

more than during recent years the Word of Wisdom. The bishops supplemented their reports by some good practical counsel.

Elder Joseph Lewin spoke in conclusion on the evidence of God's guidance in this latter-day work, the desired plan devised before the world was for the organization and peopling of the earth; the fall of Adam; the atonement wrought by our Savior Jesus Christ pursuant to the heavenly program, and by our testimony that the doctrines taught by the Elders of the Church are the Gospel of Christ, and that immediate revelation from God had been, is, and will be the precious possession of this Church individually and collectively.

Elder Wm. L. Rich was the first speaker at the afternoon meeting. He rejoiced in the improving condition of the people. Business men take an annual retrospect of their business with the object of avoiding if possible in the future any disaster arising from repetition of the mistakes of the past, profiting thus by experience. So it should be with the Saints wherein they have erred in the past; in the future they will do well to be careful not to repeat the errors. He testified that the prophecies are being daily and literally fulfilled, and that God's wisdom was manifest in the peopling of these valleys by the Saints under the direction of His inspired ministry. He was glad to note the success many of us had had in overcoming our breaches of the word of wisdom; and, by apt quotations from the Book of Mormon, showed that by faith and reliance in God we could overcome all things.

Elder James E. Hart felt well paid for his journey hither already, in drinking in of the spirit and counsels of this conference. Related some personal experiences while in New York and Ann Arbor, demonstrating thereby that God lends an ever ready ear to those who humbly supplicate Him in time of need. He admonished the young to gather knowledge from all good books, and to trust in God, to whom we should devote our best service; dwelt on the subjects of obedience to the Priesthood and the free agency of man, and on the assurances and comprehension possessed by the Saints on the all important questions whence came we, why are we here and whither shall we go on leaving here, etc., and concluded by stating that, inasmuch as the character and success of the Church depended very much on the nature of the lives of the Saints, it behooved us to be very careful as to what manner of men and women we should be.

Elder Joseph Weston (of the Lake Town Ward Bishopric) spoke on the encouragement afforded the Saints by these meetings. Our Elders do not study their discourses as do the ministers of Christendom, but are commanded to store their minds with Gospel truths, to be drawn from by God's Spirit as occasion may require.

Counselor James H. Hart related considerable of his experience in visiting and conversing with David Whitmer, and of the history of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon; spoke of the inflexibility of the testimony of the three witnesses. Though all of them departed from the Church none of them would in the remotest degree deny the testimony, but to the day of death all testify that they did see the angel hand

the plates and hear God's voice declare that they had been translated by the gift and power of God. He spoke of the unchangeableness of the Gospel, its light and breadth and depth, its capability and power alone to save all mankind who will yield obedience to its principles; spoke also of the duties of bishops, of the necessity of the Saints living so that if Christ should suddenly come they would be prepared to meet Him; of being charitable to all men, of the eternity of the marriage covenant contemplated in the Gospel, and of the importance of the obligation resting on the Saints to faithfully labor in the temples for the salvation of their dead friends.

On Sunday at 10 a. m. Elder Alma Findlay recently ordained as bishop of Bloomington Ward, addressed the Saints on the necessity of continued efforts to do the will of God as it shall be made known to us, and to avail ourselves of the opportunities of the Gospel; our faith and profession should be certified by our good works; discipline in this will eventually bring us to perfection.

Elder Wm. Gordon (Bishop's counselor at Bloomington) testified to the truth of the Gospel and related the means and manner by which he had received this assurance; said the Gospel was here now to stay; it is a system of faith and good works, and gifts and blessings accompanying obedience to the same, now as anciently. The efforts of men unaided by God's spirit to save mankind will be futile.

President Wm. Budge spoke of the distress in some of the western states at present existing; among other causes he was led to believe that the planting and culture of one crop only had more or less of influence in bringing about so sad a result. Friendly writers had compared the condition of people in states, where large areas were held by the people, with the success that appeared among the Saints in these valleys, with their comparatively small holdings, etc.; and the latter was, to a great extent, they believed, due to our people planting so many things, that, so far as good went, they were practically self sustaining and independent; and also were not in danger of losing all if one crop failed. The speaker took occasion hereupon to advise, by an excellent course of reasoning, the people to pay a great deal more attention in future than, heretofore, to cultivation of gardens, orchards, etc., all that we produce of our necessities being that much toward our enrichment and the independence we ought to acquire as a community. Next he delivered a very logical and convincing discourse on the representative character of the Gospel and work of the Lord. This was called forth by one of the speakers quoting Mr. Ingersoll as saying that he could not say that there is or is not a God, he never having seen him, but if there was, he (Mr. Ingersoll) didn't want any middle men to deal with. President Budge showed conclusively that no important business could be carried on except by this representative power, quoted the Savior's words that His mission on earth was not to do His own, but the will of His Father in heaven, His calling and delegation, His apostles to represent Him before the world. Christ represented His father here on earth, the apostles represented Christ. The speaker established the proposition that where this power of agency and representation of

the Heavenly powers does not exist, there is no Gospel of salvation; quoted Paul's saying that God in ancient times spoke to the fathers through the prophets, so he did through His Son in his day commune with the people, etc., etc. He also elaborated on the necessity of the order of the Church being carried out as we were admonished by revelation to President John Taylor a few years since.

On Sunday at 2 p. m., after the administration of the sacrament, Bishop Ira Nebeker gave the Saints some encouraging counsels; acknowledged God's goodness and wisdom in leading His people to these valleys, where they have been trained by His servants in the science of life, temporally and spiritually.

Elder Nathaniel W. Hodges spoke on the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation, and of the necessity of our being guided by its precept; said it provides for the welfare of our bodies as well as that of our spirits, and that this Gospel taught by the Saints is the same in every particular as that proclaimed by Christ and His Apostles.

Elder J. W. Latterthwaite briefly addressed the meeting on the necessity of prayer and of humility before God and all men.

Elder Wm. L. Rich could see great wisdom in our Elders not knowing when they will be called to address the people; it involved serious study of the principles of our religion, so that we may, by God's help, be able to properly instruct the people in relation to their duties as Church members. He realized that this is a glorious work. We know in whom we trust; the fear of death has been taken from us, and we are buoyed up by the assurances of the Gospel, and it also points the time when, beyond the grave, we shall meet with our friends and loved ones who have gone on before.

Elder James H. Hart complimented the choir on the improvement and sweetness of tone its members had acquired, and spoke of the soothing influence of music on the human mind. It recalled the fact to his mind that, when a boy, he was a chorister in the Church of England, and ever since had taken much delight in the reading of good music. By the relating of an apt anecdote, Elder Hart exhorted us that while we should duly appreciate the means and agencies by which we obtain gifts and graces and benefits, we should not omit to praise God from whom all blessings flow. He paid a high tribute to the memory of the brothers John and Charles Wesley, who strove to improve the religious condition of the world, realizing that their church was not Christ's, but fondly anticipating and hoping for the establishment of a church after the heavenly pattern, with the gifts and blessings that accompanied the primitive Church of Christ and His Apostles; referred again to events connected with the restoration of the Gospel; read the testimony of the three witnesses, and related a conversation he had with Widow Cowdery, who bore to him a faithful testimony to the truth and divinity of this Latter-day work. He exhorted the Bishops to ordain the boys and young men to the Lesser Priesthood, to organize them in quorums, meet with and encourage them to keep the laws of God, to eschew evil, abstain from card playing and waltzing, and to