

FUNERAL SERMON OF PRESIDENT JOSEPH SMITH

SERMON BY ELDER JOSEPH LUFF.

My duty on this occasion is such as rarely falls to the lot of man. This statement can, of course, be interpreted fully only by those of like faith with the departed. There is very much within my knowledge of our President which he deserves the expression of at my hands, but which I know he would rather would not be said. There is, therefore, very much expected of me in this line by some of those here assembled which will not be forthcoming in my effort. I know several men who could do better than I can, but I know of no man who could do full justice to the occasion.

I dare not trust my emotions nor my tongue in an extemporaneous effort, hence I have tried to commit my thoughts to writing, so that, should I fail of ability to read them, another may occupy and present them in my stead. The combined wishes of the General and Local Church officers as well as of the family that I make this attempt, and a complete willingness on my part to serve in any capacity where I may help to meet the solemn exigencies of the hour, and thus pay a feeble tribute to the man we all have so dearly loved, is my reason for attempting what I feel to be the task of my life, for in this event death has dealt as hard a blow as it can to me.

A reading of the instructions written by himself concerning the arrangements for and conduct of his funeral obsequies, in which he has plainly requested that everything that would present him more conspicuously in his deservings, before the public, than others of his faith-fellows, be avoided, will explain to you why my pen refrains from going into all the details of evidence that flood my memory and has marked his personal and official life and by reason of which a legacy has been left the church and his family more precious than accumulated gold or rubies and more imperishable than was ever acquired by the blare of trumpets, the clashing of steel and the roar of cannon.

By the appointment of God, Joseph Smith believed himself to be largely the property of the Church and the servant of men, and hence, gauging his character development and facing his life obligations in the light of his Master's Sermon on the Mount, he gave himself to the people, and from the first moment of that consecration till that one when his heart suddenly ceased to beat, he never once evinced a desire to remove from the altar what he had voluntarily placed thereon. No bait could lure him—no threat could drive him—no argument could persuade him to recall what he had once dedicated at the shrine of his love for God and man, and that dedication embodied his **all, without reservation** for sake of personal ease or wealth or pleasure. He had but one ideal before him in this and that ideal was Jesus Christ.

In the course of some remarks made by him shortly before his death, he said "I have never handled a dishonest dollar, nor am I conscious of having done any man a wrong." Later he said to me (a few hours before he left us), "You know, Joseph, that no man, unless it was my father, has ever passed through this life circumscribed as my life has been." The full meaning of that statement but few, if any, can fathom. View his life of 82 years, and especially his official life of 54 years, from whatever angle we may, our vision cannot escape the divine factors that equipped him and furnished the elements for development or restraint which enabled him to so well fill his place as a man of destiny.

Born under the aegis of that Spiritual afflatus that characterized the Church at Kirtland in 1832, and nurtured under the anxieties that persecution later gave rise to; then swept from pillar to post in the forced migrations of the Church, from Ohio to Missouri and from Missouri to Illinois; torn at the sword's point from his father's embrace when that father was in the hands of a military mob and under sentence to be shot. Denied even the privilege of a parting kiss from the lips of that father who was afterwards incarcerated in a dungeon. Daily as a listener throughout his boyhood years to the recitals that told of the brutal treatment, including the tarring and feathering to which that father and others had been subjected; the family home invaded time and again under or without pretended process of law, by men who sought his father's

life, and, finally, when but 12 years of age, confronted with the mortal remains of that father as they were brought home from Carthage, riddled with assassin's bullets; a mother widowed and a home desolated, for no other reason, so far as he could learn, than that his father had persisted in maintaining his religious convictions under the direction of God. And all this, as to its final enactments while his father was under the pledged protection of the State in which he lived.

Think of this, my hearers, and think how many men of strong will and natural impulses, have, under less provocation, become poisoned against all governments and men, and, becoming bandits or anarchists have Ishmaelized themselves against creation, arrayed their hands against every man and made vengeance their watchword for ever afterwards. Add to this the infamy of that apostacy that occurred within the Church when men, corrupted by lust and regardless of both divine and human law, first secretly, but afterwards openly (when drunk with self-assumed place and power) in Utah, gave free rein to their adulterous amours, and turned the once pure church avenues into veritable cesspools of iniquity; then, in an effort to sanctify or make acceptable to the great body their abominations, they fabricated a document, calling it a revelation from God, authorizing their bestialism and published it to the Church and the world, attaching the name of Joseph Smith to it in a way to indicate that as a Prophet of God he had received it a year before his death. This occurred

in August, 1852. Joseph Smith had been in his grave over 8 years, and it was left therefore, for his true followers and his family descendants or survivors alone to protest against this infamous and slanderous imputation. **This they did.** The Reorganized Church which had come into being the April preceding had also announced itself as unalterably and unequivocally antagonistic to polygamy and kindred doctrines, believing them to be the doctrines of devils.

Think of it, my friends: Little Joseph, or Young Joseph as he was called, was then 20 years of age, just the age when budding manhood needed the help or support that makes for its encouragement in breasting the tides or launching forth to take advantage of the elements that the world should offer to every man who sees a purpose in life. But what did this young man find to encourage him to begin the prosecution of an upright career, or carve for himself a name of honor and credit.

The ear that he turned toward the world was saluted with the vituperation and anathemas that ignorance and religious bigotry through press and rostrum and pulpit was directing against his father's name and work, and even in the immediate locality where he lived the atmosphere was aflame with threats and calumny.

The ear that he turned towards the largest gathering of erstwhile Saints (now in Utah) was saluted with the sounds of sensualism and violated law—both human and divine, and amidst this revelry of sounds he heard his father's name

interblended disgustingly and, as he believed, without warrant. What was he to do? From whence was he to draw his help or hope or encouragement? The only passport to the world's avenues of success for him was a deunciation of his father's claims in toto. The only passport to Utah and the aggrandizement it offered, was an admission that his father had been a criminal and an acceptance of the philosophy that was an offense to his righteous sense. Again I ask: Where was his source of help? Truly, as he told me just before his death, his life had been circumscribed as no other man's life had been.

Too just to arraign God as many had done: Too honorable to sacrifice a conviction in order to gain access to the world's avenues of promotion: Too noble to accept a bribe or to consent for a moment to the imputations upon his father's name so apparently unwarranted in the light of his personal knowledge of that father and of the record made by him: Too inexperienced to know how or where to turn in certainty as related to the walks of men. He resolved upon one thing, which I heard him publicly state years afterward in the City of St. Thomas, in Canada, in 1878 I think, namely: that, whatever the facts might be, he would endeavor to live so that no man would ever be able to speak an ill word of his father because of the conduct of his son. Thus determined and pledging himself within himself to a life devoted to the redemption of his father's name from the ignominy to which an unjust world and traitorous associates had consigned it, he betook himself to

God and thence began the converging of the forces and graces within him, which, under the divine economy were to become divergent in their outshining and make his life a blessing to many. So brilliant and extensive was the lustre of that outshining that the mercy of it compassed even the cruelest of his father's persecutors in later years, and carried both forgiveness and aid from his heart and hand to certain of those whose hands carried the blood stains of his father's murder, while his great heart breathed a prayer, mingled with the tears that channelled his cheeks, that God, too, would forgive the man who had helped to make him fatherless.

In response to his earnest appeal to God for direction, he was invested and environed on one occasion with what he called a glorious light, and told among other things that the light where he then stood was greater than that attending the people in Utah. That he was to have nothing to do with polygamy except to oppose it. To this counsel, as we all know, he proved faithful, and never allowed a fitting opportunity to pass without antagonizing the evil by all means within his power. I have stood or sat by his side on the public platform in Canada and in different States, including California, Idaho, Montana, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Massachusetts, and in many cities and towns in Utah (where we were associated as missionaries for over six months) and have heard him denounce the evil in unmeasured terms, employing the Bible, the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, as well

as the Statutes of the States under which the Church had lived, to emphasize his arraignment and condemnation.

On one occasion in Provo City, Utah, in the largest public building, before an immense assembly and with a number of the strongest men and most ardent polygamists arranged in phalanx before him—their attitude betraying a determination to overcome him or minimize his effort by the magnetism of their presence and influence. I saw and heard him excel himself in the force and intelligence of the splendid effort he made as he measured out the cold facts, employed the strong arguments, introduced the law and laid the axe thereby at the root of their philosophy and then coolly challenged them to take an advance step toward him, if they dare, to dislodge his position or offer even a faint apology for theirs. Needless to say they did not attempt it; but with all their combined and concentrated efforts to psychologize the man, he paralyzed them and left the place triumphantly, though the effort made him reel, till I had to steady him in his walk all the way home. Again in the Walker Opera House in Salt Lake City in 1885, before thousands of people, I heard him deliver a powerful arraignment and then tell of the revelation authorizing him to oppose polygamy, after which he declared that he had never missed a proper opportunity for doing so, and, raising his right hand, he solemnly cried out **“And so help me God, I never will.”**

In Ogden, Plain City, Springville, Payson, Spanish Fork, Pleasant Grove, Logan, Lehi,

American Fork, Ephraim, Beaver, and a number of other cities of Utah, as well as towns in Idaho and Montana, I was his associate and listened to him as he repeated his efforts in the same line, often in the presence of leading dignitaries of the dominant church in these places.

In the year 1853, after a severe and protracted illness, his mind was greatly disturbed in regard to what his life-work was to be. He was then a student of law; but unsettled as to his future course. The Lord, however, was at work with him, and one day, in broad daylight, the walls of the building around him suddenly faded from his sight and there opened before him a vision of two conditions which we have not time to here detail. He was told by a personage who stood by him that he must make his choice between these, but to do it deliberately, for there could be no recall of his decision when once made. The vision then closed and he stood in the room as before. He acted upon the advice given, and settled himself as to his life purpose and about the beginning of 1860 he received what he believed to be the instruction from God to unite with the little band that had started the Reorganization, and in April, 1860, he accompanied his mother to the Conference at Amboy, Illinois, and there was welcomed, elected and ordained to the office which he continued to hold till the day of his death, by the assembled saints who had been notified by revelation of his coming.

Thus he began his public career and from thence he has been ours in an especial sense, to

be studied as a man, to be regarded as a counselor and leader, to be measured in the light of the gospel philosophy he advocated, and to have his entire career pass under our inspection and be judged by comparison with the Christ whose representative he claimed to be.

What is our verdict today as to the man, and what the character of the tribute we are justified in paying him—the last one while his mortal remains lie in our presence. He has asked that we speak but little of his virtues publicly, but this was only an additional evidence of his worthiness of a tribute at our hands. We must not go far afield, but his life was ours—he gave himself to us, and for fifty-four years he has walked among us—our companion, our brother, our servant by the will of God, and what shall our tribute be? God help us to pay it—not only in words of eulogy, but in life responses that answer to the virtue of his counsels and exhibit the fruit of his holy impress upon us—the reflections of his course as a president—his love as a brother—his deportment as a man. From every sphere occupied by him lessons have been learned by the observant and the benefits of them will continue to appear.

One lesson he diligently sought to impart was that the success of our church work depended not upon his continuance with us, or the presence of any man, save the man Christ Jesus. His example was one of lowliness. The consciousness of his official rank never took him above the social level of the rank and file of the great

body. He was the companion of all and no air of superiority was ever exhibited by him in his cominglings with the people. He never sought an easy place but was always found where the heaviest burdens were to be borne and with his hands at the lifting handles. It was never "Go and do" with him. It was always "Come and do" what was required. He was a man with whom you could safely entrust your confidences without fear of betrayal, even though you should later become estranged from him and act as his enemy. He never allowed the wrong-doings or abuses or bad qualities of his enemies to blind him to the good that was resident in them, nor to prevent him from acknowledging it. He never allowed a man to drop in his estimation or forfeit his affection because of having violently antagonized his position in public discussions within the Church. He acquiesced gracefully in the decision of the body even though they were sometimes contrary to the ideas expressed by himself, and was always willing to lend his aid to put those decisions into execution and to rejoice over their success, if they proved successful. If they proved a failure he never greeted the promoters of the movement with a tantalizing "I told you so," but usually found some modicum of good acquired by the experiment with which to congratulate them. He frequently paid high tribute to the nobility, the trustworthiness and devotion to principle which characterized the men who openly antagonized him at times and only a few days before his death he mentioned the names of a few of them to me

and said frankly, "They understood the situation better than I did at the time, but even while they opposed me I never loved them the less for it. They were noble men and I could trust them anywhere." By divine help and early experience he had learned the lessons of self-denial and self-control, and his entire official life furnished a magnificent exhibition of it, even under the severest provocation. His idea of the meaning of true religion made him a visitor in the sick chamber, a defender of the defenseless, helper of the helpless, and always a sympathizer with the "under-dog." He was a poor man, as to worldly possessions, when he accepted the church Presidency in 1860, and unlike many other religious leaders, he was just as poor a man when, at the bidding of death, he surrendered it in 1914. Office brought him no emoluments. Money, to him, was only worth what good he could do with it. He never kept a dollar that he knew someone else needed more than himself. He never had a penny for luxury for himself but he had always one for the needy and a tear for the sorrowing. Many a journey has been undertaken by him under cover of night, to carry food and clothing, unseen, to the homes of needy ones with whom he was acquainted, and I could name some from whose door the "wolf" was kept thus by his ministrations in early days, and more than one missionary, far from home, has received in a time of extreme need, the contributions of this man from his own meagre store. But he always

tried to keep the knowledge of these things from the public. There was no ostentation with him.

His early life and experience was enough to have embittered his entire life and made him revengeful and malignant of disposition toward all men; but instead of this he was the friend of all—he loved all men, and his chief delight was in drawing upon himself to his limit in his efforts to bless. Instead of being morose he was cheerful and even humorous and this disposition asserted itself almost to his closing breath, and inspired a like feeling in all around him.

The first time I saw him was at Plano, Illinois, in April, 1877, as he was trudging along the centre of the street, propelling a large wheelbarrow, filled with coal, from the coal yard to his home, and wherever I have seen him since that time, whether in private circles or public capacity, as the guest of my home or I at his, the same humility, the same distinguished characteristics of the man have impressed me and made me feel anxious to get in closer touch with the sources of his excellence.

As Presiding officer in the counsels of the Church, before increasing infirmities of suffering and age began to incapacitate him, he always appeared to me like a man made for the place. His decisions were made with firmness, yet tinged always with those expressions that captured the hearts of belligerents. He seemed capable of deciding to a hair's breadth and the predominating element of love that pervaded the atmosphere of his actions was the commanding grace that won

us all. He never knowingly took advantage of his position as presiding officer to influence the action of the body. Whatever his private opinion on a subject under discussion might be, he was determined that both sides should always have equal opportunity for ventilation of their views, and seldom, unless his opinion was asked for, could it be told by his expression where he stood on the propositions being discussed.

His titles included Prophet, Seer and Revelator, but in service, to my thinking, he was more of a "revelator" than a Prophet to the Church, inasmuch as his communications had to do chiefly with explaining prior communications and regulating and directing the Church procedure, rather than foretelling the future or forecasting events, though in a number of those given through him to private individuals especially, the prophetic feature was exhibited. Over thirty years ago he said to the Church, unofficially, that he did not know how long he would live, but he would remain till the name of Latter Day Saint was largely relieved of the odium unjustly attached to it and was made honorable in the places where it had been held in contempt. We have only to contrast the conditions when he began his work with those that environ us now, to note the fulfillment of this. Nauvoo and surrounding country was decrying, denouncing and threatening—traducing his father's name and forbidding Latter Day Saints from living, preaching or even praying in that locality. Today the Church is in receipt of numer-

ous requests for its return and settlement there. Independence, Missouri, had recorded itself with Far West and other places with an emphasis of hate that warned the Saints that to come here was to take a terrible risk. Today it is in tears. This present funeral gathering is eloquent in testimony of esteem and sorrow. Our telephones have for days been busy transmitting expressions of sorrow over his sickness and death, from the lips of scores who are not of our faith but knew the man or knew of him. Our public prints are teeming with articles paying magnificent tribute to his memory. Allow me to read just one—an editorial from the Kansas City Journal of yesterday.

JOSEPH SMITH.

In the ecclesiastical dogmas which made up the denominational belief of the late Joseph Smith the general public has no particular interest. But in the death of the late venerable head of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints the country loses an interesting and useful citizen. Joseph Smith was considerably more than a powerful churchman into whose keeping had been committed the destinies of one of the great denominations of the world. Those who ignorantly confounded the Reorganized Church with Mormonism, in the objectionable acceptance of that term, will not appreciate the theological distinctions between the two nor understand that nothing was more hateful to Joseph Smith than the doctrines of Brigham Young, with their polygamous teachings and all the other features which make Utah Mormonism obnoxious in the eyes of the average American.

But all who ever came in contact with Joseph Smith could readily appreciate the broad charity of his tenets, the untarnished private life he lived, the unswerving de-

votion to duty which he always displayed and the simple modesty of his relations toward his church and the world at large. To his church he was the prophet whom all its communicants revered, but he was also the unostentatious leader who constantly practiced the virtues which he enjoined upon his followers. To the world he was the blameless citizen who walked before all men as an example and whose interest in the movements that made for the welfare of the community always had his heartiest support.

Perhaps nothing could give a clearer insight into the character of Joseph Smith than the directions which he issued shortly before his death in respect to his funeral. Disliking nothing so much, next to sham, as ostentation, he directed that his funeral should be conducted with the utmost simplicity, without any of the elaborateness which his followers would otherwise have provided in order to testify to the honor in which they held him. He was the prophet, but first of all he was the Christian gentleman and the good citizen. As such he lived, as such he died, as such he will be remembered by all outside the household of his faith. His followers themselves can have no legacy of remembrance more honorable than this appraisal of the people among whom he lived and labored so many years. Kindly, cheerful, loyal to his own creed, tolerant of those of others, standing for modesty, simplicity, good citizenship, embodying in his private and public life all the virtues which adorn a character worthy of emulation—such is the revelation which Joseph Smith leaves to the world, as the real interpretation of an ecclesiastical message translated into terms of human character.

What better tribute could truthfully be paid to any man that ever lived? And this but voices the sentiment that pervades the atmosphere of all places where he has lived or been known. And remember that in earning these tributes or to obtain them, Joseph Smith never trailed his

Gospel flag—never sacrificed a church principle—never was disloyal in word or act to the Restoration Work of which he was made a leading representative and exponent. What language then, could be considered flattery upon our lips, that was employed in uttering encomiums upon a life, handicapped as it was, that, perforce of its magnificence, could soften the heart of a world and elicit therefrom such a tribute as this? What could be more voiceful of a divine supervision of this man's life than this? Thank God for the arbitraments of time, and their assurance of final Gospel triumph!

Thirty-three years ago Joseph Smith said he would live till a man would be able to walk from Lamoni, Iowa, to Independence, Missouri, and find homes of Latter Day Saints all along the route in which to take his regular meals and lodge every night. This too has been fulfilled.

He united his interests with the Reorganization when but a handful or "remnant" of faithful church adherents were available for aggressive or defensive warfare in the interests of the Angel's message. Fifty-four years later he leaves it with an enrollment of over seventy thousand.

He was an ardent worker in the temperance cause and delivered lectures in many places in its interests. When our local option fight was on several months ago, though he was feeble in body, he had them take him to the polls to record his vote in its favor. He always held himself subject to the call of those directing the work or promoting its interests. A few days before his

death, when, told by his physician that his end seemed near, he called his three minor sons to his bedside, and, taking each in turn by the hand, asked for and received promptly a promise from them that they would never drink intoxicating liquor as a beverage, or use tobacco in any form. He then expressed his gratitude to them and breathed a brief prayer for God's blessing upon them.

As a husband and father he was all that his profession and position suggested he should be or those relations called for, and but few can truthfully say what we heard him say a few days before dying, when speaking to his sorrowing wife, who had so faithfully attended him throughout all his afflictions, viz., that no mean or unkind word had ever passed between them. I heard him some years ago say the same thing regarding his former wife, just before her death.

He was a "large" man, made to fill a large place, and he occupied well. He was a born leader and his winning charm was love, and he deserves well in tribute at the hands of all those to whom his life endeared him; hence, as one of many thousands I, in their behalf, have offered this humble tribute as the last that can be paid publicly while his mortal remains are yet with us. And I feel indeed keenly the meagreness of it as compared with what his splendid life among us and for us has entitled him to.

I hope no person hearing this will think me a worshipper of this man, or of the class to whom men become heroes or saints or angels simply

because they have died. I do not wish to be understood as viewing Joseph Smith as a **perfect** man or as one whose official work has, even to my eyes, exhibited no flaws, or revealed no mistakes, for such is not the case. My attitude regarding these things has been well known, and even **conspicuous** in the Church, and has not changed because of his death, nor would he have me change except I could do so conscientiously, but, viewing him as a man among men, and speaking of **him**, personally, **only as a man**, I point to him as one whose aims were always **high**, who never conceived an ignoble design, and who, as a consequence, reached and maintained a loftier plane than those whose standards were not so exalted.

I point to him as a man who, within my range of acquaintance, and to my viewing, has had no superior and but few, if any, equals, when I consider his life here from its Alpha to its Omega, in the light of what I know circumscribed and environed it, and this I say after abundant opportunity, in almost all life's walks, for observing and judging. To say more is forbidden me. To say less would be unjust and unkind. If I know love's meaning, I loved the man for the nobility I discerned in him.

He was a sufferer for years from facial neuralgia, but was almost the personification of patient endurance, and the characteristic cheerfulness of his life never failed him during all his affliction. Almost four years ago the eyes that, as he said, had served him so well for over seventy years, but

for some six years later had been gradually growing dim, lost their usual power and his hearing became seriously impaired, and thus he was all but shut out from the world and deprived of the ability to circulate at will. He became dependant in this direction, upon others, and this to a man of his disposition was an indescribable trial; still no complaint escaped him. He toiled on by the aid of his private secretary and amanuensis till his life Memoirs were completed and turned over to the Church, and he found abundant cause for thanksgiving to God for what he still enjoyed even in his life condition.

When about a fortnight ago he was attacked with a form of heart neuralgia he was ill prepared physically to endure much further pain and along during the continuance of his distress and increasing weakness, he expressed repeatedly a wish to go. His life work was done, his race was run, as he viewed it, and seeing nothing further of usefulness for him in this life, or benefit to be conferred by a prolongation of his stay, like the real philosopher that he was he quietly folded his hands and announced his readiness to be transferred to the next condition, where he hoped to continue under the divine directorate and be obedient and contented under the requirements of the new estate.

At one time, when under the impression that he had only a few hours to stay, he called for his son, Israel, who was his scribe, and dictated a brief farewell to the Church and to his family, all of whom, except his son Frederick M., were

assembled around his bed; also repeated, as his dying testimony, the declaration he had through life made of his belief in his father's virtue, also that Jesus was the Christ, the Redeemer of the world, closing with the words "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and I say Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Shortly after this he revived and his condition continued to fluctuate for several days, during which time his son Frederick M., arrived from the East and thus completed the family group in attendance. On the morning of the 10th of December he seemed to revive considerably, inspiring a little renewal of hope in some who were near him, but suddenly he asked for his wife and that he might be raised up in bed. It was but the answering of the final summons, for scarcely had his request been complied with ere his tired heart had ceased to beat and the spirit had quitted its earthly tenement. At one o'clock p. m., after making the usual tests and examinations, his physicians pronounced him dead, and the grief-stricken attendants at his bedside retired to mourn through coming years a loss which to them seems inestimable, and irreparable.

Truly, as our brother said to me, his life, from the cradle to the casket was circumscribed by his birth as no other life had been; but, instead, as many would have done, of viewing this as the decree of cruel fate, and abandoning himself to its apparent forecastings, he accepted it as the behest of an infinitely wise Providence, and prepared himself to occupy within its limitations;

nor once did he ever seem to chafe under its restrictions or look or long to step outside of them. He confined himself to an effort to fill becomingly the sphere thus narrowed for him, and as we stand by **this** casket and look back to **that** cradle, we are instinctively led to exclaim: "Who, thus circumscribed, could, within that circle, have been larger, grander or nobler?" As if to still further restrict him and give, by a final test, his grand character opportunity to yet more resplendently shine out, put on its finishing touches, and illustrate in completeness the divine lesson intended and under which influence to close his career as a teacher and an exemplar, he was deprived of the use of his eyes and nearly so of his ears—shut out from those beauties of sight and sound he used to so keenly relish, nor even permitted to look upon the faces of his family; but, when words of commiseration were communicated to him regarding this, he cheerfully made answer, "O, well, these eyes have served me splendidly a long time and till my work was practically done and I have no complaint to make. I thank God that they lasted me so long."

Thus has this hero in the struggles that life has brought to few if any others in this world, lived and walked and talked among us. We welcome the blessed legacy thus entrusted to us and, committing the interests of the family and Church, as he did, to the care of ~~the~~ All Wise and loving God, we hail and apply the comforting words of the Seer of Patmos, which may be considered as my text, "Blessed are the dead which

die in the Lord, from henceforth. Yea, Saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

Those eyes no longer dependant upon the clearness of fleshly windows for their vision, are now gazing upon the splendors of new realms of beauty and occupancy and beholding the faces of those who preceded him thereto, and those ears are now being saluted by the welcomes and the plaudits, and the music of that chorus which his voice will help to swell in singing to a present God and Savior "Blessing and honor and wisdom and Glory be thine for ever and ever! Hosanna for evermore!" Rest—Rest—REST, to his noble weary spirit. Peace—Peace—PEACE to his sacred ashes.

The choir again sang using the following hymn selected by President Smith.

I know that my Redeemer lives,
And ever prays for me;
A token of his love he gives,
A pledge of liberty.

I find him lifting up my head;
He brings salvation near:
His presence makes me free indeed,
And he will soon appear.

He wills that I should holy be:
What can withstand his will?
The counsel of his grace in me
He surely shall fulfill.

Jesus, I hang upon thy word:
I steadfastly believe
Thou wilt return, and claim me, Lord,
And to thyself receive.

ITEMS BY CHURCH HISTORIAN.

Joseph Smith was born November 6, 1832, at Kirtland, Ohio. He was the son of Joseph and Emma Hale Smith.

His father was born at Sharon, Vermont, December 23, 1805, he was the son of Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith. This Joseph Smith, the grandfather of President Smith was born at Topfield, Massachusetts, July 12, 1771, and was the son of Asael and Mary Duty Smith.

Asael was born March 1, 1744, at Topfield, Massachusetts, and was the son of Samuel and Priscilla Gould Smith.

Samuel was born in Topfield, Massachusetts, January 26, 1714, and was the son of Samuel and Rebecca Curtis Smith.

Samuel Smith the elder was born in Essex County, Massachusetts, January 26, 1666. He was the son of Robert and Mary French Smith who came from England in 1638. President Smith, therefore descended from a long line of honorable and respectable ancestry, as the Smiths, Frenches, Curtises, Goulds, Dutys, and Macks were all of the most respectable families of New England pioneers; while the Hales were among the leading families of Pennsylvania and were of Jewish extraction. These families were all highly respected in the places of their ancestral homes, and no suspicion attached to the reputation of any of them until the religious movement with which the Smiths were prominently connected began in Western New York; when

unsavory stories were circulated by those opposed to their religious views. Through a long and active life President Smith has maintained the good name of his ancestors.

When in his sixth year his parents moved from Kirtland, Ohio, to Missouri, settling at Far West in Caldwell County. From this place as a result of religious persecution his mother and her children were, in 1839, driven from the State while his father, and his colleagues, were confined in a dungeon at Liberty, Missouri. He with his adopted sister Julia and his brother Frederick crossed the ice of the Mississippi River clinging to his mother's dress, while she carried in her arms his infant brother Alexander. The family settled during this same year at Commerce, (now Nauvoo) Illinois, where he grew to manhood. At the age of eight years he was baptized by his father, and on several occasions was designated by the Spirit, through his father, to be his successor.

When many of the church under the leadership of Brigham Young moved westward in 1846, his mother, with her children, refused to go and denounced polygamy and its kindred evils. Joseph Smith and his brothers continued to be uncompromising opponents of these evils during life. On the 6th of April, 1860, he was ordained to the office of President of the High Priesthood, at Amboy, Illinois, under the hands of Zenos H. Gurley, William W. Blair, and Samuel Powers, of the Quorum of Twelve, and William Marks of the High Priests. By virtue of this ordination he be-

came president of the Church and at each General Conference since he has been sustained as such without a dissenting voice.

He was married in 1855 to Miss Emma Griswold by whom several children were born to him, three of whom were reared to womanhood, viz: Mrs. Emma J. McCallum of Independence, Mo., Mrs. Carrie L. Weld, of Lamoni, Iowa, and Mrs. Zaide V. Salyards, now deceased.

His first wife died in 1869, and he subsequently married Miss Bertha Madison, who also bore him several children, five of whom survive him, viz: Frederick M., Israel A., Hale W., and Mrs. Audentia Anderson, all of Independence, Missouri, and Mrs. Lucy Lysinger of Lamoni, Iowa.

His second wife died in 1896, and he subsequently married Miss Ada Clarke, by whom he had three sons who are yet single and reside with their mother, viz: Richard Clarke, William Wallace, and Reginald Archibald.

His residence was in Nauvoo, Illinois, until 1865, when he removed to Plano, Illinois, where he became editor of the Church official organ, *The Saints' Herald*, which position he retained until his death. In 1881 he removed to Lamoni, Iowa, where he was the most prominent citizen of the place until 1906 when he removed to Independence, Missouri, where he resided until his death.

In addition to his duties as president and his editorial work he performed much missionary labor throughout the United States, Canada, Sandwich Islands, and the British Isles.