

GREAT CROWDS ATTEND CONFERENCE

Attendance at Seventy-fourth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Breaks all Previous Records.

Journey From All Parts of the Country to Listen to Higher Authorities Dispense Words of Religion, Caution and Good Advice.

Never in the history of the church has there been such crowds in attendance as at the seventy-fourth conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, held in Salt Lake City on the 4th, 5th and 6th.

It was said by more than one Saint who had not missed a semi-annual conference in years that they never saw such a crowd as was in attendance upon this conference. It was stated further that not since the funeral of President Brigham Young in the late '70s has there been so many people upon the temple grounds at one time as assembled there Sunday to listen to the higher authorities of the church dispense words of religion, caution and advice. The crowd was so great that many were unable to get inside the tabernacle or the Assembly hall, and an open-air overflow meeting was held on the grounds.

President Joseph F. Smith and Apostle Heber J. Grant, the recently returned missionary to Japan, were the only speakers at the opening session of the conference, which was held in the tabernacle. There were the customary songs and anthems by the choir and a duet by Wood and Noel Pratt, grandsons of Parley P. Pratt. They sang a favorite selection of their grandfather, which had been put to music by Evan Stephens, entitled, "The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee."

A general plea to all Saints to get out of debt and a glowing description of the flourishing condition of the church, were the themes of the address by President Smith. He also touched upon the advantages of manual training in the school and at home, advancing the theory that healthful bodies are conducive to healthful minds, and that the latter make good Mormons. He advocated the cultivation of all the arts which tend to uplift men and women and advance the ethical side of life.

The progress of the church in Japan and the advances the inhabitants of that country are making, constituted the cardinal features of the address of Apostle Grant. He said the church is making comparatively slow progress in Japan in the way of making converts, through the difficulty in acquiring the Japanese language. He said the Japs are more eager to learn the tongue of this country than any other nation upon the face of the globe.

President Smith presided over the afternoon session of the conference the same as he did during the morning. The speakers at the tabernacle were Anthon H. Lund, one of the counselors to the president; President Pond of the Bannock stake, Idaho; President L. S. Steele, Bingham stake, Idaho; Apostle John Henry Smith and Apostle A. O. Woodruff. At Assembly hall the speakers who addressed the overflow meeting in that place of worship were Apostle Hyrum Smith and Elder Allen of Canada. Elder Benjamin E. Rich, president of the southern states missions, presided over the open-air meeting on the temple grounds. He was assisted by Elder Joseph E. Taylor, one of the stake presidents; President Duffin of the southwestern states missions, and President Robinson of the California missions.

At the meeting of the general Sunday School Union at night, President Smith opposed card playing, saying: "There is far too much precious time wasted in the foolish, vain and unprofitable, practice of card playing. I wish to admonish the Latter-day Saints against the awful practice of idling. Think of wasting a whole evening in a foolish game of cards. I know that these things often lead to mischief, and sometimes to serious wrong-doing, and I call upon the Latter-day Saints, both young and old, to stop it."

Second Day's Sessions.

During the morning session of the second day of the seventy-fourth semi-annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Christian Science, hypnotism and the theory of evolution were attacked by Apostle John W. Taylor. Apostle Taylor used an orchard afflicted with blight as the foundation upon which to make his arguments against the "cisms," as he chose to call them. He said that blight is a horticultural disease which, if it is permitted to spread throughout an orchard, will kill every tree in it. The only cure is to cut off the diseased branch, remove it from the orchard and burn it, and that Christian Science, hypnotism and the theory of evolution should be regarded as blight.

After a long course of reasoning

Apostle Taylor led up to the subject of infant baptism in other churches, and the belief that unless a child is baptized it will go to hell.

"There is no such thing as infant damnation," he continued. "It is a form of belief of such ministers who recently met in Los Angeles to fix up their creed to suit the times."

The speaker then paid considerable attention to the fact that the Epworth League is considering the policy of establishing a tithing system.

"What good is it going to do them to place in vogue the practice sanctioned by God if they do not have seers, revelators and prophets? They will have to have them. If they do not, the other denominations will not know what to do with their money. They will be compelled to run around the world to the pope or some other man to tell them what to do with it."

The apostle concluded his address by asking all Saints to get married in the temple.

President William H. Lewis of the Benson stake and President Cameron of the Panguitch stake spoke of conditions in their respective stakes, reporting their stakes in a flourishing condition. The morning session was closed by a few remarks by Apostle George Teasdale, who read at length from the Doctrine and Covenants, explaining the qualifications necessary to make a good Mormon, and why their religion makes them happy.

The principal speaker at the afternoon session of the conference was Apostle M. S. Cowley, whose discourse was a general admonition to the people to adhere to their faith and the church and not be led away by the "fad" doctrines that were spreading over the country. He compared the doctrine of the Latter-day Saints with many others that are extant, and declared that the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness was possessed only by the Saints.

The speaker proclaimed Joseph Smith to be a true prophet of God, who was far in advance of his day, and that many of the things revealed to him were being accepted by the advanced theologians of the day. He said further that the law of baptism for the redemption of the dead was one of the great truths advocated by the youthful prophet, but that many of the more enlightened divines had hinted at the necessity or wisdom of such a law long before Joseph Smith's day.

The other speaker was Apostle Rudger Clawson, who pointed out the arduous labor that rested upon the shoulders of the presidency of the church and the apostles.

Closing Session.

The feature of the morning session of the closing day of the conference were the remarks of Brigham H. Roberts denouncing the theory that Joseph Smith founded the church under a hypnotic spell. In the afternoon President John R. Winder denounced the statement that things are taught within the temple which are not taught on the outside.

At the afternoon session President John R. Winder spoke on tithing. He said that other Christian organizations were beginning to collect tithing. "I remember in England when I was there they collected the 10 per cent by law. If a man did not pay up the officers would go into his fields and carry away every tenth shock of grain or bushel of produce. Other churches are collecting tithes today, but under different names."

A. H. Lund spoke along similar lines and dwelt particularly upon the salvation of the dead. This he declared could be done and urged the Saints to do more for their forefathers.

At the closing session during the presentation of the church authorities Elder George A. Smith was named to fill the vacancy in the council of the twelve apostles caused by the death of Apostle Brigham Young, and received the unanimous vote of the conference, as did all the others. Elder Smith is the son of Apostle John Henry Smith, and is the present receiver of the United States land office in Utah. He is a native of Salt Lake City and is not yet 40 years of age.

Francis M. Lyman was chosen as president of the quorum of apostles. Apostle Francis Marion Lyman was elected to that position in 1880. He is the son of the late Amasa M. Lyman, who was at one time a counselor to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Apostle Lyman came to Utah with his parents in 1847, and has been a prominent factor in the building up of this state. He is now in England, where he is presiding over the European mission, a duty he was called to perform about two years ago.

Elder Heber J. Grant, who has just returned from Japan, was selected to succeed Elder Francis M. Lyman as president over the European mission over which the latter has presided for the past two years and a half.

When the election was over President Smith spoke briefly and the conference was adjourned.