

showed this very prophetic statement to Cyrus and that this was one reason why he concluded to issue the famous decree that liberated the exiles. Could the Almighty not foresee this? And was not the record of that name for a sufficient reason? Must we limit the knowledge of God to general facts and suppose that the details of the future are dim to Him as to limited human knowledge? History itself contradicts this view.

The remarkable fact, however, is that "Christian" ministers in our age join the ranks of those who would fain see the word of God relegated to the domain of fiction. The reason is plain enough. It is the authority of God that is no longer wanted. It is a "counsel" against the Lord and His Anointed, but it is destined to fail whether it lifts its head in unmasked infidelity or under the delicate features of scholarly criticism.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE.

The Sixty-seventh Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will convene in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. Sunday, April 4th, 1897. All officers and members of the Church are invited to be present.

WILFORD WOODRUFF,  
GEORGE Q. CANNON,  
JOSEPH F. SMITH,  
First Presidency.

### THE POLICY OF THE STATE.

One thing can be said of the expiring Legislature: It has performed an immense amount of work. How well or poorly that has been done will be developed by the attrition of experience, and the tests in the courts, that seem to be inevitable under our civilization.

Another commendable thing may be said: It has adhered to and further developed the policy of conservatism which hitherto has characterized the law-making department of this commonwealth, since as well as before it became a State. A number of propositions, more or less radical in their nature, were sprung during the session, and while some of them received considerable support, none were finally enacted into law without first being sufficiently modified to meet the views of conservative members.

What is here said is intended to apply more directly to railroad and financial legislation. Several radical departures from existing laws relating to railroads and finance were proposed, but none were made. The view in regard to railroads, which was entertained by a majority of the lawmakers, was that the State needed more of them worse than it needed stringent regulations respecting them; and in regard to finance the prevailing opinion among members of the assembly seemed to be that a conservative policy, changing existing conditions as little as possible, and giving the least uneasiness to capital, was the best to pursue.

The NEWS endorses the course of the Legislature in the pursuit of this conservatism. Utah can better afford

to let her neighbors try experiments with new or radical theories in legislation than she can to make such experiments herself. When innovations have been proved elsewhere to be beneficial it will be time enough to make them here, in most cases.

The policy of the State through its Legislature and officers, of all its municipalities through their controlling authorities, and of its corporations and business houses, should be to maintain and fortify the character for solidity and steadfastness which Utah already has established so well. Such a character will always be strong in the estimation of the world, and in fact, and will draw to itself the world's strength in the form of capital and the friendship of strong men.

This is what Utah wants. She ought to become famous for her changeless reliability, for her fixedness of purpose, and for the stability of her laws and institutions. Such a reputation, coupled with her comparatively boundless resources, will carry her swiftly onward to the brilliant destiny which awaits her.

### POLITICAL INTOLERANCE.

The State Constitution requires a secret ballot in Utah, making a provision therefore mandatory upon the Legislature; the statutes passed in pursuance of this instruction provide that voters shall be free from any intimidation, that they shall make up their ballots free from the inspection of any individual, and that no election officer or watcher shall express even an opinion as to how an elector voted; and a severe punishment is ordered for a disregard of these provisions. The purpose of all this is to preserve the freedom of the ballot in this State; for in such freedom is the safety of the people's liberties. The aim is that no elector shall be threatened or intimidated in advance of the election, to affect his vote; and that the way in which he voted shall not be revealed to subject him to punishment for acting freely in the exercise of the elective franchise.

In view of this care with which the freedom of the ballot is sought to be guarded, in the letter of the Constitution and laws of the State, both before and after voting, what will the people say of the action of the Senate at this session of the Legislature? What must they say? The record is plain on which to base a judgment. Governor Wells sent to the Senate nominations from the different political parties, is the law requires. When some of the nominees came up for consideration, they were pursued into the ballot box, and for their action there, guaranteed by the Constitution and laws to be free to them, they were publicly snubbed and insulted by being turned down, and to that extent were they punished by the Senate. The head and front of their offending was the way they voted. Nothing else was charged, nothing else intimated; the competency of the men for the positions named was beyond question. But they had supported and voted for the regular Republican ticket in this State, which they had a constitutional right to do, were dubbed "goldbugs" and the nominations rejected for that cause, which the Senate had no constitutional right

to do. The very reason for the action taken is a violation of the spirit of the Constitution—an infringement of political liberty. A very small minority of the Senate raised a protest against this course—the grossest political tyranny and intolerance ever exhibited by a legislative body in Utah.

This being the situation, a people who love and insist on full political liberty can have but one thing to say. They know that a man who will not deal fairly and justly with another, because that other differs with him in political or religious convictions, is not worthy their full confidence in the governing power of the commonwealth. A legislative senate may hold up to ridicule or denunciation a "goldbug" today; it may be a "silverite" tomorrow, or a "nationalist" the next day. But when the application of these terms is made through the way a man votes, it is forbidden by the Constitution and therefore must be condemned and rebuked by the people, if they would preserve their own freedom from assaults of bigotry in politics. It is not a question of a political party; it is a matter that concerns the liberty of the citizen to express his will at the ballot box.

### RUSSIA AND CHINA.

The reorganizing of Chinese institutions on the pattern of western civilization is now being carried out gradually. Some of the more important reforms contemplated relate to the reconstruction of the army and to public schools. The present system of provincial armies under the command of governors is to be abolished and an army numbering 300,000 men to be formed. It is to be commanded by European officers, and the soldiers are to serve three years with the colors, three years with the first reserve and three years with the second reserve. To meet the expense of this arrangement the European system of coinage is to be adopted and an import duty to be collected by the imperial custom house.

In Great Britain the progress of China's civilization is regarded with much concern. It is looked upon as a game, the various stages of which must be closely watched. Li Hung Chang is charged with having brought about the secret treaty between Russia and China, and the sentiments of this shrewd statesman are supposed to be expressed by his private secretary, who is quoted as saying that England's prestige in the East is gone altogether, and that soon she would lose India, after which event Russia and China would rule the Asiatic world.

The question of counteracting the influence of Russia in China is regarded as an important one. On this subject a writer in the Contemporary Review, London, says:

The emperor of China is free to sign what he pleases, or what he is cajoled or threatened into signing. Nor can we adopt the heroic measure of presenting an ultimatum to Russia ordering her to cancel this treaty. But such admissions are far from implying that we are helpless. We can refuse to accede to the proposed increase in the tariff unless China extends our treaty rights, such as we have at present on the coast, in Manchuria, and even throughout the whole of China. Germany and France,