

engaged, and we are blessed; we are in a place that is blessed, and the very place of which we have almost, at times, been inclined to complain and to feel that we were sharing in a hard lot—that we were forced to live and to dwell in such a place as we now occupy. But the things that we have thus regarded as hardships are blessings to us.

If you never had been able to appreciate them at all in their truthful character until now, just now open your eyes, and do not keep your eyes closed against the truth; but open them and look upon our situation—the circumstances that surround us, and you will feel, if you feel as I do, to thank God—for what? For the rugged mountains that are around us—for the barren and desert country that lies between us and the land of our enemies. You will feel, in the spirit of the persecuted of other days and other climes and dispensations, to bless God for the strength of the hills, and that the Plains that lie between us and our enemies are sterile and barren; for in these things are our protection.

“But,” says one, “would not God protect us?” Certainly; and how has God protected us? He has protected us by bringing us to the land where we now dwell—a land where, if there had been great labor bestowed upon it, it could not have been better prepared to constitute a home for the naked, the driven, the afflicted, and the despised people of God. It is every way calculated to give security to the people of God. For this reason I feel well.

If I have ever seen the hand of God—if I have ever seen or known his dealings with his people, or have ever seen a manifestation of his wisdom, it is more than ever manifest in his bringing us to this land, where the distance is so great from the land of our enemies. The character of the country intervening between us and them is

better to us than millions of millions of armed men to protect us: it affords us a protection that cannot be found in the armies of the earth, were they all marshaled in our behalf.

Well, then, I feel to thank God that we are here; I feel to bless him for every foot of desert country that intervenes between this and our enemies. There is not a foot of barren soil between us and them but for it I feel to thank God. I regard it as a bulwark of strength to protect the infant kingdom of God while it should gather to itself strength, that it might exist in the midst of the nations of the earth.

For all these things I feel well today; I feel happy, and I would that all the Saints could feel happy. “Well,” says one, “I would feel happy, if I could.” What is the reason you cannot be happy? Where is the evidence of the truth that the people are not happy in this country? Where are those who are not satisfied in this country? I do not believe that there is a dissatisfied soul in the whole length and breadth of the land where the Saints dwell that enjoys the Spirit of God. Why? Because here is the only place that man can live and enjoy the Spirit of God without restraint: here is the place where the peace, the bliss, the prospect of happiness can be cherished in the mind of man, free from restraint.

Well, then, this is the place in which to be happy. But shall we be protected? Shall we be preserved? Shall we be upheld? Shall we be sustained? I say, shall we continue to enjoy these blessings? This is a question that we may answer for ourselves.

“But,” says one, “has not President Kimball said that we should be victorious?” Yes, he has said it again and again, that we should, if we would but do right. This is why I say it is a question for us to answer for our-