

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF.

President Wilford Woodruff, the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, passed away peacefully this morning, September 2nd. Such was the intelligence brought over the wire today to the President's office. It came unexpectedly to his friends, who have been under the impression that the beloved leader of the people of God was enjoying good health, considering his advanced age. Still they, together with the Saints throughout the world, were, in a measure, prepared for the departure at this time of one who so long has stood in their midst, a tower of strength in times of tempests and an example of living faith at all times.

Wilford Woodruff was the fourth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was born at Farmington (now Avon), Hartford Co., Connecticut, March 1, 1807. He was the third son of Aphek and Beulah Thompson Woodruff. From his early youth, and in the midst of a busy life, he meditated on religious subjects. On December 29, 1833, he first heard the Gospel from the lips of Elders Zera Pulsipher and Elijah Cheney. To hear the truth was, with him, to believe it, and on January 1, 1834, he received baptism. The following April he went to Kirtland, and became acquainted with Joseph, the Prophet. In May he marched with "Zion's Camp" into Missouri.

At this time he realized a strong desire to become a messenger of the Gospel to his fellowmen, and as if in answer to his prayers he was ordained a Priest on Nov. 5, 1834, and in January, the following year, he started on a missionary tour through Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky. He went on foot and without purse and scrip, and traveled 3,243 miles. He held 170 meetings, baptized forty-three persons and organized three branches. He had many wonderful experiences during this tour and miraculous manifestations of the power of the Almighty.

His second missionary tour was commenced in May, 1837. On this he visited Maine and the Fox Islands. For two years he labored faithfully in his calling and baptized many converts. While at North Vinal Haven he received notice of his appointment to the Apostleship, and was ordained to that exalted position on April 26, 1839.

In the following August he set out for a mission to Great Britain, where his labors were crowned with success perhaps never witnessed since the days of the first Apostles of our Savior. After eight months' labor he baptized 1,800 persons, including prominent preachers of many denominations. He then returned home and reached Nauvoo in October, 1841.

Two years later he was laboring as a missionary in the eastern states but returned to Nauvoo upon hearing of the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph. In 1844 he again was sent to perform a mission to England but he returned in time to join the exodus from Nauvoo.

In 1847 he traveled with the Pioneers across the plains and was one of the first to arrive in this valley. In 1848 he went again on a mission to the eastern states, returning in 1850. In this year he was elected to the Senate of the provisional State of Deseret and served for twenty-one years in the legislative assembly of Utah. President Woodruff was closely identified with every movement for the advancement of Utah and the State owes much to his untiring efforts and patriotic zeal.

When President John Taylor became President of the Church, Wilford Woodruff was sustained as President of the Council of Apostles, and at the General conference in April, 1889, he became the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with President George Q. Cannon and President Joseph F. Smith as counselors.

President Woodruff's administration has been one of peace and good will towards all. Among the Saints he was honored and loved, and even those of other religious views than his were wont to look up to him with veneration and esteem.

His life work has been a most remarkable one. From the beginning of his ministry in 1834 and to the close of the year 1895, he had traveled 172,369 miles; held 7,655 meetings; preached 3,526 discourses; organized 51 branches of the Church and 77 preaching places. He traveled in England, Scotland and Wales and in 23 states and 5 territories in the Union.

To the family and intimate associates as well as the Saints in general, the departure of President Woodruff from this sphere of action will be felt as a great loss; yet they will be ever full of gratitude for the Providence that so long preserved him among them. His history will be a sermon to future generations, exhorting to faith, diligence and perseverance in the service of God.

Full of years and full of honors he has passed along to his great reward. Earth contained no other honor for him than what he had already gained; to have accepted of anything more than what he already had would have caused him to stoop. What a magnificent spectacle to contemplate is it, when a man weighted down with the accumulation of years, all save the halcyon period devoted to the cause of God and his fellow man, at last yields up his mortality and lays down the trust imposed upon him without one blemish upon his record or one spot upon his character! Those who have been accounted great as the world es-

teems greatness have gone hence with the plaudits of the world following them to the tomb and the praises of mankind ringing in their ears with their last consciousness; but how many of these have been at all times and under every circumstance with and of the people? How many but have made those of whom they claimed to be a part the stepping stones to their own personal preferment? Not so with Wilford Woodruff. He was one of the people all the time and everywhere. What they had to endure, he endured; their privations were his privations, their sorrows his sorrows, their hopes and faith and triumphs never any more completely theirs than his. He lived to see the fruition of his work and his brethren's work accomplished in all the departments of the human life, and as his spirit took its flight and that retrospective glance which at such time we presumably take of our mortal career passed in rapid panoramic array before him, no doubt he felt as serene, as satisfied, as replete as it is possible for the mind of man to be, even though in the heyday of existence—because he lived not for this life alone but for the one to follow, and had made himself ready to begin anew the work ended here. He was satisfied with life, satisfied with the end of life, just as he had lived for and hoped for. His peace and reward are secured. May his example be ever a bright and glowing light to others, showing them the way to worthiness in this world and exaltation in the world to come!

REPLY TO THE PRESBYTERIANS.

In response to the request of a number of friends, "Mormon" and non-Mormon, I have written the accompanying article and submit it for publication in your columns.

C. W. P.
The Presbytery of Utah at the semi-annual meeting held in Mantel, Sanpete county, formulated on Monday, Aug. 29, 1898, a series of resolutions on "The Present Situation in Utah." The "Deseret News" has denied in toto the charges contained in those resolutions. It has been argued by an anti-Mormon, Salt Lake daily paper, that a mere general denial is not sufficient and that it is only "a meaningless demurrer." Is it expected that the "News," or the Church which is accused shall prove a negative? Does it not rather rest with the accusers to prove their charges, if they are worthy of investigation?

The unbiased reader will perceive that these charges, so sweeping and "severe on the 'Mormon' Church," are general in their character and unsupported by a solitary attempt at proof. They are evidently fabricated for the export trade and for foreign consumption. But while a general denial to such general accusations should be deemed sufficient, it may be advisable to take them up and examine them serially. They commence with this paragraph:

"First—The Mormon Church has returned to politics. The old habit has re-asserted itself. The Church has resumed sway. It has decided to govern the people in this as in all other regards. Adherents of the creed are expected to 'take counsel' as of yore. The manifesto by which this was brought about issued on April 6, 1890,