

be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." That was the teaching of one of the old Apostles. Furthermore, the Lord has instituted in the Church in these last days the same Priesthood that formerly existed, and for the same purpose. We have, say, a First Presidency; then we have the Twelve; then we have High Priests; then we have Seventies; then we have High Councils, and Bishops and their Counselors; then we have Presidents of Stakes, each Stake in its form a compact body, with a President and his two Counselors, and Bishops operating in their place and presiding over their various Wards, and the High Councils operating in their place, with the Priests, Teachers and Deacons operating in theirs, all working and operating together. Then we have Relief Societies, and Mutual Improvement Societies, and our Sunday Schools, and Primary Associations, and all the various organizations and institutions which are organized for the instruction of the rising generation, male and female. Thus we have the various officers in the Church performing their several duties with honor, integrity and truthfulness before God, looking after the interest, the welfare and the happiness of those that are associated with and that are under their jurisdiction. Then these various Stakes, in their organizations, with their Presidents, are subject to the presiding authorities, and the Presidents thereof have to render an account to the Presidency of the Church; and the Presidency of the Church ought to be able at all times

to render an account to their Heavenly Father.

This is an order, as I understand it, that is introduced by the Almighty, and by Him alone. It is not of man, nor did it proceed from man, neither can it progress nor be perfected by man without the direction of the Almighty. In fact, with all these helps, with all these organizations, with all these principles, owing to the weakness and infirmities of man, we find it difficult to preserve in purity those sacred institutions that God has given unto us, and we continually need the greatest care, humility, self-denial, perseverance, watchfulness and reliance upon God. We talk sometimes about free will; is that a correct principle? Yes; and it is a principle that has always existed, and proceeded from God, our Heavenly Father. When God revealed Himself to Joseph Smith it was optional whether he obeyed His counsel or not; I suppose, however, looking at things as they exist, and as they are in truth, God understood that he would do it, he having been selected for that purpose a long, long time ago; and that the Lord knew that he would adhere to those principles and would carry out the designs of Heaven as they should be communicated unto and required of him. We received the Gospel; was anyone forced to obey it? Was there any coercion in any possible way manifested toward us? Not that I know of. Was Oliver Cowdery, who was the second Elder in the Church, obliged to receive this Gospel? No, he was not. Was Hyrum Smith obliged to receive it? No, he was not. Were any of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon—the Whitmers and others? No. And after they did identify themselves with this Church, were they com-