

taken place. This Joseph Smith had dared to organize a Church. He had found some gold plates, had a "golden Bible." He had been a money digger; and he had done a great many things, and at last his audacity had culminated in the organization of a church. As I have said the whole countryside was in a flame.

"We cannot endure this; it is a disgrace to our city, our country, our township, to let such a vile fellow as he palm his impositions on the public. We must put a stop to it."

The result was accusations, criminal accusations. Joseph Smith was brought before officers of the law upon every conceivable complaint. The papers heralded his disgrace throughout all the neighborhood, as far as they had circulation, determined to lie him down. There are certain fabulous attributes incorrectly ascribed to the creature called the octopus—or devil-fish. It is said that when it wants to devour its victims, it ejects an inky substance that fills the whole water around so that it can the more easily capture its prey. It was something in this manner that the press and pulpit endeavored to stifle the truth and to destroy those who testified that they had received it. The whole country was filled with every kind of slander. Human imagination was racked to invent stories. They said that Joseph Smith had tried to establish his divine calling by attempting to walk upon the water, with cunningly arranged planks placed a short distance beneath the surface of the water, but that, fortunately, he had been detected in his imposition. They said he had tried to raise the dead, and that the man whom he tried to raise nearly died, because the apparatus which he had arranged

for him to get air became accidentally deranged. There was no end of stories told by ignorant people, vile people, deluded people, wicked people, and even by men who called themselves ministers of the Gospel. You cannot think of anything that was not told, that was not sworn to—any number of witnesses could be obtained to testify to the truth of these falsehoods. At the same time it was said it would only be a little while until the system of which he was the head would burst up. "We have only to wait a while and it will disappear." But it did not disappear.

The Elders went forth regardless of the slanders, regardless of the falsehoods, regardless of the calumnies, preaching the word of God, preaching it in the spirit and power of God. Regardless of all these things they went—persecuted, derided, their names cast out as evil. Men considered it almost a disgrace to talk to them; if they received them into their houses their neighbors looked upon them as though they were entertaining lepers. "What, have you got a 'Mormon' in your house? Do you know what these people are?"

Traveling without purse or scrip, as their predecessors had done in primitive days of Gospel purity, from town to town, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, bearing all kinds of insults and persecutions and hardships, they traveled the land, lifting up their voices everywhere where they had the opportunity, testifying in all humility that God had again spoken from the heavens; that God had again restored the truth in its ancient purity and power; that God had restored the ordinances of the Gospel as they once existed upon the earth; and declaring unto the inhabitants of the earth