

So it was when the Saints settled in Illinois. They had difficulties to contend with that seemed insurmountable. They had to endure poverty in every form; privations of every character; sickness, still worse than poverty, prostrating them and their loved ones. But did the faithful tremble in those days and feel to abandon the work of God? Not at all. They strengthened themselves in the promises that God had made. They knew by the testimony that He had given them—the testimony of the Holy Ghost—that if they would be faithful, if they would cling to the truth and be steadfast in maintaining their integrity, God would fulfil His word to the very uttermost. And when the Prophet himself and his beloved brother were slain by the violence of mobs, and it seemed, this being so unexpected a catastrophe, as though the promises of God concerning Zion had partially failed, or that the Church, destitute of a leader, would fall to pieces, even then, in that dark hour of trial, in the depths of that dreadful affliction, the faithful still believed. They could not see with their natural eyes the outcome; they could not imagine how this would terminate; but still they had faith in God, that He who had founded this work, and who had thus far cared for it, would still shield, protect and guard it, and carry it forward until it should fulfil the high destiny which the Lord had said it should have.

Afterwards, when God raised up another leader to His people and manifested His power so signally in the midst of the people, to show to them that though one leader had been taken, God had still the power to inspire another man to fill the place made vacant by his cruel martyrdom; and when the mobs gathered around again and seemed to threaten the overthrow of the entire people and of the system, it was then as it had been in Missouri—the faithful had no doubts as to the result. But there were some who had not faith—who had not lived so as to preserve within them that living faith that comes from God. They, frightened at the threats of the enemy and alarmed at the dreadful prospects before them, withdrew from the Church and left it to meet the fate that they deemed, from their faithless view, to be inevitable. They went to various places. The towns along the Mississippi were almost peopled by those who had once been Latter-day Saints, and their children. But there was a mighty phalanx, although few in number, who never for a moment doubted the future of the work of God. They knew, by the testimony which God had given unto them, that whatever might happen, the kingdom of God and the Church that He had established would roll forth in mighty power and would yet, as the Prophet Daniel predicted, fill the whole earth.

Those of us who can remember when we were compelled to abandon Nauvoo, when the winter was so inclement that the ice made a bridge across the Mississippi for the first

teams of the pioneers to cross to Iowa on the other side, know how dark and gloomy the circumstances of the Saints were, with the mob surrounding our outer settlements and threatening to destroy us and all that we had unless the people abandoned everything they had created under the blessing of God, and how trying it was to the faith of the people of God. But then you can also remember, doubtless, how full of courage and how full of hope the faithful Latter-day Saints were in these trying circumstances. The word was to cross the Mississippi and to launch out into an unknown wilderness—to go where, no one knew. California was talked about. California then covered an extensive area. It extended east of where we now are. It embraced all this land, from the Rocky Mountains clear to the Pacific—an extensive region of which but little was known. California was talked about, however, as the place of destination. But who knew anything about California? Who knew anything of the terrors of the journey thither, or of the dangers that might have to be met and contended with? Who knew anything about the country to be traversed? The Latter-day Saints literally went forth as Paul describes Abraham as doing, leaving the land of his nativity and going forth he knew not whither, to a land which God would lead him, and which He had promised to him and to his seed after him. It was not one Abraham then; it was a whole people, moving out with faith that was undisturbed by the threatening aspect of affairs or by the wildness of the wilderness which had to be traversed; undisturbed by its unknown terrors; undisturbed by the poverty in which they were involved, not having food to last but a few weeks; undisturbed by the scarcity of clothing or by the lack of teams and means of transportation. The faith of the Latter-day Saints at that time was unshaken by any of these prospects, which to others might have been so appalling and disheartening. It was by faith that this was accomplished.

You remember the story that is told of Columbus. He was at dinner with some distinguished people, and the conversation turned upon the discovery of America, and some were disposed to make light of Columbus' performance—that it was an easy thing to sail westward and discover a continent as he had done. The conversation proceeded for some time in this strain. Finally, Columbus took an egg which laid upon the table. He asked the company present if they could make that egg stand on one end. A number of them tried to do so; but they failed. He took the egg, and he tapped it a little on the broad end and flattened it; then he set it up, and it stood alone. Now, said he, "Gentlemen, it is an easy thing to do, when you know how to do it; it is an easy thing to discover a continent after it has been discovered."

It is a great deal the same in regard to our coming to this country. We hear many remarks about what

a trifling thing it was to come here; that this was a glorious land, and that the journey across the plains was a matter of very little moment. Of course, it is now. It is not much now to get into a palace car at Burlington, in Iowa (which is not far from where we started), come across the State of Iowa, change to another palace car at Omaha, and cross from there to Ogden or to Salt Lake City. It is a very easy, delightful journey. But in the days of which I speak, affairs were very different. There was nothing known concerning all this country. I speak from actual knowledge, because, though quite young, I came across with one of the first companies, and I know the ignorance that prevailed in the camps concerning our destination or what kind of difficulties we would have to contend with. It was all a matter of faith after we left Nauvoo. The people traveled; but they did not know particularly where they were going, only they were going westward. They were led, as they believed, by servants of God, and they had no doubt in their hearts as to what the result would be. They knew, by the testimony of the Spirit of God, that they were the people of God, and that He would lead them right. This was the feeling which accompanied them and rested upon them throughout their journey. When the Pioneers sent back messengers to the camps that were traveling behind, it gave the people of course, some knowledge; it relieved uncertainty, where it had existed. The reports, however, were not very encouraging concerning the character of the country, of the soil, of the climate, or of the prospects that were before the people. But those who had faith never doubted as to the result. And after the first winter passed and the crops began to make their appearance above the surface of the soil and give some hope that there might be a harvest reaped, the crickets came, and in one night they would leave a field of promising wheat as bare as the palm of a man's hand. Field after field was swept away in this manner. The prospects were exceedingly gloomy when the crickets came; for there was scarcely enough food to give half rations to the people in this city and neighborhood. But did the people's faith falter even then? Did they think what they were going to do, and how they were going to escape the inevitable? If there was any such feeling, I never came in contact with it. It is true, I did not have the responsibility of a family; but I knew very well, from association with the Saints at that time, that their faith was not disturbed, and that they did not anticipate any disaster such as might naturally be expected in face of those devouring insects destroying all their crops. And that faith met with its reward. God, in a most miraculous manner, sent flocks of gulls. They came by hundreds and devoured the crickets. They arrested the destroyer. When we would go out on Monday morning, after having been absent from the fields on Sunday, (the people