

COOPERATION—MERCHANDISING AND PRODUCTIVE BUSINESSES—DOING THE LORD'S WILL.

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT DANIEL H. WELLS, DELIVERED IN THE NEW TABERNACLE,
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REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

After our usual custom we have met in a general council of the church to receive instruction in those things which are necessary for the government and well-being of the people, and to be instructed in that which is calculated to promote our best interests. At our Conferences a general interchange of thought and feeling in the midst of Israel takes place. At these meetings we receive great blessings; rich treasures of knowledge and understanding are opened up, and made known to the people throughout the valleys of the mountains. We come here to be instructed; we gather from the nations of the earth that we may be taught in the ways of the Lord and that we may learn to walk in His paths.

We can see a glorious future before us; we can dwell upon the words of the holy prophets and picture to ourselves great things in time to come concerning the beauty and glory of Zion, when she shall be built up. We can talk of exaltations in the Kingdom of God, of thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, but how are we going to attain to these things? It seems as though, when we receive the Gospel and our hearts are lit up with the spirit of truth, we expect, without any particular effort on our part, at some time in the future, to attain to these great excellencies and glories. We are a good deal like

children. We tell them of reading and writing, but they will never be able to do either, unless they take the trouble to learn. We often hear it said that if we wish to have a heaven we shall have to create it for ourselves. There is considerable truth in this. In the days of Joseph could he have accomplished with this people what can now be accomplished in the days of Brigham? No; it would have been impossible. I remember hearing him talk, and seeing his endeavors to establish merchandising on a similar footing to that which has been recently introduced among the Saints; but there were difficulties in the way.

In those days there was a tendency of feeling that each should share alike in everything, so much so that it was impossible for any man to do business in the mercantile line. A good brother who was needy would think it was selfish if he could not go to a store and get what he wanted without paying the money for it. It was a good deal so when we first came here. Let a brother commence the mercantile business, and the first thing he knew his whole capital stock was credited out to the brethren. He could not refuse to credit a brother. O, no! If he did it was said at once that he was selfish and was no friend to the poor. I have never seen the time when cooperation could have been established