

first party at Green River and the last at the South Pass. They reached here that fall and lived in the fort that winter, enlarging it by enclosing about thirty acres more land.

There were both Ute and Shoshone Indians in the mountains, and they were said to be hostile; it was our policy, from the start, to place ourselves in a state of protection and safety, so far as they were concerned, and then by a course of justice and uprightness to maintain friendly relations with them.

On leaving the Missouri river, it was considered necessary for every man to take three hundred pounds of breadstuff for each one of his family; also his seed grain and implements of husbandry, and arms and ammunition for the journey. It was the understanding, among our people, that no man should start with less; but a great many of the Mississippi company, portions of the battalion, and some others came in here almost without provisions. You could see the people turn out of the fort in the morning and go over these hills and with their little sticks or spades dig the sego and thistle roots, or anything and everything that the wild Indians could subsist upon.

There was a pretty general feeling of rejoicing among our enemies in the States who had driven us away, that we had got into the mountains, where there was every likelihood of us perishing, for they expected that, under the straitened circumstances in which we should be placed, we should break up and perish. However our organization was complete, and the division of breadstuff and other provisions was carried on to the nicest extent. A very large field south of this city was put under cultivation, with a fence eleven miles long,—the mountains on one side and the fence on the other. The streams were turned from their beds into different parts of this field, and there seemed to be some prospects of a crop. But myriads of great, black crickets, with voracious appetites, came down from the mountains and devoured the growing crops, and tens of thousands of young nursery trees, which had been planted and were promising to do well. The brethren fought these foes with every imaginable device. They cut ditches and turned the water into them, thinking that would stop their progress; but the crickets were smart enough to cross them,—they would cross a considerable stream,—and they devoured everything before them, and it seemed as if the colony must perish, for it was nearly out of provisions, and what little was growing was being devoured. After all efforts to destroy these pests had been baffled and pronounced hopeless, God, in His mercy, sent gulls and they devoured them. It was regarded by the people as a dispensation of Providence; and, singularly enough, these gulls have not visited us since, or but very few of them. On that occasion, however, they destroyed the crickets. They would eat until filled, and then, vomiting them, they would eat again, and so continued until they entirely cleared the fields. The crickets have sometimes made their appearance and injured the crops in places since that time, but never to so great an extent.

Not understanding the method of irrigation, much of the wheat that was sown the first year had to be pulled by hand; the straw was so short that it could not be cut. It ripened unevenly too, owing to improper watering. All these difficulties were overcome, as the system of irrigation, which had to be learned by experience, became better understood.

It may seem strange to many to realize that, even now, every tree and bush, not excepting the smallest currant or gooseberry bush, have their little ditch or water-course from which they draw their moisture and support.

The second year of the settlement here, the numbers were increased by the arrival of a thousand wagons, and by that time it began to be necessary to have some system of government established. Up to that time every man had done about what was right in his own eyes. Of course, there were regulations existing amongst us, but very little time or thought was devoted to them. The representatives of the people came together in a convention of delegates, and organized what was called the provisional government of the State of Deseret. Our settlements had begun to increase; that is, outside settlements had been formed in Davis county, a small one in Weber county, and another one in Utah county. We had brought the flag of the United States with us, and had raised it while this country was Mexican territory. We adopted a Constitution, republican in form, and sent our delegates to Washington to ask admission into the Union as a State. Under our constitution, we organized the executive, legislative and judicial departments of a State government. The people elected a governor, judges, and members of the legislature; the latter convened and organized counties and precincts, incorporated cities, enacted civil and criminal codes, which still form the basis of the laws of the Territory. The question may arise in some minds "How did we support our officers?" We acted upon the principle of retrenchment. The governor had no salary; the judges had no salary; the members of the legislature had no salary; they all served gratuitously, for the love of their country; and they did as much deliberative work as was necessary. The General Assembly of Deseret adopted a rule that any member who was not punctual in attendance should be fined; the fund thus raised was expended in furnishing wood, candles and brooms; each member furnished his own stationery.

A tax was assessed and enough thereof used to keep up the public records, the principal amount was expended in developing the country. Two bridges were constructed across the Jordan river by the Deseret government; bridges were also built across the Provo, Weber and Ogden rivers; and roads through the mountains were constructed. They also built the State House, now occupied by the University, and occupied it as a legislative hall.

In the year 1849 a vast number of people passed through here, en route for California, in search of gold; for that battalion of which I have spoken, had found, while there, the precious metal, and nearly all the world ran crazy after it. I honestly believe that thousands of persons would have utterly perished on the Plains if it had not been for the assistance and supplies received while passing through our settlements. They started across the continent without knowing how to provide themselves with an outfit. Hundreds and thousands of them have reached this city almost naked and barefoot, and though our supplies were scanty, we shared what we had with them and so saved their lives. The journey across the Plains at that time, was a very trying one, and it took pretty good "Mormons" to perform it without quarreling; gentiles could hardly do it. Many of their companies would quarrel soon after starting, and a company that started a hundred strong, would divide into fifties or thirties, and then in tens, and fives and by the time they got to the California mountains, and frequently by the time they got over these mountains there would be two in a wagon, and had they not been afraid of Indians, they would have divided and made two carts of their wagon. The officers of the Deseret government were frequently appealed to, to settle their quarrels and difficulties, and in every case where it was possible they would induce the parties to compromise by telling them how quickly they could make immense fortunes in gold if they would not stop here and quarrel.

While passing through the trials and difficulties which I have recounted the Latter-day Saints attended their meetings, observed their fast-days and contributed their offerings to the poor, and as early as 1849, the first year after their arrival here in which they were able to control means, they in fulfillment of their covenant to help to gather those left behind, placed at the disposal of the presiding bishop, Edward Hunter, five thousand dollars in gold with which to return to the States, to be used for emigrating those who needed assistance. There were some there, perhaps, who had a team, but could not raise the flour necessary for the journey; another could go if he had an ox; another could start if he could only get the iron to put the tires on his wagon, and in this way the bishop was enabled with this small sum of money to extend the necessary aid to hundreds.

The manner in which we formed our companies was particularly characteristic. When a company was formed, consisting say, of fifty wagons, it was inspected by a committee who would see that each wagon was provided with the required outfit. A blacksmith and such other mechanics as were deemed necessary formed part of each company, and when fully organized they moved out by tens, changing positions in the line, from time to time, so as to give all an equal chance of the road. At night they formed corrals, sent out watches to guard the cattle and to restrain any, who might be so disposed, from wandering about, so that no person was ever lost, and very few cattle. It seems almost incredible to tell of the safe manner in which they traveled through this strict organization; while other companies of emigrants were subject to losses and dangers, many of them wandering off and were never heard of again, in all these camps of the Saints nothing of the kind was ever known. Meetings were held every Sabbath day; Saturdays were usually devoted to washing, repairing wagons, &c., and every useful vocation that could be followed on the route under the circumstances was engaged in. The moment a camp stopped some would be mending shoes; the blacksmith would put up his bellows and go to work at his trade; knitting and sewing and even weaving were all carried on, and in this way the feeling of which the Oregon people complained was not manifested. I was told by a man from Oregon that no man or woman could cross these plains without being brutalized; but the fact is, in relation to us, that the effects of cultivated humanity, of peace, order and harmony existed in the camp of the Saints as much as in any settlement in the world.

The irrigation system, which we have been compelled to adopt here, renders small tracts of land a necessity. I know that I felt quite indignant at the National Government when she gave such immense tracts of land to the people of Oregon for settling that country, which is five times better than ours, and she would not give us anything. I have since come to the conclusion that that was effected by the overruling Providence of the Almighty. If we had had immense tracts of land donated to us by settling on them we should have been exposed to Indians, and should have been unable to irrigate these tracts. To irrigate a tract of land men have to combine to construct the water ditches, and dams; sometimes a hundred are necessary, sometimes fifty may do it, and sometimes four or five hundred are required, according to the condition and location of the land, and under no circumstances, here,

can one man, without wealth to hire attend to the irrigation of a tract that in other parts of this country would be considered a moderate sized farm. Under these circumstances a great portion of our farmers cultivate only from five to twenty acres of land; this is the rule. They who cultivate more are the exceptions, and in this way only, can we till our land properly and protect ourselves from the Indians.

In September, 1850, Congress passed an act organizing Utah into a Territory, and the next season they sent us a batch of officers. Mr. Fillmore appointed Brigham Young, Governor, he having led the people hither and having been Governor of Deseret; the rest of the officers, with the exception of a marshal, I think, were appointed East. They came here most of them, opened their eyes, looked at the deserts and were disgusted. From what I could learn a portion of them had been sent to get them out of the way, as they were troublesome. When they got here they raised a howl. Among this class were Judges Brochu and Brandeberry and Secretary Harris. They raised a tremendous howl, calling on the Government to send five thousand men to destroy the Mormons. Harris had brought money to pay the Legislature, but he took it back with him. What he did with it I do not know; but he did not pay the Legislature. They met, however, and organized the Territorial government, and have held annual sessions ever since, and so strictly in accordance with the principles of justice have they legislated that the Congress of the United States has exercised its power to disapprove of only one act, and their course on that occasion was only an act of persecution to the Latter-day Saints. This is a record of which any Territory may be proud. A portion of that act, I believe, provides that no religious or benevolent institution in the Territories of the United States shall own over fifty thousand dollars' worth of property. Now I do not suppose that the organ in this Tabernacle could be built for a hundred thousand dollars, and what on the face of the earth could be in the brains of men to legislate in this way I do not know. But such was the act, a portion of which was aimed expressly and entirely at the Latter-day Saints. So far as we are concerned, however, we have very little to complain of. Many of the men who have been sent here and paid by the Government to act as officers have undertaken to become book makers and newspaper penny-aliners, and have invented lies and all kinds of reports and sent them back, in order to induce the Government to send men here to destroy us. One judge of this class, by the name of Drummond, and his associate, sent here, as I have since learned, because they were troublesome to men of influence, went back with reports and succeeded in inducing the Government to send twenty-five hundred infantry, two regiments of cavalry and two batteries of artillery to destroy us, but, by some means or other, they changed their minds before they reached the city, and our lives were spared.

There have been times since our settlement here that we have had to exercise our powers to the utmost to protect our settlements from the Indians. The emigrants, passing through to California, would frequently commit outrages upon them. So far as our relations were concerned we treated the Indians with justice and kindness, and did not seek for their blood; but parties passing along would think it an amusement to shoot an Indian squaw, or to rob her of her horses, or something of this kind; and then the Indians would come along, and to avenge the wrongs done to them attack some lone settler or workman in a canyon. Circumstances of this character have caused some difficulties, and entailed a heavy amount of expense upon the people. In 1853, in consequence of some such outrages as these, a war ensued with the Utes, which caused much trouble, the settlements being obliged to gather up and construct forts. To prevent the Indians stealing animals from this city a wall of earth was constructed round it, twelve feet high and six feet through at the bottom, at a cost of thirty-four thousand dollars. Our policy with the Indians has always been to feed rather than fight them; and as a general thing we have been blessed with Indian Superintendents who have co-operated with us in carrying on our policy. We have had some exceptions. There was one, concerning whom the boys averred that he brought up a mule with the U. S. brand on it some years ago, and told the Indians they must not steal anything with that brand. Our late Superintendent, F. H. Head, has done all in his power to promote peace and happiness with the Indians and with the whites. But we have four frontiers, and the scarcity of the streams is such that our settlements have to be situated a good way apart, the result is that the Indians have a fair range between the settlements to hide in the mountains, and all the armies of Xerxes the Great could not hunt Indians out of these mountains, the hiding places being innumerable. Any one that tries to hunt Indians through the mountains of this Territory will soon be convinced that it is a very difficult, if not a useless, undertaking.

The policy of the Legislature of the Territory has been one of economy, and rather than get the Territory into debt to pay small salaries or none at all, except where it was absolutely necessary. Our neighbors in Nevada as soon as they were organized a Territory increased the salaries of their Judges and of the members of the Legislature and commenced imposing high

taxes; the result was that they became so involved in debt that it is said they made an effort two years ago to get Utah attached to Nevada for Utah to help to pay their debt. We took a different course; after defraying the real expenses of the government, the public money was devoted to public improvements,—such as the construction of bridges, opening of roads into new valleys and developing the interests and intercourse of our extending settlements; and at the end of almost every fiscal year, when the accounts have been closed, a surplus has been left on hand. Our county and city governments have pursued the same policy, and, to-day, if the inquiry were to be made, it would be found that their paper, in every instance, is worth as much as the national currency.

Thus has Utah managed her finances, and if our countrymen should see proper to admit us into the Union as a State, and thereby give us the privileges that are our just due, having penetrated into and reclaimed this desert country and founded a State, we should never trouble them so far as our expenses are concerned, for we are able to sustain ourselves and pay our way by our industry and economy. In fact, it is very little that we have ever received. When the army under Gen. Johnson came here they paid twenty-eight dollars and fifty cents for their flour; a portion of it was brought from the States, but the greater portion of it was purchased by their traders of our people here at about five dollars a hundred. That war, however, being a contractors' war, and aimed more particularly at the United States Treasury, where it was eminently successful, is only to be remembered as one of the blots on the face of a nation which suffered itself to be plundered by scoundrels.

We are here, and we rejoice in the truth. Travel wherever you please through our cities, towns and settlements and you will find order, industry and happiness. Almost all the inhabitants are working their own land claims; this is the case almost without exception. A man has scarcely been here more than one or two years until he has a home of his own. We gather our people from every part of the United States and from the other nations of the earth and bring them here to make them useful in developing the desert. It is said that a man who makes two spears of grass to grow where only one grew before, is a public benefactor. The Latter-day Saints, by the power which God has given them, have made what you see in this country, for six hundred miles north and south. All the improvements, and the results in agriculture and mechanism have been produced by the Latter-day Saints where nothing was before but wild sage, desolation and alkali plains. Fruits now grow here that at one time many never dreamed of; the climate is not so severe as formerly; the rains appear to be increasing; hundreds of springs of water have made their appearance in the desert; our settlements are extending through the southern deserts, already reaching three hundred and fifty miles southerly. Visit the city of St. George—it is not so large as this city, but quite as handsome, with good improvements, with smiling vineyards and cotton fields, where not long since no man would have thought anything could have been produced at all. For these results we thank God and pray Him to continue them. To our friends who visit us we say, "You are welcome to our country, only tell the truth about us when you go away." This is all the favor we ask. Of course when mercenary men are in the pay of newspapers they must write what is popular, and it is not popular to say much that is creditable about the Latter-day Saints. We ask, however, that the wisdom of the Almighty may rest upon the rulers of our country, that they may realize what we are and what we mean to be; and that there are no hundred and fifty thousand citizens of the United States who have rendered more service to their country than we have, by helping to develop this desert, put up the telegraph lines, grading four hundred miles of the Pacific railroad and extending our strength and protection through these mountains. The vigilance of our police regulations have been such that there has been safety since we have been here, and, for hundreds of miles through our Territory, strangers, while traveling, experience as much protection as in the streets of New York city. We have also furnished a magazine of supplies by means of which the gold fields of all the adjoining Territories have been opened.

I will say in relation to the text I read at the commencement, that the missionaries of this people are abroad in the earth, and the nations are flowing to Zion, according to the words of the prophet, "and it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow unto it." This is the text. You can find probably thirty different languages in this congregation; and educated men from almost every country are scattered throughout the Territory. Although, as a general thing, we gather the poor, we also gather men of talent, education and skill. We have some of the best mechanics in the world, prepared to engage in any branch of business that can be named. May the blessings of Israel's God be upon you. We say to our friends who visit us, God bless and preserve you, and return you safely to your homes and families and give you joy and rejoicing in your journey, which we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.