

and as we grow, so grows the opposition; as we gain strength, so the opposition to us gains strength; as we gain experience and knowledge, we become more capable and achieve a higher position, and we will continue to do so until Zion will be the head, just as the prophets have predicted. But it is necessary that we should pass through this school of experience to test us, to try us, to give unto us the necessary confidence in ourselves as well as in our God and in His unfailing promises. Had we been called in the beginning to pass through such ordeals as we have had of late, it is doubtful if we could have endured them, unless God had endowed us with an extraordinary amount of His power. But they have come upon us gradually. We have met one difficulty after another, one assault after another, until we have gradually acquired confidence in our ability to withstand these assaults and to meet them, as well as confidence in our God. Our faith has been increased, and through the increase of faith we have been enabled to overcome, and thus it will be unto the end. There will be times, as there have been, when it will seem as though there is no possible way of escape, when it will seem as though everything is blocked up before us, and as though we are about to be swallowed up or destroyed; and the faith of the people will be tested in this manner, doubtless, many times in the future, as it has been many times in the past; but when it will seem the darkest, when the clouds will seem the most impenetrable, when there will be not a ray to illumine the pathway of the Saints of God, then God will be near to us to deliver us, and at the very darkest hour He will dispel the clouds and provide a way of escape that will excite our

wonder, our admiration and our praise. It was so last year—I mean 1882, before the passage of the Edmunds law and afterwards. It seemed as though the spirits of evil had poured out of hell and they had come upon the earth and were operating against the work of God. In all my experience I had never met a stronger feeling than prevailed. It seemed as though the whole nation was aroused from the center to the extremities. Almost every church in the land, every priest and every religious organization, was stirred up, banded together and their influence combined against the work of God to destroy it. Congress was being pushed forward by a power which the Members could not resist, and it seemed as though there would be no stopping place short of our destruction. I expect you felt it here as the Saints felt it in Utah, and as I felt it in Washington. The papers, as you will remember, were full of threats against us. It seemed as though a crisis had arrived in our affairs. It seemed as though there was no way of escape. But God still reigned. He comforted the hearts of His servants, and I was filled with thanksgiving to see the spirit which rested upon President Taylor and the brethren at home. When I received their letters I saw that, notwithstanding the darkness of the hour and the threats of our enemies, their hearts were undismayed, and their confidence in God as unfaltering as ever. God was with His people. He had not forgotten His promises. And it seemed as though by one blow or one move, the whole of this opposition was dissipated. It fell to the ground, the whole fabric of it, and, like a baseless vision of the night, it melted away and the sunshine came out; the sun, as glorious as ever, shone