

unto us. They would throw dust in the eyes of the Latter-day Saints, if possible, and try to foster in the minds of the people that there is something very inconsistent with the Constitution and genius of our institutions for men who are religious to have anything to do with politics. It is considered all very well for a wicked man to hold office; he can mingle in politics and help to frame the government of the country; but the man who makes any profession of religion, especially if he be an official in the church to which he belongs, has no right to meddle in politics, or interfere in any way with the government of society. This is all wrong from beginning to end. Admitting what I said in the beginning, that we are the people of God, I would ask, what better people can be found, and what more suitable people to take charge of the affairs of mankind in the earth and establish righteous principles and maintain laws under which all men can dwell in peace and be entirely free from oppression and everything of this character? Who, I would ask, are better qualified to do this than the men who understand the principles of truth? Suppose, for instance, that today and from this day forward, the Latter-day Saints, those who are active in their religion and in the performance of the duties of their religion, were to withdraw from politics and leave the government of this land to others, what would be the result? It would not be but a little while before the scenes we see in other places, and that are deplored by every lover of liberty in the country, would be enacted in this part of the land; you would see a condition of affairs that would cause you to mourn, and you would be willing to flee to any place almost to be free

from participating in them. This would be the result if those who are active, as Latter-day Saints, were to withdraw from participation in these matters. But is this the design of the Lord? No, it is not; He never did design that this should be the case, and it would be a want of wisdom on our part, as a people, to allow any such a condition of affairs to exist. I maintain that Latter-day Saints have a perfect right to hold office, and they should not be excluded from office; that whenever the people choose to elect one of them, it would not be considered improper in the least degree, no matter what his standing, he has a perfect right to hold that office; and if he be a righteous man, the better it will be for the people, if he will condescend to take upon him the duties of the office. Instead of excluding such a person I would feel thankful to him to fill it, feeling assured that such men would give satisfaction, and that while they were in power good government would be preserved in the land. Some of our enemies have come to Congress, and have complained about "Mormons" holding office. I have said, gentlemen, if you would exclude a "Mormon" from holding office, because of his ecclesiastical authority, you will have to exclude every man of worth in the Territory, for there is not a man of worth in the Territory who does not hold some office in our Church. The shoemaker who works at his trade for a living, may be called upon on the Sabbath to preach to the people; the carpenter, the blacksmith, the mason, the man who works from Monday morning to Saturday night may be called upon to preach the Gospel of salvation; and such men are all the time being called to go to the nations of the earth as ministers of the Gos-