

thorities of the Church will not be presented to you at this conference, for the simple reason that they have already been sustained at the regular semi-annual conference of the Church. We shall present, in the main, only those who have been called to fill vacancies, and put before you that which has been done in order to perfect the organization of the Priesthood. These matters, and as little as possible that is unnecessary, will be presented before this conference for your action. We intend that the Priesthood shall vote upon these questions by quorums. The Presidency of the Church will first express their mind, thus indicating, at least in some degree, the mind of the Spirit and the suggestions from the head. Then the proposition will be submitted to the Apostles, for them to show their willingness or otherwise to sustain the action of the First Presidency. It will then go to the Patriarchs, and they will have the privilege of showing whether they will sustain the action that has been taken; then to the Presidents of Stakes and counselors and the High Councilors; then to the High Priests (that office in the Melchisedek Priesthood which holds the keys of presidency); next, the traveling Elders—the Seventies—will be called to express their feelings, and then the Bishops of the Church and the Lesser Priesthood, and after them the whole congregation. All the members of the Church present will have the privilege of expressing their view in relation to the matters which shall be proposed, by a rising vote and by the uplifted hand.

We propose to follow this order of the Priesthood this afternoon. We would like the people to be punctual in coming together, and for all to observe the regulations that shall be made. If each one will do his or her duty, there will be no confusion, but there will be order in the house of God. The house of God is a house of order, and we expect that this house, which is a house of God, will be a house of order, and we will have things done in their proper order if we can.

God bless the Latter-day Saints. The

Lord Almighty bless His servants the Apostles, and His servants the Presidency of the Church, and all those who labor for the welfare of Zion and for the establishment of righteousness in the hearts of the people. God bless the poor and the needy, the fatherless and the widow, and those that sorrow and are bowed down because of affliction and the loss of loved ones. May the Lord bless and comfort them, buoy up their spirits, and give them hope, joy and consolation in anticipation of the glorious future that awaits them, both in time and in eternity; for no man can foretell or foresee the glorious things that await the people of God, if only they are faithful. It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, neither has eye seen nor ear heard, the magnitude and fullness of the glory of God that awaits the faithful beyond the veil. God bless you, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT ANTON H. LUND.

A Perfect Organization—Permanent and Indispensable.

I will read a few words from the 4th chapter of Ephesians:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

"For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

I have been very much interested in the remarks of our President this morning. In contemplating the organization of the Priesthood which God has placed in His Church, it seems to me that it is a perfect institution. It is not an organization that has been devised by man, or evolved for the first time in our system of Church government: but it is like the one which Christ gave to His people formerly. It is necessary that apostles

and prophets and all these different officers of the Priesthood should be in the Church. The Church cannot do without them. They were not placed in the Church temporarily, as many of our Christian friends claim. Most of the denominations of the day affirm that Apostles were to be special witnesses of Christ in the early days only, and that after their death the Apostleship was no longer needed. But that was not the view of Paul. He understood what the Lord meant by His organization of the Church. There are those who claim that Jesus had no system of Church government; that He had no officers in the Church, but left it entirely to the people. We are told here, however, that He gave unto the Church three different officers in the Priesthood. Nor is it said that it was to be only a temporary organization. We read that these officers were given for certain purposes, viz., "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

These things are as necessary in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as they were in the first century. If the body of Christ shall be edified, these men are necessary in the Church. If the Saints shall be perfected, if the work of the ministry shall be performed, these officers must be in the Church. Besides, Paul tells us that they should remain in the church "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." If men have been placed in the Church for a certain purpose, as long as they are there and fulfill their duty, that purpose will be accomplished. When any divisions or contentions arose in the Church formerly, they were referred to the Apostles; for they were placed in the Church to lead the people into the unity of the faith. They were the living oracles, to whom could be referred all matters of dispute; and the Saints who lived out in the world, when they did not understand certain matters, would send to the head and have these points of doubt cleared up and the true doctrine explained. They were for the work of the ministry. How could the

ministry of an Apostle be performed unless an Apostle were in the Church to perform it? They were for the edifying of the body of Christ—meaning the whole Church. How could the Church be edified without these officers whom the Lord had authorized to give His word unto the people? If these are not found in the Church, I hold that the objects for which they were placed in the Church by Christ cannot be accomplished. As an evidence of this, you will find that when those authorized servants of God were martyred, the Church failed in accomplishing these objects. Instead of union in the Church, there was disunion. Men differed in their opinions so strongly that dissensions arose, and the Church was split up into many different factions. Apostasy was the result. Paul had foreseen this, and had warned the people that the day of Christ would not come until "there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." We have seen this taking place. The Church in losing its officers, failed to carry out the purposes for which they were placed in it.

When the time came to which the prophets had looked, when God would again restore His Church and Priesthood to the earth and usher in the dispensation of the fullness of times, we find the same organization again in the Church. It is true that for a few years after the Church was organized in this day there were no Apostles and no Seventies; but their appointment had been indicated. It was not a gradually growing system in which it was thought that we would imitate the Church established formerly; but the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph in the beginning what the organization of His Church should be. In June, 1829—a year before the Church was organized—the Lord revealed to the Three Witnesses, through the Prophet, that they were called upon to choose the Twelve Apostles of this last dispensation. Remember, there was no Church then; but the Lord knew what He was going to estab-

lish. Before the Church was organized He told the people that a marvelous work was about to be established in the earth. When the Church was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830, as far as we can learn there were but nine persons in the Church. Of course, with nine persons it was impossible to establish this perfect organization of the Priesthood. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were called and ordained Apostles; but there could not be Twelve Apostles, there could not be Seventy, for at that time the Church was too small. It took time for the work to grow; but the Lord had given revelation upon the subject, and when the proper time came the Presidency of the Church was organized, with the Prophet Joseph as President and Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams as his counselors. Afterwards the Twelve Apostles were chosen, and then the Seventies. But in the beginning, when there were not enough to form these different quorums, the Elders presided, because they held the Melchisedek Priesthood. The Lord, however, had a perfect organization for His Church, and He gave it unto them when they were ready to receive it.

We have found by experience that the Lord is able to perform His work through these men. When the first exigency arose in regard to who should succeed in the Presidency, the people were not prepared for it; but see how naturally the succession came. As we read in the revelations, given in the early years of the Church, the Apostles form a quorum equal in authority to the First Presidency, when the First Presidency is not, and upon their shoulders falls the authority of governing the Church until the First Presidency shall be organized again. And this was the procedure at that time, and it has been the procedure in such cases ever since. The Lord has done nothing in vain; there is an object in all He does; and we have seen the blessing it is to the Church to have a First Presidency. I was glad this morning to hear President Smith state to us the necessity of having this quorum organized, that there should not be an interregnum, only as far as was necessary. How broad the platform is up-

on which the Lord has built His Church. There is no room for doubt or uncertainty. If the First Presidency is dissolved through the death of the Prophet, then the Twelve Apostles have the authority to take the reins of government. Should there ever arise such a case as the Apostles' quorum also being dissolved (which I do not think will ever happen), the Lord has further provided that a quorum of Seventy can hold and exercise the same power. I see a beautiful illustration here of the Lord's providence, in providing that His Church shall not be left in doubt. This is not a new thing, either. When Jesus was crucified and ascended on high, the Twelve took hold of the work. He certainly presided while He was upon the earth, for He was the founder and the head of the Church. He called Twelve Apostles to His aid, and when He left, the authority fell upon them. While we are not told in express words that there was a Presidency of three, we find that three among the Twelve became the prominent ones, and to them were referred Church matters. I refer to Peter James and John. I have no doubt that they were the presiding quorum of the Church, that they held the presidency of the higher Priesthood, and that the Lord revealed to them His will; for we know that they came in our day and transferred these keys unto the Prophet Joseph—the keys of presidency over the Melchisedek Priesthood. How long they continued to fill up the vacancies occurring in the quorum, I cannot say; we have so little in the New Testament concerning it. You will remember that the history of the Church given us in the inspired writings covers a period of less than thirty-three years—if we accept the year 66 as that in which Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom. But during those years we have indications that men were chosen to be Apostles. The place of Judas, who became a traitor, was filled by the vote of the Apostles, Matthias being chosen. Then we read in the New Testament of there being four other Apostles—Paul, Barnabas, Junia and Andronicus. Of the latter two, Paul says in our English version of the Bible that they were of note among

the Apostles, and in Luther's translation they are called famous Apostles. Hence they did have more than the original Twelve. As long as the true Priesthood remained upon the earth these officers were found in the Church, fulfilling the purpose for which they were placed there.

I rejoice that we live in a day when the Lord has revealed His will unto men and has given us His Priesthood. He has also given us many promises, which we know will be fulfilled. It is for us to live so as to show the Lord that we appreciate what He has done for us; to do the best we can in the places which God has called us to occupy, and to make ourselves better men and women. May God bless us, and bless His work upon the earth, that it may prosper, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG.

The Gospel a great educational system—Overruling power of God—Present necessity for perfect organization.

I am thankful for the privilege of being here this morning, and rejoice in the words that we have heard from the Presidency. There are many things in the Doctrine and Covenants which we read and re-read without fully understanding them. I have often read the revelation which President Smith has referred to, and have tried to study and comprehend the order which God has instituted, but I must say that entirely new ideas came to my mind while President Smith was speaking. I see that it is impossible for humanity to come directly and without proper training into the presence of God. It is a long, hard labor that we shall have to perform to prepare ourselves for His presence. We need cultivation. It is like the farmer cultivating the soil, or like cultivating the mind in an educational way, only this is the greatest system of education that I have ever heard of. It is a gradual raising of the people. The mind is clearer each day in the man who studies and who understands the ways of God. In this way we draw nearer to God; and by and by, when Jesus appears, we shall know Him; for we shall be like Him. Without this training we would be as

ignorant as the world at large; but with this system of education and cultivation which God has instituted, we may rise to the dignity of being heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

I thank God for the knowledge He has given unto us. I thank Him for the testimonies of His Spirit, which He has given to me. All that I could reasonably claim at His hands has been given me, and He has never forsaken me in days of trial. This is an epitome of the history of the Latter-day Saints. God has been with them, individually and as a people. Our individual circumstances are known to him; the circumstances of the people are known to Him, and He overrules in every emergency for the uplifting, strengthening, and binding together of His Saints. We witness this in our daily lives. Every day there is a closer communion between the brethren who hold the Priesthood, in their quorums, if they are magnifying their Priesthood. Every day there is a closer communion between the husband and the wife, if they are magnifying that which God has given unto them. Every day there is an increase of affection between the children and the parents, an increase of faith and confidence in neighbor for neighbor; and we are growing together, under the admonition and power of God, in a manner that is astonishing; at least, it astonishes me, for I find it in myself as I do in my brethren.

I rejoice in the organization of the Church as it exists today. After we had paid our last respects to our late beloved President, I felt the Spirit in me so strong that I could not rest in my feelings until the First Presidency was organized. I wanted a President of the Church; I wanted him to have counselors, and to see the organization of the Church perfect. I never saw a time in my life when I believed the perfect organization of the Church, with all the strength and power God has given us in the quorums of the Priesthood, was more necessary than it is today. God intimated through His Spirit that it was His mind and will that the organization should be completed. I do not speak of men; I speak