

THE Y. M. M. I. A. CONFERENCE.

The Y. M. M. I. A. conference of the Salt Lake Stake convened in the Tabernacle, Sunday morning, at 10 o'clock, at which time an officers' meeting was held. There were present on the stand members of the general superintendency and the Stake officers, as well as representatives from other Stake associations.

Opening hymn:

Come, let us anew, our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year.

Prayer was offered by Elder Wilbur Dougall.

Continued by singing:

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear,
But with joy wend your way.

The roll call of wards by the secretary showed nearly all represented. Some of those not answered for at the roll call reported their presence later.

The report for the year ended April 30th, 1896, was then read, after which President Joseph H. Felt addressed those assembled. He expressed pleasure at the good representation from the different associations throughout the Stake and in speaking of rules which should govern each, suggested that in wards where the young men and young ladies met separately, they should hold a conjoint meeting on the last Tuesday in each month. President Felt referred to the yearly donations of 50 cents required from each member, and stated that that requirement was still in vogue and should be attended to by the associations of the Stake. The fourth week in November was the period selected for the collection of such donations. Parliamentary usages were becoming too frequent in the Mutual Improvement associations. Too often did members address the president as "Mr. Chairman" — a style which should not be resorted to in the association of the Church. The members should meet as brethren and sisters and should address each other as such. In conclusion President Felt made a few remarks with regard to the programs of the associations and stated that they should always be formulated with the object in view of fitting the members for the responsibilities which would devolve upon them in the future.

President Joseph F. Smith spoke to the brethren with regard to certain changes which had occurred in the general superintendency of the M. I. associations of the Church. He said that in consequence of existing conditions Moses Thatcher had been relieved from the general superintendency and Heber J. Grant and B. H. Roberts had been substituted together with an addition of H. G. Whitney, R. W. Young and Nephi L. Morris to the corps of assistants. President Smith spoke of a change contemplated in the publication of the Contributor — the official organ of the Y. M. M. I. associations. Heretofore the magazine had not been supported as it should have been by the members of the different associations, but it was contemplated to make changes in the magazine which would tend to make it more popular with the young men of the Church, and thereby gain their support in its publication. The speaker was pleased with the good attendance and hoped that from now on the

M. I. associations would grow and accomplish even more good in the future than they had done in the past.

Elder Heber J. Grant spoke to those assembled upon the necessity of persistent effort in collecting the annual donation of fifty cents from each member. Persistent effort was necessary in all things and if a success was to be made in the collection of the annual donations, the members should be persistently worked with and shown the necessity of meeting this exaction. Elder Grant then answered several questions submitted to him, the answers to which brought out the recommendation that where possible the Young Men's and Young Ladies' associations should meet separately each week; that there was no great necessity for officers of the associations being set apart, although there were no strong objections to it; that debates should not be allowed in the associations; that the Stake superintendency should be consulted in the matter of organizing ward associations; that the Manual course should be followed until a different line of program had been promulgated; that young men stepping away from the associations should be worked with until converted to the Mutual Improvement work. Elder Grant concluded his remarks by referring to the publication of the Contributor. He deprecated the fact that heretofore the magazine had not been supported, and stated that unless the members of the associations would support it in the future its publication would have to be brought to a halt.

Elders Richard W. Young, Junius F. Wells, President Joseph F. Smith and Elder Heber J. Grant made further remarks, after which conference was adjourned until 2 p.m.

Closing hymn:

Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation,
No longer as strangers on earth need we roam.

Benediction was pronounced by Elder J. H. Wilcox of Davis Stake.

Afternoon Session.

Choir sang:

Jesus once of humble birth,
Now in glory comes to earth.

Prayer was offered by Elder Angus M. Cannon.

Choir further sang:

Again we meet around the board
Of Jesus our redeeming Lord.

The Priesthood of the seventh ward officiated in the administration of the Sacrament.

Elder Rodney C. Badger was the first speaker. He expressed himself as being pleased to meet with the Saints in the capacity of a Mutual Improvement Conference. In glancing over the twenty-four years in which the associations have been organized, the speaker could see a vast improvement, until today a grand work was being accomplished in assisting the young people to qualify themselves for duties which would devolve upon them. There had been times, however, during the life of the M. I. associations, when the advancement was necessarily slow because of the poor facilities which were at hand, but notwithstanding these gloomy periods, the general organization had been able to pull its way through and had finally suc-

ceeded in being brought to that firm basis existing at the present time. The speaker referred to the annual donation exacted of the members of each association, and explained the use of such donations, urging upon all the necessity of complying with the requirement.

The general and Stake officers of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association were then presented and sustained unanimously by the vote of those present.

President Joseph F. Smith explained that Stake Superintendent Joseph H. Felt was at present without counselors but that in due time they would be appointed and presented for the vote of the Saints.

Heavenly Father We Would Worship was nicely rendered by Sisters Mary Romney and Mabel Cooper and the choir.

President Willford Woodruff was the next speaker. He dwelt upon the importance of the Mutual Improvement Association, as institutions in which to fit and qualify the rising generation for work in the Kingdom of God. These organizations were important factors in the Church and should be taken advantage of. The speaker, while pleased with the degree of advancement made, felt sorry to contemplate the fact that there were some young people in our midst who did not avail themselves of the opportunities afforded them and he urged upon those who were actively engaged in these associations, to strive to bring in those who had not yet allied themselves with the Mutual Improvement work. President Woodruff felt to encourage those connected with the M. I. associations and urged them to press on and to make good use of the time while they were here upon the earth.

Elder Heber J. Grant of the Council of Apostles said that he entered upon the duties of an assistant in the general superintendency of the M. I. associations with joy and pleasure. The speaker stated that the general authorities had decided upon holding weekly meetings, in which they would devote the entire time to the work of Mutual Improvement. In taking upon himself the responsibilities of the office, he did so with a determination to devote a good portion of his time to that calling, to the end that the associations would receive at least some little benefit because of his having been called to that position. Elder Grant felt that the Saints in general did not commence the work of the ministry soon enough. The young men generally, allowed their spare moments to pass by unused and seldom did they realize the positions which they occupied, until called upon to go into the world and preach the Gospel. It was the desire of the authorities to inspire the young men of Zion with a loyalty and love for the Mutual Improvement associations, that they might apply themselves diligently to the work and thereby advance themselves and assist in advancing others.

Elder Thomas Hull in addressing those assembled, felt pleased to be connected with the M. I. associations. He knew that the associations were important branches of the Church and hoped that the young men of Zion would ally themselves with them