

sive against them, and how difficult it is for them to maintain their foothold! This was the condition of the churches in the days of the Apostles. They were scattered abroad throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, and on many islands. The Apostles had gone forth wherever they could find an opening. Thousands had been organized into the Church, and in these various branches there were men who had inspiration from God, who had the authority of the Holy Priesthood, who could ask of God and receive from him knowledge for the guidance of the people. While these men remained the Church continued to grow. But persecution sought the lives of men of this character. They were singled out and slain until not one was left, until a universal silence reigned. Throughout all the nations of the earth, not a voice was heard to disturb the silence, no heavenly messenger, no voice from the eternal world, no man that had the authority to say, "thus saith the Lord." The heavens became as brass over the heads of the children of men, all communication was cut off, and of course the Church fell, the Priesthood departed, the ordinances were changed, and those who survived with a little faith accommodated themselves to the circumstances surrounding them. That was the condition in early days.

But how the condition has changed! God in his mercy concealed this continent from the eyes of the world. For ages it remained here a secret place. Neither the Atlantic nor the Pacific could be penetrated until the set time came. Then a man was found who was moved upon by the Spirit of God. He became possessed of an idea that would not die, and his idea prevailed

eventually. Ships were launched upon the great ocean, and the continent of America was discovered. God has revealed the reason this continent was concealed for so many ages. If it had been known to early ages, it would have been overrun, and there would have been no room for the great work of the last days. But he organized a government upon this land. He sustained the men who founded it. He filled them with His Spirit and enabled them to fight all the battles necessary to establish religious, social and political freedom, and a system of government was formed under which his kingdom could be set up, with all its institutions, without interfering in the least with the Constitution. In the Lord's own due time this Church was brought forth. The messengers of life and salvation were sent to the nations of the earth proclaiming that God had established His Church, and inviting them to come to a land of liberty. Thousands have been gathered here from that day to this, fulfilling in a most remarkable manner the predictions of the prophets concerning the gathering of the people in the last days. The circumstances which surrounded us are very different from those which surrounded our predecessors. We are a compact body. We believe in gathering; we believe in one people of one faith living together, worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences. This presents a solid phalanx against opposition and persecution. We cannot be slain today in detail as our brethren were 1,800 years ago. The ideas we believe in are being disseminated among our children. We are increasing. The teachings of history are that a people like us have a destiny, and they cannot be pre-