

The combined force of the unbelieving and the wicked was brought to bear to expel the Saints, and compel their journey westward to the Rocky Mountains. It was permitted by Him who overrules all things for the good of His people; and the trials of the people and the afflictions of individuals and individual families were eventually lost, as it were, and buried in the universal good which Providence had provided for His people as a whole. The school of experience through which the early leaders and families of Israel had passed for a period of sixteen years had fitted them for those trying scenes and for the work which they were destined to perform in these mountains, in grappling with the difficulties of a new country, of a barren waste, of an untried region, a region supposed to be utterly uninhabitable. The great arid belt bordering on the Rocky Mountains, extending for some hundreds of miles eastward of the Rocky Mountains, and across the great basin of the American desert, was supposed to be absolutely unproductive—incapable of producing cereals, vegetables and fruits necessary to civilization. The school boys of my age will remember to have looked on their maps and seen all this country marked as the Great American Desert. It was supposed that a strip bordering on the Pacific, was composed of fine fertile land, and adapted to European settlements. But that country on the Pacific, was, at that time, in the possession of the Mexicans, with a few Catholic missions established along the coast, where they had raised a few beans and cabbages and red peppers, and where they had sustained themselves mostly by raising stock. This was all there was to show for their presence in that region. And the few

trappers who had mingled with the Indians of this great interior country for twenty years were of the opinion that it was utterly impossible to raise grain in any part of this region. Captain James Bridger, the noted hunter and trapper, who had intermarried and established a trading post among the Shoshones, met the pioneers on the Big Sandy, and gave it as the opinion of himself, and of the early trappers who had gone through this country, that it would be impossible to raise grain here. He told us of the valley of the Great Salt Lake, and pointed out especially the valley, which he termed the valley of the Utah outlet—the valley that spread between the fresh water lake of Utah and the Great Salt Lake—as the most probable place in all of this great interior country to raise grain, at the same time supplementing his account of the land with the opinion that it was impossible to raise grain, and as a clincher to his opinion offered \$1,000 as a premium for the first ear of corn that should be raised in this valley. But the faith which sustained the Saints, and which led them, responded through President Brigham Young to Captain Bridger like this: "Wait a little season and we will show you."

We have shown to the world what could be done, or, I will say, rather, the Lord our God—the God of the Latter-day Saints—has shown to us and to all the world what could be done in this hitherto barren region when His blessing rested upon it.

The first important movement of the pioneer company on setting foot upon this ground near City Creek, was to call the camp together, and bow down under the sun at high noon, and dedicate themselves unto God, and this land for the habitation