

## DIFFICULTIES WITH WHICH THE CHURCH HAS HAD TO CONTEND IN ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN UTAH

DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, DELIVERED AT LOGAN,  
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Reported by G. D. Watt

I love to hear the teachings of the servants of God, especially those whom God has appointed to preside over his people in all the world. I love also to contribute my testimony, or to speak to the Saints by way of encouragement, illustration, and instruction. For twenty-eight years past, it has been the feeling of my heart that if there was anything on the earth that I could do to advance the work of the Lord in the last days, I wished to do it; and if I have let anything slip that I ought to have done, it has been for want of understanding and a proper knowledge of the circumstances at the time. I entertain the same sentiments and determination today upon this subject that I have entertained for twenty-eight years past.

I am gratified and rejoice exceedingly in beholding the faces of my brethren and sisters in this valley. From the manner which the people here have received the President and his escort, it is plain they are wide awake. A band of music met us on the mountain side, and they played with a free goodwill. The drummer seemed as though he was determined to beat the head of his drum in; and when the brethren undertook to sing in the meetinghouse at Wellsville, it seemed as though their united voices would tear the house to pieces, so loud were their rejoicings. The spirit in them inspired them to do as they did.

We do not realize to the full ex-

tent what we are doing. We are actually settling a portion of the earth that has been considered uninhabitable. We are reclaiming it from a desert, and building upon it a foundation for an immense State; and that State is composed of a united people, who are almost universally of harmonious sentiments. The foundation of this settlement of the "Mormon" people in the mountains really attracted the notice of the Federal Government. We had been mobbed and persecuted and driven from place to place, from city to city. On that kind of treatment we have flourished; our numbers have increased, although many of our brethren have laid their bones in the grave prematurely, and many of our wives and children have perished through persecution; yet from their ashes have seemed to spring thousands.

When we fled into the wilderness, our enemies said, "Now, let the Mormons alone; they will encounter so many difficulties and so many natural objections to their growth, they must come to naught; they will quarrel with each other, and they will soon break up, and we shall have no more trouble with them."

When James K. Polk, President of the United States, was told that the "Mormons" had occupied the Great Basin, and were making settlements on the borders of the Great Salt Lake, "Why," said he, "that is the key of the continent." When the wisdom of the venerable Senator, the late Sec-