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 PROSPERITY OF THE SAINTS

REMARKS MADE BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, IN THE BOWERY, GENERAL CONFERENCE,  
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, OCT. 7, 1865

Reported by G. D. Watt

It is with very great pleasure that I have listened to the instructions and counsels of my brethren at this Conference. In fact, the season of Conference is a period of reflection with me. It is eighteen years ago yesterday when the first October Conference was held in this valley under the shade of a hay stack, and it served an abundant means of shading all that attended. As we are here assembled now, it would require an extensive hay stack to create a shade sufficient to accommodate the assembly, and there is but a very small representation here from the settlements of the Territory, though there are considerable numbers from some of them—trains of fifty or sixty wagons loaded with persons to attend Conference. Those of us who are in this city, and who have not had the privilege of traveling through the settlements, can form very little comprehension of the extent, strength, and population of the Territory, and of the amount of labor, toil, and the results of that toil and labor which are progressing throughout.

President Young has devoted a large portion of his time since last Conference, associated with a number of Elders, in traveling and visiting the Saints. He has visited, perhaps, one-half of them, after traveling about eighteen hundred miles. Our Territory is said to be sparsely set-

tled, but our location renders it necessary that wherever a settlement exists it shall be of considerable size, in order to carry out the necessary arrangements for protection and cultivation. It is seldom that a small settlement can do this successfully. I have been pleased with the suggestions offered by President Hyde in relation to the better cultivation of the soil; for when we go to the expense of taking out water, of keeping up dams, making requisite canals, repairing tunnels and smaller ditches and water sects, it would seem really sound policy that every foot of land thus watered, in order to make it effective, should be cultivated in the best possible manner. If the Lord had seen proper to send rains from heaven to water our lands sufficiently and gratuitously as in other places, we might spread over the land and cultivate the soil without so much labor on our part. If the suggestions which have been made are duly considered and applied throughout the Territory, the result will be the production of from one to three times more of the necessities of life on the same area.

So far as the unity of the people is concerned, I have felt to rejoice the past season; I have accompanied the President this summer, except when on his last trip to Cache Valley, during which I was on a journey to the South with Elder Amasa Lyman.