

the cold shoulder was turned towards the Saints from every quarter, and immediately in front was the combined mob of nine counties, waging war against them, backed up secretly by the powers of the State—or at least there was no effort on the part of the State to restrain the actions of the mob. President Young and other Elders and the people were harassed continually by vexatious law suits. They were pressed on every hand. Their enemies desired to involve them in trouble. They sought to imprison our leading men. And though, at a council held in October, 1845, between the Twelve and the leaders of the opposition, including representatives of the State—the principal general of that district, the circuit judge of that district—Stephen A. Douglas, subsequently a Senator of the United States, and presidential aspirant—I say, notwithstanding that it was stipulated at that council, that if we would in good faith go to and make the necessary preparations for our departure westward, as soon as the grass grew in the spring, to enable our teams to live, we should be protected and the mobocratic spirit restrained until we could take our departure—our agreement and pledge to accept these conditions only seemed to embolden the more rabid of our enemies in the counties round about, and instead of respecting these conditions, agreed to by the dignitaries of the State for our protection during winter, they commenced to oppress and harass and war against us to such an extent, that we were compelled to take up our march in the dead of winter. Early in February, multitudes of the people commenced to cross the Mississippi, and form their encampments in the forests of Iowa, preparatory to starting out upon their long and dreary march across the

desert. In regard to the terrible sufferings that followed—the terrible snow storms and rains that continued from February until May, causing such floods and mire, distress and suffering and consequent sickness, as perhaps has never before been known to the lot of man under similar circumstances—they were at least such as none can properly depict or comprehend, but those who passed through them. Of the many that were laid by the wayside before reaching these valleys of the mountains, those families who were decimated must be left to tell the tale. The history of those early days of persecution and suffering will never be fully known. But in the midst of it all a goodly number of the people of God were sustained by their faith and the overruling providence of Jehovah, and were brought safely through; while the weaker and more doubtful, the fearful and unbelieving, scattered into the surrounding country, left the body of the Saints, drifted up and down the Mississippi into the various towns of Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, and back into the Eastern States, while others of the poor and less able, though earnest in the faith and abiding in the truth, were left by the wayside, at the way stations that were planted between the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers, where farms were opened, grain and vegetables planted for the poor, until they reached a general place of rendezvous on the Missouri River, at Council Bluffs, where the Mormon Battalion enlisted for the Mexican War, and in the midst of which the emigrating camps were obliged to halt until the following spring, when they started for the western wilds of this great interior country. I said these things had been directed by the overruling providence of God.