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REMARKS

Made at the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Morning, April 4th, 1897, by

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

In commencing the sixty-seventh annual conference of the Church, we have great reason to be thankful to the Lord for the favor that He has shown unto us, and for the prospects that we have concerning the growth of His work. There is everything to encourage us as a people. There is every reason to believe that the Lord is with us, and that He looks with favor upon Zion. I think it is scarcely too much to say that the work of God was never in a more prosperous condition, in many respects, than it is at present. From all parts of the world, where the Elders are laboring, good reports come of their success. From the imperfect statistics that we have (and we are trying to improve these all the time), we learn that upwards of ten thousand souls have been added to the Church during the year. In the United States the work has gone forward with considerable rapidity. It is claimed that in the Southern States alone there have been more souls added to the Church than in all the European missions. But Elder Anthon H. Lund, who has recently returned from presiding over the European mission, will not admit that the Elders have been more successful in the Southern States than they have in Europe; for, in proportion to the number of Elders engaged in the ministry, they have baptized more to the Elder in Europe than in the United States. I mention this because it is worthy of mention, and shows that the Elders in Europe are industrious and successful also. Before the close of the present year it is expected that in the Southern States 150 Sunday schools will be organized; there are nearly 100 already in operation, and by means of these a great work is being done, and many are being indoctrinated with the principles of the Gospel.

The Eastern States mission, as reported by Elder Samuel W. Richards, who has just returned, is a very promising mission, and the probability is that many souls will be added to the Church there during this coming season. A disposition is manifested on the part of a great many to investigate, and the cry from that mission, as from all the missions, is, "We want more help. Send us more Elders. We cannot fill the calls that we have for Elders." Brother Richards has been laboring in that mis-

sion now for upwards of two years, and has been quite successful in gaining access to the public prints, getting our views published in newspapers, and in removing prejudice from the minds of public men. Brother Alonzo P. Kesler has been sent to take the place of Brother Richards.

Brother Lewis A. Kelsch is laboring as president of the Northern States mission. Brother Elias S. Kimball is still laboring in the Southern States mission. Brother Ephraim Nye is laboring in California; and all these Elders and their co-laborers are performing their duties with great success.

Elder Andrew Kimball is about to be succeeded by Elder William T. Jack in the presidency of the Indian Territory mission, which is also rapidly increasing. In Colorado, Elder John W. Taylor and his associates have, within the last few months, opened the Gospel in a number of towns and cities in that state with gratifying prospects for success. Elder B. H. Roberts and a few other Elders have been visiting many of the large cities of the East and holding meetings therein that have attracted widespread attention. Nearer home, Elders J. Golden Kimball, Henry W. Naisbitt and others have been laboring in Idaho. Still other brethren have been ministering in Montana. In both of these and the neighboring states there appears to be a bright prospect for doing good, many scattered Saints, who at different times have wandered off from the main body of the Church, being found in these regions, many of whom are anxious to renew their fellowship with God's people.

There is this noticeable feature at the present time in the preaching of the Gospel all through the various missions: it is the faith of the Elders to travel without purse and scrip. There has been a time when the faith of the Elders did not appear to be sufficient to enable them to travel in this manner, and some have said that missionary labors would have to cease in some parts if the Elders had to depend upon the people to sustain them; but from all the missions where the Elders have pursued this plan of traveling without purse and scrip, they have reported that the Lord has blessed them as never before, and there is a disposition on the part of the people to entertain them and to supply their wants. The letters that come from the Elders are exceedingly encouraging. They show the faith of the Elders, and also the power of God moving upon the hearts of the people. In Great Britain and on the continent of Europe the Elders are struggling to do this. Of course, in some countries it is an exceedingly difficult thing, because of the fear there is of socialism, anarchism and

nihilism; and if a man be found in some places without money in his pocket he is in danger of being put in prison as a vagabond. Hence, in those countries great care has to be taken that the Elders do not expose themselves to imprisonment. Still the spirit in the Elders is to carry out the word of the Lord in regard to traveling without purse and scrip.

In Europe the work is progressing, particularly in northern Sweden, where a great many converts are being made, and also in Holland. The Saints who live in this city, no doubt, heard the report of Elder G. S. Spencer, who returned a few weeks ago from presiding over the Netherlands mission. I suppose that in that mission there are more people being added to the Church than in any of the European countries, and the Elders feel exceedingly encouraged in their labors and believe there is a great work to be done in that land.

In Germany the Elders are laboring with zeal and with a large degree of success, and leading men are more disposed to investigate the principles of the Gospel than they have heretofore been inclined to do. There is also a disposition in Berlin and other cities to grant larger liberty. The police are not so rigid and so disposed to interfere with the meetings; in fact, where they have attended the meetings, as they have done in some instances to get an idea of the nature of our teachings, they have been almost converted,—at least, their prejudices have been, to a great extent, removed. At the city of Breslau, the police commissioner has granted to the Elders perfect liberty to preach. So it may be said wherever the Elders have gone the Lord has opened their way and has raised up friends to them and has blessed them in their labors.

From Turkey we have deemed it wise to withdraw the Elders for the time being, in consequence of the Armenian troubles, it being thought that it was dangerous for our brethren to be there when there was rioting and so many collisions between the Turks and the Armenians.

Looking, therefore, at all the field—the Polynesian Islands, the United States and Europe—there is reason to be thankful to God for the blessings that He has vouchsafed to us, for the softening of the hearts of the people, and for the pouring out of His holy spirit upon them to prompt them to seek to understand the principles of the Gospel. Everyone who is at all acquainted with our history for the past few years can see the great change that has been wrought out in this direction, how wonderfully the Lord has operated, the large liberty He has brought to His people, the removal of prejudice and of that