

unto themselves.” This is the teaching of “spiritualism,” that peeping and muttering system. The expounders of that faith—if it may be called a faith—teach the doctrine of mankind becoming a law unto themselves—no forms, no ceremonies, no regulations—each one independent for himself and herself. Now, while we sing sometimes:

“Know this that every soul is free,
To choose his life and what he’ll be;”

and while we acknowledge,

“For this eternal truth is given,
That God will force no man to heaven.”

Yet on the other hand, we recognize the fact that there is a law given to all things in the economy of God in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. “All kingdoms have a law given.” So we are told here in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. We learn from that Book that, “there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or lesser kingdom. And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.” Every kingdom that is governed by law is preserved by law and sanctified by the same, no matter in what part of the universe it may be and those who abide the laws of that kingdom and that condition in which they find themselves, gain happiness and are preserved and sanctified and become exalted thereby. Now, although these laws are given of God, they do not interfere with the volition of man. Every man has his free agency. Light and truth are placed before us, truth and error are here, and we can choose the one and refuse the other, or refuse the one and choose the other, just as it

was with our first parents in the garden of Eden. The history of the fall is placed before us that we might understand this great principle of agency; the tree of life and the tree of death, the tree of light and the tree of darkness. The Lord has said to us in substance, “I have placed before you truth and error, choose which you will receive. You can receive the light or the darkness, you can receive the truth or the error as you please; but by and by you must give an account of your acts.” We find ourselves here on this planet that God has created for us, a branch of his great family, and he has given us certain principles to govern ourselves by. He does not force them upon us. God will force no man to heaven or to hell; but if we choose we can lay hold of these principles and be governed thereby, and by doing that we will be improved in our nature in proportion to our reception of light and truth, and exaltation will come to us on this principle and no other.

This spirit of so-called independence, or “liberty,” as some persons misuse the term, is spreading throughout the world. It has its influence among us. There is to a certain extent in our midst a desire and disposition to throw off the restraint that comes from the heads of families, the influence that parents exercise over children, to rebel against the laws of the community in which we live, to resist the restriction that comes from the laws of the land, and from the laws of the Church—the laws of God. This spirit exists to a great extent in the world, and is bound to have more or less effect upon us here in the mountains, because, although we are in some degree separated from the world, yet we are also connected with the world, and must expect,