

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

LAI'D TO REST.

Today, September 8, the remains of President Wilford Woodruff were laid to rest, followed by a vast concourse of citizens, of every age and social standing, of different political affiliations and religious beliefs, from all parts of the State. And they were drawn together, not by a desire to witness a gorgeous display or pompous ceremonies; for they all knew that the funeral rites of the Church are in full harmony with the sublime simplicity of the Gospel and that the memory of the departed could best be honored by making the last solemn services simple, as his entire life has been free from ostentation. They gathered because they loved and esteemed President Woodruff, "Wilford, the faithful." Very seldom it falls to the lot of mortal man to occupy exalted positions and yet retain the good will of all. But such was the honesty, integrity, faithfulness and personal worth of the departed Prophet, Pioneer and leader that of him it was often said that he had no enemies. No wonder, then, that a vast multitude should gather to pay their last respects to him.

President Wilford Woodruff belonged to the little band of martyr-crowned Pioneers to which the nation some day will acknowledge its indebtedness. He was one of the heroes who crossed the western border of civilization and fearlessly marched a thousand miles into the wilds of the American deserts, planting the standard of freedom in the mountain valleys. He and his companions demonstrated to the world the possibilities of a region as large as an empire and which but for their efforts would have remained, who knows how long?—the "great American desert." Very few of the present generation realize what hardships these early empire builders suffered, while everything needed for existence had to be wrested from a seemingly unfriendly nature. But few can form an idea of the nature of the faith that sustained them day by day in their efforts to redeem this country. But the results of their prayers, their faith, their labors, are now before the world. Wilford Woodruff was one of the chiefs in the struggle carried on here in these valleys in the interest of civilization, and as such he is entitled to recognition in the history of the American Republic.

Among the Latter-day Saints Wilford Woodruff has of late years occupied a distinguished position. He was the last living of the Apostles that were ordained to that exalted office in the days of Joseph, the Prophet. In this respect he was a link between the generation that witnessed the rise of the Church in this dispensation and another generation, which very soon will know the Prophet of God and his associates only from history. He was the Apostle John of this age. There are others in the midst of the Saints who like Wilford Woodruff were personally acquainted with the Prophet Joseph, and whose presence among them is esteemed precious on account of their long, faithful services in the Church of God; but their circle is becoming narrower every year, and their activity will before long be in another sphere. In one sense their places among the Saints cannot be filled. Hence it is with intense feelings that their departure, one by one, is watched by those who remain to continue the labor they so well commenced.

It is a comforting thought, though,

that the Church in this dispensation has been given back to the earth never again to be overcome by the adversary. The Lord Himself has placed all the safeguards needed around the Church for its perpetuation. It was not thus in the age following that of the first Apostles of Jesus. The early fathers had great disadvantages to overcome and were favored with but few advantages, comparatively. Many of them were converted from paganism and had their minds filled with the notions of the various philosophical schools. They were crouching under a load of fables and false philosophy which they were never fully able to throw off. Very often in their controversies with the assailants of Christianity they drew from heathen philosophy the materials for their replies, instead of from that inspiration which had guided the Apostles. Their ignorance of the Bible is most conspicuous. Some of them rejected books now received as genuine and accepted spurious documents in their stead. Their method of interpretation was often no more than a mystic allegorizing by which the Scriptures were made to teach anything the imagination of the expounder might happen to see in it. Then persecution carried off the best men of the age, leaving the burden on shoulders not always strong enough for the task. All these causes, and others, operated against the preservation of the primitive Church from error and resulted in the course of time in the removal of "the child to the throne of God."

In this age all is different. The Priesthood with all its keys and ordinances and powers remain with the Church. A faithful record has been kept and is accessible. The Spirit of revelation remains, a true light in the darkness. So, while the Saints with a feeling of deep sorrow bid farewell to their leaders, as they depart from them, they at the same time know that the work of the Lord is progressing both on earth and in heaven. With gratitude to the Almighty for the wonderful work accomplished by President Wilford Woodruff and for the assurance they have that it is an everlasting one, they bid him farewell. May the reunion with Saints above be glorious and the rest of the body sweet until the morning of resurrection!

THE DISTINGUISHED DEAD.

All truly great men are devoid of ostentation and affectation. They realize intuitively, and the realization grows with observation, that man in his best estate is a frail creature, subject at all times to perils, pains and strifes, either of which may cut short the tenuous fabric which we recognize as life; that at the most existence in the mortal estate is a narrow span, and its best aspect is troublous and crowded with responsibilities, some of these of such great moment that we have not "imagination to give them [previous] shape, thoughts to give them scope, or time to act them in." They feel also that earthly honors and rewards, gratifying and it may be pleasurable for the time, are after all but like the product of the chrysalis—beautiful when floating majestically through the air, but its wings soon falter, then droop, then decay, after which dissolution and a return to the worm which first produced it. Thus considering, the superior creations among our race make a definitive study of mortality, and

reasoning from cause to effect, become possessed of the knowledge that we are here for some other purpose than such that can be rounded out and finished in this sphere; that all our gifts and all the favors of fortune which we have inherited or acquired, are simply so many aids towards acquiring knowledge of and for a condition of life where all things exist in a state of perfection, where there is no ending of the "good, the beautiful and the true," and such honors and rewards as may befall here are honorable and admirable only as they tend to make the possessor wiser and better and to make those around and about him happier and higher and holier. It is not that places of trust and profit are despised or that the applause of admiring throngs is ignored; vastly otherwise. These are appreciated at their true worth, not regarded as incentives to vainglorious actions or self-sufficient thoughts.

Looking upon this life in this way, there can be none of the objectionable qualities apparent that are first herein spoken of. A lofty position carries with it an additional appreciation of the responsibilities of life and an enlarged sense of kindness towards the givers and the Giver of the gifts, all inculcating humanity, philanthropy and honesty. Such a man was plain, humble, earnest, straightforward, man-loving, God-worshipping Wilford Woodruff. From an humble origin he advanced to the zenith of his earthly hopes, the capstone of all honors which the world could possibly contain for him; but in lowly and exalted station he always and everywhere kept the people of whom he was a part in steadfast and loving remembrance and was never an enemy even to his enemies. He was not a warrior as the world understands that word, and yet he waged unceasing, relentless, untiring warfare against sin and vice in all their forms and abstained from personality or invadiousness in all his campaigns save and except as relates to the author of sin and vice and his agents. President Woodruff was the incarnation of honesty in all the walks of life, and he was filled with that feeling toward even transgressors that, "like the gentle dew from heaven falls upon the place beneath and is twice blessed, blessing him that gives and him that takes." Like the murdered President, Abraham Lincoln—whom he resembled in several respects—he believed in "charity for all, malice toward none and with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

Everybody hereabout remembers a year ago last March, when the birthday celebration was held in the Tabernacle. It was observed by all who were within reach. People of all ages, sexes and conditions in life, of all shades of opinion and belief and representatives of many nations thronged the great structure, each paying a tribute of respect by his presence to the venerable and venerated man in whose honor the services were held. At the close there was a unanimous and spontaneous desire to reach him, to shake his hand and say a few words of congratulation. A great many were able to do so, but not all. Some of those who were thus favored, realizing the extreme age at which the honored host as well as guest of the multitude had arrived felt that it might be the last time and gave as much emphasis to the greeting as was permissible, accompanied with a few kind words of friendliness and regard, to all of which he gave a reply in kind and caused those who were previously not intimate to feel as though all at once they had become as well acquainted with the man and his disposition as though there had been a close and unbroken acquaintance for years. It was his way. And those who came but to be