

## GENERAL CONFERENCE.

SATURDAY MORNING, April 6.

THE Forty-second Annual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints assembled in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 o'clock this morning.

On the stand were,

*Of the First Presidency.*

Geo. A. Smith and Daniel H. Wells.

*Of the Twelve Apostles.*

Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Charles C. Rich, Lorenzo Snow, Erastus Snow, Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Jr., Joseph F. Smith, Albert Carrington.

*Patriarch—John Smith.*

*Of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies.*

Joseph Young, Albert P. Rockwood, John Van Cott and Horace S. Eldredge.

*Of the Presidency of the High Priests' Quorum.*

Elias Smith, Edward Snelgrove and Elias Morris.

*Of the Presidency of this Stake of Zion.*

John W. Young, George B. Wallace and John T. Caine.

*Of the Presidency of the Bishopric.*

Edward Hunter, Leonard W. Hardy and Jesse C. Little.

There were also Bishops, Elders and leading men from every settlement in the Territory.

Conference was called to order by President GEORGE A. SMITH.

The choir sang:

"An angel from on high."

The opening prayer was offered by Elder ERASTUS SNOW.

The choir sang:

"See, all creation join  
To praise th' Eternal God."

President GEO. A. SMITH addressed the Conference. He said that owing to a spirit of persecution disgraceful to the age our First President was not permitted to be with us. But notwithstanding the prevalence of religious bigotry, and its being brought to bear against us, we rejoiced in the blessings of God. It was not strange that men, in some respects probably illiterate, yet declaring that they possessed the principles calculated to exalt and elevate the human family, should be misunderstood. The persecutors of Jesus and his ancient disciples were men who were loud in their professions of religion and of holiness. The same principle now existed and the Saints had to contend with it. From the time the church was organized in 1830 this spirit of persecution had been manifested toward the Saints. Abuse was a poor argument to use against a system of religion.

God had commenced a work to cause men to love one another and bring about a reign of peace. There was no doubt Satan stirred up the hearts of men to oppose the principles that would produce this result, and they followed his suggestions.

The brethren should free their minds from all business cares and pay attention to what might be said and done, and offer mighty prayer for the redemption of Zion, for the blessings of God to rest on President Brigham Young, that he might be strengthened in body and enabled to counsel and instruct in the kingdom of God. All should consider what they could do in aid of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, that the poor might be gathered.

President Brigham Young, when on his last visit to St. George, selected and dedicated the ground for a Temple, that the ordinances of the holy gospel might be administered there. The work upon the Temple in this city should be forwarded with even greater rapidity than heretofore.

The principle of co-operation had been adopted in many ways in the settlements, and had been gratifyingly successful, and the Female Relief Societies had been productive of good, showing what could be accomplished by the people when they were united.

The speaker then bore a powerful testimony to the truth of the work of God. The Almighty had revealed it to him, and he therefore knew it to be true.

Elder WILFORD WOODRUFF was the next speaker. He referred to the organization of the Church forty-two years ago by a prophet of the living God, and stated that we understood that on the 6th day of April, 1842 years ago, the Savior was crucified for the sins of the world. He quoted from the prophecies

of Isaiah, showing that that prophet, in looking through futurity by the prophetic gift, could see the inauguration of the work that we, by the help of the Almighty, were engaged in forwarding. Whether men believed it or not, the predictions of holy men of old concerning the last days would follow each other in fulfillment in rapid succession from this time on. The progress of this kingdom had been onward, and its progress could not be retarded by the combined efforts of all existing powers. The set time had come to favor Zion and every weapon formed against it would fail. Every President, Judge, officer and priest who had exerted their power against this work in the past, had felt the chastening hand of God.

Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God, and he lived long enough to receive all the keys and powers of the Holy Priesthood that had been held by any man of God that ever lived. He lived long enough to confer keys and powers and blessings on the Twelve Apostles and he sealed his testimony with his blood.

The blessing of God had been upon President Brigham Young, and although his liberties had been curtailed by the persecutors of the Saints, he had felt calm and collected throughout.

We had every reason to have faith that the blessings and protection of God would continue to be poured out on us as a people. Had we not come here we could not have fulfilled the predictions in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Doctrine and Covenants concerning us.

The speaker gave some excellent advice to mothers, showing the powerful influence they exercised over children, and the course they should take to properly educate them.

ELDER C. C. RICH said we were so constituted that we needed continual instruction upon the principles of truth, in order to impress them upon our minds. We were laboring for salvation, and it was the only thing we should strive for. As fast as we learned truth and applied it to our lives, we were saved from error.

The speaker spoke of the effects of obedience to the gospel of Christ, all of which were a sure testimony of the correctness of that which was obeyed, and alluded to the glorious results that would accrue were the people all over the world to cease doing wrong, and to the fact that we should form a nucleus of righteousness. It was a little over forty years since he had embraced the gospel and he knew it to be true. He had proved it for himself.

PRESIDENT GEORGE A. SMITH requested the people present to tell their friends that there was plenty of room here for all who wished to come and hear the gospel preached.

The choir sang:

"Sing ye Jehovah's praises."

President DANIEL H. WELLS offered prayer and Conference adjourned till 2 p. m.

SATURDAY, April 6th, 2 p. m.

The choir sang:

"Jehovah, Lord of heaven and earth."

Prayer was offered by Elder JOHN VAN COTT.

"Hosannah to the great Messiah,"

Was sung by the choir.

Bishop A. O. SMOOT addressed the assemblage. He spoke of the earthly mission of the Savior, stating that he came to revolutionize the world. He organized a kingdom with its officers, immunities and privileges. He was persecuted and reviled. The speaker next touched upon the progress of the Church of Christ in these latter days, and of the growth of persecution in proportion. Persecution was first manifested in the capacity of a neighborhood and has extended gradually until it has reached what we now see. It was similar in Jesus' day. Herod issued a proclamation—not exactly a fourth of July proclamation (the Bishop here desired to be excused for the allusion), but a proclamation that the male children of a certain age should be slain, that the child Christ might be destroyed.

The speaker next alluded to the blessings promised to those obedient to the principles of the gospel, and, in illustration of his discourse, mentioned the day of Pentecost, when power was sent from heaven upon the ancient disciple. The same spirit and blessings were enjoyed by the Latter-day Saints. It was through great tribulation that eternal life could be obtained. We enjoyed a very inspiring hope—the kingdom of God now set up would never fail, but would stand for ever.

Our mission was not only one of a spiritual nature, but it partook of every element of life, and was both temporal and spiritual. The principles the Latter-day Saints had embraced would revolutionize the whole world eventually. Our mission was not only to disabuse the minds of people of religious error. "Mormonism," in its broad platform embraces ever truth.

The speaker concluded by bearing testimony to the truth of the great latter-day work. He knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that President Brigham Young was his legal successor.

Elder JOHN NICHOLSON spoke of the antipathy and bitterness manifested by the people of the world generally to the work of God, and of the liberal and comprehensive nature of the gospel, showing that it was destined to save not only the living but its provisions were also applicable to those who had gone before into the spirit world. He dwelt on the importance of the work we had to perform in behalf of the dead in building temples, attending to holy ordinances, &c., and concluded by bearing testimony that God was doing a work on the earth, and the Latter-day Saints were engaged in forwarding its interests.

Elder JOHN W. YOUNG next addressed the Conference. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and was willing to bear testimony to its truthfulness. He knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet, and that our present leaders were also inspired and led by the Almighty. If any thought the work of God was less potent now than heretofore it was they who were wrong and not the work.

Elder CHARLES W. PENROSE bore testimony to the work of the Lord. Our knowledge of the truth was the cause of our coming to Utah. We did not come to learn that "Mormonism" was true, for we already knew it. It was comforting to know that God was at the helm of this work. We ought to acknowledge the hand of God in all things that transpire. If we do so all things will be overruled for our good, and his kingdom will ultimately gain the victory. Arguments had been adduced by men to show that it was a fallacy for the Latter-day Saints to trust in God, but none who ever trusted in him ever trusted in vain; not even if they died thus trusting, for the principles that men and women of God had died for would live, spread and accomplish their high destiny.

The speaker said he had no principle to sacrifice. The principles of truth had brought him to Utah and he intended to stand by them; to live, and, if necessary, to die for them. He could not give up any principle of the gospel for any earthly fear or consideration. His experience had been that when he had gone forth to perform any duty connected with the work of God the Lord had sustained him.

He continued at some length, and concluded by exhorting the people to maintain their integrity to God and his servants.

The choir sang:

"Great is the Lord."

Prayer by Elder JOHN TAYLOR.

Adjourned till 10 a. m. to-morrow.

SECOND DAY.

SUNDAY, April 7, 10 a. m.

The choir sang:

"When earth in bondage long had lain,"

Prayer by Elder JOSEPH W. YOUNG.

"Behold the mountain of the Lord,"

was sung by the choir.

President GEORGE A. SMITH said he had been requested by President Young to state to the conference that he was in comfortable health and good spirits, and that he regretted the circumstances which prevented him from meeting with the people this morning. He hoped, however, at no distant day, to meet again with the people and bear testimony of the goodness of God, and of the principles of truth.

We need not be surprised at the feeling of malignity manifested towards the work of God when pulpit and press were given over to lying, slander, and misrepresenting.

The speaker desired to call the attention of the brethren who had been on missions to Europe to the fact that some of them, when they returned home, seemed to forget that they were missionaries. At times the people who had treated them with kindness while on their missions were forgotten by them. This should not be. We should continue to be missionaries and instruct the people after they came here, that

they might not be lead away by wrong influences.

The Elders should remember those who entertained them while on their missions, at a sacrifice to themselves. Those who could should extend a helping hand to them. It should be made a point to do something handsome annually to help to emigrate the poor. Here were a hundred thousand Saints in Utah and could they not assist in emigrating the few thousands who wanted to come here? If they apostatized after they came here, all right. If we did our duty the responsibility rested with them.

When President Young returned from St. George and gave himself up voluntarily into the hands of the U. S. Marshal, he, the speaker, received a letter from a prominent gentleman of Massachusetts, who stated that it was nothing but a put up job, and that President Young had done more than any other living man, to benefit large bodies of people, and this was true. God bless such a man and God bless every man and woman engaged in so good a work.

The history of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund was one of great interest. The people had in the past sent 200, 300, 400 and 500 wagons and teams in four separate years to the Missouri river to help the poor. This was the work of Brigham Young in conjunction with the efforts of a free-hearted, generous people.

Elder JOHN TAYLOR addressed the conference. We had met in our present capacity to be instructed in matters pertaining to our faith and practice in the building up of the church of God upon the earth. We were under the guidance of the Almighty, for he has revealed to us the everlasting gospel, and we had been gathered here under its auspices, and to help to fulfill the designs of the Lord which were in his mind before the world was.

The speaker commented upon the church of Christ as it existed in the Savior's day, its priesthood, offices, blessings, &c., and upon the other religious systems and people contemporaneous with it, showing points of similarity to things as they existed in these days. He spoke of the necessity for our manifesting an appreciation of the incalculable blessings we had received. We should cast aside all sluggishness and be active in honoring our great calling. It was to the principle of revelation that we were indebted for all the light and intelligence in the possession of man in relation to God and eternity, and every system not founded upon it was destined to pass away. The people of the world did not understand the principles which God had revealed to us, therefore they could not appreciate our feelings. They did not have revelation from God. They did not profess to have it. They therefore could not do as our elders had done. Their ministers would not like them, go forth among strangers and preach without purse or scrip. They would not sufficiently trust in God.

"Mormonism" was an enigma to the world. The United States had been endeavoring to solve it for years, but they had not yet done it, and they never would. It was incomprehensible to the world, for it was as high, deep, wide and comprehensive as eternity. Our faith was the same as the faith of the Saints of all ages. Men differed from us in views and practice and they had a right to do so, and we had no objection.

The speaker predicted that no power could stay the fulfillment of the purposes of God, co-mented upon the future glorious destiny of Zion, and upon the prophecies of the ancient prophets, relating to the work of the latter days.

Elder JOSEPH W. YOUNG bore testimony that God had spoken by the voice of revelation and of holy angels, and had bestowed divine authority on Joseph Smith. Those who did not know any better had ascribed the great work accomplished by the Latter-day Saints to the shrewdness and intelligence of the leaders of this people. This was not altogether the case, for although credit was due to those leaders for what had been done, still what had been accomplished had been done by the power and efficacy of the principles of the gospel. When the people first settled these valleys, they were comparatively destitute of the necessities, and almost entirely so of the comforts of life, and there was no source of supply nearer than a thousand miles. What was it that brought us here? Was it that we might become rich by development of mineral resources? No. It was that we might find a home where we would be free from the persecution of bigots, and live in peace unmolested.