

crossed at a point now known as Omaha city; some crossed a little below, at Bellevue; or what we sometimes termed Whisky Point, there being some missionaries and Indian traders there, who occupied their time principally in selling whisky to, and swindling the Indians.

We were met there by Captain James Allen, of United States dragoons, with an order from the War Department to enrol five hundred volunteers for the war in Mexico. The volunteers were enrolled in a very few days. A portion of our wagons had crossed the Missouri at this time, and the residue of our people, from whom the volunteers were drawn, were scattered on the way two hundred miles towards Nauvoo. The men however volunteered, leaving their families and teams on the prairies without protectors, and very materially weakened the camp, because they were the flower of the people. They marched direct for Leavenworth, and there received the arms of infantry, and then marched for California by way of Santa Fe. Their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Allen, died at Leavenworth, and they were subsequently placed under the command of Lieutenant Colonel P. Saint George Cooke. They made a march of 2050 miles, to San Diego. History may be searched in vain for a parallel to this march of infantry. During a portion of this route they were on three-quarter rations, a portion on half rations and a large portion of it on quarter rations of bread, their only meat being such draught animals as were unable to proceed further. They were, at one time temporarily relieved from this pressure through an encounter with a herd of wild bulls. These men were discharged on the coast of California; but the government, finding it necessary to maintain some show of force in the southern part of California, requested a company of them to re-enlist, which they did, and served for a term of six months.

The departure of all these men from our party, left a great burden on the shoulders of those who remained. President Young gathered them together to a place now called Florence, which we demominated Winter Quarters. While there we built seven hundred log houses, one water-power, and several horse mills for grinding grain, and some hundred and fifty dug-outs, being a kind of cave dug in the earth, or houses half underground.

We gathered up the families of the battalion the best we could, but a great many were sick. Our exposures through the season, being deprived of vegetable food, and the overwork through so much bridge and road making brought on sickness; and all who were in Winter Quarters, remember it as being a place where a great many persons were afflicted, and many died.

Our brethren who were on the other side of the river established camps in various localities. There were probably two thousand wagons scattered about on the east side of the river in different parts of the Potawattamie country, each grove or camping ground taking the name of its leader. Many of those names are still retained, the various camping grounds being known as Cutler's, Perken's, Miller's, &c.

Elders Orson Hyde, P. P. Pratt and John Taylor left the camp and went on a mission to England. Brother Benson, accompanied by other brethren, went to the east to solicit donations from our eastern friends. I am not aware of the exact amount that was donated, but it was only a trifle. There were a few old clothes also contributed, which I believe were scarcely worth the freight. Christian sympathy was not very strong for the Latter-day Saints. But we feel very thankful to those who did contribute, and shall ever remember with kindness their generosity towards the Saints.

We were here visited by Col. Thos. L. Kane, of Philadelphia, an extract from whose historical address was read yesterday. He visited our camp and saw our condition, and was the only man, I believe, who by words and deeds manifested that he felt to sympathize with the outraged and plundered people called Latter-day Saints. It may be that he was not the only man, but he was the only man who made himself conspicuous by his sympathy towards us. It is true that we have had men come here, as merchants, and officers who have expressed to us that they did have great sympathy with us at that time. It does us a great deal of good now to hear them say so, we did not know anything about it then.

In the Spring of 1847 President Young with one hundred and forty-three pioneers started in search of a place of settlement. We started early before there was a particle of grass in the

Platte valley. We carried our food with us, and fed our animals on the cottonwood bark, until the grass grew, and managed to get along, making the road for 650 miles, and followed the trappers' trail about 400 miles more until we arrived in this valley. The whole company arrived here on the 24th of July 1847. There was a few bushes along the streams of City Creek, and other creeks south. The land was barren; it was covered with large black crickets, which seemed to be devouring everything that had outlived the drouth and desolation. Here we commenced our work by making an irrigation ditch, and planting potatoes, which we had brought from the States; and late as it was in the season, with all the disadvantages with which we had to contend, we raised enough to preserve the seed, though very few were as large as chestnuts. For the next three years we were reduced to considerable straits for food. Fast-meetings were held and contributions constantly made for those who had no provisions. Every head of a family issued rations to those dependant upon him for fear his supply of provisions should fall short. Rawhide, wolves, rabbits, thistle roots, segos and everything that could be thought of that would preserve life was resorted to; there was a few deaths by eating poisonous roots. A great deal of the grain planted here the first year grew only a few inches high; it was so short it could not be cut. The people had to pull it. A great many got discouraged and wanted to leave the country; some did leave. The discovery of gold mines in California by the brethren of the battalion caused many of the discontented to go to that paradise of gold.

During all these trials President Young was firm and decided, he put on a smile when among the people, and said this was the place God had pointed out for the gathering place of the Saints, and it would be blessed and become one of the most productive places in the world. In this way he encouraged the people, and he was sustained by men who felt that God had inspired him to lead us here.

President Young went back to Winter Quarters the first season, and in 1848 returned with his family. John Smith, my honored father, who was subsequently patriarch of the whole Church, and who had been President of the Stake in Nauvoo, presided during the absence of President Young. I think that, for a man of his age and health, it was, in many respects, a very unpleasant position to be placed in, for all the murmuring, complaining, fault-finding, distress, hunger, annoyances, fears and doubts of the whole people were poured into his ear. But God inspired him, although a feeble man, to keep up their spirits, and to sustain the work that was entrusted to him until the arrival of the President next season.

In three years—1850, the idea of a man issuing rations to his family to keep them from starving had passed away; but the grasshopper war of 1856 inflicted upon us so great a scarcity that issuing rations had to be resorted to again. Through all these circumstances no one was permitted to suffer, though all had to be pinched. I shall not attempt to give a detailed account of all the circumstances connected with our position in those trying times. But when our brethren arrive here by railroad and see a country smiling with plenty, I think they can hardly appreciate how it looked when we came.

When I first sat down on this ground, in 1847, I was dressed in buckskin, having torn most of my clothes to pieces. I had rawhide soles on my feet, and had a piece of hard bread and a piece of dried antelope meat to eat. I lay down, took my pistol in my hand and held on to my horse by a lariat while eating my meat and biscuit, for fear the Indians might take a notion to my hair, of which I was always very choice. I took that meal near where our City Hall now stands. There has been quite an improvement since then.

The first year of our settlement here the crops were greatly injured by crickets, and many of the people gave up all hope, and it seemed as if actual starvation was inevitable for the whole colony. God sent gulls from the Lake, and they came and devoured the crickets. It seemed as if they were heavenly messengers sent to stay the famine. They would eat until they were filled and would then disgorge; and so they continued eating and vomiting until the fields were cleared, and the colony saved: Praise the Lord! During the time of scarcity when there was a short allowance of bread, the people were remarkably healthy, more so than they were afterwards when food became more plentiful.

In 1847 it was the counsel for every person leaving the Missouri river to be provided with 365 pounds of bread stuff; many, however, came with less. The next season they were to bring 300 pounds, the season after 250 pounds; but in 1850 the people came with just enough to serve them during their journey across the Plains. In 1849 President Young founded the P. E. Fund. We had covenanted while in Conference in the Temple at Nauvoo, that we would never quit our exertions to the extent of our influence and property, until every man, woman and child of the Latter-day Saints that wanted to come to the mountains, had been gathered. In 1849, notwithstanding all our poverty, a large sum in gold was contributed by the brethren for emigration purposes, and Bishop Edward Hunter went back and commenced the work. We also recommenced the work of missions, which for a short time had been partially suspended. Missionaries were sent to Denmark, Sweden, Norway, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and the islands of the Pacific.

The first commercial house established here by strangers was Livingston & Kinkead's. Mr. Livingston had about eight thousand dollars, which was all the money the firm had to invest. Kinkead was taken in as a partner, and they obtained credit in the east for twenty thousand dollars' worth of goods, freighted them here and opened their store. They reported to their creditors that on the first day of opening they received ten thousand dollars in gold. They remained here until they made themselves fortunes and carried gold from this Territory, perhaps to the amount of millions, and established themselves elsewhere. They were an honorable business house, but I have often reflected upon the bad policy that we, as servants of God, adopted at that time in sustaining strangers. If the ten thousand dollars which was paid into that house the first day, had been handled by some of our experienced merchants in a coöperative institution, it would have been just as easy to have furnished our own merchandise as to have bought their's. Bishop N. K. Whitney, who was then living, or Bishop Woolley, and numbers of others were well acquainted with mercantile business; but they had been robbed of all they had and had no capital. It only wanted unity and willingness on the part of the people to sustain their brethren in their business relations to have laid the foundation to supply all that was ever supplied by Livingston & Kinkead.

I would like every one to inquire for himself, What would have been the result if instead of sustaining Livingston & Kinkead and other merchants our people had sustained Latter-day Saints? The result would have been that large sums of money would have remained here and been used for building up the country; and when a dark cloud had lowered over us, our brethren with this means in their possession would have been on hand to aid the Saints in defending and preserving their lives and liberties; while as it was, the influence of the men we had enriched was turned against us, they believing they could make more money out of the government and get rich quicker through war than they could by continuing their honest, legitimate business with the people here. This firm is but one; several other firms might be mentioned who pursued a similar course.

As soon as it was known in Christendom that the Latter-day Saints were not dead, but that they were alive and flourishing, and were gathering their people to the mountains at the rate of from two to five thousand a year, and that they had succeeded in reclaiming the desert and in making grain and grass grow where nothing would grow before, it seemed as though all hell was aroused again. Federal officers were sent here, and they thought it policy to join in the general hue and cry, or at least some of them; there were a few honorable exceptions. But the majority of them raised a hue and cry against us, and it was thought so much of, that one of the rotten planks in the platform of the great rising party which contested the elevation of James Buchanan to the Presidency, was the destruction of polygamy. This brought to our country immense armies, more men being concerned in the matter than in some of the principal battles of the revolution, or even in the war of 1812. Some 6,000 regulars were marched in this direction, while teamsters and hangers-on increased this number to about 17,000. There were also several thousand freight wagons, and everything on the face of the earth seemingly that could be done to hurl into this country destruction and vengeance, was done.

But God over-ruled it. When they got here they found that they really had been deceived. They went and established themselves at Camp Floyd, and spent their time in destroying arms and ammunition, and breaking up the property of the United States, until forty million dollars, the reported cost of the expedition, had been wasted. The armies then scattered to the four winds of the heaven. This expenditure of the government money laid the foundation of these outside mercantile establishments which have been nursed by us to so great an extent from that time to this.

It has been believed that great benefit financially accrued to the Saints through this expedition; but I think that as a whole it has been a hindrance to our real progress. Very little of the money came into the hands of the Saints, but some merchandise at high prices, which might have been a temporary convenience. But it caused our people to relax their energies in producing from the elements what they needed, such as flax, cotton, and wool; and also turned their attention from the manufacture of iron. The burning of wagons, the bursting of shell, and the destruction of arms, furnishing much of the latter at comparatively nominal prices; hence a present benefit worked a permanent injury. The speculators who made vast fortunes at the expense of the nation soon squandered them, and part of this army, and even its commander, and many of the officers were soon found arrayed against the flag of our country, and taking an active part in the terrible war between the North and South, the results of which are being so severely felt at the present time.

Scandalous sheets have been issued here for years, and, as far as possible, sent to all parts of the world, filled with lies, defamation and abuse, and everything that would tend to rouse the indignation of the Christian world against us, and to get up an excuse for our annihilation. These sheets have been sustained by men in the mercantile business whom we have sustained by our trade, and consequently have been supported indirectly by our money. I have been horrified at such a use of our means, and have felt that it was our duty, as Saints, to stop supporting these slanders, lest, peradventure, should they continue until they produced the designed effect, our blood should be upon our own heads.

What did we cross the Plains for? To get where we could enjoy peace and religious liberty. Why did we drag hand carts across the Plains? That we might have the privilege of dwelling and associating with Saints, and not build up a hostile influence in our midst, and place wealth in the hands of our enemies, who use it to spread abroad defamation and falsehood and to light a flame that will again have the direct result, unless overruled by the almighty power of God, of bringing upon the Latter-day Saints here the same sorrow, distress and desolation that have followed them elsewhere. For my part I do not fellowship Latter-day Saints who thus use their money. I advise the Saints to form co-operative societies and associations all over the Territory, and to import everything they need that they cannot manufacture, and not to pay their money to men who use it to buy boyonets to slay them with, and to stir up the indignation of our fellow-men against us. Our outside friends should feel contented with the privilege of paying us the money for the products of our labor, and we should exact it at their hands, as a due reward for our exertions in producing the necessities of life in this desert.

Some may say "We are afraid the brethren are making money too fast;" or "We do not like to trade with them, they charge us too high." Suppose they do, you need not buy of them; but do not go and buy of men who would use that money to cut your throats, or to publish lies about you, and endeavor to induce all men to come here and dispossess you of your homes. Do not be so mad as that. "Well," says one, "I really want some little article that I cannot buy elsewhere." Man's wants are very numerous, but his necessities are really very few, and we should abridge our wants, and go to work and manufacture everything we can within ourselves; and what we cannot manufacture we can import and save ourselves the 40, 120, 400 or 1,000 per cent. that we are now paying for our merchandise, and so stop building up those who are laying a foundation, openly and above board, for our destruction. And furthermore, cease to fellowship every man that will not build up Zion. Amen.