

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-fourth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will convene in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 o'clock on Friday morning, April 6th, 1894.

The officers and members of the Church generally are cordially invited to attend the meeting of the Conference.

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

HISTORICAL CORRECTIONS.

The News is pleased to give space to the following communication:

SALT LAKE CITY, March 21, 1894.—Mr. Editor: I notice in your issue of the 20th inst. an article headed H. W. Bigler, in which it is stated that Bigler and Azariah Smith, of Mantl, are the only ones now alive and residing in Utah, who went to Coloma, forty-five miles distant from Sutter's Fort, and built a sawmill in January, 1848. I write to inform you that Alexander Stephens is now living in Weber county, and he and I were present at the great discovery of gold at that place. William Johnston, of New Mexico, was also present.

H. W. Bigler was, as you stated, the first to make the record of that important event.

Herewith I forward to you my pamphlet on the first discovery of gold in California, a copy of which is now laid away in the archives of the state library of California, and also in the library of the Society of California Pioneers of '49, and accepted as the best record that they have ever found.

Feeling that you will be pleased to correct the mistake, I am, yours truly,

JAMES S. BROWN.

The pamphlet received from Mr. Brown is entitled "California Gold: an Authentic History of the First Find," and contains sixteen pages of interesting reading matter. It has been recently issued from the press at Oakland, California, the date of its authorship being January 24 of this year. The narrative covers from June 1, 1847, to the latter part of June, 1848. The error which Mr. Brown calls attention to was based on a passage that has been much quoted in local publications, and the substance of which appeared in a widely-read series of articles of a few years ago in the *Century Magazine* on the Gold Discovery: "Henry W. Bigler, of St. George, Azariah Smith, of Mantl, in Utah; and Peter L. Wimmer, of San Diego, California, are today the three survivors of the party of workmen whose picks and shovels first brought to light the auriferous wealth of California." A few months ago Wm. Johnston, of New Mexico, wrote that he was still living, and his letter was published in the *News*; as he is not residing in Utah, he was not named in our article on the 20th. Now Mr. Brown comes forward with

the information that Mr. Stephens is yet residing in Weber county and himself in this city. It is with more than ordinary satisfaction that we announce these additional facts to the public, and for the courtesy of enabling us to do so Mr. Brown has our thanks.

We regard the pamphlet referred to as worthy the importance which the author says has been attached to it by the California Pioneers' society. Its author was on the ground at the time and therefore speaks from personal knowledge. It bears evidence of being a more authentic and accurate account of the discovery of gold in California than is contained in the histories of that state now extant, including that of H. H. Bancroft, and is therefore a correction of their statements. For this reason we give a brief summary of the narrative and some extracts therefrom.

Mr. Brown relates how the Mormon Battalion members decided to stay in California and seek employment for the winter of 1847-8, and recites that a number of them were hired by Sutter and Marshall. Six of the Battalion—Alex. Stephens, H. W. Bigler, James Berger, Azariah Smith, Wm. Johnston and James S. Brown—built a cabin near the saw mill at Coloma, and did their own cooking. Mr. Brown tells how, on the day before the discovery was made, Mr. Marshall communicated to him his views that a bed of rock in the mill race contained gold. They got a pan and washed some of the sand, gravel and bedrock (the latter scaled off with a pick), but their search was unsuccessful. Mr. Marshall was not satisfied, however, and said he would turn in the water to run all night, and would shut it off in the morning to look for the metal. Thus it appears that the discovery was not accidentally made while examining some damage to the tail race, but was the result of deliberate search. When Mr. Marshall shut the water off in the morning Mr. Brown remarked to his companions, "Oh, he is going to find a gold mine this morning." Mr. Brown's narrative then says:

Nothing but a smile of derision stole over the faces of the parties present. We ate our breakfast and went to work. James Berger and myself went to the whipsaw, and the rest of the men some eight or ten rods off from the mill. I was close to the mill and sawpit, but was also close to the tail race, where I could direct the Indians that were there. This was January 24, 1848.

Just when we got partly to work, here came Mr. Marshall with his old wool hat in his hand, and stopped within six or eight yards of the sawpit and exclaimed, "Boys, I have got her now!" I, being the nearest to him, and having more curiosity than the rest of the men, jumped from the pit and stepped to him, and on looking in his hat discovered say ten or twelve scales of what proved to be gold. I picked up the largest piece, worth about fifty cents, and tested it with my teeth, and as it did not give, I held it aloft and exclaimed, "Gold, boys, gold!" At that they all dropped their tools and gathered around Mr. Marshall.

Mr. Brown then details how he tested the metal by hammering it—and by

heating, and again declared that it was gold. He says:

At this juncture all was excitement, and all repaired to the lower end of the tail race, where we found from three to six inches of water flowing over the bed of the rock, in which there were crevices and little pockets, over which the water rippled in the glare of the sunlight as it shone over the mountain peaks. James Berger was the first man to spy a scale of the metal. He stooped to pick it up, but found some difficulty in getting hold of it, as his fingers would blur the water, but he finally succeeded. The next man to find a piece was H. W. Bigler; he used his jack-knife, getting it on the point of the blade, then getting his forefinger over it, placed it in his left hand. And as we learned how to look for it, as it glittered under the water and in the rays of the sun, we were all rewarded with a few scales. Each put his mine into a small vial that was provided by Marshall, and we made him the custodian. We repeated our visits for three or four mornings to the tail race, each time collecting some more of the precious metal, until we had gathered somewhere between three and four ounces.

The pamphlet goes on to relate how H. W. Bigler found gold in more than a dozen other places, and describes how many other discoveries were made, up to the time of the rush to Mormon Island and the first public announcement of the news by a San Francisco paper edited by Samuel Brannan and owned by a company of Mormons. There is also an interesting statement as to how Alexander Stephens made a trough from a log, and then converted it into a rocker, which led to the renowned gold rocker. Mr. Brown's narrative gives many particulars up to the time he left for Utah, in June, 1848, and states:

To Sutter's capital and enterprise and Marshall's shrewd sagacity has been given the credit of the great gold discovery of California. The facts are that James W. Marshall discovered the first color, and in less than an hour six Mormons found color as well, and in less than six weeks had discovered it in hundreds of places that Mr. Marshall had never seen, the most notable of which was Mormon Island, to where the first rush was made, and from where the news was spread to the uttermost bounds of the everlasting hills and to all the nations of the earth.

As to Sutter's enterprise and capital, he did furnish the graham flour and mutton, wheat and peas, black coffee and brown sugar, teams and tools, while we, the members of the Mormon Battalion, did do the hard labor that discovered the metal; and it is also true that we were in Sutter's employ at that date, and that we did not get paid for our labor. I worked 100 days for the firm, and never received one farthing for it. * * * When we went for a settlement we were told by Captain Sutter that he could not settle with us, for his bookkeeper had gone to the mines and his books were not posted. He cursed Marshall and the mines and declared that he was a ruined man, that the discovery was his ruin, for it had drawn off his laborers and left everything to go to rack, and he was being robbed. I do not wish it to be understood that I charge them with being dishonorable, for I do not, but I charge it to the general confusion of the country.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

The fact that Christ rose from the tomb after having suffered death by crucifixion has always been proclaimed