

## Wilson Seeley Lewis

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Caldwell & Co., and in 1871 formed a partnership with Edwin Manning under the name of Manning & Epperson. In 1878 the firm also entered the banking business and in 1902 the banking department of the firm was incorporated as the Manning & Epperson State Bank, and Mr. Epperson continued active in its business until his death. He was a member of the town council of Eddyville for many years and was mayor several times. In 1879 he was elected representative and was re-elected two years later, serving in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth general assemblies. He was again elected representative and served in 1906 in the Thirty-first General Assembly. He was an active Republican and for many years attended nearly all its conventions, district, state and national.

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WILSON SEELEY LEWIS was born at Russell, New York, July 17, 1857, and died at Sioux City, Iowa, August 24, 1921. His parents were William H. and Hannah (Turner) Lewis. He attended St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York, removed to Iowa in 1878 and engaged in educational work, and served as superintendent of schools at Center Point and at Belle Plaine, at the latter place from 1882 to 1885. In 1884 he entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal church and served as pastor, first at Blainstown and then at Traer. In 1888 he went to Epworth as principal of Epworth Seminary and made a remarkable record in building up that secondary educational institution. In 1897 he resigned and the same year he was invited to become president of Morningside College, Sioux City, and accepted. At that time the college had an attendance of 187 students, had but one good building, and another started but the construction had stopped because of lack of funds, had no endowment and was in debt \$25,000. In the eleven years of his presidency the debt was paid off, the campus enlarged, several good buildings erected, an endowment of \$400,000 obtained, the student attendance increased to 500, and the college came to be recognized as of standard rank. In 1908 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church held at Baltimore elected him as one of its bishops, and he was assigned to the supervision of the church's educational and religious work in southern China with headquarters at Foochow. He was active in establishing a great many schools for primary, intermediate and higher education, and medical schools and hospitals. He materially assisted his church in the United States in raising the \$115,000,000 Centenary Fund by writing and by delivering public addresses in innumerable places. Because of the death of Bishop J. W. Bashford, Bishop Lewis became senior bishop in China and was assigned to northern China with headquarters at Peking. The year before his death he was actively engaged in famine relief work in China. He was a man of great vision and of unusual ability as an organizer and executive. His success as an educator was only equalled by his influence as a preacher of the Christian religion.

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