

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MISSION TO THE COTTON COUNTRY

REMARKS BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, MADE IN THE TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, OCTOBER 8, 1862

Reported by J. V. Long

Brethren, there is a subject which has been spoken of during this Conference in regard to the mission to the cotton growing district of our Territory, to which I desire to again call your attention.

We have been instructed in the principles of the kingdom to a wonderful extent during this Conference. The instructions which we have received have been of a character that they may be reduced to practice by every person whose feelings are so disposed.

The President remarked that he desired to strengthen the missions to the cotton country by sending down two hundred more families. It will be recollected that a request was made last year for the brethren to volunteer to go on that important mission. There were a few who came up and gave in their names, but the great mass of the brethren did not feel to do so. They were aware that it was the wish of the Presidency that certain things should be done, but they seemed as though they needed taking by the ears and shaking to make them sensible of the great importance that ought to be attached to this mission. It appeared as if some of the brethren (to use a figurative expression) had become fastened to the earth with tremendous roots, so that it was with considerable difficulty that they could be got up, but they had to be taken up root and branch.

We, as a Conference, voted that the President should call, but none of us felt like volunteering. [President B. Young: I volunteered, on the condition that the people would consent to it.] Yes, the President volunteered, but it is well known that the Presidency are required here; most of the time they must be present to superintend the building of the Temple and direct the affairs of the Church in all the world, but the Elders are set apart to go into all the earth and labor as directed by the Presidency. It is also well known that the master builder has influence and power here and that he understands how the foundation, the walls, the timbers, the roof, and all connected with the Temple of our God should be put together. It is likewise well known that the Presidency never ask men to do a service except that their labors are required in that new position. One particular remark which I wish to make is, that notwithstanding the unprecedented high water in Washington County and the damage and disappointment consequent upon the flood, the settlements made by the last year's mission have proved a decided success. That mission has proven the nature of the climate more perfectly than it had before, it has tested the soil, and accomplished many other things of immense advantage and worth. It was stated by many that the mission