

The Priesthood Quorums, including the high priests, seventies and elders, and bishops and their counselors, from all parts of the Church, were in attendance; officers of the auxiliary organizations both of men and of women were present, and also members of the Board of Education.

Mission Presidents were in attendance, as follows: John H. Taylor, Northern States; Samuel O. Bennion, Central States; John M. Knight, Western States; Joseph W. McMurrin, California; Brigham S. Young, Northwestern States; Joseph Quinney, Jr., Canada; John G. Allred, Northcentral States; Charles A. Callis, Southern States; Benjamin Goddard, Bureau of Information, Temple Block, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Kenneth Haymore, acting president of the Mexican mission in the absence of Elder Rey L. Pratt who was in South America.

President Grant announced that Elder J. Golden Kimball would preside at the Assembly Hall overflow meeting; and that the music would be furnished by the Murray First ward and by Millcreek ward, of the Cottonwood stake. Appointments were also made for speakers.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn on page 198, "Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation."

Prayer was offered by Elder C. Clarence Neslen, bishop of the Twentieth ward, Salt Lake City.

The choir sang: "The morning breaks, the shadows flee."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

This is a very wonderful gathering of Latter-day Saints, the Tabernacle being crowded to overflowing. It is certainly an inspiring sight, and bears witness to the interest and devotion of the Latter-day Saints. I humbly pray that while I stand before you this morning I may be able to say something that shall in some small degree fulfil my share of this conference, and which you can take away with you and feel that you have received some benefit by leaving your homes, some of you from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south, and from New York to San Francisco.

CAUSE FOR REJOICING

I rejoice in the growth of the work of God. I rejoice in the integrity and devotion and the willing self-sacrifice of the people. I am very thankful for all of the many blessings that have come to us as a people, from the time when that great pioneer, Brigham Young, and that wonderful band of men and women, one hundred and forty odd, first came to this valley. I am thankful for the blessings of the Lord that have attended the Saints, notwithstanding the drivings and the persecutions and the mobbings that they have had to endure during the 96 years since the organization of the Church.

It is generally expected that at the April conference of the Church something shall be given in the nature of statistics regarding the condition of the Church. Therefore, before making any special remarks, I shall give you a few items of interest.

CHANGES IN OFFICERS, AND CHURCH STATISTICS

Stake Presidents Honorably Released.

Mark Austin, Fremont stake; Peter M. Hansen (deceased), Bear River stake; Nelson J. Hogan, Idaho stake; Heber C. Austin, Idaho Falls stake.

New Stake Presidents

George S. Romney, Fremont stake; Milton H. Welling, Bear River stake; J. Fred Corbett, Idaho stake; Frederick A. Caine, Idaho Falls stake.

Mission Presidents Honorably Released

Albert R. Peterson, Norwegian mission; John S. Hansen, Danish mission; Charles S. Hyde, Netherlands mission; Herbert B. Foulger, Tahitian mission (acting).

Mission Presidents Appointed

Martin Christopherson, Norwegian mission; Joseph L. Peterson, Danish mission; John P. Lillywhite, Netherlands mission; Alma G. Burton, Tahitian mission.

STATISTICS

There are at present: stakes of Zion, 94; wards, 909; independent branches, 76; missions, 26; branches in missions, 716, making a total of 1701 wards and branches now in the Church.

There were less than twenty stakes of Zion at the time I was chosen to be one of the twelve apostles of the Church, 43 years ago.

Since our conference in 1925, 69 stake and ward meeting houses have been erected and 24 buildings in our missions, which makes a total of 93 structures during the year.

We have not yet completed the Arizona temple, but the expenditures up to the 31st of December, 1925, on that building were \$540,000.

We rejoice in the wonderful growth of work in our temples. In the Salt Lake temple, I learn from brother Geo. F. Richards, we have had as high as 1800 people go through in a single day. Many companies go through there each day, laboring for the salvation of their dead.

In our Church educational system we have enrolled: in Church schools, 4,184; in Seminaries, 10,341; in Religion Classes, 57,000;

Total number receiving week-day religious education, 71,525.

This says nothing of religious education that is being given to 59,000 women in our Relief Societies, 100,000 in our Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, and a quarter of a million in our Sunday schools. And I am informed that the enrollment of our children in Primary Associations now reaches 100,000.

There were ordinances performed in the temples for the living and the dead last year, 986,321.

Number of people recommended to the temples, 55,695.

We have somewhat more than 2,500 missionaries in the field at the present time.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Following are the expenditures from the tithes of the Church for the year 1925:

Stake and Ward Purposes

There has been returned from the tithes to the stakes and wards for building construction, maintenance and operation, \$1,486,351.81.

Education

Expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of Church schools, \$958,440.67.

Temples

Expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of temples, \$319,415.

Charities

For the care of the worthy poor and other charitable purposes, including hospital treatment, \$172,352.74.

Missions

For the maintenance and operation of all the missions and for the erection of places of worship and other buildings in the missions, \$769,926.79.

Making a total, which has been taken from the tithes and returned by the trustee-in-trust for the maintenance and operation of the stakes and wards, for the maintenance and operation of Church schools and temples, for charities and for mission activities, of \$3,706,397.01.

Other Charities

In addition to charities paid from the tithes, as before named, there has also been disbursed the fast offerings, other charities and assistance rendered by the Relief Society, in the sum of \$442,868.07, which amount, added to the \$172,262.74 paid from the tithes, makes the total charity assistance rendered by the Church, \$615,130.81.

There has been collected by the various wards of the Church and paid to missionaries to assist in their maintenance, \$131,941.31.

STATISTICS REGARDING THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Children blessed and entered on the records of the Church in the stakes and missions, 20,233.

Children baptized in the stakes and missions, 14,390.

Converts baptized and entered on the records of the stakes and missions, 6,373.

SOCIAL STATISTICS.

Birth rate, 32 per thousand; marriage rate, 15 per thousand; death rate, 6.7 per thousand.

Divorces—There was one divorce in every 20 marriages. Average in the United States is one divorce in every seven marriages.

Families owning their own homes, 73 per cent.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW

There is at the present time an agitation going on in the United States against the enforcement of prohibition. Straw votes are being taken which show that the overwhelming sentiment of those who have seen fit to vote on this straw ballot are in favor of the repeal or modification of the present law.

There is also a wave of crime sweeping over the country. Perhaps there is nothing of greater importance, next to our spiritual growth, than a determination on the part of the Latter-day Saints to observe the laws of our country. I wish to quote from the immortal Lincoln:

LINCOLN ON THE SUBJECT

"Let every American, every lover of Liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of '76 did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property and his sacred honor. Let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles in her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, in spelling books and almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, enforced in courts of justice. In short, let it become the political religion of the nation."

One of the Articles of our Faith declares that we believe in sustaining the law and supporting the rulers. So that not only should Latter-day Saints follow the advice of the immortal Lincoln, but they should follow the doctrines of the Church to which they belong.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Theodore Roosevelt has the following statements to make that would apply more or less to sustaining the law:

"In character we must have virtue, morality, decency and square dealing as the foundation.

"Any man who claims there can be liberty in spite of and against the law is claiming that anarchy is liberty.

"We need strong bodies; more than that, we need strong minds, and finally we need what counts for more than body or mind—character."

"The man who counts is the man who is decent and who makes himself felt as a force for decency."

THE WORD OF WISDOM A REVELATION TO THE SAINTS

The Latter-day Saints have a revelation from God regarding strong bodies. In that revelation it is recorded that tobacco is not good for the body. It is also recorded there that strong drinks are not to be taken internally, but are only for the washing of the body. We are told in this same revelation that hot drinks are not good for man. This revelation was given to the Latter-day Saints in 1833, only three years after the organization of the Church. Yet, there are many of the people who have never lived up to that revelation. But I am thankful that the great majority of the Latter-day Saints are observers of the Word of Wisdom—that tea, coffee, liquor and tobacco are let alone by the Latter-day Saints.

I have read to you that we have seventeen hundred wards and branches in the Church. In each of the wards of the Church there is a bishop and two counselors and a ward clerk, and in each of the independent branches there is a president and two counselors. There are sometimes three presiding officers in the branches throughout the missions, and sometimes only one. But we have an army of men presiding amounting to four or five thousand, and every one of those men must

pledge his honor that he will observe the Word of Wisdom. We have now ninety-four stakes, with a presidency of three men, and a stake clerk, and we have twelve high councilors in each of these stakes. In addition we have many alternate high councilors. It will average, I am sure, twenty men to the stake, So we have an army of two thousand there, and every one of these leading men must obey the Word of Wisdom.

ON WOMEN AND SMOKING

I read recently in a paper published in our city:

"The woman smoker is the prominent professional and business woman in every community." I desire to broadcast all over the world that that statement is an absolute falsehood so far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned. Never in my life have I seen a Latter-day Saint woman or girl smoking a cigarette. This article states that last year there were 9,000,000,000 cigarettes smoked by the women of these United States, and that there were 7,000,000,000 cigarettes smoked by women the year before, an increase in round numbers of thirty per cent. The writer said that the woman smoker is "the prominent commercial and business woman in every community." I say: Leave out every Latter-day Saint community, because it is a falsehood.

"She is the wife of your local physician." She is not the wife of any physician in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints so far as I know. "She is the wife of the town banker, the attorney. She is the president of your parent-teacher club, your literary club." These statements are reputed to have been made by Cynthia Grey. I would not be a bit surprised if Cynthia Grey is but a newspaper name, and it is one of the tobacco trusts who furnished the article.

"In other words, it is stuff and nonsense, nowadays, to say that the women who smoke are scarlet ladies." We do not say that. So she has put that in to weaken the fight against this awful curse, cigarette smoking.

"Does nicotine harm the woman any more than the man, if it harms either?" Nicotine harms every man, woman and child that uses tobacco, and we as Latter-day Saints have the word of the Lord God Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, to that effect, this lady (or perhaps man), to the contrary notwithstanding.

"I am inclined to believe that even a woman smoker, quite firm in her conviction that she is doing the proper thing" [I do not believe that any woman smoker believes she is doing the proper thing] "would stop smoking, if any real authority could prove she was harming any possible future child of hers." The trained athletes of the nation are pretty good authorities on the harm to the physical body, and they are practically a unit that tobacco and liquor do harm the body. Some of the great baseball clubs of America, who have won championships, won't allow liquor or tobacco to be used by their men.

The head of the New York Athletic club, one of the greatest in

this country, announces that there is no prospect of success in the athletic line to the man who uses tobacco and liquor.

"But medical savants, when pushed to the wall, seem not much alarmed." When they are not pushed to the wall, the great majority of them acknowledge the harmful influence of these things.

"The president of the Association of Railway Chief Surgeons is quoted as saying 'Fags help men work out problems. Why not women?'"

A whip helps a horse to go a little bit further, but it does not add any strength to the horse, and no narcotic or stimulant that creates an appetite for itself is good for man or woman. And thank the Lord we have his word to that effect.

I will not take any more of your time reading from this article, for it is "rot."

COMMENTS ON SUSTAINING THE LAW

I meant after reading Lincoln's wonderful appeal to sustain the Constitution, to read the following:

Gladstone said, speaking of the Constitution of the United States: "It is the greatest document of its kind that ever sprang from the mind of man."

The faith of the Latter-day Saints and the teaching that I have had since I was a child at my mother's knee, as well as from this stand, is that the Constitution of our country was written by men inspired of the Lord God Almighty. Therefore we, as Latter-day Saints, more than any other people, ought to be supporters of the Constitution, and all constitutional law.

I read a clipping from a great financial paper, as follows:

"Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall" is as true today as it was 2,500 years ago. The indications of surface conditions are not satisfactory. A crime wave is sweeping the country; hope is necessary to give a thrill in the movies; temperance and self-control have become a joke; observance and respect for law are considered old-fashioned; honest labor is looked upon as something to be avoided; too many are trying to get something for nothing and are going into debt for needless luxuries and harmful pleasures."

LATTER-DAY SAINTS WARNED AGAINST DEBT AND WEALTH

Right here let me warn the Latter-day Saints to buy automobiles and to buy the ordinary necessities of life when they have the money to buy them, and not to mortgage their future. I have heard of people over in England who regularly mortgage their Sunday clothes Monday morning and take them out of "hock" the next Saturday night. I want to say to you that those who discount their future, who run in debt for the ordinary necessities of life and for the luxuries of life, are laying burdens upon themselves that will come back with compound interest to cause them great trouble and humiliation. To quote again:

"Nasty magazines are building up great circulations, while the colleges are closing up their chapels and opening up smoking rooms for the women students."

Again let me say that that cannot be found in any of the Church

schools or seminaries. Once more, please leave out the Latter-day Saints.

"I sincerely hope that these things are merely a phase and that the American people are still a God-fearing race. If not, these things are a tremendous indictment of schools and colleges as well as parents. Yes, America has every material blessing at the present time and if we will keep our feet on the ground, the present era of prosperity should continue for years. On the other hand, all wealth is a mere tool which can be used either to upbuild or to destroy. Everything depends on the motives, ambition and tastes of the people who have this tool in their hands."

Wealth is leading to folly and almost to that which would be counted as sin. Pope says:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

AVOID SERVING THE GOD OF FASHION

I am ashamed, as I walk the streets of our cities, at the lack of modesty in the dresses, not only of our young people, but our mothers and even grandmothers. I will rejoice when there shall come over this land again an increased respect for the sacredness of the body and a willingness on the part of our good, pure, upright ladies to dress themselves in a more becoming manner. I shall rejoice when the Latter-day Saints shall endeavor to find out that thing which will bring to them and to their posterity peace and comfort of body and of mind. The Lord said that he was a jealous God, and that we should serve no other God before him. So we should not serve the god of fashion. When our Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations were organized they were organized under the title of the Young Ladies' Retrenchment Associations, and one of the purposes was retrenchment and more modesty in dressing; and I shall rejoice if the Lord will inspire the Latter-day Saints to set a better example in the future than they are setting at the present time.

I want to announce that I shall be glad if we will quit giving notices to the papers of what is termed "teas" that are being held in our homes. I read of a "tea" being given in the home of President Heber J. Grant, and of the "tea" table being decorated. There is no tea table in the home of President Heber J. Grant. There has been no tea served either to our friends or visitors, in the home of Heber J. Grant. I would like us to change that name in our newspapers, at least so far as Latter-day Saints are concerned, and have it a "social gathering," or a lunch, or anything you have a mind to call it, and quit calling it a "tea" when every Latter-day Saint is asked by the Lord to leave tea, coffee and tobacco alone.

PROMISE OF GOD TO OBSERVERS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM

And for fear I forget it, I want to read to you one of the most marvelous and wonderful promises that God has made to every Latter-

day Saint that keeps this Word of Wisdom. The Word of Wisdom was given, as stated, only three years after the Church was organized:

"All grain is ordained for the use of man and of beasts, to be the staff of life, not only for man but for beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, and all wild animals that run or creep on the earth;

"And these hath God made for the use of man only in times of famine and excess of hunger."

It is being acknowledged by the great doctors today that an excessive use of meat is not good for humanity, and the Word of Wisdom teaches us that:

"All grain is good for the food of man; as also the fruit of the vine; that which yieldeth fruit, whether in the ground or above the ground—

"Nevertheless, wheat for man, and corn for the ox, and oats for the horses, and rye for the fowls and for swine, and for all beasts of the field, and barley for all useful animals, and for mild drinks, as also other grain."

Now listen, all ye Latter-day Saints, to the word of the Lord and the promise of the Creator of heaven and earth:

"And all Saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow in their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen."

What a marvelous promise! And as there is no promise made by the Lord only upon the condition that we fulfil the law upon which that promise is predicated, the law of life and health to the Latter-day Saints is to obey the Word of Wisdom.

THE SUPPORT OF HOME INSTITUTIONS

Generally at these conferences I have made just a few remarks about supporting our home institutions, I thought I would simply read what I said once before:

"The support of home institutions is the main foundation of any state's prosperity. The support of home industries keeps money at home, furnishes employment, reduces cost and insures prosperity. If all the people of Utah and the other intermountain States would adopt the principle of buying the product of the factories of the Intermountain territory, most of our industrial problems would vanish.

"From the earliest days the people of Utah have been taught to support home industries, and to keep money at home. Where the advice has been followed prosperity has resulted. Now, more than ever, the people of the Intermountain country should stand together and support the institutions which are assisting in the up-building of the territory."

APPEAL TO FARMERS ON THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

I want to say a word to the Latter-day Saints regarding the beet sugar industry. The credit of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints was utilized to the extent of something over \$3,000,000 a few years ago in borrowing and loaning money to the sugar industry, to keep it from going into the hands of the receiver. This industry was established by the Church running in debt to secure the money to build the very first factory that was ever built in the United States of America with American machinery, for the manufacture of beet sugar, and the Church has always fostered the industry.

I appeal to you farmers, every one of you, in all the various parts of Utah and Idaho, and in Canada now—wherever a sugar factory has been established—to support those factories by planting a goodly portion of suitable land in beets which may be manufactured into sugar. A great many of the farmers seem to feel that they are under no obligation whatever to support these factories, some of which have been built upon the earnest solicitation and upon the absolute pledge of the farmers that they would furnish so many thousand acres of beets for each factory. Several of these factories have had to remain idle. Why? Because these pledges have not been fulfilled.

Our Lord and Savior said:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

As one of your neighbors, who has labored diligently and invested all he had originally, and lost every dollar of it, in establishing this great industry, I appeal to you farmers to love me and others who established it. My personal stock amounts to very little, I could not sell it today for \$500, but the Church has invested several million dollars in establishing and maintaining this industry for the benefit of the farmers. Therefore, I appeal to you to have no idle beet sugar factories in your communities; and by supporting these factories you will bring additional money into your communities, and will be fulfilling the second great commandment; to love your neighbors.

WHAT THE CHURCH REQUESTS AS TO CARD PLAYING

By the way, I hear that card playing is becoming very, very popular, and that the Church must be in favor of card-playing because the Church authorities never say anything against it. From the time I was a child and read the *Juvenile Instructor*, published for the benefit of the people, I have read nothing except condemnation of card-playing and the wasting of your time in doing something that brings no good, bodily, intellectually or in any way, and sometimes leads your children to become gamblers, because they become expert card-players. The Church as a Church requests its members not to play cards. I hope you understand me, and I want you to know that I am speaking for the Church when I ask the people to let cards alone.

SUSTAIN THE DESERET NEWS

Again I am speaking for the Church when I ask Latter-day

Saints to sustain the newspaper published by the Church. I have gone into the homes of bishops and other leading families in this Church, and have failed to find *The Deseret Evening News*. We desire the support of *The Deseret News* because it is your paper. We are the Church and the Church owns *The Deseret News*, and if you make it a great financial success you will be sharing in that success because it is your paper. And I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that there have been a score or more of speeches published in *The News* in the past year, nearly every one of which to my mind was worth the price of *The Deseret News*. I called up an influential man the other day and asked if he had read one, two or three of those sermons. He said no. I want to tell you that a sermon by one of the greatest educational minds in Utah, (I doubt there is a superior one) Dr. Joseph F. Merrill, over the radio and subsequently enlarged upon from this stand, was published in *The News*. I would not take a fifty dollar bill for it if I could not get it again.

We are here—for what? For the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we get it in *The Deseret News*. I will say to you that one of the finest sermons on Priesthood that I have listened to—(by the way, I did not listen to it; but I read it in *The News*)—was by one of the great lawyers of America, one of the international lawyers, a man honored by our country to be called to Washington in the great conference on disarmament, J. Reuben Clark. You did not read it if you do not take *The News*. It was a splendid talk. I want to say to you that the talks by Adam Bennion and by Milton Bennion are worth the price of *The News* for a year. I will have to stop talking about *The News*, or I won't get through with the other things I want to say.

AUTHORITIES ABSENT FROM CONFERENCE

There are absent today of the General Authorities, Elders Reed Smoot, James E. Talmage, and Melvin J. Ballard of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Reed Smoot, as you all know, is a Senator from Utah, and thank the Lord for such a senator, a man who has gained for himself a national and an international reputation for his honesty, for his integrity, and for his great and wonderful ability, and he stands today at the head of the greatest committee in the senate of the United States. I remember when ex-President Taft was here he said, with that little chuckle of his that made us all laugh, "And to think that when he first came down to Washington nearly everybody tried to keep him out of the senate. Now I have come all the way to Utah to plead with the people to be sure and send him back again."

Elder James E. Talmage is doing a wonderful and splendid work in the British Isles as president of the European mission. Elder Talmage, as you know, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and the distinction of being a member of one of the greatest scientific societies in the world has enabled him to get favorable articles into

the newspapers, in such a way as we have never been able to do before in the British Isles.

Elder Melvin J. Ballard is opening a mission, as you all know, in South America, and is meeting with some success.

Elder Brigham H. Roberts of the First Council of Seventy, has appointments in the East, and on account of the death of his wife and having to come here to her funeral, he has been excused from this conference. He is accomplishing a remarkable and wonderful labor in the Eastern States.

Elder Rey L. Pratt of the First Council of Seventy is with Brother Ballard in South America.

Elder Rulon S. Wells of the same council went to South America, as you all know, but on account of ill health had to return.

Splendid missionary work is being done by all those who are engaged in the different missions in the United States and all over the world, for which we are grateful.

CALLS FOR MISSIONARIES

We have calls for missionaries from every quarter of the globe—more missionaries, more missionaries. The lady missionaries, we want it understood, are called to labor only in the United States. There are requests coming constantly that we send lady missionaries to other parts of the world, but we feel it is a mistake to send our sisters further away.

A very remarkable and splendid work has been done by the short term missionaries that were sent out. We regret that the call came so late, and many of them have only been able to stay in the field three months, some of them four and some of them five months. We hope we can have more short-term missionaries, and that they will be able to spend the full six months in the mission field. Some of the accomplishments of these men have been very remarkable. Men of experience, men of testimony, and of undying faith in the gospel have brought many souls to a knowledge of the truth. Perhaps some of our school teachers during their vacations can volunteer and will be willing to do missionary work.

AN EASTER GREETING

This is Easter, and I wish to read to you a greeting that was published in *The Deseret Evening News* for Christmas and I believe it is equally as appropriate for Easter Sunday:

Greetings from the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

As Christmas tide approaches our minds revert to that never to be forgotten night when shepherds who were watching their flocks on the hills of Judea were startled as the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and the angel of the Lord stood before them and said: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

"For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

It was a night which was distinct from all other nights which had come and gone since the creation of the earth.

The birth of Christ our Lord was more than an incident, it was an epoch in the history of the world to which prophets had looked forward, of which poets had sung, and in which angels joined their voices with mortals in praise to God. It was the day decreed and foreordained by our Father who is in heaven when he would manifest himself to his children, who are here upon earth, in the person of his Only Begotten Son.

Whether or not the 25th day of December is the proper date of the birth of Christ, our Lord, matters little. We join with other Christian people in celebrating it as such and if we observe it in the true spirit of the Master, renewing the covenant which we have made that we are willing to take upon us his name, and keep the commandments which he has given, our offering will be accepted.

He came that man might see and know God as he is, for he bore witness that whoever had seen him had seen the Father, for he was the express image of his person.

He came to teach us the character of God, and by example and precept pointed out the path which, if we walk in it, will lead us back into his presence. He came to break the bands of death with which man was bound, and made possible the resurrection by which the grave is robbed of its victory and death of its sting.

After his crucifixion and the death of the apostles whom he had chosen, who suffered martyrdom at the hands of those who were opposed to the truths which he taught, it appeared that his mission and ministry had been a failure; but as time passed, and the doctrines of Christianity became better understood, thoughtful men turned to him as their source of light and strength, thus preserving faith in his mission and ministry, with the result that Christianity became the dominant influence in the civilization and development of the world.

As time passed dissensions occurred in the primitive church. The laws governing the church established by the Redeemer, were transgressed, the ordinances were changed, the everlasting covenant was broken. Men began to teach for doctrine their own commandments; a form of worship had been established which was called Christianity, but was without the power of God which characterized the primitive church. Spiritual darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people.

Then there came another epochal period in the history of the world. The time had arrived, fore-ordained by the Lord, and foretold by his prophets, when another gospel dispensation was to be ushered in, when the gospel of the kingdom was to be restored, and preached in all the world, as a witness unto all people before the end shall come.

Again the heavens rejoiced, again heavenly beings communicated the will of the Father to his children who are here upon the earth, and men were made glad as the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times was ushered in.

Joseph Smith was the agent through whom the Lord saw fit to begin the great latter-day work. To him the Father and Son appeared in heavenly vision, upon him the keys of the everlasting priesthood were conferred, with authority to transmit them to others, with the promise that the priesthood should never be taken from the earth again, until the purposes of the Father were accomplished.

Under his direction the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830, and the command given to its members to bear the gospel message to all people, calling them to repentance and faith in Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh, with the promise that who-

soever should repent and obey would know, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the message which they brought was true.

As the result of this message many thousands of people have been gathered out from the various nations where the gospel has been preached and brought to Zion, the place designated by the Lord as the gathering place of Latter-day Israel. The desert has been made glad because of them, and has been converted into fruitful fields. Springs of living water have broken out to moisten the thirsty land, and cities have sprung up where before was only desolation and wilderness. Music and the voices of children are heard in the streets where silence had reigned supreme.

It is the Lord our God, through his Only Begotten Son, who has done it. To him be the praise and glory forever.

We exhort our brethren and sisters of the Church, wherever they may be, to remain steadfast in their faith. Hold fast to the word of the Lord, which is the iron rod that will lead us to the Tree of Life.

To the people of the world we appeal to come unto Christ, through whom redemption cometh to all those who take upon them his name, and keep the commandments which he has given. We bear witness that the fulness of his gospel has been restored, that his Church is established, and will continue to spread until peace shall prevail among men, and his kingdom come and his will be done upon earth as it is done in heaven. O Lord, hasten that glorious day.

HEBER J. GRANT,
ANTHONY W. IVINS,
CHARLES W. NIBLEY,

First Presidency.

God bless you. Amen.

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

I sincerely desire, my brethren and sisters, during the few moments of time that I may occupy, that I may have the benefit of your faith, exercised in my behalf. I appreciate fully the responsibility which I assume, as I stand here professing to teach the doctrines of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

THE ADVICE OF GAMALIEL

The scripture which I am about to read I have often quoted before, but it appears so appropriate to the subject which I desire briefly to discuss that it will bear repetition. The apostles who had been chosen by our Lord had been imprisoned by those who were opposed to the doctrines which they taught, and had been arraigned before the Jewish high priests, by whom they were accused of violating the law. When opportunity was granted them to speak in their own behalf, Peter stood up and said:

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them,