

demanding their abatement as a nuisance. They not only give the neighborhood an uneasy reputation among the better class of citizens, but are a direct means of spreading vice and immorality.

There can be no question as to the tendency of these Sunday amusements, whether dancing, concerts or games, in their influence upon the morals of the people. However much may be said of the harmlessness, to the abstract, of the proceedings, the fact remains that they attract and are congenial to a class of people that do not place a high value upon morality. And as like cleaves to like, it may be said that it breeds and consistent religious observances do not draw such people to an active interest therein, then that which does attract them does not do so by any influence of religion it contains. It is the non-religious trend of such Sunday proceedings that finds a kindred spirit in non-religious lives, and therefore gathers them in, not to elevate, but to debase them and others who are caught by the net which draws away from the higher and stricter religious influence.

The inclination to ignore and turn away from Duty is one the strongest indications of the age of a calamitous condition that confronts this nation. Every people that has turned from God has met disaster as a result. It may be regrettable that the lessons of the past are being unheeded in this regard by the people of today, in the drift toward individualism and the disregard of a centralized controlling power, but it is nevertheless a fact. And the abandonment of a way for exclusively religious exercises and devotions is one of its marked evidences. The efforts of the people of Cleveland who are opposing the Sunday masquerade balls complained of is an attempt to check an impending evil of great magnitude, and if it fails from lack of co-operation on the part of those who administer the law, so much the worse for the real power in the people that is responsible for that administration.

PREACHING IN ARIZONA.

Elders John Henry Smith and Heber J. Grant, of the Council of Apostles, have been holding meetings in Arizona, where there are very many Latter-day Saints and several organized Stakes of Zion, and have been making special efforts to get people of all grades of religious conviction to come and listen to the teachings of the Gospel of Christ. The brethren are meeting with much success in their labors in presenting the true plan of salvation before the people. An illustration of the reception they are meeting with and the work they are doing may be seen in the press reports of the meetings of Phoenix, the capital city of Arizona. Says the Phoenix Gazette:

John Henry Smith and Heber J. Grant, the two Mormon Apostles of the Church of Latter-day Saints, spoke last night at the opera house. The place was packed to its utmost, even the stairway and street being filled. The Mesa choir assisted in furnishing music. Both gentlemen are eloquent speakers, and the

services last evening were listened to with much interest.

The Arizona Republican, Phoenix, gives the following account of the same services:

Apostles John Henry Smith and Heber J. Grant of the Mormon Church addressed a large crowd last night as could conveniently find room in the auditorium and both galleries of the opera house. Both gentlemen are of pleasing appearance and though their doctrine is older than most men now living, it was so new that it was received with the greatest interest. Mr. Grant is a rapid and powerful speaker. His defense of his creed was able, and his tribute to the memory of Brigham Young was beautiful. He resented the charges of disloyalty which had been made against the Mormon Church, the accusation of narrowness against it great head. In refutation of the one he called attention to the organization of the Battalion which at the call of the government penetrated the southwest while the Church was being driven from post to post. To disprove the other he pointed to Salt Lake and Utah as monuments of the wisdom and power of Brigham Young. Mr. Smith is also a speaker of pleasing presence and great ability.

Of the meeting held Friday evening, March 12, the Arizona Gazette, Phoenix, says:

Last night, to a large and deeply interested audience at the opera house, Heber J. Grant and John Henry Smith, Apostles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, expounded the doctrines and practices of their Church. Quite a large contingent came down from Mesa, including the Mormon choir, which rendered some most excellent vocal music. The meeting was conducted by Counselor Hakes, and several prominent Morimons were on the stage, including four members of the Legislature. Mr. Grant, who is a young looking man of about 35, spoke first, and in a very eloquent and convincing manner gave the origin and history of his Church. He was followed by Mr. Smith, whose personal appearance is decidedly patriarchal, who spoke of the divine mission of Joseph Smith. His style of oratory, though entirely different to Mr. Grant's, proved to be equally captivating, for it was a quarter past ten when Representative George W. Skinner delivered the final benediction. The remarks of both gentlemen were entirely free from assaults on other churches or their members. Mr. Smith frequently used the term "the mother church," when referring to the Catholic church, and spoke of his "brethren in Christ" of the Protestant churches. Altogether it was an entertaining and instructive exposition, and undoubtedly was a revelation to many of the large audience as to what the Mormon Church actually teaches.

It is most gratifying to note, in addition to the increased interest that is being shown by the Latter-day Saints generally, and the youth in particular, in the principles of the Gospel and the work of the Church authorities in promulgating the same, that the labors of the Elders among those who have not yet obeyed the fullness of the Gospel message are bearing fruit, in calling more general attention to the glorious and marvelous work which the Lord has instituted in the latter days. The spirit of the Lord is working in mighty power among all the people of this nation especially, to lead them at least to hear the testimony of the Elders and to have opportunity of receiving the message they deliver as servants of the

Most High. In the East, the West, the North, and the South, the workings of the Spirit are manifest; and it may be confidently anticipated that in the due course of time the other nations will experience a like outpouring, till all shall have had the privilege of receiving the Gospel. The mission of declaring the principles which the Lord has revealed in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith seems to depend upon a comparative few at this time; but these laborers in vineyard here and abroad are striving diligently, and it becomes all the Saints to uphold them by earnest prayers, and by strong faith manifest in their own endeavors to be mighty workers in righteousness, that the testimony of the whole Church shall go forth unflinchingly, bearing witness of the power of God that rests upon His people.

THE LEAD OF MEETINGS.

CANNONVILLE, Utah,
March 8, 1897.

To the Editor:

Be kind enough to answer the following questions through the columns of the News:

Can a High Priest, in the absence of the Bishop and counselors of the ward, preside and take the lead of Sunday meetings, without being called or otherwise requested to do so, by the Bishop?

Can he (the High Priest) assume the authority by virtue of his calling as High Priest?

If not, who is the proper person to preside over the Sunday meetings in the absence of the Bishopric?

SUBSCRIBER.

To the first question we will say that if there is no one directed by the Bishopric to conduct the meeting, and the Bishop and counselors are absent, a High Priest can take the lead of the meeting, provided the Saints present at the meeting indicate him as their choice to do so; but he could not do so against the wish of the Saints. A High Priest has the authority to preside, but he performs the duties of presidency in pursuance of his appointment; and in the absence of the Bishop and counselors, without instructions, the Saints are not under obligations to select a High Priest to conduct a ward meeting. They can choose some one else having the presiding qualification. If a Bishopric should leave the Saints unprovided for in the way of some one to conduct a ward meeting that has been regularly appointed, the members of the Church are not compelled to forego the meeting; they may select some qualified person to conduct the services.

The reply to the second question is that a High Priest cannot assume a jurisdiction to which he has not been appointed. He has the presiding authority, but requires the appointment before he can exercise his authority in a particular field. The Saints in such a meeting as the one described could select him to proceed with the meeting till the regularly appointed authority comes; or he may proceed by their consent, given in due form.

As to the third question, it is a proper thing for the Bishopric of a ward, where there is liability of the three members of that council being absent, to have one or more brethren