

and a standing in the Church, disregard the authority of the Priesthood, both local and general. I hear sometimes of parties, and of cliques, and of rings in our midst. What! What, a party in the Church and kingdom of God? What! Rings associated with the principles of eternal truth—associated with the celestial law that emanates from our Heavenly Father? The devil got up a ring and was cast out of heaven for getting it up, as also a third part of the spirits who associated themselves with him. They were cast out because they devised principles that were in opposition to the word and will and law of God, and every man who follows in their footsteps, unless he speedily repent, will be placed in the same position—will also be cast out. The law of God must be put in force against the transgressor. No man who professes to be a Latter-day Saint can transgress with impunity. The Priesthood of God cannot be disregarded with impunity. We have men in our midst who are not afraid to speak against the authorities of the Church in the localities in which they live. Jude, in his general epistle, refers to such men. He alludes to them as “filthy dreamers who defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet,” he says, “Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not * * clouds they are without water, carried about of winds * * wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouths

speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.” So also Peter speaks of such characters, “But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.” Now, we have such men as these up and down. I think Brother Hosea Stout describes them as “smart Alecs.” They think they are wiser and better than other people, and they want to regulate the affairs of God, when God has given them no authority to do it. But it is woe to those who fight against the authorities of the Church of God. Let such be brought up before proper tribunals; for no backbiting, nor anything of that kind can be sanctioned in the Church and kingdom of God. These are things that prevail more or less in various parts of the Territory. I suppose we have them to meet. They have always been, to a greater or less degree, mixed up with the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth; but it is for the authorities to purge the Church of all such things, and to have a people who will be united, who will be one, and who will be governed by the law of God. If I violate any law of the Church, bring me up for it; if anyone else does, bring him up for it; but don’t go sneaking around backbiting and misrepresenting. Let us act as men, at least, if we won’t be Saints; but we should be true to our calling and profession, and honor our God. There is nothing new in all this. The spirit of rebellion has gone on ever since the devil and his angels were cast out of heaven. He and they have been making war against the Saints, and will continue to do so; but Satan will finally be over-