

THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY.

ST. GEORGE, Dec. 24th, 1880.

Editor Deseret News:

Yesterday was a day long to be remembered, one which all Israel should recollect with joy and gratitude. And indeed it was so remembered here publicly. A seventies meeting was convened at 2 o'clock p. m. in the Tabernacle to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith, presided over by President Jacob Gates, Presidents Herriman and Hancock being unable to attend. After singing, prayer was offered by Elder Milo Andrus. Elder Jacob Gates made a few remarks, of an introductory nature. He alluded to the birth of the Savior in the meridian of time, at which the morning stars sang together, and if the morning stars rejoiced at the coming of our Savior, so might the stars of evening rejoice, when the evening of this world was lit by the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Expressed his love for Joseph and the religion he taught, and always remembered his associations with the Prophet with exceeding joy.

Brother Henry Eyring felt a diffidence in speaking on such an occasion as he would prefer hearing from those who were personally acquainted with this good man whose birthday is being celebrated; bore an earnest testimony to the truth of so-called "Mormonism."

Brother Barney, an old veteran in the Church related many incidents of personal history more or less connected with the history of the Prophet.

A song followed, by Bro. S. L. Adams, who has a clear, pleasing voice. Another "old-timer," Bro. Burgess, then spoke. He also, like Bro. Barney, was associated at times with Joseph, and drew from his memory pictures in which Joseph was portrayed. A poem, beautiful in expression, and full of divine inspiration, written by Sister Eliza R. Snow Smith, was read by Susa Young Gates. No doubt it will soon be published so that all Israel can read and be glad that the wife of our beloved Prophet is still with us to sing his praise on earth.

Elder Milo Andrus then followed in a powerful address, following in line of the former speakers. He, too, drew upon his memory for pictures, and pointed them with exhortations to daily efforts in the great cause of truth.

The choir sang a hymn, after which Sister Eliza R. Snow Smith addressed the people. She was filled with a powerful spirit of testimony. Her words were full of comfort. Her early life was spent under pleasant circumstances. Her first associations with this Church were those which brought her in constant communication with God's prophet; and the more she knew him, the more she became acquainted with his character, the more she loved him, the more she respected him. She had guided her life by the words of Joseph during his life, and afterwards the word of Brigham Young was the word of God to her; and now President Taylor was the man to whom she looked for the divine word. She felt rejoiced that she had the privilege of bearing her testimony on this occasion in St. George. She felt honored to stand here and bear testimony of that noble man, that man of God—that man that stood between God and the whole human family—and sometimes alone but for his God, and as God and one honest man is a big majority he was not quite alone, I say I feel honored to speak these few words and bear my testimony to that man of God—my husband.

Bro. Nobles followed with some reminiscences of the life of Joseph, whom he had loved exceedingly. Told of the cholera scourge sent to the people, and his own miraculous escape therefrom. Also of the rescue of Joseph from jail, and other interesting facts that are now part of our church history.

Sister Zina D. Young told of Bro. Joseph's remark in relation to the revelation on celestial marriage. How an angel came to him with a drawn sword, and said if he did not obey this law he would lose his priesthood; and in the keeping of it he, Joseph, did not know but it would cost him his life. Bore a faithful testimony to the great nobility of Joseph Smith and the greatness of the work he commenced in this dispensation.

Bro. McAllister referred to the extreme youth of Joseph when first called of God. Spoke of his happy, joyous disposition. Told of a dream or vision in which he saw Joseph

and Brigham. Urged the Saints to cling to the gospel taught by them. Read an extract from a paper. After which the "Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum" by E. R. Snow, was read by Bro. James G. Bleak. Bro. Foster followed with a few well-chosen remarks.

The choir and congregation sang, "Hail to the Prophet," and the services were closed with prayer by Bro. Macintyre.

In the evening a social party was given under the auspices of the Seventies. It was an exceedingly pleasant one too. Songs, speeches, dancing, etc., made up a pleasant variety. Thus ended the first genuine public celebration of the prophet's birthday in St. George. May it become a general custom in Israel and may our Dixie be always in the front rank of the grand march heavenward, is the sincere hope of

Yours truly,
S. Y. GATES.