

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

CONFERENCE NOTICE.

The Sixty-sixth 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 Saturday morning, April 4th, 1896.

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.

THE STARRY FIELD.

The uncertainty as to the arrangement of the stars on the United States flag, which had to be changed by reason of the admission of Utah to the Union, has at last been settled by agreement of the secretaries of the war and navy, and the approval of the President. At present the blue field of the national emblem contains 44 stars arranged in six rows, the top and bottom rows containing eight, and the four intervening rows containing seven stars each, the rows being horizontal from left to right, and running obliquely from top to bottom. The changes are twofold, the purpose being to provide for the present need of Utah's extra star, and also for contingencies for the future. Utah's star has been added to the third row, being placed at the end; and the eighth star from the lowest row, the sixth, has been shifted to the end of the next to the lowest row, the fifth. As now arranged, therefore, the forty-five stars will be found in alternate horizontal rows of eight and seven stars each; and this flag will be official after July 4th next, when all others will become obsolete. Upon the admission of Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, the second, fourth and sixth rows will be completed with an extra star each, thus requiring no further change in the design as now adopted. Here is the arrangement as agreed upon, and any flag of any other pattern after the Fourth of next July will be out of order, the Utah star being designated by us in heavy black:



In this connection the NEWS has special pleasure in publishing the annexed correspondence. The first

letter is from Senator Frank J. Cannon to President Woodruff:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, D. C.,
February 25, 1895.

Venerable Sir:

To you, whose life has spanned the entire history of Utah's settlement and growth to this hour; to you, the chief representative of her Pioneers; and to you, whose hands first raised the emblem of our sublime country in the Salt Lake valley, I have the honor of transmitting, by the kindness of Hon. Joseph F. Smith, one of the two first flags made for the War Department of the United States, containing forty-five stars. With all who know you, I am thankful that you have been permitted to see the day of Utah's glory, that your hands can touch and your eyes behold the beauty of this ensign as it now recognizes the wondrous achievement of a devoted people, blessed by God and animated by patriotism, in their struggle to make of a wilderness one of the mightiest states of the Union.

Yours affectionately,

FRANK J. CANNON.

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF,
Salt Lake City, Utah.

Following is President Woodruff's response:

Hon. Frank J. Cannon, U. S. Senate,
Washington City, D. C.:

My Dear Senator—As a Pioneer who brought President Young in my carriage into the Great Salt Lake Valley the first time he ever saw the Salt Lake and surrounding country; and as one who assisted in planting the American flag on this then Mexican soil, and who assisted President Young in laying out Salt Lake City, with its broad streets and sidewalks in this Great American dry, sandy desert, and being in my ninetieth year of age, I accept this noble flag for and in behalf of the Church of Jesus of Christ Latter-day Saints (being President of the same); also in behalf of every citizen of the State of Utah. The flag has been spread to the breeze of both sea and land for 120 years over the greatest free Republican government ever established by the God of heaven since the creation of the world, which flag I hope that the citizens of Utah will ever maintain and make honorable. I feel thankful that I have lived to see the day when this noble flag is hoisted as an emblem and ensign to all the inhabitants of Utah in the capacity of a State government. Forty-nine years of my life have been spent in Utah.

Yours truly,

WILFORD WOODRUFF.

The foregoing letters have been withheld for some time because of an intimation that the design upon which the two flags referred to had been made might again be changed—several propositions to that effect having been submitted to the government authorities. As stated, however, the arrangement agreed upon has been officially confirmed. The other flag referred to by Senator Cannon as one of the two first made with the Utah star, is the property of Governor H. M. Wells.

SEVERE BUT TRUE.

The DESERET NEWS has not at all times been able to concur in the conclusions of T. De Witt Talmage; in

fact, it has frequently been our lot to differ materially and not only expose falsity but denounce coarse and even brutal language from that gentleman. That he is one of the most glittering divines of the day, in the use of either tongue or pen, none can gainsay, and when his powers are trained in the direction of assaulting vice and crime, as is often the case we are pleased to say, he becomes an object of sincere admiration. On one of such occasions recently he proceeded to outline the "gates of hell," which he analyzed by saying that gate the first is impure literature; gate the second, the dissolute dance; gate the third, indiscreet apparel; gate the fourth, alcoholic beverage. "The wise cup is the patron of impurity," he said, speaking of the last "gate." "The officers of the law tell us that nearly all the men who go into the shambles of death go in intoxicated, the mental and the spiritual abolished that the brute may triumph. Tell me that a young man drinks, and I know the whole story. If he becomes the captive of the wine cup he will become a captive of all other vices; only give him time. The courts that license the sale of strong drink, license gambling houses, license libelism, license disease, license death, license all sufferings, all crimes, all despoliations, all disasters, all murders, all woe. It is the courts and the legislature that are awing wide open this grinding, creaky, stupendous gate of the lost."

This is a pretty severe arraignment, and by not a few will be pronounced an outburst of that sensational style of oratory for which the doctor is somewhat noted; but who shall undertake to say that, as rational or otherwise, the words are not those of truth? It may be that he goes beyond the wound some little, but the most skillful surgeons often do that because the case cannot be completely covered in any other way. Talmage hits close enough to the mark this time, we are both pleased and sorry to say.

THE NATIONAL CONVENTIONS.

The following is in answer to the question of a correspondent as to the membership of the national conventions of the two great parties:

✱ The total number of votes in the Republican national convention in 1892 was 906. Since then Utah has been admitted to Statehood, adding four votes, making a total of 910. In the call for the convention this year Chairman Carter of the national committee directed all territories seeking statehood to elect four delegates-at-large, the question of their admission to be decided by the convention. If Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma each elect four delegates-at-large, and they are all admitted, the total number of votes in the convention will be 922.

In the Democratic national convention of 1892, there were 910 delegates, and under the two-thirds rule 604 votes were necessary to a choice. Cleveland received 617 1-3 votes on the first ballot. The addition of Utah to the list of states will add four delegates this year, making a total of 914, and 610 will be necessary to a choice if the two-thirds rule is maintained.