



PROSPERITY OF SOUTHERN UTAH

REMARKS BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, MAY 19, 1867

Reported by David W. Evans

Unpropitious as the morning has been we are assembled here for the purpose of receiving instruction. It is a pleasure to me to meet with the Saints. I feel the spirit that prompts them in the discharge of their duties, and the response which comes from the congregation to the speaker, inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, is mutually calculated to instruct and encourage us in the discharge of our several duties.

Since Conference I have visited the settlements south to some extent, accompanying President Young on his journey. I have been much gratified that the Saints are progressing, and that the teachings given at Conference are being generally carried out, although the settlements were then but thinly represented, in consequence of the almost impassable state of the roads. The word, however, has gone forth, and the feeling is implanted in the breasts of the Saints to make new efforts and endeavors to fulfil the duties of their calling, and to cultivate that spirit of oneness which is necessary to enable us to overcome and to attain that position in the earth which God designs His Kingdom to occupy in the last days.

I must say that in traveling through the country, and looking at things as they naturally exist, I could but wonder that anybody on the earth could envy us the privilege

of living in these mountain deserts. Our brethren in the cotton country have had to struggle against natural difficulties to a great extent, and have overcome them only by main strength, and a continued exercise of that strength is necessary to keep what they gain. It is true that some of the settlements or towns are located in positions where they can obtain their water for irrigation from springs; this, however, is in limited quantity. The city of St. George receives its water from a number of springs which seem to be increasing in quantity, but if the city should be enlarged, as anticipated, the water will have to be brought from a distance at a very great expense. The city lots in Washington and Toquerville are watered by means of springs, but the farming lands in Washington and St. George are watered from the Rio Virgin and Santa Clara rivers. These streams are subject to floods. The soil on their banks is so friable and uncertain that whenever a flood comes the dams that are placed in these streams, to aid in taking out the water, are easily washed away, and the cotton and grain fields can be irrigated only at a vast annual expense.

It seems a difficult task to contend with the elements, and to accomplish that which is required of us; and I am very well satisfied that no other people would attempt to improve