

commission from Albert, elector of Mainz and archbishop-cardinal of Mainz and Magdeburg, to traverse Germany, and especially Saxony, for the sale of plenary indulgences, that is, as traveling commissary of such indulgences. Tetzel was a terrible fellow, with stentorian voice and any amount of impudence. He traveled in the German States in expensive and imposing style, halting when and where he thought proper, to hawk his indulgences, something after the Cheap John fashion of later years and other lands, and could tell as wonderful tales about the necessity and efficacy and cheapness of his wares, not lacking plentiful and heavy abuse for those who could not be gulled and would not buy. He would build fires in the market places, threatening to burn opponents of his business as heretics. For the small matter of six ducats, Tetzel would sell a man a regularly signed indulgence, absolving him for living with more than one wife at a time. A silver ducat is worth about a dollar, and a gold ducat about twice as much. But Tetzel went further than that. He would sell indulgences that would allow the buyers to become polygamists with impunity in the future. Polygamy, past, present or future, was much the same to the zealous Tetzel, so that he got the money safe. Absolution, that is, remission, pardon, forgiveness, was absolutely sure and certain as soon as the money chinked at the bottom of his box, and he hurled fierce denunciations at those Diddymuses who doubted his words, or dared to maintain to the contrary of his extravagant preaching. Buck, in his *Theological Dictionary*, quoting from the *Tax of the Sacred Roman Chancery*, gives some of the figures charged for indulgences covering various offenses. A man could buy an indulgence pardon for procuring abortion for seven and sixpence, for perjury for nine shillings, for arson or robbery for twelve shillings, for defiling a virgin for nine shillings, for carnal knowledge of mother or sister for seven and sixpence, for murder of a layman for the same figure, for keeping a concubine for ten and sixpence, and it was not safe for him to lay hands violently on a clergyman for a less sum, but he could redeem the soul of his dead father out of purgatory for a shilling. These were great times for willing and wicked sinners, and the enterprising Tetzel made all he could of that stubborn fact. He seemed born for the business.

Tetzel, in his pretentious and overbearing manner, formidable voice and pious tone, would extol the virtues of his indulgences, and portray the desirableness of them, till his hearers were scared into purchasing. He would say, "Indulgences are the most precious and most sublime gift of God. Come, and I will give you letters under seal, by which even the sins you may have a desire to commit in future will all be forgiven. I would not exchange my privileges for that of St. Peter in Heaven; for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle by his sermons. There is no sin too great for an indulgence to remit." He even declared that if any one had violated the Holy Virgin Mary, if he would only pay and pay well, it would be forgiven him. "Hard-hearted and thoughtless man," said he, with "twelve pence you can deliver your father out of purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him!" * * I declare to you, that though you had only a single coat, you would be bound to take it off and sell it, in order to obtain this grace." Tetzel himself may have believed in the potency of his indulgences, whether he paid for them or not, for he was given to delicate attentions to women. A circumstance of this kind occurred at Inspruck, for which the Emperor Maximilian ordered him to be put into a sack and thrown into the river, but the Elector Frederick arrived just in the nick of time, and begged him off.

Tetzel's indulgences for lapses future were held to be valid, by high authority. At Leipsic, a Saxon gentleman gave him ten crowns for an indulgence absolving the buyer for an attack he wanted to make on one of his enemies. Armed with this indulgence and a stick, the gentleman waylaid Tetzel in a wood between Juterboch and Treblin, struck him several blows, and carried off the indulgence money chest. Tetzel complained before the judges, but his

assailant put in the ten crown indulgence by way of defence, showing that, by Tetzel's own signature, exemption from all punishment for the offence had been given beforehand. Duke George, though angry at first, was mollified at the sight of the exculpatory document, and ordered the accused gentleman to be acquitted.

This indulgence business of Tetzel was the adventitious occasion of the beginning of the Reformation. Luther attacked Tetzel's doctrine of indulgences in ninety-five theses, which were posted on the church door for discussion in the University of Wittenburg. Tetzel attacked the theses, and Luther replied. Tetzel, with the aid of Professor Wimpina, wrote some anti-theses, which were nominally discussed in the University of Frankfort-on-the-Oder. Tetzel publicly burnt the theses of Luther in the suburbs of Frankfort, declaring that Luther ought to have been served in the same way. In retaliation, at Wittenburg, the students of the University publicly burnt eight hundred copies of the anti-theses of Tetzel in the market place, much to the mortification of Luther.

Some Catholic authors deny that Tetzel sold indulgences for future acts, and say that it was not in accordance with his commission. But, judging by Tetzel's evident character, his acknowledged extravagances, the nature and spirit of the times, and the manifold religious abuses of those days, the presumption is fair that he did sell such indulgences, whether it was in his commission or not. It is true that the politic Miltitz, the papal nuncio at the Saxon Court, administered a severe rebuke to Tetzel for his extravagances, but not until Luther's theses, and his refusal to recant them, had shaken the Catholic Church to its foundation, and something had to be done. Moreover, Tetzel did not invent the indulgence system, nor concoct all the commissions and authoritative regulations of the sale of indulgences. He went about selling them as an itinerant merchant monk. Like most merchants, he gloried in his business, and was enthusiastic in its pursuit, exercising his utmost ingenuity to make his sales as large and as profitable as he could. Furthermore, some time before Miltitz rebuked Tetzel, Pope Leo X caused the issuance of a bull, through his legate in Germany, Cardinal De Vio, confirming the doctrine and sale of indulgences, especially in the very points attacked by Luther. It is interesting to visitors to Rome, when gazing on the magnificent proportions of St. Peter's, to remember that the sale of these indulgences was vigorously pushed by Pope Leo to furnish means to carry on the building of that imposing structure. See D'Aubigne's *Hist. Reformation*, vol. 1. Muller's *Relig.*, iii. Mosheim's *Ecc. History*, vol. 1, chap. 2. Also various other works.

I have made this particular reference to Tetzel and the indulgence business to show that even the most ascetic and prohibitive of religious societies has permitted its votaries to indulge plurally on very slight conditions. In fact, "they all do it," more or less, openly or slyly, legitimately or clandestinely, with liberty or with license. I may add, in this connection, that Bernard Adelman, canon of Augsburg, wrote to his friend Pirkheimer concerning the Bishop of that place, that he was "the husband of so many wives." Now the Bishop was one of those prelates who were very forward in promoting the sale of indulgences. Possibly his individual experience had taught him the need of them to a good staunch Catholic, in those wicked days. See D'Aubigne's *Hist. Reformation*, Vol. I, page 216.

JACOB.

SANPETE STAKE CONFERENCE.

The Quarterly Conference of the Sanpete Stake was held on the 15th and 16th of Nov., 1879, in the Ephraim meeting house.

15th, 10 a. m.

Opened by singing and prayer. There were present on the stand: Apostle Joseph F. Smith, Bishops E. F. Sheets, Elder P. P. Pratt and President Petersen and counselors, of this Stake.

Elder Parley P. Pratt addressed the conference for a short time upon the blessings enjoyed in these valleys as compared with early times;

related some experience while on his late mission to the Southern States, and showed that if the Lord found faith at his coming it would be among the Latter-day Saints.

Elder C. H. Wheelock contrasted the feelings manifested by many now when called to go abroad to preach the gospel, with that of the Elders in the early days of the Church; thought a reformation was needed.

Statistical report of the Stake was read.

Apostle Joseph F. Smith referred to the report just read, which shows that a large percentage of those reported are children under eight years of age, the duty of whose parents it is to teach them the principles of the gospel; contrasted the surroundings of different individual members of the Church; many of those who had grown grey in the Church had had to struggle along against their former traditions and prejudices. Their children are growing up without these obstacles in their way. Exhorted parents to be consistent, that their children may have the benefit of example as well as precept, lest we, like Israel of old, should have to wander in the wilderness until the disobedient are wasted away.

Recess until 2 p. m.

2 p. m.

Opened by singing and prayer.

President Taylor, Apostles Orson Pratt and Brigham Young, and Elder George Teasdale, President of the Juab Stake, met with the Saints.

Apostle Brigham Young said he believed a great many of the Saints were becoming lukewarm and indifferent to the things of the Kingdom of God. By perusing the records we have received, the speaker was led to believe that we have received as much as any people ever had that were in a similar condition to ourselves. He believed that the Saints in these mountains would be subject to much annoyance from their enemies until they remembered their covenants. The people certainly patronize our enemies or they could not flourish in our midst. Many men who come here do so intending to do right and let us and our religion alone, no doubt, but if they do let us alone they are cut off from the outside element and separated from them as much as from us. Many who labored on the Nauvoo Temple were very thankful if they could obtain corn bread with which to appease their hunger; no person in this valley need go hungry. The Lord will bless this people if we go to with our might and build these Temples; our young men can receive the ordinances of the gospel and power that will enable them to carry off this Kingdom, obtain power over our enemies, unite ourselves upon the principles that God has revealed, and obtain salvation in the kingdom of God.

President Maiben read the report of donations received for the Manti Temple, and their disbursement.

Elder Folsom addressed the conference on the labors on the Temple; said the Saints had been liberal in their donations, exhorted to continued liberality and energy that the work may progress as rapidly as possible.

Pres. Taylor addressed the conference a short time. He had already visited many of the settlements in this valley; had visited the Temple in Manti, was pleased with the labor done there and the manner in which it is done; wished to say to the Saints that Brother Folsom gets none of his pay from their donations, but he and Brother Parry are paid by the Trustee-in-Trust. We wish to do all we can for the people; don't wish to hurt any one, are one with you in building up the kingdom of God.

Sunday, 10 a. m.

Singing and prayer.

Elder Orson Pratt said: We have passed through many circumstances since our joining the Church, sometimes having abundance of this world's goods and sometimes a scarcity thereof. It is necessary for us to pass through a variety of circumstances to see if we will be faithful to our Father and our God. This people, the past season, have passed through a time of drought, the Lord could easily have given them rain or an abundance of snow in the tops of the mountains had He seen fit to do so. In the days of Elijah the prophet, Israel suffered a famine for three years and a half, and after they had

repented, the prophet prayed for rain and the Lord sent rain on the earth again; so it would be with the Latter-day Saints if they would humble themselves before the Lord, no blessing that would be good for them to have would be withheld from them. The destiny of the Latter-day Saints is greater than that of any other people that have ever lived on the earth. Dwelt at considerable length upon the labors to be performed, the blessings to be obtained by this people, the return of the tribes from the north, their labors and the blessings they will receive, and also the glory to be revealed in this dispensation.

President Maiben presented the general authorities of the Church, also the authorities of this Stake, all of whom were unanimously sustained.

President Petersen said that the Lamanite brethren in Thistle Valley had already built a tithing office and a school-house. President Taylor had promised them books for a school.

2 p. m.

Singing and prayer.

After which the sacrament was administered.

Bishop Sheets expressed his pleasure at the labor that had been performed on the Temple at Manti; exhorted the Saints to be faithful in all things, that we may receive the promised blessings, for if we are not faithful the promises are no promises to us.

Apostle Joseph F. Smith said there could be no doubt that the Lord had made all his promises on conditions of our faithfulness; if we keep not the commandments there is no promise to us. Solomon says, "Honor the Lord thy God with thy substance," etc. If a man wants a blessing he must labor for it. Anciently, when the people paid their tithes, the prophet came along and asked the meaning of those great heaps, the reply was that since the people paid their tithes they had enough and these great heaps remained, so it is when the people do their duty. My experience from youth up has been if we pay our tithing, God will bless us; my widowed mother by her own exertions and the blessings of God moved herself and family to these valleys, being determined not to be left behind, and after arriving here paid tithing on all she raised, while those who advised her not to pay her tithing, she being a widow, have since apostatized. We sustain a great many men in our midst, and by our patronage, find them large incomes, and they are packed into juries to find indictments against our best men for keeping the commandment of God. We sustain this class of men and yet expect the blessings of God to be upon us; let us be true to ourselves, and any man who grows cold to the interest of his kingdom and throws his influence with our enemies, drop him like you would a hot potato. Let us sustain ourselves as we have a right to do.

Pres. Taylor said, the Saints claim to be the descendants of scattered Israel, at least many do, and it is by this descent or lineage that we obtain our blessings. While we admit that the blessings pertaining to the priesthood, were given to Abraham and his seed after him, yet we know also that millions of the seed of Abraham will not be saved nor receive the gospel until they receive it in that prison prepared for the disobedient. God will be true to his promises if we are true to him, and keep his commandments, as we have abundantly proven. This has been the experience of the Elders who go forth preaching the gospel, they have promised the Holy Ghost to all who would believe and obey. What right has any one to promise the Holy Ghost? None whatever, unless God has authorized him to do so. Has this promise been realized? The Latter-day Saints testify that it has. Now we are required to build Temples. Who knows how to build Temples, and administer therein? None, except God teaches them. The Lord has always been faithful to his promises, so let the Saints be, whether it blow hot or cold, faithful to their covenants. When the Apostles and Elders have gone forth preaching the gospel, have they lacked anything? Never. God has been with us and provided for us. He wished President Petersen to see that the wives of those who have gone on missions be cared for and sustained, that they do not want for, the ne-

cessaries of life while their husbands are away, for they are the honorable of the earth. We want our children educated, but we do not want them educated by our enemies nor by those who are not of us. In dealing with each other let us not be too niggardly. When called upon to build temples, the question should be, what do you want of me? not, how little can I get along with. Wished the sisters to be sustained, for they are doing a good work, and asked God to bless and sustain them.

Conference adjourned, to meet again in this place on the 14th of February next, at 10 a. m.

Singing and benediction.

GEORGE TAYLOR,
Clerk of Conference.

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