

of the Prophets Joseph and Hyrum, as also the slaughter of many other individuals; the burning of houses, of granaries, of haystacks, of grain stacks, the property of the Saints from outside settlements near Nauvoo, and of the consequent combination of nine counties to make a descent upon Nauvoo, and the expulsion of the Saints from the city—all these things, I say, are matters of history. And while the people of the State in their organized capacity sought to screen themselves from the direct responsibility of those events under various pretenses, yet the covering was “too thin” from the fact that the then Governor Ford, of Illinois, was really aiding and abetting all those movements; he did nothing to restrain them, but everything to encourage them, and in this way the stain of these things—the death of the Prophets and the expulsion of the Saints—was fastened upon the government of the State. However much some honorable persons in the State may have opposed these things, yet there was not influence and power enough in the State to intervene for the protection of the Saints in the enjoyment of their civil and religious rights. Thus they were compelled to retire, and their march was westward into these mountains.

All this had been predicted by the Prophet Joseph. The Saints had been looking forward to the accomplishment of those events. They were not altogether unlooked for, however much the necessity was deplored and however great were the sufferings of individuals and families, and the community as a whole, in their travels for a distance of nearly 1,500 miles across the then barren trackless desert.

The history of the pioneers and the many people that followed, and

the privations of the early years in the settlement of the Saints in these Rocky Mountains, are also matters of history. I would that they were compiled in a succinct and lucid history, that our children might peruse the same and not forget the scenes through which their fathers have passed; for they are wonderful. There are many now living who passed through these events; they were personal sharers in them; but the great mass of the present generation know nothing of them, only as they are occasionally referred to by their fathers.

It is therefore quite true what President George A. Smith said, “that we came to this country willingly because we were obliged to.” It seemed to have been the course marked out before us, and circumstances so surrounded and pressed upon us, that we were not able to avoid it, although we fain would have avoided it, if we could.

Prior to the full determination upon moving westward, President Brigham Young and the Twelve joined in communications to all the Governors of the several States east of the Rocky Mountains, imploring them and their Legislatures for some word of comfort, of consolation, of tacit permission for the Saints to find shelter and protection at the hands of their respective governments. These official communications, made to every State and State legislature in the land, received but very slight consideration. From a portion of them no answers were received at all, and those who did deign to answer those communications answered them evasively, without any hearty expressions of welcome, or any intimation that they would use their influence to maintain the rights, privileges and immunities of citizens. In short,