

footstool. If we take into consideration our present condition as to the comforts of life, we are better situated today with grain in our granaries and food in our houses, than any other people of the same number upon the face of the earth, or that can be found located together upon the same extent of territory anywhere. If we take into consideration our condition as to homes, there is a greater proportion of this people today who have comfortable homes of their own than can be found anywhere else; more of them have no need to strive for the privilege of earning a living, as a great many of our people had to do before they were gathered when they often found it difficult to obtain employment, and even if successful were obliged to work by the piece or by the day, receiving their pay regularly at the end of the week, and in this way measuring the conditions of their living by the amount of means which they were permitted to earn. In this manner life or existence and its comforts were measured out to them. There was comparatively no room for the exercise of enterprise, of skill, of native wit, and those qualities which God has placed in their nature, and which He designed they should practice and thus become wise and skilled by their own ingenuity.

We sometimes feel that we are oppressed, that we are pinched and persecuted by the people who are intruding upon our rights, and trampling upon our liberties, but as yet we know but little, comparatively speaking about oppression. The people of the countries of Asia and of Europe, with all of the liberty that they enjoy, are under the most severe daily oppression, continued dependence and subordination to those that are over them. In those

countries there is a feeling of fear—fear of their rulers, terror in their minds caused by the dread of threatening war which is liable at any time to come upon them with all its horrors. In every national dispute that arises they see and feel at once the liability that their sons, fathers, neighbors and kinsmen may be drafted and sent off to the war, perhaps never to return. And their hearts are filled with fear and anxiety over this and other similar things.

We see in newspapers that in Egypt, China, Central America, and almost everywhere else the air is thick with the mists and clouds of war. Where is the mother or sister, father or son among us that is today away from one of their kindred on account of war? The worst you have to dread is a short imprisonment and a few hundred dollars fine; that is the worst thing you can find to mourn and worry over. Why, bless your dear souls, there is not another community of the same number anywhere on the whole earth in which there is to be found such settled peace as right here among this very people that are before me, and the people that fill this territory all around us. And yet you think the times are terribly hard with your granaries full of wheat that you cannot sell, with large quantities of potatoes and vegetables that you cannot dispose of, with flocks and herds about you; because you cannot sell your products and get as good prices as you would like, some of you think you are in a terribly distressed condition (Laughter).

I wish the Saints would put away these foolish ideas. I want to have you realize that you are in a condition of peace and plenty, with liberty, too, for God has made you free.