

PERSECUTION—MISSIONARIES—EMIGRATION

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT GEORGE A. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE NEW TABERNACLE,
SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 7, 1872

Reported by David W. Evans

We are again assembled this morning to continue the duties and services of our Conference, and I am requested by President Young to state that he is in the enjoyment of comfortable health and in excellent spirits. He regrets very much the circumstances which render it inexpedient for him to meet with you this morning, and hopes the time may soon come when he will again enjoy that privilege, also the privilege of bearing testimony to the glorious work of the last days, in the public congregation. He desires and appreciates the prayers and faith of the Saints; he thinks that it is quite proper that any man before he is thoroughly qualified to rule shall learn to be ruled—that he shall learn to obey before he learns to command. All these lessons in their time and in their season are proper for us to learn.

When we realize the malignity of the spirit of persecution which is aimed at the Latter-day Saints in these valleys, we need not wonder that we have to contend with vexatious lawsuits and with illegal and unjustifiable prosecutions, for the influence of the pulpit and the press when controlled by the spirit of lying is very great for evil, but God is greater—his power is more omnipotent; and although thousands of prophets, priests and wise men in the earth

have been compelled to lay down their lives for the cause of Zion, and for the sake of the principles of the gospel of peace, and in doing so they have acquired honors that could not be attained in any other way; their reward is certain, eternal and sure.

I wish to call the attention of the elders who have been in years past, on missions, to one important item of duty. It is well known that our emigration annually brings some thousands of persons among whom our missionaries have labored and with whom they are acquainted, and among whom are many who still look to them for fatherly advice and encouragement, but many of the elders who return immediately forget that they have been missionaries. When they reach home they perhaps find their affairs a little deranged, business having stopped in their absence, money making or procuring the means of living having gone rather behind hand, they drop right into a groove as it were to catch up, and they forget their duties, and the people whom they have been acquainted with and who have treated them with kindness and generosity are also frequently forgotten and neglected. The emigrants come into these valleys and fall perhaps under influences that are wrong and wicked, for men inspired with a spirit of hostility to the