

# THE DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

NO. 30.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1862.

VOL. XI.

## DISCOURSE

By GEORGE A. SMITH, at Logan, Cache Co., September 10, 1861.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

I love to hear the teachings of the servants of God, especially those whom God has appointed to preside over his people in all the world. I love also to contribute my testimony, or to speak to the Saints by way of encouragement, illustration and instruction. For twenty-eight years past, it has been the feeling of my heart, that if there was anything on the earth that I could do to advance the work of the Lord in the last days, I wished to do it; and if I have let anything slip that I ought to have done, it has been for want of understanding and a proper knowledge of the circumstances at the time. I entertain the same sentiments and determination to-day upon this subject that I have entertained for twenty-eight years past.

I am gratified and rejoiced exceedingly in beholding the faces of my brethren and sisters in this valley. From the manner which the people here have received the President and his escort, it is plain they are wide awake. A band of music met us on the mountain side, and they played with a free good will. The drummer seemed as though he was determined to beat the head of his drum in; and when the brethren undertook to sing in the meeting house at Wellsville, it seemed as though their united voices would tear the house to pieces, so loud were their rejoicings. The spirit in them inspired them to do as they did.

We do not realize to the full extent what we are doing. We are actually settling a portion of the earth that has been considered uninhabitable. We are reclaiming it from a desert, and building upon it a foundation for an immense State, and that State is composed of a united people, who are almost universally of harmonious sentiments. The foundation of this settlement of the Mormon people in the mountains really attracted the notice of the Federal Government. We had been mobbed, and persecuted, and driven from place to place, from city to city. On that kind of treatment we have flourished; our numbers have increased, although many of our brethren have laid their bones in the grave prematurely, and many of our wives and children have perished through persecution; yet from their ashes has seemed to spring thousands.

When we fled into the wilderness, our enemies said, "Now, let the Mormons alone, they will encounter so many difficulties, and so many natural obstructions to their growth, they must come to naught; they will quarrel with each other, and they will soon break up, and we shall have no more trouble with them."

When James K. Polk, President of the United States, was told that the Mormons had occupied the Great Basin, and were making settlements on the borders of the Great Salt Lake, "Why," said he, "that is the key of the continent." When the wisdom of the venerable Senator, the late Secretary Cass, was brought into requisition on the subject, "What shall we do with the Mormons?" says he, "Send a small army among them, under the command of an intelligent officer; send good looking, companionable, sociable officers, and a few strong minded women; yes, send men who are calculated to win away their females, and thus civilize them by introducing among them habits of modern Christian civilization, and in a short time you will reduce them to the necessity of being satisfied with one wife." Colonel Steptoe was sent here to fulfill that mission with the gentlemanly officers and soldiers who composed his command. The object of their errand, however, was not accomplished.

In a short time afterwards they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to take a step that should make an utter end of Mormonism at once, by a decided and bold stroke of "our gallant little army." The nation was proud of so grand an undertaking. The press lauded the project, and the members of the government were proud of the zeal in which this enterprising war was undertaken. The delusion passed current that the Mormons would now be broken up. Their first hope was that famine would reduce us to destruction, but this had failed.

And while they were looking for tidings, that in the hard winter of 1856 the Mormons had all perished of starvation, our delegates suddenly appeared at the capitol, asking for admission into the Union as a State. This astonished them.

Do they not remember that from the earliest period of our history the nation and the different States have recognized us as a separate people? In 1834 Daniel Dunklin, Governor of Missouri, said in an official document that the constitution and laws of the State of Missouri made ample provisions for the protection of the Mormons, but the prejudices of the people of Missouri were so great against them, that

they could not be enforced, and consequently the Mormons could not be re-instated in the possession of their lands and protected in their rights.

If my friend, Attorney General Blair, here will allow me, I will quote Blackstone, who says that "allegiance is that ligament or thread which ties or binds the subject to the sovereign, and for which the subject is entitled to protection from the sovereign." Now, the very minute that the sovereign, king or government, republic, or whatever form of government it may be, shall cease to extend protection to their subjects, whether they be many or few, they necessarily become independent, and are compelled for self-preservation to protect themselves and to look out for their own wants, and provide for their own necessities. That is the situation we were in in Missouri when Gov. Dunklin declared that the constitution and laws of Missouri could not be enforced so as to protect this people; it was virtually declaring us independent of that State, and acknowledging our right to protect ourselves in that capacity. The truth of this position was further illustrated by the imposition upon us of a treaty by Major-Gen. Lucas in the fall of 1838, which treaty was approved by Major-Gen. Clark, and subsequently by L. W. Boggs, Governor of the State; and thus contrary to our will, and at the point of thousands of bayonets, were we compelled to be one of the high contracting parties to a treaty, an exercise of power which belongs alone to independent sovereignty.

From that day, and I do not know how long before, so far as allegiance is concerned, we were cast without the pale of the jurisdiction of the government in which we lived. It was not us that did this; it was forced upon us; we were law abiding citizens, and wanted the protection of the laws, the constitution and the government of Missouri; we wished to remain quietly in our homes, and have the privilege of eating the bread of industry, and to rear our children in virtue's way; but no, "these institutions [constitution and laws] are not for you, Mormons."

We found the same doctrine held good in the State of Illinois; and the same principle has been carried out precisely by the action of the general government towards us.

I was told at Washington that if we were not Mormons, we should be hailed with generosity and friendship; and the prestige of having subdued this country, and brought it into use, would have placed us foremost in the rank of Territories. But we were Mormons. These are the sentiments, the spirit and feeling all over the country, and with the government.

We look at this matter as it is. The general government is not going to donate land to us, while they were ready to give the settlers in Oregon six hundred and forty acres of land each, half as much for their wives, and a quarter as much for each one of their children. Oregon is located on the sea board, possessing the advantage of large navigable rivers. It has a flourishing commerce growing up, providing the people with exchanges at comparatively little cost.

Utah is in the heart of the desert. It requires persons of the most undaunted courage and energy to possess it at all; then why not give them a chance to occupy the land? why not encourage the settlers of Utah to reward them for their energy and toil in reclaiming a desert, by giving them six hundred and forty acres of land a piece? Because "they are damned Mormons;" that is the reason they do not give them an acre.

What do we find in the administration of Mr. Buchanan? The very first step he took was to gather the flower of the American army, the finest and best appointed army that ever the United States fitted out. This was the declaration of the members of the Cabinet and the press throughout the whole country. The army under Washington that captured Lord Cornwallis, hardly amounted to twelve thousand men; the army that was sent to Utah, and actually raised for this Territory, numbered over thirteen thousand soldiers; but all together, with the attaches they employed, it amounted to upwards of seventeen thousand men. Even this vast army was not allowed to pass through the inhabited parts of the Territory, until the high commissioners sent by the President of the United States, exercising, though disclaiming the authority of the treaty making power, negotiated for their passage into the settlements. Many attempts were made to violate this compact, and in many instances they did so to a limited extent, but they found dangers beset them. An old Frenchman said they would damn the Mormons when they would get up, and when they would go to bed, when they would drink, smoke and gamble, and they would say, "Why not go to work and destroy them?" then they would reason, "We are here right in the midst of the Mormons; there is only a few thousands of us, and if we commence the play we will all go under; then the people will come from the States and kill all the Mormons; but

what good would that do us if we were all dead." God fought our battles.

To conclude the argument that we were an independent people, acknowledged by the United States, and that our Territory was no longer tenable to their armies, but must be evacuated, orders were given by the President to destroy every thing that could be of use to us here. "Burst your cannon, blow up your magazines, and waste everything that you cannot carry away, and that would be of any use whatever to the Mormon people; for in vacating a Territory, we cannot conquer; we must let nothing go into the hands of our enemies that will in any way benefit them." The destruction of property in this way is an evidence of hostilities. This is the practice of nations that are at war with each other, to destroy what they cannot carry away.

We have had to protect ourselves and sustain the expense of Indian wars, make our own laws, regulate ourselves in our own way, and no nation, kindred, tongue or people has the right to say, why do you so? This right has so far been conceded; the army has been withdrawn from our country, and they have gone away, in a manner, acknowledging their defeat. To be sure, many of the officers went away, saying, "We will come by and by and wipe you out." But as God would have it, they are employed in paying such compliments to each other as they had designed to inflict upon us.

I have friends in what is now termed the Northern and Southern Confederacies, for now the Federal Union is one of the things that has ceased to be; such a thing as the government of the United States as organized by our fathers has ceased to exist. The North claims to be it; but the United States as a government, as a nation, as organized by our fathers, is among the things that were. Fragments of it, in the shape of separate governments or combinations may be able to inflict national chastisement upon each other, or make war with foreign nations; but it is only as a fraction, and not as a whole. The State of Kentucky declares that the North nor South shall march armies into their territory. You find in the history of the wars of Europe that an armed neutrality is not an uncommon thing; Kentucky is observing the same. She is a powerful State; she may be drawn into the great vortex of war; she may take sides with the North or with the South, or most likely be divided on both sides; but she is no more in connection with the general government, as it is called, than with Tennessee or Virginia.

Turmoil and mob power rules; they are destroying each other, demolishing public improvements, printing presses have been destroyed in Missouri, and most other States. Blackstone says that a press that publishes falsehood and licentiousness is a nuisance, and that all corporations should have power to abate it. We abated the *Expositor* in Nauvoo according to law on this ground. Both the North and the South have been doing the same thing; hundreds of papers have been suppressed. Gov. Ford said it was right to abate the *Expositor*, but it would have been better by mob than by municipal authority; and now mob law rules the whole country and destroys printing presses without let or hindrance.

We will now speak of our mountain home. The Lord has smiled upon these valleys. Col. Fremont was in the Bear River valley in August, 1843, when the mercury stood at 29 deg., showing conclusively that grain could not be ripened here. People in the States would pick up that report and say, "Everything will freeze to death there." A few years passed away, and you find eight or nine hundred families of Saints in Cache Valley, and they can raise the finest wheat, flax, and wool. I saw yesterday as fine a specimen of tobacco as can be raised in Virginia. Every nation feels it is their best policy, and their duty to adopt such a system of political economy as will provide for their own wants, and protect themselves against the exactions of other nations.

We need not expect to get cotton from the Southern States, for they are fighting with the North, and have no time to raise it, and communication is cut off by a blockade. We need not expect to get tobacco from the South, for the negroes are at work digging entrenchments, and raising corn for the Southern army.

We have got to provide for ourselves, as a great family and as a nation. All enlightened nations have endeavored to get control of a northern and southern climate: the God of heaven in his abundant mercy has given us the control in these elevated valleys of a northern and southern climate.

There are a great many persons among us that use tobacco; and there are some reasons why they use it. For instance our young men see a Gentile with a stove pipe hat on, a pair of big whiskers, and a cigar in his mouth. O, it looks so pretty, think our young men; and if they cannot get a cigar, they must have a pipe. Many of our boys see an old man that has been educated among the Gentiles,

and has contracted, unfortunately, a habit of chewing tobacco; while walking along he spits upon the snow; it colors the virgin snow as though a calf had been there. The boy looks at it, and says he, "That looks nice;" so he gets his tobacco, and spits on the snow also. "There," says he, "that looks as though a man had been along here." This habit has become stubborn with many people. You may be astonished when I tell you that it takes about sixty thousand dollars in cash out of our Territory every year for the article of tobacco: within the last ten years we have paid in the neighborhood of six hundred thousand dollars for this one article. But should we undertake to raise it and cure it, and use it, the brethren may object to it, because a Gentile or a nigger never pished on it.

It is entirely against our interest to pay out this yearly sum for an article we can raise in our own country, and a violation of the true principles of political economy. I will appeal to our individual pockets, I will say I have got to pay for me and my boys for twenty-five pounds of tobacco in a year. Suppose the tax-gatherer comes, and my tax is twenty-five dollars, I say I have not a red cent, and I cannot pay it. It cannot be had, I cannot raise it; but twenty-five dollars in tobacco must be raised; there are no two ways about that.

Now, as a State, in this item of political economy, let us raise and manufacture our own tobacco, and learn to think and believe that tobacco of our own raising is just as good, and a little better, than that brought from abroad.

We sent brethren to the south to raise cotton in 1857; something like thirty-three of them went, and the next year many more went, so that in 1858 the vote of Washington county amounted to one hundred voters. Many of them were Southern men, who had been gathered from Texas, Alabama, Mississippi and other parts of the Southern States; they were accustomed to raising cotton. The President advised them to go there and supply the Territory with cotton. It had the appearance of a barren country generally; the mountains were barren and bleak in their appearance; red sandstone and black volcanic rock, and a variety of grey colored clay prevailing, altogether giving it a kind of sombre, deadly appearance. The brethren went to raising cotton in small patches as they could find the land, and every year they cultivated it they found the cotton improve in quality. They raised better cotton last year than the year before, and so they have continued until it has become a certainty that cotton can be raised there.

I have seen men load up their cotton, and start this way to trade it off. Say they, "I want to get a few bushels of wheat, and pay in cotton." The answer has been, "I can do nothing with your cotton; but if it was spun, I would buy it." So the cotton raiser has considered it of little use to raise cotton, and went to raising wheat. They did not know what to do with their cotton when it was raised. You may go to those same persons that would not buy from the cotton raiser, and their women say, "Husband, I have got to have some cotton batting from the store, to make some quilts of; now, husband, you need not try to dodge, the batten has got to come." It costs fifty cents a pound, and one third of it is paper when you get it. Sister, why did you not buy that boy's cotton the other day; you would have got two dollars for your wheat you sell at the store for one? "O, his cotton was grown at home, and that bought in the stores is made into nice sheets, all ready for spreading in the quilt." You can take a pair of hand cards and prepare our home-made cotton for the quilt with but a little trouble, and you would have the clean cotton instead of one third brown paper. For your bushel of wheat, after hauling it to the store, you get a pound and a half of cotton, whereas if you sell your wheat to the home producer for cotton, you have laid at your door four pounds of cotton for a bushel of wheat.

To buy the foreign cotton in this manner, and discourage home production, is very far from good political economy. Quite an amount of raw cotton is wanted in this Territory for filling quilts and other purposes by every family. The wool answers a good purpose, but it is not plentiful enough; and even if it were, there are many kinds of quilts and comforters for which cotton is far preferable. Did we only encourage this home production of cotton to this limited extent, it would save thousands of dollars of money that is now thrown needlessly into the pockets of merchants to supply this article from abroad. Let us stop this suicidal practice of sending away our money; it would be better to braid our bed covering from oat straw, until we can supply our wants from the elements and soil of our own mountain valleys.

In 1857 the brethren had been to raise flax; I speak particularly of Provo. In 1858 the army came, and there was a chance for a man