

It was the aim and desire of the officers to instill into the hearts of the children a desire to honor and revere the birthday as well as the name of our beloved Prophet.

Officers and children all join in wishing him many happy returns of his birthday, and that he may be spared to lead the people until he is satisfied with this life. This with all other blessings for his future happiness, we ask God to give.

AM. FORK PRIMARY ASS'NS.
ELIZA BUCKWALTER, Sec.

ELDER WHITNEY'S LECTURE.

The Assembly Hall was well filled last evening on the occasion of the lecture by Elder Orson F. Whitney, whose subject was, Born Again—Baptism of the Water and of the Spirit. During the evening R. C. Easton sang the solo O, My Father.

Jesus said, began the speaker, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. This positive and all-important declaration had been the cause of no end of controversy and discussion, and up to this day its real meaning had not been determined by some of the religious denominations. Over the general meaning of the phrase there may have been no definite dispute. All believed more or less in baptism, but the question remaining, and furnishing the backbone of the controversy was what was really meant by the word baptism.

Theologians in summing the subject up, took for their guide the light thrown upon it by ancient commentators. But this would not suffice, for the Latter-day Saints; they looked for something more substantial to throw its radiance upon their minds and give them a proper and explicit interpretation of the question. They gasped for some remnant of that grand old work which Jesus Himself brought to earth, for in that they looked forward to a source which was sublime, pure and holy.

The speaker, to substantiate the stand taken by the Latter-day Saints quoted from the New Testament as follows. Matthew iii, 1, 2, 5 and 6; Mark i, 4; Matthew iii, 11-17; John iii, 8-5; Matthew xviii, 18, 19; Mark xvi, 15-18; Acts i, 28-30 and viii, 14-17; Acts x, 46, 47; Acts xix, 5, 6; Acts xxii, 16; Romans vi, 3-6; 1st Corinthians xv, 9; 1st Corinthians x, 1, 2 and 4; Ephesians v, 26; Titus iii, 5; 1st Peter iii, 18-21; John i, 7; John v, 7, 8.

These passages, said the speaker, if they taught anything, taught the ordinance of baptism in its completeness. They taught the baptism of not only the water, but the baptism of both the water and the Spirit, like unto that received by Jesus Christ some eighteen hundred years ago. The Son said this and He doeth nothing but that which He seeth His Father do. Follow me, was the injunction, and thus was the baptism of the Savior and all others made necessary. Jesus was without sin or blemish, but notwithstanding this, He said to John the Baptist, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Some claimed that the baptism of

Jesus was a vicarious one, but whether so or not, that did not obviate its necessity. The ordinance was made universal and became the door-way to the Kingdom of God because of its typifying the resurrection. It was a law which applied to all humanity with the exception of small infants, to whom it did not apply because of their being sinless in the eyes of the Father. Suffer little children to come unto me, said the Savior, and forbid them not for such is the kingdom of heaven. He also said, Unless you humble yourselves as a little child ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God. These declarations set forth the purity of little children and gave mankind to understand that unless they purified themselves, they were not capable of becoming candidates for His favors and blessings.

Baptism for the dead was also taught by the scriptural quotations referred to, in order that mankind might avoid spiritual imprisonment and be given a chance to attain to a degree of glory in the Father's kingdom. Those who had passed away before the restoration of the Gospel, for without having had a chance to obey the Gospel in the flesh were given the opportunity of receiving it through the vicarious work done for them, and thus if they received it, fell heirs to a place in the celestial kingdom of our God. Those who refused to receive the Gospel when given an opportunity in the flesh would be given another chance vicariously and thus throw themselves open to a lower degree of glory, even the terrestrial glory.

The doctrine of children's baptism was one which had been much discussed, despite the fact that they were sinless and had no need of baptism, while for a long period in early centuries, baptism was looked upon as not being an essential to salvation at all. It was in the sixteenth century, however, that baptism as looked upon generally today was accepted by nearly all of Christendom.

Baptism of the water was a cleansing process, through obedience to the work of God and faith in His promise that former sins should be remitted. By baptism humanity were as morally cleansed as by death the body was freed from its corruption. There were three essential elements in baptism—water, water and blood—although but the two former were generally recognized. Baptism was not complete, however, without the third element, for as John said, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. The latter element seemed to act as the mediator, for the baptism of the water and the spirit were not effectual unless linked with the element of the blood.

The speaker told of baptism as looked upon by St. Augustus and the Greeks and then referred to its significance. The Savior was not a mere rhetorician, nor did he resort to vain repetitions, but his words were all symbolical of some grand principle which he desired to portray or interpret. When He compared the entrance into His Kingdom with a birth he was hinting at no less a principle than the resurrection for the dead. Born of water means to go down into and come up out of the water. This then determined that baptism was by

immersion, as the birth would not be complete unless it was a literal covering of the body. Baptism of the spirit, meant literally that we must come from God, or be buried in His Spirit. So also was it with every birth—so also was it with every resurrection. The water in which we were buried by baptism was a symbol of the grave, which led to a celestial salvation or the glory of God. Every birth implied burial; a burial in this life presupposed a birth in the world to come.

That immersion was the mode instituted by Christ and His Apostles was a reasonable inference. The very meaning of the word meant to dip and in the ancient churches of the world this mode was practiced, until the thirteenth century when they had given way to sprinkling. Ancient church buildings, however, showed that immersion was once resorted to.

In early ages it was the custom to have a three-fold immersion to represent the different branches of the Trinity. This was finally changed until today there were practiced throughout Christendom many different modes of baptism. It remained, however, for the Prophet Joseph Smith to introduce the ordinance anew in this dispensation. It was on the 15th day of May, 1829, when Joseph and Oliver Cowdery while translating the Book of Mormon came across the almost obsolete term baptism. They went into the woods and inquired of the Lord concerning it, when, according to their own testimony, they received a heavenly visitation, the messenger telling them that his name was John, the same John referred to in the Scriptures as John the Baptist. At this time he delivered unto them authority to baptize each other, by bestowing upon them the Holy Priesthood. They were also commanded and given power and authority to baptize others, which they did, thus laying the foundation of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which followed after. God Himself through direct revelation gave other valuable instructions concerning the doctrine of baptism.

Elder Whitney in conclusion quoted freely from the Pearl of Great Price, Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants concerning baptism, its efficacy and proper mode, and summed up the whole by bearing testimony to the benefits which he himself had received through compliance with that ordinance.

Was Joseph Smith Sent of God? is the subject of the next lecture, Elder Franklin D. Richards being the speaker. The Twentieth ward choir will furnish the singing on that occasion.

Y. L. M. I. A. CONFERENCE.

Minutes of the quarterly conference of the Y. L. M. I. A. held in the Assembly Hall March 2, Superintendent Mary A. Freeze presiding.

Opening hymn "Guide us O Thou Great Jehovah." Prayer by Sister Rose Wallace. Singing "Come dearest Lord." (The singing for this conference was furnished by the Twenty-first ward Y. L. M. I. A.)

Sister Sarah Dean, president of the Nineteenth ward association spoke on