

Letter From President Geo. A. Smith.

We have been favored with the perusal of a letter from President George A. Smith to his son John Henry, in this city, from which we extract the following—

HOTEL BRUN, Bologna,
Jan. 8th, 1873.

With thanks to our heavenly Father for his mercies I can inform you that myself and company are in good health. Bro. George Dunford, for business reasons, started for home yesterday. He was a pleasant companion to travel with and we regret much the necessity of his return.

We spent five days in Venice, which was peculiarly interesting to me for its historical associations and peculiar location. At the time that Attila invaded Italy, and destroyed Aquila, which was then the great mart of trade in northern Italy, the panic-stricken inhabitants of the neighboring towns, fearing a like fate from the barbarian, took shelter in some low mud islands or banks, formed by the wash of several rivers, north of the Po, in what is called the lagoon of the Adriatic, driving piles in the mud, using the various streams as canals, covering the piles with cement and mud, laying upon them foundations of rock, from which in an incredibly short time grew the great naval power of the republic of Venice, which retained its independence thirteen hundred years, and may probably during one thousand years have been considered a first-class power. Its government, though termed republican, was a consolidated aristocracy, and very tyrannical. But few of the people had the right to vote, and they elected from the aristocratic class the senate, and the senate selected forty of their number, who again selected ten, who again selected three of their number, in whose hands was centred a good deal of absolute power.

The Grand Doge or reigning duke was elected for life by the senators, and seemed to possess much greater powers than the sovereigns of England do at the present time. Some of these reigning presidents were men of extraordinary ability, and extended the dominion of Venice over many islands and countries. One of them captured and plundered Constantinople and brought from that place many trophies, which were shown us with pride and satisfaction.

The canals of Venice are streets, the carriages are boats, called gondolas. They are all built of one pattern and painted black. There are but three horses in the city, which contains one hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants; every hotel, wealthy gentleman and business man have their boats tied to their doors. The republican government was extinguished by Napoleon I. in 1797, and although the place submitted to his authority without any resistance, he committed many acts of vandalism, such as carrying away many choice paintings, statues and souvenirs of Venetian greatness to Paris; plundering the churches of their golden and silver ornaments, and sending them to the mint; scattering the monks and nuns to the four winds, telling the nuns they should be raising boys to fill his armies; breaking in pieces the winged lion wherever it was to be found, it being the proud emblem of Venetian power; destroying the magnificent ship in which the Grand Doge of Venice had married the Adriatic seven hundred times, and cast into the sea as many gold rings. An immense amount of gold and silver used in ornamenting this vessel he sent to the mint. Venice had two hundred churches, many of them very costly edifices; sixty-seven of these he tore down, converting the land on which they stood and their materials to other purposes. A monastery which contained 1,200 monks was converted into a custom house. Up to this time all the dead had been buried in churches. This he prohibited, and since that time a cemetery has grown up in the lagoons, formed by the earth deposited there for the purpose of making an island, and is being enlarged from year to year by the mud which is taken from the canals, which are as numerous as the streets of other cities. This mud is a clay, and is secured by piles capped with cement, upon which walls are built next to the sea. The ground is raised six feet above high watermark. The dead are buried four feet below the sur-

face. The poor are buried in trenches, one coffin lying close against another, but only one tier deep. The last one buried is left uncovered, ready for the next one to be laid against it, and then the trench is filled. Twenty-four of this class had been buried there this year when I was there, the sixth of January. Ground for single graves could be purchased by any persons for eighteen francs, and all who felt able buried their dead on their own ground thus obtained. These private graves are all marked with a cross, many of iron, some of wood and many of stone. The monuments were generally plain and tasteful. A small enclosure beautifully decorated is used for a Protestant burying place. Among the number buried there, were many English and Germans, but only one American, William Sparks, aged thirty, died August 19th, 1849. Few Americans have had the opportunity to drop a tear over this lonely grave of their fellow countryman. He was U. S. Consul at Venice at the time of his death. A large addition to the Catholic cemetery has just been finished, and brought into use. The hundreds of palaces along the Grand Canal, many of them fine specimens of architecture, are mostly going to decay. While Venice belonged to the Austrians, which was about fifty years, the Austrian government made Trieste the port of entry and few ships visited Venice. But now, under the Italian government, its trade has revived, and steamers and ships give sociability and character and commercial life to the almost dead city. We heard expressions of approbation and loyalty to Victor Emanuel and to Italian unity, though they seem to feel heavily the increased taxation which it has cost to bring it about—two wars with Austria, one with Naples and one with the States of the Church.

I am satisfied that Victor Emanuel is personally popular with the people. While in Venice we visited two glass factories, where many fine specimens of glass were produced. We visited the palace of Victor Emanuel, or about a hundred rooms of it, which he occupies during his annual visits to Venice, the old palace of the Doges, the Senate and Council Chambers, the ancient prison, crossing the Bridge of Sighs and returning. We ascended the monument in St. Marc's square, the highest in Venice, visited the Academy of Arts, several galleries of antiquities, the arsenal, the Armenian convent, and many other places, particulars related concerning which may have been more imaginary than real, as the house of Shylock, the merchant of Venice, where the city now keeps a pawnbroker's office. Our guide showed us the first church built in Venice in 421, the house of Othello, the palace of Desdemona, the house of Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveler and explorer in Asia, the palace of the Queen of Cyprus, and many other places that history, art or poetry have rendered familiar with us. Our guide showed us many holy relics preserved in St. Marc's cathedral; the coffin containing the body of St. Marc, which he assured us was genuine, it having been brought from Alexandria eight hundred years ago. The body had been smuggled on board a Venetian ship in a basket of vegetables, thus eluding the vigilance of the infidel guard, and bringing the remains of the Evangelist to Venice, to rest in a marble coffin and to become the patron saint of the city. Our guide showed us some columns of Solomon's temple, that were semi-transparent, a slab of granite, seven feet by seven, from Mount Tabor, upon which the Savior stood, when he was transfigured, a slab from the prison of John the Baptist, upon which his head fell when it was stricken off by the command of Herod. In pointing to the door he said, "There is preserved his head." The door is only opened on Fridays. The marble chair of St. Marc, and many other relics, he assured me were genuine, as they had been brought to Venice eight hundred years ago.

I have to-day been looking at some tombstones and remains of Etruscan nobles, which were buried three thousand years ago. There are many good specimens of gold jewelry and ornaments of earth and glass and metal, showing that the inhabitants of Bologna three thousand years ago were acquainted with many of the arts.

GEO. A. SMITH.

IN TOWN. — Judge Wilson, formerly chief Justice of Utah, is in town.

A BILL

Granting rights of way to railroad companies in the several Territories.

[This bill passed the House Jan. 27, 1873.]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That in the several Territories the right of way across the public lands, not exceeding two hundred feet in width, and twenty acres of land for every ten miles of road for the erection of suitable station-buildings, turn-outs, reservoirs, switches, and machine-shops, are hereby granted to any railroad company incorporated under the general railroad incorporation law of the proper Territory. This act shall not apply within the limits of any Indian or military reservation without a special act of Congress. Where such railroad shall pass through a mountain canyon, defile, or pass, the right of way through the same shall not be exclusive, and any other road shall have the right to pass through the same, but not in such a manner as to impair the track or operation of the road first constructed. In case such railroad shall not be completed within five years after the formation of the corporation, the rights herein granted shall be forfeited as to the uncompleted portion of its line. No Territory shall in any manner give or loan its credit to any railroad company; nor shall any county or municipality therein do so, unless duly authorized thereto by an act of the Territorial Legislature; nor unless said act shall be ratified by a two-thirds vote of those voting on the question. And no person except a qualified elector resident in the county or municipality affected thereby, and who has paid taxes on real or personal property to such county or municipality on the last property assessment preceding the election, shall be authorized to vote on said question. The legislature of the proper Territory may in its general incorporation law provide for the manner in which private lands and public lands occupied under the laws of the United States may be condemned to the extent and for the purpose hereinbefore mentioned, but no condemnation shall be made without first making a fair compensation therefor, exclusive of any benefit that may accrue to the owner on account of the construction of said road. All proceedings for such condemnation shall be had in the district court of the district embracing the land.

A BILL

To promote public justice in the several Territories of the United States.

[Presented by Mr. Logan, Jan. 17, 1873, read twice, referred to the Committee on Territories, and ordered to be printed.]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it shall be the duty of each of the several United States marshals, in person, or by his deputies, to attend all the courts held by the United States judges, in any Territory of the United States in which such marshal may be officially acting, and to serve and execute all process and orders issued or directed by said courts, or by judges thereof.

Sec. 2. That it shall be the duty of the United States attorney for each of the Territories of the United States, personally, or by his deputy or assistant, to attend all the courts which may be held by the United States judges, or any of them, in each of the several Territories for which such attorney may be officially appointed, and perform the duties of prosecuting attorney in his said Territory, for all offenses against the laws of such Territory, as well as against the laws of the United States, and shall prosecute all suits to which the Territory is a party; and that each United States attorney, United States marshal, and grand and petit juror shall receive, for his services in criminal cases, or proceedings arising under the laws of the Territory in which he may be acting, the same fees or compensation as are allowed for like services in criminal cases or proceedings arising under the laws of the United States; and such fees or compensation being taxed by the court or judge before whom the services were rendered, or, in the case of the attorney and marshal, by the supreme court of the Terri-

tory, shall be paid to the said attorney, marshal, and jurors respectively, from the territorial treasury annually, on the third Monday in December.

Sec. 3. That whenever a district judge of any Territory of the United States shall determine that a grand or petit jury will be needed at a term of his court, the said judge, the United States attorney, and United States marshal for such Territory shall make a list, in writing, of the names of one hundred male citizens of the United States residing in said district, and who have resided six months in said Territory, and shall affix thereto their certificate to the effect that the same is the list from which the grand and petit jurors are to be drawn for the ensuing term of the court, and shall cause the same to be filed in the office of the clerk of the said court. And whenever the judge shall order the clerk to issue a venire, the clerk, in the presence of the said attorney and marshal, or their deputies, shall write the names contained in the said list each on a separate slip of paper, all the slips being of the same size and kind, shall fold them uniformly so that the name written thereon shall be concealed; shall then place them in a covered box, and thoroughly mix and mingle them, and shall then draw therefrom the requisite number of names. If a grand jury be required, it shall be drawn first. Both grand and petit juries thus drawn shall consist of the same number of men as are required in the circuit and district courts of the United States. The clerk shall make a list in writing of the names of the persons constituting each panel so drawn; and the clerk, attorney, and marshal shall affix thereto their certificate to the fact, the time and place of such drawing, and file the same in the office of the said clerk, who shall forthwith issue a venire to the said marshal, commanding him to summon the men so drawn to attend and serve as such jurors at the time and place previously designated by the said judge. And such jurors shall constitute the regular panel for such term of the court, and for all cases, whether arising under the laws of the United States or under the laws of the said Territory. If at any time talesmen shall be required, their names may be drawn from the said box by the clerk in open court or they may be summoned from the bystanders, or from the vicinage, as the presiding judge shall direct. No challenge shall be allowed on the ground that a juror had been summoned or had served at a previous term of the court. Each party, whether in civil or criminal cases, shall be allowed six peremptory challenges. In criminal cases the court and not the jury shall pronounce the punishment, under the limitation prescribed by the law.

Sec. 4. That all fines imposed by the district courts for violation of the laws of the Territory and paid shall be deposited in a national bank by order of the presiding judge, and shall be expended, so far as may be necessary, to pay the taxable fees and charges of officers, jurors, and witnesses in proceedings to enforce the said laws.

Sec. 5. That in all suits or proceedings at law or in equity, wherein in the United States are neither a party nor interested, the costs may be taxed against and collected of the proper parties, under the direction of the court, or of the clerk thereof, and the collection thereof enforced by execution or attachment against the property of the party. The fees of the jury shall be advanced by the winning party.

Sec. 6. That in prosecution for the crime of bigamy or polygamy, proof of cohabitation by the accused as husband or wife, or the acknowledgment of the party accused of the existence of the marital relation of husband and wife, shall be sufficient to sustain the prosecution.

Sec. 7. That each district judge may appoint one commissioner for each county in his district, who shall have the same authority, as an examining and committing magistrate, as that possessed by the said judge, and who shall be allowed the same fees and compensation that are allowed like officers in the States. Fees for such services, under the laws of the Territory, shall be paid out of the territorial treasury, annually, on the third Monday in December. Each judge may fix the time and places of holding district courts in his district, for the transaction of business arising under the laws of the Territory, and the number of terms which may be held annually. The

district courts shall have exclusive original jurisdiction of all actions for divorce, and shall take jurisdiction of such actions now pending therein. Each district court in the Territory may appoint a short-hand reporter, whose duty it shall be to report and transcribe the testimony and proceedings in such criminal cases as shall be designated by the judge of said court, and who shall receive the same fees or compensation therefor as are allowed for like services in the circuit courts of the United States. Such fees or compensation for services in cases or proceedings arising under the laws of the Territory, being taxed by the court or judge, shall be paid to such reporter from the territorial treasury, annually, on the third Monday in December; and in case the territorial legislature shall fail to make provision for the payment of the fees and compensations by this act made chargeable upon the territorial treasury, then in such case the same shall be paid out of the funds which have been or shall be appropriated by Congress to defray the expenses of the territorial legislature and for the compensation of the members thereof.

Correspondence.

LIVERPOOL, Jan. 8th, 1873.

Elder A. M. Cannon.

Soon after my arrival in this land, President Carrington assigned me to the Liverpool Conference, where I have continued to labor up to the present time. I have found in my travels many zealous and kind hearted persons who are making active efforts with a view of effecting their emigration, and who look forward to that event with fond hope and bright anticipation, and feel confident that their turn will come some time, thus feeling hopeful of the future. Many are very poor and destitute, yet like the widow are ready and willing to share their scanty substance, and if poor in this world's goods are rich in spirit and good works, and feel happy in the work of the Lord. There are some here who have relatives and friends in Utah who have made promises, and to whom they still look for assistance, feeling mortified and disappointed that they have not kept their word and rendered them assistance, when in some instances no doubt it has been within their power to do so.

Wages at the present are better than for some time past, but every article of consumption is proportionately high, so that it does not benefit the poor very much. In the instance of a family of small children who are unable to work, the present system is an injury. In the towns and villages of this country there are thousands wretchedly clad and miserably filthy, and but for the mild and soft weather would be driven to greater destitution and suffering. The class most to be pitied are children, whose parents in some and probably many instances find their way to ale houses and other places of dissipation, where they loiter their time and spend their scanty pittance, thus gratifying unbridled passion and bringing sorrow and misery on themselves and offspring. Yet this class will unite with the clergy and others to fan the flame of persecution and cry, "Down with the Mormons." All seem to overlook the corruption and depravity at home more or less in every city, town, and village.

At present there is but little interest manifested by the people in hearing or receiving the truth. Infidelity seems to be increasing, indeed the different dogmas and tenets of men-made institutions that are promulgated are calculated to drive people to infidelity. The wise men of this time have fine ability for explaining events away. No matter what occurs they can set the public mind at rest, invariably denying that the Lord is bringing about these changes for the furtherance of his purposes on the earth.

I am pleased to hear of the general peace and prosperity in Utah, though some of Satan's emissaries are badly wounded. They doubtless are only awaiting convalescence to renew the attack, and in the mean time making every preparation to insure success.

Please remember me kindly to Presidents Young and Wells, and also to Br. Geo. Q., also accept my best wishes for many happy New Years for yourself and family, and extend the same to my friends.

Yours in the covenant.

JOHN NEFF.