

or heard of. If we can govern the tongue, we are prepared then to enter upon the government of other matters; but I think we shall have plenty to do, at least for the present, to govern our tongues, even the best that are under the sound of my voice; for there is no person but that sometimes speaks unadvisedly with his lips—but that sometimes lets off an improper word; for the tongue or mouth is merely the valve of the heart—the place where the sentiments are discharged that have been confined in the heart, and that is the true index to the real inner man. Hence, “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by them thou shalt be condemned.” Who of us this morning can say that we have not offended in word, even this morning? Can we say that we have not offended in word since the new year of 1858 began? 1857 is gone by; 1858 is now before us. Have we offended in word since this year began?—for I am sure that you all prayed that, with the close of the year, your sins might be canceled and swept away into the gulf of forgetfulness, that they be brought against you no more. Then I trust that you have entered upon the new year with a clean page—turned over a new leaf. Is there a spot or blemish upon that new page thus far until now? Have none of us offended in word? If we have not, so far we are perfect, and able also to bridle the whole body. This will do then, perhaps, for the regulation and control of the tongue.

There are other matters that I may be led to speak upon in relation to the government of the Saints as a body. By what law shall we be governed? By what rule are we to be controlled and managed? By the laws and powers of this world, or by the laws and powers of the world to come? We form a very important link in the chain of existence. We are occupying

a very important place at the present time, and we are called upon to set an example. We are called upon to be the pioneers of a work that shall be everlasting. To be sure, we are but weak and feeble; yet we are the strongest of all people on the earth, if we have the God of heaven to be our helper; and we have him, if we offend not in word—if we can govern the tongue.

It is said there are a great many imperfections among us as a people. Grant it. At the same time, it is said we are the best people on earth, and the only friends God has. Admit this to be so. We may not be so pure friends as he might desire, but we are the best there are; and if he suffers us to be cut off, he will have none left of any kind. This is verily so.

We know that if we want a certain work done, we select the most proper individual for that job. If he is not so good as we could wish, we take the best we have and use that individual. So the Almighty, if he cannot have a people exactly to his liking, I do not know but that he will take the best there is, and manage and get along with them according to the wisdom he possesses.

Now, in relation to the Constitution of the United States, I want to speak a few words. There is a great deal of sacredness attached to the Constitution of the United States by this people: that is all right and good. The Constitution is well enough, and so is anything that serves the purpose for which it was created, provided that purpose be a good one. It was designed and created with a good intention. If it serves the purpose and end of its creation, it is good; and when it has served the end of its creation, the purpose and design of the Almighty are accomplished, and I do not know that he has any more particular use for it. He may then