

## Miscellaneous.

[From the Birmingham Daily Gazette, Feb. 25.]

### LATTER-DAY SAINTS' CONFERENCE.

Yesterday the Latter-day Saints, or Mormons, held their Semi-Annual Conference for the Birmingham District, in the Oddfellows' Hall, Temple Street. The first meeting opened at half past ten, when the hall was nearly filled. Mr. A. Hatch, president of the district, ruled the meeting, and there were several of "the brethren" present from the Territory of Utah. After a few introductory remarks, which were preceded by singing and prayer, the President called upon the presidents of the local conferences to present their reports. Mr. Francis Platt, president of the Birmingham Conference, having "expressed his gratitude to the Most High and Eternal God for being permitted to occupy the place which he held amongst the Saints," reported they had not increased so much this year as during the last. It appeared to be the experience of the Elders in that conference, that some years were periods of sowing, and other years periods of reaping. Some 74 had been baptized; their meetings had been well attended, and the Spirit of the Lord had been manifested through the testimony of some of the Saints. At Stourbridge progress had been made since the opening of the mission there; and the brethren were manifesting great individual life, fire, and vivacity. There were twelve branches in the conference of Birmingham; since last year one had to be disorganized in consequence of the brethren having been scattered by emigration. In its room, however, one branch had been organized in a distant part of the county. Mr. George Hunter, President of the Warwickshire Conference, reported that the people over whom he was placed were sincere and active; and in general the Saints were trying to do their duty before they left this land for Zion. In conclusion, he said he was perfectly at home with the Saints in Warwickshire. Mr. Southwick, President of the Staffordshire Conference, reported that he could say that the people in Staffordshire were good people, and were trying to build up the kingdom of God so far as lay in their power. There were not many of their people down in Staffordshire—about 120 or 130—but they were extending their borders, and were desirous of leaving England and going to Zion, because they thought God was approaching with His judgments upon the nations. The President said, the various presidents having reported, he would place a few figures before the congregation, to show the financial and numerical strength of the Conferences of Birmingham, Warwickshire and Staffordshire. The three Conferences were divided into 29 branches—12 in Birmingham, 11 in Warwickshire and 6 in Staffordshire. During last year there emigrated from Birmingham 134 persons—that was, 134 people had gone to a land at the other end of the earth, and they had been advertised as "more fresh fish for the Salt Lake"—(laughter). Well, there was plenty of room in the Salt Lake for all the fresh fish that were sent—(laughter). Forty had emigrated from the Warwickshire Conference, and 28 from Staffordshire—making a total of 202. In the three districts 137 had been baptized into the Church in 1866—thus through emigration they had lost 65 during the year. The total strength of Birmingham was 848; in Warwickshire, 282; in Staffordshire, 128; total, 1,258; and if these all did their duty as they ought to do, they would revolutionize this part of the country—that was certain—revolutionize it, as they meant to do. This was a great country, a free country, a wealthy country—of course it was! although perhaps such a disagreeable spectacle as a beggar might be found in it—(laughter)—and being a wealthy country, little could be done without money. The total amount received during the year in the conferences composing this district, was £1,066 12s. 7d. He explained how a portion of this money was expended, and suggested modes by which the contributions of the Saints to the emigration fund—worked at Liverpool—might be increased, and thus the means for the more speedy emigration of the Saints to Zion be placed at their disposal. The speaker next referred to his approaching visit to Utah, eulogized America, and particularly Utah, urged

the Latter-day Saints to make all haste in emigrating, and said that although he had no fault to find with the way in which he had been received in this country, the new country was beyond all doubt far ahead of, and superior to the old.

The mid-day conference was equally well attended, and the principal business was the presentation of the authorities of the church, and the granting of sanction to the district Saints. It had been announced at the morning meeting that a collection—and only one collection—would be taken up at the mid-day meeting, it being expected that £30 would be contributed; and as the most convenient way, we may here mention that at the evening conference the President announced that the collection had been a success. Short addresses were delivered at the mid-day meeting by Messrs. Orson Pratt, Wm. Gibson, and W. B. Preston. The former speaker, a venerable looking man from Utah, dwelt with force on the truthfulness of the work of Mormonism, and invited all strangers to investigate and know for themselves.

At the evening conference, which commenced at six o'clock, the hall was crowded in every part, it being announced that Mr. Franklin D. Richards, "one of the twelve apostles" from Utah, would deliver an address. Mr. Richards expressed his pleasure, after an absence of ten years, at again meeting the brethren of Birmingham, and also his wish to convey to every man, woman and child, the great and glorious principles of the religion over which their prophet, under the Most High God, presided. He first testified to the wonderful progress of Mormonism. From three or four towns in the State of Illinois, the Mormons had increased until now they had something like 150 towns throughout the territory of Utah. This was the work of twenty years—only a mere span—and he could well remember, in the month of February, 1848, going out in the first ship (whose passengers were destined for Utah). It was a credit which all gave to their prophet Brigham Young, that he was well posted in all matters concerning the territory and government, and he most zealously guarded and watched over the interests of the society. It made them sorrow to look upon the children of men, because they persisted in turning away from the truth, or scorning it when offered. He could not understand this feeling, unless it was due to the fact—the Mormons—were polygamists, and because of this they were followed with a vindictive feeling, that was not worthy of the time or the people. Did not father Abraham—did not the ancient prophets practice it in all righteousness before God? Yes. And now it was practiced by the Latter-day Saints, who had surrounded it with more rigid rules of domestic virtue than had been in force in times long gone past. He wished to speak to them, without hurting their feelings, upon this subject, but there was a time coming, if it had not already arrived, when things done in secret would have to undergo the ordeal of being investigated in the broad light of day, and when it would be found necessary to throw off a false delicacy in dealing with a great evil which afflicted all the cities of this and other countries. They found everywhere in the great cities what was called the social evil, and people had talked about that, unable to find a remedy, until now it was looked at passively—there being as it was thought no real remedy. But here was a perfect cure for it, and the Latter-day Saints were convinced that this was true.

After a lengthy and very plain reference to the subject, he asked what had been the testimony of travelers in Utah on the matter? Mr. Hepworth Dixon had advertised the world that a house of ill-repute did not exist in the Territory. From 10,000 to 50,000 of the neglected and outcast—once the darlings of fathers and mothers and brothers—were wandering in the great cities of the country; but in Utah they had something better, purer, nobler, higher. What was the beginning—the great origin of the Church of England? Who was that monarch who, having one wife, and being desirous of having others, was refused by the Pope? King Henry VIII. did not consider that he was bound to one woman, therefore he took other wives. But (asked the speaker) why did he not go the whole length? why did he not come out a whole man? and who knew but that if he had then established the religion of the Latter-

day Saints, God would have bestowed upon him great prosperity? God was now about to call the nations to account for the great sin to which he had alluded, and he (the speaker) asked "how far short are the sins of the present time of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah?" In a few concluding phrases, characteristic of the members of the class to which he belonged, Mr. Richards testified that the Church of the Saints was building up the kingdom of God. Mr. O. Pratt next spoke in continuation of the subject, and prophesied the great growth of the Mormon faith, the return of the believers to build up a temple in the land from which they had been driven by the United States to Utah. He also prophesied utter annihilation, if not something worse, to Great Britain, America, and all other nations if they did not awake in time to the truth, and embrace the doctrine of the Saints. In support of his remarks, he quoted portions of the 29th chapter of Isaiah, and also referred to the Book of Mormon.—The proceedings were brought to a close by the singing of a hymn by an efficient choir, placed under Mr. Cook. It was announced that several other meetings will be held during the week.

[From the Millennial Star.]

COPENHAGEN, Feb. 19, 1867.

ELDER PRATT,

Dear Brother,—I improve the present opportunity of writing you these lines, in order to express my gratitude for the recent visit of brother F. D. Richards, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at Hamburg the 11th ult., en route for this place. Indeed I felt very happy to greet and welcome brother Richards, and to have the privilege of his company to travel through some part of this Mission, as it is over twelve years ago since he paid us a visit. We arrived at this place the 12th ult., and on the following day, being Sabbath, brother Richards attended the branch meeting, where a goodly number of Saints and strangers were assembled, who listened with great attention to the excellent and suitable remarks given by him through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which also assisted me in the translation of the same. The roads being in several places blocked up by snow, we had to wait until the 26th, when we set out for Sweden by rail for Elsinore, crossed the Sound by steamer to Helsingborg on the Swedish coast, continued by rail from there to the city of Malmö, in the Scona Conference, arrived therein the evening, and were met at the station by Elder N. Wilhelmsen. The next day we had a lively and well attended meeting, arranged by the presiding Elder, John Fagerberg, who, together with the Saints, were happy to welcome brother Richards on Swedish ground. Having learned that the railroad to Stockholm was passable, we took train the 28th for the city of Jönköping, our next place of destination, where there is a branch belonging to the Gothenburg Conference, and were joined there by Elder N. Wilhelmsen, and held a good meeting on the 29th with the Saints, who felt well in having the opportunity of seeing and hearing an Apostle for the first time; the strangers present were also very attentive. Early the next morning we continued our journey through the snow-covered country, the layers of snow being deeper as we advanced northward, yet the iron horse pulled us through, and we reached the city of Norrköping in the evening. This being the head place of the Conference of the same name, the presiding Elder, G. Ohlsson, had advised the Saints to convene a meeting the next day, we found the hall well filled at the appointed time both with Saints and peaceable outsiders, eager to receive the word of God which was dispensed to the joy and satisfaction of all present. The 1st inst. we took cars for Stockholm, and arrived at the old capital of Sweden the same day in the evening, and were met and welcomed at the station by the President of the Conference, J. B. Hesse. The following day being very stormy and unpleasant, we kept mostly indoors, enjoying ourselves by reading, writing, and conversing. On Sunday the 3d, in the afternoon we stepped into the Palace Church, and listened to the Lutheran service, which sounded cold and lifeless, and I wondered how in the world so many people could be induced to attend such seemingly unprofitable service, though I myself had in former days done so through the force of habit and tradition. It was a pleasant and

striking contrast to meet with the Saints in the afternoon at their assembly room, where I felt the difference of the living Spirit warming the hearts, as the words emanated from an authorized servant of the Lord, causing me to thank God with my whole heart for the knowledge of the true Gospel, and the enjoyment of its blessings. On the 2nd we had a pleasant sleigh ride through the town, and took a view over the same and the surrounding country, from two of the most elevated points, though the panorama was not at all satisfactory at this time of the year, the snow covering the landscape, and hiding the beauty of the scenery, which in the summer time is very picturesque and romantic. In the evening we had the opportunity of seeing the Royal family at the opera house, (the great theatre,) which was filled with a very respectable-looking and well-dressed crowd of spectators, who all rose to their feet when the royalty entered; and after the king had bowed to all sides, he remained standing while the orchestra played a favorite national song. The present king, Charles XV., seems to be very popular among his people, and is favorably inclined to the advancement of political and religious liberty, and I hope the time will come, when the Saints here will enjoy the same freedom as in Denmark, being at present limited to hold their meetings in the evenings, after the services of the state church are closed. We held another meeting on the 5th, when brother Richards and myself confirmed four members who had been baptized the same evening. The work is advancing in all parts of Sweden, confirming my belief in a prophetic expression of brother Richards', while preaching in one of the meetings in Sweden, that thousands of believers will yet be gathered out from that country to increase the strength of Zion.

On the 7th we left Stockholm by rail for Malmö, recrossed the Baltic by steamer, and landed at Copenhagen the next day at 4 o'clock p.m., and found all well at 14, Lorentzsgade. The following Sunday, the 20th, the Saints and a goodly lot of strangers assembled in a large hall rented for the occasion: a meeting was held, the remembrance of which is sweet and heavenly, and will not be forgotten by those present who enjoyed the influence of the Holy Spirit which was poured out in great abundance, fixing upon the hearts of the hearers the conviction of the truths advanced. It was a glorious time, long to be remembered. As the season was not convenient for traveling in other parts of the Mission, brother Richards concluded not to prolong his stay among us, hence he took leave on the 12th to return to England, via Rotterdam. I accompanied him as far as Hamburg, where we parted on the 13th, at 6 o'clock in the evening, he taking the train for Rotterdam, and I returned the next day to Copenhagen to resume my labors. The time brother Richards spent among us, was very beneficial to us all, as he was untiring on all occasions to impart good words and instructions, seasoned by the spirit and influence of the holy Priesthood vested in him. He carried with him the spirit of Zion, causing our hearts to rejoice, and imparting as it were renewed life and vigor in all with whom he came in contact. Our best wishes follow him, and may God bless him, and all the leaders of Israel, in promoting the cause of Zion upon the earth.

Fearing that this communication has already grown too lengthy and tedious, I will conclude with love and respect to yourself and all in the office, in which the brethren and sisters here join. I subscribe myself your brother in Christ,  
C. WIDERBERG.

RELEASES.—Elder William R. Smith, President of the District comprising Manchester, Liverpool and Preston Conferences, has been, on account of ill health, released, with permission to return home. Brother Smith has labored in this country, with unceasing diligence, for nearly two years, and is highly esteemed among the Saints of his District.

Elder Brigham W. Kimball, President of the Nottingham Conference, has been released to return home, on account of a dangerous affliction upon the lungs. Brother Kimball has been about three years in the Mission, and has labored with great zeal; his ministrations have undoubtedly been a blessing to many, and will prove a great source of consolation to him through life.