

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

## EIGHTY-EIGHT.

Today, March 1st, is the eighty-eighth anniversary of the birth of Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and the NEWS is pleased to note its voice with that of Saints in every land in extending heartiest congratulations to the venerated Apostle of the Lord, and in a fervent prayer that his life may be further prolonged in bodily health and unimpaired mental vigor, to continue in labors that have ranked him among the great and good men whose presence on earth has brought blessings to their fellow-men. Our sincere wishes also go out to President Woodruff's wife, Sister Emma Woodruff, who likewise celebrates her birthday today, she being just thirty-one years younger than her husband. This afternoon relatives and intimate friends of the honored couple assembled and engaged in exercises specially suited to the occasion, and their felicitous expressions will find joyous echo in the hearts of the whole people.

The lives of Brother and Sister Woodruff are pre-simient as an example before the Saints in their fidelity to virtue and truth, their love for their fellow-beings, their harmonious relationship, and their conformity to the word and will of the Lord. Matron and maid in Israel may find in Sister Woodruff an illustration of a devoted wife, mother and Saint, that should serve as an inspiration to press on to the good and the true; and in President Woodruff the sons of Zion have a leader whose worthiness for the place is firmly established.

The career of President Woodruff is an open book before the people, presenting the record of a most remarkable man. Following the quiet and peaceful pursuits of life, there are few persons who have had such an interesting and eventful experience. In it all he has exhibited great activity, energy and determination in the line of usefulness. The predominant attribute in his character has been that of implicit faith and reliance in the Almighty. His first thought, adhered to with unwavering fidelity, has been to know the will of God and do it. Walking in that path, there are none who know him but have learned to honor and respect.

In pursuing the course marked out in his early life, no task has been too onerous for him, no self-denial too great to comply with cheerfully and in a sublime faith that the Lord would direct all things for the good of those that serve Him. This was clearly exhibited in his boyhood's days, and became more marked as he advanced in life. As an illustration of the rules that governed his conduct may be cited the advice which he gave when a young man, in connection with an experience in Zion's Camp, in 1834, and which is good counsel to young people today. He said: "I will exhort all my young friends not to cherish selfishness; if you have any, get rid of it as soon as possible. Be generous and noble-hearted, kind to your parents, brothers,

sisters and playmates. Never contend with them; but try to make peace whenever you can. Whenever you are blessed with any good thing, be willing to share it with others. By cultivating these principles while you are young, you will lay a foundation to do much good through your lives, and you will be beloved and respected of the Lord and all good men."

Brother Woodruff has verified his teachings in his own life. As a servant of the Most High, the inspiration of the Lord has rested upon him mightily, and he has been powerful in his testimony of the divinity of the Gospel restored to earth in this dispensation, with which restoration is associated the organization of the Church, by divine authority, over which he has the honor to preside on the earth, and which is pressing on to the destiny marked out by its Head and Founder, the Redeemer of mankind. May the peace and blessing of the Almighty continue with President Woodruff and all his association!

## SICK IN PALESTINE.

A private letter from Haifa, Palestine, dated February 7th, and received this morning, Feb. 28, contains the news that the dread disease "black smallpox" has broken out in the Arabian part of the city, where its ravages are terrible. The German colony situated near the city, at the foot of Mount Carmel, has not been able to escape the epidemic, owing to the close daily intercourse with the natives, and at the time of the writing, four European houses had been isolated because of their inhabitants being stricken with the disease.

Among the sufferers was a young Elder from Utah, Johan Clark, of Farmington, at present traveling in the Holy Land. The correspondent states that he is with a family named Hitt, where he receives all possible care and attention. The house is quarantined, but from the doctor it was learned that although his condition was very serious, some hopes for his recovery were entertained. Mr. Clark, previous to his sickness, went every day into the city, mingling freely with the natives in order to learn their language, and it is supposed the sickness was contracted in this way.

Haifa has the reputation of being one of the cleanest and most healthy Arabian cities in Palestine. Its location is such that the rains during this season of the year in some measure neutralize the effects of the total absence of sanitary precautions, by washing the accumulated filth in the streets down into the bay. For this reason epidemics are less frequent in that place than in the interior. Yet, close to the city, on the north, is the low, somewhat marshy ground through which the historical brook Klehon finds an outlet into the sea, and like all similar localities in Palestine, this is a breeding place of various disease germs. Travelers in Palestine cannot be too careful with

regard to their health, provided they have the necessary means at their disposal; for while it is true that in that country many an invalid from abroad has obtained health and strength, it is equally true that apparently strong persons have found there an untimely grave. The neglect of man, or the ignorance of the inhabitants concerning hygienic requirements, an ignorance studiously nursed by a government that fears every kind of enlightenment worse than death, account for the fact that a country destined to be an Eden is still a desert, a ruin and a pest-house, all with the approbation of Christian Europe.

## BRIGADIER GENERAL YOUNG.

The appointment, by Governor West, of Lieut. Richard W. Young to be Brigadier General in the militia will be highly commended by the people of Utah generally. A more suitable selection could not have been made. In taking this step the Governor has recognized the ability, courage and patriotism of Utah's sons in a way which will appeal to her citizen soldiery and to the public generally in the most direct manner, and will enlist their hearty support. General Young is a Utah boy, having been born in Salt Lake City; his father was himself only a boy when he came to these valleys; and his grandfather was the great Pioneer and first Governor of Utah—Brigham Young. By force of his own ability General Richard W. Young has come to the front, notably in his service in the United States army. He is a thorough American, imbued with an intense love of the Republic and its institutions. His new position places him in immediate command of the Utah National Guard on any occasion of active service, in which event his past career is evidence that he will be prompt, determined, cool-headed and vigorous. In these desirable respects he is a typical officer for the position he is called to fill.

## UTAH COAL OIL.

Many indications of petroleum have been found in the Rocky Mountains, in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, and some wells have been sunk in the hope of securing the oil in sufficient quantities for commercial use. Up to the present these have not been attended by the wished-for success, but now there comes a brighter ray of promise from that direction than has been seen before. It is announced that coal oil is found in large quantities in San Juan county. A shaft is being sunk, and the results of the labor will be communicated through the NEWS in due time. Some particulars appear in a letter from a Bluff City correspondent.

There are abundant reasons for believing that petroleum exists in vast quantities in this part of the continent. Scientists class the mountain ranges as in "the oil region," the formation being of that character; and it is quite probable that Utah will yet occupy a prominent place as an oil producer. When this time comes, the