

PROPRIETY OF THEATRICAL AMUSEMENTS.—INSTRUCTIONS
RELATIVE TO CONDUCTING THEM.

*Remarks by President BRIGHAM YOUNG, at the Dedication of the New Theatre
in Great Salt Lake City, March 6, 1862.*

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

Man is organized and brought forth as the king of the earth, to understand, to criticise, examine, improve, manufacture, arrange, and organize the crude matter, and honour and glorify the works of God's hands. This is a wide field for the operation of man, that reaches into eternity; and it is good for mortals to search out the things of this earth.

The elements are to be brought into shape and operation for the benefit, happiness, beauty, excellency, glory, and exaltation of the children of men that dwell upon the earth; though we cannot produce that which has not already been produced. Are we capable, by our most critical researches, of finding that which has not already been found? We are not. We are capable of improving upon the crude elements, until we understand the organization of this earth, and the power by which it is sustained, for what purpose man was created, and the immortality that will crown his existence. All this is what others have learned before us.

Were we capable of scanning the eternities of the Gods, we should find works and exhibitions of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and power, by whom? By those who were as we are. It is the privilege of man to search out the wisdom of God pertaining to the earth and the heavens.

Professing Christians generally would not consider this a fit position

for those who profess the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ to occupy. These Saints of the Most High appear here in the capacity of an assembly to exercise and amuse the mind of the natural man. This idea brings at once to my mind a thousand reflections. What is nature? Everything that pertains to the heavens and the earth. "My son," says the Christian father, "you should not attend a theatre, for there the wicked assemble; nor a ball-room, for there the wicked assemble; you should not be found playing a ball, for the sinner does that." Hundreds of like admonitions are thus given, and so we have been thus traditioned; but it is our privilege and our duty to scan all the works of man from the days of Adam until now, and thereby learn what man was made for, what he is capable of performing, and how far his wisdom can reach into the heavens, and to know the evil and the good.

It is written in the Scriptures, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Is there an evil thing upon the earth that he does not fully understand? There is not. The Psalmist very beautifully illustrates this idea—"Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it