

(Order No. 1.)

HEADQUARTERS MORMON BATTALION,
Mission of San Diego, January 30, 1847.

The lieutenant colonel commanding congratulates the battalion on their safe arrival on the shore of the Pacific ocean and the conclusion of its march of over two thousand miles. History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry. Nineteenths of it has been through a wilderness, where nothing but savages and wild beasts are found, or deserts where, for want of water, there is no living creature. There with almost hopeless labor we have dug deep wells, which the future traveler will enjoy. Without a guide who had traversed them we have ventured into trackless prairies where water was not found for several marches. With crowbar and pick and ax in hand, we have worked our way over mountains which seemed to defy aught save the wild goat, and hewed a passage through a chasm of living rock more narrow than our wagons. To bring these first wagons to the Pacific, we have preserved the strength of the mules by herding them over large tracts, which you laboriously guarded without loss. The garrisons of four presidios of Sonora concentrated within the walls of Tucson gave us no peace. We drove them out with their artillery; but our intercourse with the citizens was unmarked by a single act of injustice. Thus marching, half naked and half fed, and living upon wild animals, we have discovered and made a road of great value to our country.

Arrived at the first settlement of California, after a single day's rest, you cheerfully turned off from the route to this point of promised repose to enter upon a campaign and meet, as we believed, the approach of the enemy, and this, too, without even salt to season your sole subsistence of fresh meat.

Lieutenant A. D. Smith and George Stoneman, of the first dragoons, have shared and given you valuable aid in all these labors.

Thus, volunteers, you have exhibited some high and essential qualities of veterans. But much remains undone. Soon you will turn your strict attention to the drill, to system and order, to forms also, which are all necessary to the soldier.

By order of Lieutenant Colonel P. St. George Cooke.

P. C. MERRILL, Adjutant.

Returning eastward these men found their families in the great basin of Salt Lake. The advance-guard of the Mormon emigration reached Salt Lake valley on July 24, 1847, selected the present site of Salt Lake City, built a fort of some strength as a protection against the Indians, and planted some root crops, a portion of which partially matured. A few of these pioneers, under the lead of President Young returned to the Missouri river the same fall, leaving the majority to plow and plant during the following season. Their subsistence through the entire winter was in part a root growing wild and pointed out by the Indians as capable of supporting life. The few cereals and roots brought with them were saved for planting, for such were the difficulties of transportation through the eleven hundred miles of mountains and deserts they traversed that it was with the greatest difficulty they could bring the necessary implements and grains and roots for seed. No white man save Colonel James Bridger, a trapper at Fort Bridger, and a mountaineer named Goodyear, was found in the region, consequently the Mormon pioneers were undisputed masters of the country, with no neighbors except the wild and degraded Utah and Shoshone Indians, whose friendship was courted for the sake of peace and has always been retained through a policy of liberality and justice. The opinion of Colonel Bridger was expressed that it was impossible to raise grain in that region and that immigration to the "great basin" would be followed by starvation. Nevertheless, trusting in the Providence of God and remembering the persecutions of man, the community resolved to dare the alternative.

When the bulk of the immigration reached the valley in 1848 they found that much had been raised for their support, besides a large percentage preserved for seed. Rations of bread were issued and used, and the people were again in a condition of comparative safety and comfort. The march of 1848, as may be supposed, was attended with great hardships. The immigrants were deficient in transportation, and suffered from a scarcity of provisions and the severe toils of the journey. Great mortality resulted from disease, old age, and other causes, and it was said that the trail of the Mormons could be followed in 1849 by the graves of the dead they had left on their route. Yet it is worthy of note that during that pilgrimage of four months' duration neither the spinning-wheel nor the loom ceased to do its work, the large wagon and the slow tread of the ox giving an opportunity for labor while the train was in motion. There are now in Utah hundreds of yards of goods for which the

material was spun and which were woven during that journey. Every means was utilized to the utmost; even the faithful cow gave her strength in the yoke, and furnished milk at night for the sustenance of the children she had drawn during the day.

Such, sir, are some of the incidents connected with the planting of this colony which is now sought to be legislated out of existence. The calumnies charging the Mormons with idleness, immorality, and disloyalty are all refuted by the facts of history. The first printing-press ever taken west of the Missouri river was established by them at Independence in 1832. The first newspaper in the great basin of the Salt Lake, where now there are three, and I believe the first in San Francisco, were published by the Mormons. The first United States flag unfurled in the great interior, save by Government officials, was raised by Mormons. Well do I know the spot where the first "liberty pole" was raised, and from the top of which floated the stars and stripes, while yet the country was known as Mexican territory. In obedience to Mormon love of law and order and of the institutions of our country one of their first acts after reaching their new home was to meet in convention and form a local government and send a Delegate over three thousand miles to Washington, and ask the parent Government to extend her protecting care over them.*

* Extract from a discourse delivered by Daniel H. Wells, one of the prominent dignitaries of the Mormon church, on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the entrance of the Mormons into the valley of the Great Salt Lake:

"It has been thought by some that this people, abused, maltreated, insulted, robbed, plundered, murdered, and finally disfranchised and expatriated, would naturally feel reluctant to again unite their destiny with the American Republic." * * *

* "No wonder that it was thought by some that we would not again submit ourselves (even while we were yet scorned and ridiculed) to return to our allegiance to our country. Remember that it was by the act of our native country, not ours, that we were expatriated, and then consider the opportunities we had of forming other ties. Let this pass while we lift the veil and show the policy which dictated us. That country, that Constitution, those institutions were all ours; they are still ours. Our fathers were heroes of the Revolution. Under the master-spirit of an Adams, a Jefferson, and a Washington, they declared and maintained their independence, and under the guidance of the spirit of truth they fulfilled their mission whereunto they were sent from the presence of the Father. Because demagogues have arisen and seized the reins of power should we relinquish our interest in that country made dear to us by every tie of association and consanguinity?" * * *

* "Those who have indulged such sentiments concerning us have not read Mormonism aright, for never, no, never, will we desert our country's cause; never will we be found arrayed by the side of her enemies, although she herself may cherish them in her own bosom. Although she may launch both the thunderbolts of war which may return and spend their fury upon her own head, never, no, never, will we permit the weakness of human nature to triumph over our love of country, our devotion to her institutions handed down to us by her honored sires, made dear by a thousand tender recollections."

In regard to the Christian temper of the Mormons during the infancy of this colony there is also indisputable evidence. The year 1849 blessed the new settlement with an abundant harvest, amply sufficient, with strict economy, for its wants, besides something to spare to the many California immigrants who crowded the plains during that season in their march to the Pacific shores and whose lack of experience had caused much sickness and great loss of stock. Multitudes fell by the way-side, and many of those who succeeded in reaching "the great half-way house," as they styled Salt Lake City, were sadly in need of rest, medical treatment, and good nursing. The ill-health of many forced them to remain there for a time, and numerous lives were saved by the careful watching and tender nursing of some good old mother by the bed-side of the suffering stranger. For several years Salt Lake City was more or less a hospital for emigrants during the fall and winter seasons from disease and accidents incident to a long journey. When the strangers became rested and were able to proceed they exchanged their broken-down stock for fresh animals, recruited their supply of bread-stuffs, and having improved their health by a free use of vegetables, went on their way rejoicing. Captain Stansbury, who spent a year among the Mormons while engaged on the Government survey of the Great Salt Lake in 1849-50, in his report gives the following frank

testimony to the character and dealings of the people:

"In their dealings with the crowds of emigrants that passed through their city the Mormons were fair and upright, taking no advantage of the necessitous condition of many if not most of them. They sold them such provisions as they could spare at moderate prices, and such as they themselves paid in their dealings with each other. In the whole of our intercourse with them, which lasted rather more than a year, I cannot refer to a single instance of fraud or extortion to which any of the party was subjected; and I strongly incline to the opinion that the charges that have been preferred against them in this respect arose either from interested misrepresentation or erroneous information. I certainly never experienced anything like it in my own case, nor did I witness or hear of any instance of it in the case of others while I resided among them. Too many that passed through their settlements were disposed to disregard their claim to the land they occupied, to ridicule the municipal regulations of their city, and to trespass wantonly upon their rights. Such offenders were promptly arrested by the authorities, made to pay a severe fine, and in some instances were imprisoned or made to labor on the public works; a punishment richly merited and which would have been inflicted upon them in any civilized community. In short, these people presented the appearance of a quiet, orderly, industrious, and well-organized society, as much so as one would meet with in any city of the Union, having the rights of personal property as perfectly defined and as religiously respected as with ourselves; nothing being further from their faith or practice than the spirit of communism, which has been most erroneously supposed to prevail among them. The main peculiarity of the people consists in their religious tenets, the form and extent of their church government, (which is a theocracy,) and in the nature especially of their domestic relations."

A few words of evidence may not be amiss in regard to the orderly character of the Mormons and their capacity for self-government, especially when the witness is one suspected of no partiality for the people whom he describes. Lieut. Gunnison, speaking of the same period, says:

"We found them in 1849 organized into a State with all the order of legislative, judicial, and executive officers regularly filled under a constitution eminently republican in sentiment and tolerant in religion; and though the authority of Congress has not yet sanctioned this form of government, presented and petitioned for, they proceed with all the routine of an organized self-governing people under the title of a Territory, they being satisfied to abide their time in accessions of strength by numbers, when they may be deemed fit to take a sovereign position, being contented so long as allowed to enjoy the substance under the shadow of a name. They levy and collect taxes, raise and equip troops for protection in full sovereignty on the soil they helped to conquer first and subdue to use afterward."

Gunnison also adds his testimony to that of others in regard to the fair dealing of the people, and says that food "was sold to the gold emigrants at a less price than at Fort Laramie, four hundred miles nearer to the States."

The progress of the colony was what you might expect from such a beginning. In 1850 there was not a shingle roof in Salt Lake City, now containing nearly twenty thousand inhabitants, with splendid churches, theatres, dwellings, and business houses. It is a remarkable fact, too, that most of the fortunes which were realized in Utah in mercantile pursuits previous to 1863, were made by those who were not Mormons; while I have never known of a farm being opened, a mill built, and scarcely a house erected by any but those of that faith. Thus it is shown that to the Mormons belongs the credit of redeeming from the complete sterility in which they found it the now magnificent valleys of Salt Lake. The population other than Mormon has never, in my opinion, exceeded two and a half per cent of the whole. The fact that a very large proportion of our people are of foreign birth is one that should give us favor in the eyes of the Government. We have expended over \$5,000,000 in the promotion of immigration from foreign lands. While many of the States operate special machinery at considerable expense for the purpose of bringing foreign immigration within their limits, the whole country is sensitively alive to the importance of this means of increasing its power. With an immense area of virgin soil and all our wonderful resources, nothing is so essential to the nation as abundant labor. Now, the Mormons have not only materially swelled the aggregate of immigration, but they have created a system of management which is already famous for its excellence, and has attracted the attention of the British Government, and caused the examination of our agent in England by a parliamentary commission, in order to

learn the means by which we have so successfully transported our tens of thousands from the one continent to the other. Verily, a prophet is not without honor save in his own country.

I have alluded to the Indian policy of the Mormons and its excellent effect; and as the Indian question has become one which excites the anxiety of the whole country I must be pardoned for pointing with justifiable pride to results which show the wisdom of their leaders in this respect to be far in excess practically of that of our neighbors. We have acted on the principle that it is cheaper to feed these savages than to fight them; and the Indians have permitted the passage of the Mormon trains without the loss of a life or of a dollar's worth of goods. The first loss ever sustained was of property on the railroad since its construction. Compared with the Indian troubles of other sections those of Utah have been trivial. The whole expenditure of the United States on account of Indian wars there has been but \$75,000, while millions on millions have been spent all about us without accomplishing any durable peace. These expenses too would have been much greater but for the supplies of food and forage drawn from our settlements at nominal prices.

Another material advantage derived by the country at large from the existence of our colony is the great assistance it has rendered in the settlement of the surrounding region. It will need no detailed statement to convince gentlemen of the immense aid rendered by such a colony in such a wilderness to the peopling of the adjacent Territories and to the success of enterprises like the overland mail, the telegraph, and the Pacific railroad. It is not too much to say that had the colony of Utah had no existence these enterprises must of necessity have been retarded for years longer, and might even yet be only dreams of the future.

And yet, notwithstanding our value to the country, it has always been a matter of extreme difficulty to obtain the ordinary legislation needed to protect our industry and property. It is only within a year that we have been able to secure an extension of the public land system over our Territory, a delay which has prevented us from availing ourselves of the liberal pre-emption and homestead laws enjoyed in the States and other Territories. We have borne these harsh and unjust discriminations with patience; but they deepen our disappointment at the attempts now made to impose upon us still greater hardships.

It is proper that I should now allude to the accusation that the people of Utah do not sufficiently honor the courts of justice. This statement is the exact reverse of truth. A well regulated and impartial judiciary is regarded as the very foundation of civil government, and Utah has her system of territorial courts as well as those of the General Government. The error may have grown out of the fact that Mormons, in the settlement of disputes, prefer arbitration to litigation as being quicker and cheaper. The courts, however, are always open to those who prefer suits at law, and the judgments of these courts are respected and enforced. That Utah contains some bad men is unquestionably true; with four frontiers it can scarcely be expected of us to exclude all such. Yet there is no more justice in holding the citizens of Utah responsible for the acts of vicious individuals among them than there would be on the part of the Mormons in charging the whole people of the United States with the wrongs perpetrated upon them in Missouri and Illinois, or than there would be on the part of the civilized world in charging upon the citizens of this District the untimely taking off of the late Chief Magistrate. Nor can it justly be made an extraordinary offence if some shall have assumed the cloak of religion for evil purposes. When you will point us to a territory where there is no hypocrisy or crime we will acknowledge our responsibility for this imperfection. Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone.

But the important influence on the country of Mormon enterprise has not been confined to Utah. It may not be known to all who listen to me to-day that the disciples of its faith have borne a leading part in the settlement and improvement of other portions. The first discovery of gold in California in 1847-8, which excited the whole civilized world and precipitated upon the Pacific coast that avalanche of immigration which transformed a semi-wilderness into proud and populous States and carried a frontier of American settlements to the very ocean was