

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

PIONEER DAY THOUGHTS.

The journey of the Pioneers across the immense desert and their entrance in the Salt Lake valley have often been compared to the crossing of the Arabian desert and the arrival of the children of Israel in Palestine. In many respects the comparison is striking and appropriate, but in one particular at least the two events bear no resemblance to each other. When Moses ascended Mount Nebo to the top of Pisgah and lifted up his eyes to the promised land he beheld a country well watered, dotted with prosperous cities and villages, cultivated, shaded by palm trees, rich in luxuriant verdure. Before him was the Jordan valley, a pleasing contrast to the sandy deserts he had traversed; further off he viewed the hills of Judea and perhaps the dim outlines of Carmel. The advance party that had explored the land of promise brought back with them clusters of grapes of gigantic size as evidence of the fertility of the country of the fathers.

No such beautiful sights greeted the Utah Pioneers when first they gazed upon this valley. The wide expanse before them was a barren desert. It was not a land "flowing with milk and honey." It has been said that some of those sturdy Pioneers wept when they saw the country and wondered whether the voice of inspiration which they had followed had not been misunderstood.

It is therefore all the more remarkable to contemplate that under these apparently discouraging circumstances the Prophet of God never for a moment faltered in his intention to remain here with the people entrusted to his care. President Young, when entering the valley on July 24th, 1847, we are told, expressed his entire satisfaction at the appearance of the place as a resting place for the Saints. And the secret of this remarkable faith was not the physical features of the country, but, as President Woodruff expresses it: "While lying upon his bed in my carriage, gazing upon the scene before us, many things of the future concerning the valley were shown to him in a vision." These views of the glorious future of the country were evidently a reality to the modest man, just as much as were the beautiful panorama presented to the gaze of Moses that memorable day on Mount Nebo.

There were many things to encourage the Pioneers when they looked back upon their historical journey. One of these was the fact that they had all been miraculously preserved in the wilderness. They had traveled over a thousand miles from Winter Quarters; they had been nearly four months on the road; their equipment was not of the best; the hardships were such as to be beyond comprehension except to those who have actual experience in journeyings of that kind; yet, when they at last camped in this country and counted their numbers, not one had been lost on the road, through death.

No serious accident had befallen any of them. As through a miracle they had been preserved. The divine seal had been stamped upon their undertaking. It was a lesson in implicit trust in the power of the Almighty, of value to all ages and generations.

The tendency of the children of men is to rely on such agencies as are visible to human reason. Two remarkable incidents among others in the history of the people of God seem to be recorded for the evident purpose of directing faith to God alone. One is connected with the return of the captives from Babylon. When Ezra and his company arrived to the border of the desert, by the river of Ahava, it was found that they had no military protection. The country they were to traverse was filled with roaming bands of outlaws who undoubtedly would be attracted to the little band of Jews, because they were carrying treasures with them for the building of the temple. Ezra might have obtained a military escort, but, as recorded in the book that bears his name, he decided to trust in the Lord alone, since he repeatedly had told the king that the hand of Jehovah was over them in this undertaking. Dedicating himself and all with him to the Supreme Ruler, he started out across the desert and accomplished the perilous journey without the loss of anything entrusted to his care for the building of Jerusalem.

The other incident and one parallel to this is the journey of the Utah Pioneers across the American desert. Their remarkable preservation conveys the much needed lesson that it is infinitely better in all things to trust in the Lord than to depend on anything or anybody else. The Pioneer journey is a practical sermon on faith.

PRIDE OF UTAH.

Children's Day had the gem of the parades of the Jubilee thus far, and probably to its close, for the animation and beauty of the scene presented. The many thousands of the youth in line were at once an inspiration and a picture of surpassing loveliness. As Sabbath school after Sabbath school fell in in excellent order at the front of the Pioneer monument, those who had the privilege of viewing the scene, and who remembered President Brigham Young and how he loved to watch the processions of Sabbath school children who came out to meet him in the various cities, towns and settlements on special occasions, were deeply impressed with the special appropriateness of the proceedings today. The majestic statue of the great Pioneer that surmounts the magnificent monument seemed to be almost a living figure, and to gaze with deepest admiration and benign joy upon the columns of beautiful young Utah, as they marched past, joyous at their participation in the great event. They were children of the Sunday schools of the Latter-day Saints—a system of schools brought

into existence during the presidency over the Church of Utah's foremost Pioneer.

The day was cooled by the light clouds which averted the burning rays of a midday summer sun. During a quarter of an hour in the closing time of the parade there was a gentle shower of rain, which would have been more welcome if it had been deferred half an hour, since it caused a slight discomfort to the people and to the little ones with light summer clothing, in anxiety lest there should be a sharp rain. But a heavy shower did not come, and for a choice between that which did and a hot day like yesterday, the light sprinkle and its associate coolness were preferable.

The order of the children was most excellent. Some of the schools marched with a precision and uniformity that would give pointers to some of the bands and other adult organizations; and all conducted themselves in a most becoming manner. At the close of the march the ceremony of throwing thousands of bouquets at the base of the Pioneer monument was an affecting event. All connected with the proceedings of Children's Day in making it such a great success, and especially the officers of the Deseret Sunday School Union and of the several schools, and parents who sent their children, are deserving of high commendation. The pride and hope of Utah—her children—were grandly represented by the thousands in today's parade, in a pageant never to be forgotten by lovers of Utah who viewed it, or by those who participated therein. God bless the children of our State, that they may ever keep the prospects of Utah bright and hopeful as they are today—a scene of enchantment indeed.

SECRET SOCIETIES EXPENSIVE.

A recent number of the North American Review has an article by W. S. Harwood on secret orders in the United States, which affords food for reflection. The present membership of these societies is placed at 5,400,000, or about one-fifth the adult male population. The article points out the beneficent operations of the orders referred to, giving the amount paid out in that line at \$475,000,000. In referring to the evils attending these orders, Mr. Harwood admits that "no human gauge can measure the sorrow that comes to some families through the too close attention of husband and father to the lodge-room." As to the expense of association with the organization, he figures it out in this manner:

There are many elevating and enabling elements in those fraternities, but the broad, rich acres of man's selfishness are nowhere more carefully fertilized, tended, tilled, and reaped than in the lodge-room. It would all but revolutionize a large section of American society if the wives and growing-up daughters of the households of the men who belong to these organizations should insist on their right to spend for their own adornment or their own personal pleasure dollar for dollar spent by husband or brother for dues and initiations, for regalia and uniforms and swords, for