

2 p. m.

Singing by the choir and congregation of the hymn which begins:

"How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word."

Opening prayer by Elder John Nicholson.

The choir sang:

"Softly beams the sacred dawning
Of the great Millennial morn."

ELDER JOHN HENRY SMITH.

Necessity of a strict observance of the Sabbath.—Permissible enjoyment and recreation on week days.—Effects of Sabbath-breaking upon our children.

I am happy in the opportunity of listening, as I did this forenoon, to the remarks that were made by our brethren who spoke to us; and I was especially pleased that President Woodruff was enabled to be here and open this Conference by speaking for a short period of time. I trust that during the time I may occupy, I may be permitted to enjoy the same spirit that was enjoyed by our brethren in their conversations this morning. I have no subject upon my mind at this moment, but I trust that the suggestions of the Spirit may point out the direction in which I should go, that I may be enabled to touch upon some subject or other that shall be of interest to you.

During the past few months, in visiting the stake conferences and also in attending meetings in various wards, I have been very strongly impressed with the necessity for a much more strict observance of the Sabbath day than the Saints have been giving to it, and in talking to the people I have been more impressed to speak upon that matter than upon any other.

No people in the world have been dealt more generously with in the line of enjoyment—proper enjoyment—than the Latter-day Saints. Other religious peoples take little of those lighter enjoyments, and seem to regard them as sinful. But to us the Lord has been generous, in that we have been permitted to enjoy ourselves in witnessing representations upon the "mimic stage," to also have some pleasure in parties, and to enjoy ourselves in dancing. A great many religious people re-

gard these representations upon the stage, also dancing, as improper and wrong; but I myself am most happy in the thought that our Heavenly Father, in the introducing of His work and in seeking to establish among His children a correct understanding of the obligations and requirements of life, has permitted us the opportunity of lightening our minds, changing our currents of thought, and devoting ourselves to reasonable and proper amusements, that the mind might be freed from its constant load or strain occasioned by its so continuously pursuing the directions of those weightier conditions and obligations, and the continuance of thought upon them, by which the mind becomes overcharged and, as a result, produces sickness and feebleness, without there is some way in which it can be relieved. To my mind, the spirit and feeling and sentiment engendered in legitimate and proper amusements produces a most pleasing and satisfactory effect and result upon the mind that is thus permitted to throw off its weightier thoughts and enter upon legitimate and proper amusements, freeing it and enabling it to carry its weightier burdens more easily and more fully and more thoroughly.

But I notice that while this spirit of amusement is legitimate and proper in the sphere of our every-day life, the tendency seems to be growing among many to disregard the Sabbath day and to change it from the day of worship, the day of rest, the day upon which we may be enabled to commune with our own thoughts and to reach out after the inspiration of the Spirit of God—that tendency, I say, is a growing one, to change that day into a day of pleasure; and to my mind, as I look around and note that tendency, I am sanguine that it is not for the best, but, upon the contrary, that, unless proper means shall be adopted to change this tendency, the sacred character of that day and the obligation that rests upon us as the children of our Heavenly Father to worship Him, is going to result badly; and it looks to me that an earnest effort should be made by the Elders of the Church to more deeply impress upon the minds of those of middle age and upon the younger and growing generations, the

sacredness of that day. There is no reason that can be assigned among the Latter-day Saints why it should be turned into a day of pleasure-seeking, a day of recreation.

The opportunities given in which we can enjoy ourselves with propriety in our social gatherings during the week should be appreciated by us; and while we may be required to labor, our time being largely utilized in the various employments upon which we enter in order to obtain our livelihood, these opportunities for recreation present themselves continuously before us. I feel in connection with this matter that we need—and we need it very badly too, taken as a whole—to have the entire time that comes as the Sabbath day to devote our minds and our hearts to communion with that Spirit that comes from on high. Laboring and struggling daily and hourly to meet the physical needs of man, or to gratify some desire in the line of amusement, our minds are taken away from that regard and respect to the Sabbath day, and that regard and reverence and respect to the requirements of our Heavenly Father in connection with the softening of our minds and putting our spirits in touch with Him, that the tendency to simply go to Sabbath school or to attend one service upon the Sabbath day, either in the Tabernacle or in the ward meeting houses, or other buildings, and then to hitch up our teams and drive about the city, or into the canyons, or to be found following up the streams and fishing, and indulging in these species of recreation, to my mind is not in keeping with the spirit and nature of the work the Lord has set us to do. I believe that so far as may be practicable, our animals should have the same opportunities for rest upon the Sabbath day that we have. It is true that there may be circumstances arising, in order to discharge the legitimate and proper duties that rest upon us, that we may be compelled to drive our teams, or that we may be compelled, through sickness or otherwise, to be found not performing in its strictness the duties attendant upon us as members of the body of Christ; but with the generous opportunities that have been given to us for amusement, the chance

that is ours to change our current of thought, and the requirement laid upon our Father's children, not alone in the ages that have gone by, but in these days that they should remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, we can avoid these evils.

Again in this dispensation, the Lord has renewed His covenant with His children, and pointed out to them the course they should pursue in regard to His work. Yet day by day or Sabbath by Sabbath, in mingling among the people, in noting the conditions that arise, as the tendency to the violation of the Sabbath and to disregard the sacredness of that holy day increases, I see that infidelity will increase, because to indulge upon that day in the same species of labor or careless amusement common upon other days, and to neglect and disregard the obligations we owe to that day rendered sacred by our Father in Heaven, upon which we should approach Him, will increase the spirit of disregard for our Heavenly Father in the breasts of those who indulge in it. I do not wish, in any sense, to become cranky, as we sometimes say of our brethren who strike upon a hobby and seem to work at it continuously, but, to my mind, there has grown to be a reckless disregard of that sacred requirement of holding holy and sacred the Sabbath day, in the minds of a great body of people who profess to be Latter-day Saints. It is not confined to the boys and girls who drift away from the restraints that should exist in the home, but it is manifest among those of more mature years. It is seen in many places and under many conditions, and it is repeated Sabbath after Sabbath, from month's end to month's end, and from year's end to year's end, and I trust that the faith and respect and reverence that should be shown in connection with the sacred observance of that day, devoted by our Heavenly Father to the enlightenment and uplifting of His children in the knowledge of Himself, shall not be held so lightly as it seems to be growing to be in the minds of many people who profess to believe upon His name, but that, wherever it may be possible, they will obey His wish, and hold sacred His day, that with themselves and their households, they will attend the ser-

vices of the Church, and, if unable so to do, within the sacred folds of their own home circle will study the scriptures and seek to impress upon their minds a knowledge of His purposes, as shown in the sacred things which have come to us.

I feel that in connection with this matter, a change should take place with us; and while we may not be enabled to avoid some seeming violations of that sacred day, I believe that the spirit of every member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later-day Saints should be directed to a more careful and thoughtful and prudent observance of the obligations which attach to us in connection with that day; that those teams and our vehicles, that those that are dependent upon us, shall be made to feel and sense the sacredness of that day and their duty to their Maker; that their minds may be eased of the strain of their week-day labor, and have communion with the Holy Spirit, that spirit that brings joy and gladness, that awakens hope, that puts us in sacred touch with our Heavenly Father, and renders us obedient to His holy wish,—that that spirit may be with them and direct and guide them into its strict observance. I believe that carriage riding and buggy riding in this city and in these larger cities among the Saints, has grown to be a crime, and that our Heavenly Father is not pleased with it. That is my spirit and feeling in regard to that matter. President Cannon asks, "What about bicycles?" Well, I say this, my brethren and sisters, in regard to this question of riding of horses and bicycles, the driving of teams, and such like upon the Sabbath day: I recognize that many are so situated, being miles away from places of worship, that they must of necessity drive their teams in order to take their families to their legitimate and proper places of worship,—I have nothing to say with reference to this matter, but when our teams are hitched up every Sabbath afternoon and driven for hours and hours for pleasure, I think we trench upon ground upon which we should not enter. I think, brethren and sisters, remembering the goodness of our Father to us, that while the rest of the religious world feel

that it is a crime upon their part to have social enjoyments, our Father has permitted us to have these, going upon the basis that reasonable pleasure is legitimate and right, and drawing our minds from the weighty loads that come to men and women in their struggle of life; but O, let us hold sacred that day that our Father has named as the day upon which we, as His children, taught in the principles of righteousness, should show our love for Him, and our love for the principles involved in good government, in the balancing and shaping of the mind in its currents of thought along religious channels, and not be in a condition that our minds shall be given wholly to the enjoyment or pursuit of pleasure alone, or to the weighty obligations of life, to the business affairs of life, that drift us away from the sacred communion of the Holy Spirit.

My brethren and sisters, I ask that you who are under the sound of my voice this day will bear in remembrance that God has decreed that the Sabbath day should be held sacred and holy in His sight, and He expects us, His sons and His daughters, to so regard it in our ministrations and labors, to only discharge such duties as rest upon us, that are impossible for us to avoid but which come legitimately and cannot be avoided. My witness to you is that they who remember the Sabbath day, who shall take the rest proposed in the change of thought, who shall do it in attendance upon the sacred service, where the worship of God is present, will live longer lives, will be made more acceptable in every respect to our Heavenly Father; and in their children and their children's children will the impress of that spirit to hold sacred the day of rest and worship be manifest in their lives, which will bring joy and satisfaction to the fathers and mothers because of the course that they pursue.

I pray that the Spirit of the Lord may indeed be in our midst, that the determination shall be a fixed and established one that in the homes of the Latter-day Saints, wherever they may be situated, shall be found a people who revere and respect the sacred day which God has designated as a day of

res.; that that day shall not become a day of pleasure but, upon the contrary, a day of worship, of reverence, and love for the Supreme Being, and that each one will seek to do his Father's bidding in this respect, and keep His commandments. Amen.

ELDER FRANCIS M. LYMAN.

Sacred ground.—Maintaining Repentance.—Tenderness of heart.—Moses's teachings.—God never fails.

Twenty-five minutes will not be a very long practice at the mark straight ahead of us, but I will endeavor to talk straight, with the help of the Lord and with the help of your faith and prayers, my brethren and sisters, and trust that something may be said that will be profitable to us.

While listening to the brethren today, I have thought of this sacred spot, this building, this sacred ground where the Latter-day Saints are wont to assemble twice a year from all over the Church, coming here to listen to the living oracles, the men who have been chosen by the Lord, upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility of this Church and this work which the Lord has established, and O, what a sacred spot this is destined to be! When I think of the great designer of this building, President Young, and his brethren who have occupied the stand, the pulpit here, and how freely the word of the Lord has come to the people by the inspiration of the Almighty, words of wisdom, words of intelligence, words fraught with the power of God, I think what wonderful occasions have been in this building! How we have rejoiced together, and how we have been fed and stimulated to go forth from this central spot to our various fields of labor, to serve the Lord anew, to renew our energies, our covenants and obligations to the Lord and to more faithfully keep His commandments, that we may make good our great undertaking; to repent of our sins and to obtain forgiveness; to make a repentance genuine and eternal; for I am brought to believe that it is possible for men to repent and then to unrepent, and to fail to keep their repent-

ance good; and I believe that the victory is in retaining our repentance and making it good, so that the Spirit of the Lord may dwell richly with us.

I believe that it has been a fault with the Latter-day Saints, with us all, perhaps, without exception, that we have not properly maintained our repentance and kept it good; that we have, after we have embraced the Gospel and have received baptism properly, slackened our course; that we have become careless; that we have not maintained the broken heart and the contrite spirit, for be it known, it is necessary that men should have the broken heart, the tender and soft heart, and the contrite spirit, or they are not worthy of that great ordinance of baptism of water and of fire and of the Holy Ghost. And when we have reached this point, that we have complied with the revelation which is so clear and pointed, so definite that no one can mistake, I believe that that same condition must be maintained. I believe that my heart should be as tender today as it ever was. I cannot afford to be hard-hearted, I cannot afford to be stubborn, I cannot afford to be haughty and high-minded; but I must be contrite in spirit and my heart broken and tender, for the Lord has prescribed that all those who humble themselves before God and desire to be baptized should come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the Church that they have truly repented of their sins and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve Him to the end. He says: "All who truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins shall be received by baptism into this Church." I take it that this requirement is necessary to entitle us to baptism into this Church, and no person is entitled to baptism who comes not to that condition. And if it be necessary that that condition is reached, or shall be reached, by those who would be baptized into this Church and have their sins washed away, to entitle them to receive the Holy Ghost, I believe that it is necessary also that that repentance and that broken heart and