

of religion shall not take part in the affairs of state, although there is nothing of that kind said anywhere in the constitution or the laws; but there may be some propriety in saying this where men are educated especially for the ministry—where they devote themselves to that labor and withdraw themselves from the practical affairs of life and depend upon their parishioners furnishing them support. There might be some propriety in saying to a class of that kind, “you are not fit to take part in civil affairs, and the practical, everyday affairs of life, because of your calling and because of the nature of your duties.” But we say there is great impropriety in saying that those who labor in the ministry among us shall not take part; for this reason: that all the men among us who are the most practical, the most energetic, and the most business like—from these men the ministers are chosen, that is, men who labor in the ministry as Bishops, as Elders, as missionaries, and in other capacities. They have proved that they are capable of sustaining themselves by their own efforts, and at the same time devote a certain portion of their time to public affairs. Hence, you will find among us as a rule that our Bishops are all practical men; our Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors, and the Bishops and their Counselors, the Teachers and others, are all active business men among us. They have gained experience, and because of that they are sometimes chosen to fill local offices. Take the Legislature of Utah Territory, composed as it has been of some holding positions in the Church, and you will find a body of practical men, the superiors of whom are not to be found—I say it without fear of truthful contradiction—

anywhere in any Legislature in this country, men who understand the wants of their constituents and of the people, and the kind of laws that are best adapted to them. I have had some experience in mingling with men in public life, and I must say that for practical wisdom, and for a knowledge of the affairs of the country and of the people represented in Utah Territory, there was found, previous to the passage of the Edmunds law, a class of men that had not their superiors anywhere in this land, for practical wisdom and the ability necessary to lay the foundation, and to perpetuate the institutions of a great country.

Is it wrong for men who have the Priesthood, and who act in this capacity, to act in civil offices and to let the people have the benefit of their experience in these matters—is there any wrong in this? I can see none, and I am sure that no man who is a true friend to his country can. There is no good reason why these men should be excluded; in fact there is every reason why they should be invited to take part in establishing the affairs of the country. I have often said, in speaking to our brethren and sisters in various parts of the Territory, that that which we behold to-day in our Territory—the good order, the peace, the freedom from debt, the lightness of taxation, and all the circumstances that are so favorable to us as a people, are due to the men who have borne the Priesthood, commencing with President Brigham Young, his Counselors, and the Twelve Apostles, and the leading men in Israel—the circumstances which surround us, I say, are due to the wisdom that God has given unto them in managing these affairs. At the same time, because this is