

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

FORTY-NINE YEARS.

This period represents the time that Utah has been occupied by white men in the work of establishing cities, towns and villages and bringing mountains, vale, and stream under the dominion of a civilized race. Before the commencement of that period all this mountain region, and for many years after a large portion of it, was a desert, inhabited by a few wandering savages and by wild beasts, reptiles and insects. Forty-nine years ago a small band of religious exiles—the vanguard of the Mormon people who had been compelled to flee from their homes in Illinois because of their fidelity to the Gospel of Christ—emerged from Emigration Canyon, the defile east of Salt Lake City and just south of Fort Douglas, and from the eastern bench obtained their first view of the dry and barren valley of the Great Salt Lake.

The arduous journey across the great plains and the settlement of Utah's vales was the work of the Mormon people as a religious body; and the credit for whatever success and triumph have attended the bringing of this section of country under the rule of civilization is due to the cause of Christianity as revealed anew to this age through the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was because of their claims as Latter-day Saints that the settlers of Utah were persecuted in their former home; it was as Saints that they took up their journey westward, looking to God for guidance and deliverance; and it was as Saints that they made their abode in these valleys. Under such an inspiration it was no wonder that, when their Prophet and leader in those days, President Brigham Young, looked over the scene as it was presented to his view from the bench and announced that this was the place the Lord had shown him in vision as the resting and gathering place of the Saints, those who followed him said amen, and felt that they had reached their home.

All the progress from Nauvoo westward, and the settlement here, was an exercise of inspired faith, manifest by works of trial and tribulation unsurpassed in the history of any other people. It was not the judgment and power of man, for these would have passed this valley by as "a place unfit for habitation." But God had selected it; He indicated it as the home in "the top of the mountains" for His people; He had promised them "a land rich above all other lands," and said He would make "the barren waste a fruitful field," and "the desert to blossom as the rose." This selection and these promises were made known to the people through the presiding Church authorities as the word of the Lord, and notwithstanding the fact that all natural appearances were opposed thereto, through their knowledge that divine inspiration was with the leaders of Israel, the Saints accepted the Almighty at His word as revealed through His servants in latter days, and located here. The result of forty-nine years'

experience in "the valleys of the mountains" stands before the world as prominent and incontrovertible evidence of the guidance of the Almighty in the affairs of His children, and of the fact that God spoke to and through the authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

As to the scene that presented itself in July, 1847, and the change that ensued, with the causes therefor as recognized by the Pioneers then and since, we quote from the address of President Willford Woodruff, made at the last general celebration of Pioneer Day held in Salt Lake City—July 24, 1880.

When we arrived in this valley we found it a barren desert, and a very desert it was. There was no mark of the white man. We found a few naked Indians who would eat a pint of roasted crickets for their dinner. But a great change has come over this desert. A generation has passed. Eight of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles who were then living, and most of them among the Pioneers, are now in the spirit world. Orson Pratt, Erastus Snow and myself are the only ones now living who were among the Pioneers and in the quorum of the Twelve at that time. Truly then we found a barren desert. Today I stand in a tabernacle filled with some ten thousand of the Latter-day Saints who have followed the Pioneers into these valleys of the mountains. When we cast our eyes over these valleys, then a desert, today they are teeming with the industry of 150,000 of the sons and daughters of Zion, who have been gathered by the commandments of God and the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. We, as Pioneers and as the people of God, are making history.

Since that celebration of Pioneer Day, many of the noble band who entered the Salt Lake valley in 1847 have passed away, among them two of the three Apostles named in 1880 by President Woodruff—Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow; and ere the opportunity presents for another celebration, the probability of nature is that the now small number living will be still further reduced. This year would have witnessed a Pioneer reunion and celebration, but for a sad event which from its nature made such a proceeding inopportune; this was the death of the beloved and honored son of a Pioneer of 1847, also loved and honored by the whole people.

Of the presiding council of the Church who came into the valley with the first company of Pioneers, President Willford Woodruff alone remains; of the entire band of one hundred and forty-three men, three women and two children, the News gave two years ago, on the occasion of the Pioneer reunion at Saltair on August 20, a list of thirty-eight survivors. Since then the number has been cut down by the death of several, among them Patriarchs Lorenzo D. Young and Jacob Weiler of this city, and Wm. Carter of St. George—the latter one of the first who ploughed land in this valley. By another July 24th, when the fiftieth year since the arrival in Utah shall have been rounded out, we know not what names may be dropped from the list. But we do

know that the Pioneer band and the cause that impelled their heroic action are permanently enshrined in the hearts of the people of these mountain vales. Honoring the Pioneers who led the van in the assembling of the Latter-day Saints in their present home, we glorify the God of Israel whose guidance, inspiration and blessing was over all, and who provided the means of establishing the Saints in their lovely mountain home.

IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

The patriarch Job, as we have record in the nineteenth chapter of the book of Job, made use of the following language regarding Christ the Son of God:

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter-day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Here is an unequivocal declaration of several facts which the patriarch states as within his knowledge; and in one of these involved the necessity of again receiving his body of flesh, although worms should destroy it after his mortal death. He looked for death as a certainty, in common with mankind; with equal certainty he watched for the coming of the Redeemer; and in the same absolute assurance of that which would come, he proclaimed the fact of the resurrection of his body, that in his flesh and with his own eyes he should see God.

Centuries passed before the doors were opened that the foreknowledge of Job could be attested by the actual occurrence of the events he had predicted. The resurrection became sure of accomplishment only in the death and raising again of Jesus Christ; and on that raising hinges all the promises of salvation, or the fulfillment thereof, ever made or yet to be. But if Job spoke truly it must come, and if it has since taken place, then the patriarch spoke by the spirit of prophecy.

"He is risen from the dead," is the testimony of the Apostles in the history they have left us of His acts upon earth. It is the testimony of the world in its history wherever Christianity has reached. It is the raising of the actual body of flesh and bones—that which exists in this sphere. It was in the flesh, and with his own eyes, and not another's, that Job was to behold the Holy One. "It is I; handle me and see," said Jesus, when He came forth from the tomb and invited that inspection which would prove that His was a body of flesh and bones, and that it was not a spiritual appearing.

The prime fact of Christian history is the actual resurrection of the body of Jesus. It was that fact which the Apostles went forth to proclaim. They had been plunged into a state of terror and hopelessness at His death, to which they were witnesses. What raised them from that condition to one of the most sublime courage and assurance of victory? It was the resurrection of Christ. Nothing else could have accomplished that end. They knew Jesus; they ate and drank and slept with Him through