

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us.

He will be followed by Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

Of the Council of the Twelve

● My dear brethren:

Some twenty-five years or more ago my wife and I built a home. The first of many trees that we planted was a thornless honey locust. I remember the day we brought it home from the nursery, a spindly little whip of a tree, so small and supple I could have tied it into a knot. I dug a hole, put in the roots, shoveled back the earth, watered it, and forgot it. It stands at the south side of the house, where the wind coming from the canyon to the east blows hardest.

One winter day a few years ago I chanced to look out the window at the tree. I noticed it was terribly misshapen, leaning ungracefully to the west, so much so that a heavy storm might have uprooted it. I went to my toolhouse, where I save things for two years before throwing them away, got a block and tackle, anchored one end to the tree and the other to another tree, and pulled and pulled to no avail. The little whip of a tree was now a giant with a diameter of almost a foot. After debating with myself for a week or two, I finally took a pruning saw and cut off the great west limb. I almost wept at my butchery. It looks better today. It has straightened somewhat, but where the heavy cut was made, it developed a great scar, which has cracked and let in decay.

The tree that might have been gracious and beautiful leaves much to be desired. Once it could have been kept straight with a string for an anchor. Now neither block and tackle nor pruning saw can make up for the neglect of its younger years.

Children's Friend

It is so with people. It takes only a

string, as it were, to help children grow strong and straight in the Church. One such string has been their own magazine, the *Children's Friend*. This has been a great magazine. All who have been acquainted with it have regarded it as an outstanding children's journal.

An eminent child psychologist wrote: "I have known the *Children's Friend* as one of the only decently edited magazines for children in the United States." Under the program of correlation, instituted by the First Presidency, the name of the magazine will be changed. It will simply be the *Friend*, dropping the word *children's*, because when some youngsters get to be ten and eleven years of age, they think they are no longer children. But they still need a *Friend*.

The Primary Association will no longer be its sole sponsor. It will be published by the Church, with the Children's Correlation Committee and representatives of both the Primary and the Sunday School as editorial consultants. It will be edited by men and women with long experience, and will be a new friend, a better friend, for the children of the Church, and we hope for many others. With wonderful stories and fascinating art, it will open small and delightful windows and bring to young minds understanding of eternal and marvelous gospel principles. It will be a blessing in every home into which it goes.

"As the twig is bent . . ."

Children are so very important. I never get over the thought that every man, good or bad, was once a little boy, and that every woman was once a little girl. They have moved in the direction in which they were pointed

when they were small. Truly, "As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined." The time to mold the pattern of virtuous youth and faithful adults is childhood.

"A Friend for Every Child"

Most of you brethren are fathers, fathers of young children. Some of you are grandfathers. Others are bishops or in other capacities with responsibility for children. We ask

your support in seeing that the *Friend* is in every Latter-day Saint home where there is a child.

It will bless the child and it will bless the home.

May I leave with you a motto: "A Friend for Every Child." As children grow in faithfulness, anchored against the storms of life, so in strength will the Church and the nation grow. I pray that it may be so, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

Elder Richard L. Evans

Of the Council of the Twelve

● President Smith and my beloved brethren of the priesthood: Hanging in my office are two moving portrayals of the importance of the written word: One is a picture of Mormon working on the gold plates, and the other of Moroni, in his anguished loneliness, about to leave the records in Cumorah's Hill.

The written word

I think how Nephi and his brothers were sent to obtain the written records, and of the Ten Commandments inscribed on tablets of stone. I have long been associated with the "Spoken Word," but never do I suppose that it will take the place of the written word.

Since the beginning of this dispensation, the Church has provided various periodicals and publications for its people. They would make a long and distinguished list, published for a season, and then supplanted, according to circumstances. And now with the Church reaching worldwide, further changes are with us.

Improvement Era

The *Improvement Era*, established some 73 years ago by President Heber J. Grant, President Joseph F. Smith, and others, has served an important purpose, along with the other magazines of the Church. I am privileged

to have been associated with the *Era* nearly half the length of its life.

And now, as announced, all such periodicals are to be published directly through the priesthood channels of the Church.

The New Era

We are pleased that the magazine to be published for the young people shall be named the *New Era*—and the title would seem to be timeless. In its first issue, the *Improvement Era* announced as its purpose to uplift the lives of youth and to aid parents and teachers in the same effort. The *New Era* will be pointed to the same purpose.

Brother Doyle Green, Brother Jay Todd, and Sister Elaine Cannon, under the general direction of the First Presidency, with others of the General Authorities, including President Kimball, Brothers Marion G. Romney, Howard W. Hunter, Marion D. Hanks, Bishop John H. Vandenberg, and a long list of distinguished contributors, are committed to making the *New Era* serve the youth and young adults of the Church, from deacons on through Aaronic Priesthood, with girls of like age—seminaries, institutes, Sunday School, MIA, LDSSA; and in general, those young people in the searching, decision-making years of life who are as yet uncommitted to marriage; those concerned with college, careers, missions, military service, dating, dress and