

them in the faith. I have had the pleasure of associating with a great many of them during the past year, having traveled more than twenty thousand miles, visiting the Saints in the stakes of Zion and in the mission field. I have found them in the world, and in the stakes of Zion just as true to the Gospel as the most faithful of these men and women here near the headquarters of the Church. I know of their integrity; I have heard their testimonies; I have heard their presidents speak well of them. I have seen them in the auxiliary organizations working like bees in a hive. I do know something of the strength of the veterans of Zion, and the faith and integrity of the youth of Zion, and I doubt them not. There is a very small percentage of the boys and girls, sons and daughters of the Saints, who will be recreant to the faith of their parents. Our young people are, in a large measure, as I have said, true and faithful, and they will continue so, and the Lord will prosper Zion, and bless His people. Zion will triumph; the truth will prevail, and God's purposes will be consummated in the earth. May the Lord help us all to be faithful, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH.

Faithfulness and zeal manifest in the missions.—Observance of the Word of Wisdom a means of exaltation.—Faith and intelligence increased by obedience to the laws of health.—Transmission of tendency to physical and mental weakness.—Evidence of faith is keeping the commandments.

It is very remarkable to me how rapidly the time passes. It does not seem six months since we were in our last general conference, and

I occupied this same position. Since then it has been my privilege to go into the mission field, and to visit some of the branches of the Church in different portions of the United States. The testimony of President Smith of the worth of our Mission Presidents coincides with my feelings. I met a number of Presidents of Missions in their fields of labor, and found them desirous of building up the Church of God, and they are laboring diligently to that end. I had the pleasure of meeting many of your sons and some of your daughters also, who are giving their time and ability to the promulgation of the work of our Father. I rejoiced in the testimonies they bore. I discovered that the sweet Spirit of the Lord was with them, and that they were happy, even though their names, in many cases, were cast out as evil because they were members of the Church of Christ. I listened to the testimonies of those who are members of the Church, in the Eastern and the Southern States, and they bore the same witness that is expressed in our meetings at home when opportunity for testimony is afforded. I find, wherever I go among the branches of the Church, that the spirit which should characterize the Elders of Israel and the members of the fold of Christ is strongly manifest in the lives of its devotees.

Speaking of the apparently rapid way that time passes, I am reminded that none of us are here in this life very long. We believe that we are harvesting the fruits of our pre-existent lives, and earning here the reward we expect to reap when we go hence. The Lord has indicated to us that by faith we can please Him, and that by keeping His commandments we

can draw near unto Him. We are told that faith is a gift of God, and that in return for obedience our faith is increased. Thereby we grow in strength, and we feel the presence of the Holy Spirit more abundantly. Some of the brethren have spoken to us today concerning one of the temporal laws of the Lord—the Word of Wisdom. I sometimes wonder if Latter-day Saints realize that it has been given to us for our exaltation; not only for our temporal blessing, but to prepare us for spiritual life. It was my observation in the mission fields that the Elders who manifested the most faith, who seemed to have the greatest assurance of the divinity of this work, were those who had kept this law of the Lord. I found that many of those who, in times past, had questioned the divinity of this Church, had tampered with things which the Lord has said are not good for us. We are told that the glory of God is intelligence, and we all admire intelligent men and women, therefore it should be our desire to lay the foundation for increased mental power and not do anything to weaken it. It is evident in the lives of some that they deprive themselves of the brain power they might enjoy, by the continued use of things our Heavenly Father has said are not good; they become less intelligent as a result, and fail to make the preparation for Eternal life that should be their ambition.

I am fully convinced that the Lord in His mercy, when He gave us the Word of Wisdom, gave it to us, not alone that we might have health while we live in the world, but that our faith might be strengthened, that our testimony of the divinity of the mission of our Lord and Master might be in-

creased, that thereby we might be better prepared to return to His presence when our labor here is complete. I fear that, as sons and daughters of Zion we sometimes fail to realize the importance of this great message to the world. Sec. 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants is not only a Word of Wisdom to the members of this Church but it is a law for the temporal salvation of all of our Father's children in the world, and it behooves the Latter-day Saints to declare the truth of this law to all men. We observe that compliance with the laws of health produces mental and physical strength, and we discover that through disobedience thereto, mental and physical deterioration follows. It is our Creator, the Father of our spirits, who gave us opportunity to dwell upon this earth, who has said that certain things referred to in that revelation are not good for us. He has made us valuable promises, if we will obey this law,—promises of wisdom, of health and strength, and that the destroying angel shall pass us by and not hurt us, as he did the children of Israel. I look upon the Word of Wisdom as kind advice of our Father in heaven, who desires to see His children become more like Him. He sent me into the world that I might develop my manhood and magnify my opportunities. I take it as the fatherly counsel of one who, knowing what I needed, said to me: "My son, these things are not good for you, and if you will avoid them I will give you the companionship of my Holy Spirit and joy while you live in the world and in the end eternal life. How foolish I would be then to partake of these forbidden things, having the assurance that it is the

counsel of the Lord I should abstain therefrom. I would feel under condemnation if I should partake of them, when He who knows better than anybody else says that they are harmful, and has warned me against them.

Tobacco often affects the heart; and many men who have been physically strong in their childhood have weakened that vital organ in young manhood by the tobacco habit, and in many cases the malady is transmitted to their offspring. Sometimes consumption results from the use of those things God has forbidden; the tissue of the lungs and the membranes give way, disease sets in, and the violator of the law of health goes to an untimely grave. Unfortunately the scourge does not always stop with them; they transmit it to their children—those blessed jewels in whose development they expect to rejoice in the Kingdom of God. It is well known that many dread diseases are transmitted from one generation to another, and have the effect of weakening the mental and physical powers of the race. Surely we do not want to be among those knowingly guilty of increasing the burdens of those yet unborn. The Lord has warned us that the sins of the fathers will be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation; and it is said that those who walk uprightly before the Lord and obey His counsel will bequeath virtues to their offspring. I believe that the Word of Wisdom is a natural law, and that it is incumbent upon the Latter-day Saints to obey the Lord in this as in other matters. In the world today we find that consumption, heart troubles of various kinds, tuberculosis, cancer and other dread dis-

eases, usually regarded as of a hereditary nature, are on the increase, and they send thousands to the grave annually. There is no doubt that, in many cases, their beginning is traceable to the causes I have named. How terrible we would feel if, having weakened our physical structure and mentality by the use of these forbidden things, we should find that we have left as a heritage to our children, weaknesses that may be handed down from generation to generation until our names shall be obliterated from the earth! Oh, how I wish the sons and daughters of the Latter-day Saints could understand the importance of this law! How I wish that the fathers and mothers who tamper with these things, and then offer excuses for themselves, might understand that they are bringing humiliation and distress upon their children. We are taught that the glory of our Heavenly Father will be shared by us, if we are faithful. If I am honorable and keep the commandments of the Lord, I believe that my children will inherit similar strength of character. On the other hand, if I plant in them appetites and desires for those things which the Lord has forbidden, whereby they transgress His laws, forfeit the companionship of His Holy Spirit, and go outside the pale of the Church, when I go to the other side and find that by my unfaithfulness and determination to be a law unto myself, I have placed a stumbling block in the way of my children, so that they are deprived of exaltation in the presence of the Father, all the excuses I have made in this life will be of no avail. Brethren and sisters, let us not be a community of excuse-makers. Let us not be among those who say

that, because they are old and feeble, they must have these things. The Lawgiver made no distinction for age; let us make none. The older we are the more exemplary should be our lives. I do not feel to criticize or condemn any of those who have violated laws of the Lord, I do not feel to say unkind things of them; I sympathize with them deeply, and I pray that the Lord may come to their rescue before it is too late, and assist them to overcome.

Brethren and sisters, we cannot with impunity look slightly upon the Word of Wisdom. It was given as counsel and advice, not by commandment or constraint, but as a word of wisdom, from our Father, for the temporal salvation of our bodies and the preparation of our souls for eternal life. He thought it of enough importance to give it unto us, and to warn us and if He who knows all things thought it necessary to give advice and counsel upon these temporal matters, how carefully we, who know not what the morrow has in store for us, should observe that divine counsel. I feel that the Latter-day Saints have in the Word of Wisdom a law that will exalt them and lift them above those who fail to keep it. As I have already said, fathers and mothers, if they will keep the Word of Wisdom, may transmit to their offspring virtues and strength that they could not otherwise give to them. I believe that the companionship of the Spirit of our Father will be in the hearts and homes of those who keep this law, and their desire to be obedient will be transmitted to their children. Brother McKay, who spoke on this subject, has had evidences in his educational work of the im-

portance of students observing this law. It is a well known fact that the effect of tobacco upon the child brain is most harmful, destroying the memory and dulling the finer senses; also, that the effect of liquor upon the youthful brain is very deleterious: it breaks down the desire to be honorable and upright, and leads to vice and crime. The baneful effect of tea and coffee upon the nerves of womankind is too well understood to admit of argument. And so it is all along the line. The Lord has given us this law in kindness and love, promising certain blessings if we will obey His counsel. I feel to exhort you, by brethren and sisters, to teach this in your homes. Call the attention of your growing children to it, and to the reward predicated on its observance. Let me say to you that the best evidence of our faith in that law, that we believe it came from God, is a consistent observance of it in our lives. We may preach it all day long, but if we transgress it in practice, our example may be disastrous to those we love better than life, for they will feel that they can safely follow where we lead.

I am thankful for the sons and daughters of Israel, for their virtue and temperance, and rejoice in their righteousness. I thank the Lord that we have been planted in this land of Zion, which He has said is blessed above all other lands. Today, I raise my voice in humility and pray that we may have strength to observe the Word of Wisdom and all other laws of the Lord, that our lives may comport with the dignity of the great Church with which we are identified, that men and women everywhere, seeing our good works,

may be led to glorify our Father which is in heaven; that in the future the sons and daughters of Zion may bless us for examples of integrity bequeathed to them; that our brothers and sisters of other faiths may be able to say, "There are men and women in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, who live according to their teachings to others, evidencing their belief that those principles are from God."

I pray that our Father may bless the man who stands at the head of this work, with his counselors, and those associated with them, that each may be inspired to teach in power and plainness the truths of heaven; that the Presidents of Stakes, who so faithfully and energetically discharge their duties in the organized Stakes of Zion, may find joy in their ministry, and that the Bishops and other officers may receive abundant blessings from the Lord for their labors among His children. I pray that love for the Gospel may be found in the hearts of the rising generation, that they may prepare to teach its truths to the convincing of the honorable of the earth. That day and night, by reason of our devotion to those things that are right and pure and true, the Spirit of our Father may tabernacle with us, that we may rejoice in its companionship. I pray that His Spirit may be poured out upon all the world, wherever men and women desire to know His will and keep His commandments; and that it may find its way to those who are not disposed to keep the laws of God, that the spirit of repentance may come upon them; that all may be prepared for the time which we are assured is not far distant, when the Lord will suddenly come to His temple; that His children may rejoice in His

presence and receive eternal life at His hands, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER HYRUM M. SMITH.

General unanimity of the Priesthood and members of the Church.—Vain following of fashion censured.—The Saints "a menace" to crime.—Warning against the skating rink craze, and excess in amusements.

My brothers and sisters, there is nothing gives me more happiness than the knowledge that the Latter-day Saints are progressive and prosperous, both spiritually and temporally. I am exceedingly well pleased at the large attendance upon this conference, and with the addresses that have already been delivered. I rejoice in the opening statement of President Smith concerning the condition of the Church, because I myself know that statement to be the truth. My experience in traveling throughout the lands where the Saints are gathered confirms the truth of his remarks, and proves to me that they are conservative and just. I rejoice in the general faithfulness of the Latter-day Saints, in keeping the commandments of the Lord. The counsel and advice that was given to the Presidents of Stakes, the Bishops of Wards, the Presidents of Quorums and other leading brethren, that they be united and see eye to eye, is veritably complied with by those authorities, with few exceptions. Not only is this the case with the authorities of the Church throughout Zion, but it is the case with the Latter-day Saints universally; as to the Gospel of Jesus Christ they see eye to eye. The fundamental principles and