

THE DESERET WEEKLY

PIONEER PUBLICATION

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.

ESTABLISHED

TRUTH AND LIBERTY

JUNE 1850.

NO. 23.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1891.

VOL. XLIII.

GIDEON'S FOUNTAIN.

You know the sacred legend old,
How, to the fountain's brink,
When war across the land had rolled,
Great Gideon led his armed foes
And bade them stoop and drink.

How all the cautious ones he chose
Who quaffed from palms dipped down,
And put to flight his robber foes
With slaughter fierce of battled blows
By Jezreel's lofty town.

As in the days when Gideon tried
His men to find the true,
From out the mountain's caverned side
The water wells and wanders wide,
And mirrors skies of blue.

The thirsty cattle come and stand
Deep in the cooling stream,
Wind-bended reeds clasp hand with hand,
And over all the wheat sown land
Hills Galleian dream.

And as we quaff the water clear
Kre on we ride again,
We seem to see a throng appear—
The stern array with shield and spear
Of Gideon and his men.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

THE "REORGANIZED" ABSURDITIES.

A NUMBER of questions were asked of the *DESERET NEWS* in the latest issue of the *Lamoni, Iowa, Herald*—the organ of the "Josephites." They are propounded in a carping and sarcastic manner, but that is of but little consequence. We make reply lest it might be thought, or said, that the queries could not be answered. The *Herald's* editorial, which is quite lengthy, amounts to this:

"The rule of law in the Doctrine and Covenants, under which a full organization of the Church is to be effected, requires a presidency of three, holding directing, presiding authority, and in point of decision holding what may be termed concurrent jurisdiction with the Twelve and Seventy." When Joseph and Hyrum were martyred, a motion was carried at a special conference that the "Twelve should preside over the whole Church and that when any alteration in the Presidency should be required, reasonable notice would be given." On December 27, 1847, at a conference held in Winter Quarters, Brigham Young was chosen President of the Church, with Heber C. Kimball

and Willard Richards as his Counselors, in pursuance of a previous announcement of the Twelve that "the time would soon come to reorganize the Church according to the original pattern, with a First Presidency and Patriarch." The *Millennial Star* for April 15, 1848, announced that "the Church is again organized with a First Presidency, with a fair prospect that that all the Quorums of the Church will be replete, according to the original design."

We are asked to explain why a "re-organization" was begun at Winter Quarters at the residence of Orson Hyde Dec. 5th, if the Church had not been disorganized. And connected with this question is the statement that "there were but six of the then existing Twelve present, *President Young excluded.*"

Answering this assertion first, we say, the words we have placed in italics settles the point sought to be made as to a majority of the Twelve being present. President Young was one of the Twelve Apostles and could not be "excluded," and the revelation says: "A majority may form a quorum when occasion requires." So without disputing any of the alleged facts as to December 5th or stopping to show that the choosing of the First Presidency was by action of the whole Conference on December 24th, it is evident from the *Herald's* own data that a majority of the Twelve took action on this matter, not that it was acquiesced in by the other Apostles who were in good standing and fellowship.

But we are still under the necessity of referring to the position of the *Herald* and the "Reorganization" as absurdities, for the reason that it must be clear to every sane person who thinks, that the reorganization of the First Presidency or of the Twelve, or of any other council in the Church, is not a reorganization of the Church, and therefore that the choosing of a Presidency, or the filling up of a Quorum by the body, is not only no evidence that the Church had been "disorganized" but a proof that the body was still in active organized existence. The revelation says the First Presidency is to be composed of "three Presiding High Priests chosen by the body," etc.

The *Herald* asks: "If reorganization was an absurdity on the part of the Reorganized Church, was it less an

absurdity on the part of President Young, H. C. Kimball, W. Richards and those who did their work in 1847." To which we answer, while the former was absurd, because there had been no disorganization of the Church, the latter was not absurd in any degree, for the same reason. The living Church, organized in 1830, which grew and developed into that degree of perfection in its organism that existed when Joseph and Hyrum died, simply acted according to its constitution and vital powers, in re-forming such councils or quorums as had become deficient through the death or transgression of some of its officers. But the "Josephite" movement was the action of certain separate individuals to organize a new church, assuming that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was dead because its presiding officer had been killed. This appears to us a manifest absurdity, and involves the death of the Church every time its President dies or one of its leading quorums becomes depleted.

The re-baptism of the Saints after coming into this Territory, and the "reformation," as it was called, are next cited, and the *DESERET NEWS* is gravely asked to explain why these things took place if they were not reorganizations. Is not this question another "re-organized absurdity?" When a sinner repents and reforms, is the man actually re-organized? If a body of church members become slothful or lukewarm, and a reformation is brought about, so that they renew their covenants before God and awake to greater spiritual activity, is that a reorganization of the Church?

Why does the *Herald* get down to a mere play upon words in order to make a point upon paper that does not exist in fact? And is it not puerile to contend that because the Church chose a new Presidency it was evidence of "a dissolution of the Church in its organic form?" There is so wide a distinction between re-organizing a council or quorum, and re-organizing the whole Church that, it seems any one who wishes to see can behold it at a glance.

But on the *Herald's* own statement of the case which we have quoted, the so-called "Reorganization" is not yet an organization of the Church and is not entitled to either name. The *Herald* says: "It requires a presidency of three, holding directing presiding authority," with the "concurrent