

has ministered to the Church in the latter's capacity as an assembled General Conference, may every one in the Church, whether acting as an official or as a member, pay due attention to the admonitions and counsels given, in the full spirit and meaning thereof, and in humility, faith and zeal be not only hearers of the word of God, but obedient thereto in doing the things that He requires of His Saints.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS IN FULL

It has already been announced that the First Presidency of the Church have decided to publish the proceedings of General Conferences in full, in the form of a pamphlet. The one containing the details of the late general assembly of the Saints will be issued in a few days from the "Deseret News" establishment. Its cost will be nominal—only ten cents per copy.

A pamphlet of this character has been applied for by public libraries and other institutions in different parts of the country. It will be a means of disseminating correct information concerning the community of Latter-day Saints, its aims and institutions, besides subserving other profitable purposes. It will be of service for historical uses. If such a publication had been issued from the organization of the Church—which of course was impracticable—it would have been priceless, as an immense amount of information would thus have been preserved in compact shape.

Such a pamphlet as the one now considered will enable the Saints in every part of the world who are unable to attend the general conferences to make themselves familiar with the proceedings of those gatherings, and to some extent with the spirit which pervades them. Those who do attend on such occasions can, by means of the full report, more firmly, by its perusal, fasten upon their minds the teachings they have heard.

Some of the discourses delivered at the Conference just closed have been upon the beneficial effects of reading and studying the written word of God. Those Saints who thus exercise their minds are more ready to understand the purport of the teachings of the living oracles than those who do not. The discourses of the authorities should be attentively perused by the people, as in this way the latter are brought into closer touch and sympathy with their ecclesiastical leaders. This is a leading reason for the publication of the proposed pamphlet.

All who desire to secure copies of this publication should send their orders to this office.

CITY GOVERNMENT.

That meeting of mayors which has lately been held in Columbus, Ohio, is deemed by the flippant to be an assembly of those who, despairing of running their cities aright at home, are telling how the thing should be done in convention. The sneer is not justified, however; for out of the discussions and interchange of views at the Columbus gathering a vast amount of good has come, and the cities represented ought to receive a direct benefit, as should also all others, from the suggestions offered and adopted as to changes in charters, increased or better-defined powers of mayors, and all the other points argued and passed upon with reference to the government of a municipality. Such government is at best a complexity owing to our system of management; under partisan rule it is worse than a complexity—it threatens to become, except

in occasional instances, what most people know it has already become in most cases, an abomination.

A new science in city government is needed—the oldest, most progressive and best governed cities have come to this conclusion and are working along the lines of reform. It is a question of men now—men of tried ability, of freedom from party dictation, of independence as to promises of spoils, of antipathy to heelers, or indifference to all other clamor than the proper demand for clean, pure, economical, business administration. If under the arching dome of the whole heavens there is a patriotic citizen who finds fault with those qualifications in city officials, let him stand up and be counted. Of course there is complaint against that kind of candidates and that kind of a platform, but the decent portion of the objectors are mightily embarrassed by the company in which they find themselves. For while not all the opposition consists of those who live upon the spoils of office and are content to play the part of place-seeker, political flunkey or party boss, it is abundantly evident that there is not one of these latter varieties but is to be found working jaws and legs and fingers on that particular side of the case.

If there is one thing more than another that should especially commend the idea of non-partisanship in city affairs to the favor of thoughtful and conservative citizens, it is the character, attributes and personal value of the great majority of those who are most loudly opposing it. This vivid fact should not be lost sight of, no matter how many idle, imaginary or baseless sidelights the opposition may seek to throw upon the reform movement. It is a sorry condition which confronts and worries those who, while themselves reputable and honest and desiring respectability in their associates, are unfortunately unable to rid their cause of the "strikers" and "rounders" whom they despise as much as anybody can, but whom party machinery still finds use and pay for.

WHO OWNS THE ENGAGEMENT RING?

The poet insists that it is in the spring that the young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love; but experienced observers of human nature agree that all seasons are alike to lovers, fall engagements and marriages being generally regarded as especially lucky. Directly bearing upon the matter of courtship, and therefore of interest at any time, is a decision just rendered by a Brooklyn court on the ethics of the matter. The Cleveland Plaindealer summarizes the mass of evidence, pleading, ruling, etc., which the papers of Greater New York published concerning the case, and states the substantial facts and conclusions in a way that enables the busy reader to get the points at a glance. It appears that a young man had given the lady of his choice a handsome diamond engagement ring. One day he got the ring from her, and on its return she discovered that the diamond had been removed and replaced by a chip of glass. Of course the engagement was broken off. Then the girl had the young man arrested for stealing the diamond, and the young man put in a claim for the ring itself as being his property and not that of the girl. Her lawyer insisted that the ring had been given outright to the girl and that it became her property absolutely. His lawyer claimed that an engagement ring is given on conditions only, and that the property in it has not gone altogether from the original possessor.

There was the issue and it brought up for decision a question that has given concern to many young men and maidens. It is considered a point of honor, when an engagement is broken off, that all presents of value, and especially the engagement ring, shall be at once returned. But there are some persons who do not look very closely at the point of honor, and regard only the question of legal title. Cases are not infrequent where the custodian—it is doubtful whether it would be proper to say possessor—of an engagement ring has refused to give it up and the original owner has felt an uncertainty about the right to reclaim it by law. The decision of the Brooklyn judge is therefore of value as a precedent. He listened carefully to the arguments on either side and gave them due consideration before deciding. Then he announced that an engagement ring is not a gift, but merely the token of a contract and of value to the girl solely as the sign and evidence of the contract. When the contract was broken, the purpose of the ring was at an end and the girl's title to it was lost. The charge of theft was therefore dismissed and the ring declared the property of the man.

HUMANITY'S DUTY.

Right Rev. John Hale Wicks, bishop of Bloemfontein, whose diocese extends over Basutoland, the whole of the Orange Free State, British Bechuanaland and a few more unpronounceable sections in Africa, has lately been declaring through the Humanitarian (London) the difficulties confronting the missionaries of his church in the Dark Continent. Of course polygamy is given prominence as one of these; but of particular local interest is the statement that the authorities allow the convert to choose which of his wives he will retain, and he is bound to provide for those whom he puts away.

This is what an opposing superior force prescribes for barbarians in the heart of the least known part of the earth's habitable surface; and yet there are coarse, unfeeling creatures in more advanced countries—creatures who consider themselves the personification of the highest civilization, who are still so base as to curse an honest, pure-minded man for caring for the wife whom the law has said he may not live with, and for supporting the children she has born unto him. Happily such inhumanity is rare—albeit those whom it animates are noisy and sometimes stand in prominent places. Even more gratifying is the fact that few are scared by the bluster, being sustained not only by their own consciences but by the decent sentiment of every reputable person. The laws of the land are made to be obeyed, and must be obeyed; but there is no law, either of God or man, that needs to make a true man a coward or a wretch. Polygamy has ceased, and the practice of what is called unlawful cohabitation is at an end; but there are wives and children to whom exist obligations which no statute can wipe out, and from which no one but the foulest ingrate and scoundrel would desire to be exonerated. Manhood, humanity, Christianity, all demand that men act properly toward those with whom they have entered into holy alliances, and to the innocents whom they have been instrumental in bringing into the world; and the blight of heaven will surely fall upon those who through timidity, inconstancy, inhumanity or any unworthy motive whatsoever seek to evade these obligations and responsibilities.