

DESERET NEWS:

WEEKLY:

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - APRIL 21, 1880.

CIRCULAR FROM THE
TWELVE APOSTLES.

SALT LAKE CITY, U. T.

April 16, 1880.

*To the Presidents of Stakes and
Bishops of the Several Wards.*

Dear Brethren.—During the annual Conference begun in this city on the 6th inst., the Trustees in Trust, with the unanimous approval of the Apostles and Counselors, deemed it a fitting opportunity, on the 50th anniversary of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and at the close of the Year of Jubilee, to propose remitting some \$800,000 or one-half of the indebtedness to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, by the worthy poor who are struggling with adversity, unable to pay, and with but little prospect of ever being able. This very liberal proposition was cordially sustained by the unanimous vote of the vast congregation, composed of authorities and members from all regions of our settlements.

That these remissions may be applied in the wisest manner possible, the Bishops of the several Wards are hereby respectfully requested to at once proceed to learn who of those indebted to the P. E. Fund Company they may deem entitled to the benefit of the aforementioned remissions, and write down names, ages, year of immigration and P. O. address, with a few of the principal reasons why they recommend a remission, and forward all such recommendations to their several Presidents of Stakes.

The Presidents of Stakes are also respectfully requested to at once carefully examine the aforesaid recommendations from the Bishops; endorse thereon their approval or disapproval, with or without remarks, as they may please, and forward to the President or Clerk of the P. E. F. Co., Box B, this city, for consideration and final action by the proper authorities here, and their action thereon will be made known to the parties concerned through their Bishop as speedily as may be.

In case a Bishop shall deem it more proper to recommend remitting only a part of an indebtedness, he will recommend accordingly, as aforesaid, specifying the amount.

DELINQUENT TITHING REMITTED.

At the General Jubilee Conference, April 1880, President John Taylor proposed, and the Conference voted, that the deserving poor have their delinquent Tithing remitted throughout the whole church to the amount of one-half the total of all delinquencies; under such regulations as shall be approved by the Stake Presidents and the Apostles. The Presidents of Stakes and Bishops' Agents, are therefore respectfully requested to ascertain from the books in the several Wards under their jurisdiction the amount of all such delinquencies and, at an early day, a list of names and the Wards where found, with the amounts recommended for remittal, which should include all delinquencies of persons, generally well disposed, but who, by reason of losses, affliction, helpless families or missionary labors, have been unable to pay, and such amounts of other delinquencies as may be deemed right and proper, in accordance with the spirit of the Conference. Should the total amounts so recommended for remission amount to less or more than the total delinquency of respectively, it will be

adjusted and equalized as far as practicable, and as shall be deemed to be just, by the Presiding Bishop, with the approval of the Apostles. The several Agents should consult with Bishops, and make up lists to be submitted to the Stake Presidency, which after such modifications as they deem advisable, should be signed by them and the Bishop's Agents for the Stake, and forwarded to the Presiding Bishop of the Church.

We need not remind you that neither favoritism nor prejudice should influence any one in these matters, but only an earnest desire to make the yoke easy and the burden light.

DONATION OF COWS AND SHEEP.

On the suggestion of President John Taylor and his brethren of the Council of Apostles, by common consent, as expressed by the unanimous vote of the Saints in Conference assembled, on April 7th, 1880, one thousand good young milk cows and five thousand head of healthy sheep were appropriated, for the relief of the deserving poor Saints in Zion. Three hundred of the former, and two thousand of the latter were subscribed by the Church, and the remainder as a donation by the vote of the Presidencies of the Stakes and Bishops of the Wards, who were present at the meeting.

In order that a proper apportionment may be determined, the Presidents of the several Stakes are requested to ascertain and report to the Trustee-in-Trust as speedily as possible the number of cows and sheep that will be required to relieve the worthy poor in their Stakes.

A prompt report, giving the names and residences in full of such as the Bishops recommend, and whom you can endorse as being worthy and needy, will enable us to determine at once, and inform you of how many head of each it will be necessary for you to furnish. In securing subscriptions, it would be well as far as possible to make, at the same time, distributions as you may think proper.

Being aware of the object of this charitable measure, you will, we feel assured, perceive the importance of being thorough, prompt, and energetic in its accomplishment.

THE LOANING OF RELIEF SOCIETY
WHEAT.

To the President of the Central Grain Committee, and Presidents of the various Branches of the Relief Society in Salt Lake City and throughout the Stakes of Zion, having in charge stored Wheat.

In accordance with a unanimous vote of the Sisters present at our late General Conference, we recommend that you loan to your respective Bishops so much wheat as they may consider requisite to meet the necessities of the deserving poor.

We also recommend that the Bishops receipt to you and take receipts from those to whom they distribute, that the wheat loaned may be faithfully returned when circumstances shall permit.

We realize that our Sisters have performed a highly commendable and praiseworthy labor in storing wheat for future emergencies, and we trust that, inasmuch as the wheat is loaned without interest, the Bishops, in carrying out the above measures, will see that they receive a full equivalent for their loans, taking into consideration the losses in changing as well as the difference between old and new wheat as to quality and quantity. The shrinkage is supposed to be about ten per cent. The Bishops should be responsible for the return of the wheat, hence they should loan on good security and to such persons as will

return the same according to agreement. It should be loaned mainly for seed. The Tithing Office will in no case be responsible for the return of the whole or any part thereof.

THE FORGIVENESS OF DEBTS TO THE
WORTHY POOR IN ZION.

At our recent Annual Conference the Church, by common consent, remitted one-half of the people's entire indebtedness to the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company, and one half of the amount due on back tithing account; aggregating about \$875,900. This amount to apply to the cancellation of the obligations of the worthy poor on their emigration and tithing accounts; thus freeing them from a burden which they have been unable, to honorably cast off. To all such, in this regard, we offer a Jubilee. The power of God moving the hearts of the Saints still further, caused them to appropriate, for the relief of the deserving poor of Zion, one thousand head of cows and five thousand head of sheep. In addition to this, the Relief Societies, with a liberal generosity, offer to loan to the needy some 34,000 bushels of wheat until after harvest, without interest.

With these worthy examples, as the fruits of the gospel before us, we wish to extend to all our brethren and sisters the privilege of aiding in this good work of compassion and love. We respectfully remind those who have the riches of this world more abundantly bestowed upon them, that they have a fitting opportunity of remembering the Lord's poor. If you hold their notes, and they are unable to pay, forgive the interest and the principal, or so much thereof as you might desire them to forgive were their and your circumstances reversed; thus doing unto others as you would that others should do unto you. For upon this hang the law and the prophets. If you have mortgages upon the homes of your brethren or sisters, who are poor, worthy and honest, and who desire to pay you but cannot, free them in whole or in part. Extend to them a jubilee, if you can consistently. You will have their faith, prayers and confidence, which may be worth more than money. We invite Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution as the parent; all other co-operative institutions as the children; our brethren who are engaged in profitable railroad, banking, mercantile, manufacturing, or other remunerative enterprises, to extend a helping hand. Free the worthy debt-bound brother if you can. Let there be no rich among us from whose tables fall only crumbs to feed a wounded Lazarus. Rather let us, each and all do our part honorably, justly, charitably and well. The Church of Christ has given us a worthy example, let us follow it, so that God may forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors. By so doing, you will as Jesus says, "Make unto yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

That all these matters may be carried promptly to a successful issue, we advise the Presidencies of the several Stakes and the Bishop's agents to proceed at once to visit all the wards therein, holding meetings in order to arrange all these matters while making their visits. By this means they will more readily accomplish what is herein required and have their minds relieved of the responsibilities relating thereto. Those needing wheat for seed must of course have it soon in order that it may be available for that purpose this season; while those needing cows and sheep will appreciate promptness in their delivery.

JOHN TAYLOR,

In behalf of the
Council of Apostles.THE VANDALISM OF TOUR-
ISTS.

The vandalism of the average American tourist has become notorious in all the world. He will not only secure relics by desecrating the tomb of Washington and others of the illustrious dead at home, but by laying violent hands upon anything noteworthy abroad which can be defaced, or despoiled, or carried away bodily without detection. The mysterious coffer in the Great Pyramid of Egypt is chipped and broken by the tourist's hammer, and in his greed for specimens or souvenirs of travel, nothing is too sacred for his sacrilegious hands.

It cannot be wondered at then, that the grave of President Brigham Young has not been kept entirely free from the assaults of the relic fiend. Yesterday, so we are informed, some travelers from the East broke off pieces of the huge stone slab that covers the tomb, to carry away as mementoes of their visit. When they are exhibited as curiosities from Utah, those fragments should be labeled: "Specimens of Christian regard for the Sabbath and respect for the feelings of the friends of the venerated dead."

We hope no boy or girl raised among the "benighted Mormons" will ever descend to the level of those "enlightened Christians" who thus prove to us their superior breeding and education, or will ever be guilty of the same kind of discourtesy which some of the despisers of the Latter-day Saints exhibit when attending our public worship. Respect for other people's religion, no matter how absurd it may seem to us, is one of the duties enjoined upon a "Mormon," old or young.

We take pleasure, in this connection, in stating that the apparent discourtesy noticed by a great many of the congregation in the Assembly Hall yesterday was not either intentional or real. Most of the visitors from the East who attended the services sat in respectful attention till the close of the meeting; those who left the Hall during the delivery of the discourse retired because of the draught occasioned by the open windows, which they were not able to bear without danger to their health. Dr. Ordway, the leader of the party, is a gentleman, and we have this explanation from him, which is entirely sufficient.

The party appears to be composed of ladies and gentlemen of culture and social standing, people to whom we are always pleased to extend a kindly greeting. We trust that the ill-mannered vandals who spent the Sabbath afternoon in defacing the tomb of our departed President were in no way connected with this party, whom we wish a pleasant trip to the Coast and a safe return to New England.

"THE SCUM OF THE EARTH."

One of the commonest "arguments" against the "Mormon" community is that it is composed of "the scum of the earth." This statement is made by the editor, the preacher and the traveling subscription gatherer, in almost every anti-"Mormon" attack. One of the great "crimes" alleged against the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is, that they confine their labors chiefly to the lower classes and gather their converts from the scum of society. "The rank and file of Mormonism" are represented as densely ignorant, unaccustomed to republican freedom and unacquainted with the refinement of the age, and the leaders are called rude impostors and unlettered bores, fit only to till the ground. Joseph Smith is always assailed as an ignoramus, and Brigham Young as an uncultivated and uneducated, though determined and successful man.

Supposing that the Latter-day Saints deserve these expressions of "Christian" contempt, that they have been gathered in from the poorer classes of European nations; that they have been taken out of monarchical serfdom; and that their leading men are illiterate and uncultured in modern fashions and attainments. When then? Did our very pious and fastidious accusers ever reflect that the founders of the ancient Christian Church, in which they profess to believe, were persons of the character they so affect to despise? Jesus himself opened his eyes to the light of this world in a stable,

and was reared as the son of a common mechanic. Christ's chief Apostles were fishermen, or laborers at other low callings, and similar objections were urged against them by the Pharisees of their times, as are now made against their brethren by the Pharisees of the latter times.

When Peter and John defended their faith in the presence of Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas and Alexander and other Jewish dignitaries, it is written that "when they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled." It is also said of them "but the common people heard them gladly." Jesus gave to the messengers from John the Baptist, as one of the proofs of his divine mission, "the poor have the gospel preached unto them." And further, holy writ declares, "For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; That no flesh should glory in his presence." It was predicted by the prophet Isaiah, that when God should perform his "marvellous work and a wonder" in the latter days, "the wisdom of the wise men should perish and the understanding of the prudent should be hid."

All these sayings apply in the case of the world and the Latter-day Saints. We have made no pretensions to learning, nor to blue blood, nor to great distinctions of rank, or wealth or title. The rich, as a general rule, are blinded by the god of this world, and the learned boast in their acquirements. Therefore they do not regard the gospel we preach with favor, and, as of old, the poor have the gospel preached to them, and only the common people receive it gladly.

But if it be true that the people who have built up and inhabited this Territory were gathered from the class described, is not this a credit mark to the Church which has gathered and redeemed them from poverty and bondage? That they are, and since their sojourn in these mountain valleys have been industrious, economical, thrifty and successful, the fields, orchards, gardens, homes, towns, cities, school-houses, churches, temples and public buildings attest with an indisputable voice and seal and subscription. The evidences of organized and intelligently directed energy abound in every direction. People who once were in want now rejoice in plenty, and the former European peasant is now a landholder and a citizen, the peer before the lay of his pretended superiors, who sneer at his faith and mock at his origin. If "Mormonism" can accomplish so much with such "inferior" materials, is not its work to be commended rather than condemned, and is there not more God in the evolution of such a people out of the "scum of European society," than in the modern "Christian" plan, which makes wider the distinction between rich and poor, more sharply defines class distinctions, and rivets more tightly the chains of Old World servitude?

But though we admit that the bulk of our people and most of our leaders have come from the laboring classes of society in various countries, we emphatically deny that they have been culled from the slums and dens of the cities of Europe or elsewhere, or that they ever belonged to the degraded or criminal ranks of any nation. Thousands of them saved up by strict economy the means to pay for their own emigration. Thousands more furnished part of the money and were helped to the rest by the kindness and good will of their already liberated friends. This is a proof that they are not of the grade alleged, or else that they have nobly risen from the dust and ashes of their original condition and been lifted by this "Mormonism" into comfort and comparative independence.

The truth is that the masses of the "Mormon" people have come from the honest, temperate, steady, industrial class which is the substantial element of society, and from which the so-called higher classes have of necessity to be recruited. The depraved class opposes "Mormonism" with vulgar abuse and the missiles peculiarly its own, just as much as the high-toned, pretendedly pious, learned and wealthy class with its ridicule, misrepresentation, and the weapons of cultured hatred.