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Gen J. Smith's appeal
to the Green Mountain Boys

GENERAL JOSEPH SMITH'S

APPEAL

TO THE

GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS;

DECEMBER, 1843.

HISTORIAN'S OFFICE
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AN APPEAL,

To the Freemen of the State of Vermont, "the brave Green Mountain Boys,"

and honest men.

I was born in Sharon, Vermont, in 1805,—where the first quarter of my life, grew with the growth, and strengthened with the strength of that "first born" State of the "United Thirteen." From the old "French War" to the final consummation of American Independence, my fathers, heart to heart, and shoulder to shoulder, with the noble fathers of our liberty, fought and bled; and, with the most of that venerable band of patriots, they have gone to rest,—bequeathing a glorious country with all her inherent rights to millions of posterity. Like other honest citizens, I not only, (when manhood came,) sought my own peace, prosperity, and happiness, but also the peace, prosperity, and happiness of my friends; and, with all the rights and realm before me, and the revelations of Jesus Christ, to guide me into all truth, I had good reason to enter into the blessings and privileges of an American citizen;—the rights of a Green Mountain Boy, unmolested, and enjoy life and religion according to the most virtuous and enlightened customs, rules, and etiquet of the nineteenth century. But to the disgrace of the United States, it is not so. These rights and privileges, together with a large amount of property, have been wrested from me and thousands of my friends, by lawless mobs in Missouri, supported by executive authority; and the crime of plundering our property; and the unconstitutional and barbarous act of our expulsion; and even the inhumanity of murdering men, women, and children, have received the *pass-word* of "*justifiable*" by legislative enactments, and the horrid deeds, doleful and disgraceful as they are, have been paid for by government.

In vain have we sought for redress of grievances and a restoration to our rights in the Courts and Legislature of Missouri. In vain have we sought for our rights and the remuneration for our property in the halls of Congress, and at the hands of the President. The only consolation yet experienced from these highest tribunals, and *mercy seats* of our bleeding country, is, that "*our cause is just, but the government has no power to redress us.*"

Our arms were forcibly taken from us by those Missouri marauders;—and in spite of every effort to have them returned, the State of Missouri still

retains them ; and the United States' militia law, with this fact before the government, still compells us to do military duty, and for a lack of said arms the law forces us to pay our fines. As Shakspeare would say ; "*thereby hangs a tale.*"

Several hundred thousand dollars worth of land in Missouri, was purchased at the United States' Land Offices in that district of country ; and the money without doubt, has been appropriated to strengthen the army and navy, or increase the power and glory of the nation in some other way : and notwithstanding Missouri has robbed and mobed me and twelve or fifteen thousand innocent inhabitants, murdered hundreds, and expelled the residue, at the point of the bayonet, without law, contrary to the express language of the Constitution of the United States, and every State in the Union ; and contrary to the custom and usage of civilized nations ; and especially, one holding up the motto : "*The asylum of the oppressed ;*" yet the comfort we receive, to raise our wounded bodies, and invigorate our troubled spirits, on account of such immense sacrifices of life, property, patience, and right ; and as an equivalent for the enormous taxes we are compelled to pay to support these functionaries in a dignified manner, after we have petitioned, and plead with tears, and been showed like a caravan of foreign animals, for the peculiar gratification, of connoisseurs in humanity, that flare along in public life, like lamps upon lamp posts, because they are better calculated for the schemes of the night than for the scenes of the day, is, as President Van Buren said, *your cause is just, but government has no power to redress you !*

No wonder, after the Pharisee's prayer, the Publican smote his breast and said, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner !* What must the manacled nations think of freemen's rights in the land of liberty ?

Were I a Chaldean I would exclaim : Keed'nauh ta-meroon le-hoam clauhayahauh dey-shemayahauh veh aur'kau lau gnaubadoo, yabadoo ma-ar'gnan oomeen tehoat shemayahauh alah. (Thus shall ye say unto them : The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.)

An Egyptian : Su-c-eh-ni : (What other persons are those ?) A Grecian : Diabolos bassileuei : (The Devil reigns.) A Frenchman : Messieurs sans Dieu, (Gentlemen without God :) A Turk. Ain shems : (The fountain of light.) A German : sie sind unferstandig. (What consu mmat ignorance !) A Syrian : Zaubol. (Sacrifice !) A Spaniard : Il sabio muda conscio, il nescio no. (A wise man reflects, a fool does not.) A Samaritan : Saunau ! (O stranger !) An Italian : Oh tempa ! oh diffidenza ! (O the times ! o the diffidence !) A Hebrew : Ahtauh ail rauey. (Thou God seest me.) A Dane : Hyad tidende ! (What tidings !) A Saxon : Hwæt riht ! (What right !) A Sweede : Hvad skilia : (What skill !) A Polander : Nav-yen-shoo bah pon na Jesu Christus ; (Blessed be the name of Jesus Christ.) A Western Indian : She-mo-kah she-mo-keh teh ough-ne-gah. (The white man, O the white man, he yere uncertain.) A Roman : Procul o procul este profani ! (Be off, be off ye profane !) But as I am I will only add : when the wicked rule the people in:ourn.

Now, therefore, having failed in every attempt to obtain satisfaction at the tribunals where all men seek for it, according to the rules of right :—I am compelled to appeal to the honor and patriotism of my native State ; to the clemency and valor of "Green Mountain Boys ;" for, throughout the various

periods of the world, whenever a nation, kingdom, state, family or individual has received an insult, or an injury, from a superior force, (unless satisfaction was made) it has been the custom to call in the aid of friends to assist in obtaining redress. For proof we have only to refer to the recovery of Lot and his effects, by Abraham, in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah; or, to turn to the relief afforded by France and Holland, for the achievement of the Independence of these United States: Without bringing up the great bulk of historical facts, rules, laws, decrees, and treaties, and bible records, by which nations have been governed, to show that mutual alliance, for the general benefit of mankind, to retaliate and repel foreign aggressions; to punish and prevent home wrongs, when the conservitors of justice and the laws have failed to afford a remedy, are not only common and in the highest sense justifiable and wise, but, they are also, proper expedients to promote the enjoyment of equal rights, the pursuit of happiness, the preservation of life, and the benefit of posterity.

With all these facts before me, and a pure desire to ameliorate the condition of the poor and unfortunate among men, and if possible to entice all men from evil to good; and with a firm reliance that God will reward the just, I have been stimulated to call upon my native State, for a "union of all honest men;" and to appeal to the valor of the "Green Mountain Boys" by all honorable methods and means to assist me in obtaining justice from Missouri: not only for the property she has stolen and confiscated, the murders she has committed among my friends, and for our expulsion from the State, but also to humble and chastise, or abase her for the disgrace she has brought upon constitutional liberty, until she atones for her sins.

I appeal also, to the fraternity of brethren, who are bound by kindred ties, to assist a brother in distress, in all cases where it can be done according to the rules of the order, to extend the boon of benevolence and protection, in avenging the Lord of his enemies, as if a Solomon, a Hiram, a St. John, or a Washington raised his hands before a wondering world, and exclaimed:—
"My life for his!" Light, liberty and virtue forever!

I bring this appeal before my native State for the solemn reason that an injury has been done, and crimes have been committed, which a sovereign State, of the Federal compact, one of the great family of "*E pluribus unum*," refuses to compensate, by consent of parties, rules of law, customs of nations, or in any other way: I bring it also, because the national Government has fallen short of affording the necessary relief as before stated *for want of power*, leaving a large body of her own free citizens, whose wealth went freely into her treasury for lands, and whose gold and silver for taxes, still fills the pockets of her dignitaries, "in ermine and lace," defrauded, robbed, mobbed, plundered, ravished, driven, exiled and banished from the "Independent Republic of Missouri!"

And in this appeal let me say: raise your towers; pile your monuments to the skies; build your steam frigates; spread yourselves far and wide, and open the iron eyes of your bulwarks by sea and land; and let the towering church steeples, marshal the country like the "dreadful splendor" of an army with bayonets: but remember the flood of Noah; remember the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah; remember the dispersion and confusion at the Tower of Babel; remember the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts; remember the hand writing upon the wall, *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*; remember the angels visit to Sennacherib and the 185,000 Assyrians; remember the end of the

Jews and Jerusalem; and remember the Lord Almighty will avenge the blood of his Saints that now crimson the skirts of Missouri! Shall wisdom cry aloud and not her speech be heard?

Has the majesty of American liberty sunk into such vile servitude and oppression, that justice has fled? Has the glory and influence of a Washington, an Adams, a Jefferson, a Lafayette, and a host of others forever departed,—and the wrath of a Cain, a Judas, and a Nero whirled forth in the heraldry of hell, to sprinkle our garments with blood; and lighten the darkness of midnight, with the blaze of our dwellings? Where is the patriotism of '76? Where is the virtue of our forefathers? and where is the sacred honor of freemen?

Must we, because we believe in the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ; the administration of angels, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, like the prophets and apostles of old,—must we be mobed with impunity—be exiled from our habitations and property without remedy; murdered without mercy, —and government find the weapons, and pay the vagabonds for doing the jobs, and give them the plunder into the bargain? Must we, because we believe in enjoying the constitutional privilege and right of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own consciences; and because we believe in repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins; the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands; the resurrection of the dead; the millenium; the day of judgment; and the Book of Mormon as the history of the aborigines of this continent,—must we be expelled from the institutions of our country; the rights of citizenship, and the graves of our friends and brethren, and the government lock the gate of humanity, and shut the door of redress against us?—if so, fare well freedom; adieu to personal safety,—and let the red hot wrath of an offended God purify the nation of such sinks of corruption! For that realm is hurrying to ruin where vice has the power to expel virtue.

My father, who stood, several times in the battles of the American Revolution, till his companions, in arms, had been shot dead, at his feet, was forced from his home in Far West, Missouri, by those civilized, or satanized savages, in the dreary season of winter, to seek a shelter in another State; and the vicissitudes and sufferings consequent to his flight, brought his honored grey head to the grave, a few months after. And my youngest brother, also, in the vigor and bloom of youth, from his great exposure and fatigue in endeavoring to assist his parents on their journey, (I and my brother Hyrum being in chains, in dungeons—*where they tried to feed us upon human flesh*—in Missouri,) was likewise so debilitated that he found a premature grave shortly after my father. And my mother, too, though she yet lingers among us, from her extreme exposure in that dreadful tragedy, was filled with rheumatic affections and other diseases, which leaves her no enjoyment of health. She is sinking in grief and pain, broken hearted, from Missouri persecution.

O death! wilt thou not give to every honest man, a *heated dart to sting* those wretches while they pollute the land? and O grave! wilt thou not open the *trap door to the pit* of ungodly men, that they may stumble in?

I appeal to the "Green Mountain Boys" of my native State, to rise in the majesty of virtuous freemen, and by all honorable means help bring Missouri to the bar of justice. If there is one whisper from the spirit of an Ethan Allen; or a gleam from the shade of a Gen. Stark, let it mingle with

our sense of honor, and fire our bosoms for the cause of suffering innocèce,—for the reputation of our disgraced country, and for the glory of God: and may all the earth bear me witness, if Missouri, blood stained Missouri;—escapes the due demerit of her crimes, the vengeance she so justly deserves, that Vermont is a hypocrite—a coward—and this nation the hot bed of political demagogues !

I make this appeal to the sons of liberty of my native State for help, to frustrate the wicked designs of sinful men; I make it to hush the violence of mobs; I make it to cope with the unhallowed influence of wicked men in high places; I make it to resent the insult and injury made to an innocent, unoffending people, by a lawless ruffian State; I make it to obtain justice where law is put at defiance; I make it to wipe off the stain of blood from our nation's escutcheon; I make it to show presidents, governors and rulers, prudence; I make it to fill honorable men with discretion; I make it teach senators wisdom; I make it to learn judges justice; I make it to point clergymen to the path of virtue;—and I make it to turn the hearts of this nation to the truth and realities of pure and undefiled religion, that they may escape the perdition of ungodly men; and Jesus Christ, the son of God, is my Great Counsellor.

Wherefore let the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble, the poor and the needy, the bond and the free, both black and white, take heed to their ways, and cleave to the knowledge of God; and execute justice and judgment upon the earth in righteousness; and prepare to meet the judge of the quick and the dead, for the hour of his coming is nigh.

And I must go on as the herald of grace,
Till the wide-spreading conflict is over,
And burst through the curtains of tyrannic night.
Yea, I must go on to gather our race,
Till the high blazing flame of Jehovah,
Illumines the globe as a triumph of right.

As a friend of equal rights to all men, and a messenger of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ,

I have the honor to be,
Your devoted servant,

JOSEPH SMITH. }

Nauvoo, Ill. }
December, 1843. }
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