

# DESERET EVENING NEWS

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SALT LAKE CITY, - MARCH 18, 1904.

## THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The Seventy-Fourth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Sunday, April 3, Monday, April 4, and Wednesday, April 6, commencing each day at 10 a. m. A general attendance of the officers and members is requested and expected.

As the General Conference will commence on April 3, the first Sunday in the month, which is the regular Fast Day, the Saints in the Salt Lake and adjacent stakes of Zion will observe the monthly fast on Sunday, March 27, 1904. The stake and ward authorities in distant places will use their own judgment as to making the change for this occasion.

A general Priesthood meeting will be held in the Tabernacle on Monday evening, April 4, at 7 o'clock.

A special Priesthood meeting will be held in the Assembly Hall, Tuesday, April 5, at 10 o'clock a. m.

A religion class convention will be held in the Barratt hall on Tuesday, April 5, at 2 o'clock p. m.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,  
JOHN R. WINDER,  
ANTHONY H. LUND,  
First Presidency.

The general conference of the Deseret Sunday School Union will be held at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday evening, April 3, at 7 o'clock, and the attendance of all officers and teachers is desired. A general invitation is extended to all Sunday school workers and Saints to be present.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,  
GEORGE REYNOLDS,  
JOS. M. TANNER,  
General Superintendency.

## A RIDICULOUS LIBELLER.

We publish today the report from a Michigan paper of an interview with F. E. McGurkin of this city. It will be found on another page. We reproduce it in full, so that the people here may know what is said about them elsewhere by one who, from his long residence, should be able to tell the truth concerning local affairs.

If the statements he has made had appeared only in the paper from which we copy, verbatim, we might not have paid much attention to them. But the Deaver Post had previously reported him in a similar vein, and other papers had done the same, and it seemed as though he had made his trip to the east the occasion for venting his animosity and distributing his falsehoods, about a people who have never done him any harm and with many of whom he has been on amicable business relations.

His first assertion is that Senator Reed Smoot is "a sworn enemy to the United States, who represents a body of men who have taken the oath of vengeance against the government, and who declare themselves to owe no allegiance to the country." Whoever F. E. McGurkin may mean by this libel, his assertion is utterly devoid of truth and brands his brew with a mark of burning shame. Reed Smoot represents the entire people of Utah and more particularly the party that elected him. Have the Republicans who voted for and supported Mr. Smoot taken such an oath as that alleged? We presume the man that made the assertion will say he didn't mean them. But his language covers the entire Republican party of Utah, for it is that party that Senator Smoot especially represents.

If this position is evaded by the claim that the "Mormon" Church was meant by the libeller, the assertion is equally untrue. Neither Mr. Smoot nor any other member of that Church has taken any such oath or obligation. On the contrary, they are by their religion pledged to support the Constitution and government of their country and to yield "subjection to the powers that be." F. E. McGurkin has placed himself on record by the side of those shameless known defamers of the Church who are despised for "bearing false witness against their neighbors."

Next he states that "all mandates of the Church and State are divinely ordered. The Mormons believe it firmly." If he is not as ignorant of the truth as the meanest cur on the streets of this city, he knows that this assertion is utterly false and inexcusable. The same as to the "blood curdling oaths" of "vengeance against the government," that he declares are taken by "every good Mormon who passes through the endowment house." He does not say himself,

in repeating this oft-refuted calumny by placing it on rumor, but he makes the false statement his own. "Every good Mormon" is thus defamed by a man who lives among them and expects to do business with them; and they know now what his word is worth.

Does not F. E. McGurkin know that by his published statement that "The Apostles and Elders in the Mormon Church dictate to every member of the Church regarding his personal affairs, including politics, business and private matters," he exposes his own assassin as well as lack of veracity? How is such a thing possible with two or three hundred thousand people scattered over the area covered by the "Mormon" Church? And what excuse can he find for such a monstrous and patent absurdity? He cannot be ignorant of the fact, however dense he may be as to the "Mormon" question, that his own Church has been maligned on just the same lines as those on which he has misrepresented the "Mormon" Church.

We are pleased to know that the Catholic prelates and priests do not endorse such attacks, and that they recognize the similarity of the allegations against them and against the "Mormon" Church leaders. Nothing, however vicious, he has said about the latter exceeds the charges made against the former. Does he like them, as directed against his own faith and its exponents?

Is he not ashamed to face just men of either party or any persuasion, with the falsehoods he has put in print, that "the heads of the Mormon Church decided upon the appointment of Reed Smoot for United States Senator," and that "they walked in and gave the orders to the Utah Legislature and that settled it?" What fact can he adduce in justification of such a bold assertion, the latter part of which at least is known to be without the shadow of truth or reason? And why should the "unseating of Senator Smoot" cause "a split in the 'Mormon' Church" or "result in breaking its power and authority?" Is the man daft as well as mendacious, or was he just "stuffed" the reporter at the expense of his fellow citizens at Salt Lake?

We might go on and expose other attacks upon the majority of the people of this State made by one who should know and do better. But enough has been said to show his animus and unreliability. We desire to make a sharp distinction between F. E. McGurkin and other residents here with the same surname. We believe them to be honorable gentlemen who mind their own business and do it well. We cast no reflection upon them. Neither do we attempt anything of the kind upon the author of the falsehoods which we have touched upon; he has done that himself.

What benefit can possibly accrue to Utah, or anybody in it, by the publication of such stuff and such stories as F. E. McGurkin has palmed off upon eastern papers, we cannot for the life of us perceive. The prejudices they create or foster do injury to the State and to business affairs. And they cause distrust and anger to arise among citizens whose interest it is to work together for the common good. While we may sincerely differ with each other on religion and politics and social conditions, and every man has the right to his opinions on either, no one is justified in exhibiting his anger at persons who differ with him, by such vicious and malicious falsehoods as those embodied in the F. E. McGurkin interview with a Michigan paper.

## PROBLEMS OF THE TIME.

There are many questions that might profitably occupy the attention of the philanthropists and statesmen of this country, in preference to the so-called "Mormon" question, which does not need their sagacity. They would not overlook this fact, were it not that the old custom of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel still prevails among Pharisees and hypocrites.

For instance, on one of the islands of the state of Maine, a short time ago, some religious fanatics, it is said, were about to kill a young man, in their efforts to "cast out the devil." They were prevented by the interference of a sheriff. The same fanatics are reported to have been contemplating the necessity of sacrificing a child, some what according to the pattern of Abraham, who, however, was prevented from consummating the sacrifice, having stood the supreme test faithfully. We hear very little of the "danger" of such murderous doctrines. The "watchdogs" are silent, in the presence of such strange occurrences in the otherwise sensitive East. And this is all the more peculiar, since this is not the only strange doctrine heard in the land. The New York Evening Mail says:

"The craze of 'holiness,' the 'Holy Ghost' and 'U's' excitement, which is now sweeping over the coast people of Maine, is practically the same thing as the emotional zeal which led some of the Russian Doobhobors in the Canadian Northwest last year to strip themselves of all clothing and start out on a religious pilgrimage to Doobhobors and Maine and Massachusetts Adventists and holiness disciples all belong, intellectually and emotionally, to the primitive age of the world."

Then, in this country, some people are still upholding slavery in spite of the Constitution. Investigation has shown that in Mississippi, for instance, as well as in Alabama and Georgia, a planter may lend an improvident negro \$10. Then a demand is suddenly made for the repayment of the money. The negro cannot pay. Proceedings are begun against him, and he is delivered over to penance. If he attempts to break away and escape, he is whipped and bound. His case is hopeless, unless the national authority intervenes. The negro is sold into slavery for \$10. Before the war, he would have cost perhaps \$1,000. That is the difference. But we hear of no popular waves of indignation at the flagrant violation of the Constitution. Says the New York Evening Post:

"When the Evening Post made its revelations of the peonage abuses in Alabama in June last, it was happy to think that these inquiries were limited to certain districts in that State. But news of similar wrongs comes at almost regular intervals from Tennessee, Doobhobors, Alabama, Louisiana, and today from Mississippi. At Jackson yesterday a negro farmhand was rescued

from his enslavers only when the officials produced their revolvers. And it is as noteworthy as it was in the Alabama cases that the latter represented, not state authority, but the Federal government."

Where is the patriotism that professes to blush for Utah?

Further, we have, as a nation protesting against the persecution of Jews in Roumania, and expressed our indignation at the horrors of Kishineff. At the same time, our patriots close their eyes to the indescribable horrors of negro lynching that stain our fair land with blood, and stamp the perpetrators as a low class of savages. The recent outrage at Springfield, O., suggests to the Boston Transcript the question, "Has Race War Begun?" and the following comment:

"The frequent lynching and torture of colored individuals, here and there, has indicated race hatred, but it has not before attained the proportions of a race war. There has generally been a white man he would now be alive, for these sporadic and shocking exhibitions but when a mob starts out as did that at Springfield with torch and shotgun to shoot and burn indiscriminately, without consideration of age, sex, or character, marking its victims only by their color, a new and startling phase of savage excess is developed. It is made a crime punishable by the most dire penalties to be born a negro, and he is hunted as wild beasts used to be pursued in the primitive days of the republic."

The Springfield Republican takes the same view:

"The truth then is that the peculiar offense of the negro criminal in all cases, which exposes him to mob vengeance, is the dark color of his skin. If the murderer at Springfield had been a white man he would now be alive, and awaiting the due process of law. We are thus to account for these many and horrible mob executions, North and South, simply on the ground of a recent and extended revival or growth in this country of race hate and contemptuous regard for people of dark-colored skins."

These are only a few of the serious problems that confront this nation. It looks as if the father of deception had succeeded in blinding, by prejudice, large multitudes, to the real dangers surrounding us, and leading them a wild goose chase. It is a time in which the courage and integrity of the nation is put to the test. It is often difficult to do right, but especially in the face of widespread opposition.

## SNOW FOR LUNG TROUBLES.

What the human system can become accustomed to in the shape of extremes of temperature has recently been illustrated in the experience of a gentleman who, according to the New York Tribune, last winter, was in the habit of taking baths in the snow, and enjoyed the "plunge" immensely. Two years ago he was given up by the physicians as incurable. He suffered from consumption, and other members of his family had died of that disease. Then he determined to try the open air treatment. He took out the windows in his bedroom, and slept there one winter. Then he moved his bed into a tent. Of his snow bath, he says:

"Early last March I began by taking off my shoes and stockings and walking barefooted in the snow. Then this winter I began going in all over, wearing nothing but a pair of trunks. I have taken such a bath with the mercury as low as 17 degrees above zero, and I know I have been benefited by these baths. Of course, I experience a shock when I first strike the snow, but it lasts only an instant. When I come out my body is all aglow. I have not gained vastly in weight, but I am tougher and in better condition. My lungs are healed, and I do not experience any pain."

Consumption is a disease that yearly carries off a great number of people in all parts of the world. Any suggestion as to its treatment is therefore of value. The gentleman claims to have derived great benefit from the cold baths. That suggests a mountain region, rather than a coast, as the ideal resort for consumptives. They used to go to California, to enjoy the ocean breezes and the mild climate. They should rather stop in the mountain canyons, where fresh air and pure snow can be enjoyed all the year round. Utah would be an ideal place for sufferers from pulmonary troubles.

President Angell's visits are few and far between.

Like the Star Spangled Banner, Port Arthur is still there.

Having crossed the Yalu the Russians expect next to run across the Japanese.

One swallow does not make a summer, but one Roosevelt unmakes a Summers.

A reservation always goes with the executive order for opening the Utah reservation.

A correspondent at Vladivostok says the cost of living is very high. Still it is not very high living.

General Grosvenor speaks of Mr. Bristow as a Dogberry. But calling names doesn't alter facts.

Not knowing the whereabouts of each other, the Russian and Japanese fleets may accidentally run across each other some day.

The Northern Securities company continues to hold conferences, possibly to find out where it is at. It is at death's door.

Playing jai-alai in the senate chamber proves this if nothing more, that "a little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men."

Those mysterious postoffice department reports are marked "R" and "Q" instead of "P" and "Q". The why of this is the real mystery.

Mr. Bristow claims responsibility for but seven pages of the famous post-office report, these the first seven. But these pages seem to have dealt with the seven deadly sins.

District Attorney Jerome says that he will pursue the distinguished gambler

and lover of art, Richard Canfield, to the bitter end. This will be very gallant to Mr. Canfield.

The leading countries of South America have entered into an alliance against being absorbed by the United States. This country is no sponge. It pays for what it gets or fights for it in a manly fashion.

In executive session our most potent, grave and revered senators have been playing the game of jai-alai. It must be called a wheel within a wheel, being but a part of the larger game of politics now being played in the General Leonard Wood case.

The St. Petersburg papers "bitterly resent" the false stories of the abandonment of Port Arthur, which they say are circulated for the purpose of affecting stocks. In the end they will find it much pleasanter to resent, bitterly or otherwise, such stories than to have to acknowledge their truth.

James J. Hill recently told some Minnesota farmers that the Northern Securities company, of which he is president, has added from five to seven cents a bushel to the price of northwestern wheat. Having said this before the decision in the Merger case, Mr. Hill can prove quite as conclusively when wheat goes down from five to seven cents, that it was the decision of the supreme court that took it away.

A Washington correspondent tells the following on Representative Bede: "Judson" Bede, of Minnesota, is a new member in the House, and his name did not appear in the list of Representatives printed in the special postoffice report. "The chaplain of the Senate was invited to come over and open the House," said Mr. Bede, "he did so, and prayed for the Lord to look down on us, and I think he is doing so," added Mr. Bede, "for everybody else is looking down on us just now."

The United States Consul at Beirut, Syria, reports the fact that the camel is still able, as a beast of burden, to successfully compete with the railroads operated in Syria and Palestine. This is thought strange by some, since the railroads in other countries have broken up the business of oxen and mules. But the railroads in Syria are not like railroads in other parts of the world. A camel train can at times successfully compete with them in swiftness, and cost of operation.

## PRESS COMMENTS.

Montpelier Examiner.

Most everybody in this section already knew that these church officials were practicing polygamous cohabitation with several wives, but the Examiner was not aware that the head of the Church believed he was violating any law of the Almighty in so doing. We had always supposed that the man, if so simply "suspended" further polygamous marriages, but that those already so married, violated no divine law in continuing these relations. We believe that has been the idea of all Mormons as well as Gentiles.

Chicago Chronicle.

The proceedings of the committee now investigating the Smoot case, so far as they have been reported, do not reflect any great credit on the committee, on the investigation or on those who are at the back of it. A whole session recently was devoted to the examination of Joseph F. Smith, president of the Mormon Church; on the subject of Mormon revelations, the color of the different angels who communicated them and the binding effect of one revelation over another preceding revelation. Some members of the committee had to inquire over and over what was the purpose of the examination. The position of the Mormon Church in regard to polygamy and civil government is well known. It claims to have had a divine revelation establishing polygamy, but that after the United States law was passed forbidding it the first revelation was suspended by a second. It believes that the Mormon Church is ultimately to displace all civil governments, but in the meanwhile inculcates loyalty and obedience to the state and United States government. As Senator Smoot repudiates polygamy, both theoretically and practically, and has taken an oath to support the constitution of the United States, it is difficult to understand how he is disqualified for office by holding an apostleship in the Mormon Church.

Arizona Republican.

It would be an impossible task for the most zealous enemies of the Mormons to point out a practicable course of action which has been followed by the polygamists. The polygamists were found upholding a course which has been properly condemned by the world as inimical to the best civilization and destructive of the accepted tenets of morality. Confronted by this national condemnation, and by laws which forbade the "peculiar institution," and it is asserted, enlightened by a revelation to the head of the Church from heaven, the polygamists renounced that part of their creed which had countenanced polygamous marriages. They agreed that they would take no more wives. But what were they to do with the wives they already had? What sort of morality would it have been to abandon the misguided women who accepted this peculiar marriage under the belief that it was altogether respectable, religious and moral—a religious duty on their part, in fact? It would be a poor sort of Christianity which would require the "husbands" of these women to drive them out and make outcasts of them.

From a practical viewpoint, the whole business of the Smoot investigation is profitless to the public good. All the Mormons who now have more than one wife are old men; there are but a few hundred of them. No good can be accomplished by the investigation, and it would have been infinitely better to drop the investigation the moment it was found that Smoot himself was not a polygamist and never had been. The senate, as the sole judge of the qualifications of its members, might have elected Mr. Smoot because of a lack of respectability had it been shown that he was a polygamist, but if he be unseated now it will be manifestly in response to a public clamor which does not reflect credit upon American police and common sense.

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