

SIXTY-NINTH SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Sixty-ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints commenced in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. on Thursday, Oct. 6, 1898, President Lorenzo Snow presiding.

Of the general authorities present on the stand there were of the First Presidency—Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith; of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles—Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant, John W. Taylor, Marriner W. Merrill, Anthon H. Lund, Matthias F. Cowley and Abraham Owen Woodruff; Patriarch John Smith; of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies—Seymour B. Young, B. H. Roberts, George Reynolds and Jonathan G. Kimball; of the Presiding Bishopric—William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton and John R. Winder.

Conference was called to order by President George Q. Cannon.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn which begins:

Redeemer of Israel,
Our only delight,
On whom for a blessing we call;
Our shadow by day,
And our pillar by night,
Our King, our Deliverer, our all.

Opening prayer by Elder John Nicholson.

The hymn which begins as follows was sung by the choir:

Zion stands with hills surrounded—
Zion, kept by power divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world in arms combine;
Happy Zion,
What a favored lot is thine.

PRESIDENT LORENZO SNOW

spoke upon the object of the people in coming together in Conference, and their duty, in assembling, to enter into communion with God, and to improve and perfect themselves in the principles of truth. The need of supernatural guidance in their peculiar labors and difficulties, was spoken of, as also the love which God is always willing to show to His children, as illustrated in the ministration of Jesus, after His resurrection, to the spirits of the antediluvians. The great blessings promised to the Saints were spoken of and they were urged not to do anything by which these blessings would be forfeited.

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON addressed the conference. He said that the last six months had not been characterized by many conspicuous changes, excepting the loss of our beloved President. He then spoke of the situation of the missionary field abroad, in which satisfactory advancement was being made in all the countries in which the Elders were laboring. The speaker made reference to the gratifying results of greater care being taken in the selection of representative Latter-day Saints, both male and female, for the work of the ministry. The improvement in the circumstances of the Saints, speaking generally, over the situation. In that regard, which prevailed a year ago was a cause for thankfulness. The necessity of all the people being employed received due attention, and President Cannon pointed out methods by the application of which this could be accomplished. A portion of the discourse was devoted to showing what could be done in material matters by exercising faith, coupled with the exercise of individual energy. There was an increasing disposition to appeal for help in times of difficulty, to the Church, which was wrong. It was not possible for the trustee-in-trust to respond

to the numerous applications for financial aid which were constantly being made.

ELDER MATTHIAS F. COWLEY,

of the council of the Apostles, was the next speaker. He stated that the object of conferences of the Church was the strengthening of the people in their faith and their encouragement in the performance of their duties. Living in strict accordance with their covenants would give to the Saints a testimony that they were accepted of God. If one was not performing his whole duty and was not chided by the Holy Ghost he was in a dangerous condition, having deadened the spirit within him.

Elder Cowley referred to a visit of the departed President Young, to President Woodruff and his admonition to him to tell the people to get the Spirit of God, and keep it. This injunction though apparently commonplace, was a message worthy to be delivered by a departed Prophet to a living one, for it was the keynote of the life of every son and daughter of God. It was all the more necessary because of the fact that the belief generally prevailed in the earth that this Spirit was not to be given to men in this day. But the message of the Elders promising the bestowal of this Spirit fell upon prepared ears, and found faithful ones ready to accept and enjoy the promise. This promise and the organization through which it was given, was designed to be perpetual, and through perfection of organization interruption of the line of authority was avoided. Men were called as much by the spirit of revelation in this day, as in any dispensation of the past, whether in the days of Moses, of the Apostles or any other era of the Gospel light. In the days of Moses, many of the people were unprepared to receive and obey the higher laws of the Gospel, and lower commandments, temporal in their nature, were given them. The same faith which was manifested by Moses, was exemplified by his successor, Joshua. The lesser Priesthood was retained in Israel until Christ came and restored the fullness of the Gospel. The organization and power of the Priesthood were restored in our day, and men had been called to positions of trust and responsibility by revelation, as well as in times past.

Referring to the principle of faith, Elder Cowley commended the statement of Nephth that God gave no commandments without preparing the way for keeping them. By trust in God and prayer to him, true education and preparation for all duties of life, could be obtained by every man. This attainment would also be assisted by the faithful performance of all the duties of life, not merely their partial performance. Thoroughness in all these matters would result in a greater outpouring of the spirit of testimony upon the people. No man who studied and kept the laws of the Gospel ever wearied in the work. This was one of the greatest evidences of the truth of "Mormonism."

The choir sang,

We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.
Benediction by Patriarch John Smith.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The hymn which begins as follows was sung by the choir and congregation:

Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation;
No longer as strangers on earth need we roam,
Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation,
And shortly the hour of redemption will come.

Prayer by Elder George C. Parkinson.

Singing:

All hail the glorious day,
By Prophets long foretold,
When, with harmonious lay,
The sheep of Israel's fold
On Zion's hill His praise proclaim,
And shout hosanna to His name.

ELDER ANTHON H. LUND,

of the quorum of Apostles, was the first speaker. He said in substance: He had been absent from home at the last Conference, laboring in the Orient, where he had interesting experiences. The Saints in the Turkish empire had been for a time without a full organization, until he and Elder Hintze were sent there. The Saints there rejoiced in the Gospel and enjoyed its Spirit, being well grounded in its principles, considering their isolated condition. They were also under the disadvantage of not having the Church works translated into their language yet the Spirit of the Lord was leading them into all truth. Elder Lund and his companions had the pleasure of baptizing and confirming a number and making the organization of branches, etc., more complete. Even the efforts of the adversaries of the work, numbers of different Christian churches, had resulted in arousing a spirit of inquiry. The officers of the government were fair to the Elders and Saints allowing a measurable degree of freedom in religious worship. Not so much freedom was allowed, however, to Mahometans, who were held strictly to the established religion. When disturbance was made by the enemies of the truth, it was thought wisdom not to appeal to the government and run the risk of arousing the old bitterness between the Turks and the Christians. But the persecution amounted to but little.

Much of the blood of Israel was sprinkled among the Armenians, and the fruits of the Spirit were manifest very frequently among the Saints.

A gathering place for the Saints was sought out by the Elders on their visit. Referring to the prophecy of Moses regarding the scattering of Israel and the curse pronounced upon the land, the speaker stated, that the prophecy had been strikingly fulfilled. But Elder Orson Hyde had been sent to Palestine to dedicate it for the gathering of the Jews, and since that time a strong sentiment of gathering had arisen among the Jews, and a desire to become an independent nation and to own the land given to their fathers. In one place 15,000 had settled since 1896, and notwithstanding the opposition of the sultan, the "Zionist movement" was rapidly advancing. It was one of the signs of the times.

A colony of Americans was met in Jerusalem, who had gone there under the impression that Christ would soon come, and they desired to live there when He should come to Mount Olivet. They had all things in common and did much good to the poor. They pointed out the fact that Jerusalem was being built on the lines laid out in the prophecy of Zechariah, though without any previous design.

Before the Saints could gather to the place selected, it would be necessary for their faith to be strengthened, preparatory to the establishment of a Zion on the eastern continent. No power on earth could prevent this consummation.

ELDER MARRINER W. MERRILL,

of the quorum of the Apostles, was the next speaker. His remarks were substantially as follows: All had an object in view in coming to Conference. Probably a majority present were from distant parts. We were here to be instructed and to listen to the Spirit of the Lord. We were here to be refreshed. It was a good time to