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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, 1904, and continue until Wednesday, April 6. A general attendance of the officers and members is requested and expected.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,

JOHN R. WINDER,

ANTHONY H. LUND,

First Presidency.

UTTERLY DEPRAVED.

With its accustomed perversity and sophistry, the Salt Lake Tribune has quoted part of a sentence in the Deseret News, concerning unpublished common vices in Christian cities, that are both unlawful and brutal, and then asks:

"Are we to understand, then, that polygamy is merely the Mormon substitute for that sort of thing? If not, where does the parallel come in?"

The answer is, No, you are not to understand anything of the kind, for the reason that in the same article that the Tribune has garbled, the "News" said: "Mark this. We make no comparison between the evils that abound in this 'Christian' land that are winked at and condoned, and the system of wedlock revealed through the 'Mormon' Prophet. God forbid!"

Therefore there is no "parallel to come in," as none was drawn. We made the distinction clear because we anticipated some such devilry as that now resorted to by the Tribune, for that is one of its old tricks. It was never known to state an opponent's position fairly, particularly if he was a "Mormon" or touched on any question relating to "Mormonism." That paper is utterly reprobate and contemptible in its course and policy, and cannot be depended upon in any statement of fact or argument in controversy.

As a case in point as to its reliability, read the statement it published on first page of Tuesday's daily issue in reference to the testimony of Mrs. Mabel B. Kennedy; it said:

"Her description of Apostle Young, who performed the ceremony, was exact, every effort of Attorney Worthington for Senator Smoot failing to shake her on cross-examination."

Then read the following, which is in the regular report from Washington published in the same paper of the same date on the second page:

"She could not identify a picture of Brigham Young."

The witness became confused several times under cross-examination and made some contradictory statements, which for the most part she corrected later when her attention was called to them by the attorney for the prosecution. She was unable to give a description of Brigham Young."

Now, notice the annexed paragraph which appears in the Tribune's double column, first page, displayed leading statement of the Smoot case this Wednesday morning:

"From the testimony of Mrs. Matthews it would seem that Mrs. Kennedy was forced into becoming a plural wife. She had asked to be allowed to wait until she was 18 years old, but Johnson and her mother would not consent, and she was sent to Arizona and sealed to Johnson."

Read the press report of the case in all the local papers. Tribune's included, and see if there is anything that justifies the statement we have copied. It will be seen that it is a falsehood "out of whole cloth." The exact contrary appears in the press report, which shows that both the girl and her mother desired the marriage, that Apostle Peasdale refused to perform it until she had reached the age of 18, and that she was sealed to do so by the mother, under the plea that "such marriages were done away."

That the girl went into Mexico with Johnson and his wife, voluntarily, planned the marriage with them, and that nothing was told to the person who performed the ceremony to inform him that it was a plural marriage.

If the public want to know the truth in relation to the present controversy they should pay no attention to either the "specials" or editorials in the Tribune.

bune. The Associated Press reports are in the main correct and such mistakes as occur are mostly of minor importance. They are not wilfully untrue and therefore differ from the utterances of the Salt Lake Tribune.

THAT "TACIT UNDERSTANDING"

There was a sentiment, sometimes strongly expressed by broadminded men and public journals when Utah was admitted into the Union, that under the pledge of the State further polygamous marriages being prohibited, there should be no interference with people who were and had been for years involved in plural family relations. Denials of this came either from misinformation, or ignorance, or wilful perversion of the facts. We recur to this matter because of the following acknowledgment of the existence of that sentiment, which appeared in the Sacramento Bee of March 5:

"President Smith, of the Mormon Church has publicly declared he has a plurality of wives and he proposes to protect them. He says he has taken no new ones since the Anti-Polygamy law went into effect. Before the Congressional committee on Wednesday he said:

"I married my first wife more than thirty-eight years ago, and my last wife more than twenty years ago. By those wives I have had children and I have preferred to take my own chances with the law and suffer any consequences the law might visit upon me rather than abandon these children and their mothers."

"The Bee has always held that our polygamy laws should severely punish any future disregard of the doctrine of monogamy, but should not seek to humiliate the wives of the past nor bastardize their children."

"About the meanest thing old Abraham did was to turn Hagar out into the wilderness."

"In one respect at least, Smith of Utah is a better man than was Abraham of Ur."

Touching on the question of the course to be pursued in relation to the families of men who contracted plural marriages before the issuance of the "manifesto," the Worcester Spy of March 5 has this timely editorial:

"The frankness with which the head of the Mormon Church explains his private life is amazing. While there is no sympathy in the east for a polygamist, we can understand this man's position toward his five wives. He believes, of course, that his first duty is to his wives and children. Just what duty the state has to perform in a case like this it is pretty hard to state."

"If a man is telling the exact truth about the abandonment of polygamy, it is quite possible that the conditions will cure themselves in time and society will be better off, perhaps, than to persecute men and women who entered the state of polygamy before 1890."

"The effectual divorcing of polygamous wives would work extreme hardship on innocent women and children more than upon the men. The investigation of Senator Smoot has justified itself and it has apparently turned into an investigation of polygamy in Utah. Apparently the Mormon Church is not afraid of explaining its position."

"Congress has hardly the right to investigate any church. The United States guarantees religious independence. A man's religious views must be protected by Congress and not interfered with. Of course the publicity of this investigation affords the Mormon Church an opportunity to explain itself frankly and efficiently."

GOOD FOR THE "MORMONS."

The following tribute to the good qualities of the "Mormons" in Arizona, was contributed by a prominent citizen of that Territory, and published in the Phoenix Republican and has been reproduced in other Arizona papers with cordial endorsement:

"There are Mormons in many localities in beautiful Arizona. They have been among our best, bravest and thriftiest pioneers. And wherever you find them, there industry is everywhere apparent, energy and thought and vigor are everywhere visible in fruitful and tangible form. In the Salt River valley, in particular, one will find the inevitable signs of the many qualities evidenced in beautiful homes, luxuriant orchards and fields. No race or sect can beat them as farmers. No one understands better the soil or the science of irrigation than they. Nowhere will one find kinder hospitality—genuine, come-in-and-make-yourself-at-home hospitality than among them. The writer knows many of these estimable people personally and admires them. He has sampled their hospitality and esteems it highly."

"Thatcher, in the Gila valley, is a charming little burg—a veritable gem in a beautiful setting. The settlement is purely Mormon. There you will find every farmer owning his ranch, comfortable, prosperous, with money in the bank. There you will find a splendid academy of learning, for the Mormons value education. They believe in the very best of schools and strive earnestly to attain pre-eminence. They believe, too, in educating their children at home. While there last fall the writer visited the academy and found it doing splendid work. In the evening he attended a social dance given under the auspices of the academy. These dances are given monthly, we were told. The principal of the academy was in charge. Preceding the dancing a prayer was offered by the Bishop. This is the regular custom. Then followed a social entertainment of an extraordinarily high standard. There was no untidy conduct. The Bishop, the teachers and parents were there as instructors and chaperones. The young people were guided, not spied upon. They were taught by precept and example of their parents and friends. Harmony reigned and pure joy was unconfined."

"Another peculiarity was the perfect equality of the sexes. The Mormon men believe that their wives are not only good enough for companions, but good enough for citizens and voters. They believe in equal suffrage. Why should they not?"

GOING TO JERUSALEM.

An expedition of more than common interest has left New York these days. It numbered about 800 persons, and the destiny is Jerusalem, where a world's congress of Sunday school workers is to be held during the third week of April. The idea of holding a Sunday school congress in the city of David occurred a couple of years ago to a gentleman very much interested in Sunday school work and it met with general approval, with the result that many now will realize their fondest dream, of visiting and seeing some of the sacred places of holy writ. Seventeen days will be spent in Palestine, and the pilgrims will stop, on the road, at Madeira, Gibraltar, Algiers, Athens, Constantinople, and other places of interest. At Jerusalem the Americans will be joined by two hundred English delegates who come on a special ship, and thus the convention will take on a decidedly international complexion, inasmuch as representatives of other nations, also are expected to be present. It is safe to say that never before has the land so dear to Christian faith and in which so many notable scenes have been enacted, witnessed such a demonstration as this world's gathering of Sunday school workers must prove to be.

The trip will undoubtedly be one of memorable interest to the "pilgrims" themselves, and they will learn many things of special value to Sunday school teachers, relative to the correct exegesis of the sacred text. The hope is also expressed that by their great number they will impress the Jews and Mohammedans with the "strength" of the "Christianity" of western nations. In this they will be disappointed, though. Thousands of pilgrims visit the Holy Land every year, some from Russia, some from France, Italy, and other countries, but the "numbers" do not overwhelm the stole Arab or the mercenary Hebrew. If the "pilgrims" come prepared to spend large sums of money on "guides" and on all kinds of relics and mementoes, as well as on beggars of every description, they will make a favorable impression, but not otherwise.

The Sunday school laborers will have a chance of visiting places held by Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans alike, as well places revered by only one of these great divisions. They will visit the ancient home of Abraham. They will see what is called the tomb of David, and the ruins of structures reared by Solomon. They will walk upon fields where once the feet of the Savior trod, and where His ancestors lived and labored. It is to be hoped that their history will not fail to bring to the visitors the lessons they carry for the benefit of the present time.

Just now March seems to be a mixture of lion and lamb.

They are leading a strenuous life in Springfield, Ohio, just now.

The attack on Vladivostok seems to have been a sort of shell-ry compound.

If the Smoot investigation is to run all summer, why not hold the sessions at the St. Louis exposition?

The czar wants to take the field. He also wants to take Korea and Manchuria.

One trouble with a big navy is that it is apt to give the nation possessing it the big head.

Whose sympathy does not go out to Mrs. Kennedy because of the severely trying ordeal through which she had to pass? Poor woman!

It is very evident that the witnesses in the Senator Smoot investigation are not going to make a fortune out of what the government allows them.

Premier Balfour has made it plain that it is not the intention of his majesty's government to tax food stuffs. The British workman couldn't stomach that.

An Iowa man is being sued by two women for hugging them, the damages in each case being laid at five thousand dollars. He had better continue to hug his delusions.

The Sultan was willing to allow the Black Sea fleet to pass through the Dardanelles on conditions that Russia indignantly rejected. When the final settling of accounts comes, as it will some day, Russia will produce this item and demand a full accounting with heavy interest.

The account of the lynching of a negro at Springfield, O., says that "Frequently the arm would fly up convulsively when a muscle was struck and the mob went fairly wild with delight. Throughout it all perfect good humor and good order was maintained, and everyone seemed in the best of spirits, joking with his nearest neighbor while reloading his revolver." And the mob went wild with delight! And throughout it all perfect good humor and good order was maintained! How pleasant to think that everything was in the best of taste and in perfect accord with the best usage of Ohio's best society. There was nothing unseemly, nothing out of harmony with the proprieties of the occasion, nothing rowdyish or vulgar, nothing that betrayed the canaille and the low bred. It was an eminent success of which Springfield is justly proud and all the rest of the United States deeply ashamed.

A FEW PRESS COMMENTS.

Indianapolis Journal.

Mr. Smoot is not a practical polygamist and never has been. He has never had but one wife. As far as this question is concerned, therefore, he has not violated the law and is not subject to any penalty or disqualification. The fact that he is a Mormon and that polygamy was formerly taught and practiced by the church and is still practiced by some of its members, does not affect his standing at all. The only question that could arise in his case on this point is not whether he theoretically believed in it, but whether he practiced it. As it is not claimed that he has ever had more than one wife he is immune on this point. But it is claimed that as an apostle in the Mormon church Mr. Smoot has taken an oath or assumed obligations to the church inconsistent with his obligations as a United States senator. This is a political question and entirely distinct from the religious phase of the question and from polygamy. It can be shown that Mr. Smoot has assumed an obligation to the Mormon Church which in the possible event of a conflict would override and nullify his oath as a senator to support the Constitution of the United States he ought not to hold a seat in the Senate. This seems to be the real point at issue.

Kansas City Journal.

The evidence at the Senate investigation has borne hard upon the Mormon church, and especially upon its president Joseph Smith. By his own confession Smith is living in open violation of the laws of his State and teaching others to do so. He is not only a real question in issue, however, is what Smith has done and is doing, but what Smith has done and is doing. It has been proved that Smith is a practical polygamist and unfit to be a senator, but the church is not to be affected by that. Smith is unfit to be senator.

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