

SECOND DAY.

Saturday, April 7, 10 a. m.

Conference was called to order by President Smith.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said—
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

Prayer was offered by Elder C. F. Middleton.

The choir sang the hymn beginning,

All hail the glorious day,
By prophets long foretold,
When with harmonious lay
The sheep of Israel's fold
On Zion's hill his praise proclaim,
And shout hosanna to his name.

ELDER GEORGE REYNOLDS.

My brethren and sisters, it affords me very great pleasure to meet with you in this conference, to see the vast number present, and to feel the goodly influence which prevails. In standing before you this morning I may refer to the missionary labors of the Church. At the present time a large number of Elders are being called for this important work, and I may say that in all my lengthy experience I have never known the call for missionaries to be answered so willingly and so readily as is the present one. I presume at least one hundred and fifty missionaries will leave our borders during this month, and in the months immediately following the number will be almost as large, and names from the Presidents of Stakes and Bishops still continue to reach the President's office. I believe I am justified in saying that the brethren whose names have been

suggested show better preparation for that labor than I have ever known. There is, however, one thing that disheartens me, just a little, that is, the number of young men called who admit that they have not been keeping the Word of Wisdom. While they say they will have no difficulty hereafter in observing this law of God, they acknowledge that in the past they have not done so. This is regrettable, because it shows the tendency there is among us to neglect those requirements of the Lord which entail a daily sacrifice of our personal desires. We often express a willingness to lay our all upon the altar of sacrifice, and at the same time these matters which in the minds of some appear to be of minor importance are forgotten or slighted; they are not considered of sufficient importance for us to live up to every day of our lives. I know that in our hearts we are ready to meet the requirements that the Lord makes of us. Some of the answers received by the First Presidency are quite pathetic. The writers, though expressing the difficulties by which they are environed, say they will be ready, and that they will report at the time mentioned to fulfill the requirement of the Lord, whatever may be the circumstances under which they are placed. No doubt, our Church schools have had considerable influence in bringing about this result, and the missionary classes established in our academies are no small factor in increasing the desire of the brethren to perform missionary labor, and in preparing them therefor. We have had quite a large attendance at the missionary classes in the districts that are remote from headquarters, but for some reason, this year, the Church schools nearest to Salt Lake City, have not had the full attendance in the missionary classes

that they have had in former years. The schools in the north—in Rexburg, in Preston, and other places, have had large classes of missionary students. The effect of these classes is quite pronounced and has much to do with the present ready responses to missionary calls. You are aware no doubt, from reports that have been made by the presidents of missions at the last few conferences, that they have not been supplied with the number of men they desired. They could not indeed answer all the calls that were made upon them by strangers, nor even visit all the members of the Church in their missions as frequently as was desirable, and the consequence has been that some have fallen into the background through the want of that attention which is necessary in all places where our people are established. I am hopeful that this difficulty will be remedied and that the arrival of so many new brethren will also increase the vitality and develop the labors of the brethren in these various missions.

Referring to a cause nearly akin to the missionary work, that of the Sunday schools, I desire to say a few words. President Smith asked me if I did not think the Sabbath schools were in a better condition today than they had ever been, and I answered him to the effect that I so believed that I had never known the time when taken all in all, the schools were doing better work than they are now. Our schools are increasing in number; and that in regard to punctuality, the good order maintained, and the methods adopted for instructing the children I believe we are growing and growing in the right direction, each year. Above all, I believe that the children in the schools are obtaining a better knowledge of the Gospel, and that they are not losing in the spirit and faith of the principles of eternal life. I have always regarded, and do today, that the first thing most important in connection with our Sunday schools, and indeed with all the other auxiliary organizations of the Church, is to make

Latter-day Saints of our children, to develop within them a faith that shall grow with increasing years, an understanding faith, a faith that, while it appeals to the heart, will also appeal to the head, and be able to give a reason for the hope that is within; not a blind obedience, as it is sometimes called, but a comprehensive understanding of the revelations of God and the work that He is performing in this generation. Many of our children are wonderfully blest in this direction. They have a strong and abiding faith. God has, by His Holy Spirit, given it to them. They also have an understanding of the history of the Church and the reasons for the faith that they possess, and are able to talk in a sensible manner in regard to the principles of the Church. They are able to tell why God has revealed His mind and will in these days, and why the kingdom of God is being built up, and the reason of the opposition which Satan and those under his control upon the earth are using to overthrow this work. Many of them also realize that the reasons given by our opponents for their opposition to the work of God in which we are engaged are not the real reasons. They realize the reason is that in our midst is to be found the Priesthood of the true and living God. It is that which the emissaries of Satan are fighting, it is that which they fear, because they know as long as God's Priesthood is organized upon the earth the purposes of the evil one cannot be accomplished, nor can they continue unrepented in the lives that so many of them are inclined to lead. As was said by President Smith yesterday, the Gospel stands for righteousness, for purity, for truth, for everything that is good and desirable, and within the pale of the Church is to be found everything necessary for the happiness of man here upon the earth, and for his eternal salvation hereafter. There is no need of Latter-day Saints going outside of the Church for any good thing, for it can all be found in that which God has given to us. His plan is perfect and embraces all things that men

should desire to receive and attain to; and when men go outside of the Church of Jesus Christ for anything that they believe will benefit them, it shows that they have a narrow, a limited and a contracted idea of the Gospel, and do not rightly understand its principles nor its efficacy for salvation day by day and forever. We were told many, many years ago by President Young, that outside of the Gospel there were but three things—death, hell and the grave. None of us want either of those things. We desire to live, and to live forever, with the gift of eternal lives granted unto us. Our desires are to so live in this probation, that when that which is perfect is come we shall inherit it, and we shall eventually become, through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, like unto Him. As Christ said, "Be ye perfect, even as I and my Father in heaven are perfect."

My brethren and sisters, I do not think that my voice is adapted to this Tabernacle; possibly many of you cannot hear me; so I will not occupy your time any longer, but pray God to bless you, and to bless all that is done and said at this conference; and may much good and unity in the midst of the Saints result from our coming together at this time. I ask it through Jesus our Redeemer. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH W. McMURRIN.

I trust, my brethren and sisters, that during the few moments I stand before you I may be blessed with the Spirit of the Lord, and speak such words to this congregation as the Lord would have me speak. I have rejoiced very greatly in the instructions imparted by the brethren during this conference, and I feel in my soul that those who have stood before us and borne testimony to the truth of the great work in which we are engaged, have been directed in their words by the Spirit of the Lord. As a people, we are very strong believers in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that man is not able of himself, by the wisdom which he possesses naturally, to instruct the people concerning the purposes of the Lord.

That instruction can only be given to the convincing of the people, and to the building up of the faith and knowledge of the Saints, by the power of the Holy Ghost. In listening to the remarks that have been made by Elder George Reynolds, in relation to the missionaries, some thoughts passed through my mind concerning them. It falls to my lot in connection with my brethren to meet companies of missionaries very frequently in the annex of the Salt Lake Temple, where they are usually set apart for their missionary labors, and I have observed, as others of the brethren have, that nearly all the Elders that go into the world to preach the Gospel are young men, and very largely men without missionary experience—young men who are going out from their homes for the first time to exercise the authority of the Holy Priesthood in calling men to repentance. I have often felt that it would be a very great advantage to missionary work throughout the world if the brethren who are called upon from time to time to suggest missionaries could mix up with these young men, who labor so zealously and faithfully in the preaching of the Gospel, a few men who have already had missionary experience.

Since the commencement of this work there have been thousands of men who have operated in the nations of the earth in the labors of the ministry, and today, in the communities of the Later-day Saints, there are a large number of men who in years gone by have labored successfully and through experience have become competent in missionary work. I fear that when the brethren look for missionaries, they feel that men who have already been abroad should not be again appointed to these labors, if there are other men who have not had this opportunity. But I believe it would be a very great advantage to the young men, and a help to the mission presidents, and a benefit to the people of the world, if the young men could be blessed with the companionship and assistance of some of the brethren who