

said, scarcely a step in its advancement was hidden from him; scarcely a step but what was foreshadowed by him through the Spirit of God, which rested down upon him. Men doubt the divinity of this work. Men question the spirit of prophecy, or the divine mission of Joseph Smith. His life is maligned and misrepresented; his character derided and held up to contempt and scorn; yet it is not much to say, it is not much to anticipate, that before many years pass away, he will be recognized by the children of men as one of the mightiest Prophets that ever trod the footstool of God our Eternal Father. It is because his life has not been understood; it is because the work which he was the means in the hands of God of founding, is not comprehended; it is because his life has not been understood; it is because the work which he was the means in the hands of God of founding is not comprehended; it is because everything connected with this Church is beclouded by misrepresentation and falsehood that men assume the attitude they do towards this the great work of our God. In the very beginning of this work Joseph told the Saints, left on record the statement, as to how it would be received by the children of men—the hatred with which it would be met, the violence that would be manifested towards it, the various troubles through which it would have to pass. All these things he told, by his prophetic voice, as though their history had been written, as though they had taken place. Most graphically he has described to the Saints the results that should attend the increase of the work. At the first he said it should excite the animosity and hatred of a township. It did this. God in his mercy did not permit persecution to

become so strong in the inception of the work, in the days of its weakness, that it could be overwhelmed. He restrained the power of the wicked, so that the growth and strength of the work would be commensurate with the opposition it had to contend with. As its circle enlarged, as its influence extended, opposition grew proportionately. From townships it extended to cities. As the work grew and outspread these limits, it excited the opposition of counties. As its influence continued to grow, from one county it extended to adjacent counties all the time growing, all the time increasing, all the time meeting with as much opposition as it could well bear up under. Wonderfully has the providence of our God been exhibited in the care exercised over His growing Church and His increasing people! Had it not been for this care, my brethren and sisters, we should not have the happy privilege that we enjoy this day of meeting together in peace in this Tabernacle. Had Satan been permitted to wreak his vengeance upon the Church in the commencement, it could easily have been extinguished in blood. Had the same power that was exercised against the Church in the days of Nauvoo, when the blood of our Prophet and Patriarch, and our present President, drenched the soil of Illinois—had that same spirit been permitted to have wreaked its vengeance upon the Church in the early days, it could, with no more excitement than was then raised, have completely extirpated the Priesthood from the face of the earth. But God, as I have said, in His wonderful providence, restrained the wrath of the wicked in the early days of the Church. Brother Franklin D. Richards has told us this morning, that for eight years