

In the United States the people are the government, and their united voice is the only sovereign that should rule, the only power that should be obeyed and the only gentlemen that should be honored at home and abroad, on the land and on the sea. Wherefore, were I the President of United States, by the voice of a virtuous people, I would honor the old paths of the venerated fathers of freedom; I would walk in the tracks of the illustrious patriots who carried the ark of the government upon their shoulders with an eye single to the glory of the people, and when that people petitioned to abolish slavery in the slave states, I would use all honorable means to have their prayers granted, and give liberty to the captive by paying the southern gentlemen a reasonable equivalent for his property, that the whole nation might be free indeed!

When the people petitioned for a national bank, I would use my best endeavors to have their prayers answered, and establish one on national principles to save taxes, and make them the controllers of its ways and means; and when the people petitioned to possess the territory of Oregon or any other contiguous territory, I would lend the influence of a chief magistrate to grant so reasonable a request, that they might extend the mighty efforts and enterprise of a free people from the east to the west sea, and make the wilderness blossom as the rose; and when a neighboring realm petitioned to join the union of the sons of liberty, my voice would be, *come*; yea, come Texas, come Mexico, come Canada, and come all the world; let us be brethren, let us be one great family, and let there be a universal peace. Abolish the cruel custom of prisons (except certain cases) penitentiaries, court martials for desertion; and let reason and friendship reign over the ruins of ignorance and barbarity; yea, I would, as the universal friend of man, open the prisons, open the eyes, open the ears and open the hearts of all people, to behold and enjoy freedom, unadulterated freedom; and God, who once cleansed the violence of the earth with a flood, whose Son laid down his life for the salvation of all his Father gave him out of the world, and who has promised that he will come and purify the world again with fire in the last days, should be supplicated by me for the good of all people.—With the highest esteem, I am a friend of virtue and of the people,

JOSEPH SMITH.

Nauvoo, Illinois, Feb. 7, 1844.

A piece of doggerel appears in the "Warsaw Message" of this date entitled "Buckeye's Lamentations for the want of more Wives," evidently the production of Wilson Law, and breathing a very foul and malicious spirit.

Thursday, 8.—Held mayor's court, and tried two negroes for attempting to marry white women; fined one \$25 and the other \$5. In the evening there was a political meeting in the Assembly room, when br. Phelps publicly read for the first time, my "Views of the Powers and Policy of the General Government." I addressed the meeting as follows:—

"I would not have suffered my name to have been used by my friends on anywise, as President of the United States, or candidate for that office, if I and my friends could have had the privilege of enjoying our religious and civil rights as American citizens, even those rights which the Constitution guarantees unto all her citizens alike, but this we as a people have been denied from the beginning. Persecution has rolled upon our heads from time to time, from portions of the United States, like peals of thunder, because of our religion, and no portion of the government as yet has stepped forward for our relief; and under view of these things I feel it to be my right and privilege to obtain what influence and power I can lawfully in the United States for the protection of injured innocence, and if I lose my life in a good cause I am willing to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue, righteousness and truth, in maintaining the laws and Constitution of the United States, if need be, for the general good of mankind."

I was followed by Elders Hyde and Taylor, and a unanimous vote was taken to maintain my political views.

Friday, 9.—Held mayor's court in my dining room, on the case "Nauvoo v. William Withers," for assault. Case withdrawn on my recommendation.

This evening a public meeting was held; I extract from the "Neighbor":—

"PUBLIC MEETING.

On Friday the 9th inst. a public meeting was held in the Assembly room, at which a public address of General Joseph Smith's to the citizens of the United States was read by Judge Phelps. The address is certainly an able document, big with meaning and interest, clearly pointing out the way for the temporal salvation of this Union, showing what would be our best policy, pointing out the rocks and quicksand where our political bark is in danger of being wrecked, and the way to escape it, and evincing a knowledge and foresight of our political economy, worthy of the writer.

Appropriate remarks were made by several gentlemen after the reading of the address."

Saturday, 10.—I instructed the marshal to inform Mr. Cole, who kept a select school in the Assembly room, that I must for the future have that room for my own use.

Prayer meeting in the Assembly room; prayed for sister Richards and others who were sick.

A conference was held at Tuscaloosa county, Alabama; Elder John Brown, president, and George W. Stewart, clerk. Three branches were represented containing 9 elders, 2 priests, 3 teachers, 3 deacons and 123 members.

Sunday, 11.—Snow on the ground; thaw commenced in the afternoon. I was at home.

Monday, 12.—I sat in the city council, and recommended the repeal of the ordinances en-

titled "An extra ordinance for the extra case of Joseph Smith." "An ordinance to prevent unlawful search or seizure of persons or property, by foreign process, in the city of Nauvoo," and "An ordinance regulating the currency," and they were repealed accordingly. The memorial to Congress, passed Dec. 21, 1843, was again read, and signed by the counselors, aldermen, mayor, recorder and marshal.

I instructed councilor Orson Pratt to call all the Illinois representatives together, and tell them our sufferings have been such that we must have that document passed, and we will have it.

"You must go in for it. Go to John Quincy Adams and ask him to call the delegation from Massachusetts separate from the Illinois delegation, and demand the same. Go to Henry Clay and other prominent men. Call public meetings in the city of Washington. Take the saloon, publish the admittance so much per ticket, invite the members of both houses to come and hear you, and roar upon them. You may take all my writings you think anything of and read to them, &c., and you shall prosper in the name of God: Amen."

The recorder presented the report of the attendance of the city council, from which it appears that I have sat with them 11 sessions, from the 14th Oct., 1843 to the 16th January, 1844, inclusive.

Councilor O. Pratt nominated Geo. P. Stiles as councilor during his absence, which was confirmed by the council.

I burned \$81 of city scrip according to ordinance.

Thawing; streets very dirty.

Tuesday, 13.—I was at home. Settled with Theodore Turley and gave him the deed of a lot.

Having received an invitation from br. J. L. Heywood to visit Quincy. I wrote him in reply:

"Nauvoo, February 13, 1844.

Dear br. Heywood:—I sit down at this time to acknowledge the receipt of, and reciprocate the friendly feelings manifest in yours of the 7th inst., and although surrounded by a press of business shall take pleasure in spending a few moments to reply.

I would take the greatest pleasure imaginable in coming down to Quincy on a visit to see you and all my friends in your city, would business and circumstances permit, but it would be a matter of impossibility almost for me to leave home at the present time in consequence of a multitude of business which I have daily to attend to. Moreover wisdom and prudence seem to forbid my coming on account of the bitter feeling which manifests itself in various places between this and Quincy, not that I have any apprehensions for my personal safety, for the same kind hand which hath hitherto been my shield and support would save me from the power of my wicked persecutors, but something might grow out of it which would prompt my adversaries to get out another illegal writ, and would eventually, probably, cost me some three or four thousand dollars, as in other cases, and under which I have still to labor to disadvantage. Under these considerations, therefore, I am compelled to decline paying you a visit for the present, at the same time, in connection with Mrs. Smith, I tender my warmest acknowledgments for the invitation.

I am pleased to hear of the prosperity of your branch, and hope it will continue; for although I never feel to force my doctrines upon any person, I rejoice to see prejudice give way to truth, and the traditions of men dispersed by the pure principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I should be pleased to have the privilege of forming an acquaintance with your partner, Mr. Kimball, and his lady, and should they ever come up this way I hope they will call and see me.

As respects things in Nauvoo I have nothing to say but good. Although the mobocrats of this county breathe out their shame with a continual foam, and threaten extermination, &c., the citizens of Nauvoo are at peace, they fear no danger, for the report of mobs have become so common, that the Mormons pay no attention to it whatever. Each man minds his own business and all are making improvements as fast as they can. In fact things in general seem prosperous and pleasing, and I never saw a better feeling amongst the Saints than at the present time.

My family have been some sick of late and continue so, especially my youngest boy.

Accept, dear sir, the warmest respects of myself and Mrs. Smith, and please present the same to your lady. In the meantime I remain your friend and brother,

JOSEPH SMITH."

President Brigham Young returned from Bear Creek settlements where he had been preaching for the last few days.

Wednesday, 14.—At home through the day. In the evening the Assembly room was filled by the brethren, when my "Views of the powers and policy of the Government of the United States" was again read. I afterwards spoke on the same subject at considerable length.

Thursday, 15.—At home. A beautiful day. I insert the following article from the Times and Seasons:—

"WHO SHALL BE OUR NEXT PRESIDENT?"

This is an inquiry which to us as a people is a matter of the most paramount importance, and requires our most serious, calm, and dispassionate reflection. Executive power when correctly wielded is a great blessing to the people of this great commonwealth, and forms one of the firmest pillars of our confederation. It watches the interests of the whole community with a fatherly care; it wisely balances the other legislative powers when overheated by party spirit, or sectional feeling; it watches

with jealous care our interests and commerce with foreign nations, and gives tone and efficacy to legislative enactments.

The President stands at the head of these United States and is the mouth-piece of this vast republic. If he be a man of an enlightened mind and a capacious soul; if he is a virtuous man, a statesman, a patriot and a man of unflinching integrity; if he possess the same spirit that fired the souls of our venerable sires, who founded this great commonwealth, and wishes to promote the universal good of the whole republic, he may indeed be made a blessing to community.

But if he prostrates his high and honorable calling to base and unworthy purposes; if he makes use of the power which the people have placed in his hands for their interests to gratify his ambition, for the purpose of self-aggrandizement or pecuniary interest; if he meanly panders with demagogues, loses sight of the interests of the nation and sacrifices the union on the altar of sectional interests or party views, he renders himself unworthy of the dignified trust reposed in him, debases the nation in the eyes of the civilized world and produces misery and confusion at home. 'When the wicked rule, the people mourn.'

There is perhaps no body of people in the United States who are at the present time more interested about the issue of the presidential contest than are the Latter Day Saints. And our situation in regard to the two great political parties is a most novel one. It is a fact well understood that we have suffered great injustice from the State of Missouri; that we petitioned to the authorities of that State for redress in vain; that we have also memorialized Congress, under the late administration, and have obtained the heartless reply that 'Congress has no power to redress your grievances.'

After having taken all the legal and constitutional steps that we can, we are still groaning under accumulated wrongs. Is there no power anywhere to redress our grievances? Missouri lacks the disposition, and Congress both lacks the disposition and power (?) and thus fifteen thousand inhabitants of these United States can with impunity be dispossessed of their property, have their houses burned, their property confiscated, many of their numbers murdered, and the remainder driven from their homes and left to wander as exiles in this boasted land of freedom and equal rights, and after appealing again and again to the legally constituted authorities of our land for redress, we are coolly told by our highest tribunals, 'we can do nothing for you.'

We have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars into the coffers of Congress for their lands, and they stand virtually pledged to defend us in our rights, but they have not done it. If a man steals a dollar from his neighbor, or steals a horse or a hog, he can obtain redress; but we have been robbed by wholesale, the most daring murders have been committed, and we are coolly told that we can obtain no redress. If a steamboat is set on fire on our coast by foreigners, even when she is engaged in aiding and abetting the enemies of that power, it becomes a matter of national interference and legislation; or if a foreigner, as in the case of McLeod, is taken on our land and tried for supposed crimes committed by him against our citizens, his nation interferes; and it becomes a matter of negotiation and legislation; but our authorities can calmly look on and see the citizens of a county butchered with impunity; they can see two counties dispossessed of their inhabitants, their houses burned and their property confiscated, and when the cries of fifteen thousand men, women and children salute their ears, they deliberately tell us that we can obtain no redress.

Hear it therefore ye mobbers! proclaim it to all the scoundrels in the Union! let a standard be erected around which shall rally all the renegades of the land: assemble yourselves and rob at pleasure, murder till you are saturated with blood, drive men, women and children from their homes, their is no law to protect them, and Congress has no power to redress their grievances, and the great father of the Union (the President) has not got an ear to listen to their complaints.

What shall we do under this state of things? In the event of either of the prominent candidates, Van Buren or Clay, obtaining the presidential chair we should not be placed in any better situation.

In speaking of Mr. Clay, his politics are diametrically opposed to ours; he inclines strongly to the old school of federalists, and as a matter of course would not favor our cause, neither could we conscientiously vote for him. And we have yet stronger objections to Mr. Van Buren, on other grounds. He has sung the old song of Congress—"Congress has no power to redress your grievances."

But did the matter rest here it would not be so bad. He was in the presidential chair at the time of our former difficulties. We appealed to him on that occasion, but we appealed in vain, and his sentiments are yet unchanged.

But all these things are tolerable in comparison to what we have yet to state. We have been informed from a respectable source that there is an understanding between Mr. Benton, of Missouri, and Mr. Van Buren, and a conditional compact entered into, that if Mr. Benton will use his influence to get Mr. Van Buren elected, that Van Buren, when elected, shall use his executive influence to wipe away the stain from Missouri by a further persecution of the Mormons, and wreaking out vengeance on their heads either by extermination or by some other summary process. We could scarcely credit the statement, and we hope yet for the sake of humanity that the suggestion is false, but we have too good reason to believe that we are correctly informed.

If then this is the case can we conscientious-

ly vote for a man of this description, and put the weapons into his hands to cut our throat with? We cannot; and however much we might wish to sustain the democratic nomination we cannot—we will not vote for Van Buren. Our interests, our property, our lives and the lives of our families are too dear to us to be sacrificed at the shrine of party spirit and to gratify party feelings. We have been sold once in the State of Missouri, and our liberties bartered away by political demagogues, through executive intrigue, and we wish not to be betrayed again by Benton and Van Buren.

Under these circumstances the question again arises, who shall we support? GENERAL JOSEPH SMITH. A man of sterling worth and integrity and of enlarged views; a man who has raised himself from the humblest walks in life to stand at the head of a large, intelligent, respectable and increasing society, that has spread not only in this land, but in distant nations; a man whose talents and genius are of an exalted nature, and whose experience has rendered him every way adequate to the onerous duty. Honorable, fearless and energetic; he would administer justice with an impartial hand, and magnify, and dignify the office of chief magistrate of this land, and we feel assured that there is not a man in the United States more competent for the task.

One great reason that we have for pursuing our present course is, that at every election we have been made a political target for the filthy demagogues in the country to shoot their loathsome arrows at. And every story has been put into requisition to blast our fame from the old fabrication of 'walk on the water' down to 'the murder of ex-Governor Boggs.' The journals have teemed with this filthy trash, and even men who ought to have more respect for themselves; men contending for the gubernatorial chair have made use of terms so degrading, so mean, so humiliating, that a Billingsgate fisherman would have considered herself disgraced with. We refuse any longer to be thus bedaubed for either party. We tell all such to let their filth flow in its own legitimate channel, for we are sick of the loathsome smell.

Gentlemen, we are not going either to 'murder ex-Governor Boggs nor a Mormon in this State for not giving us his money,' nor are we going to 'walk on the water,' nor drown a woman; nor 'defraud the poor of their property,' nor send 'destroying angels after General Bennett to kill him,' nor 'marry spiritual wives,' nor commit any other outrageous act this election to help any party with; you must get some other persons to perform these kind offices for you for the future. We withdraw.

Under existing circumstances we have no other alternative, and if we can accomplish our object, well; if not, we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have acted conscientiously and have used our best judgment; and if we have to throw away our votes, we had better do so upon a worthy rather than upon an unworthy individual, who might make use of the weapon we put in his hand to destroy us with.

Whatever may be the opinions of men in general in regard to Mr. Smith, we know that he need only to be known to be admired; and that it is the principles of honor, integrity, patriotism and philanthropy that has elevated him in the minds of his friends, and the same principles if seen and known would beget the esteem and confidence of all the patriotic and virtuous throughout the Union.

Whatever therefore be the opinions of other men our course is marked out, and our motto from henceforth will be GENERAL JOSEPH SMITH."

Friday, 16.—At home. This evening I spent two hours in the office. Settled with br. Whitney, gave him deed of several town lots and took his receipt in full.

REMARKS

On the necessity of adhering to the Priesthood in preference to science and art, by Elder Wilford Woodruff, Bowery, Thursday, April 9, 1857.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

It is a pleasure to me, and I presume it is to all the brethren who have lived in the midst of this people during the rise and progress of this Church and kingdom, to see the sons of the prophets stand before the people as they have this day and hear their words while bearing testimony of the work of God.

I well remember the time that our young brethren who have addressed us were called on their missions, and they, in connection with br. Grant, br. Ellsworth and others met at my house one evening to receive their blessings under the hands of the twelve Apostles. When they had received their blessings they were called upon to speak their feelings, most of them I suppose, for the first time in their lives; true they had sat under the teachings of the servants of God from their infancy. When most of them had expressed their feelings relative to going on a mission to England, br. Joseph A. Young said, "brethren I will tell you my feelings when I come home."

We have heard from him since he came home, his feelings have been expressed much to our edification. That remark sounded well to me and truly it has been very edifying and interesting to me to hear the speeches which have been made by all the young brethren since they have returned, the spirit they manifest shows to me that the blessing and spirit of their fathers are with them, and I realize that the spirit of the Most High is in them, and that ere long they will become mighty men in Israel, and will have to bear off this kingdom and shoulder the care and responsibility of it when their fathers are resting