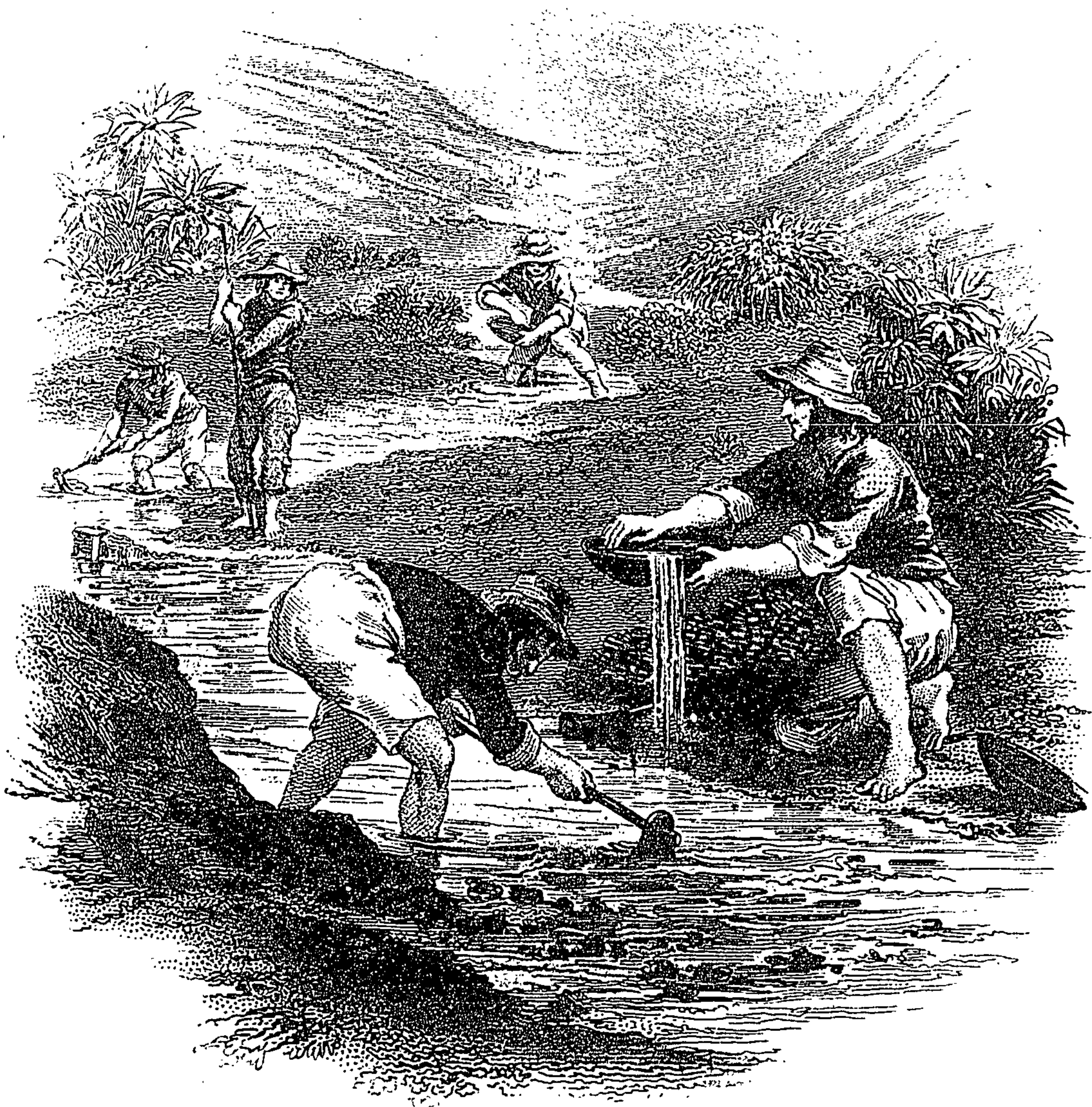


GOLDEN RIVER

Its Past History

ITS PRESENT POSITION

ITS FUTURE PROSPECTS.



SCENE ON A BRANCH OF THE SACRAMENTO.

London.

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1850.

While the Mormons maintained a strictly peaceable demeanour towards their opponents, the effect of the prophet's death was to create a considerable division among them as to the election of his successor. At one time it was proposed to appoint Smith's son, a mere lad. Sidney Rigdon, the partner of Smith in the concoction of the scheme, who was at Pittsburgh at the time of the murder, returned to Nauvoo, with the view of claiming the vacant position of chief and prophet, on the ground of being the only survivor of the first presidency, and also of his having been nominated by Smith as his successor. It appears, however, that ultimately the Mormons resolved to dispense with a prophet, and selected twelve from the body, to become the rulers of the church collectively, under the name of the Twelve Apostles, two of them being appointed trustees of the church or public property. Under their rule it was decided, that every one who joined "the church" was to surrender one-tenth of his property, and one-tenth of his annual income was to be appropriated to the completion of the Temple and to the support of the poor. The rejection of Rigdon as the successor of Smith, led to discord and disunion among the Mormons themselves. A portion of the sect issued a manifesto on the subject, in which they declared the Church to be dissolved, on account of its rejection of the divinely-appointed leader. Rigdon and his party withdrew. He established his branch of the Church at Pittsburgh, and published a paper, in which his quondam associate, Smith, was denounced as an immoral and corrupt person. It was stated that Joe's death was ordained of the Lord, on account of his transgressions; that he did not apostatize, but that he "wrought abominations," and was therefore deemed unfit to direct "the kingdom," and share in the triumphs. The "transgression" consisted in his introducing what Smith called the "spiritual wife" system, by which each elder was allowed to have ten wives. It is alleged that, under Smith's rule, this system of "spiritual wives" was universally prevalent at Nauvoo; and if so, it forms a more tangible and definite ground for the animosity exhibited by the surrounding population, than those alleged for the violence and bloodshed of which they were guilty. Rigdon professed to take his

stand on a different ground, and called on all the faithful to come out and separate themselves from their corrupt brethren at Nauvoo, which was doomed to destruction, and fast falling into decay, on account of its iniquities.

While the sect was thus rent by internal dissensions, the enemies of Mormonism continued their relentless persecution. They banded themselves together under the title of Anti-Mormons, and carried fire and sword into the Mormon settlements in all directions. Nor did they confine themselves to these alone. They also laid waste the dwellings of all those suspected of favouring the obnoxious sect; and openly proclaimed their determination not to stop short of the expulsion of every Mormon from the State of Illinois. These outrages, in which houses were burnt down, skirmishes took place, and lives were lost, continued during the whole of 1844—5, and at length the Mormons were again compelled to leave their settlement, being literally expelled by force, and the utter want of security for either life or property.

In their second Exodus, they seem to have determined to relinquish all connexion whatever with any other community, and to become an independent and isolated people. They crossed the Rocky Mountains, and marched into the trackless deserts of the Great Basin, leaving all the settled portions of the continent behind them. The distress, privations, hardships and sufferings they underwent, in this enforced pilgrimage through a barren wilderness, were of the most extreme and appalling description. Great numbers sank exhausted on the route. At length, however, the pioneers reached the tract of country where they are now settled, between the Great Salt Lake and the Utah Lake. It is fertilised by the Utah River, which connects the two lakes, and is said to be both healthful and productive to a high degree.

On the 24th of July, 1846, the pioneers of the sect arrived in the valley of the Utah; and, finding it suitable for the objects in view, resolved upon making it the New Jerusalem of Mormonism. The capital of the new State was erected on the borders of the Salt Lake, and entitled the Great Salt Lake City. Agricultural buildings and industrial operations were commenced and carried on with energy, spirit, and disci-