the arch deceiver, who desires the overthrow of the work of God. Therefore brethren, be on your guard, be faithful in prayer and watchfulness, in faith and good works, lest you enter into temptation and darkness comes upon you; lest you get bewildered and led astray, and unwarily imbibe an