

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-eighth Semi-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 Monday morning, October 4, 1897.

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

WILFORD WOODRUFF,

GEORGE Q. CANNON,

JOSEPH F. SMITH,

First Presidency.

THE NON-PARTISAN COMMITTEE.

The "News" has not the faintest hope of either satisfying or silencing the ward politicians who are inveighing against the non-partisan committee, and heaping all sorts of accusations upon it, including tyranny, czar-like methods, star chamber sittings, dark-lantern procedure, etc. The committee has threatened to abolish the occupation of the ward politician, and that individual is consequently in no mood to accept any explanations or arguments, nor to be satisfied with anything short of the annihilation of the committee.

But there are thousands of voters in the city, who are honest and conscientious, and who desire to support that policy which will yield the best results in municipal affairs, who are in danger of being misled by the representations of the rounders and heelers, and a few words of explanation, and a few statements of fact, addressed to them, will, if listened to in candor, help them to a realization of the situation.

The accusers of the committee say it is guilty of gross assumption; has adopted un-American methods; has attacked the liberties of the people by preventing a popular expression in primaries regarding nominations; is assuming the role of dictator, etc. Now the facts are simply these:

The manner in which city affairs has long been conducted had created a sentiment of profound disgust in the minds of thousands of citizens, especially leading business men and taxpayers. It was natural that one business man should express this sentiment to others, who in turn heartily endorsed it. Thus was created an atmosphere that inevitably produced spontaneous action. It was plain that if a reformation was to be effected, an organized movement must precede it; and an informal meeting of prominent business men was held to consider what to do in the emergency.

These gentlemen knew perfectly well what a storm among the politicians their action would raise. They foresaw the accusations that would be heaped upon them, and the abuse they would be obliged to endure, but in the consciousness of their own integrity, and realizing the inestimable benefits that would result to the city as a whole, they decided to proceed with their work. Other meetings were held, and a plan of campaign was matured.

Why did not the committee give the people a chance to be heard, by pro-

viding for primaries and conventions? Because the committee represented no party having local committees to arrange for and conduct such assemblages. It had no party machinery at its command, and therefore could put none in operation. Furthermore, its chief labor was to destroy party machinery, so far as municipal elections are concerned, and had it gone to work and created some of its own, it would have been open to the charge of stultification. Primaries and conventions are the very means by which corruption is accomplished, and by abolishing them the committee gained its first great victory over the heelers and rounders. The latter are howling because the opportunity to make the swaps and bargains through which rascals attain power is not to be afforded them, in the shape of primaries and conventions.

In deciding not to provide for primaries and conventions, the committee have displayed admirable shrewdness and foresight, as well as consistency, and have baffled the plotters in advance. When the voters of the city come to appreciate this point at its full value, they will enthusiastically support the committee and its policy.

Again, the committee is not a political body; its work is not political; its aims and ambitions are not political. It is a body of business men; its work is pure business; it seeks to accomplish none but business results. It is therefore more than justified in abjuring ordinary political methods and precedents; it is morally bound to do so.

One of the first things the members of the committee did was to pledge their honor as gentlemen that all their acts, and all the nominations they might favor, should be strictly in harmony with the non-partisan and business spirit in which their work was begun; and it is the unanimous testimony of every member concerning every other member that this pledge has been faithfully kept throughout all their work and deliberations.

No man has been before the committee seeking office for himself or friend; and beyond doubt such an applicant would be promptly turned down. Neither has any member of the committee shown a taint of nepotism, while they have unalterably resolved not to accept office themselves. The committee are and claim to be nothing more or less than citizens who are personally and patriotically interested in the welfare of the city, and who are engaged in maturing a purely business proposition to submit to the shareholders in the municipal corporation, the taxpayers. That proposition will take the form of a municipal ticket, and the committee has a perfect right, in every sense, to submit it to the people of the city.

THE PASS.

"Try not the pass, the old man said." This poetic advice has always, since it was written, received considerable favor—as poetry, not otherwise. As a matter of fact, the human animal reads "Excelsior" admiringly only that he may the more comprehensively and unblushingly disregard its injunction, if we may judge by what goes on continually. It looks as if the natural stubbornness of mankind had been appealed to by reason of its being made known to him that certain things must not be tried, let alone accomplished, and these things

he will do to the exclusion of some others.

The efforts to discover a pass across the region surrounding the North Pole have cost thousands of lives and millions of money. Nature has erected a barrier which so far has successfully withstood every assault upon it. In characters which we ought to understand by this time she has written upon the outer wall, "Thus every year the attempts to penetrate the frozen zone continue."

Then there is the Chilkoot pass, which is more an object of interest to the world at large just now than any other. A good many have succeeded in leaving it behind, and very many more have failed and will continue to fail in attempting to do so. Those who are so near its summit now that getting back is difficult and going ahead dangerous, or a majority of them, will assuredly wish they were elsewhere before long. Spurred on by dreams of wealth suddenly and easily acquired when once the goal is reached, they are buoyed up and borne onward until it becomes physically impossible to proceed further; then what? Sickness, hunger, disaster and death. Yet with all this staring them in the face there is not likely to be a complete cessation of the impetuous caravan's onward march until the word comes from the promised land that the means with which to fulfill the promises or any considerable part of them are exhausted or so nearly so that it is utterly futile for any more to come with the hope of getting away as well off as they came.

Then there is the Khyber pass, which is at present a source of the most profound interest to various portions of Europe and Asia. It is about as impossible when manned by a hostile force as that of Thermopylae or any of the others named or unnamed. And the Afridis are hostile, just now decidedly so, as many a British soldier can bear ample witness to and many more would if only the dead could speak.

It would not be the correct thing to close this chapter and leave another kind of pass unmentioned. It is the one by means of which a person procures transportation from point to point or admission to some sort of entertainment without going through the customary transaction of paying in coin (or paper) of the realm. This kind of pass is much better known than are the others and is the common resort of every tongue, clime, condition and almost every age. It is exceedingly popular, always in demand, and if it did not encourage such proceedings by constantly yielding to advances, the discouragements frequently received might curtail its issue somewhat. It is much the same in all places and all ages, and of it may truthfully be said: "Age cannot dim nor custom stale its infinite variety." It is a very handy thing to have sometimes, but by reason of its accessibility is not always treated with the consideration to which it is entitled. It is too late in the day, or rather in the century, to discuss the ethical features of the case; it being one that has passed along from age to age acquiring additional recognition, corresponding respectability and increasing proportions as it progressed. Like the country paper, it has come to stay, and the best we can do is to keep it shorn as much as may be of abuses and as distant as possible from the hands of the unworthy.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

The letters written by missionaries for publication in the "News" are often of a highly entertaining and instructive character, and are greatly