

# Brigham Young's Word of Wisdom Legacy

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**D**uring the thirty-three years that Brigham Young led The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1844–77, he set the Church on a course of following the Word of Wisdom to the letter. While most Church members failed to obey the revelation's proscriptions during Brigham's lifetime, he set the goal that members would eventually comply with the Word of Wisdom. During his tenure, he changed the standard from moderate use of tobacco, alcohol, tea, and coffee to full abstinence.

This important chapter in the history of the Word of Wisdom has several subtexts. It reveals President Young's personality and leadership style. It also suggests a social trend and incremental progress. Like Americans and western Europeans generally, the men and women of President Young's era were refining themselves and their society—slowly and fitfully, perhaps, and certainly not as quickly as President Young hoped.

Despite the lag between the rhetoric and the reality, the change in practice was eventually complete enough that many of today's Church members might look back on pioneer-day Word of Wisdom observance with surprise and disbelief. This article presents an examination of Brigham's role in the elevation of Word of Wisdom compliance in hopes that this information will help readers understand the difficulties he faced in changing the personal habits of the growing Church membership.<sup>1</sup>

## **Initial Word of Wisdom Interpretations**

The Brigham Young era began with an easy tolerance about Word of Wisdom compliance that reflected both the flexible wording of Joseph Smith's revelation and the social norms of the nineteenth century. Given to

the Church in February 1833, the health code revelation came not by way of “commandment or constraint” but as a voluntary “greeting.” In short, it was an invitation (literally a “word of [divine] wisdom”) that promised Church members “temporal” blessings (physical and perhaps monetary advantages) as well as spiritual insight (“wisdom” and “knowledge”). To gain these gifts, the Saints were asked to forego “wine or strong drink,” tobacco when taken internally instead of as a healing herb, and “hot drinks.” These prohibitions were matched by a series of prescriptions—suggestions of foods that might be ideally eaten. For instance, the revelation urged a diet of vegetables (“herbs”), fruits, grains, and a little meat, although more meat was allowed in “famine” and cold weather.<sup>2</sup>

At first glance, the revelation appeared to be a mild advisory that left the use of the prohibited and prescribed items to the judgment of Church members. However, elements of the Word of Wisdom revelation also suggested a stricter view. While the revelation was offered as advice, could a conscientious Saint set aside any word of God? After all, the health code was a *divine* instruction. Moreover, the revelation contained words that seemed inclusive. It was intended for the “weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints”—categories that came close to suggesting a universal application.<sup>3</sup>

In truth, Church members did not immediately receive consistent, unequivocal direction from prophetic figures relative to how certain specific verses were to be interpreted and/or implemented. Could the prescribed items be used “moderately”—with restraint—or did members have to abstain from them? How much attention should they give to the prescribed foods? Were these to become the bulk of their diet? And there were hard questions about duty and conscience. If the Word of Wisdom was more than a health code—if it also had a moral or religious duty attached to it—the revelation might require a greater obedience. Finally, how insistent would the Church be about obedience? Would following the Word of Wisdom become a matter of Church discipline, perhaps requiring the names of the wayward to be taken from Church rolls? Or would compliance be left to each man and woman? The Latter-day Saint concept of agency had to be considered. Since none of these questions and issues were fully answered by the 1833 Word of Wisdom revelation, Church leaders and members would need time and experience to sort them out.

The vagueness of the wording of the Word of Wisdom actually may have been an advantage to the fledgling Church. Because the revelation sought to reform embedded drinking and dietary habits (and the social traditions on which these habits were based), the revelation might have foundered had its full application been sudden or strict, and the early

Church itself could have lost its cohesion and focus. The abolition of alcohol, especially, posed a difficult challenge, for eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Americans were drinkers on a scale that can scarcely be imagined today.

### **Early American Drinking, Tobacco Use, and Diet**

In the colonial era, most men drank, as did a fair number of women and children. Alcohol supplemented bland diets, helped as a relaxant for anxiety, and served as medication for colds, snake bites, and broken limbs. Drink provided uplift at parties, military drills, and community projects such as house-raising.<sup>4</sup> “Freer was its use than water by the human species,” said one temperance author.<sup>5</sup> Americans would drink from dawn to dusk, at breakfast and dinner, with friends or alone.<sup>6</sup>

The four decades between 1790 and 1830 saw the heaviest per capita alcohol consumption in the nation’s history, as the dark brews, fermented wines, and distilled rum of the colonial era gave way to the hard cider and especially to the hard whiskey of the new republic. Annual per capita consumption of alcohol for Americans over the age of fourteen rose from an estimated 5.8 gallons in 1790 to 7.1 gallons in the first third of the nineteenth century—more than three times the drinking level of Americans near the end of the twentieth century.<sup>7</sup>

Excessive drinking—perhaps the United States’s most serious preventable public health problem of the time—was not the only issue addressed by the Word of Wisdom. Disease resulting from the use of tobacco also was a growing public health problem. In addition to smoking cigars and pipes, Americans sniffed or chewed snuff (finely pulverized tobacco).<sup>8</sup> Chewing tobacco, an American innovation that mixed tobacco and molasses, was a social staple. Stains of dark-colored spittle covered the floors in most public places; well-mannered people could do little but complain and hope for better times.<sup>9</sup> While the early-nineteenth-century incidence of tobacco use is difficult to estimate, clearly tobacco was used by many men as well as by some women. The Saints were no exception; when Joseph Smith first presented his Word of Wisdom revelation to a group of twenty-two men at Kirtland, Ohio (fig. 1), twenty were using tobacco.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, there was a growing feeling that Americans might improve their diet. The popular and possibly most influential food reformer in the 1830s, Sylvester Graham (famous for the “Graham cracker”), voiced concern not only about alcohol and tobacco but also about such things as coffee, tea, pepper, mustard, and “every other kind of artificial stimulants and narcotics.”<sup>11</sup>



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FIG. 1. An upper room in Newel K. Whitney's Kirtland, Ohio, store. On February 27, 1833, Joseph received the revelation know as the Word of Wisdom at an assembly of brethren in this room.

Obviously, the Word of Wisdom came in a time of widespread health and social reform. Alcohol reformers had first raised their voices before the end of the eighteenth century, and their cries grew as the quantity of spirits used by the American public rose. The year 1826 saw the organization of the American Temperance Society, which urged abstinence rather than moderation as the most feasible way to end the national binge. This national organization in turn led to the establishment of hundreds of local societies, which were especially numerous in the Western Reserve of Ohio, where Joseph Smith received his Word of Wisdom revelation.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, the day before Joseph Smith received the revelation, temperance societies throughout the United States engaged in a special campaign. "A whole nation," wrote a journalist in the *New York Temperance Recorder*, "called up its energies, and the cry . . . was heard reverberating from hill to hill and from vale to vale."<sup>13</sup>

Many Americans, particularly religious evangelicals, worried about the social conditions of the new republic. While the colonial population may have drunk a great deal, public behavior had been controlled by restraining ideals and institutions that placed a premium on social order and virtue. As a result, drinking, particularly in the New England colonies, had been "orderly" and private. However, by the end of the eighteenth century and

beginning of the nineteenth, these old controls began to loosen, and many “traditional” Americans grew alarmed at the public display of drinking and the resulting social disorder.<sup>14</sup>

### The Early Church and the Word of Wisdom

Brigham Young was influenced by the Mormons’ experience with the health code before he became the President of the Church. At best, early Word of Wisdom observance had a checkered history. It is true that some voices in Ohio urged complete abstinence. “Have not the authorities of the church in council assembled in this place, decided deliberately and positively,” wrote a Church editorialist at Kirtland in 1837, “that if any official members of this church shall violate or in any wise disregard the words of wisdom which the Lord has given for the benefit of his saints, he shall lose his office?”<sup>15</sup>

Such strict views led to turmoil and schism in Missouri,<sup>16</sup> and by the time the Church established its headquarters at Nauvoo, Joseph Smith declined to enforce a policy of abstinence. After one Church elder preached a long sermon that enjoined the Saints to “sanctity, solemnity, and temperance in the extreme, in the rigid sectarian style,” Joseph reproved him for being “pharisaical and hypocritical and [for] not edifying the people.” Later that evening, a Church council concluded “that a forced abstinence was not making us free but we should be under bondage with a yoke [*sic*] upon our necks.”<sup>17</sup> The decision apparently reflected the Latter-day Saint ideals of personal conscience and forbearance as well as the reality that an enforced compliance might tear the social fabric of the Church.

However, at Kirtland and at Nauvoo, the first-generation Mormons insisted that their towns be orderly and filled with virtue. A visiting Methodist preacher named Prior expressed astonishment at not seeing “loungers about the streets nor any drunkards about [their] taverns,”<sup>18</sup> while the *Hancock Eagle* called the city of Nauvoo “a Benighted Region,” lamenting that “from the centre to the circumference of the city, . . . a glass of ardent spirits cannot be *purchased* at any price” (*italics in original*).<sup>19</sup> While the newspaper perhaps exaggerated, it suggested a policy that Brigham Young reaffirmed upon becoming the Church leader in 1844. Said an official letter of the Quorum of the Twelve, sent out several months after Joseph Smith’s death, “To be plain . . . we wish to suppress all grogshops, gambling houses, and all other disorderly houses or proceedings in our city, and to tolerate no intemperance or vice in our midst.”<sup>20</sup>

**Observance on the Trail.** When, in January 1847, Brigham Young issued his only canonized revelation—section 136 of the Doctrine and

Covenants—the theme of intemperance was once more touched upon. The revelation, meant to list the procedures and standards of the Latter-day Saint migration to the Great Basin, included an admonition to the Saints to cease their “drunkenness” (D&C 136:23–24). Church leaders tried to control drinking at Winter Quarters by giving the bishops exclusive right to sell alcohol; illegal vendors nevertheless sold enough drink to cause “very prevelent” drunkenness and disorderly noise. A police sweep netted five barrels of contraband in a single day, resulting in rage and defiance from some of the moonshiners.<sup>21</sup> But Brigham hoped for an even greater reformation. In March 1847, as the pioneer camp was about to go west, he spoke about making the Word of Wisdom a test of fellowship. While sickness might bring the use of a “cup of tea or a little sp[irits],” Brigham urged that the Saints generally put aside their whiskey and tobacco. They would see, he said, “who is King, tobacco or the man.” There was a measure of self-inspection in his statement. “If I was not afflicted with chewing [tobacco],” he told the Saints, “I should be just right” with the Word of Wisdom.<sup>22</sup>

To show abnegation, Brigham urged the Saints to substitute for their ten-pound trail ration of coffee, which was a luxury, additional basic flour<sup>23</sup> (fig. 2). Few Saints did so. At the very least, they regarded tea and especially coffee as staples for their trip to the Great Basin, and many also used tobacco.<sup>24</sup> In fact, according to one report, the Church members, fearing a short supply of these commodities, stocked up on them before leaving the Midwest.<sup>25</sup> This relaxed stance toward Word of Wisdom observance characterized Mormon gathering efforts for much of the century. Abraham O. Smoot, later a Salt Lake City bishop and stake president in Utah County, recalled that around their campfires Latter-day Saint pioneers often drank tea and coffee and used tobacco.<sup>26</sup>

**Regulation in Early Utah.** Once in the West, President Young saw just how heavily the realities of pioneering in Utah weighed upon the Saints: there were more pressing demands upon his Saints than meeting head-on their ingrained drinking and preconversion dietary habits. However, he refused to yield on the single item that he believed to be the most serious Word of Wisdom violation: immoderate drinking leading to public inebriation. Upon learning that William Tubbs was bringing whiskey into the newly founded Great Salt Lake City community, Brigham ordered the seizure of the liquor. In 1849, Tubbs was tried and excommunicated from the Church for speaking evil against the Presidency.<sup>27</sup>

But such action hardly stopped the manufacture of “home brew.” It was common enough that in 1849 Church leaders ruled that those using much-needed corn to make whiskey were subject to having their grain

taken from them and given to the poor.<sup>28</sup> In the next several years, Brigham established a virtual Church monopoly on liquor distribution.<sup>29</sup> Further, in February 1851, newly appointed Utah Territorial Governor Brigham Young approved an ordinance of the local general assembly stipulating that only the governor could issue licenses to manufacture ardent spirits.<sup>30</sup> Such a policy was not uniquely Mormon. Civil licenses to make and sell alcoholic beverages, present since colonial times, were being used increasingly by United States temperance workers to control consumption.<sup>31</sup>

### Redefining the Word of Wisdom

Brigham's sermons indicate that the hope of a more faithful Word of Wisdom observance never seemed far from his mind. One of his April 1850 general conference sermons began to define the issue of proper observance. To obey the health code, he said, the Saints must "quit drinking whiskey and leave off using so much tobacco, tea, and coffee,"<sup>32</sup> although several months later he good-naturedly offered to delay for a year any sanction on chewing tobacco if the Saints would support the Church's emigration program.<sup>33</sup> By the end of the year, however, he seemed willing to

BILL OF PARTICULARS FOR THE EMIGRANTS LEAVING THIS GOVERNMENT NEXT SPRING.	
Each family consisting of five persons, to be provided with	
1 good strong wagon, well covered with a light box.	25 do Seed grain,
2 or 3 good yoke of oxen between the age of 4 and 10 years.	1 gal. Alcohol,
2 or more milch cows.	20 lbs of Soap each family,
1 or more good beeves.	4 or 5 Fish hooks and lines for do.
3 sheep if they can be obtained.	15 lbs. Iron and Steel.
1000 lbs. of flour or other bread or bread stuffs in good sacks.	A few-lbs of wrought nails,
1 good musket or rifle to each male over the age of 12 years.	One or more sets of saw or grist mill Irons to company of 100 families,
1 lb. Powder,	2 sets of Pully Blocks and ropes to each co'y for crossing rivers,
4 do Lead,	1 good Seine and hook for each company,
1 do Tea,	From 25 to 100 lbs of Farming & mechanical tools,
5 do Coffee.	Cooking utensils to consist of a Bake kettle, frying pan, coffee pot, & tea kettle;
100 do Sugar,	Tin cups, plates, knives forks, spoons, & pans as few as will do.
1 do Cayenne Pepper,	A good tent and furniture to each 2 families.
2 do Black do,	Clothing & bedding to each family not to exceed 500 pounds.
4 do Mustard,	Ten extra teams for each company of 100 families.
10 do Rice for each family,	
1 do Cinnamon,	
4 do Cloves,	
1 doz Nutmegs,	
25 lbs Salt,	
5 do Saleratus,	
10 do Dried apples.	
4 bush. of Beans.	
A few lbs of dried Beef or Bacon,	
5 lbs dried Peaches,	
20 do do Pumpkin,	
N. B. In addition to the above list, horse and mule teams, can be used as well as oxen. Many items of comfort and convenience will suggest themselves to a wise and provident people, and can be laid in in season; but none should start without filling the original bill.	

FIG. 2. "Bill of Particulars," ca. 1847. Shown in this list are items recommended for Saints to take with them across the plains. Brigham urged Saints who were journeying to Utah to substitute extra flour for their ration of tea and coffee.

mount a serious Word of Wisdom campaign. On December 15, 1850, he told a private meeting of Church leaders that he “thought [it] best to renew the word of wisdom,”<sup>34</sup> and two weeks later the Church’s *Deseret News* published an editorial that declared the time had come for members to decide if the health code was “sent forth in the wisdom of heaven, or in the folly of man.”<sup>35</sup> That same month, Brigham complained that the Saints did not know what was good for them and spoke of their unfortunate desire for tobacco, alcohol, tea, and coffee.<sup>36</sup> These commodities were luxuries that agitated the nervous system and caused an early death, he believed.<sup>37</sup>

Brigham’s preaching may have had to do with the Christmas–New Year social season, which in *Deseret*—like elsewhere—began a round of parties that often included drinking. Further temperance preaching was put on hold for the next few months, as Brigham was appointed territorial governor and devoted his attention to setting up the new government.

**The September 1851 Conference.** Events of the September 1851 general conference are often regarded as a watershed in the history of the Word of Wisdom.<sup>38</sup> On the third day of the conference, Patriarch John Smith urged the men to “leave off using tobacco &c.”<sup>39</sup> After Smith’s fervent plea, W. W. Phelps presented a motion (perhaps uttered from his seat in the podium area) that the Saints lay aside their use of tea, coffee, tobacco, and snuff.<sup>40</sup> Apparently, Brigham Young then “rose to put the motion [to the people] and called on all the sisters who will leave the use of tea, coffee, &c., to manifest it by raising the right hand.” One vote in opposition was recorded. Brigham, in a second vote, then called “on all the boys who were under *ninety* years of age who would covenant to leave off the use of tobacco, whisky, and all things mentioned in the Word of Wisdom, to manifest it in the same manner” (*italics in original*). Again, there was one dissenting vote.<sup>41</sup> Patriarch Smith then uttered a brief encouragement: “May the Lord bless you and help you to keep all your covenants.”<sup>42</sup>

Stirred by these spontaneous events, Brigham continued:

I will draw the line and know who is for the Lord and who is not, and those who will not keep the Word of Wisdom, I will cut off from the Church; I throw out a challenge to all men and women. Have I not always counselled you right? I would rather you would cut me into inch pieces, than to flinch from my duty, the Lord being my helper.<sup>43</sup>

The conference concluded the following morning, on Wednesday. Once more the Word of Wisdom was preached, and it was apparently in this session that President Young expressed his regret that the pioneers had spent an estimated fifty thousand dollars on tea, coffee, and tobacco, in his mind a misuse of resources and a negation of the Word of Wisdom’s promise of temporal or monetary blessing.



It had been a stirring conference with a temporal focus. When the Church issued its Sixth General Epistle, the conference report that summarized major events and teaching, President Young gave the Word of Wisdom equal billing with tithing, a major theme of the conference. The epistle reported that the conference had voted to “commence anew the tithings and consecrations” of Church members while at the same time voting “to observe the words of wisdom, and particularly to dispense with the use of tea, coffee, snuff, and tobacco.”<sup>44</sup> The epistle’s failure to mention alcohol may be noteworthy. The items named in the epistle were imported from the East and therefore drained the territory of scarce money. In contrast, most alcoholic beverages were locally produced, which allowed resources to remain in Utah. The possibility of a financial motive is strengthened by a close reading of the various diaries and minutes of the September conference; they, too, appear to give emphasis to prohibitions of imported products.

When the fall general conference of the Church reconvened in October 1851, Brigham began by expressing views that went beyond a pecuniary utility of the Word of Wisdom. He spoke of the decisions made in September as “productive of more good than any Conference we ever held” and specifically pointed to action taken regarding the Word of Wisdom. Brigham believed that in due time the Saints would begin to realize that their understanding of Joseph Smith’s revelation had been meager. He also hoped to expand Word of Wisdom teaching. “We are forbidden to eat meat in hot weather,” he reminded the Saints, and he asked them not to overload their stomachs.<sup>45</sup>

**The September 1851 Conference in Review.** Church leaders would later refer to the September 1851 conference as the point in time when Joseph Smith’s revelation was accepted by the members of the Church as a binding commandment.<sup>46</sup> However, little evidence exists that Brigham himself regarded this September conference as a pivotal event in Word of Wisdom reform. Certainly, he took no steps, then or later, to make full compliance a membership test for either Church leaders or the members in general.<sup>47</sup> And there is no record of other Church leaders in President Young’s lifetime using the 1851 September conference as a text. In short, the Saints seemed to have understood that while “Brother Brigham” had taken a firm stance on obeying the revelation, his celebrated (and often exaggerated) pulpit language—in this case using the threat of excommunication for non-observers—reached beyond his actual policy. Utah Territory, like several U.S. states that adopted laws of statutory prohibition in the 1850s, seemed willing to express the ideal of suppressing drink, but with no

immediate or realistic ability or process of doing so. The prevailing social condition defied simple or instantaneous solutions.

A clearer indication of President Young's policy was contained in private letters sent to local Church and civic leaders responsible for local conditions. One of the fullest of these letters was written in November 1852 to Lorin Farr, who presided over the Ogden Valley settlements. Brigham wanted a rational, controlled use of alcohol:

For washings, and medicinal purposes, spirituous liquors are useful and necessary, yet the blessing which they are designed to bestow upon the human race, is so often and so shamefully abused, that many good and conscientious people would deny themselves the blessing of its use, and entirely exclude it, from society; but this is not right, and this people must learn to govern and control all things in righteousness.<sup>48</sup>

When the Saints made these decisions individually, Brigham hoped that they would learn to “govern and control all things in righteousness.” It was this point that had led him while a youth to refuse his father's request that he take the temperance pledge. “No, sir,” said I, ‘if I sign the temperance pledge I feel that I am bound, and I wish to do just right, without being bound to do it; I want my liberty’; and I have conceived from my youth up that I could have my liberty and independence just as much in doing right as I could in doing wrong.”<sup>49</sup>

### Attempts at Social Control

In his November 1852 letter to Lorin Farr, Brigham also expressed views about individuals who made and sold alcohol:

Whoever should undertake to distill liquors, or deal in them, must expect so soon as it is discovered that their business is becoming a bane to society, that it will summarily be dispensed with, like any other nuisance; be abated entirely, at the expense of the owners, or those engaged in its manufacture, or sale, or traffic[.] I am determined not to tolerate drunkenness and shops, but will smash them up wherever I can find them, anywhere in the Territory, as I shall have power and influence with the people. Yet did I not believe in always being beholden to our enemies for that article, or else having to do without it. You will therefore discover that I am highly in favor of its manufacture, as I am in favor of all other manufacture for the good of the people.<sup>50</sup>

Brigham's counsel conformed to Utah precedents. Shortly after arriving in the Great Basin, Church authorities adopted a policy of limited but officially sanctioned alcohol production. “The foundation for the City Brewery is in the course of erection, and we shall be happy to see it completed,” opined the *Deseret News* in late summer 1850. With the prospect of

an “abundant” crop of hops being realized, the newspaper held out the hope that “those who enjoy the gathering of Hops can now resume their pleasure parties.”<sup>51</sup> That fall “a new distillery [was] in operation on a very small scale.”<sup>52</sup> In 1852 the city had granted “brother Moon” the exclusive right of making liquor in the city and tried to close the other operating distilleries.<sup>53</sup>

Apparently, the move to close Salt Lake City’s distilleries proved ineffectual or troubling, and Brigham himself eventually established what he later described as “one of the best stills in this territory,” perhaps to better control the manufacture and sale of a product that Brigham continued to believe had some limited virtue. “I never permitted any [alcohol] to be made only for the use and benefit of the people,” he explained.

Some have been for tying up the mouths of the people so they shall not drink. I never was in favor of this course, only in case of our not being agents to ourselves. If I keep a bottle containing spirits to mix with a little camphore & wash my body with, or to administer to any of my family that may be sick I am not obliged to drink it, neither are you. It is good for the washing of the body, and for medicine to apply in many cases of sickness and in health. [Now] I do not wish a law made making it fineable for a person making a drop of liquor, neither do I wish to give license to sell it to a man to drink it.<sup>54</sup>

Yet enough liquor was being produced and consumed in the city to cause President Young to become alarmed. In 1852 he complained that some men were making “perfect swill tubs” of themselves, cursing and swearing in the city’s “Beer shops” and walking unsteadily in the streets.<sup>55</sup> Brigham accused some “Elders of Israel”—men who had “done much good” and who were “firm in the faith”—of descending to “the poor miserable state of a drunkard.” “You meet them in the streets so drunk they do not know where they are,” said the Church leader, yet they say that they “believe Mormonism” with all their hearts.<sup>56</sup>

As elsewhere in the United States, Utah was reaping the result of several generations of excessive and addictive drinking, which seemed to grow worse in the frontier West.<sup>57</sup> It was small comfort to Brigham Young that local conditions were “not so bad” as in other western settlements. “Hearken who are the persons living here?” he said in rejoinder. “How came this City into existence?” Saints were expected to do better.<sup>58</sup>

By late 1854, the arrival in Utah of 160 soldiers and 130 civilian auxiliaries under the command of Colonel Edward J. Steptoe prodded another attempt to assert social control. Steptoe and his men had been sent west to reconnoiter a military road to California but remained in Utah during winter 1854/55.<sup>59</sup> While the men were probably not any more rowdy than most barracked

soldiers, Steptoe, recognizing the danger of social unrest, asked President Young's help in making the incendiary of drink less easily available.<sup>60</sup>

The request created a dilemma; Salt Lake City was torn between conflicting ideals. There remained the question of "liberty" and Mormon uneasiness about dictating social conditions, including to non-Latter-day Saints. "We are no advocates for curtailing any person's reasonable agency," said the *Deseret News*. "It is not strong drink, but the misuse of it which we deprecate."<sup>61</sup> Eventually, the Mormons settled on a policy of revoking the liquor retail licenses that once had been liberally allowed.<sup>62</sup> On November 18, 1854, Brigham told territorial judge Zerubbabel Snow to stop selling liquor. "On the account of the increase of drunkenness in this city, and the natural evils resulting therefrom, which far outweigh all profits accruing," President Young wrote, "I hereby request that, upon the receipt of this note you cease entirely from selling whiskey or any intoxicating liquor to any person whatever, when the design of the buyer is to use it for a beverage," adding "a strict compliance with this request will much oblige the [non-alcoholic] cider-loving portion of our citizens."<sup>63</sup>

At a Sabbath worship meeting held the day after Brigham's instruction to Snow to cease selling liquor, each member of the First Presidency preached against the liquor traffic and drunkenness. Brigham ordered the cessation of breweries and drinking. Second Counselor Jedediah Grant, who also served as Salt Lake City mayor, told the Saints to quit sending petitions for grogeries to the city council. "I feel they [are] a part of hell and ought to be salted [dumped] in the [Great] Salt Lake," he said.<sup>64</sup>

The First Presidency campaign against drunkenness and unwise and unlawful liquor distribution continued through 1854 and well into the following year. Speaking to the Saints in the Old Tabernacle on November 26, 1854, First Counselor Heber C. Kimball spoke of seeing the armies of heaven in a vision. The army consisted of righteous Saints—those who "will not sell whisky, stick up [build] grogeries, and establish distilleries."<sup>65</sup> A few days later, Brigham wrote to his son Joseph A. Young, then serving a proselyting mission, that with only one exception all members possessing liquor licenses had responded positively to Kimball's forthright warning to return them or be cut off from the Church.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Brigham likely closed his distillery at this time, believing that he could no longer control the use of the spirits that it produced.<sup>67</sup>

However, Salt Lake City's attempt to control the liquor traffic failed to prevent several army-related incidents. Two days before Christmas, a drunken U.S. trooper attending a Social Hall drama began a "considerable *melee*" between "quite a number of soldiers" and an equal number of

Mormon boys.<sup>68</sup> On Christmas day, things turned more serious. “Drunken soldiers” provoked a clash on Salt Lake City’s Main Street (nicknamed “Hell-Street” or “Whiskey-Street” because of its growing reputation for disorder) by making belittling remarks about nearby Mormon ladies. Mormon men picked up the challenge, and a “*regular melee*” broke out. The outmanned soldiers fired five rounds from their guns, apparently to warn off their opponents. The Mormons ran to their homes for their weapons, and a “general engagement” was stopped only by the firm action of Steptoe’s officers and the city’s police.<sup>69</sup>

On February 3, 1855, Brigham responded to Zerubbabel Snow’s refusal to close up his liquor trade. “I do not wish any more spirits distilled in this place or its vicinity,” Brigham wrote in a clearly rising temper. Liquor’s “effects upon society when it is used as an intoxicating drink is so injurious that the benefits derived from it as a medicine will not justify this community in tolerating its manufacture.”<sup>70</sup> By early spring 1855, liquor was apparently relatively difficult to come by. “We can[']t have beer or whiskey to drink because of the devilish Saints who don[']t know how to use it,” deplored Salt Lake bishop Edward D. Woolley. “I like it a little myself but can[']t get it now.”<sup>71</sup> The ideal that most Mormons continued to uphold was the moderate or rational use of alcohol—if only other Mormons could be wise in their conduct.

### Higher Word of Wisdom Standards for Youth

The Mormons’ drive to control liquor distribution and use in 1854–55 was not their only Word of Wisdom initiative in the middle 1850s. Brigham Young and other Church leaders took steps to expand the observance of the health code to the rising generation. If not the older folk, Church leaders reasoned, perhaps the youth might reject the unhappy and unholy legacies of their parents and grandparents. This fervent hope came to characterize President Young’s administration.

On July 24, 1854, Brigham Young asked young men to forego the drinking of alcohol and to “also make a covenant with yourselves that no more of that filthy, nasty, and obnoxious weed called tobacco shall enter your mouths; it is a disgrace to this, and every other community.”<sup>72</sup> Parents had an excuse; they had been born in an age that had supported these traditions. On the other hand, Latter-day Saint youth had grown up in the Church, which proscribed the use of such substances, and, as a result, the young people should realize how harmful such substances could be.<sup>73</sup> That same day, Brigham spoke to children who gathered for the annual

Pioneer Day festivity. After speaking about mothers who give their children wine, tea, and coffee, Brigham counseled the young girls assembled there to “never be guilty of such practices when you become mothers.”<sup>74</sup>

In April 1855, President Young again counseled young men to obey the Word of Wisdom. “If the ‘old fogies’ take a little tobacco, a little whisky, or a little tea and coffee,” he said, “we wish you boys to let it alone, and let those have it who have long been accustomed to its use. It is far better for these my brethren, who are young and healthy, to avoid every injurious habit.”<sup>75</sup>

President Young’s advice had a second meaning: Although the youth should avoid the Word of Wisdom’s banned items, they must have patience with their parents. These were good people who had contracted their habits in an earlier, laxer era. His advice to Elder Orson Hyde, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and then the head of the Latter-day Saint community at present-day Carson City, Nevada, was typical of Brigham’s approach to the Church’s older generation. “Concerning tobacco,” he wrote Hyde, “make yourself comfortable by chewing and smoking all you wish until you come home, and then we will talk it over.”<sup>76</sup>

### Relative Temperance

It is difficult to gauge the effect of Salt Lake City’s temperance campaign in the middle 1850s with its corollary cautions to Mormon youth about the use of tobacco, tea, and coffee. Most observers of the time, Gentile as well as Mormon, noted that the Mormons used the Word of Wisdom proscribed items, but in a moderate way that left the city orderly. Traveler William Chandless, after eating dinner with a Mormon family in 1855, commented on the absence of tea and coffee but observed that, although the Saints had a health code, this was the only family he had seen “that while rich enough to disobey, followed the advice.”<sup>77</sup> Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, European observers who were also in the city in 1855, noted that moderate use, not abstinence, was the ideal. “Although there are neither grog-shops nor dealers in any kind of drinks to be met with,” wrote Remy,

it does not necessarily follow that the Saints refrain from the moderate use of spirituous or fermented liquors. No command compels them to reject certain productions of nature or of art. . . . The more fervent do abstain with this view, but occasionally they make no scruple of the moderate use of drink.<sup>78</sup>

Remy and Brenchley thought that the Mormons were more temperate than most societies and that they used coffee and tea less often than other staples. Moreover, “the majority abstain from fermented or spirituous

liquors, either voluntarily and from motives of temperance, or on account of their poverty.” Regarding tobacco, “they chew [it] more than they smoke it; this vile habit, however, is less usual among them than in other parts of the Union.”<sup>79</sup>

These comments are borne out by the era’s tests of Church orthodoxy. Abstaining from Word of Wisdom proscriptions was not included in a list of rules that President Young issued to bishops in 1856 to screen men and women to receive the high ordinance of the endowment.<sup>80</sup> Nor was abstaining one of the tests of membership used in the famed Mormon Reformation of 1856–57. During this general “call to repentance,” Church leaders used pulpit preaching and a wide-ranging catechism to examine personal behavior and to spur the Saints to better works. While the catechism had more than two dozen questions, only one had to do with the Word of Wisdom; predictably, it was, “Have you been intoxicated with strong drink?”<sup>81</sup> In sum, only drunkenness had achieved Word of Wisdom taboo status, and probably only repeated public drunkenness might place a man or a woman’s membership at risk.

The 1850s, then, had seen important Word of Wisdom events. The health code had been officially reaffirmed by the 1851 general conference, although impulsively and with little follow-up at the time. Moreover, the temperance drive of 1854–55 with its corollary of youth observance had restored city order and suggested rules for the new generation. These events as well as the Saints’ general tendency toward temperance produced a society that was, especially for the freewheeling West, relatively stable and well ordered. As the *Deseret News* suggested in an editorial in the middle 1850s, it was the actions of a comparative few that caused consternation—“a few whisky and beer sellers, and . . . a small sprinkling of drunkards and rowdies.”<sup>82</sup> Generally, the Mormons were doing well with the main Word of Wisdom health problem of the time—alcohol drinking—at least in a relative sense.

### **Financial Concerns and the Word of Wisdom**

Throughout the 1850s and into the 1860s, the financial costs of not observing the Word of Wisdom were a concern for Brigham. In 1855, Brigham told Provo Saints that women should quit buying tea and coffee. “I’ll take \$125,000 and it will not pay for tea and coffee brought in [the last] ten months,” he claimed. “Give me the [cash spent by the Saints on tea and coffee], and I will bring the Saints from England, who are starving for food.”<sup>83</sup> In 1859, with Brigham’s approval, the *Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society* studied ways to cultivate tobacco locally as a countermeasure to

importing it.<sup>84</sup> In the same vein, the *Deseret News* decried that “thousands of dollars annually leave our Territory for tobacco, an article which can be easily raised in every settlement in the mountains, and we have plenty of citizens skilled in its manufacture.” The newspaper listed the best varieties of tobacco to use, the proper soil to plant it in, and sundry other items dealing with its preparation and care.<sup>85</sup>

These concerns seemed to grow in the early 1860s as the likelihood of an American civil war loomed, an eventuality that Brigham thought might signal the end of political and economic ties with the East.<sup>86</sup> “You know that we all profess to believe the ‘Word of Wisdom,’” Brigham preached in early 1861. “We, as Latter-day Saints, care but little about tobacco; but as ‘Mormons,’ we use a vast quantity of it. As Saints, we use but little; as ‘Mormons,’ we use a great deal.” The Church leader estimated that “Mormons” had collectively paid sixty thousand dollars to support their habit in the past ten or twelve years.<sup>87</sup> Two months later, he once more urged home manufacture as an economic remedy. “Why don’t you raise your own tobacco and save the dollars?” he asked.<sup>88</sup>

President Young returned to this theme some years later. “Then why not go to work and raise the tobacco we consume?” he asked in 1863.

We have talked about this for years, but are we any nearer to its accomplishment? Very little, if any. I have asked the Bishops to raise in their wards, the tobacco they wish to consume, but they do not do it. I do not know what they say, neither do I know what they feel, but they do not do it. Now I say that we do not ought to buy another pound to be brought into this Territory, and if I had my way about it I would never suffer another pound to be brought here.<sup>89</sup>

As the tracks of the transcontinental railroad reached closer to Utah during the middle and late 1860s, Brigham realized that imports of tea, coffee, and tobacco from the East were likely to increase as costs of transportation decreased. Because these imports would still be costly, Brigham saw the Word of Wisdom as a temporal blessing that, if observed, could put more money into the pockets of the Saints, reduce Zion’s colonial dependence on the East for goods, and make for a more rational use of resources.<sup>90</sup> And if the Saints would not break off their habits, Brigham suggested practically, Word of Wisdom commodities be produced locally.

While clearly bothered by economic waste, Brigham never used just financial arguments to put down tobacco. He opposed “the weed” as an offense to common sense. “There is more grumbling in Deseret [Utah] for tobacco than there is for bread,” he said in 1863.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, moral and theological grounds were never far from his consideration. In 1865 he told a



congregation that the Saints must adhere to the health revelation if they expected to return to Jackson County, Missouri, for the millennial gathering. "So impressive were his remarks," said the recorder of the sermon, that "there was quite a rustling afterwards among loose, dried tobacco leaves, various remnants of 'plugs' being consigned to other places than pockets of masticatory organs, and numerous resolves were made, that tea and coffee would be henceforth abstained from, and the Word of Wisdom strictly observed."<sup>92</sup>

Furthermore, President Young remained deeply concerned about the social and moral results of drinking, which led him to raise repeatedly the issue of the local manufacture and control of alcohol. "I despise the whiskey maker more than I do the thieves, and I have no use for either," he told the Saints in 1861. "Harlots and publicans will enter the kingdom of God before the whiskey dealer. Cursed is he that putteth the cup to his brother's lips."<sup>93</sup> When a Church member asked to be excused from a Uintah Valley colonizing company, Brigham perceived his reluctance had to do with the man's whiskey making. "I do not wish to excuse you," he exploded. "I want you to go so that you can neither make whiskey or get it. For any man that makes whiskey or Beer is [g]uilty of putting the cup to his neighbor[s'] lips and any man that will make whiskey to sell here would sell the kingdom of God for a pickeyune." Brigham reminded the wayward Saint of his own example of closing up his distillery when its alcohol could no longer be controlled.<sup>94</sup>

### **Utah Liquor Laws**

The foregoing incident suggests that Salt Lake City had a hard time suppressing liquor traffic. The challenge became greater in 1861 after Colonel Patrick Connor's U.S. army "Volunteers" bivouacked on Salt Lake City's eastern bench. Complaints grew thereafter about drunkards in the streets. The "traveling community"—soldiers and travelers—augmented by a rising population of non-Latter-day Saint residents demanded liquor, and the city tried to "control it so that all who are weak may not abuse themselves with it."<sup>95</sup> The feeble certainly included Church members.

Since establishing Salt Lake City, the Mormons had tried to govern the liquor traffic with a variety of expedients, which sometimes were employed in combination. These included licensed private liquor manufacturing and retailing, city-owned monopolies of these practices, and outright prohibition. In April 1865, after President Young made some "terse remarks on liquor stores and groceries," the congregation voted once again to close all Salt Lake City saloons and taverns,<sup>96</sup> and city fathers moved to a system of

local monopoly. Only agents recognized by the municipality were to be allowed to sell liquor, with profits from the trade going into the city treasury.<sup>97</sup>

Not surprisingly, those who were not members of the Church were hardly prepared to live with such controls, and some avoided them by organizing private clubs that served alcohol. In turn, the local community branded these as “nuisance” establishments and took steps to outlaw them. With tempers rising, local Gentiles appealed to U.S. officers in Salt Lake City and Washington, D.C., for protection. After a heated exchange between Mormon and federal officers in President Young’s office, Brigham gave guarantees that property would be protected.<sup>98</sup> The incident was more than a passing event; it signaled that Mormons by themselves were no longer able to establish Salt Lake City’s liquor laws and control the city’s social environment. Power was shifting to the non-Mormon and federal officials.

### **President Young’s Victory over Tobacco**

There may have been a personal dimension to President Young’s increasingly vigorous preaching about the Word of Wisdom in the 1860s: he had finally vanquished his own dependence on chewing tobacco. He had arrived in the Salt Lake Valley determined to overcome his tobacco use. “Who is going to be master, you or me?” he reportedly asked the plug of tobacco that he often carried in his hip pocket. Leonard Arrington, President Young’s biographer, suggests that such dialogue helped Brigham maintain his abstinence until unbearable tooth pain caused him in 1857 to dip into the tobacco kitty again after avoiding it for nine years.<sup>99</sup>

Another report suggests that Brigham did not maintain his resolve quite so long. In 1855, Jules Remy claimed to have watched Brigham matter-of-factly prepare a quid of Virginia tobacco.<sup>100</sup> Such a practice was in keeping with Brigham’s advice to Church members for the modest use of tobacco. “Many of the brethren chew tobacco,” he said in one sermon.

I have advised them to be modest about it. Do not take out a whole plug of tobacco in meeting before the eyes of the congregation, and cut off a long slice and put it in your mouth, to the annoyance of everybody around. Do not glory in this disgraceful practice. If you must use tobacco, put a small portion in your mouth when no person sees you, and be careful that no one sees you chew it. I do not charge you with sin. You have the “Word of Wisdom.” Read it. Some say, “Oh, as I do in private, so I do in public, and I am not ashamed of it.” It is, at least, disgraceful to you to expose your absurdities. Some men will go into a clean and beautifully-furnished parlour with tobacco in their mouths, and feel, “I ask no odds.” I would advise such men to be more modest, and not spit upon the carpet and furniture, but step to the door, and be careful not to

let any person see you spit; or, what is better, omit chewing until you have an opportunity to do so without offending.<sup>101</sup>

There was, of course, yet another option, and that was abstinence. It was the tack that Brigham chose shortly after delivering the above advice. By July 1860, except for medicinal or sacramental reasons, President Young broke off all personal use of alcohol, tobacco, tea, or coffee. Several months later, he spoke of his feat to the Saints, giving as his reason the desire to set a blameless example. "I would chew a little in wisdom & would drink a little," he said, "but I will not do it to have our little children chew [that are] a few years old."<sup>102</sup>

He hoped that the Saints would likewise control themselves. "I have used tobacco a great portion of my life, and I have quit it," he told the Saints in Centerville, Utah, in June 1861. "Some will say to me how in the world could you do it. Because I was a mind to," he said. "Can you do the same? Yes."<sup>103</sup> He gave similar advice at October general conference in 1862. "I have been in the habit of using tobacco a great deal in my life, but it is now almost two years and a half since I have tasted it," he said.

Has the forsaking of it caused me much suffering? Look at me. Do I look unusually wrinkled, gray, pale, and wan? . . . It is a year and a half since I have tasted tea. Do you think that I have suffered much through the want of it? Do you think that I am less influenced by the gift and power of the Holy Spirit than formerly? I do not drink tea, coffee, nor intoxicating drinks. Does abstinence from these . . . injure my health or improve it? My appearance will answer the question. Do you think that my mind is less active and clear . . . in consequence of not using these drinks? Brethren, why not abstain as I have done from these hurtful luxuries.<sup>104</sup>

Four days after the conference, President Young wrote to his missionary son Brigham Young Jr. to encourage him to shun the use of tobacco, too. Again, he cited his personal example:

In all probability you will be able to entirely quit the use of tobacco while on your mission, if you have not already done so. In such case I trust you will be wise enough to not resume its use on your return, either while crossing the ocean, passing through the States, nor upon the plains, but permit us to welcome you home with your mouth and breath free from the use and smell of tobacco. It is now going on two years and a half since I have used a particle of tobacco, and I guess a little resolution and faith on your part will also enable you to dispense with its use, in doing which you will ever feel strengthened, prospered, and blest.<sup>105</sup>

President Young's adherence to the Word of Wisdom no doubt played a role in his increasing advocacy of the health code. During the years 1867–69, he began perhaps the Church's most earnest and sustained drive

for Word of Wisdom reform to date. As the completion of the transcontinental railroad approached (the famed “Golden Spike” signaling its completion was driven at Promontory, Utah, in 1869), economic concerns, which had been a theme in Young’s counsel throughout the 1860s, lay at the root of some of his pleas. However, also at center stage were moral imperatives, which became increasingly important.

### Word of Wisdom Reform in the Late 1860s

The reform began at the April 1867 general conference. At one of the opening sessions of the conference, President Young pled with Latter-day Saint women to build the latter-day kingdom by eschewing tea and coffee and by not letting their children drink tea or coffee.<sup>106</sup> Church compliance, he understood, required the support of the leaders of the Church, which was lacking. “You go through the wards in the city, and then through the wards in the country,” he said, “and ask the Bishops—‘Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?’”

The reply will be “Yes; no, not exactly.” “Do you drink tea?” “No.” “Coffee?” “No.” “Do you drink whisky?” “No.” “Well, then, why do you not observe the Word of Wisdom?” “Well, this tobacco, I cannot give it up.” And in this he sets an example to every man, and to every boy over ten years of age, in his ward, to nibble at and chew tobacco. You go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not chew tobacco, nor drink tea nor coffee, but once in a while he takes a little spirits, and keeps whisky in his house, in which he will occasionally indulge. Go to another ward, and perhaps the Bishop does not drink whisky nor chew tobacco, but he “cannot give up his tea and coffee.” And so it goes through the whole church. Not that every Bishop indulges in one or more of these habits, but most of them do.<sup>107</sup>

Continuing, Brigham made his point explicitly:

Bishops, Elders of Israel, High Priests, Seventies, the Twelve Apostles, the First Presidency, and all the House of Israel, hearken ye, O, my people! keep the word of the Lord, observe the Word of Wisdom. . . .

. . . If you have the right to chew tobacco, you have a privilege I have not; if you have a right to drink whisky, you have a right that I have not; if you have a right to transgress the Word of Wisdom, you have a right that I have not.<sup>108</sup>

**Increased Word of Wisdom Commitment.** Clearly impatient with the progress of the Saints, President Young no longer linked “personal liberty” to the Word of Wisdom but instead spoke of the obligation of Church leaders and members to obey. Likewise, his words no longer had the opaque ambiguity of the original revelation; heavenly “counsel” had become more

straightforward—approaching the weight of a commandment. During the two weeks after the conference, he continued the campaign. On April 21, 1867, he suggested that the Saints might properly donate money recently saved by obeying the Word of Wisdom to the Church's missionary fund. Several Church members did so.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, he stressed his Word of Wisdom message that spring while visiting southern Utah with several general authorities.<sup>110</sup> Traveling for a month among the settlements from Santaquin to St. George, the group preached Word of Wisdom compliance. At St. George, Brigham's two sermons on the topic encouraged the Saints to abstain from hot and intoxicating drinks and tobacco and to use grain for food and not for making liquor.<sup>111</sup>

Brigham Young expressed satisfaction with the Word of Wisdom observance in the territory. "The merchants on 'Whiskey St.' [in Salt Lake City] can scarcely get enough [trade] day by day to pay their rents," he informed two of his sons serving missions in England. "The people manifest the strongest disposition we have ever witnessed to carry into effect the counsels which have been given respecting the Word of Wisdom and obedience in temporal as well as spiritual matters." Aware that previous Word of Wisdom crusades had too often been characterized by haphazard pledges in revivalistic settings, President Young was gratified that on this occasion emotion had been kept to a minimum. "There has been no coercion used," he wrote, "no covenants required; the principle has been set forth and the people seemed prepared to receive and carry it out willingly."<sup>112</sup>

Another of President Young's letters gave added detail. "During my recent trip to St. George and back," he told a missionary serving in St. Louis, "not one of those who accompanied me used tea or coffee during the entire trip so as I had an opportunity of seeing." Moreover, the settlers "whether out of respect to us, or because they felt the importance of obeying the counsel given, did not use tea or coffee while we were with them."<sup>113</sup> Many Saints in southern Utah indicated that they were now living the Word of Wisdom, and, significantly, no one offered the dignitaries "tea, coffee, tobacco or liquor."<sup>114</sup>

It appeared that this reform was making good and perhaps lasting progress. "Great numbers of the people in the Territory have entirely abstained from the use of stimulants," Brigham reported to Elder Franklin Richards, who at the time presided over the European Mission. "I am happy to inform you that they seem determined to obey the whisperings of the spirit."<sup>115</sup> At the October 1867 general conference, President Young thanked the Saints for their obedience but at the same time issued a caution. In the past, the Saints had continued their use of proscribed items by

rationalizing that they were required as medicine. “Who is to be the judge?” Brigham asked. The issue of medicinal use was subjective and too often open-ended, Brigham was saying, and while he admitted that there were times that justified the use of hot drinks, tobacco, or alcohol, these occasions were few and exceptional. But on the question of obeying, the Church leader remained firm. “Some seem to think that this thing will soon die away, and that the people will return to the use of tea, coffee, tobacco and liquor,” he said. Such casual Saints would bring the “curse of God” upon them, and they would be sorry for their acts.<sup>116</sup>

The reform of 1867–69 changed as it continued. Speakers, who once stressed financial reasons for obeying the health code, gave more attention to the issues of moral and physical health. In addition, President Young and other Church leaders began to expand their Word of Wisdom advice to include more than just the proscriptive items that regularly were mentioned. In summer 1867, President Young told Provo Saints that he had continued his abstinence of hot drinks. “I do not think that I have ever taken so much comfort in drinking cold water in all my life as I have this season past,” he said.<sup>117</sup>

In the months following, President Young also addressed the question of eating meat. His opposition to pork was longstanding and almost as strong as his opposition to alcohol and tobacco.<sup>118</sup> Instead of using these substances, he urged such things as buttermilk, eggs, fish, fowl, and milk as well as fruits and vegetables, which were prescribed by the original revelation. Furthermore, he gave advice about the manner of eating. He thought that the stomach should not be overloaded and that the Saints should therefore eat in moderation.<sup>119</sup>

Clearly, President Young meant his Word of Wisdom reform to be taken seriously. When organizing Schools of the Prophets in the late 1860s, he highlighted the Word of Wisdom. At the initial meeting of the Provo school, he asked those “keeping” the health code to stand, and a majority rose. “The members of this school [in the future] will have to keep the word of wisdom,” he instructed. “Those who do not keep [it] will have to [eventually] leave this school.” To further make the point, Church leaders honored seventy-five-year-old Amos Fielding, who had the unusual distinction of having embraced and “lived” the health code since his conversion to Mormonism thirty years earlier.<sup>120</sup> Members of the Schools of the Prophets at Salt Lake City and Parowan pledged to “observe and keep the Word of Wisdom according to the spirit and meaning thereof.”<sup>121</sup> Presumably, members of the other regional schools did likewise.

**Reform in Great Britain.** The call to reform was heard even in distant Great Britain. Missionary Henry Jacobs, fresh from Utah, had “indulged”

himself in “the very offensive habit of using a little tea from the effects of the water [the Atlantic Ocean] I had crossed,” he said. But Elder Jacobs understood that he would be unable to ask the British Saints to reform unless he did so himself, and he therefore pledged to make “a firm stand by the assistance of the Lord” to abstain from outlawed items. Soon he felt himself prepared to minister to the local Saints, and he could claim that he had helped “several of the brethren” stop using the “nasty weed.” Still other Saints promised to avoid stimulants. Jacobs’s Word of Wisdom teaching continued into December, when he wrote in his diary, “Visiting among the saints all day . . . some of whom I labored with to get them to observe the Word of Wisdom.”<sup>122</sup>

A similar chronology may have existed in Wales. According to one local authority, little “systematic attention” was given to the Word of Wisdom among Welsh Saints until August 1867, when missionaries and members began to give it greater heed. By this time, missionaries typically were abstaining from alcohol and tobacco, and some extended their abstinence to tea and coffee. While local members were less successful in their observance, particularly in giving up tea, some did conform to the health law and became exponents of its cause.<sup>123</sup> At a Church conference held in Wales in 1869, the following Word of Wisdom verse was read:

Where is truth and where is wisdom  
To lead Saints right while such is done?  
The truly precious Word of Wisdom  
Shows what to eat, to drink, to shun.

Forewarned of drinks both strong and hot  
Tobacco (snuffs) pernicious are  
Flesh meats in summer should scarce be eaten  
In famine times and winter spare.<sup>124</sup>

Whatever its rhyme and rhythm, the verse showed the reach of Brigham Young’s reform.

**Trials of Reform.** While President Young and other Church leaders zealously pushed for increased Word of Wisdom observance, the results were sometimes disappointing. Practical application among the Saints proved to be the greatest challenge. At the Provo School of the Prophets, where President Young had been so insistent upon observance, men were soon voicing their difficulty with compliance. School member Dan Graves told colleagues he “has been [in] the habit of drinking Tea all his life—his nature seems to crave for it but he is getting over it.” Another school member, an elderly man named Alexander, explained he “had used Tobacco ever since he was three years old.” Even Hyrum and Joseph Smith had

unsuccessfully tried to help him break his habit. However, Alexander had this much hope: “Where I used a plug of Tobacco in a month, I do not now use that amount in six years.”<sup>125</sup>

Of course, the men of the Provo School were hardly alone. At the October conference in 1870, Brigham publicly chided members of the Presiding Bishopric for nonobservance. They had been previously sustained in their offices with the precise understanding that, according to Brigham, “they would let their liquor and tobacco alone.” Instead, their compliance had been limited to a “few days.”<sup>126</sup> Likely, these men were representative of the many Latter-day Saints who fell short. Elder Orson Pratt was not exaggerating when, at a School of Prophets meeting in Salt Lake City in late 1871, he talked about “the great lack of observance of the Word of Wisdom by the saints.”<sup>127</sup>

Brigham did not give up his crusade easily, and the continuing inability of Church members to abide the Word of Wisdom summoned some of his most forceful language. “I require all under 100 years old to stop using tobac[c]o & drinking whiskey,” he said on one occasion. “If they do not, we will soon make it a test of fellow[ship] in the Church.” He also warned that those Saints participating in the millennium would be observers of the health code.<sup>128</sup> In May 1870, President Young reproached men who spit tobacco quids on the Tabernacle floor. “It is an imposition for gentlemen to spit tobacco juice around, or to leave their quids of tobacco on the floor,” he said. He wanted no more tobacco chewing at conference.<sup>129</sup>

Such practices brought the obvious question: Why after so much preaching did the Saints still not observe the Word of Wisdom? Brigham gave his own answer. Many Church members such as tea-drinking women claimed, “It will kill me if I quit it.” To them, the Church leader said, “Then die, and die in the faith, instead of living and breaking the requests of Heaven.”<sup>130</sup> The Saints, no doubt, understood such language for what it was: Brigham’s notorious tongue and temper, which often were different from his actual practice. During one of his tours, an elderly lady expressed concern about her coffee drinking, and he had been indulgent, “I told her to take it, and blessed her and her coffee.”<sup>131</sup>

By the early 1870s, President Young continued to encourage and cajole the Saints to observe the Word of Wisdom, but both the number of his exhortations and their force diminished. The reform movement of 1867–69 had obviously run its course. Part of the problem lay with the need to pursue other projects. The 1870s saw the Church organize economic cooperatives and United Orders. It was also a time of institutional growth with the reorganization of the Church’s local wards and stakes. President Young also began to improve the opportunities for education in the territory and



directed the completion of the first temple in Utah, at St. George. In short, other issues pressing upon the Church did not allow Brigham and other leaders to give single-minded focus to the Word of Wisdom.

### Reaching Saints through the Auxiliaries

However, President Young's declining attention to the Word of Wisdom was more than a preoccupation with other policies. He was also resigned to the fact that the first generation of converts, as a group, was unlikely to change. While President Young's vigorous preaching had probably convinced some of his people to abstain and some to cut back their consumption, the record overall had not been heroic. Faced with this bleak assessment, the Church leader increasingly put his hope in Zion's youth, and to reach them he used the recently established Church auxiliaries of Sunday School and the young men's and young ladies' organizations. These organizations taught Word of Wisdom abstinence and even encouraged temperance pledges.<sup>132</sup>

The Church's newly founded magazines also contributed to the cause. The voice of Latter-day Saint women was the *Woman's Exponent*, which began publication in 1872. This newspaper showed a concern for national temperance and prohibition but also published articles on health, diet, and a stricter adherence to the Word of Wisdom. Because it insisted that Zion's mothers properly raise their children, the *Exponent*, with its Victorian values, became a powerful Word of Wisdom tool. The Church also published the *Juvenile Instructor*, intended for children and adolescents. The *Instructor* featured editorials, essays, short stories, and biographical sketches that often had a Horatio Alger flavor. From its pages, Latter-day Saint youth learned that it was unmanly to use tobacco and alcohol and unladylike to consume tea and coffee. It also reported on Church Word of Wisdom events. In November 1870, for instance, readers learned how a young girl overcame her tea and coffee habit. Or at other times, Church youth were told about group temperance pledges, as when the Smithfield, Utah, Young Ladies Retrenchment Society agreed to keep the Word of Wisdom "in all respects."<sup>133</sup>

However, the influence of these Church magazines lay mostly in the future—their promise in shaping a new generation. During President Young's last years, he continued to teach the Word of Wisdom and hope for the Saints' reformation. According to his plural wife Emily Dow Young, he tried in his life's sunset "every way to impress upon the minds of the people the necessity of reforming both in dress and food."<sup>134</sup> In fact, this personal observation is not the only evidence of the abiding nature of the Church

leader's concern about Word of Wisdom matters and of his disappointment that the Saints had not had better progress. "Now what good will this [Word of Wisdom] instruction do you?" Brigham asked the St. George Saints in 1876, the year before he died. "Some of you will go home [and] smoke your pipe, take your snuff, and drink your tea, and may say 'that was a pretty good sermon from brother Brigham this afternoon,' and with this remark the benefit of the instruction appears to end."<sup>135</sup> In early 1877, he urged one of his sons to abandon any habits contrary to the Holy Spirit, including "smoking and everything of the kind." In President Young's mind, his son's "age, experience, position and responsibility demand[ed] an abandonment of such practices."<sup>136</sup>

When he drew up a list of worthiness criteria to gauge the spiritual level of individual Saints in the St. George Stake, the Word of Wisdom appeared first. Perhaps intended as a guideline for admission to the recently completed temple, the worthiness list was similar to the catechism used in the 1856–57 Reformation, but now the question posed for Word of Wisdom obedience no longer concerned just "drunkenness." Religiously active Church members "must observe and keep the Word of Wisdom according to the Spirit and meaning thereof," it said.<sup>137</sup> And in May 1877, only months before his death, President Young included strong Word of Wisdom counsel in instructions given to Elder Joseph F. Smith, recently called to preside over the European Mission: missionaries who could not abstain from tobacco and alcohol were to be sent home.<sup>138</sup> Clearly, despite other concerns, President Young had not forgotten the need for Word of Wisdom reform.

## Conclusion

Why did Church members make such slow and fitful progress in observing the Word of Wisdom? One explanation has to do with how the first generation viewed Joseph Smith's revelation. Some of these first converts felt uncommitted because of its permissive language. Their ingrained social customs and personal habits, in turn, made it difficult for them to accept a firmer interpretation. Also, formal Church policy had been somewhat tolerant. Whatever the periodic rhetorical flourishes of Brigham and other Church leaders, the Utah pioneer era apparently saw no official Church action taken against any member for a Word of Wisdom violation except public and disorderly drunkenness. This easygoing and kindly attitude was partly based upon Mormon leaders' view that God-given "liberty" (agency) required the individual and not the Church to make personal life decisions. Another delay in compliance was the policy that

excused the aged from obeying the Word of Wisdom and that upheld proscribed items as occasionally useful and medicinal. This last attitude no doubt was well meant and in some cases was justified. However, it also created a loophole for conscious and unconscious excuse making that resulted in further acceptance of the use of tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol.

Besides, many Saints probably thought that they were doing well enough. Many had made sacrifices for their acceptance of the gospel. By embracing its unpopular cause, they had turned their backs upon family and neighbors. They had converted, emigrated, colonized, proselytized, and begun raising a new generation of Saints. The heavy obligations of pioneer life made Word of Wisdom concerns seem secondary and sometimes irrelevant. Moreover, it was not as though the Saints' conduct was discreditable. Most callers and sojourners among them found them to be a generally temperate and sober people. They likely drank less, smoked less, and chewed less than citizens of other American communities, and their villages, especially outside of the urbanlike Salt Lake area, were models of contemporary decorum.<sup>139</sup> Because of these conditions, some of the Saints may have had difficulty understanding President Young's urging for temperance and dietary reform. They were doing relatively well, so they may have wondered that they were asked to do more.

Whatever the reasons that slowed reform, during President Young's administration there was progress in the application of the Word of Wisdom grounded on several footings. For one thing, preaching in support of the reform moved from establishing an ideal of social order to stressing the financial advantages of compliance to abstaining for moral and health imperatives. The reasons for this shift in goals need further study, although it is clear that Mormon attitudes were partly shaped by nineteenth-century ideals of Victorian and evangelical refinement that were a part of postbellum America. The nineteenth-century Mormon experience with its Word of Wisdom revelation was never too far removed from national currents.

During the Brigham Young administration, Mormons did not say much about their change in Word of Wisdom attitudes. However, from present-day hindsight, it is clear that during Brigham's years a modification did occur. When the Brigham Young administration began, the Saints strived to obey the health code by being moderate users of its proscribed substances and by avoiding public drunkenness. At Brigham's death, the people understood that the ideal was abstinence.

The current position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints drew from these ideas, both in accepting the ideal of abstinence from tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol and in insisting that Church members desiring to be found in good standing comply with this ideal. The Word of

Wisdom drive in the late 1860s moved the Church in this direction, particularly after President Young began to chide Church leaders publicly for disobeying. While he never explained this shift in policy and ideals, it likely had to do with his impatience over the Saints' slowness to accept the higher standard that had always been implicit in the Word of Wisdom revelation and with the incidence of human tragedy that came as a result. For President Young's part, his Word of Wisdom labor had been difficult and without dramatic success. Another generation or two would be required before the majority of Saints came to accept his Word of Wisdom standard and perhaps still more time before they sensed the eternal blessings of his legacy.

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1. The literature on the historical development of the Word of Wisdom is preliminary and episodic. For a sampling, see Paul H. Peterson, "An Historical Analysis of the Word of Wisdom" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972); Thomas G. Alexander, "The Word of Wisdom: From Principle to Requirement," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (fall 1981): 78–88; Leonard J. Arrington, "An Economic Interpretation of the 'Word of Wisdom,'" *BYU Studies* 1, no. 1 (1959): 37–49; Lester E. Bush Jr., "The Word of Wisdom in Early Nineteenth-Century Perspective," *Dialogue* 14 (autumn 1981): 46–65; Clyde Ford, "The Origin of the Word of Wisdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 24 (fall 1998): 129–54; and Robert J. McCue, "Did the Word of Wisdom Become a Commandment in 1851?" *Dialogue* 14 (autumn 1981): 66–77.

2. Doctrine and Covenants 89. Bush, "Word of Wisdom in Early Nineteenth-Century Perspective," 46–65, gives information on how Word of Wisdom terms were used contemporaneously.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 89:3. The matter was made more confusing by the way the revelation was first printed. When first issued as a broadsheet and later as a section in the 1835 Book of Commandments, these advisory phrases appeared as an introduction to the revelation. It was not until 1876 that these phrases were printed in the body of the revelation, appearing from then on as Doctrine and Covenants 89:1–3. As a result, during the Brigham Young era, the question was raised whether the advisory clauses were a part of Joseph Smith's original revelation or whether they had been added as an editorial afterthought intended to "soften" the original wording. Unfortunately, the issue cannot be resolved. Although the earliest prepublication manuscripts of the Word of Wisdom treat these verses as part of the original revelation, these documents were written

months after the receipt of the Word of Wisdom. No document contemporaneous with Joseph's revelation appears to have survived. See Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," 3 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 2:1171-75.

4. W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 25.

5. August F. Fehlandt, *A Century of Drink Reform in the United States* (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1904), 19-20.

6. Rorabaugh, *Alcoholic Republic*, 14-21, 25; Mark Edward Lender and James Kirby Martin, *Drinking in America: A History* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 2-21.

7. Lender and Martin, *Drinking in America*, 14, 46; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, "Apparant Per Capita Ethanol Consumption for the United States, 1850-2000," <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/databases/consumo1.htm>.

8. R. Carlyle Buley, "Glimpses of Pioneer Mid-West Social and Cultural History," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 23 (March 1937): 492-93. Cigarette smoking would not become popular in the United States until the last part of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century.

9. R. T. Ravenholt, "Tobacco's Global Death March," *Population and Development Review* 16 (June 1990): 218-29. Francis Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London: printed for Whittaker and Treacher, 1832), contains many interesting accounts of tobacco use and abuse in frontier Ohio, where Joseph Smith received the Word of Wisdom revelation.

10. Statement of Zebedee Coltrin, "Minutes of the St. George School of the Prophets," December 23, 1883, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. Earlier Coltrin gave the same information to the newly formed School of Prophets at Salt Lake City except that, in this case, he said that there were twenty-one (rather than twenty-two) present and that all but one (rather than two) were using tobacco. "Minutes of the Salt Lake School of the Prophets," October 11, 1883, 71-73, Church Archives.

11. Sylvester Graham, *The Aesculapian Tablets of the Nineteenth Century* (Providence: Weeden and Cory, 1834), vii.

12. John Allen Krout, *The Origins of Prohibition* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1925), 136; Alfred Mathews, *Ohio and Her Western Reserve: With a Story of Three States* (New York: D. Appleton, 1902), 163-64; D. Griffiths Jr., *Two Years' Residence in the New Settlements of Ohio, North America: With Directions to Emigrants* (London: Westley and Davis, 1835), 129-30.

13. *Temperance Recorder* [Albany, New York] 2, no. 2 (April 2, 1833): 14. The *Recorder* was published by the Executive Committee of the New York State Temperance Society. Several issues are located in the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Perry Special Collections).

14. Lender and Martin, *Drinking in America*, 34-36.

15. W. A. Cowdery, *Messenger and Advocate*, May 1837, 510.

16. When Book of Mormon witness and Missouri Church leader David Whitmer was later asked about the cause for his disaffiliation with the Church, he responded, "I was appointed in charge of church affairs in Zion Missouri, but from my teachings disaffection grew." According to Whitmer, some of the difficulties

ensued when “Joseph [Smith] and Sydney [Rigdon] came out and visited the various branches of the church [in Missouri] pledging them to themselves as against my teachings upon the word of wisdom and other matters.” Zenas H. Gurley, Interview, January 14, 1885, Richmond, Missouri, Gurley Collection, Church Archives, cited in Lyndon W. Cook, ed., *David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness* (Provo, Utah: Grandin Book, 1991), 152. When Whitmer was excommunicated by a council in 1838, failure to observe the Word of Wisdom was among the indicting charges, with local records also showing a concern at the time for the consumption of tea and coffee. See *Far West Record*, February 1838, 138. While attempts to observe the Word of Wisdom in Ohio and Missouri and the resulting schism can only be suggested here, the authors plan to deal with the early practice of the Word of Wisdom within their larger forthcoming book-length study of the historical development of the revelation.

17. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d. ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 4:445; Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal: 1833–1898, Typescript*, ed. Scott G. Kenny, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature Books, 1983–84), 2:136–37, November 7, 1841.

18. Charles MacKay, *The Religious, Social, and Political History of Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, from Their Origin to the Present Time*, ed. Samuel M. Smucker (New York: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan, 1856), 151, 155.

19. *Hancock Eagle*, April 10, 1846, 3.

20. “An Epistle of the Twelve,” October 1, 1844, *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833–1964*, ed. James R. Clark, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–70), 1:242.

21. Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–61*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:294; General Church Minutes, January 14, 1848, Church Archives.

22. General Church Minutes, March 21 and 26, 1847.

23. General Church Minutes, March 26, 1847.

24. For example, see Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 3:148, April 14, 1847; 3:210, June 20, 1847.

25. Benjamin Brown, *Testimonies for the Truth: A Record of Manifestations of the Power of God, Miraculous and Providential, Witnessed in the Travels and Experience of Benjamin Brown, High Priest in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 27. There were, of course, exceptions. One English branch elected to live the Word of Wisdom completely and use the funds saved from such expenditures to aid emigration. See Eli B. Kelsey, Letter to Editor, *Millennial Star* 11 (July 1, 1849): 201.

26. “Minutes of the Provo School of the Prophets,” September 8, 1868, Church Archives.

27. Journal History of the Church, February 2, 1849, 1, Church Archives.

28. Journal History of the Church, February 3, 1849, 1.

29. General Church Minutes, July 29, 1849.

30. Milton Longhorn, “The Mormons and the Founding of Utah, 1847–1851” (master’s thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1932), 49.

31. Lender and Martin, *Drinking in America*, 72–73.

32. General Church Minutes, April 7, 1850.
  33. General Church Minutes, September 7, 1850.
  34. Remarks, December 15, 1850, recorded on the same date in Brigham Young Office Journal and in Historian's Office Journal, Church Archives.
  35. *Deseret News*, December 28, 1850, 180.
  36. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 3:588, December 22, 1850.
  37. General Church Minutes, December 29, 1850.
  38. Helpful sources in piecing together what happened regarding the 1851 Word of Wisdom initiative include Journal History of the Church, September 7–9, 1851; General Church Minutes, September 9, 1851; Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 4:55–68, September 7–9, 1851; Brigham Young, Remarks, General Church Minutes, September 9, 1851; Historian's Office Journal, 1:103, September 9, 1851; Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 2:403, September 9, 1851; Diary of Lorenzo Brown, September 9–10, 1851, Church Archives; Diary of Samuel H. Rogers, 2 vols., 1:178–79, September 11, 1851, Perry Special Collections; and "Minutes of the General Conference," *Millennial Star* 14 (February 1, 1852): 33–36.
  39. Young, Remarks, September 9, 1851; Thomas Bullock's Report, General Church Minutes, September 9, 1851; "Minutes of the General Conference," 35.
  40. Thomas Bullock's Report, September 9, 1851.
  41. The records of these events are not always consistent in their detail. For instance, Woodruff's diary suggests that the men were placed under covenant prior to the women's vote. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 4:66, September 1851. Too, while the transcript of Young's remarks suggests unanimity, Bullock's minutes state the dissenting votes. We have chosen to assume that clerk Bullock's account is more likely accurate. "Minutes of the General Conference," 35.
  42. General Church Minutes, September 9, 1851. We have reconstructed this chronology from available sources but acknowledge that events may have happened in a different order.
  43. Young, Remarks, September 9, 1851; "Minutes of the General Conference," 35.
  44. Sixth General Epistle, September 22, 1851, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 2:90.
  45. General Church Minutes, October 6, 1851; Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, October 6, 1851, 4:72.
  46. For instance, see Francis M. Lyman, in *Seventy-Ninth Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1908), 55; and McCue, "Did the Word of Wisdom Become a Commandment in 1851?" 66–77.
- See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Improvement Era* 59 (February 1956): 78. This influential article responded to this question: Has the Word of Wisdom "ever been presented to the Church as a commandment making its observance obligatory upon the members of the Church?" To this inquiry, Elder Smith replied, "The simple answer to this question is yes, such commandment has been given and repeated on several occasions. [On] September 9, 1851, President Brigham Young stated that the members of the Church had had sufficient time to be taught the import of this revelation and that henceforth it was to be considered a divine commandment." Elder Smith's statement was later quoted in various books, Church Sunday School manuals, and seminary and institute manuals. The most recent reference to the

supposedly pivotal 1851 conference action was made by President Ezra Taft Benson in his address to the April 1983 general conference. Ezra Taft Benson, "A Principle with a Promise," *Ensign* 13 (May 1983): 53.

47. When the city's bishops met at their regular coordinating meeting in October 1851, there was telling uncertainty about the recent Word of Wisdom counsel. Had the recent conference made the health code "a Law in Israel?" asked one of the bishops. Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter ended the meeting's discussion by saying that "as for making . . . [the Word of Wisdom] a Test of fellowship he could not at present decide." Record of Bishops' Meetings, October 12, 1851, "Report of Wards, Ordinations, Instructions, and General Proceedings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood," Church Archives.

48. Brigham Young to Lorin Farr, November 1852, Brigham Young Miscellaneous Letterbook, Brigham Young Papers, Church Archives. To another local Church authority, Isaac Haight, who presided in Cedar City, Utah, President Young wrote: "You . . . mention that you would like a License to distil whisky, as to that, you can do as you please in the matter but should you embark in this enterprise I wish you to understand and distinctly that it has to be under your own immediate control, so that no evil result may arise from it." Brigham Young to Isaac S. Haight, November 4, 1854, Brigham Young Letterbooks, Brigham Young Papers.

49. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 14:225, August 27, 1871.

50. Brigham Young to Lorin Farr, November 1852.

51. "Brewery," *Deseret News*, September 7, 1850, 103.

52. Brigham Young, Office Journal, December 14, 1850, Church Archives.

53. Jedediah M. Grant, Remarks, December 26, 1852, Brigham Young Office Journal.

54. Brigham Young, "Remarks," October 27, 1860, Provo, Utah, reported by G. D. Watt, Report of Speeches, Historian's Office, Church Archives.

55. Brigham Young, Remarks, Church General Minutes, May 23, 1852.

56. Brigham Young, Remarks, General Church Minutes, November 19, 1854.

57. Lender and Martin, *Drinking in America*, 48; Elliott West, *The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 2.

58. Young, Remarks, November 19, 1854.

59. Robert Kent Fielding, *The Unsolicited Chronicler: An Account of the Gunnison Massacre, Its Causes and Consequences* (Brookline, Mass.: Paradigm Publications, 1993), 213–37.

60. Brigham Young to Joseph A. Young, December 1, 1854, Brigham Young Letterbooks. While in Utah, Steptoe himself reportedly did a "good deal" of drinking and was "often high." J. F. Kinney, Remarks in private conversation, Church General Minutes, July 10, 1855. Mormons frequently noted the U.S. appointees and army officers' drinking, which may have been prompted by the loneliness of their Utah stations. Mormon-Gentile relations did not allow social mixing.

61. "Intoxicating Drinks," *Deseret News*, November 23, 1854, 3.

62. Jedediah M. Grant, Remarks, *Deseret News*, October 28, 1854.

63. Brigham Young to Zerubbabel Snow, November 18, 1854, Brigham Young



Letterbooks.

64. General Church Minutes, November 19, 1854.

65. Heber C. Kimball, in *Journal of Discourses*, 2:161, November 26, 1854.

66. Brigham Young to Joseph A. Young, December 1, 1854, Brigham Young

Letterbooks.

67. Young, "Remarks," October 27, 1860.

68. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 2:536, December 23, 1854, italics in original.

69. Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier*, 2:536; "The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock," p. 33, Perry Special Collections.

70. Brigham Young to Zerubbabel Snow, February 3, 1855, Miscellaneous Business and Financial Letterbook, Brigham Young Papers.

71. Edward D. Woolley, Remarks, General Church Minutes, March 4, 1855.

72. Journal History of the Church, July 24, 1854, 8.

73. Journal History of the Church, July 24, 1854, 8.

74. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 2:17, July 24, 1854.

75. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 2:271, April 8, 1855.

76. Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, September 29, 1855, Brigham Young

Letterbooks.

77. William Chandless, *A Visit to Salt Lake: Being a Journey across the Plains and a Residence in the Mormon Settlements at Utah* (London: Smith, Elder, 1857), 228–29.

78. Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, *A Journey to Great-Salt-Lake City*, 2 vols. (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), 1:198.

79. Remy and Brenchley, *Journey to Great-Salt-Lake City*, 2:271–72.

80. "Questions to Be Asked the Latter Day Saints," manuscript, Church Archives; Journal History of the Church, May 19, 1856, 1.

81. "Questions to Be Asked." For the origin and use of the Reformation's catechism, see Paul H. Peterson, "The Mormon Reformation" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1981; BYU Studies, 2002), 29–30.

82. "Intoxicating Drinks," *Deseret News*, November 23, 1854, 3.

83. Brigham Young, Remarks, General Church Minutes, March 9, 1855.

84. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 5:279–80, January 28, 1859.

85. *Deseret News*, March 2, 1859, 222.

86. E. B. Long, *The Saints and the Union: Utah Territory during the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 18–35.

87. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 9:35, April 7, 1861.

88. Brigham Young, Sermon, June 30, 1861, Centerville, Utah, reported by G. D. Witt, Report of Speeches.

89. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, April 7, 1863.

90. Leonard J. Arrington's path-breaking essay in the first issue of *BYU Studies*, "An Economic Interpretation of the 'Word of Wisdom,'" stressed President Young's use of the Word of Wisdom for economic or financial advantage. It was an argument that also was highlighted in Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), 250.

91. Young, Sermon, April 7, 1863.

92. Report of Brigham Young Sermon, General Church Minutes, May 7, 1865.

93. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, July 21, 1861.
94. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 5:591, August 27, 1861.
95. Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 344.
96. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, April 30, 1865.
97. Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 344.
98. Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 344–45.
99. Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 312–13.
100. Remy and Brenchley, *Journey to Salt Lake City*, 1:202.
101. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 8:361–62, March 10, 1860.
102. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, October 28, 1860.
103. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, June 30, 1861.
104. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, October 7, 1862.
- Brigham quit using tobacco permanently in July 1860. Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 313.
105. Brigham Young to Brigham Young Jr., October 11, 1862, Brigham Young Letterbooks.
106. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 6:334–35, April 7, 1867.
107. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:27, April 7, 1867.
108. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:29–31.
109. Brigham Young, Sermon, Church General Minutes, April 21, 1867. See also Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:35–37, April 14, 1867.
110. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 6:337, April 22, 1867.
111. Brigham Young, Sermons, General Church Minutes, May 4 and 5, 1867.
112. Brigham Young to Brigham Young Jr. and John W. Young, May 21, 1867, Brigham Young Letterbooks.
113. Brigham Young to L. D. Rudd, June 8, 1867, Brigham Young Letterbooks.
114. Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:13, May 19, 1867. See John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:48, May 19, 1867.
- Elder Joseph F. Smith noted, “A general coolness exists against the longer acquaintance with those expensive luxuries,—tea, coffee, tobacco, and whisky.” It was a “coolness which we believe will be permanent and based on reason; not the spirit of an excitable reformation, or sudden resolve, needing to be treated to stimulate its strength.” Joseph F. Smith and Claudius V. Spencer to Editor of *Deseret News*, reprinted in *Millennial Star* 29 (July 6, 1867): 418.
115. Brigham Young to Franklin D. Richards, January 7, 1868, Brigham Young Letterbooks.
116. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, October 8, 1867. See also “Summary of Remarks by President B. Young,” *Millennial Star* 29 (December 7, 1867): 775; Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 6:371, October 8, 1867.
117. Brigham Young, Sermon, General Church Minutes, August 25, 1867.
118. Brigham Young, Remarks, “Minutes of the Provo School of the Prophets,” April 15, 1868.
- In February 1860, Brigham Young admitted to a close group of confidantes, that he found Hyrum Smith’s position on the Word of Wisdom incongruous. “Hyrum would eat about three lb of fat pork in a day,” Brigham noted incredulously, “and yet be so severe upon a tobacco chewer.” Brigham Young Office Jour-

nal, February 24, 1860, Book D, August 8, 1858 to September 30, 1863. In April conference 1868, both President Young and Apostle George Q. Cannon railed against pork eating. Elder Cannon said that “swine’s flesh should be entirely abstained from,” while Brigham Young, presumably speaking after Cannon, noted that “it was the will of the Lord that his people should cease eating swine’s flesh.” “History of the Church,” April 6, 1868, 1839–[ca. 1882], Historian’s Office, Church Archives. At an April 1868 School of the Prophets meeting in Provo, Brigham Young told assembled members that swine flesh was unhealthy. Two weeks later, speaking again with school members, Brigham advised everyone “to refrain from eating such meat.” Young, Remarks, “Minutes of the Provo School of the Prophets,” April 15, 27, 1868.

119. Brigham Young, Remarks, “Minutes of the Salt Lake City School of the Prophets,” June 25, 1870.

120. Brigham Young, Remarks, April 15, 1868.

121. Journal History of the Church, September 19, 1868; “Minutes of the Parowan School of Prophets,” November 1868, 2–3, Church Archives.

122. Henry Chariton Jacobs, Journal, September 1 and 29, and December 7 and 11, 1867, typescript, Church Archives.

123. Douglas James Davies, *Mormon Spirituality: Latter Day Saints in Wales and Zion* (Nottingham, England: University of Nottingham, [1987]), 6.

124. Davies, *Mormon Spirituality*, 31.

125. “Minutes of the Provo School of the Prophets,” January 26, 1869.

126. Journal History of the Church, October 30, 1870, 1.

127. Orson Pratt, Remarks, “Minutes of the Salt Lake City School of the Prophets,” September 30, 1871.

128. Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 6:463, April 19, 1869.

129. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 13:343–44, May 5, 1870.

130. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 14:20, May 6, 1870.

131. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:218, May 17, 1868.

132. “The Young Ladies’ Column,” *Juvenile Instructor* 6 (July 8, 1871): 111. For the activity of the new youth programs in one ward, see Ronald W. Walker, “‘Going to Meeting’ in Salt Lake City’s Thirteenth Ward, 1849–1881: A Microanalysis,” in *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington*, ed. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 153. Also see Carol Cornwall Madsen and Susan Staker Oman, *Sisters and Little Saints: One Hundred Years of Primary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979), 16–17, 148–49.

133. George Q. Cannon, “Editorial Thoughts,” *Juvenile Instructor* 5 (November 26, 1870): 187; “Young Ladies’ Column,” 111.

134. [Emily Dow Young], “Practical Hints,” *Woman’s Exponent* 7 (February 15, 1879): 193.

135. Brigham Young, Sermon, Church General Minutes, May 13, 1876.

136. Brigham Young to Arta D. Young, February 15, 1877, Brigham Young Letterbooks.

137. Brigham Young to J. D. T. McAllister, April 13, 1877, Brigham Young Letterbooks.

138. Brigham Young to Joseph F. Smith, May 11, 1877, Brigham Young Let-

terbooks.

139. For example, see the observations of Richard F. Burton, *City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1862), 239; William Hepworth Dixon, *New America*, 2 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1867), 2:207; and John Codman, *The Mormon Country: A Summer with the "Latter-day Saints"* (New York: United States Publishing, 1874), 6–7.