

tioned servants of the Lord are inspired to place before the people.

It may be that in some cases the familiarity of the people with those bearing divine authority to act in certain callings in the name of the Lord seems to lead to forgetfulness of the great privilege enjoyed in that familiar association; but generally speaking, among the Latter-day Saints the presence of divine authority is duly recognized, and the people realize, perhaps to a complete an extent as any could do who had an everyday companionship therewith, the force of the instructions on the Gospel as coming in the power of divine inspiration. The reason for this realization is the testimony that comes to the individual by the ministration of the Holy Spirit.

Judging from the attendance at these conferences, which in almost every instance is large where the people are able, through any reasonable effort, to come out, the Saints who take an active part in giving force to Gospel rules of conduct appreciate the instructions given on such occasions. Judging also by this attendance in comparison with membership in the Stake, and by reports of the officers in various organizations, it may be concluded that there is a measure of indolence in religious matters in some Stakes which ought to be a subject of earnest attention.

With this in view, it is assuring to note the proceedings at the opening session of the Salt Lake Stake conference, wherein suggestions were made for more systematic Church work in various departments. If ever there existed a time when a good field was offered for development in this line it is now, when there are no specially untoward conditions of persecution to attract attention. The efficient work being done in Sunday schools was commended; there is further advance in range in that direction; and there is room for improvement in methods in quorums, mutual improvement associations and other organizations. Now is a ripe time, and the Stake conferences an excellent place, to set the ball rolling for greater accomplishments in the spread of righteousness than the past has witnessed.

GET A FULL REGISTRATION.

In the coming election in this State there will be several new and important conditions presented to the voters as to the modus operandi of casting ballots for officers. Preparatory therefore a registration has been provided by which every elector, male and female, is to be officially enrolled, that the aims of the law can be carried out. This registration will commence on the 15th instant.

Connected with this matter is a duty which every citizen owes to the State and to himself or herself—that of being named on the registration list. There may be some men who are careless about voting; and perhaps there are some women who do not care much about the suffrage, who also feel that the matter of registration should not be attended to. If there are any of that kind it is to be hoped that they will give the item of their obligation

to the State some consideration, and come to realize that the duty of every citizen is to honor the law. It is required by statute that qualified voters be registered; the purpose of the law is to have the name of every citizen on the registration list. And no matter whether they vote or not, citizens are in duty bound to take every step necessary to carry out that purpose. It is a legal as well as moral duty for every citizen to assume a position to exercise every privilege conferred in this government; patriotism to the government requires it. Even though the privilege may not be exercised, the qualification therefor is a responsibility none should shirk.

No doubt the registry officers will do all they can to obtain a full registration of voters. In doing so they must ask a great many questions, stipulated in the law. They are not authorized to go further and to require any information not demanded by the statute. But the latter is far-reaching, and makes of citizens a great many inquiries that some persons may not feel inclined to respond to in courteous manner. Yet the law does not go beyond the bounds of propriety for the end sought. Hence, when questions as to age, nativity, residence, etc., are put by the registrars, it is to be hoped that all citizens, irrespective of sex or politics, will remember that these officers are merely performing their duties; that the information they ask is in the interest of good government and not to interfere with private matters; and that it should be cheerfully given in the spirit of harmony and sustaining the law.

In whatever questions may arise as to registration it is a primary qualification for registry agents that they be courteous to all. In their official capacity they are acting as servants of the public, not as masters or dictators; and if a registration officer is polite and affable in his manner he will at once disarm any person who may present an opposite characteristic as an obstacle in his path. But the citizens should have a care further than to register when the agent finds them; if from any cause they are missed they should make it their business not to have their names omitted from the registration list. In this State the lists for the coming election ought to embrace every qualified name.

OUR BIBLE.

A friend of the NEWS asks us to state, for the satisfaction, as he thinks, of many readers, the facts regarding the genuineness of the books of the Bible. Are there any manuscripts extant written by the authors, or can the agreement of the now received text with the first documents be proved? A vast amount of labor and learning has been brought to bear upon this question and the results may be found in any complete introduction to the study of sacred scripture. Here we can only briefly touch upon the subject.

It is well known that there are no autograph copies known to be in existence of the books of the Bible, any more than there are of the works of Herodotus or Virgil. Their genuine-

ness is accepted on other grounds. If, it may be asked, a forgery has been committed, at what time did it take place?

It is perfectly clear that it could not have occurred since books were committed "to the immortal custody of the press." Printing, by fixing the dates and multiplying copies, renders an alteration of the text impossible. There are now extant printed copies of the Old Testament dated as early as 1488. The copy from which Luther made his famous translation, dated 1494, is still preserved at a library in Berlin. Printed New Testaments are extant from 1514 and 1516. These can be compared with modern editions.

At the time these volumes were printed there were written copies in every important library in Europe. Over 1,600 such manuscript copies have been examined, many of which are complete. Most of the Hebrew manuscripts were written—as indicated by the form of the letters, the material on which they were written, etc.—between the years 1000 and 1457 of our era, but some belong to the 8th and 9th centuries. In the case of the New Testament, however, and the translation of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint, the manuscripts are still earlier. In the British museum there is a Bible in four volumes, the Codex Alexandrinus, supposed to have been written before the close of the 5th century. The celebrated Bible in the Vatican at Rome belongs to the 4th century. There are several others written at the same time. All these manuscripts may be compared with our present Bibles, and the fact thereby established is that the latter in most of the essential points agree with the Bibles in use three or four hundred years after Christ.

At this time the inquirer is led to another class of evidence. There are still in existence the more or less voluminous writings of ecclesiastical authors and their adversaries. Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen belong to the third and second centuries. Theophilus, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr and Papias belong to the second century, and Polycarp, Ignatius, Clement of Rome, Hermas and Barnabas belong to the first century. There are at least 180 ecclesiastical authors from these early centuries, and their quotations from the Bible are so numerous and often made so literally, that, as Dr. Bentley asserts, the whole of the New Testament can be copied from the writings of those that lived in the first six centuries. This should be proof conclusive of the genuineness of that part of the Bible.

A similar investigation as to the Old Testament takes the student at once to two centuries before our era, for at that time the Septuagint was in common use in the synagogues, and later it was accepted by our Lord and His Apostles as sacred scripture.

Dr. Joseph Angus well remarks that the manuscripts are almost innumerable. They were kept for centuries in distant parts of the world, under the custody of opposing sects. Copyists sometimes counted every word and every letter in the books. It cannot be disputed that every care possible has been exercised in the preservation