

The experience that we have gained in this respect in the past is only a foretaste of that which is in the future. Those who started in this Work with an understanding of its nature, made their calculations that, if it were necessary to lay down their lives and sacrifice everything that is near and dear to them, they, with the Lord's help, would do so to break the yoke of Satan and free mankind from the thralldom of sin that has so long oppressed them. There is no doubt that many have had their lives shortened through the cruelty of their enemies; many have been spoiled of their goods and have been called upon to make sacrifices, if we may term them such, but in our view they are not sacrifices, yet we cannot express the idea better than by using this word. The difficulties which we have encountered in the past in this respect we shall doubtless meet in the future, with this difference, that the kingdom of God is gaining power and strength; the people are gaining faith and experience, which enable them to endure far more than in former days.

This morning, Brother George A. Smith alluded to circumstances in the early history of this people which caused those who called themselves Saints to apostatize. While he was speaking I contrasted the difference in my mind between the Saints today and then. There is a very great difference. Many apostatized then from trivial and foolish causes; they were so ignorant of the nature of the work of God. Now it is somewhat better understood, and apostasy is not near so common as then; people begin to understand the mind of the Lord. The adversary has less power and influence over the Latter-day Saints than he had in that early day. The kingdom of God is becoming more consolidated, and it wields greater influence every day; and it

will be so from this time forward until the Priesthood shall prevail.

The hatred of the adversary will not be lessened by the lapse of time; in fact, I sometimes think that he will make more desperate exertions; he will arouse all the inhabitants of the earth by his influence, and by slanders, and lies, and storms of vituperation, and, by his mists of darkness, endeavor to becloud the understandings of mankind, so that they will be deceived respecting this Work. We have these agencies at work here.

I heard a gentleman remark lately, who himself had just arrived in the city, that he supposed from the reports that were circulated about affairs at this city that all the people here were in a blaze of excitement, that men dare not go out of their houses, and that a certain class were in danger of their lives. Now, we who live here know how false these reports are; yet, it shows the nature of the agencies which are at work, and the means wicked men use to becloud the understanding and to stir up the anger of the powers that be—the Government and its agents—to take steps to crush, if possible, this people. Doubtless, we shall have this to contend with from this time forward to an increased extent, as the kingdom advances and occupies a larger share of public attention and a more conspicuous position among the nations. But, with the increase of this disposition among the wicked, there will be an increase of strength, and power, and faith, and experience on the part of the Latter-day Saints.

I often think about our circumstances today, and those which we have been surrounded with for some time. Who, do you think, on all the face of the earth could enjoy themselves so calmly as we do with the influences operating against them that we have working against us?