

PRESENT AND FORMER PERSECUTIONS OF THE SAINTS, ETC.

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 18, 1857

Recorded by G. D. Watt, J. V. Long

I purpose to have read to you this morning some of the communications that have passed between our enemies and ourselves, for the people are anxious to know the feeling of the two parties; they are very anxious to learn the news. I am perfectly willing that they should know all, for my feelings and yours are very different from those of the world. You are aware that among the nations the soldiers are never permitted to know anything about the plans of the officers: statesmen withhold from their constituents every policy they possibly can, and the statement of one of them is verily true pertaining to their use of the English language—that is, to secrete ideas instead of revealing them. Men study to talk a great deal, when at the same time they know but very little, and often even strive to conceal the little they do know. Among its other capabilities, the English language is better adapted than any other in existence to the using of thousands of words without conveying an idea.

If the Government of the United States have sent soldiers to this Territory, I do not know it; for I have had no official notice of such a circumstance, and you will perceive that I treat them accordingly. If they are sent by Government, they are sent expressly to destroy this people; and if they are not sent by the Government, they have come expressly to destroy this people; therefore I shall treat them, as I have informed the officer in command, the same as though they were an avowed mob—

not as I would those who have heretofore mobbed us, but as parties who have come to mob us now.

I have informed Colonel Alexander that had his command been the men who have heretofore mobbed us, and the lying scribblers and the wicked rabble, who have all the day long been trying to incite mobs against us, they never would have seen the South Pass.

You will perceive from the communications which brother John T. Caine will read, the feelings of the two parties—myself representing the Latter-day Saints, and Colonel Alexander representing the officers of what he states to be a portion of the United States army. Whether it is or not, I have no business to know, and shall not know, until I am officially notified.

Brother Caine will now read the principal letters in the order best adapted to your comprehending their purport.

[Brother Caine read an unofficial letter from President Brigham Young to Colonel Alexander, dated Oct. 14; one from Lieut. General Wells to President Young, dated Oct. 15; one from Colonel Alexander to Governor Young, dated Oct. 12; and one from Governor Young to Colonel Alexander, dated Oct. 16.]

There are a good many here who have not witnessed the scenes of persecution that some of us have. I was asking father Morley, this morning, whether he thought the enemy could now ride into our cornfields and through our gardens and shoot down