

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will convene in the Tabernacle on Thursday morning, October 6th, 1898, at 10 o'clock a. m. Officers and members of the Church are invited to be present.

LORENZO SNOW,
GEO. Q. CANNON,
JOS. F. SMITH,
First Presidency.

CHANGE IN Z. C. M. I. PRESIDENCY.

The late President Wilford Woodruff was president of Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution, hence his death made a vacancy in the official department of that corporation. This has been filled by the unanimous selection of President Lorenzo Snow for the position—a choice that is in every way acceptable, both to the stockholders of the institution and to the public at large, which is directly interested in important changes in this extensive and influential mercantile establishment.

The policy of the institution will continue the same—a policy that has been uniformly pursued for the general good of the people of this intermountain region. Z. C. M. I. is a mercantile business, and as such is expected to make a reasonable dividend on the capital invested—a feature which every intelligent person will endorse. But in its history, its present condition, and its future prospects, it is very much more than that to the people of these valleys. It is a balancing power in keeping prices down to a reasonable figure, in furnishing the public with every desirable variety and quality of merchandise, and in being the leading type of the financial integrity and capacity of the inhabitants of this section of the country.

In these essential particulars it has been and is a tower of strength to the Great West whose benefits are not to be measured even by the millions of dollars in business that its books show has been transacted, but in the priceless advantages that have come to the people at large by having the permanent reliance and assistance of a firm and moderate financial power, concentrated in the hands of those who have used and continue to use it wisely and well. It has been a potent force in stemming the tide of panics, in preventing exorbitant prices, and in opening avenues of commerce to the people at large. This highly commendable policy of the past is the fixed aim for the future, upheld as firmly by the new administration as by those that are past. May success continue to abide with Z. C. M. I., for the reason that it is thoroughly well merited.

REFLECTIONS FOR SUNDAY.

Sunday is a day to look forward to. Like charity, it is twice blessed in that it is at once a period of repose at the close of a week of exertion more or less wearisome, and a time for turning the hearts of men from their strifes, their struggles with one another, their antagonisms and their animosities unto the contemplation of things more in harmony with the original plan. All do not

require the rest, and all who do require it cannot get it; also many who do get it fall to employ it in the manner herein indicated. This is to be regretted, not so much because it exists—a bad enough condition of things in itself—but more on account of the deplorable fact that those who are enveloped in it do not want to be extricated. Like those who have for long times indulged in vicious habits, they no doubt now and then realize that they are doing wrong and in some cases might turn from it with a determined effort, but they prefer not to do so because their appetites are vitiated, their indulgence is alluring, and in this unnatural condition they are unable to see and appreciate the real happiness that lies just beyond the environment.

What shall it benefit a man to gain the honors and emoluments of life in great abundance if all or even a part of the things gained is used not to promote the real happiness of others or even the possessor of them? And how much worse is it when not only that state of things prevails but the ability of such persons to consummate definite ends is used to embarrass, hinder, annoy, humiliate, and even in some cases to utterly crush those who are not engaged in the same lines of applied thought and are availing themselves of their natural right to differ in respect to certain things?

The family of man is moulded after a common pattern and invested with common attributes and characteristics; but when this is said all is said regarding sameness. We are not alike in appearance, voice, tastes, inclinations or capacities. Such contrariety added to the ability necessary to give expression or force to any inherited or cultivated quality is what creates divergence of opinion and this in turn is responsible for the social and national distinctions which exist among us. Hence political parties, religious denominations and all the other forms and combinations which permeate the social group. It is not to be expected that there will be no disagreements, no antagonisms, even when the will is held in restraint and the utmost tolerance because of differences of opinion and practices are extended. The family has not yet reached that stage of perfection. The condition that is contended for is one in which less of acrimony, bitterness and malice would characterize the rivalries and oppositions of the people. If those who are intense in their views and the expression of them will, just for experiment's sake, say, try to find something in an opponent that is good and worthy—all such things if possible—and having found it proceed without too much delay to place it before the public; and then if it must be done take as charitable a view of his shortcomings and wrong-doings as can be accomplished without too much of a strain upon the disposition. It is hereby guaranteed that those who so do will get along just as fast and as well politically, socially and otherwise. Will it be done? Not in many cases if at all. It is feared. Why? Because in most instances the object is not only to get ahead but to keep the other person from getting anything. It seems as if the salt would lose some of its savor if A and his "set," even getting as much as they asked for, had to contemplate the unwelcome spectacle of B and his class otherwise than plunged in the deepest humiliation, sorrow and even disgrace. Is life so long or its events so certain as to justify such things, even if they could be justified at all? Hardly.

Whatever be the means of passing the day tomorrow, the bestowal of a thought upon this subject will trespass but little on one's time and can surely do no harm even though it accomplish no good. Only a determination to continue the wrong course to the end will exclude the thought, because once given a lodgment it may be found so pleasurable a thing that there might be created at once a liking for it, and this, as previously shown, is the thing that is altogether non grata. A liking for it would undoubtedly grow upon one even as the wine cup grows, but with what vastly different results! One makes the participant light-hearted and fair-minded, the other causes its victim to become degraded, enervated and forlorn.

ALGER AND THE SPOILS SYSTEM.

Secretary Alger, in self-defense, states that the reason why so much went wrong with the volunteers is that his subordinates failed to execute the orders given them. He intimates that the regulars were all right because controlled by trained officers, while the officers of the volunteers in many cases were men unfit for responsible positions, appointed not because of their ability but because they had influential friends.

Whether this be true or not need not be discussed. It is a matter of which the general public can judge. But it is worth while noticing that, according to the St. Louis Globe Democrat's Washington correspondent, none was more unfit for a responsible position than Secretary Alger himself; in the appointment of no army officer were merit and ability more overlooked than in his own case. The writer referred to says that privately and with unanimity there was a spirit of intense protest among army officers when it was known that Gen. Alger was to be made secretary of war. He came to his office without a welcome.

It was remembered that Gen. Merritt had been Alger's superior officer in the Civil war and had passed upon an alleged offense for which the Alger court-martial had been convened. There was no confidence in Alger when he entered upon his office.

To make matters worse, the secretary at the outbreak of the war was sick. The Globe-Democrat correspondent says:

"His physicians advised retirement and long rest. The patient snatched a few days at a time by the seashore. He came hurrying back to his duties in the department. Much of his work during the war was transacted as he lay flat on his back. Days passed without his presence at the department, but the papers to be examined and signed went to the sick room to be considered."

It is further alleged that time and again the secretary was given to understand that his services were but little appreciated. The story runs:

"From the beginning of hostilities to the signing of the protocol, there was scarcely a military movement executed that was not radically different from the suggestions offered by the secretary. Whether his way would have been better than the one subsequently adopted is hardly a profitable consideration. The fact that he was turned down almost continuously tended to affect detrimentally his relations with the commanding officers of the army. His usefulness became impaired. Recent criticisms in official quarters, directed against the secretary, are only the public expressions of sentiments which high officers of the department have held all of the time. In so far as they express want of confidence in the