

MINUTES

OF A GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS MISSION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, HELD AT PALAWAI, ISLAND OF LANAI, COMMENCED ON SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH, 1856.

Conference convened at 11 a.m.

Present—Of the presidency of the mission: Silas Smith, John T. Caine and Silas S. Smith. Presidents of conferences: Joseph Smith, H. P. Richards, Edward Partridge, George Speirs and Eli Bell.

Traveling Elders: W. E. Pack, Wm. King, S. M. Molen, Sixtus E. Johnson, John R. Young, W. B. Rogers, O. K. Whitney, W. W. Cluff, John A. West, S. B. Thurston, F. W. Hurst and G. Linn.

Conference called to order by Pres. Smith. Opened by singing the hymn on page 132, "Sweet is the work," &c. Prayer by Pres. Smith. Sung hymn on page 15, "Joy to the world," &c.

Moved and carried that Elder John T. Caine act as clerk of the conference.

Moved and seconded that we sustain Elder Silas Smith as the president of this mission. Carried unanimously.

Pres. Smith in a brief manner thanked the brethren for their expression of confidence in him, said that by the assistance of the Lord, he would endeavor to merit a continuance of the same. He then presented Elders John T. Caine and Silas S. Smith as his counselors, who upon motion were unanimously sustained.

Pres. Smith in a few remarks stated the object of the conference, and set forth the arrangement of the business, and called upon the elders to take an active part in the same.

Moved and seconded that we uphold and sustain by our faith and prayers President Brigham Young, H. C. Kimball and J. M. Grant as the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, in all the world. Carried unanimously.

Moved and carried that we also sustain the quorum of the Twelve Apostles and all other authorities of the church in the land of Zion, and throughout the world.

The President then called for a representation of the conferences which were given as follows:—

LANAI CONFERENCE.—Elder Silas S. Smith, president, stated that the Saints who had gathered to this place continue to feel well; they desire to keep the commandments of the Lord; their faith in the great work of the last days is daily increasing, which is manifested very clearly by the alacrity with which they obey the counsels of those who are set over them; many are desirous of gathering to Zion as soon as the way opens. Fifty-five have gathered here since last conference, and were, as is customary, re-baptized into the church. Meetings are held regularly three times on Sundays, and from three to six times through the week, all of which are well attended. Bore testimony to the faithfulness of his assistants, Elders W. E. Pack and William King.

MAUI CONFERENCE.—Elder Joseph Smith, president, reports the Saints generally speaking feeling well—as this is the oldest conference in the mission, there are some who having lost their first love, have become lukewarm and careless; but the majority are rejoicing in the work in which they have engaged; meetings are held regularly in the different branches, which are well attended. The Saints are well supplied with meeting houses. Many are desirous of gathering to Zion. Testified to the faithfulness of his associate laborers, Elders S. M. Molen and Sixtus E. Johnson.

HILO (HAWAII) CONFERENCE.—Elder H. P. Richards, president, reports that when he arrived in his field from the July conference he found the church in Hilo in a very poor situation, but he was happy to state that, through the blessings of the Lord, it had been restored to order, and the Saints generally are feeling well, and rejoicing in the gospel.

Meetings are regularly held and well attended. One good meeting house has been built and another commenced. Through having to spend all our time in strengthening the Saints, we have been unable to open up new fields of labor, as was anticipated we should do, at our last conference. There are large districts in this conference where the gospel has not yet been preached, and although frequently called upon to go there and preach, we could not do so, and attend to our other duties. Testified to the zeal and faithfulness of his fellow laborer Elder John R. Young.

KOHALA (HAWAII) CONFERENCE.—Elder Edward Partridge, president. This conference, like that of Hilo, we found (upon arriving there from our last general conference) to be in a somewhat confused state; but at present the majority of the Saints feel well, and are increasing in faith and good works; there are still, however, some careless and heedless ones. Meetings are held regularly in the different branches, and are generally interesting. The conference was in a much better situation when we left it, than it had been for some time past; we have been blessed in our labors. The Saints are pretty well supplied with meeting houses. Elder W. B. Rogers has been a faithful fellow-laborer, and has done all he could to assist in the work.

KAUAI CONFERENCE.—Elder John T. Caine, president, reports this conference in a healthy condition; the Saints are generally alive to the work, and the officers are diligent in their callings, yet there are some who do not seem to realize the importance of living their religion. Meetings are held regularly throughout the conference, and are well attended. One meeting house has been built, and materials ready for others.

In Honolulu, besides a large branch of native Saints, there is a small branch of foreigners. Four meetings, two native and two Eng-

lish, are held on Sundays, with prayer and social meetings frequently through the week, all of which are generally well attended. Our labors among the foreign community, although apparently fruitless, have not been without their good effects in removing prejudices from the minds of the citizens; and during the shipping season many of those "who go down to the sea in ships" had the gospel preached to them, which in the future may not be entirely fruitless.

I take pleasure in testifying to the zeal and faithfulness of my associates, Elders Orson K. Whitney, William Cluff and John A. West. While br. Whitney and myself have been engaged with the secular and foreign interests of the mission in Honolulu, the native Saints have been strengthened and built up by the untiring labors of Elders Cluff and West.

The only opposition to the work has been a few anti-Mormon sermons by the Protestant missionaries, which have done us considerable good; for in endeavoring to expose Mormonism, they exposed their own folly and imposition, which was apparent, even to the prejudiced minds of their own church members.

KAUAI CONFERENCE.—Elder George Speirs, president. On our arrival in this conference we found the Saints very weak, and many had turned from the church, several others who were reported at our last general conference we had been unable to find, so that the statistical report of Kauai will show a considerable decrease from that reported to the last conference. But those who do remain, feel well, and are more alive to the work than they ever have been before. Does not consider the decrease in numbers as any detriment to the cause, for many of those whose names were on the record were unworthy of a standing in the church; believes the conference will thrive now that the dead branches are lopped off. One meeting house has been built, and the meetings are pretty well attended. Testified to the faithful labors of his associate, Elder S. B. Thurston.

MOLOKAI CONFERENCE.—Elder Eli Bell, president. This conference has improved much these last few months. When I first went there many of the Saints were cold; but, through the blessing of the Lord, we have been enabled to create a fresh interest in their bosoms towards the principles of the gospel, and many are now rejoicing in the same. The conference is well supplied with meeting houses; meetings are held regularly and well attended; had been much assisted by Elder F. W. Hurst (formerly from Australia) who had proved a valuable fellow-laborer.

The following representation was then made: Lanai, represented by Elder Silas S. Smith, 4 seventies, 9 elders, 9 priests, 5 teachers, 5 deacons, 2 died, 1 cut off, 16 scattering. Total number of officers and members, 153.

Maui, represented by Elder Joseph Smith, 3 seventies, 30 elders, 54 priests, 67 teachers, 68 deacons, 18 died, 1 cut off, 45 scattering. Total number of officers and members, 1253.

Hilo, (Hawaii) represented by Elder H. P. Richards, 2 seventies, 4 elders, 6 priests, 10 teachers, 9 deacons, 5 died, 10 cut off, 16 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 212.

Kohala, (Hawaii) represented by Elder Edward Partridge, 2 seventies, 6 elders, 18 priests, 39 teachers, 30 deacons, 10 died, 15 cut off, 30 scattered, 54 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 718.

Oahu, represented by Elder John T. Caine, 4 seventies, 19 elders, 28 priests, 32 teachers, 17 deacons, 18 died, 2 cut off, 73 scattering, 52 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 800.

Oahu, foreign Saints, represented by Elder John T. Caine, 4 elders, 1 priest, 13 removed, 2 cut off, 4 scattering, 1 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 18.

Kauai, represented by Elder George Speirs, 2 seventies, 14 elders, 18 priests, 5 teachers, 16 deacons, 35 died, 89 cut off, 50 scattering, 17 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 500.

Molokai, represented by Elder Eli Bell, 1 seventy, 13 elders, 11 priests, 9 teachers, 6 deacons, 6 died, 9 cut off, 22 scattering, 2 baptized since last conference. Total number of officers and members, 177.

The conference was then briefly addressed by Elders Pack, Partridge and Johnson, who expressed themselves happy in the privilege they thus enjoyed, in once more assembling in a conference capacity, and rejoiced to behold the unity and good feeling which seemed to pervade every breast.

Adjourned for one hour. Singing. Benediction by Elder John T. Caine.

2 P. M.

Conference convened pursuant to adjournment. Singing. Prayer by Elder H. P. Richards. Singing.

Elder John T. Caine submitted a report of the secular affairs of the mission; which was read and accepted.

Report shows that considerable of the indebtedness of the mission had been discharged since last conference, with the prospect of the whole being shortly liquidated.

Elder Silas S. Smith made a report of the operations at the gathering place, Palawai, Lanai. Accepted.

Report shows that considerable labor had been performed on the farm, with a prospect for a time of an abundant harvest; but the worms had again appeared, and swept away almost everything. The extreme drouth this season has also been a detriment to our efforts yet notwithstanding these difficulties the native Saints have raised sufficient to supply all their wants. We have contracted no more debts upon the place, and with the ordinary blessing of Providence, the prospects in the future are good.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow. Singing. Benediction by Elder Silas S. Smith.

Evening 7½ o'clock.

Meeting opened as usual by singing and prayer.

Elder Caine addressed the meeting upon the magnitude of the work in which we are engaged and the responsibility of our stations as Elders of Israel.

He was followed by Elder Richards and others, who testified to the truth of what they had just heard, and expressed themselves as being greatly privileged in being considered worthy to fill so high and holy a calling.

Pres. Smith made some very timely and instructive concluding remarks. An excellent spirit prevailed.

MONDAY, April 7.

Conference convened at 10 a. m. Opened by singing. Prayer by Elder John T. Caine. Singing.

Elder Ward E. Pack made a report relative to the English school at that place, (Palawai, Lanai.) After considerable exertion, had succeeded in building a suitable house, and the school was commenced in February. The average attendance at the day-school for children was twenty, and about the same number of adults to the evening school. Most of the scholars had made good progress for the time, and quite a desire was manifested to acquire the English language. On motion report was accepted.

Elder John T. Caine reports, that since our last conference negotiations had been entered into with the owner of the Palawai land, with a view of leasing it for a term of years, to be used for the gathering of the Saints, but nothing permanent had as yet been accomplished. Report accepted.

Elder John T. Caine reports, that, agreeable to appointment he had, in behalf of the mission, renewed the application to the Minister of Interior for the necessary license to permit the Elders of this mission to solemnize marriages, a privilege of which we have been deprived for two years, while it is extended to all other ministers irrespective of sect or party.

The Minister of Interior refusing to do anything in the matter, through the politeness of his R. H. Prince Lot Kamehameha our application was brought before the King in Privy Council, where a resolution was passed instructing the Minister of Interior not to grant such license to the Elders of our Church, assigning as a reason, that we "believe and teach the doctrine of Polygamy, the practice of which is contrary to the laws of this Kingdom."

Report accepted. Some business of a local nature was then disposed of, when conference adjourned for one hour. Singing. Dismissed by Elder S. E. Johnson.

2 o'clock p.m.

Conference met pursuant to adjournment.—Singing. Prayer by Elder Silas S. Smith.—Singing.

Elder John T. Caine called the attention of the conference to the situation of Elder Silas S. Smith; said it had been apparent for some time, that the health of br. Smith, was fast declining; did not believe that the Lord required any Elder to remain here at the sacrifice of his health. The authorities in Zion had plainly instructed us before we left home, to take care of our bodies, and not wear them out on one mission; thought that the climate did not agree with br. Smith, and in order that he might regain his health it would be necessary for him to seek a more congenial climate; shall feel sorry to part with the labors and counsels of br. Silas S. Smith, but wisdom seems to dictate that his stay on these lands be brief. Should therefore motion, that in consideration of the fast declining health of Elder Silas S. Smith, we consider that it would not be prudent for him longer to remain on these lands. We therefore feel to release him from further duties in this mission, that he may return home as speedily as possible.—He leaves with our confidence and respect; he has been faithful in the discharge of every duty entrusted to him, and he has our prayers for the speedy restoration of his health, and future prosperity in the Redeemer's Kingdom.

After many expressions, by the President and Elders, of sympathy and affection towards br. Smith, coupled with regrets at being so soon bereaved of his society, the motion was put and unanimously carried.

Pres. Smith said that as the releasing of br. Silas S. Smith had deprived him of one of his counselors, he should therefore nominate Elder Henry P. Richards to take br. Smith's place as his second counselor.

On motion the nomination was unanimously sustained. The Elders then received their appointments for the coming six months, as follows:

LANAI CONFERENCE. Edward Partridge, President—Eli Bell and S. E. Johnson, Traveling Elders.

MAUI CONFERENCE. Elder Henry P. Richards, President—John A. West and S. B. Thurston, Traveling Elders.

HILO CONFERENCE. Elder Joseph Smith, President—W. B. Rogers, traveling Elder.

KOHALA CONFERENCE. Elder George Speirs, President—William W. Cluff, Traveling Elder.

OAHU CONFERENCE. Elder John T. Caine, President—Elders O. K. Whitney, Wm. King and F. W. Hurst, Traveling Elders.

KAUAI CONFERENCE. Elder Ward E. Pack, President—Simpson M. Molen, Traveling Elder.

MOLOKAI CONFERENCE. Elder John R. Young, President.

The brethren, by show of hands, manifested their satisfaction with their appointments.

The conference was then addressed by Elders King and Young.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow. Singing. Dismissed by Elder W. E. Pack.

Evening, 7½ o'clock.

Meeting opened as usual, and was addressed by Elders Richards, S. S. Smith, and others, upon the great truths contained in the gospel as revealed in these last days; felt like devoting their whole energies to the promulgation of the same, that they might do something for the benefit of their fellow men, as well as for themselves. All seemed to rejoice in the truth of the remarks and all appeared to enjoy the meeting.

TUESDAY, April 8th.

Conference convened at 10 a. m. Opened by Singing. Prayer by Elder Edward Partridge. Singing.

Motioned and carried that the English school at Palawai, Lanai, be continued, and that Elder S. E. Johnson take charge of the same, under the direction of the Presidency. The price of tuition for each pupil was fixed at one dollar per quarter, this amount being considered barely sufficient to defray the necessary expenses of the school.

Some business of a local nature, mostly pertaining to the Gathering Place on Lanai, was then transacted.

Adjourned for one hour. Doxology. Benediction by Elder H. P. Richards.

Conference convened at 2 p. m. Singing. Prayer by Elder W. E. Pack. Singing.

Moved and carried, that Charles S. Atkins be cut off from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for unchristianlike conduct.

Moved, That we tender to Elder George Q. Cannon of San Francisco our sincere thanks for the printed letter (Olelo Hoolaha) which he sent us for distribution among this people; it has been the means of doing much good in preparing them to receive the Book of Mormon; and we feel to uphold and sustain Elder Cannon and associates, Elders Bull and Wilkie, in their labors in printing and publishing the Hawaiian translation of the Book of Mormon, and in all their efforts in the cause of truth.

The President then nominated the following native Elders to go on missions:

J. W. H. Kou and Keolanui to labor in the Maui conference; Puoanui and Mahoe to labor in the Hilo, (Hawaii) conference; Paulo Mawaeawa and Kahalemanu in the Kohala (Hawaii) conference; J. W. B. Makuakane and Nahakualua in the Oahu conference; Kapono and Puamana to labor in the Kauai conference; Keolanui and Pake to labor in the Molokai conference. On motion these nominations were unanimously sustained.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow. Singing. Benediction by Elder O. K. Whitney.

WEDNESDAY, April 9th.

Conference convened at 10 a. m. Singing. Prayer by Elder William King. Singing.

The President stated that there was no further business to come before the conference, and called upon the Elders to occupy the time as the spirit should dictate.

Whereupon, Elders O. K. Whitney, S. E. Johnson, John R. Young, S. B. Thurston, Geo. Speirs, Edward Partridge, William W. Cluff, F. W. Hurst and Eli Bell briefly addressed the conference—expressed themselves greatly blessed during the session of this conference—never have we beheld such union of feeling away from the stakes of Zion; we feel like pressing on in the good work; and doing all we can to raise this poor down-trodden race, from their low and degraded situation.

Adjourned for one hour. Doxology. Benediction by Elder W. B. Rogers.

Convened at 2 p. m. Singing. Prayer by Elder Joseph Smith. Singing.

The conference was then addressed by Elders W. E. Pack, John A. West, W. B. Rogers, Silas S. Smith, H. P. Richards, S. M. Molen, G. Linn, Joseph Smith and John T. Caine, who rejoiced in the work in which they were engaged as ministers of salvation to this benighted race; the union which was manifested in this conference was a source of gratitude and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father, that while the powers of the earth, both civil and religious, were at continual war with each other, we can sit and counsel upon the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and not a dissenting voice in our midst—all peace—all harmony—but one desire animating every breath, the rolling forth of the mighty purposes of Jehovah. We shall go from this conference invigorated and strengthened, our faith increased, and with renewed determinations to fulfil with honor the mission we came here to perform.

Pres. Smith said he was glad to hear the brethren speak their feelings, he also rejoiced in the union that prevails in our midst, and hoped it might ever continue, for in union among ourselves depended the prosperity of our mission. In the course of his remarks, he made many valuable suggestions to the Elders, all of which were heartily responded to on their part.

Some further instructions upon local and other matters were then given by the President and his counselors, after which the Presidency gave each other a parting blessing, and then proceeded and blessed and set apart the Elders to their respective callings.

On motion, conference adjourned till the 6th of October, to meet at such place as the Presidency may select.

Sung doxology suited to the occasion. Benediction by Pres. Smith.

EVENING, 7½ o'clock.

The brethren assembled for a farewell meeting. Singing.

Elder Caine addressed the meeting upon the coming forth of the gospel in these last days, showing that it was in accordance with the predictions of the old prophets as well as Christ and his Apostles, that such a work should come forth before the end.