

customs are interesting to the rest of the country. Looked upon as a leader and her claims recognized in this respect by all, we must be well represented at the Denver congress. The story of the early struggle in Utah where labor only was available in the development of irrigation is repeated in every gathering where the subject is under discussion. The story of the efforts of the Pioneers in inaugurating the system here in Salt Lake as related to the Irrigation Congress by President Wilford Woodruff has been told and retold all over this broad land. Early struggles here force all to give Utah settlements the first place in the history of American irrigation, Greeley comes next, then Riverside. It is not necessary to refer to the many important questions affecting the work of irrigation and colonization which will be brought up at Denver.

The importance of a question which means finally 50,000,000 of acres fit for the homes of men is so great that the leading men of the Inter-mountain states may well take a joint interest in discussing it. The question is being asked by the general committee and by people all over the states: Can the West grasp a great opportunity?

Let us answer that Utah people can rise to the occasion and do well their share towards solving the problems connected with this question. Utah will experiment wisely with the million acres given to it by the enabling act, and if in the course of legislation in the near future another million is given probably no objection will be raised by the people of the great new State. But right now our duty is to give our experiences and our best efforts to the people of the other states who are to meet on common ground to consider what is to be for the best interests of the arid west.

C. E. WANTLAND,
For the Irrigation Commission.

THE TABERNACLE CHOIR.

An ardent admirer of the Salt Lake Tabernacle choir writes to the NEWS as follows, under date of today, on an event that every Usonian looks back upon and remembers with feelings of pride and satisfaction:

On Tuesday afternoon, one year ago today, Aug 28, our Tabernacle choir left Salt Lake City on their unparalleled and highly successful journey to enter a competition against any body of singers in the world who chose to enter the arena; and their chief competitors were to be the Welsh, who had for at least twenty years established themselves at London as champions unexcelled in choral work.

It seems like a dream, yet is real when we think of the scene at the depot one year ago this afternoon, thousands of enthusiastic friends, of every creed, crowding the entire length of the train with one happy wish in their hearts—God speed to the "Mormon Choir"—as it was termed—and crown them with success, everybody proudly called them "our choir" even then, and hopes ran high for its success as a winner, but this hope was born rather of enthusiasm perhaps than reason.

There was one at least on board that train, while perfectly composed and resigned as to the result, had counted

over and over the odds against him. With less than one-half our little city's population to select 250 singers from (for ours was a church choir of one denomination, and the many splendid voices outside of this were not at his disposal), with only ten weeks of special preparation on the difficult choruses to be rendered, as no decision to have them go had been reached earlier. Voices whose various nationalities made them characteristically different to be assimilated as much as possible—the whole, himself included, with no experience whatever in contesting for prizes, to enter at once a world's contest and against choirs whose members and leaders were mostly of one nationality, and whose life business and pleasure had been musical contests, who had contested on some of these very selections more than once, and who had over a year's special preparation for this event.

Added to this was the fact that only two pianos were to be the accompaniment. Something customary to the other choirs but most unusual to ours who were so accustomed to the great organ. All these disadvantages he could not forget while hundreds of enthusiastic friends wrung his hands into blisters, his consolation came chiefly in unwavering faith in the success of his concerts, in this his singers had never failed, and he knew where he stood and what good the favorable impression made would reflect on the community he and his choir was representing. Then whatever the result of the contest, there was the unheard of treat to 250 of his beloved singers in the trip and the Fair itself, if defeat came. This satisfaction would balance against the humiliation caused by disappointed friends who hoped against reason.

Well, away they sped with cheers, "Good byes," "God bless you," ringing in their ears. Their entrance into Wyoming was welcomed with music, flowers, fruits and cheers from the good people of Evanston and Rock Springs. Denver, while making no public demonstration, on their arrival greeted them at the concert in such numbers that hundreds could not gain admittance into the elegant church. Full of humility and prayer in their hearts for success they took their places before an audience friendly, but with evident curiosity on many a countenance, which the first "Hosannah" eliminated, placing evident, deep satisfaction on every face which the thunderous applause even could not express more unmistakably that the victory was won so far as the entertainments went. Notwithstanding difficulties arising such as a constant change of seating arrangement in various halls some of which were very perplexing, disarranging the order of seating, placing the chair on level floor, etc., which would make it almost impossible to see or hear so as to do harmonious work. Yet Kansas City and St. Louis only added to the success begun at Denver. On arriving at Chicago they found some of their eastern competitors there already, but with kindly greetings. On hearing one chorus of their song at an entertainment, some Salt Lakers were at once sanguine of our choir's success. But the change in climate was

silencing many of our best voices and later it was found they had engaged the two choirs that were over from South Wales to enter the male chorus and ladies chorus contest, and no protest against this could avail because there was no stipulations to prohibit it in the rules of contest. Daily our singers met at the Utah building and rehearsed while hundreds would gather around and listen. The male chorus contest drew two prize winning choirs from over the ocean, one from North and one from South Wales, and four besides our own from the United States. Our boys were third in the order of appearing, and they did themselves proud. Mr. John Thomas, the adjudicator from London, declaring "First west of the Atlantic ocean." The two Welsh choirs from the other side, were indescribable in their excellence. None could be more enthused than our boys in listening to them. Stephens beaming with pleasure at what he knew must be his defeat, cried:

"That is worth more to us than a prize! That is perfection! Remember it, boys, and let us work up to it!"

Friday was the day of the final contest of choirs, and everybody, singers and listeners, were worked up to the highest pitch.

Rehearsals were held at noon by all the choirs, two of them in the Contest hall and our own in the Utah building, they having rehearsed in the Hall the previous day. Stephen's last words to his choir were: "Pay no attention to your competitors until you have sung, be not eager to excel them. Simply be calm, earnest, and see to it that we do ourselves justice, and I, for one, will be satisfied, prize or no prize." So when the time of contest arrived, they being second on the program, while the first chorus were singing, ours arranged themselves in order in two large rooms under the pipe organ. A prayer was offered up in each room, humbly asking the Lord that we might be enabled to do ourselves and the people they represented justice on this momentous occasion. The first choir having sung, our leader stepped up on the platform and quietly directed all to their places without the least confusion, the vast assemblage breaking out into rousing bursts of applause every few moments. Photos were taken of them as they stood ready for the signal. Then, amidst perfect silence, they heard the opening chord of Worthy is the Lamb, and sang in a manner which they have at least never excelled. At the close the cheers and applause was simply deafening, and it would seem never to come to an end. The other two numbers rendered as well, and who could excel them was the general feeling.

The quiet Blessed are the Men was more trying to a body of people laboring under suppressed excitement, yet they held their own well, though scarcely able to command that calmness necessary, which they might have done on a less exciting occasion.

This over, the tremendous "Now the Torrents Rise" turned them loose again, and they swept along steady and grandly, more so by far than any other choir in the contest. The slow last portion of it representing the awful hush over a devastated world, was