

mission. One of the most prominent of the Book of Mormon prophets was Nephi, son of Lehi, the head of the colony of people who left Jerusalem 600 years before Christ, came to this continent and established themselves upon this favored land. Nephi was a great man, having strong characteristics, one of which was the plainness of his speech. He made many prophecies in relation to our times, knowing that the record would come forth in the latter days for the benefit of all who should receive it. He depicted the present situation of the world in the following succinct and unmistakable language, as recorded on page 113:

"But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles; yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles, and also the Jews both those who shall come upon this land, and those who shall be upon other lands; yea, even upon all the lands of the earth; behold they will be drunken with iniquity, and all manner of abominations;

"And when that day shall come, they shall be visited of the Lord of Hosts, with thunder, and with earthquake, and with great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire."

No one will deny the correctness of Nephi's delineation of the moral situation of the inhabitants of the world, without respect to nationality. Such a denial would be useless, because the daily record of crime of the most horrible character, and embracing every known phase of it, proves the faithfulness of the appalling picture. That the most abominable offenses against the laws of God and man are increasing alarmingly is a fact that can be easily demonstrated by the process of comparison. If the insane race for wealth, pleasure and power be thrown in, it will be seen how clearly are the words of the prophet fulfilled—"They will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations."

The prophecy embodied in the quotation is *multum in parvo*, being a striking illustration of condensation. A number of elemental disturbances are named. They were to be, in our times, conspicuous for frequency and intensity. It not there would have been no special point in naming them in connection with the peculiar conditions of the latter days. Thunder is first on Nephi's list of visitations in this particular prophecy. Accounts comedically from all parts of the earth giving descriptions of thunderstorms unprecedented in the regions where they occur. The reverberations are depicted as deafening and terrorizing, while the accompanying lightning is not only intensely vivid, but frequently destructive of human life and property, it being the means of setting buildings on fire, and performing many eccentric operations.

Earthquakes accompanied by great noises, as if the earth were groaning, are more or less frequent and exceedingly destructive, the latest being that recorded in the dispatches as having destroyed a town in Mexico.

The frequency and destructive character of storms and tempests is a matter of remark in the public journals. The situation is such that in some places, where they are specially common, the people are kept to some extent in a condition of dread. It is nonsense to

say cavalierly that such things have always been and are therefore but a continuation of what has occurred in the past. Where is there the information that would justify an assertion to the effect that such atmospheric disturbances have ever been as prevalent as now? Take our own loved country as an example. In some parts of it, so often have tempests and storms of great violence and destructive force appeared—almost annihilating towns and villages—that storm-cellars have become a part of residential architecture. This provision of means of refuge in connection with dwelling houses has been almost unknown until within the last few years. In connection with this subject it may not be amiss to mention a fact of which we have been informed. When the Elders of the Church go out into the world, a part of their proclamation is to warn the people of coming calamities. In some parts of the Southern States, where districts have been visited by terrorizing storms, numbers of the people, not connected with the Church, have sought out the Elders so they could be near them at such times, believing that they would thus be safe from injury during the elemental war. As an object lesson in relation to the prevalence of storms in the present period, we need only refer no further back than to the tempestuous condition of the oceans—notably the Atlantic—during last winter.

The last of the visitations named by Nephi in the prophecy quoted in this article is that of "the flame of devouring fire." It is only needful in this branch of the subject to direct attention to the daily record, which is appalling. Numbers of towns and cities are being practically swept out of existence by the devouring element in the various countries of our globe. As stated some time since in the press dispatches, the question was recently raised, in a meeting of insurance people held in Liverpool, whether it was advisable for European companies to operate in the United States, where fires increased with such phenomenal rapidity during the last few years that the American business had been conducted at a loss.

There are many predictions of the Prophets, especially those of Joseph Smith, which relate to the present time that are receiving a literal verification in the present condition of the world, but this article has extended already to greater length than was intended. Consequently, further treatment of this subject must be deferred. There is enough to show to the Saints, at least, that the days in which we live are momentous.

CONGRESS ADJOURNS.

The first session of the Fifty-Second Congress came to a close at 11 o'clock last evening. After a long fight an appropriation of \$2,500,000 was made for the World's Fair at Chicago. The session will not figure in history as one remarkable for any large and important legislation. Perhaps the bill which attracted most attention was the Chinese Exclusion measure, the full text of which was published in these columns at the time of its passage. The other bills of note passed during

the session just closed are the Inman Registry bill, the Blackhawk and Seminole Wars Pension bill, the Eight Hour bill, the Army Nurse bill, the Intermediate Pension bill, the bill to increase the pay of members of the life-saving service, and the bill enabling the President to enforce reciprocity canal arrangements with Canada.

The great topics of the time were free silver coinage, the tariff, and dealing in options. Nothing has been done in either. Measures relating to all three were killed. Next to these in importance were retrenchment in appropriations and the World's Fair bill. As to retrenchment there does not seem to have been any reforms effected in that line. And as to the World's Fair bill, Congress can hardly be censured for its reluctance to pass that measure. When Chicago was selected, a distinct and emphatic assurance was given by the people of Illinois that Congress would not be asked for any aid beyond the funds necessary for Federal exhibits.

The total number of bills and joint resolutions introduced in the House was nearly 10,000 and in the Senate 3604. The House passed 475 bills, 284 of which passed the Senate and went to the President. The Senate passed 691 bills, 113 of which passed the House and went to the President, who vetoed two of them, namely the McGarrahan claim bill and the bill to amend the Court of Appeals Act. The President permitted three bills to become law without his signature.

Of the measures passed by the House 151 were private pension bills, 48 to remove charges of desertion, and 41 private bills of a miscellaneous character. Only about 220 measures of a really public nature were passed, and a number of these related to the District of Columbia, so that out of the 10,000 bills and joint resolutions introduced in the House only about 200 measures relating to the Nation at large were passed.

MARS, AT HIS NEAREST POINT TO THE EARTH TODAY.

E. M. CONVERSE, in the Boston Herald, has the following in relation to Mars, now the prevailing topic both for astronomers and newspapers:

"Mars is morning star until Aug. 4, and then evening star. He stands foremost on the August list; for his grand opposition with the sun occurs on the 4th at 1h. 21m. A. M. The ruddy planet then rises in the southeast just as the sun sets in the northwest. He looks down from the meridian at midnight, and continues to be visible until his light is quenched in the glow of the approaching sun. Nothing more can be said to draw attention to the favorable conditions for observing our celestial neighbor when circumstances bring him comparatively near to the terrestrial domain, or to the importance of making the most of the opportunity for the closest examination of his surface.

"Southern astronomers see him to better advantage, but northern astronomers have larger telescopes. Time will determine where the greater honors will be won. Every one will earnestly wish that the sky may be free from clouds and the atmosphere clear and pure when Mars, marvelous in size and brilliant in color, bends low in the heavens and invites a