

as his prophet brother, he could say nay! But when God called him to part with the prudent, lion hearted support and stay he could not say nay—knowing that “obedience is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

Whatever were the personal feelings of the great modern Prophet, like Jesus, his Master, he had learned that he was here not to do his own but the will of his Father, and he did it even unto death and so did his successor.

True greatness consists in being equal to emergencies; rising higher and higher when most envied and beset with startling difficulties and overwhelming disasters.

Cromwell with his invincible Iron Sides was great in war because of his trust in the God of Hosts and the justice of principles for which he fought.

Napoleon was great when conducting on the bloody battlefield against what he conceived to be the usurpations of monarchical dynasties, but was not great when he cast off Josephine, the wife of his youth, that he might form an alliance by marriage with a scion of the very system of monarchical despotism against which he had thrown the best lives of France by thousands and to destroy which he had poured out in torrents the blood of her sons. Great was he when earnestly contending for what he honestly believed to be right, but when principles were sacrificed at the shrine of selfish ambition, and hypocrisy supplanted sincerity he became dispicable.

At the battle of Borodino his marvelous faculty of concentrating promptly and at the opportune time embattled hosts to break the lines of an enemy, had not yet forsaken him; he was still the child of destiny—war's fierce cyclone. The Russian lines entrenched behind their guns were decimated by the awful cannonading of the French, who for hours poured upon them shot and shell, until the heavens seemed ablaze and the murky demons of hell appeared as if tearing out the very bowels of earth. Suddenly, as if by magic, the roar of artillery ceased all along the line, and an awful silence, as of universal death, for a moment reigned supreme; then followed a sound like the dropping of gentle rain on dry forest leaves. That seemingly harmless sound grew apace as it came thundering forward, increasing as the voice of the ocean wave, until breaking through the sulphurous smoke the irresistible cavalry charge shattered the Russian line as the hurricane sweeps the reed-shadowed marsh. Beneath the wheel lay the father, who died at his post, and beside him, near the breech of the great gun, crouched the boy soldier, undergoing his first baptism of blood and fire. Around him gathered the great Napoleon and staff, one of the latter crying exultingly, “A great victory, a great victory!” “Yes,” replied another, “but at what a cost! half our army lies dead or maimed, we should fall back and recruit our broken regiments.”

Then Napoleon turned with a cold sneer upon his lips and said: “We turn not back, but date our next bulletin from Moscow, gentlemen; an omelet cannot be made without the breaking of a few eggs.” And the boy of the dead gunner heard it and knew that God was no longer with Napoleon, and that the star of the merciless must soon be hidden forever in the dark clouds of ruin and despair.

A little time since I incidentally spoke in this building, of the heroic Grant, and mentioned him as victor in numerous battles, and referred to his indomitable perseverance and courage; how amid raging battle he coolly replaced torn regiments with fresh men from his reserves, and fought on unmoved as if determined to win on that line, and expressed the idea that the greatest of all the great achievements of that iron hearted soldier was at Appomattox when white-winged mercy prompted a generous refusal of the surrender of Confederate horses and mules offered by General Robert E. Lee. “No,” said Grant, “not a horse, not a mule, General; your people will need them for the spring plowing.” In that simple expression, revealing the tender heart and magnanimous soul of U. S. Grant is found the sequel of his greatness; and, I believe, largely of his success as a hero soldier.

A little later one of the brethren referring to my remarks about Grant, drew, in eloquent language, a touching picture of Lee, the general of the lost cause, and showed his greatness, not alone in victory, but in defeat as well. In listening to the recital of how that mighty commander watched division after division, regiment after regiment, melt away under terrific cross fires, and finally saw the hope of the Confederacy crushed on the bloody field of Gettysburg, and while realizing that his heart was breaking, exclaimed, “we cannot always win battles.” I confess that while I did not think Grant less great, I thought that Lee's greatness had been tested far beyond that of the other; and what after all is the evidence of greatness save that found in the test?

On this rule, where stands Brigham Young? Place him not, my young friends, I beseech you, below the highest our great country has produced. No boast do we make that he killed, or gave command to kill hundreds and thousands of fellow beings. I am aware that the highest laurels are woven into garlands to crown the brow of war's blood-stained heroes; but where others conquered on the field of carnage, Brigham Young conquered in the field of justice and reason. When the vision of crimsoned walls and bespattered floors and the martyred Prophet at Carthage was revealed to his mind, his first thought was “Has Joseph taken the keys of the Kingdom with him?” Joseph might die and the world still live; but Joseph dead and the keys of the Kingdom gone, the world and all things in it, he knew must perish sooner or later. Hence the far-reaching thought—a thought

not prompted by individual or selfish ambitious motives; for men like Brigham Young, lose thought of self and individuality becomes completely swallowed up in the work assigned them. Sydney Rigdon seeking, after the martyrdom of Joseph, the guardianship of the Church, was not thus swallowed up; hence the joy of a shepherdless, distracted people when they heard the voice of true inspiration, the voice of true greatness uttering “Attention, Israel!”

No duplicity or fear or doubt in those words, nor in any that followed from his lips. In the finishing of the Nauvoo Temple under the circumstances then surrounding the Saints, is there any evidence of infinite trust in God and of greatness?

Grant and Lee, Napoleon, Caesar and Alexander each, no doubt, understood how to plan campaigns and conduct retreats; but history affords no evidence that either or all combined possessed wisdom sufficient to organize a destitute, despoiled people and successfully lead them as did Brigham Young. General Lee's hopes were crushed when he witnessed his shattered forces broken at Gettysburg. But Brigham Young, driven with his people into a howling wilderness, did neither faint nor falter. Search the annals of war and conquest from the beginning and learn that greatest courage and most lofty devotion are not exhibited on the battle field of carnage and death. But to lead a people destitute almost to the verge of starvation and nakedness requires greatness of the first magnitude. What Brigham Young accomplished in that respect has but one parallel in history, that of Moses leading ancient Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Witness what he did at Winter Quarters! With graves increasing around him and making the last earthly resting place of those daily dying from exposure and want, Brigham Young constantly sought to distract the minds of the people from their miserable surroundings, by directing them from the woes of the present, to the hopes of the future. Think of introducing the dance and encouraging the song under such sorrowful conditions. Think of his pleadings for the redress of the grievances of people driven ruthlessly from their homes, and for answer receive from the President a request for 500 men from the camps of a homeless people to secure the conquest of California and to fight, if need be, in the war with Mexico.

Who shall say that tests like those are not such as try men's souls? Yet Brigham Young, with his masterful conceptions of the future, yielded the strength of camps and devoted it willingly to the service of the country that had permitted his people to be robbed of every right dear to an American citizen except the right to honorably die. One can readily believe that treatment of this kind would inevitably tend to make the recipients in turn harsh and cruel. On the narrow and bigoted soul it undoubtedly would