

to be found anywhere. He related a test which had been applied in this regard by a returned Elder from the Southern States. He visited numbers of the people in Utah as a preacher of the Gospel, but did not disclose his identity as a "Mormon." In soliciting aid he did not meet with a single refusal. President Smith related a number of incidents which had come under his own observation. He held that the sentiment of the Latter-day Saints generally was to help the poor; that was the feeling of every faithful member of the Church. He showed that there were very few, if any, beggars who had standing in the Church. The discourse was devoted to the subject of charity, and the necessity of discouraging pauperism.

The choir sang:

On the mountain's top appearing
Lo! the sacred herald stand!

Benediction by Elder George B. Wallace.

Afternoon Session.

The choir sang:

O, God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Prayer by Elder Elias H. Blackburn.
Singing by the choir:

Behold, the mountain of the Lord
In latter days shall rise,
On mountain tops, above the hills,
And draw the wond'ring eyes.

The following abstracts of reports were read by President Joseph F. Smith:

Synopsis of Primary association reports for year ending December 31st, 1897.

This report lacks those of four Stakes of Zion.

No. of associations	459
No. of officers	2,893
No. of members	33,449

Total..... 36,342

Showing an increase of..... 2,190

No. of regular and other meetings held..... 14,738

No. of testimonies, readings and other exercises..... 149,953

Louie B. Felt, President.

Lillie T. Freeze, First Counselor.

Josephine R. West, Second Counselor.
May Anderson, Secretary and Treasurer.

Synopsis of Sunday school statistical report for 1897:

Number of Sunday schools—

In the organized Stakes of Zion..... 630

In the foreign missions of the Church..... 361

Total..... 991

Number of schools held during

the year..... 39,470

Total number of pupils—males..... 48,454

Females..... 49,578

Total number of officers, teachers and missionaries..... 12,596

Total..... 110,728

Considerably more than one-third of the children attending these schools are in the primary department (including the kindergarten).

In the Stakes of Zion the average number of times school has been held during the year is 45½.

The most noticeable feature of the report is the great increase in schools and attendance in the foreign missions of the Church. There are 150 in the Southern States mission alone, and more than 130 on the Isles of the Pacific.

ELDER GEORGE TEASDALE

of the Quorum of the Twelve, read from the third chapter of John, including that portion of it which embodies the statement of the Savior to Nicodemus regarding the indispensable character of baptism of water and of the Spirit. He also referred to the revelations of the same ancient Apostle, predicting a departure from the true order of the Gospel, and the restoration of that divine system of salvation in the latter times. The speaker testified that such a restoration has occurred, and, as in times of old, all who embraced the truth were offered and entitled to an individual testimony that such a step was approved of God. This was the message of the Elders sent into the world by the Church. It was the word of God to the nations and those who rejected it were under condemnation. The Church as revealed in this day through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, had all the characteristics of that which the Savior established in His day and time, including spiritual gifts and graces.

The speaker next dwelt upon the disastrous results of financial debt. He also spoke upon sound versus superficial education. He then drew attention to the evidences that the community of Latter-day Saints was founded upon a basis, by properly building upon which it was sure to attain to true greatness in the earth. This people, while realizing their own weakness were striving to produce the works of righteousness. He exhorted the Saints to fulfill the law of God in relation to both temporal and spiritual things and all would be well, and especially advised his hearers to comply with the requirement regarding the payment of tithing.

ELDER JOHN HENRY SMITH

stated that he endorsed all that had been read or spoken during the Conference, all of which had been calculated to lead to reflection on the goodness of God. Those who had been called out of Babylon and their descendants should rejoice in the redemption offered through the Gospel. The speaker referred to the want which had been experienced by the people in the past, and briefly suggested the lessons of frugality inculcated thereby. He spoke also of the missionary work performed by the young men under the auspices of the M. I. A., and its beneficial effect upon the young. This merely gave an idea of the possibilities of missionary work among the covenant people of God. Their testimonies had been received by many but there was great necessity that the work should be continued, in order that its effects might be made more permanent. The labors of such an array of young men as had been brought to a realization of the responsibilities resting upon them, would no doubt add great strength to the work of God; and it was to be hoped that their own lives would be enriched and gladdened by the new light they had received. He trusted that all who had been aroused to a better knowledge of their obligations would continue such ministrations until all now within the pale of God's full favor are brought to a full realization of their relationship to their Father.

The speaker referred to the tendency on the part of the Latter-day Saints to ally themselves with the various fraternal societies formed outside the Church. He thought mutual aid societies could be formed in the various Stakes under the direction of the members of the Church, all their profits being kept at home, and their full benefits received here. Some care should be bestowed upon such organizations, and the association of the Latter-day Saints in other societies be discouraged.

Strong commendation was bestowed upon the policy carried out by President McKinley in his effort to secure peace, and the speaker trusted that

everything possible would be done to prevent the shedding of blood. He thought that the prayers of the people should be offered up in behalf of the government that peace might be established and the work of carrying the Gospel to the nations be uninterrupted. They should not join in thoughtless cries for war, but in faith for the stability of the principles of liberty, salvation and righteousness.

At the conclusion of Elder Smith's remarks the great congregation arose and, with the choir, sang, with deep feeling,

"My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of Liberty."

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF

spoke briefly upon the dramatic events connected with the career of the Saints in Far West, Missouri, including his own association and experience with Zion's camp. He referred to prophecy of the Prophet Joseph Smith, given at that time, to the effect that the Latter-day Saints, then but a handful, would become a great people in the Rocky Mountains, and that Christ would visit them there; they would also fill North and South America, and finally the whole earth. President Woodruff said he had no doubt that many of the children of the Saints now living would live to see the Savior when He should visit His people in this mountain region.

ELDER FRANCIS M. LYMAN

of the Quorum of the Twelve, was the closing speaker. He felt that this was a great day for Israel, when the nucleus and progress of the work of God could be so plainly manifested to the world, to the honor and glory of God. More labor was being performed than at any time in the past, all labors being crowned with increasing success. No time would come when difficulties would be wanting so long as the people were in need of the development and purification gained through such experiences. The establishment and maintenance of peace should be encouraged, but in case of difficulties the Latter-day Saints had always responded willingly to the call of duty because of their love for their country. But war was not at all desirable. Its avoidance should be accomplished, if possible without dishonor.

War was always terrible and all should unite in becoming peacemakers, who should "be called the children of God." The predictions of Christ regarding the wars and rumors of wars to come, and His caution to the Saints not to be troubled thereby, were referred to, and all were exhorted to be ready always for the coming of the Son of Man. This event would not be delayed, and the watchmen on the walls of Zion would be ready to sound their warning to those within, when trouble affecting them was foreseen.

Elder Lyman referred to the generous treatment accorded to the Elders in the Southern States during his recent visit there and testified with gratitude to the change of feeling toward the Latter-day Saints brought about by God in response to the predictions made by President Woodruff at the dedication of the Temple in this city. The speaker testified of the divinity of the mission of the servants of God, and the fullness of the Gospel and its ability to meet all requirements of the human family. The Saints could afford to be generous in their treatment of the various denominations in the world, and could afford to give them every opportunity to present their views, as they were willing to grant the same privileges to us. In conclusion he gave valuable advice which would lead to the temporal salvation of the people, and exhorted all to be Latter-day Saints in every particular.