

had doubts whether some systems were not as good as ours, and whether we had not better be governed by the powers of the world than listen to the teachings of God; however, as we have progressed the mist has been removed, and in relation to these matters, the Elders of Israel begin to understand that they have something to do with the world politically as well as religiously, that it is as much their duty to study correct political principles as well as religious, and to seek to know and comprehend the social and political interests of man, and to learn and be able to teach that which would be best calculated to promote the interests of the world. As President Young says frequently, we have made advancement, and now begin to comprehend many things of which we were before ignorant. We have been striving, to a certain degree, to get correct information in relation to all matters necessary for our future advancement and understanding of things in connection with the Saints of God, we have been endeavoring to promote the righteousness, the putting away and overcoming of iniquity, and the hand of God has been with us guiding and directing us. It is not necessary to go over the details of our history, but, suffice it to say, that many circumstances that were of a critical character, and trying for the time being, have turned out to be for our best good and to our future advantage. Many of the Saints thought it was difficult and trying to leave Nauvoo, but should we like to go back there now? There is not a man but would say that he is better off than he would have been if he had remained in the State of Illinois, yet, as one of the poet's has said—

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform; He plants
his footsteps in the sea And rides
upon the storm. Deep in unfathomable
mines Of never-failing skill,

He treasures up his bright designs And
works his sovereign will. Ye fearful
Saints fresh courage take The clouds ye
so much dread Are big with mercy, and
shall break In blessings on your head.
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But
trust him for his grace; Behind a frowning
Providence He hides a smiling face.
His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding
every hour; The bud may have a bitter
taste, But sweet will be the flower."

We have proven that the hand of God has directed us, and by it we are sustained, as we now find ourselves here on the present occasion. Well, now, if the Lord has blessed us, as he has done, what reason have we to fear for the future. Some people ask what will be the result of our acts at the present time? I don't care; God has dictated, and it is his business to dictate those that guide us and direct our energies. If you have got a religion that is different from that of other people, won't they persecute you? Yes; but what of that? We dare to have a religion of our own. Years ago we dared to have faith for ourselves, and to come forth amongst the contumely of the world and to say we were Saints, and that we had taken upon us the name of Jesus Christ, and were resolved to fulfil the obligations which the Church of Christ had imposed upon us. This we felt years and years ago. Did we experience it? Certainly; men would persecute us, laugh at us and deprive us of our happiness if they could. A great many influences were brought to bear against us. Well, now, is it consistent that all the churches that are spoken of in the Book of Mormon as well as in the Bible, that have been and still are being built up to get gain, and for the purpose of keeping hordes of men living upon the people in comparative idleness; I ask is it reasonable that all these systems and organizations of