

liarily a religious establishment; in it are centered all our hopes of salvation, honor, glory, and exaltation. In it we find our hopes of a resurrection, and of a life of immortality in another state of existence. By it we are actuated in all our business of life, through its influence we have preserved virtue, established truth, and been enabled to endure persecution. By its influence we have surmounted the difficulties of a banishment from the abodes of civilization and this world's enlightenment, and established ourselves in these distant vales, where, until we came hither, there was nothing, either in soil, climate, or productions, to attract the notice of even the adventurous and enterprising; in a country which offered no inducements worthy of consideration to any people but us. And why to us as a people? Because here, far distant from any white settlements, upon a piece of earth not valuable for its facilities either for cultivation, navigation, or commerce, where the whole face of the country presented the most barren and forbidding aspect, we considered we might live and enjoy our religion unmolested, and be free from the meddlesome interference of any person. If our principles and religion were obnoxious to any, they were relieved from our presence, unless they chose to follow us.

If the people of the United States do not like our religious institutions, they are not compelled to mix in our society, or associate with us, or with our children. There is nothing here to tempt their cupidity, their avarice, or their lust. Then let them remain at home, or if they wish to roam in quest of new locations, there are none less desirable than this, for any other purpose than the one for which we have selected it, not for its intrinsic value in a pecuniary point of view, but in order that we might enjoy our religion in peace, preserve our youth

in virtue, and be freed from the insults, abuse, and persecution of our enemies.

Why should we have enemies? "Why is it," say our objectors, "that you cannot mingle and mix in society like other religious denominations?" It has been seen that the people would not permit us to dwell in their midst in peace. We have been universally driven by illegal force, by mobs, murderers, and assassins, as unworthy of having a place amongst the abodes of civilized man, until, as a last resort, we found peace in these distant valleys. It is because our religion is the only true one. It is because we have the only true authority, upon the face of the whole earth, to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel. It is because the keys of this dispensation were committed by messengers sent from the Celestial world unto Joseph Smith, and are now held on the earth by this people. It is because Christ and Lucifer are enemies, and cannot be made friends; and Lucifer, knowing that we have this Priesthood, this power, this authority, seeks our overthrow.

I am aware that these answers involve the truth of our principles, the divine appointment of Joseph Smith, the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, &c.; but this subject I leave for your consideration and investigation, with this simple declaration, that whether our religion is believed by any other people or not, it is by us, and no power or authority in the government can lawfully or righteously molest us in the peaceable and quiet enjoyment thereof. It cannot be done without law, and surely the government have no right to make any law concerning it, or to prevent the free exercise thereof.

Why should tests of patriotism to the government be required of this people, more than of any other com-