

SUPPLEMENT TO THE DESERET NEWS.

SALT LAKE CITY, OCTOBER 28, 1868.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

Delivered by President Geo. A. Smith, in the New Tabernacle, October 8th and 9th, 1868.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

The circumstances by which we are surrounded are such as to cause feelings of no ordinary character. In all the Conferences held hitherto, in this city and in Nauvoo, we have enjoyed the society of our late lamented President, Heber C. Kimball; and his being called away from a useful field in which he had long labored, should remind us, that each of us, at any moment, may be called to close our career here for time, and to await our reward in the resurrection. We can but rejoice that our brother, in his long life and labors in the church, was a pattern of humility, faith and diligence, and was instrumental in the hands of God, in bringing many thousands to a knowledge of the truth. The blow which has fallen upon us, in being deprived of his company, counsel and instruction, should remind us of the necessity of diligence in the discharge of all our duties, that, like him, we may be prepared to inherit celestial glory and to associate with Joseph and Hyrum Smith and David Patten and the martyrs who have gone before.

The incidents that have been brought to our notice by our brethren who have spoken during the Conference give rise to a series of reflections in relation to our early history as a people, which, I presume, it would be well for us all to review. There are some in this Territory who have been in the Church thirty-six, thirty-seven or thirty-eight years, but a great many of the people have been in only a few years. A very large portion of our population have been reared here, and consequently a brief sketch of the early incidents of our history may not be unprofitable to any.

When Joseph Smith took the plates of Mormon from the hill Cumorah, he was immediately surrounded by enemies, and though he was a young man of unexceptionable character, he was compelled to go from place to place, while translating the work, to avoid persecution. The press and the pulpit denounced him as an imposter and his followers as dupes. As soon as he preached the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, and organized a Church of six members, he was arrested and brought before a magistrate, honorably discharged by him, and immediately arrested again and hurried into an adjoining county, where he was insulted, spit upon and kept without food during the day, and then given crusts of bread and water. The next day he was taken before magistrates, who after a rigid examination, found no fault in him. A mob resolved to "tar and feather" him, but through the instrumentality of the constable, who previously treated him roughly but who now became his friend, he made his escape in safety. All these proceedings were instigated by clergymen and professors of religion in high standing. A similar spirit of persecution was manifested in a greater or less degree in every place where the gospel was proclaimed, not only against Joseph Smith but also against other elders who preached the word.

This system of persecution continued, especially in the shape of vexatious law suits, numbering some fifty in all, up to the day of his death, and in all of which a most vicious and vindictive spirit was manifested outside of judicial questions. In every case he was honorably acquitted, and upon the charge of treason upon which he was detained in Carthage jail, when murdered, he had not even been lawfully examined before a magistrate. In all these trials except one he had been before persons religiously opposed to him—his enemies were his judges—and all this while every act of his life was prompted by a firm desire to do good to his fellow men—to preach the gospel of peace—to magnify the high and holy calling he had received from the Lord and thereby lead back to the ancient faith of Jesus Christ his fellow beings who had fallen into darkness.

Vexatious law suits not accomplishing the work to the satisfaction of the persecutors of the Saints, mob violence was resorted to, as being more effective. On the 25th day of March, 1832, in Hyrum, Portage Co., Ohio, Joseph Smith was dragged from his bed and carried to the woods, daubed with tar and feathers, and otherwise ill-treated. The following is his account of the outrage:

"On the 25th of March, the twins before mentioned, which had been sick for some time with the measles, caused us to be broke of our rest in taking care of them, especially my wife. In the evening I told her she had better retire to rest with one of the children, and I would watch with the sickest child. In the night she told me I had better lie down on the trundle bed, and I did so, and was soon after awoken by her screaming 'murder!' when I found myself going out of the door, in the hands of about a dozen men; some of whose hands were in my hair, and some hold of my shirt, drawers and limbs. The foot of the trundle bed was towards the door, leaving only room enough for the door to swing. My wife heard a gentle tapping on the windows, which she then took no particular notice of, (but which was unquestionably designed for ascertaining whether we were all asleep,) and soon after the mob burst open the door and surrounded the bed in an instant, and, as I said, the first I knew, I was going out of the door in the hands of an infuriated mob. I made a desperate struggle, as I was forced out, to extricate myself, but only cleared one leg, with which I made a pass at one man, and he fell on the door steps. I was immediately confined again; and they swore by God they would kill me if I did not be still, which quieted me. As they passed around the house with me, the fellow that I kicked came to me and thrust his hand into my face, all covered with blood, (for I hit him on the nose,) and with an exulting horse laugh, muttered: 'Ge, gee, God damn ye, I'll fix ye.'"

They then seized me by the throat, and held on till I lost my breath. After I came to, as they passed along with me, about thirty rods from the house, I saw Elder Rigdon stretched out on the ground, whither they had dragged him by the heels. I supposed he was dead. I began to plead with them, saying, "You will have mercy and spare my life, I hope," to which they replied, "God, damn ye, call on your God for help, we'll show ye no mercy;" and the people began to show themselves in every direction; one coming from the orchard had a plank, and I expected they would kill me, and carry me off on the plank. They then turned to the right and went on about thirty rods further, about sixty rods from the house and thirty from where I saw Elder Rigdon, into the meadow, where they stopped, and one said "Simonds, Simonds," (meaning I suppose, Simonds Rider,) "pull up his drawers, pull up his drawers, he will take cold." Another replied: "Ain't ye going to kill 'im, ain't ye going to kill 'im?" when a group of mobbers collected a little way off and said: "Simonds, Simonds, come here;" and Simonds charged those who had hold of me to keep me from touching the ground, (as they had all the time done) lest I should get a spring upon them. They went and held a council, and as I could occasionally overhear a word, I supposed it was to know whether it was best to kill me. They returned after a while when I learned they had concluded not to kill me, but pound and scratch me well, tear off my shirt and drawers, and leave me naked. One cried, "Simonds, Simonds, where's the tar bucket?" "I don't know," answered one, "where 'tis, Eli's left it." They ran back and fetched the bucket of tar, when one exclaimed, "God damn it, let us tar up his mouth;" and they tried to force the tar-paddle into my mouth; I twisted my head around, so that they could not, and they cried out, "God damn ye hold up yer head and let us give ye some tar." They then tried to force a vial into my mouth, and broke it in my teeth. All my cloths were torn off me

except my shirt collar, and one man fell on me and scratched my body with his nails like a mad cat, and then muttered out: "God damn ye, that's the way the Holy Ghost falls on folks."

They then left me, and I attempted to rise, but fell again. I pulled the tar away from my lips, so that I could breathe more freely, and raised myself up, when I saw two lights. I made my way towards one of them, and found it was Father Johnson's. When I had come to the door, I was naked, and the tar made me look as though I had been covered with blood; and when my wife saw me she thought I was mashed all to pieces, and fainted. During the affray abroad, the sisters of the neighborhood had collected at my room. I called for a blanket, they threw me one, and shut the door. I wrapped it around me and went." History of Joseph Smith, *Mill. Star*, vol. 14, page 148.

I will add that the exposure of the child above referred to, to the night air, caused its death. This murdered child was doubtless the first martyr of the last dispensation.

In a revelation given Sept. 1831, the Lord said, "It is my will that the Saints retain a strong hold in the land of Kirtland for the space of five years."

The Saints owned several farms in Kirtland. Mr. Lyman, a Presbyterian, also owned a grist mill there, and many of us got our grinding done at his mill, although our brethren owned mills two or three miles distant. We had commenced building the Kirtland Temple. A portion of the city site had been surveyed, and many of the Saints who had recently come in were building houses on the lots. Mr. Lyman associated himself with a combination to starve us out. The authorities proceeded to warn all the Latter-day Saints out of the township, and formed a compact not to employ us or sell us grain, which was scarce at the time. Mr. Lyman had 3,000 bushels of wheat, but refused to let us have it at any reasonable price, and it was believed we were so destitute of money that we would have to scatter abroad. The warning out of town was designed to prevent our becoming a township charge, the law of Ohio being that if a person who had been warned out of town, applied for assistance, he was to be carried to the next town and so on till he was taken out of the State or to the town from which he formerly came.

We were obliged to send fifty miles for grain, which cost us one dollar and six cents per bushel delivered in Kirtland. Mr. Lyman's grain remained unsold and his effort to starve us taught us better than to longer patronize his mill, although it cost us the trouble of going two or three miles to mills belonging to our brethren. We built a magnificent temple and a large city. We paid our quota of taxes and we were as noted and remarkable for our industry, temperance, thrift and morality there, as our people are at the present day. We also patronized a Mr. Lyon, who was a gentlemanly outside merchant, but the moment he got an opportunity he united with our enemies to oppress us.

We sent our children to school to Mr. Bates, a Presbyterian minister, who soon after went into court and bore false witness against the Elders, and further testified on oath that every "Mormon" was intellectually insane. This lesson did admonish us not to longer intrust the education of our youth to canting hypocrites.

For several years we had used the paper of Geanga Bank at Painesville, as money. A loan of a few hundred dollars was asked for by Joseph Smith, with ample security, but was refused, and Elder Reynolds Cahoon was told they would not accommodate the "Mormon Prophet," although they acknowledged the endorsers were above question, simply because it would encourage "Mormonism." So much of their specie was drawn by Joseph Smith during the three succeeding days, as greatly improved their tempers, and they said to Elder Cahoon, "tell Mr. Smith he must stop this, and any favor he wants we are ready to accord him."

Subsequently application was made

to the Legislature of the State, for a bank charter, the notes to be redeemed with specie and their redemption secured by real estate. The charter was denied us on the grounds that we were "Mormons," and soon a combination of apostates and outsiders caused us to leave Kirtland, the most of our property unsold; and our beautiful Temple yet remains a lasting monument of our perseverance and industry. The loss sustained through this persecution was probably not less than one million dollars.

MISSOURI.

On the 20th day of July, 1831, at Independence, Jackson county, Joseph Smith set apart and dedicated a lot as the site of the Temple of the centre stake of Zion, ground having been purchased for this purpose, and it still is known as the "Temple lot." The Saints entered lands in different parts of the county, built houses, opened farms, constructed mills, established a printing office (owned by W. W. Phelps & Co., and the first in Western Missouri), and opened a mercantile establishment, the largest in the county, owned by Messrs. Gilbert & Whitney.

In July, 1833, a mob was organized by signing a circular, which set forth that the civil law did not afford them a sufficient guarantee against the "Mormons," whom they accused of "blasphemously pretending to heal the sick by the administration of holy oil," and, consequently they must be either "fanatics" or "knaves." Under the influence of Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian ministers, they tore down the printing office of the *Evening and Morning Star*, which cost some \$6,000. They stripped and tarred and feathered Bishop Partridge and Elder Charles Allen, and seized several other Elders and cast them into prison, compelled Gilbert & Whitney to close their store, and soon after broke it open and scattered their goods to the four winds. They tore down twenty houses over the heads of the inmates, and whipped and terribly lacerated with hickory with many of the Elders, killed Andrew Barber, and severely wounded many others; robbed the houses of their property and finally expelled fifteen hundred people from the county. They also destroyed some 216 dwellings, and much of the land being valuable timber land, became public plunder. The Saints were robbed of most of their horses, cattle, implements of husbandry, &c. The total loss in these transactions is estimated at half a million dollars.

"Horrible to relate, several women thus driven from their homes gave birth to children in the woods and on the prairies, destitute of beds or clothing, having escaped in fright. It is stated on the authority of Solomon Hancock, an eye witness, that he, with the assistance of two or three others, protected one hundred and twenty women and children for the space of ten days, who were obliged to keep themselves hid from their pursuers, while they were hourly expecting to be massacred, and who finally escaped into Clay county, by finding a circuitous route to the ferry."

They could be traced by the blood from their feet on the burnt prairie. This occurred in the month of November, and is a specimen of the kindness that law-abiding Latter-day Saints received at the hands of those who had power over them. The Saints were so law abiding that not a single process had been issued against any member of the Church in Jackson county up to the organization of the mob, although all the offices, civil and military, were in the hands of their enemies.

Prominent in these cruelties as actors and apologists were the Reverends Isaac McCoy and D. Pixley, the former a Baptist and the latter a Presbyterian missionary to the Indians.

CLAY COUNTY.

The arrival of the Saints in Clay County was a blessing to the inhabitants, who had just opened small prairie farms and planted them with Indian corn, much of which was unharvested. They had cattle on the bottoms and hogs in the woods. The majority of