

new and unaccountable phenomenon—a faith *nova* and *illicita* for which its votaries predicted universal victory. Hence war was waged against it, until finally Constantine turned the tide, seeing the utter impossibility of checking its progress.

These are facts of history. Christianity spread, not because of a conviction prevalent among the pagans that its great Founder was an extraordinary man, but on account of its own divine power and notwithstanding the general idea that it was originated by a criminal and that it was the most absurd of all existing creeds.

A BATTALION WOMAN.

It affords the *News* particular pleasure to make correction of a statement published in these columns some weeks ago to the effect that all the women who were in the Mormon Battalion were dead except one. Mrs. Martha J. Mowrey, wife of Harley Mowrey Sr., is another survivor of that noble band. She is at present living at Vernal, Utah.

THE CHURCH AND POLITICS.

The following correspondence will need no further introduction or explanation than that the cause of it all was a brief discourse delivered by President Woodruff in Provo on Sunday last, the 23rd inst.; the *Salt Lake Tribune* of Monday morning contained a synopsis of those remarks and later in the day addressed President Woodruff a letter containing three queries regarding the meaning of certain passages in its report, and he the same evening forwarded a brief reply. Both letters appear in the *Tribune* of this (Tuesday) morning, and the *News* reproduces them for the reason that the Latter-day Saints generally will be much interested in and ought to be informed of the incident and the correspondence. The *Tribune's* letter was as follows:

SALT LAKE CITY, Sept. 24, 1894.

Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

Dear sir:—Heretofore the *Tribune* has reported you and others in authority in your Church as giving utterance to the sentiment that the Mormon people ought to divide upon national party lines, according to the political sentiments which each man might entertain, without interference in any way from officials of your Church in that matter. Frequently has that utterance been given, and the public has come to rely upon it as fixed and final. Now, however, this feeling of safety from Church interference in politics has been disturbed, and a fresh source of unrest introduced by a report which appeared in the *Tribune* this morning of your remarks yesterday at Provo. The report was made by a man in complete sympathy with yourself so far as Church affairs go, and who, it is certain, would refuse to misreport you in any way. Subsequent inquiry develops that he is confident in the accuracy of his report of your remarks as he understood them. The portion of that report which causes uneasiness is the following:

"It is generally thought the First Presidency should have nothing to say about politics," he

continued. "I picked up a paper this morning saying that we had no business to meddle in politics. We have a right to lead the people in spiritual and temporal affairs. We have the same rights of leadership that President Young had, and that the Prophet Joseph Smith had. In temporal affairs? Yes. In political affairs? Yes. We have a right to advise both Democrats and Republicans to lead a pure campaign. We have a right to say to the people that they must be pure in politics as well as in temporal affairs. We have thousands of children growing to manhood in Zion. I am interested in their welfare, and I would like to see them brought up under proper influences, and not under the influence of such a campaign as we had two years ago."

The purpose of this inquiry is to ascertain with exactness.

First, whether your remarks were precisely as reported, and, if not, wherein they depart from precision.

Second, if the remarks were as reported, then in what sense do you wish them to be understood: whether as a claim to control the political actions of your people absolutely, or only as a citizen to advise the right.

Third, the claim is apparently made in your remarks that the Church authorities claim the right to direct the people in their business and politics, and, in general, their temporal affairs, as well as spiritual. It is desirable to know whether this claim is really made and insisted upon at this time, and is to be in the future, while the public has been led to believe that claim a thing of the past. Most respectfully,

TRIBUNE PUBLISHING CO.

PRESIDENT WOODRUFF'S REPLY.

President Woodruff replied to the above queries as follows:

Salt Lake Tribune:

Gentlemen—Answering the first question in your note, I have to say that I believe the extract you quote from your report of my remarks at Provo is substantially correct.

To the second, my reply is that "the control of the political actions of our people absolutely" is not set up as a claim in my remarks, and I certainly would not wish them to be so understood. I hold that it is the right of the Priesthood to advise at any and all times and under any circumstances those who profess to respect its powers, in all matters pertaining to their temporal welfare and their spiritual salvation; if in the matter of politics, that the Latter-day Saints should be governed by pure principles, and in political affairs should realize and act upon their responsibilities as Saints and citizens. This is not to claim the right to advise them how or for whom they should vote, or which party they should join. We emphatically and sincerely approved the division of the Mormon people on party lines, and we recognize every man's agency and respect his right to choose in these matters for himself. We have not advised, and do not advise our people how they shall vote; the elections that have been held in this Territory since politics on national party lines was introduced, are proof of this policy; we have asked no Republican to vote the Democratic ticket, and no Democrat to vote the Republican ticket; we have never advised men to vote other than their convictions prompted them, and have no intention of giving such advice. At the same time, we claim the right, both as individuals and as leaders of the Church, to counsel our people to keep aloof from the corruption, the scandal and the filth of politics as too frequently practiced in the world, to set an example in this as in other things, and it is in this sense that I wish to be understood as asserting the right of the Priesthood to give counsel in political affairs. As citizens we have the right of opinion and of

speech; we also have responsibilities and duties to ourselves and to others; but until the foregoing can be construed as meddling in politics, I shall be unable to find ground for the uneasiness of which you speak. However, in the light of this statement of my meaning and views, I trust there can be no further cause of anxiety or unrest; I assure you there is no foundation for it.

Yours respectfully,
WILFORD WOODRUFF.

TO FARM OWNERS.

It is pretty generally known that of late years a vast number of western farms has passed into the ownership of eastern residents through mortgage foreclosures. There is being developed an inclination on the part of these owners to get rid of these holdings, and to such the United States *Investor* utters a word of warning that should have a wider effect than upon merely the class to which it is directed. That paper points out that real estate values in the West are greatly depressed as a result of last year's panic, and in many localities it is difficult to find purchasers at any cost—a state of affairs that is being taken advantage of by sharpers to frighten timid investors into throwing over their western farm lands at merely nominal prices.

The *Investor* then takes up an argument on this line: These western farm lands are worth something today, and later on they will be worth a great deal more. The success of the investment in them all depends on the ability of the present holders to carry them until times improve. There is every reason to believe that the worst that can be apprehended in connection with the western situation has been fully discounted in the drop in real estate prices which already has taken place. Prices are bound to be low for several years, but, there is good reason to believe, with an upward tendency. The financial depression in the United States will undoubtedly keep immigration down to a low point for a considerable period. The fact, however, must ever be kept in mind that this country is the center toward which the population of the whole world is tending. Coming years, therefore, must inevitably witness a strong demand for farm lands in the United States. In this connection it is well to bear in mind that about all the good government land has been disposed of, and that farms are not going to be obtained as cheap in the future as in the past, other things being equal. A great deal is being said at this time regarding the sharp competition which the American farmer is going to encounter in the future as the result of the opening up of new agricultural regions in various parts of the world. It can be safely said, however, that in the long run this country will be able to hold its own. Temporarily the American agriculturist may experience hardship. But it is idle to attempt to demonstrate that America is about to take a second place as the great food-producing country of the world. Whatever may be the status of their investments today, it can be safely asserted that five years hence will witness prices considerably in excess of those now obtainable.

Among those who are in position to