THE CHOIR'S JOURNEY

Incidents on Route from Salt Lake to St. Louis.

TWO SWEET HOURS IN ZION.

Three Interesting Letters from the "News" Special Correspondent, and One From Andrew Jenson.

(Special Correspondence to the DESERET NEWS.)

DENVER, Colo., Aug. 30.—Agreeable to promise I take this first opportunity of dropping you a few hurried lines relative to our excursion party. To begin at the beginning—when we arrived at the depot most of us made our way by dint of much scowling through the throng that thronged the train to our respective cars, only to be met at the steps by the information that all baggage, even hand baskets, must be checked at the baggage room, and placed on the baggage car, a very disheartening piece of information to those who, in the hurry and excitement of "getting off" had failed to eat dinner before starting.

As soon as the train was well under way all seemed moved with a desire to locate their particular friends, and a good-natured crowd jostled and elbowed each other through the aisles. Before reaching Ogden Presidents Woodruff, Cannon and Smith passed through the cars exchanging greetings and shaking hands with the entire party.

The first stop was made at Ogden, where an enthusiastic crowd of friends and well-wishers mobbed us a hearty welcome. During the few minutes the train waited many of our party hurried with the crowd on the platform receiving the well wishes of friends for a safe and successful trip. At all the settlements along the Weber we found crowds assembled, who cheered heartily as our train sped past them, warming our hearts with the knowledge that we were accepted by them as the representatives of the Mormon people at Chicago.

Soon after leaving Echo, as it moved by one impulse, all began pressing forward to the baggage car to pick up lunch baskets, and those whose berths were nearest certainly had cause to congratulate themselves on that fact. By the time supper was fairly over we were rolling into the hospitable town of Evanston, Wyoming, where we were accorded a royal welcome. A large crowd assembled at the depot as our train drew up at the depot, and fully one thousand voices were raised in welcoming cheers. Alighting from the cars, many of the basses and tenors sang a selection which was heartily cheered. J. W. Hanna, who is well known in Salt Lake, on behalf of the mayor and town council of Evanston, gave a short address of welcome and tendered us the freedom of the city even for our short stay, regretting that it could not be longer. Said he: "The Tabernacle choir is an organization of which the people of this intermountain region are justly proud. You take with you our best wishes for your success in the contest at Chicago." Hon. John T. Caine responded in behalf of Prof. Stephens and the choir in his happiest vein, evoking hearty laughter and cheers. The choir sang another selection which ended as the train began to move and there was a rather undignified scramble to get aboard, one young man in his fear of being left plunged head foremost through an open window to the no small diversion of the bystanders.

Leaving Evanston we sped out into the darkness leaving that we left behind us warm friends and taking with us pleasant reminiscences of our neighbors on the east. As we passed through Echo Springs the twinkling lights of a strain of music (rendered by a brass band, out to welcome us) lingered for a moment in our ears, awakening feelings of regret that we could not stop to acknowledge the courtesy and good will that prompted the welcome intended.

Next morning at eight o'clock we stopped at Laramie for breakfast or for tea, coffee or milk for those who were supplied with much. The male chorus sang a selection which was warmly responded by the assembled multitude. Another selection was sung and as warmly received at Cheyenne.

Arriving at Denver at 3 p. m. the choir proceeded to the reserved hall—the M. E. Trinity church—for instruction and short rehearsal, then after dinner dispersed for sightseeing, to assemble again at eight o'clock for the concert.

To dispose of the subject of head one need only say that the concert was unquestionably a success, both financially and artistically, but that words poorly express the enthusiastic applause with which every number was received. The male chorus and every one of the soloists was given a rousing recall. The large hall and gallery of the M. E. Trinity church was crowded to its most capacity, and many ladies even were obliged to stand during the whole evening as every seat had been taken in the advance sale.

Immediately after the close of the concert we boarded our special train and were soon waiting rapidly towards Kansas City. P.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Sept. 1.—When we returned to the depot at Denver city after our concert we found everything arranged for the night and without waiting even for much we all took possession of our berths, and were soon wrapped in social slumber after the worry and excitement of a long day's travel, followed by the jubilee experience of our "first appearance."

In the morning we awoke to find ourselves speeding through the limitless plains of Kansas under cover of a gentle inundation on every hand to the horizon. During the forenoon we passed many small villages surrounded by diverse nodes which are energy of man has endeavored, with but poor success, apparently, to convert into fertile farms. Water was evidently the one factor wanting.

As we came further eastward the face of the country became hilly and more and more picturesque, features and to assume an aspect of more beauty and peaceful repose. Yet at the same time we were struck with the feature that seemed to include almost general feeling of relief prevailed. This was an occasional depot or cedar roofed over as a place of refuge when the terrible cyclone spreads destruction in its path. While the beauty of the landscape, with its gently sloping hills and verdant valleys, might, at first, be a close bough to repose on comfortable rules, yet the general relief was that the picture lacked the grand and essential feature of our so certain frameparts to a complete picture.

At our numerous stops we made at various stations along the route, the young people gladly availed themselves of the opportunity to vary the monotony of the journey by a run to the freezing air. The health of our party is generally good though some few have been slightly indisposed from the effects of a change in drinking water. The spirits of all seem to be buoyant and at times quite the joviality, and everyone seems to enter thoroughly into the enjoyment of the trip.

Yesterday afternoon at Junction City, 135 miles from Kansas City, we met the train bearing the company of Henry Irving, the great actor, and our male chorus sang for them to one we parted company, much to their astonishment, if one may be permitted to judge by the hearty applause we received.

It was about 8:30 p. m. when we reached the Union depot at Kansas City instead of 5 p. m., our schedule time, and we all remained in the cars instead of registering our night-seeing. After all, what we lacked in quantity of time, we made up in quality. Despite as it seems to be prepared for the arduous task of going by a good night's rest. Daylight, however, found many of our party up and up town viewing with wonder the sights of this wonderful city beside which our own Salt Lake stands into the insignificance of a village.

Just before 9 o'clock we were visited by a special committee of five appointed by the citizens of Independence to wait upon us and secure us of the hospitality and warm welcome awaiting us there. Soon after, our special train with the Independence committee aboard drew out of the land of our fond pilgrimage. A trip of half an hour brought us to the depot where we found many carriages and conveyances on hand to carry such as wished to ride to the Temple lot. Many preferred walking up the gently sloping hill to the sacred spot, and the serious cast of all features gave a sure indication of the deep feelings that stirred the heart as we trod the sod endeared by association sacred ties to the children of God.

Upon the Temple lot we found a large concourse of people assembled to welcome us. The choir gathered on the south side of the small frame house on the Temple lot used as a house of worship by the Reorganites. A platform had been arranged and on this were seated the First Presidency and the leading men of Independence. After the singing by the choir of the thrilling hymn, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning," the crowd adjourned to the handsome Josephite church across the street where we soon parked with an appreciative audience eager to hear more singing.

When all were assembled the mayor of Independence addressed us in words as follows:

"To you American freemen, visitors from the Far West, from a land of finds, of flowers, of milk and honey, I am here as a representative of the citizens of Independence, Mo., a broad, open people, free from bigotry, generous, law-abiding, God-fearing and lovers of liberty, and extend to their compatriots in deep behalf the right hand of fellowship and a hearty welcome to our city, hoping that the memory of this day may be ever garnered in each of our hearts, and treasured as one of the most happy events of our lives."

President Winchell responded, thanking the people for their warm welcome and invited the blessing of heaven upon them. He then introduced President Cannon, who briefly followed in the same strain and gave the welcome he had received while it was unexpected and all the more deeply appreciated. He closed by thanking them in the name of the Lord and the choir sang the anthem "Light and Truth," and to answer to an enthusiastic recalling the Temple anthem "Hosanna."

H. C. Eaton, by request, sang "O My Father," an air with such thrilling power as that the effect on many hearts, collected by the memories that never second that historic spot, was witnessed in the warm tears that welled unbidden to the eyes.

These exercises, while necessarily brief, had occupied all the time allotted to our visit, and with deep regret we hastened to the cars, bringing with us some memories of the spot we stood on, but carrying in our centre more lasting remembrances to Deity we had experienced in being permitted to visit the land dedicated to the building of the New Jerusalem.

In the afternoon we gave a matinee performance to a small but very highly appreciative audience, and at night sang to a full house in the auditorium.

The reception our concert received elsewhere should be self-evident. The appearance was hearty for every number and the encores were all enthusiastically received. Weber received the best result.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., Sept. 2.—At the close of our concert last night we hurried direct to our train, and at 11:30 p. m. continued our eastward journey. Very early this morning the Wabash pounded through the cities and we were shaken from our slumbers at the state capital, and many got up to get a view of the renowned state prison and the capitol. The former has so many buildings devoted to various modern industries conducted with it that it looks like a great amount of considerable manufacturing village.

Our route lay along the south bank of the Missouri river until within a few miles of St. Louis. At that point the river bends away to the east and joins the Mississippi about twenty miles above the city. The country through which we were passing was very picturesque and beautiful. The soil seemed to be of a wonderful fertility. Every thing is richly with irrigation, and in many fields we noticed with wonder that the corn stalks attained a height of two to twelve feet and the ears ripened fully one-third long. Yet with all the advantages of a rapidly rapidly growth, farming seems to be carried on in a entirely pioneer compared with the farming farms at home locality.

Many of us realized for the first time the earnestness of our parents in order to giving us more than we or two and going out into the inhospitable wilds of the far West, and at the same time never before realized the good done them for enabling the heart to blossom like the rose. It was the perfect harmony in all we did that it was not our young people could take the object lesson this trip affords or they would view with greater reverence the pioneers of the desert, and appreciate more fully the glorious inheritance left to them as a heritage of privation, toil and death.

We should have arrived at St. Louis at 8:30 a.m. but were fully one-hour and a half late. We separated into three parties to find hotels as no one hotel in the city could accommodate us all at such short notice. After breakfast we met at the Merchant's Exchange building by invitation of the citizens of St. Louis, who in we were escorted to a hospitable reception. During the interim of waiting we had an excellent opportunity of witnessing the earliest thing who assembled their every day to gamble in stocks. It was very amusing to watch the "bulls and bears" good-naturedly banding each other about, jamming hats over each others' eyes, and mashing "stiffies," etc. We remarked that none were so bold as to appear in a "Mormon pipe" and the head gear of all seemed to be of rather inferior quality for men whose daily transactions run sometimes into the millions. As one of our singers, who hails a silk hat, mounted the steps surrounding the pit, we watched to see if he receive the same treatment the hats of members of the exchange were receiving but he fortunately withdrew in time to save it from such indignity.

At noon the president of the exchange called the assembled crowd to order and introduced the mayor of the city, C. P. Walbridge, who delivered a warm address to welcome. He spoke of the great achievements of our fathers in building up a worthy and prosperous commonwealth in the midst of the forbidding desert, and in less than fifty years being able to send out such an illustrious body of singers to compete against the world as one of the wonders of the age.

Hon. John T. Caine responded, thanking the mayor and citizens for the distinguished honor conferred upon us in such a flattering reception, after which the male chorus sang "Love of Home," and in response to the hearty applause with which it was received sang "The Soldier's Farewell."

At 1:30 p.m. the entire party participated in a pleasant excursion of two hours on the Mississippi river, on the excursion steamer Pargoud, which H. W. Brolaski, an old friend, had kindly placed at our disposal.

It would be presumptuous, at least for a stranger who has spent but one day in this great city, to attempt any description of the many interesting things we saw. There were so many things to engage our attention that the mind is bewildered in trying to recall a little of them. We met many warm hearted friends who endeavored in every way to make our visit a pleasant one. Among these none labored more effectually than Geo. W. B. Roskell and Andrew Wormell of the firm of Roskell & Co., jobbers and cook binders with whom the Deseret News company have had many and lasting agreeable business associations. Through them we were introduced to many prominent citizens of our party and when they met on Change and were by them introduced to our party they devoted themselves exclusively to furthering our enjoyment. Many of our will remember them with warmest feelings so long as we remember our present visit to St. Louis.

Tonight we sing in the Masonic music and in the Exposition building, and in an unknown the largest that has yet greeted us and with the concert we conclude our journey to Chicago. P.

(Special Correspondence of the NEWS.)

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Sept. 1, 1893.—Continuing my journey from Denver on Wednesday of August 30th, I arrived at Kansas City the following day at 8 p.m. I presented at Union Independence, Junction Junction, and after a wearying journey in Kansas City, where I had the pleasure of meeting the excursion from Ogden, Salt Lake, which arrived about 11 o'clock in the evening. Today I accompanied the choir on their visit to the presidency, where they were taken in their own special cars on the Missouri Pacific Railway. We arrived at the depot in Independence at 9:30 a. m. the day. Immediately upon our arrival we were accosted by one of the citizens of that place, and all had to the Temple lot (about a quarter of a mile northwest) where the Reorganite brethren had erected a temporary stand on the open lot for the evening's service. The visitors and a large number of the citizens of Independence crowded around and listened very attentively to the choir sing "O My Father" and "Light and Truth." We did a number of more the like of which has never before been heard in that sacred spot. As the inspired words were repeated and the sweet voices of Zion, where are sung a Temple of God will be erected, "And the glory of God shall rest upon it." Yes, and the spirit of inspiration came upon many, whispering to unmistakable tones to prepare for the time when the redemption of Zion is to bring sign.

The singing at this spot concluded all the services held on the Temple lot. Complying with the invitation of the mayor, I, with the exception of the "Reorganized Church" had tendered the use of one of our churches, lying across the street from the Temple lot, the congregation pioneered thither. The center, which is said to have a seating capacity of 1800, was filled to its full capacity. Many members were unable to gain admittance. The moment of the choir having taken their position on the stand and immediately before it, and quietness having been restored, Mayor Winchell stepped forward and welcomed the visitors in a brief address, to which responses were made by President Woodruff and Cannon.

The choir then rendered the hymn "Light and Truth" in superb style, after which Mr. H. C. Eaton in distinguished manner, gave the hymn, "O my Father thou that dwellest," assisted by the choir, in the same spirit and with the same effect as when he rendered the beautiful piece in the morning style during the dedicatory services in the Salt Lake City temple in April last. This was followed by the choir singing the Temple anthem "Hosanna" (the house of our Lord is completed) to conclude with "Israel, Israel, God has a Kingdom," all of which was well received by an audience whose enthusiasm was exceedingly chilled.

The combined the service at Independence and the visitors met at 4 o'clock to the depot where the train stood ready to take them back to Kansas City.

The spirit which characterized the proceedings at Independence throughout was excellent on the part of the participants; the feelings of the citizens seemed to be exceptionally good toward the visitors, and the reports, "Welcome to a friendly land," which reached us while in Kansas City from publishers of a Kansas City newspaper is very suggestive. The difference in feelings existing towards the Saints now and that which led to the expulsion of both citizens in 1833 is very striking, and it would seem to indicate that the present inhabitants of Independence—do not endorse the atrocities inflicted upon our people in this county that early years ago, though one of the editors of an Independence paper told me very recently that the old spirit burned toward the Mormons still existed in Jackson county. The open hostilities now manifested in Kansas City, however, would indicate that he is not mistaken up to a very great extent in those views.

It is very much to be regretted that the time allotted the visitors to Independence was so limited; only two hours were spent there allotted. There are a few points of historical interest in and around Independence which they would have enjoyed very much to see; but time did not permit them to see a few of them to advantage. Yet, on the whole, it seemed to be a very happy event in the history of the Saints. P.

The Kansas City Star gives a full report of the proceedings in Independence in this evening's issue, and yesterday it published a short but fair editorial on the event of the visit of the Mormons to Kansas City, extending to them a hearty welcome.

The Kansas City Times of this morning published a lengthy article and let Morris contributes with interesting points, based on information which the reporters of that paper gleaned from the excursionists themselves immediately after their arrival at the depot last night. Also the Star had a reporter on the ground, both reported their articles in a spirit of fairness and kindness, doing to give correct information to their readers. Other Kansas City papers also speak highly and especially of the visit of the Mormons to their city, although some of them get things fairly mixed through being incorrectly informed.

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