

CONFERENCE IN NEW ZEALAND.

UAWA, Tologa Bay, New Zealand,
August 19th, 1885.

Editor Deseret News:

Dear Sir:—By request of Elders John W. Ash, president of the Conference, and Ezra F. Richards, clerk, both of whom have gone north to open a new field of labor, I forward you a synopsis of the doings at our Conference, held at this place, August 15th and 16th, 1885.

There were present on the stand President W. F. Stewart, Elders John W. Ash, Ezra F. Richards, J. W. Kaulinamoku, Elias Johnson, Ephraim Maglely and Sondra Sanders, Jr., Brother Ash presiding. About 125 natives were in attendance, the great majority of whom were members of the Church.

After the opening exercises President Stewart explained the object and nature of the Conference, it being a new thing to the Maori people. Stated we had met at a feast, not of food for the body, but of food for the spirit. He was followed by Elder John W. Ash, who gave in the report of the district.

The Presidents of the various branches of the Conference were called upon to report the work entrusted to them. Brother Hamuera Mita, of Muriwai branch, felt well in the true Gospel of the Lord. Some of his people were doing right and some were not. Three members had been excommunicated; but he had prayed earnestly that they would reform, and now two of them had applied for rebaptism. The Pakirikiri Saints were feeling well and doing right. He was well pleased with the way the teacher did his work in sunshine and in storm.

Brother H. Tupeka represented some ten scattering members at Gisborne. He did not know the Lord until he revealed Himself to Joseph Smith and sent His Elders to this land. Referred to the parable of the sower and exhorted his brethren to be diligent.

The First Counselor of Papahariki said the branch he represented was composed of a President, two Counselors, one Teacher, one Deacon and eleven members. Exhorted the Saints to be both hearers and doers of the law. Referred to the evils abroad and closed by bearing his testimony to the truth of the Gospel.

Brother Tekani was pleased to see non-members attend our meetings. The members belonging to his branch were very firm, having great faith in the true Gospel of Christ. His prayers were continuous in behalf of his people who had not heard or received the Gospel, that they might be able to hear and see its truths and embrace them. There were three other branches reported, showing a good standing. They spoke of their faith and that of their people, advised all to stand firm and steadfast; that none knew the time of Christ's second coming, etc. Prayed the Lords assistance in behalf of the Elders learning the Maori language; felt well in coming together to preach and receive instructions in the Gospel of Christ; that this was one step towards our coming to a unity of the faith. The spirit of God had been given them to make plain that Gospel which came not of man, and they were earnest in expounding the same to their brethren yet in darkness, and in teaching those who were members.

After singing and prayer the meeting adjourned till 2 p. m.

AFTERNOON MEETING

commenced by singing and prayer, following which Elder Elias Johnson (Pres. Stewart interpreting) spoke at length on the kingdom, organization, authority, first principles, etc., and closed by exhorting the Saints to faithfulness.

The statistical report of the district was read, showing six Utah Elders and one local Elder, seventeen Priests, nine Teachers, two Deacons and 241 members; seventy members having been added since the last conference. Twenty-four of the Saints had voluntarily left off smoking, while some shunned even the appearance of liquor.

Brother Ihairara being called upon, spoke, exhorting all to have but one set of leaders and they to be the ones Christ had given us, viz.: Apostles, Prophets, etc. Reviewed briefly the organization of the primitive church and its doctrine. Made mention of the "falling away," infant baptism and the doctrine of the churches of to-day. He closed his remarks with his testimony that the Gospel is true.

Pres. Stewart spoke of the great number of false religions extant, the difficulty some seem to have in perceiving the truth, and the way one may find it. Spoke of the necessity of faith, repentance and baptism, the mode of baptism and authority to officiate. Referred to sins, the inducement of which would disqualify us for an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, and advised the Saints to shun all evil, as only those who endure faithfully to the end will be saved.

After a hymn in the Maori language the benediction was pronounced by Elder Sondra Sanders, Jr.

Thus ending the first day's service of a conference long to be remembered. All the speaking was in the Maori tongue with the exception of the remarks made by Brother Johnson and the three of us who had just arrived from Utah. The minutes were taken in full by Elder Ezra F. Richards, to whom I am indebted for this report.

But it would make too long an article for the NEWS to give a full synopsis of the proceedings.

a Priesthood meeting was held the evening of the 15th while conference continued Sunday a. m. and p. m. with another meeting of the Priesthood in the evening, at which the Priesthood was explained and three Elders, one Teacher and one Deacon were ordained, having been voted for during the conference. This, together with other things, truly constituted a spiritual feast for the worthy Maori people.

Thus, though not fully represented, I hope the Saints in Utah will be able to obtain a glimpse of the work in New Zealand. The Auckland conference was held about two weeks ago. Other districts have held their conferences while others are yet to hold theirs. Every thing is prosperous and the work is being pushed ahead with energy and spirit. We trust the day has dawned in which the

FORTY-TWO THOUSAND

Maori people shall have the Gospel preached unto them, that they may receive or reject the salvation that offered them.

May God abundantly bless His cause and those who love Him and keep His commandments is our daily prayer. This He will do for it is His promise. Saints of Zion, let us be among the worthy number.

Your brother in the Gospel,
SONDRA SANDERS, JR.

A MORMON'S VIEWS.

Mr. James H. Hart, the New York agent of the Utah emigration society, and an Elder in the Mormon Church, said this morning: "The Mormon question is a complex one, and the more it is agitated the more difficult becomes the situation. The present action of the courts in Utah is simply persecution. All kinds of means have been devised during the last fifty years to solve the problem of what is called Mormonism. This is only another phase of it. Lawless mobs have made attacks on us during the last fifty years, persecuting our people until they find themselves located in the mountains 150,000 strong. Their Prophets and Elders have been murdered in a barbarous manner, and no one during all these years has been punished for killing a Mormon Elder. During the greatest opposition polygamy was not a factor in the difficulty. On the arrival of the people in the mountains, then belonging to the Mexican republic, they unfurled the stars and stripes and pledged themselves as friends of the government. A polygamist, Brigham Young, was appointed governor by President Fillmore, in 1848. From 1847 to 1862 the people grew in number until they reached a total of 100,000 souls. Its representatives were acknowledged for several terms as representatives of the Territory in Congress. The polygamy law was passed in 1862, but remained a dead letter on the statute book until three years ago, when the Edmunds amendment was passed.

"There are no prosecutions for polygamy, but they are for, as the judges call it, unlawful relations between man and woman. The punishment is a fine of \$300 and six months in prison. The Utah courts have so ruled, that by dividing this time since the passage of the Edmunds act into a number of offences, or into years, months, weeks or days for the so-called offences, it makes the imprisonment practically for life, and the fines run up to an enormous amount. This is unjust. In the first place, marriage is a part of our religion, and is acknowledged by the Utah judiciary. The relation holds in our estimation for eternity. It is acknowledged by the best of lawyers that the Edmunds act virtually annuls the first amendment to the constitution which prohibits congress from passing any acts interfering with the free exercise of religion. We believe that this has been revealed to us from God, and we cannot disobey this law. We cannot abandon our wives and children as demanded by the courts, without violating our contracts with our wives and our covenants with our God. Bishop Clawson is suffering in jail. Rather than be hated by his wives and children and be despised and ostracized by our people.

"Mr. Beecher said a few days ago that if the Bible was true, Mormonism was right. We believe in the Christian Bible. The old Prophets were polygamists, but not the whole of Israel. Monogamy was not heard of until 300 or 400 years after Christ. It has been imposed on the whole of Europe by pagan Rome. Caesar guarded the virtue of his wife, but compromised himself with other women. So with this country to-day. There are 500,000 abandoned women in this country who earn their living by their shame. Their average life is five years. So 100,000 die every year and go to an untimely grave. The people here do not know Mormonism, for if they did they would not attack it so blindly. Only 8 per cent. of the Mormons have more than one wife; that is to say, 12,000 in all our country, or only about 4,000 men.

"We will contest this matter in the United States courts as soon as we can be heard. The persons who are now suffering in jail have been denied an appeal to the United States courts, as in the case of Angus M. Cannon, the brother of our former representative, George Q. Cannon. If we get no redress in the United States courts we will submit our case to the Almighty, who will do us justice. The talk of force and arms is absurd. We are non-combatants. Our business is to

preach the gospel, build temples, gather the Saints and save the living and the dead. The Mormon people generally regard this as a religious crusade, urged upon Congress by religious bigots. Congress to gratify their religious constituents has done what it is ashamed of. It was an assumption of this kind that lighted the fires of Smithfield, and drove the Puritans from England and the Huguenots from France. It was such an assumption that harried the Vaudois of the Alps and persecuted the Scotch covenanters on the mountains where they tried to worship God according to their consciences.

"Mr. Chamberlin, a liberal of England, made a speech in Glasgow the other day. In the course of his remarks he said: 'If a man has a right to think out his religious faith for himself and hold it, he ought not to be bribed or persecuted in order to relinquish it, and the State oversteps its proper field of duty and trespasses on religious equality and religious freedom in doing so.'

If the principles of the democratic party were carried out they would insure liberty to all citizens of this republic. Consequently the 'Mormon' people, although they cannot vote, believe in the Jeffersonian principle. There are a few men who will leave families, but the mass of the 'Mormon' people will die in their belief. It will injure us personally but as a sect it will make us grow.—N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.

EXPRESSIONS FROM THE PEOPLE.

SHALL WE LIVE IN HISTORY.

All public men expect to have their acts criticized, hence the care they generally manifest in order to escape the humiliation of being adjudged by the public voice as incompetent or unworthy. The author reads and corrects many times over before allowing his work to appear in public, and he watches with eagerness the comments of the just critic upon his production, knowing full well that unfavorable comment would stand in the way of future success. The artist and sculptor are equally anxious to have awarded to them the merit for which they have so diligently labored, even the actor upon the stage who has neither conceived the plot nor furnished one solitary line of the piece he is representing is very careful to portray the character he assumes so truly in keeping with the author's conception as to place himself beyond

UNFAVORABLE CRITICISM.

The wise legislator will carefully note every word of the law he is framing not only to prevent a false construction being placed upon any of its provisions, but also that he may receive honorable mention for the wisdom he has displayed in producing such a sound, just and equitable statute. The upright judge will watch so closely the proceedings in any case that comes before him and will rule so equitably as to earn the title of administrator of even-handed justice, and be adjudged in every way worthy of the ermine he wears. While the executive officer will be considered, kind and humane even to the convicted felon. Such are the characteristics of the true man and the ambition to be recognized as such is not only pardonable but laudable, and needs no excuse. But there are men whose ignoble souls never conceived the idea that their fellow-beings had any rights which they were bound to respect, and when these receive a little brief authority they invariably use it to oppress, abuse and rob their brother of his inalienable rights unless he will consent to bow down and worship at their shrine; caring nothing for the consequences their acts will bring upon themselves, so eager are they to gratify the unlawful and unholy desires of their corrupt and wicked hearts.

THE ACTS OF MEN

in authority are closely watched, and their conduct in many instances receives more than a passing review. They live in history, and after years reflect upon them either honor or disgrace, for they are then stripped of all their trappings and stand forth in the symmetry of a perfect form on the hideousness of their distorted shape, for future generations judge only of the naked facts.

Sometimes we weigh men's conduct in a balance and award them merit or demerit as the scales determine the preponderance on either side. In other instances a solitary act for good or for evil stands out so prominently as to outweigh all of the other conduct of their lives. Notably was this the case with

BENEDICT ARNOLD

who had endured untold hardships and had exhibited most commendable bravery but whose one traitorous act not only dimmed his former lustre for ever, but caused him to be spoken of with loathing by his contemporaries and to be held in execration by future generations. An act of cowardice, especially at a supreme moment is never forgotten and seldom forgiven, while an unswerving integrity is ever applauded, even though death may be the consequence.

RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

more than any other have called forth and caused to be exhibited such bitterness of feeling, followed by such scenes of persecution, torture and bloodshed as to make one shudder at their mere

recital. The honesty of these religious devotees has appealed in vain to their persecutors, for they would accept of nothing short of recantation and a total renunciation of their religious views and practices, and in many ages of the world's history thousands—aye, millions have allowed their blood to be shed rather than yield to the public clamor. Thus have they sustained to the death principles which they held so sacred as to be of more value than their lives, and by this means have principles been perpetuated that would otherwise have ceased to exist.

The abhorrence we feel for those who in past years were guilty of these atrocities seems to have no effect whatever upon many who in succeeding ages have exhibited the same bitter hate and have delighted in gratifying their desire to

PERSECUTE, TORTURE AND KILL

the adherents of certain religious faiths and principles. And the execration in which the former inquisitions are held seems to have no effect in deterring them from pursuing the same course as their predecessors. The thought of a future record, of a sullied name or lasting disgrace seems to be forgotten by them in their eagerness to gratify this unrighteous and ungodly desire to "lord it over" their fellow-men.

Such scenes when enacted in a despotic government would seem to be a very natural outgrowth of the spirit and genius of such government, but for an enlightened nation like America with her advanced civilization her pronounced love of liberty and especially

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

to ever tolerate such things as have occurred of late in Utah and the adjoining Territories is almost past relief, and indicates such decay as must ere long result most disastrously to the nation. If, to tamper with the foundation is dangerous to the building, what must be the consequences when some of its principle stones and especially one of its corner stones is removed? The fabric may remain for a time it is true, losing none of the grandeur of its external appearance and it may successfully withstand many a blast, but there will come a storm by and by so severe that it will cause it to tremble and fall, and thus will be broken to pieces one of the grandest structures that ever existed. A nation whose constitutional life indicated such a perpetuity of existence as to have put ancient, long-lived Babylon, or the more modern long-lived Roman empire to shame. For the almost immediate descendants (nay, let us hope they are either foreign-born or bastards) of the founders of this mighty nation to be guilty of such sacrilege as to sap the foundation of the structure their fathers laid and whose stones were cemented in mortar mixed with their own blood is such shameful vandalism as to make them deserve everlasting obloquy and disgrace, which history will not fail to award them.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE,

as indexed by their acts in supporting the present crusade against this handful of Saints, is: Let the work be prosecuted to the bitter end; pay no respect to constitutional rights; ignore sound precedents; rule as unrighteously as you please; banish all humane feeling; ruin industries; imprison the worthiest and best of their citizens; desolate their homes; confiscate their property; and, if you cannot accomplish it without, employ the sword, the bayonet and the still more destructive cannon, for we have determined that 'Mormonism and the 'Mormons' shall either yield or die.

BUT HARK!

There is another voice speaking; it was first heard upon the plains of Bethlehem; its accents were soft; its tones were mild, but terrible in their mildness. The Being who spoke, saw this very day, though eighteen centuries ahead of that time; he saw a little stone cut out the mountain without hands; it commenced to roll; he recognized its power and he prophesied thus: "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Let statesmen, judges, and executive officers, together with the entire people open their ears and listen. That voice is speaking again, repeating the same words; and history will yet record their exact fulfillment; for the voice that is speaking is the voice of God, and no word of His ever yet failed.

HISTORICUS.

[COMMUNICATED.]

DISCUSSING THE SUBJECT.

"In all countries where there is any important question to be discussed and settled, all parties who are at all interested in it discuss the pros and cons and then make up their minds as regards the matter."

The above paragraph is clipped from a leader in a late issue of an anti-'Mormon' contemporary, and as I will show, manifests in a marked degree the inconsistency which permeates every argument used against the Church. In itself the sentiment expressed in the excerpt is sound, but like many other reasonings from the anti-'Mormon' standpoint, it can

most readily be turned against the party that advances it.

When, in the history of the nation's dealing with the "Mormon" people, has there ever been an intelligent, natural discussion of the question involved? Have not the bulk of the anti-'Mormons' avoided such discussions, and made up their minds from sheer prejudice, that the "Mormons" were wrong, and being in the wrong, must yield to the opinion of the many who differed from them? Have any of the instigators of the religious persecutions the Saints are now enduring, ever considered that perhaps after all the "Mormon" people were right, and that cruel and oppressive legislation against them was wrong? Too much prejudice exists in the minds of many to admit of any such thought; but is that right? Is it statesmanlike for Congress to pass special local laws for the representations of a few local demagogues, interested in nullifying the political rights of the majority here? Is it Christianlike for ministers to use their influence for the legal destruction of a rival religion, simply because they are unable to cope with it in the legitimate field of political discussion? Is it sensible for intelligent people to silently sit and suffer a thriving community to be broken up because their religious convictions, the divinity of which never has been and never can be disproved? Has any considerable number of progressive people outside of the "Mormon" Church ever thought on the subject now under consideration? Do those who oppose "Mormonism" in public know why they do so, from logical reasoning which could for an instant convert the position taken by the Saints in favor of our doctrines? Let the intelligent reader answer the foregoing questions according to his own experience and observation.

I make bold to assert, that it is through the great lack of intelligent discussion on the subjects which agitate the country concerning the Saints, that so much ignorance and prejudice prevail in regard to the matter. It is the absence of fair and impartial investigation that makes it possible for parties to misrepresent this people and their motives at a distance. The press itself—the most independent and powerful means of discussion in the world—has almost effectually closed its columns against any argument or statement in their defense. If the "Mormon" situation is touched even by a friendly paper, the article has to be surrounded by a protective army of politic assertions as the personal beliefs and sentiments of the writer, lest his influence should perish in the flames of prejudice as soon as the stand he has taken in favor of such an unpopular people becomes public.

The missionary field meets with its special obstacles to a proper discussion of the subject. Few persons are willing to lend an intelligent ear to the ministrations of the "Mormon" missionary. And when after much faithful labor and heroic effort a family or two become convinced, the bloody hand of persecution is thrust out to grasp those who have thus opened up a door to the more perfect comprehension of the principles and situation. The very journals that indulge in sentimental suggestions on free discussion, almost daily urge a cruel and crushing process against the Saints, and the preaching of the word by the Elders. Through the influence of intemperate articles by the anti-'Mormon' press of this city, righteous men have been shot down in the Southern States, while discussing the principles of the Gospel with the sacred scriptures open before them. Every avenue for the fair presentation of their view to the public is being closed as fast as possible, through the intolerant instigations of the very men who quote petal sentiment in favor of free thought and free speech. If a writer assumes to vindicate the cause of the Saints in the Church papers, he is spotted, and hounded from his post, officers with warrants, and perplexing processes are inaugurated to curtail his public career.

And all this in a country which has sought for reputation as a land of religious liberty—a land whose patriots pride themselves on having cut the gordian knot of tyranny and elevated the bright banner of freedom to all the world. Can it be possible that thinking people will fail to observe the inconsistencies here depicted? Will there not be a glorious reaction to the present political crisis? I feel confident in predicting that before many more years pass away, most of the prejudice wrought up by scheming politicians against this innocent people will be dispelled. That intelligent investigation will become more universal. That greater freedom of speech will prevail, and many who have refused to look deeply into this dark deeds of demagoguery by which this people have been so long betrayed will yet turn to be their friends and defenders before the world.

I am more certain of these things when I witness the surprise and indignation of our patriotic friends when contemplating our progress in spite of adversity; and the cheering they express at the misrepresentation made of our institutions abroad. Facts are not to be repudiated as easily as some may imagine. Intelligent tourists, who are identified with material interests in their own localities, are not as easily cajoled as the unreflecting masses who never travel. And the men carry an influence wherever they go, which will in time be felt, and the benefits extend throughout the entire fabric of society.

The Saints have always counted it a