

DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - APRIL, 12, 1876.

THE WONDERFUL HEGIRA STORY.

It is presumable that everybody has had more than one good hearty laugh over that burlesque story in the New York *Sun* concerning the alleged purpose of the "Mormons" to vacate Utah and overrun New Mexico. The whole story sounds like the latest weak invention of the enemy, the Utah ring, and does not speak very loudly in favor of the sagacity of the circle of conspirators who compose that disreputable organization. Neither is the idea of a "Mormon hegira" original at this late day. On the contrary, it is old and threadbare. Give us something of a quality not so stale and wearisome. I have been said the "Mormons" were going to Sonora, to old Mexico, to Central or South America, to some group of the Pacific Islands, to Palestine and Jerusalem, and elsewhere. But they are not gone yet. They do not look much like a going people. They look as if they were going to stay where they are a little while longer, as is their inalienable right, if they feel so disposed. No people on earth have a better right to stay here than they have. There may be more desirable localities than this, a more genial climate, more generally productive lands, but Utah has served the "Mormons" tolerably well for over thirty years, and they look as if they could endure to remain a few years longer in the valleys of the Great Basin. If any other Territory or State really needs to be replenished with a few hundred or thousand first-class moral, industrious, enterprising, well disposed citizens, and should ask the "Mormons" for help in that way, why they might generously respond, as to do good and to communicate and build up and develop the country is their motto. But when the "Mormons" conclude to inaugurate another wholesale hegira, and leave Utah *en masse*, the country will be likely to know it.

CONFERENCE.

THE members of the Church assemble in general conference at stated times for the purpose of conferring together upon the means most advisable to be adopted for the furtherance of the work of the Lord and the increase of righteousness upon the earth, in anticipation of that greatly to be desired time when it shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the mighty deep; also for the Saints to strengthen their faith in the Lord and their obedience to gospel principles.

That there is great need for a marked increase in the prevalence of righteousness in the world is patent to all. The current exposures of wide-spread corruption, dishonesty, and wickedness of various kinds throughout society, and in the high places of the land, especially in this country, are creating alarm in the minds of many people, and the more thoughtful are beginning to ask where all these things are to end. This shows the increasing necessity of the people of God rising up in the purity of holiness and the strength of truth and righteousness, that there may be manifest a place and a people where reliance may be put, though wickedness should threaten to engulf all the rest of the people in the country.

DIES IRÆ.

Nor a few of the denizens of this city verily thought the day of judgment had surely come when the four powder magazines on Arsenal Hill, immediately north of the city, exploded yesterday afternoon (April 5.) with three terrific and distinct reports. Some persons involuntarily executed astonishing gestures, struck tragic or imploring attitudes, and certainly believed for a few moments that the verit-

able day of wrath, the actual end of the world, the awful crack of doom had burst upon them in its terrible, stupendous, awe-inspiring, overwhelming, irresistible reality, force and grandeur. Some thought the time was come when the valleys were being exalted and the mountains brought low. Others, not so seriously affected, who could think of anything, thought the nearest steam-boiler had exploded, or a sudden simultaneous bombardment had been opened on the devoted city, or a volcano had suddenly burst open in dreadful eruption, or a tremendous earthquake or series of earthquakes were shaking terribly the city. The simultaneous smashing of glass, especially in the principal street, heightened the dreadfulness of the moment.

Never, to the end of their mortal lives, will the people of this city forget the fearful shock, nor many of them their strange, involuntary sensations, actions, and attitudes, some of the latter being exceedingly fantastic, and even ludicrous to think of in their calmer moments. Some persons, in addition to the momentary excitement, were nervously affected for a considerable time, and they probably spent many wakeful hours last night. The women generally will be likely to complain of "bad backs" for a week or two to come, while a few may suffer more seriously.

These extraordinary sensations, impulses, and thoughts, however, were of brief duration, for the immense volumes of flame and smoke denoted the origin and real nature of the catastrophe, followed within a radius of two or three miles by a shower of rocks, iron, timber, unexploded powder, dust, and general debris.

The saddest features of this tragic event are the loss of life, and the injury to limbs. The damage to property is very great, hardly a house in the city escaping scot free, and many being wrecked or more or less badly strained.

The lessons to be learned from the disaster are mainly in the line of more cautious and prudent treatment of explosives, especially the more dangerous and easily inflammable ones. It is now the general sentiment that the magazines were located much too near the city and much too near each other. The practice, which evidently was not uncommon, of making the magazines a target for pistol or rifle practice, cannot be too severely censured. A man who will thus recklessly play with and around the most deadly explosives is a fool, a madman, if not a villain, and should be taken good care of in a preventive way.

Lastly, we may say that it is hardly a humane act, much less the act of a public spirited citizen, to endeavor, at this calamitous epoch, to make a corner in glass, or to run the price of the article up two or three hundred per cent. over the price in ordinary times. People will form and hold their own opinions of individuals who thus make merchandise of the misfortunes of their fellow citizens.

SAID TO DECLINE.

It is rumored around that Mr. Coghlan, the new appointee to the chief justiceship of Utah, is not disposed to accept, being loth to leave the nice little legal business which he has built up in California. If this be true, who can blame him? It is true that a citizen ought to hold himself at the call of his country, but that does not count much now-a-days. Besides, it is often merely the call of party, and not the call of the country by a long way.

The office of a judge in this Territory has become rather a thankless office for an honorable man. There is a party here which is set to proscribe the bulk of the people and deny them their rights, by hook or by crook, by law if it need be, but without law if it can not be done with law. This party does not want a just judge, will not have a just judge if he can be kept out, or turned out if he should happen to get in. To effect this purpose no stone would be left unturned, no means would be too disreputable to be adopted.

We have had recently two fairly good judges in the seat of the Chief Justice, but, because they would not pander to the purposes of the ring, they were relentlessly and

remorselessly hounded out of the office. Such is the treatment which any decent judge may expect from the Salt Lake ring, and, therefore it is no wonder that appointees begin to count the cost before accepting.

Besides, the legitimate remuneration, which is all an honest judge will wittingly take, is not extraordinarily great, and a good lawyer would not be likely to get less by private practice elsewhere. Further, in all probability the present administration will not last more than eleven months longer, and after that time Heaven knows how far rotation in office will be carried.

WEDNESDAY'S DREIFUL WORK.

THE Prince of the Power of the Air had a roisterly time on Wednesday afternoon. He manifested himself in a plenitude of power such as few people see once in their lifetime, and fewer still more than once in mortality's allotted three-score years and ten. It was an experience which compressed into a few moments the force of years of ordinary mental impressions, and brought thousands of people face to face with the presence of imminent individual danger and apparent sudden death. It was an elemental convulsion nearest akin to the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds that most mortals will ever witness, and that those who have witnessed once will ever wish to witness again. Not many of our citizens, previously, had any realizing idea of the immense reserve force stored up in a few grains of charcoal and nitre and sulphur. The knowledge thus practically and painfully obtained should stand them in good stead, and they should learn from it extreme prudence in dealing with such a dangerous, powerful, and uncertain element of destruction and death.

The explosion has been the main topic of conversation in the city ever since, and will be more or less for days to come. Years in the future, the time of it will be referred to as an era, whence and with which the happenings of other events will be calculated and compared.

The cause of the convulsion, in all human probability, will never be definitely ascertained, if indeed it will be approximately known. The general supposition that a gun or rifle was fired through the doors of one of the magazines, and thus ignited the powder within, is still but a supposition. The young men, Hill and Richardson, we are informed, had a shot gun between them, but it seems very improbable that a shot from their gun had anything to do with the explosion. They must, unfortunately, have been very near the magazines at the critical moment of the catastrophe, probably on their return home from the hills.

The idea of incendiarism is hardly suppressable, the principal objection being the lack of sufficient apparent inducement. Insanity might lead to such incendiarism, and so might unmitigated villainy. Insanity needs no motive, but villainy usually has motives, either of gain, or of revenge, or of sheer diabolism. The motive of gain is not evident. The motive of revenge does not appear. The motive of diabolism, if such actually existed, one would think, would have led to the consummation of the devilish deed in the darkness, for if it had happened in the night time, the devilishness of the action would have been superlative, the alarm would have been most extreme, the horror of the occasion and the attending sensation would have been magnified and multiplied beyond computation. By an overruling Providence that acme of consternation, that supreme intensity of horror, was happily saved to the inhabitants of this city, or the consequences would have been far more serious than they were and are. It is hard to think that the explosion was purposely caused.

Immediate carelessness does not seem to have been the cause, for the reason that, so far as we can learn, no one was engaged in any of the magazines at the time, or that day.

It is barely possible that some animal of the rodent order was foraging around in one of the magazines, and caused something to fall or jar, and thus ignite the powder.

It may be possible that a slight leakage of powder outside had caused a train, of greater or less length and substance, leading into the building, and that the disaster occurred through the accidental ignition in some non-evident way of such loose spilt powder.

The most probable cause of the explosion, however, was spontaneous combustion. Steam boilers, ordinary gunpowder, and powder mills and magazines, it is well known, will sometimes explode in an unaccountable manner, from no immediate cause within the range of human knowledge, and sometimes from causes remotely ascertained or imperfectly understood. Some of the more readily inflammable powders and other explosives of that class approach so nearly to fulminates in some of their more susceptible characteristics that a concussion, sometimes a very slight one, is sufficient to explode them, and even certain conditions of ordinary temperature may do it. The most likely cause of the disaster, then, with present information, appears to be spontaneous combustion; the next, some kind of accidental concussion, the nature of which is not apparent, and is at best a matter of vague conjecture.

Not only should powder magazines be located in places at a safe distance from cities, towns, and settlements, but each magazine should be located at a safe distance from every other magazine, so that the blowing up of one would not occasion the blowing up of another, and it would be well if the more powerful and readily exploded powders were stored by themselves instead of with the common gunpowder.

There is one thing which should be looked after in the streets. There is a large amount of broken glass in the city, and some people throw it out into the streets without any care. Now it is well known that many of the children go barefoot in the summer time; they will do it, whether they have shoes or not, and they will run great hazard of cutting dangerously their little feet with this glass. Besides, their little hands will get into mischief, and the broken glass is tempting to them to handle. Therefore it is a heedless thing to throw it into the streets. It should be put in some place secure from them, or from danger of hurting them. Perhaps the most ready and safe means of disposing of it would be to bury it two or three feet deep in the lots. The children would not get at it, nor wound themselves with it then.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

FIRST DAY.

THURSDAY, April 6th.

The forty-sixth annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened this morning in the New Tabernacle, April 6th, 1876, at 10 o'clock.

PRESENT ON THE STAND.

Of the First Presidency—Pres. B. Young and Daniel H. Wells.
Of the Twelve Apostles—John Taylor, Willford Woodruff, Orson Pratt, sen., C. C. Rich, Lorenzo Snow, Brigham Young, jr., Jos. F. Smith.

Patriarch—John Smith.
Of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies—Joseph Young, Albert P. Rockwood, Horace S. Eldredge, John Van Cott.

Of the Presidency of the High Priest's Quorum—Elias Smith and Elias Morris.

Of the Presidency of this Stake of Zion—Geo. B. Wallace and W. H. Folsom.

Of the Presidency of the Bishopric—Edward Hunter, L. W. Hardy, Robert T. Burton.

In addition to the above, there was a general attendance of the authorities throughout the Territory, besides a large congregation of Saints.

Conference was called to order by PRES. B. YOUNG.

The choir sang—

An angel from on high

The long, long silence broke,

Prayer by Elder JOHN TAYLOR.

The choir sang—

Great is the Lord, 'tis good to praise

His high and holy name.

ELDER WILFORD WOODRUFF

Rejoiced in having another opportunity of meeting together in another conference. He particularly desired that every heart should be lifted up in praise and thanksgiving to God.

The professing Christian world, though they said they believed in the Bible, were groping in darkness and were without faith in God. The Latter-day Saints not only believed in Joseph Smith, the prophet of the last days, but also in those promises and prophecies that God had declared through his servants in ancient and modern times.

He then spoke of the blessings and privileges that all those were entitled to who had embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ, and who kept a celestial law. All those to whom were committed a dispensation of the gospel God held responsible for the carrying out of his purposes, as he revealed unto them from time to time. God held the ancient apostles responsible for the faithful testimony which Jesus their master sent them forth to bear to the nations of the earth, and which they faithfully performed to the day of their death. So also with Joseph Smith, to whom the Lord delivered the ancient records of the Nephites, and gave him the priesthood to lay the foundation of a kingdom that never was to be thrown down. God held him accountable for the faithful use of those powers and keys that were committed to him. It was the same with Pres. Young, his counsel, the twelve apostles, and all who held the priesthood. God held us all accountable for the same, and it behooved us to be careful how we handled sacred things and to magnify our calling that was placed upon us.

He urged the prompt and honest observance of the law of tithing, that our temples might be built, and all faithful Saints have the privilege of attending to those ordinances for their dead friends and forefathers that alone could be attended to in the temples of the Most High God. No matter what our circumstances might be, all had the power of keeping the commandments of God. He hoped the saints who attended this Conference would come with prayerful hearts, that God might inspire his servant Brigham and give him strength to deal out to the people the bread of life. He prayed that God would also inspire his Saints with an increasing desire and determination to do all things required at their hands.

PRESIDENT D. H. WELLS

Felt gratified with another opportunity of meeting in the capacity of a general Conference. A great and glorious privilege was granted unto us, of being co-workers with the Almighty, and assisting him in sustaining and establishing his kingdom upon the earth. The world at the present time was full of unbelief and wickedness, and the Lord had sent forth his ever lasting gospel to reclaim his children from the error of their ways. This was a preparatory work. The judgments of God were beginning to be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth. It was through the instrumentality of his children that he was going to establish his great and glorious kingdom. Let us take hold then with renewed zeal and energy and build up temples by paying our tithing. Were we willing to use our means and ability for the forwarding of this great Temple, the foundation of which was already laid? We could do it if we were only united and willing to lay ourselves out for this great work. There need be no delay in this matter, but by some appropriating their labor and others their means to furnish a support for the families of the laborers, the work could be immediately commenced. Economy and home industries, and the necessity of more being producers instead of consumers, he also spoke upon, which would give us greater power, and the work of the Lord would be accelerated and roll forth with increased rapidity.

He hoped the Saints would go forth in renewed energy to do those things required at their hands, and become united in bringing about the purposes of God.

The Conference was adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m.

The choir sang an anthem—

Jerusalem, my glorious home.

Benediction by Elder C. C. RICH.

The choir sang—

Great God, attend while Zion sings

The joy that from thy presence springs.

Prayer by Bishop LORENZO D. YOUNG.