

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

### FOUR SCORE AND TEN.

On Monday next, March 1st, President Willford Woodruff will have attained the ninetieth year of his age; and with the arrival of this anniversary of his birth will come the expression of the heartfelt wishes of hundreds of thousands of people, representing every nation, that the beloved and honored veteran yet may see many more birthday anniversaries, in the continuance of his life's labors in comforting and blessing his fellow beings.

President Woodruff has passed many years the period of life usually allotted to men even of excellent physical powers, though he is yet short of the age to which some have attained. So far as relates to his condition mentally and physically, in the former it is unimpaired in vigor, and in the latter it is in such excellent form that it bids fair to continue in healthful, energetic operation for many years. Brother Woodruff maintains excellent health, and is a monument among the people of the beneficial results of a temperate, God-fearing life, so full of energy and persistent hard work that a shadow of idleness never has swept across it.

In his eventful career, President Woodruff has been called to pass through many more privations than is the lot of the majority of this community nowadays; he has made many great sacrifices of personal comfort at the call of duty; has been the victim of severe accidents and physical sufferings at times. And through all these scenes of trial as well as those of comfort he has experienced, he has been a humble, patient, determined worker. Few men have labored so hard or so persistently in their physical exertions, and fewer still have maintained the spiritual activity he has displayed. His whole life has been one of earnestly seeking to serve God and benefit his fellowman. He put his hand to the plow in early life, and he never has faltered or turned back.

As one of the first band of Pioneers that entered Utah, to redeem it from a savage and desolate condition, President Woodruff is prominently before the people today. He came into this valley with President Brigham Young, when the general idea that prevailed concerning it was that it was unfit for habitation; he heard the prophetic declaration that it was the place for the exiled Saints to make their home, and that by the Divine blessing it would become a land of peace and plenty to them; he has seen the desert changed into a garden, the wilderness transformed into a delightful place of habitation, and with his hands and brains he did his part to effect the transformation. All this and more he has beheld as following in the wake of the Pioneer band whose coming here was the harbinger of a mighty civilized empire that should extend its progress and powers from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean.

But it is as a humble, faithful and powerful Apostle of the Lord Jesus that President Woodruff stands

pre-eminently before his fellow-men; and the power that has attended him in his holy calling is of the Lord. From early youth he had the ministrations of the spiritual forces of the universe in dreams and visions, and in the admonitions of "the still small voice" of the Spirit. His career in this regard is before the people, and is a record of the miraculous which cannot be obliterated or gainsaid. The voice of inspiration, the ministration of angels, the testimony of Jesus in the spirit of prophecy, all have their part in this record. For the greater portion of President Woodruff's life has been occupied in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in this and foreign lands; and his experience and testimony in this connection, from the time he joined the Church until now when he holds its highest office in the earthly organization, is an ineffaceable witness of the existence, omnipotence, love and wisdom of God, and the revelation of His Gospel to man in this age of the world.

The testimony which President Woodruff bears of the Gospel is direct and certain; it is his own knowledge and experience; it comes from a heart whose sincerity, honesty and truth are established among and known of all his associates in present times as in days gone by; in its positiveness and force it sweeps away every shadow of doubt and denial raised by agnostics and tremblers who nurse a hope that Deity is non-existent; it is as strong, as firm, as enduring, as perfect, as is the testimony of the Apostles Peter, James, John, and others of their council to the resurrection of the risen Redeemer. And in the divine authority and powers of the same Apostleship it stands to all who dwell upon the earth or in heaven.

It is well for all the young people to note the force, the clearness, and the certainty with which the witness of this venerable Apostle of the Lord is presented to them in his life and in his language; it is well for the Saints to give a special attention to its directness and power; and it would be well for all men to weigh it from the standpoint of consistency, of thorough investigation, and of its practical application to the needs and desires of mankind. May the blessings of Jehovah continue to abide with President Woodruff, and for many years yet may he be spared to the Saints to bear witness of the mercy, love and wisdom of God, manifested in His Gospel plan restored to earth in this dispensation by messengers sent from the throne of grace!

### THAT FORT CAMERON PROPOSITION.

The proposition for the State to purchase Fort Cameron, near Beaver, and establish there a branch of the State normal school, is being urged upon the present Legislature quite strongly, and a number of members, possibly a majority in both houses,

look upon it with favor. When it is remembered that all the higher educational institutions of the State are in the northern part of it, that the southern counties are without railroad facilities, and have always labored under great disadvantage in respect to education, the force of the claim that comes from that section for a higher educational institution becomes more apparent.

The Fort Cameron property is offered to the State very cheap. But the State, like an individual, should never purchase that which it does not need merely because it is cheap. Yet there exists a need in the southern part of the State for a normal school. Young persons there who wish to qualify themselves for the profession of teaching are obliged to go a long distance from home, and incur a heavy expense, which obstacles deter many who otherwise would take normal training. This condition tends to necessitate the importation into the southern counties of qualified teachers, or the employment of such as are not qualified, and is unfavorable to the best interests of education.

There is substantial justice in the claim that the southern counties of the State should receive relief in this regard. Their young men and women, who desire to become teachers, have a right to ask that some of the facilities for normal training, paid for by the State, be placed within their reach; and if Fort Cameron is a suitable site for a normal school, the preponderating arguments seem to us to be in favor of its purchase by the State for that purpose.

One argument urged against that proposition is that the Fort is a mile and a half from the nearest town, Beaver, and consequently from the nearest schools of small children in which the normal students could obtain practical experience. But in our judgment very little weight attaches to this objection. A town within a mile and a half of a normal school is not too far away for its schools to be taken advantage of by normal students. In fact it is better for several reasons that a normal school be not located within a populous district.

This matter has repeatedly been canvassed by the Legislature, but no decisive action ever has been taken respecting it, and the fact that it comes up at each recurring session proves that there is at least some merit in it. The News is in favor of giving the southern counties a good normal school, whether or not Fort Cameron be chosen for its site.

### FOR OR AGAINST.

A peculiarity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when proclaimed with divine authority and in its purity, is that it arrests the attention of men. The announcement of its principles causes either acceptance or rejection. Absolute indifference is almost impossible. It was the experience of the first Christian missionaries to the world that their doctrines were the subject of controversy everywhere. Every victory won for the cross was the sequence of incidents of