

grasp a thing without form or comeliness. They know not where to get hold of it; and when they think they have hold of it, it slips through their hands. Such has been the great success of the preaching of the word.

Now, then, if they resort to force of arms or to brute force to overpower us, may we not safely calculate that the results will be similar to those in the mental contest? "Say first of God above, then man below, How can we reason but from what we know?"

So far, we do actually know and understand. It is demonstrated by our experience, and we are prepared to say that it is truly so. Behold, the wicked are unwilling to be converted by the gentle means the Lord God of Israel has introduced. They are satisfied that they cannot prevail against us by argument; and even polygamy, in all the glaring forms they may please to give it, offers obstacles too formidable for them to encounter by argument, Scripture, philosophy, or truth. But "overcome it must be," say the enemy; and "we will not rest until we have resorted to the last extremity. We will try the force of arms!" "Very well, if that is your mode of warfare," says the Almighty, "I do not desire it; but I will show you that I am not only a man of reason, Scripture, and truth, but a man of war too. If force of arms is your plan and mode of attack, you will find me ready to meet you in that and in every method you may adopt."

Behold, they rise up in war against the Saints. The Saints heretofore, when attacked on moral and Scripture principles, have stood up to oppose the enemy. If they had not done this, the enemy would have overpowered us. We have always met him with the truth and the simple arguments which God has furnished us with, and have always been successful; and perhaps, had we stood up

to oppose him with force of arms, we might have been equally successful: but I cannot say how that is. The time, probably, had not come for us to take that position; and consequently, when it came to force of arms, the enemy must needs be made the aggressor. He was permitted to prevail against us for the time being; and whether that was not the very means of putting us in a position whereby we could successfully oppose him in that way, when the time did come, we can easily judge. I guess it is all right and has worked for our good; and herein we can discern that our heavenly Father has exemplified a glorious truth to us, that all things shall work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose.

If we had taken this position in Missouri or in Nauvoo, before breakfast they could have ordered their affairs and come upon us, and it would have required a standing army of the angels of God to defend us. But the time had not yet come; therefore the Lord suffered them to prevail until he should get us where he wanted us: "And then shall the prophecies of my servants be fulfilled in the scenes that shall transpire with you." It never could have been said, "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains," if we had remained in the valley of the Mississippi.

The Lord considered it necessary that we should be removed into the chambers of the Almighty, or to some place prepared to receive us, where he might display his power, and get for himself a name and honor that shall never be forgotten. Sometimes a defeat is equal to a victory. I recollect of reading an account, the saying of a celebrated General, after he had gained a victory and lost a great portion of his men. One of his officers congratulated him on his victory.