

We have passed the chaotic period and the dark ages, and the great pillar of slavery, which now stands forth a demolished monument of wickedness—that was cemented with blood and draped in the tears of the oppressed,—there it lies! Behold it! a shapeless heap of ruins, to mark for a time the place and the nation that permitted its erection. But beside it, and overshadowing it, let us erect the great temple of liberty, commenced by our noble fathers in 1776, and upon its broad and lofty arches let us inscribe Love, Fraternity and Equality, before the law for all mankind; and upon its great and towering dome justice shall prevail as the law-giver for all the nations of the world; and so our Government shall receive the benedictions of heaven, and the devout and heartfelt homage of not only our people, but of all peoples under the whole heavens.

HON. JOHN TAYLOR.

It is not my intention at the present time to make many remarks. We have assembled here for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of American Independence. We have listened to a long oration, very ably delivered, in relation to scenes through which our nation has passed associated with and during the late terrible war. I would not further investigate this subject at present. This anniversary very naturally leads our minds back to the time when the American colonists were struggling with England for their very existence; when a band of brave patriotic men framed the Declaration of Independence which you have heard read, and hurled defiance at their oppressors;—when through the combined efforts of a united people and the blessings of Almighty God, the foe was driven back, victory perched on the banners of the colonists and a free nation was born on this continent. The great difficulty that had before existed was that a few people wanted to govern the many, that aristocracy and monarchy sought to influence the minds and acts of the people and to bring them into bondage. This state of feeling had existed to a great extent on the continent of Europe and the principles of bondage and servility there practised were sought to be fastened on these colonies. But they, by their united efforts, proclaimed themselves free, and in the memorable Declaration of Independence, the founders of the Republic gave to us their peculiar views. They believed in taxation and representation going hand in hand, in freedom of speech, freedom of the press and in liberty of conscience; they believed that men should be allowed to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and that no man had a right to interfere with those rights. Under these circumstances that great palladium of human liberty, the Constitution of the United States, was framed, to consolidate, cement and bind together in fraternal bonds the nation newly born as a mutual compromise adapted to the wants of all, which in its spirit and in its obligations was calculated to promote the happiness and well-being of the New World, just then springing into life.

This Constitution we hold as a sacred instrument; for Joseph Smith, the founder of this people, said "it was given by the inspiration of the Almighty." This instrument has been assailed under various circumstances and at various times and has been mutilated and changed to meet the views of sectional politicians and fanatical demagogues; but it is sacred to us; for in it are the germs of liberty, which we wish maintained and perpetuated so that our posterity may enjoy its benefits.

The assembly that has met here today shows the enthusiasm that dwells in the hearts of the people in regard to the commemoration of this day and the maintenance of these principles. I am pleased to meet with so many of my friends. I was pleased to see them parade the streets, and to see the order, union, harmony and beauty there displayed, it is the effect of that liberty which we enjoy, or part of it. It is our desire to maintain, inviolate, these principles committed to us in all their purity fullness and meaning, and when men shall attempt to encroach upon them to resist them. When men have sought to encroach upon our rights and to tyrannize over us we have maintained our integrity and clung to the Constitution, and we will cling to it as long as we live upon the earth (applause). We do not want it changed, we do not want it bettered, it is good enough for us as it was originally.

In regard to many political questions that have agitated society in this country we care little about them. We are aware that there have been worms

knawing at the root of the tree of liberty, entering, as it were, into its vitals; and to-day, some of the old leaven presents itself. Some of the old monarchical ideas that prevail in parts of the earth whence many of us have come, are insidiously sought to be planted in our midst; some of our bloated demagogues are talking of monarchy and of kings and emperors ruling over us; and imperialism if you please, is beginning to hold up a bold front, telling us that our republican institutions amount to nothing, and that there is no strength, virtue, power, energy or vitality associated with them, and that we must return to those systems from which we have fled, and against which we fought. Men in this nation to-day, are busy advocating imperialism, but we want nothing to do with it. We want the Constitution as it was and is, and liberty to spread and grow throughout this land and throughout the world; (Cheers.) anything short of this will not satisfy our feelings.

We have no party prejudices, no sectional views,—no North, no South, no East, no West, but the union of the United States and the union and happiness of the world. These are the objects we have in view and it is for us to maintain them inviolate.

I do not wish to intrude upon you as you are already very much fatigued and there are other gentlemen who wish to speak. I shall close, therefore, by saying, The Constitution of the United States, may it be preserved inviolate now and forever. (Prolonged applause.) Captain Groxall's band played a selection of popular melodies.

The next speaker on the programme was COL. F. H. HEAD, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who spoke as follows: "Ladies and Gentlemen, the considerable length to which the exercises have been protracted, together with the fact that President Smith, who is to follow me, is charged to the muzzle with good things, admonishes me that I can best consult your inclinations by adorning my remarks with the grace of brevity. I will, therefore, touch upon one of two or three points which had suggested themselves to me as appropriate for this occasion. Life, if it is worthy to be called life, is a state of progress. The man who does not progress does not live, he exists as a beast exists; and when the birth-day anniversary of each man's life rolls round it behooves him to consider, before he bids his friends to come to his house and partake of his turkeys and drink of his wine, whether he and they have really any occasion for congratulation that he was ever born. And so it is with a nation. A nation may stagnate or it may progress; it may exist simply. And so, on our national birth-day we may well inquire whether we have any special cause for congratulation that ninety-three years ago this day our Republic saw the light. Assuming the test of national life to be progress, I think we may well claim for our fatherland the title of the most living of the nations. Our cotemporary leading powers live in the past; their minds are fixed on the historic names and heroic memories of former days. The Englishman longs for the time of "good Queen Bess," for the genius of Shakespeare and Milton, for the oratory of Pitt and Burke, and he lavishes his means in restoring his ancestral home to all its ancient hideousness. The Frenchman longs for the days of the ancient empire,—for the martial glories of the first Napoleon; the German for the times of Frederic the Great, for Schiller and Goethe; the Italian for the unimagined glories of the Roman Empire, and all, with one accord, talk about the degeneracy of these latter days.

With our nation, however, everything is precisely the reverse of this. The typical American lives in the future; we are the nation of the future, the hope of the world. America shall yet speak for all the human race. (Applause) All that we have yet accomplished is but fragmentary, a record of projects and expectations, merely an indication of that which is to come. The American looks before him, never behind; he has no time to think of the past. He has vast acres of fertile land to be changed from the unproductive prairie into thrifty homes; he has rivers to bridge, mountain chains to pierce to make highways for the commerce of all the world; he has mountains of gold and silver to be wrought to furnish the sinews for this commerce. He must create for himself a literature, and the arts. If he builds a Pacific Railroad he thinks of it as the prolific mother of a dozen more in the American Desert.

The people of Utah are genuine typical Americans in their modes of thought and action. They have built two hundred miles of the Great National High-

way, but this fact is already almost forgotten, and would be quite if it were paid for. (Applause and laughter) And you are now projecting a road which shall stretch from Ogden to the Colorado, which shall be gmmmed along its course with a hundred blooming cities and villages with thrifty, happy homes, in the future, for a million citizens of the Republic. (Applause.)

Judged by its fruits and its prospects, our nation has already demonstrated to the world its right to live. It is the greatest motive, living power of our age and race; and we may, to-day, with gratitude and with hope, fire our cannon and wave our banners; and let all this assembly of bright-eyed children, and the representative men of every industry and of every art thank God that, of this mighty throbbing life, they are a part. (Applause.)

I trust I may be pardoned, my friends, on this occasion, for adding a few words of a personal character, since this is probably the last occasion on which I shall have the privilege of addressing you here. I am anticipating soon to be relieved from my official duties here, and to leave the Territory; and I could not bid you farewell, in justice to myself, without thanking you for the great and uniform personal kindnesses which I have received at your hands during the past four years. (Applause.) The duties of my official position have been somewhat onerous and important; and I have never hesitated to aver, as I do to-day, that whatever measure of success has attended my efforts in the discharge of those official duties, has been due in no small degree to the cordial aid and co-operation I have received at all times from the people of the Territory. (Applause.) But it is not alone for aid which I have received in discharging my official duties, in carrying out the wishes and plans of the Government, that I would thank you to-day; but for personal kindnesses without number, to myself; for those thousand social amities and neighborly deeds of kindness, which make bright and beautiful the pathway of our earthly lives. Some poet has beautifully pictured that when the sublimest moment of each man's life shall come, when he shall stand on the threshold of a future world, not only do all the acts and incidents of his past life move in rapid review before him, but he shall see grouped around him the faces of all those who, in life, have been his tried and trusty friends, and that they shall bid him god-speed on his journey, and by their presence in that solemn hour make beautiful the portals of his heaven life. If the poet has dreamed aright, when that hour shall come to me, as to all, to say:

"Farewell life, my senses swim,  
And the world is growing dim."

I shall see about me the faces of many of those who are here to-day, friends whose names, faces and memories I shall cherish forever; friends whose communications to me have been no words of deceit or guile; friends, whom may God reward for all their thoughtful acts of kindness to me and to mine."

The Marshal then introduced Hon. GEORGE A. SMITH, who said:

"The circumstances connected with the present occasion naturally stir up in our minds reflections concerning the past. We saw in the procession to-day a wagon loaded with sage brush, grease-wood and willows; I do not know whether there were any crickets and grasshoppers, I did not see any. There were other wagons loaded with the choicest productions of a careful husbandry. The first wagon showed the productions of this country when we first entered it; the other what it now produces by the labor and industry of the inhabitants of these mountains. The Fourth of July is a memorable day for every American to celebrate; to every inhabitant of Utah the 24th of July is another memorable day. Twenty-two years ago a band of pioneers, led by Brigham Young, were working the road and seeking a pass across these mountains, trying to find a place where they might enjoy the right of preaching the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands, without the risk of having their Presidents and Apostles murdered, their bishops tarred and feathered, themselves robbed, and their houses burned, for under the broad folds of the American flag we had borne all this. About twenty-two years ago we left the then territory of the United States and came into Mexican territory. Here we unfurled the U. S. national flag to the breeze, and laid a foundation by planting potatoes and other vegetables for the industrial improvements which now exist, and the 130 cities and settlements that now flourish in these mountains,

Early in 1844, Joseph Smith, the Prophet whom God had inspired to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity to the world, published to the United States his "views on the policy and powers of the Government."

He recommended them to "Pray Congress to pay every man a reasonable price for his slaves, out of the surplus revenue arising from the sale of public lands, and from the deduction of pay from the members of Congress."

"Break off the shackles," said he, from the poor black man, and hire him to labor like other human beings; for an hour of virtuous liberty on earth is worth a whole eternity of bondage."

A few days after he was murdered and his friends were expelled from their homes, but not an officer of the law existed in the nation who exerted his authority to punish the perpetrators of these crimes. The Latter-day Saints sought shelter in these mountains, while God in His wrath scourged the nation, and those officers who had failed to, or would not discharge their duties and protect the Latter-day Saints, found themselves unable to stem the torrent of rebellion, murder and crime, until there came a war in which about a million of people perished. May we hope that our country will never be guilty of a crime again that will bring upon it another such scourge. (Applause.)

God has blessed us in these mountains and we have been able to maintain our liberty and to enjoy the privileges which are guaranteed to us by the Constitution of the United States, sanctified by the blood of our fathers. Although we had to seek homes in the midst of deserts, a thousand miles from any civilization, we have planted the standard of liberty, and acquired to our country a vast domain, thereby showing to the great nation of which we form a part, that we are a truly loyal, upright, honorable and persevering race, and that we could do more for the development of our country, than the same number of people in any other part of her broad domain. This we have been able to accomplish, and with the blessing of the Almighty we are continuing the great work, the foundations of which are only yet barely commenced, of extending liberty, peace and happiness to the human race.

I rejoice to-day with you in the blessings which surround us, and in the prospects before us; I rejoice in the fine display that has been made in honor of the day we celebrate; the procession of three thousand school children, and of the representatives of the different branches of industry was magnificent. I feel satisfied that, with the blessings of God, we shall be able to roll forth and consummate under the flag of our country, the great work which we have commenced until we shall see the day when peace, unity and harmony will extend throughout the length and breadth of our nation, and when the desire for bloodshed, robbery and murder, and interfering with the religious and civil rights of others shall cease.

We are laboring for this and rejoice in the prospect; and in the meantime we hope that our countrymen will understand us better. The great railroad now passes through our country, and we are forming the acquaintance of a different class of men from any with whom we have been acquainted, and being better known we shall be better understood, for of all people on the face of the earth, we have been the most maligned, and yet we have been the most industrious, temperate, orderly and law-abiding people on the face of the earth.

Our Heavenly Father has commenced to redeem the human race, to bring them back from bondage, corruption and oppression, and He has commenced it with this people,—and I bear my testimony that the power and blessing of the Almighty are and will continue to abide with the Latter-day Saints; and they will have the privilege one day, when the Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land, to go back to Missouri and inhabit their cherished homes, for which they paid the government nearly half a million in money, and which they still own. These days will come, they are not far distant, and I rejoice in the prospect. (loud applause.)

President Smith moved a vote of thanks to the Committee of Arrangements, also to the Marshal and his assistants for the able manner in which they had conducted the celebration.

President Young moved an amendment, that the Committee continue their labors, and that the exercises of the day be adjourned until the 24th instant.

The amendment was unanimously carried.

After benediction by the chaplain the assembly dispersed.