

DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

WEDNESDAY, - August 4, 1875.

EXAGGERATION ABOUT UTAH.

THERE is a great tendency in many people, and especially in American people, to exaggeration. Statements and representations are made every day which are so far from the truth that they can hardly be fairly denominated anything less than falsehoods. Still they are persisted in and offered with an extraordinary amount of unblushing assurance. Sometimes this is done from habit, occasionally from misinformation and from mere imaginings, and we apprehend not infrequently from a wilful desire to manufacture capital of some kind or other—political, religious, or directly pecuniary.

The prevalent opinion once was that the whole Rocky Mountain region and much of the Plains was a barren desert, practically useless for purposes of civilized settlement. This idea is now pretty well exploded, in regard to much, though it remains true of many portions of that region. When the "Mormons" settled in this valley it was very complacently thought that they would be utterly unable to sustain themselves and consequently would all starve to death. But events proved that they had such a grip upon life that neither the arid desert nor the cruel Indians, the armies of crickets nor the clouds of grasshoppers, could destroy their vitality. Under years of discouragement and privations, without outside aid or sympathy, they managed to live. The barren desert was subdued and transformed into a garden, the Indians were placated and turned into friends, the crickets and grasshoppers were out-fought and out-lived, and with persistent perseverance in settlement and soil cultivation the very climate has been in a degree ameliorated, spring and summer rains have become more frequent, the springs and streams and lakes have enlarged and increased in number, and portions of the Territory years ago utterly impossible of successful and profitable culture have gradually succumbed and have been made to bring forth handsome returns to the industrious and diligent agriculturist. The hills and the mountains also have unbosomed some of their metallic treasures, so that, strange to say, this region of country, instead of being passed by and left to its loneliness and solitude, is now come to be looked upon as a desirable place for settlement, soil culture, mining, trade, commerce, and pleasurable resort. The change is indeed great in the situation and in the appearances of things, inasmuch that ardent minds quote Scripture passages like the following—

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

"It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.

"In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

"And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water" (as along South Temple Street for instance).

Here then the tendency to exaggeration breaks out again, and we find people speaking in unwarrantably roseate terms of this region. There is some rich land in Utah, and now it is represented that such rich land can be found by millions of acres. The climate is modified, and it is said that it is the most delightful climate in the world. There is more water here than there once was, and it is said that every valley is well watered. There is some timber in the mountains, and it is declared that the mountains are full of timber. This City has grown considerably, and it is to be the greatest inland city in America. The climate is claimed to be

most salubrious, the health of the people perfect, to be sick is extremely difficult, and to die is next to impossible, the soil of the valleys produces in profuse abundance on the surface and is underlaid with inexhaustible mines of coal and iron, the mountains are seamed with useful and precious metals and covered with luxuriant timber.

Everybody knows that spoken in such strains these representations are falsehoods. This is not the most delightful climate in the world. There are others far pleasanter, less exhaustive, less enervating. This is a hard climate to work in, a hard climate to rear children in. It is easy to be sick here, and it is often difficult to be otherwise. The mortality, if not large, is not excessively small, and it is especially severe on infants. It is not a mild, equable, genial climate. It is a sharp and severe climate. The mountains are not covered with timber; iron, coal, and precious metals can not be found everywhere and anywhere for the digging. The valleys that are well watered are few, and the acres of unclaimed rich soil can not be picked up by the million. Irrigation is necessary to satisfactory soil culture, and only in a few places is water for irrigation abundant and readily available.

It is not fair, it is akin to swindling, to delude people by representing this region as other than what it really is. There are certainly other parts of the world which surpass it in general fertility, natural resources, pleasant and healthful climate, and beauty of landscape. It has its advantages, and other regions have theirs.

THE MOB SPIRIT.

WHEN Jesus was taken before Pilate, the latter said, "I find no fault in this man." "But they (the Jews) cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him." "And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified." "And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him but the Jews cried out saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

When Joseph Smith was basely assassinated while in prison under the pledged faith of the State of Illinois, the dark deed was done under the mobocratic decision that "if the law of the land could not reach him, powder and ball should."

The same wicked, mobocratic, base, cowardly, murderous spirit fires the hearts, loosens the tongues, and inspires the speech of some men now as it did in the days of Joseph Smith, and those of Jesus Christ before him. This is evident in men presuming others to be guilty of things of which they are entirely innocent, and in speaking of them in terms applicable only to persons who have been indubitably proved guilty before a competent tribunal.

In this same ferocious and wholly unjustifiable spirit the *San Francisco Post* says—

"If civil law will not reach Brigham, martial law or lynch law should."

The *Post* knows that martial law and lynch law are no law at all. Martial law is simply the fiat of one man, right or wrong, and lynch law is simply the fiat of several men, right or wrong.

The *Gold Hill News* and some other papers talk in equally irrational, passionate, and wild strains, forgetting that it is infinitely easier to throw down the flood-gates and let a stream of ungovernable violence loose upon society than it is to stay the reckless progress of that furious stream and shut it out again when it has done the work so foolishly desired.

Good citizens everywhere are forward to use their utmost influence to soothe and soften rather than excite and irritate the wild and evil passions of men, and those who act in a contrary spirit are deadly enemies to the peace, union, prosperity, and fair fame of the commonwealth.

DEPOSITIONS OF PRESIDENTS BRIGHAM YOUNG AND GEO. A. SMITH CONCERNING THE MOUNTAIN MEADOW MASSACRE.

Territory of Utah, } s.s.
Beaver Co.

In the Second Judicial District Court of the Territory of Utah, Beaver County.

The People &c.,

vs.
John D. Lee, Wm. H. Dame, Isaac C. Haight, et al.

Indictment
for murder,
Sept. 16,
1857.

Questions to be propounded to Brigham Young, on his examination as a witness in the case of John D. Lee and others on trial at Beaver City, this 30th of July, 1875.

1. State your age, the present condition of your health, and whether in its condition you could travel to attend, in person at Beaver, the court now sitting there? If not, state why not?

2. What offices, either ecclesiastical, civil or military, did you hold in the year 1857?

3. State the condition of affairs between the Territory of Utah and the Federal Government in the summer and fall of 1857.

4. Were there any United States judges here during the summer and fall of 1857?

5. State what you know about trains of emigrants passing through the Territory to the West, and particularly about a company from Arkansas en route for California, passing through this city in the summer or fall of 1857?

6. Was this Arkansas company of emigrants ordered away from Salt Lake City by yourself, or any one in authority under you?

7. Was any counsel or instructions given by any person to the citizens of Utah not to sell grain to or trade with the emigrant trains passing through Utah at that time; if so, what were those instructions and counsel?

8. When did your first hear of the attack and destruction of this Arkansas company at Mountain Meadows in September, 1857?

9. Did John D. Lee report to you at any time after this massacre what had been done at that massacre, and if so, what did you reply to him in reference thereto?

10. Did Philip Klingens Smith call at your office with John D. Lee, at the time of Lee making his report; and did you at that time order Smith to turn over the stock to Lee and order them not to talk about the massacre?

11. Did you ever give any direction concerning the property taken from the emigrants at the Mountain Meadow massacre, or know anything as to its disposition?

12. Why did you not as Governor institute proceedings forthwith to investigate that massacre and bring the guilty authors thereof to justice?

13. Did you, about the 10th of September, 1857, receive a communication from Isaac C. Haight or any other person of Cedar City, concerning a company of emigrants called the Arkansas company?

14. Have you that communication?

15. Did you answer this communication?

16. Will you state the substance of your letter to him?

The answers of Brigham Young to the interrogatories, hereto appended, were reduced to writing and were given after the said Brigham Young had been duly sworn to testify the truth in the above entitled cause and are as follows—

1. To the first interrogatory, he saith—

I am in my seventy-fifth year. It would be a great risk, both to my health and life, for me to travel to Beaver at this present time. I am and have been for sometime an invalid.

2. He saith—

I was the Governor of this Territory and ex-officio Superintendent of Indian affairs, and the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during the year 1857.

3. He saith—

In May or June, 1857, the United States mails for Utah were stopped by the Government, all communication by mail was cut off. An army of the United States was en

route for Utah with the ostensible design of destroying the Latter-day Saints, according to the reports that reached us from the East.

4. He saith—

To the best of my recollection there was no United States Judge here in the latter part of 1857.

5. He saith—

As usual emigrant trains were passing through our Territory for the West. I heard it rumored that a company from Arkansas, en route to California, had passed through the city.

6. He saith—

No, not that I know of—I never heard of any such thing, and certainly no such order was given by the then Acting Governor.

7. He saith—

Yes. Counsel and advice was given to the citizens not to sell grain to the emigrants to feed their stock, but to let them have sufficient for themselves, if they were out. The simple reason for this was that for several years our crops had been short, and the prospect was at that time that we might have trouble with the United States army, then en-route for this place, and we wanted to preserve the grain for food. The citizens of the Territory were counselled not to feed grain to their own stock. No person was ever punished or called in question for furnishing supplies to the emigrants, within my knowledge.

8. He saith—

I did not learn anything of the attack or destruction of the Arkansas company until sometime after it had occurred, then only by floating rumors.

9. He saith—

Within some two or three months after the massacre he called at my office and had much to say with regard to the Indians, their being stirred up to anger and threatening the settlements of the whites, and then commenced giving an account of the massacre. I told him to stop, as, from what I had already learned by rumor, I did not wish my feelings harrowed up with a recital of details.

10. He saith—

No. He did not call with John D. Lee, and I have no recollection of his ever speaking to me, nor I to him, concerning the massacre or anything pertaining to the property.

11. He saith—

No. I never gave any directions concerning the property taken from the company of emigrants at the Mountain Meadow massacre; nor did I know anything of that property or its disposal, and I do not to this day, except from public rumor.

12. He saith—

Because another governor had been appointed by the President of the United States, and was then on the way here to take my place, and I did not know how soon he might arrive; and because the United States judges were not in the Territory. Soon after Governor Cumming arrived I asked him to take Judge Craighbaugh, who belonged to the Southern District, with him and I would accompany them with sufficient aid to investigate the matter and bring the offenders to justice.

13. He saith—

I did receive a communication from Isaac C. Haight or John D. Lee, who was then a farmer for the Indians.

14. He saith—

I have not. I have made diligent search for it, but cannot find it.

15. He saith—

I did, to Isaac C. Haight, who was then the acting President at Cedar City.

16. He saith—

Yes. It was to let this company of emigrants and all companies of emigrants pass through the country unmolested, and to allay the angry

feelings of the Indians as much as possible. (Signed)
BRIGHAM YOUNG.

Territory of Utah, } ss.
Beaver County.

In the Second Judicial District Court of the Territory of Utah.

The People, &c., } Indictment
vs. } for murder,
John D. Lee, Wm. H. } committed
Dame, Isaac C. } September
Haight et al. } 16th, 1857.

Salt Lake County, ss.

George A. Smith, having been first duly sworn, deposes and says—that he is aged fifty-eight years; that he is now, and has been for several months, suffering from a severe and dangerous illness of the head and lungs; and that to attend the court at Beaver, in the present condition of his health, would immediately end his life.

Deponent further saith that he had no military command during the year 1857, nor any other official position, except that of one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Deponent further saith that he never, in the year 1857, at Parowan or elsewhere, attended a council where Wm. H. Dame, Isaac C. Haight or others were present, to discuss any measures for attacking, or any manner injuring, an emigrant train from Arkansas, or any other place, which is alleged to have been destroyed at the Mountain Meadows in September, 1857.

Deponent further saith that he never heard or knew anything of a train of emigrants, which he learned afterwards, by rumor, was from Arkansas, until he met said emigrant train at Corn Creek, on his way north to Salt Lake City, on or about the 25th day of August, 1857. At Corn Creek, deponent further saith, that he camped with Jacob Hamblin, Philo T. Farnsworth, Silas S. Smith and Elisha Hoops, and there, for the first time, he learned of the existence of said emigrant train, and their intended journey to California.

Deponent further saith that, having been absent from the Territory for a year previous, he returned in the summer of 1857, and went south to visit his family at Parowan, and to look after some property he had there; and also visit his friends, and for no other purpose, and that, on leaving Salt Lake City, he had no knowledge whatsoever of the existence of said emigrant train, nor did he acquire any until as before stated.

Deponent further saith that, as an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he preached several times on his way south and also on his return, and tried to impress upon the minds of the people the necessity of great care as to their grain crops, as all the crops had been short for several years previous to 1857, and many of the people were reduced to actual want and were suffering for the necessities of life.

Deponent further saith that he advised the people to furnish aid emigrant companies passing through the Territory with what they might actually need for bread-stuffs, for the support of themselves and families while passing through the Territory, and also advised the people not to feed their grain to their own stock, nor sell it to the emigrants for that purpose.

Deponent further saith that he never heard of or knew of any attack upon said emigrant train until some time after his return to Salt Lake City, and that while near Fort Bridger he heard for the first time that the Indians had massacred an emigrant company at Mountain Meadows.

Deponent further saith that he never at any time, either before or after that massacre, was accessory thereto; that he never directly or indirectly aided, abetted, or assisted in its perpetration, or had any knowledge thereof, except by hearsay; that he never knew anything of the distribution of the property taken there, except by hearsay as aforesaid.

Deponent further saith that all charges and statements as pertaining to him, contrary to the foregoing are false and untrue.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 30th day of July, A. D. 1875. (Signed)

WILLIAM CLAYTON,
Notary Public.