

we were told pointedly that we must hold no prayer meetings, no prayer circles, no conferences, and that we must have neither Bishops nor Presidents, and that if we indulged in any of these forbidden luxuries the citizens would be upon us and destroy us. A very few accepted the conditions and remained, and I believe that, to this day, one or two families occupy their inheritances who then renounced their faith.

This people landed in Illinois destitute. Most of their animals had been plundered from them during the difficulties, and, to use a comparative expression, they arrived in that State almost naked and barefoot. They were, however, a very industrious people, and they immediately went to work; anywhere and everywhere that they could find anything to do their hands laid hold upon it, and prosperity very soon began to smile upon them. Joseph Smith was kept in prison during the winter, but in the spring he and several of his fellow prisoners, among them Bishop Alexander McRae of the 11th Ward, escaped and made their way to the State of Illinois.

Our people had a very singular idea of justice and right; they supposed, having paid their money to the United States for their lands, having actually purchased and received titles for them, that it was the business of the United States to protect them thereon; having little acquaintance with law they entertained the somewhat wild idea that that was no more than justice on the part of the Government. Of course, the government could only be expected to protect them against any adverse titles that might arise; but so far as protecting them from mobs or from illegal violence from the State in which they lived, from oppression from those in authority, or from marauders

who might burn their houses, or murder them and ravish their wives, this was no part of the business of the United States; but in their lack of knowledge on these subjects they fancied that the United States should protect them on their lands, hence Joseph Smith and several of his brethren went directly to Washington, carrying the applications of some ten thousand persons, and asked the Government to protect them in the possession of their lands and in their rights, and to restore them to their homes. They had an interview on the subject with Mr. Van Buren, at that time President of the United States, and the answer that he gave has become almost a household word. Said he—"Gentlemen, your cause is just, but we can do nothing for you." Joseph accordingly returned to his friends in the western border of Illinois, and they commenced purchasing lands in the vicinity of Nauvoo, and they laid out and built a city and remained there.

This occurred in the Spring of 1839, and Joseph remained there until the Summer of 1844, during which time he had several very grievous lawsuits, which arose out of attempts on the part of the authorities of Missouri to carry him back to that State. He was arrested several times, and had one trial, and was discharged on *habeas corpus* in the circuit court, before Judge Stephen A. Douglas; one trial, and discharged on *habeas corpus* before Judge Pope, United States judge in the district of Illinois; and one trial before the municipal court of Nauvoo. These several trials cost a great deal of money and a great deal of time, and were a very discouraging feature in the progress of the settlements in that vicinity, though the industry and enterprise of the people were