

## THE RELIEF SOCIETY JUBILEE.

A large audience, chiefly ladies, gathered March 17th, at 10 o'clock at the Tabernacle to celebrate the organization of the Relief Society fifty years ago, on March 17, 1842.

On the stand were Joseph F. Smith of the First Presidency, Apostles John Henry Smith and Abraham H. Cannon, President Angus M. Cannon, Dr. James E. Talmage, and the following officers of the Relief Society: President Zina D. H. Young, Counselors Jane S. Richards, and Bathsheba W. Smith; Sarah M. Kimball, secretary; Dr. Romania B. Pratt, Assistant Secretary; M. Isabella Horne, treasurer, and Zina Y. W. Card, and Emeline B. Wells, cor. secretary.

The exercises were opened with the choir singing:

O my Father, Thou that dwellest,

Prayer was offered by President Angus M. Cannon.

The choir and congregation joined in singing:

How firm a foundation,  
Ye Saints of the Lord.

### PRESIDENT ZINA D. H. YOUNG

delivered a brief but eloquent address in which she welcomed the audience on this great occasion. This is a day, she said, when the daughters of Zion extend their hand of fellowship to all who are engaged in the great work of the Relief Society all over the world. The object of this society is to do good by extending a helping hand in every direction. The speaker expressed a wish that God might bless all her sisters in their labors for the poor and suffering, and that the work might continue to grow in importance. But while attending to the duty of looking after the poor, it was also necessary to attend to the duties at home and feel that these duties are pleasures as well as duties.

The children should be brought up in the fear of God and be taught to pray, and not be neglected. The speaker would plead with her sisters to take good care of their homes, also to support the *Woman's Exponent*, and to do good in every respect, notwithstanding the fact that our work is not always encouraging. May we be faithful in our work. This is a grand occasion.

### ZINA Y. W. CARD

read the revelation given to Emma Smith, as found in Doctrine and Covenants.

### APOSTLE ABRAHAM H. CANNON

addressed the audience. He felt it a great honor, he said, to meet with so worthy an assembly as the representatives of the Relief Society. It must fill the hearts of the Saints with joy to think of the glorious work the sisters have done. We cannot conceive of how great a help they have been to the Church, although we know of many houses to which they have carried comfort and brought relief in sickness and affliction. God has been with them in their work. Many miraculous cures have been effected through their prayers, and this has strengthened the testimony of many. But the work in future will be even greater than that in the past. There is an opportunity for our sisters to exercise their talents among the people. Charity, it is said, is misapplied, if bestowed on idlers; not only young men, but also young women should be put in a position to use their brains and their hands. The speaker related what he had seen in other parts of the world where young ladies in schools are instructed in all things pertaining to the calling of women. Among us some young people think it a disgrace to work. They forget their future duties as wives and mothers and are therefore but poorly prepared for those duties, when called upon to perform them. It is necessary that they should be prepared, and not cause disunion in the families as is apt to follow if young men after marriage discover that their companions are unequipped to take care of their homes. Here is a field for the Relief Societies. God is with the sisters, and the speaker hoped they might ever enjoy His blessing.

### AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

of the first organization of the L. D. S. Relief society, prepared by Sarah M. Kimball, secretary, was read by Elder James E. Talmage. The following is a full account of the first meeting:

By invitation of the President of the Church, a number of sisters convened in the Masonic Lodge room, on the 17th of March, 1842, President Joseph Smith, Elder John Taylor and Willard Richards were present.

President Smith stated that the meeting was called for the purpose of making more complete the organization of the Church by organizing the women in the order of the Priesthood.

John Taylor was called to the chair and Willard Richards acted as secretary. After singing and prayer, a

vote was taken to know if all were satisfied with the sisters present and willing to acknowledge them in good fellowship and admit them to all the privileges of the institution about to be organized. All being satisfied, the names of those present were taken as follows:

Emma Smith,	Elizabeth Jones,
Martha Knight,	Leonora Taylor,
Elvira A. Coles,	Eliza R. Snow,
Sarah M. Cleveland,	Sophia Packard,
Phebe Ann Hawkes,	Bathsheba W. Smith,
Margaret A. Cook,	Sophia Robinson,
Dosdemona Fulmer,	Philinda Herrick,
Elizabeth Ann Whitney,	Phebe M. Wheeler,
Sarah M. Kimball,	Sophia E. Marks.

President Smith then explained some of the duties that would devolve on members of the society, said they could provoke the brethren to good works, look after the needs of the poor, and perform charitable acts. Women must assist in correcting the morals and strengthening the virtues of the community. Said it is now in order for the sisters to elect a president to preside over the Society and let her choose two counselors to assist in the duties of her office. He would ordain them, and let them preside just as the Presidency preside over the Church, and if they needed his instruction they could ask and they would be pleased to give it from time to time. Let the Presidency serve as a constitution and their decisions become precedents for you to act upon.

If officers are wanted to carry out these designs of the institution, let them be appointed and set apart as Teachers, Deacons, etc., are among us.

Elizabeth A. Whitney moved, and Sophia Packard seconded the motion, that Emma Smith be elected president of the society. The vote was put by the chairman and pronounced unanimous. The president-elect made choice of Sarah M. Cleveland and Elizabeth Ann Whitney as her counselors. Eliza R. Snow was appointed secretary, Phebe M. Wheeler assistant secretary and Elvira A. Coles treasurer.

President Joseph Smith read the revelation to Emma Smith from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and stated that she was ordained at the time the revelation was given, to expound the Scriptures, to teach, etc.

He then read scriptures to show that an elect lady is one elected to preside. By request of President Joseph Smith, Apostle John Taylor ordained Sarah M. Cleveland and Elizabeth Ann Whitney to be counselors to and assist President Emma Smith in the duties

of her office, and share in the blessings pertaining thereto.

He then confirmed on Emma Smith her former ordination and blessed her to be a mother in Israel, a pattern of virtue and to possess all the qualifications necessary to enable her to preside with dignity and give such instruction, as may be requisite in her calling as an elect lady.

Elder Taylor vacated the chair and President Emma Smith and Counselors took the stand.

A lengthy discussion followed on the question "What shall this society be called?" Mrs. Cleveland and Whitney advocated the appropriateness of the name Relief Society. John Taylor and Joseph Smith, spoke in favor of the word Benevolent. Emma Smith and E. R. Snow argued in favor of Mrs. Cleveland's choice. The gentlemen withdrew their objection and a motion to adopt the name Relief Society was unanimously carried.

President Joseph Smith then said: "I now declare this Society organized, with president and counselors. All who shall hereafter be admitted must be free from censure and admitted by vote. President Joseph Smith laid down a five-dollar gold piece to commence the Relief Society fund, and said: "What I do hereafter for charity I shall do through this Society."

Sarah M. Cleveland gave	\$0.12
Sarah M. Kimball	1.00
Emma Smith	1.00
Elizabeth Ann Whitney	0.50
Willard Richards	1.00
John Taylor	2.00

President Joseph Smith said: "I will give a city lot, on which the Society can build. Will make the deed to the treasurer."

At the third meeting of the society, March 30th, President Joseph Smith said the members of the society must act in concert, or nothing can be accomplished. To move according to the ancient Priesthood this must be a select society, separate from the evils of the world.

#### SIXTH MEETING, APRIL 28TH.

President Joseph Smith said he was present to speak upon the Priesthood. As his instructions were intended only for members of the society, he wished those not members to withdraw, after which he called attention to the 12th chapter of Corinthians: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, etc." Said the passage which reads "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost" should be translated "No man can know," etc. Continued the reading of the chapter, and gave instructions respecting the different offices and the necessity of every individual acting in the place allotted to him or her, and filling the offices to which they were appointed. Spoke of the disposition of some to consider the lower offices in the Church dishonorable and to look with jealous eyes on the position of others. Said it was the nonsense of the human heart to aspire to positions not appointed of God; that it was better for individuals to magnify their respective callings and wait patiently till God shall say "Come up higher." Said it was talked by members of the society that some were not doing right in laying hands on the sick. If they had common sympathy they would rejoice that the sick could be healed. The

time has not been before when these things could be in their proper order. The Church is not now organized in its proper order, and cannot be until the temple is completed. He referred to the commission given to the ancient Apostles: "Go ye into all the world," etc." No matter who believes, these signs, such as healing the sick, casting out devils, should follow all that believe, whether male or female.

If the sisters have faith to heal the sick, let them do so, and let the good work roll on. It is no sin for anybody to administer to the sick that has faith, or if the sick have faith to be healed by the administration.

Reproved those that were disposed to find fault, spoke at some length on the difficulties he had had to surmount ever since the organization of the Church, on account of aspiring men; said the same aspiring disposition will be in this society and must be guarded against.

As he had the opportunity he would instruct the society how to act according to the will of God. He did not know that he should have many opportunities of teaching them; they were going to be left to themselves; they would not long have him to instruct them; the Church would not have his instruction long, and the world would not be troubled with him great while; according to his prayer, God had appointed him elsewhere. The congregation was melted to tears.

He exhorted the sisters to sustain with their confidence, their faith and their prayers those whom God had appointed to lead. Said the keys are about to be given to you that you may be able to detect anything false as readily as the Elders. If members of the society become corrupt, you must deal with them; the sympathies of the hearts of the Church have induced them to bear with those that were corrupt, in consequence of which all become contaminated. You must put down iniquity and by your good example provoke the Elders to good works.

If you do right, there is no danger of going too fast; resist evil and there is no danger; neither God, men, angels nor devils can condemn those that resist everything that is evil. As well might the devil seek to dethrone Jehovah as that soul that resists everything that is evil. You are now placed in a situation where you can act according to those sympathies which God has planted in your bosoms. If you live in accord with your privileges angels cannot be restrained from being your associates. Women, if they are pure and innocent, can come into the presence of God. If we would come into the presence of God we must be pure. The devil has great power; his ways are deceptive. Do not be contentious, but let the weight of innocence be felt, which is more mighty than a millstone hung about the neck; meekness, love, purity, these are the things which should magnify us.

Iniquity must be purged out, then the veil will be rent and the blessings of heaven will flow down.

After this instruction you will be more responsible. It is an honor to save yourselves; all are responsible for themselves. Then read the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians, "Though I speak with the tongue of men," etc.

Said do not be limited in your views with regard to your neighbors' virtues; do not think yourselves more righteous than others. You must enlarge your souls toward others if you would do like Jesus, and carry your fellow creatures to Abraham's bosom. He had manifested long-suffering and we must do the same. Said "Though one have the spirit of prophecy," etc., though one should become mighty and do great things, overturn mountains and then should turn to eat and drink with the drunken, all former deeds would not save them, but they would go to destruction. As you increase in innocence, virtue and goodness, let your hearts expand, let them be enlarged towards others; you must be long-suffering and bear with the faults and errors of mankind. How precious the souls of men! The Society is to get instruction through the order which God has established, through the medium of those appointed to lead, and I now turn the key to you in the name of God, and this Society shall rejoice, and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time; this is the beginning of better days for you.

When you go home never give a cross word, but let kindness, charity and love crown your works. Do not envy sinners; exercise mercy towards them. \* \* \* \*

Let your administrations be confined mostly to those around you. As far as knowledge is concerned, it may extend to all the world. But your administrations should be confined to the circle of your acquaintance, and more especially to the members of the Society. Those ordained to lead the Society are authorized to appoint officers as the circumstances shall require.

If any have a matter to reveal let it be in your own tongue. Do not indulge too much in the gift of tongues, or the devil will take advantage.

You may speak in tongues for your comfort. But I lay this down as a rule, that if anything is taught by the gift of tongues, it is not to be received for doctrine.

President Smith then gave instructions respecting women administering to the sick by the laying on of hands, said it was according to revelation; he never was placed in similar circumstances, and never had given the same instruction. At the ninth Relief Society meeting, May 26th, the Prophet read the 14th chapter of Ezekiel, and said the Lord had declared by that Prophet that the people should stand for themselves and depend on no man or men in the state of corruption in the Jewish church, that righteous persons could only deliver their own souls. Applied it to the present condition of the Church of Latter-day Saints. If the people depart from the Lord they must fall; they were depending on the Prophet; hence there was darkness in their midst.

He had two things to recommend to the society. Be guarded in your speech; no organized body can exist without giving heed to this caution. All organized bodies have their peculiar evils, weaknesses and difficulties; the object is to make these not so good, equal with the good, and ever hold the keys of power, which will influence to virtue and goodness.



When you chasten and reprove, never mention it again; then you will be established in power, virtue and holiness and the wrath of God will be turned away. God designs to save the people out of their sins. Jesus said "Ye shall do the works which ye see Me do." These are the grand keywords for the society to act upon.

The tenth meeting was addressed by Bishop N. K. Whitney; President Joseph Smith being present.

Eleventh meeting, June 8 h—President Joseph Smith: "It grieves me that there is no fuller fellowship; if one member suffers all feel it; by union of feeling we obtain power [with God; Christ said He came to call sinners to repentance and to save them. Christ was condemned by the righteous Jews because he took sinners into his society; he took them upon the principle that they repent. Nothing is so much calculated to lead people to forsake sin as to take them by the hand and watch over them with tenderness. The nearer we get to our Heavenly Father the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls. I say to this society if you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another. How mildly the Savior dealt with Peter, saying: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;" at another time He said to him "Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep." The society is not only to relieve the poor but to save souls.

Sixteenth meeting held in the Grove, August 31st, 1842. After relating recent difficulties he had encountered while being hunted by his enemies, he said the Relief Society has taken an active part in my welfare, in petitioning the Governor in my behalf. These measures were necessary, and your influence helped to bring about my redemption from the hands of my enemies; I have come here to bless you. The society has done well; their principles are to practice holiness. God loves you, and your prayer shall avail much; do not cease to let them ascend to God in my behalf. The enemy will never get weary. I expect he will array everything against me; expect a tremendous warfare. He that will war the Christian warfare will have the angels and all the powers of darkness continually arrayed against him.

A few things had been manifested to him during his absence respecting baptism for the dead, which he would communicate next Sabbath if nothing should occur to prevent it. He then offered a fervent prayer to God in behalf of the society. After the transaction of some business, in the adjustment of which President Smith offered counsel, he said he had one more remark to make respecting baptism for the dead, which must suffice for the present and until he had the opportunity to present the subject at greater length.

All persons baptized for the dead must have a recorder present, that he may be an eye-witness to testify of it. It will be necessary in the Great Council that these things be testified of. It should be attended to from this time. If there is any lack it may be at the expense of our friends. This was the last R. S. meeting that Pres. Joseph Smith attended.

During the two years' administration

of Pres. Emma Smith and her associates, visiting sisters were appointed to search out the needy, to find work for the able-bodied, to receive contributions and to report conditions.

The labors of the society were extended to the four wards of the city.

Twelve hundred and seventy-six names were enrolled as members. The recorded receipts were \$415.24.

#### AFTER THE DAYS OF NAUVOO.

An interesting paper on the work of the Relief Society after the days of Nauvoo, prepared by Emeline B. Wells, was read by Apostle Abraham H. Cannon.

When the Saints left Nauvoo the meetings were necessarily discontinued, but the noble institution was never lost sight of. Vilate Kimball, Mary Ann Young and Elizabeth Ann Whitney, among many others, accomplished a noble work in ministering to the afflicted, and as soon as a settlement in this valley was effected, the sisters had temporary societies in several wards, and their noble work was carried on. In 1855 President Young called upon the Bishops to organize the Relief Society, and Eliza R. Snow was called to assist in this work, with Zina D. Young as counselor. The coming of Johnstons army again interrupted the work for some time, but as soon as order had been restored, a permanent organization was effected throughout the several Stakes of Zion.

#### "THE DAUGHTER OF ZION"

a song composed by Emily H. Woodmansee, especially for this occasion, was beautifully rendered by the Tabernacle choir.

#### PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH

on behalf of the First Presidency offered prayer. This was a special feature of the exercises, it being arranged that all the relief societies in the whole world should engage in prayer at 12 o'clock noon.

After prayer, he addressed the congregation. This Relief society, he said, has always had the hearty endorsement and the approval of the First Presidency since its first organization, fifty years ago. It had occurred to the speaker that it would be an excellent thing to erect a building or buildings, as the case might be, where there could be a hall for the Society to meet, and which would be in a measure self-sustaining. He did not know whether this matter had been considered yet. It had already been stated that the Prophet Joseph Smith had presented the Society with a building lot, and he did not see why the plan of building could not yet be carried out. It appeared to him to be an easy matter.

With regard to the gift of tongues, the speaker said, it was one very much liable to mislead. The adversary can easily take advantage of it. However, where the Spirit of the Lord directs it, it is a good thing. Sometimes, however, persons speak under the influence of a wrong spirit.

In relation to laying on of hands by sisters, the speaker said it is a proper thing for mothers, who have received their blessings in the house of God, to pray for their sick and to rebuke diseases. It is just as much the right of the mother as of the father, although he, holding the Priesthood, can do it by virtue of this, as well as in the name

of the Lord. The women are not especially called upon to visit from house to house to administer to the sick, but they can do so properly, if called upon.

The speaker was thankful for the opportunity of meeting with the Saints, and wished that the Lord might bless the work. He exhorted all to live their religion and do their duties faithfully.

#### AN ADDRESS BY BETHSHEBA W. SMITH

was read by Apostle John Henry Smith. She was one of the first seventeen members that were identified with the organization. The Prophet Joseph Smith often met with the sisters and gave them instructions and counsels. The speaker quoted some of his memorable sayings:

"Every virtuous woman should be long to this society."

"This organization is not only for the purpose of administering to the sick and afflicted, the poor and the needy, but it is to save souls."

"If the sisters come before the Lord in humility and faith and lay hands upon the sick and the Lord heals them, none should find fault."

"If we were pure in all things nothing on earth or in heaven could hinder the angels from associating with us."

At one meeting he said, he would not be with us much longer to instruct us. This made us all feel sad. His words soon came to pass and rung our hearts with sorrow and grief for the great loss we had sustained in losing our dearly beloved Prophet,—for a true prophet, I know, he was.

#### AN ADDRESS BY M. ISABELLA HORNE was read by Apostle Abraham H. Cannon.

She said she was thankful to have had the privilege of having been associated with the first organization and heard instructions by Emma Smith. She referred to the experience of the Saints when expelled from Nauvoo and on their weary journey across the plains, experiences only to be understood by those who had been through them. A vivid description was given of the difficulties with which the first pioneers had to contend in this valley. It is hard today to account for the success that attended our first labors here. But in all, our hearts were filled with gratitude. The settlers gladly shared their scanty provisions with those who had less.

The speaker gave an interesting sketch of the labors of the society in Utah. Thousands of dollars have been collected for distribution among the poor besides other useful work that has been accomplished.

#### DR. ROMANIA B. PRATT

read a paper on the administration of Eliza R. Snow in the Relief Society. She was elected president over all the branches in Zion, at a meeting held in the Assembly Hall, June 19th, 1880. Zina D. Young and Elizabeth Ann Whitney were elected counselors, Sarah M. Kimball secretary, and M. Isabella Horne treasurer. On July 14th, the officers were ordained to the various positions, by President John Taylor.

Various branches of work in which the society has taken an active part were mentioned. In June, 1882, the Deseret Hospital was established with

Eliza R. Snow as president of the board of directors, and in Sept., 1882, Romania B. Pratt was appointed assistant secretary. In April 1855 the total number of members was reported to be 16,358. The paper gives a brief account of the visit of Sister Snow and party to Jerusalem and the compilation of her interesting book "Correspondence of Palestine Tourists," and concludes with the following tribute to her memory:

"She traveled extensively in the various Stakes of Zion, always in the capacity of an instructor; was everywhere received as a loving friend and a wise counselor. As an organizer she was unexcelled. Our beloved sister and president closed her eyes in death in the Lion House, Salt Lake City, Utah, December 5th, 1887, aged eighty-three years. Her comparatively long life was eventful beyond that of most women. This jubilee day, March 17th, 1892, the name of Eliza R. Snow will be reverently spoken in many Relief Society branches and in many lands."

#### THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.

President Angus M. Cannon announced that an interesting paper had been prepared by Dr. Romania B. Pratt on the labors of Zina D. Young as President of the society after Eliza R. Snow, but owing to the lateness of the hour, the reading of this sketch was omitted. The paper is here inserted:

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah,  
March 17th, 1891.

Administration of the Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Zina D. H. Young, President.

After the death of Sister Eliza R. Snow, which occurred December 5th, 1887, Sister Zina D. Young, who had been her first counselor, took charge until the semi-annual conference of the Church, April 8th, 1888, when President John Taylor appointed her to preside over the Relief Society.

Apostle Franklin D. Richards, after the authorities of the Church had been presented, said: Our late lamented Sister Eliza R. Snow has been president of the Relief Society ever since its organization in these mountains, and has labored with unexampled diligence for its welfare and advancement. Her death now leaves the organization without a president. Sister Zina D. Young was her first counselor. It is now moved and seconded that she be made president. Sister Young was unanimously sustained.

October 11th, 1888, President Zina Young chose as her first counselor Jane S. Richards, as her second Bathsheba W. Smith, corresponding secretary Emmeline B. Wells. They were set apart under the hands of the First Presidency of the Church.

The central board of the Relief Society was then fully organized as follows: President, Zina D. H. Young; first counselor, Jane S. Richards; second counselor, Bathsheba W. Smith; secretary, Sarah M. Kimball; assistant secretary, Romania B. Pratt; corresponding secretary, Emmeline B. Wells; treasurer, M. Isabella Horne.

One of the most notable features of progress of the Relief Society was the inauguration of annual and semi-annual conferences for women, where special instruction peculiar to their

work could be given by the President and her counselors and other experienced women, and where verbal reports be made by the Presidents of Stake and societies or their representatives. Each society through these privileges is enabled to receive the benefit of the combined wisdom and intelligence of the whole.

The first general conference of the Relief Society convened in the Assembly Hall of this city Saturday morning, April 6th, 1889, President Zina D. Young presiding, assisted by her counselors. Sister Young wrote an eloquent address, which was read by Sister E. B. Wells. It consisted of special instructions upon the duty of women as wives and mothers and Relief Society work.

The next conference, the semi-annual of the Relief Society, was held in the Assembly Hall in this city, October 7th, 1889, Zina D. Young presiding. There were two sessions.

April 7th, 1890, the first annual conference convened in the Assembly Hall of this city and held two sessions, President Zina Young presiding.

October 7th, 1890, the second semi-annual conference convened in the Assembly Hall in this city and held two sessions. President Zina Young presiding.

April 7th, 1891, in the Tabernacle in this city, the second annual conference of the Relief Society was assembled. President Zina D. Young presiding.

October 7th, 1891, the third semi-annual conference was held in the Assembly Hall in this city. President Zina D. Young presiding.

The approximate amount expended in charitable work during the years 1888-89-90-91, in Utah, Idaho, Colorado, Arizona, Sandwich Islands, London and Canada was \$70,892.04. There are probably over 400 branch societies, with a membership of about 25,300. Besides gathering and dispensing this vast amount of means, the Relief Society has organized and managed many enterprises called home industries, such as the Woman's Co-op. Store, millinery parlors and dressmaking establishments. Many societies have built and own their own halls and wheat granaries. When we consider the many thousands of the poor and needy that this money has comforted, fed, clothed and kept warm, the scope and industry of the Relief Society organization can in a measure be realized. President Zina Young, her counselors and other sisters travel extensively among the Stakes, organizing new societies and instructing in the work. They have been indefatigable in their labors and the fruits thereof are already seen in every part of the Church which has been blessed by their presence.

ROMANIA B. PRATT.

#### SENTIMENTS.

An excellent paper on the Relief Society jubilee, prepared by Emmeline B. Wells, was read by Apostle Abraham H. Cannon.

The choir then sang the anthem:

Daughter of Zion, awake from thy slumbers.

Benediction was pronounced by Apostle John Henry Smith.