

THE
Californian Crusoe;

OR,

THE LOST TREASURE FOUND.

A Tale of Mormonism.

Richard (R)

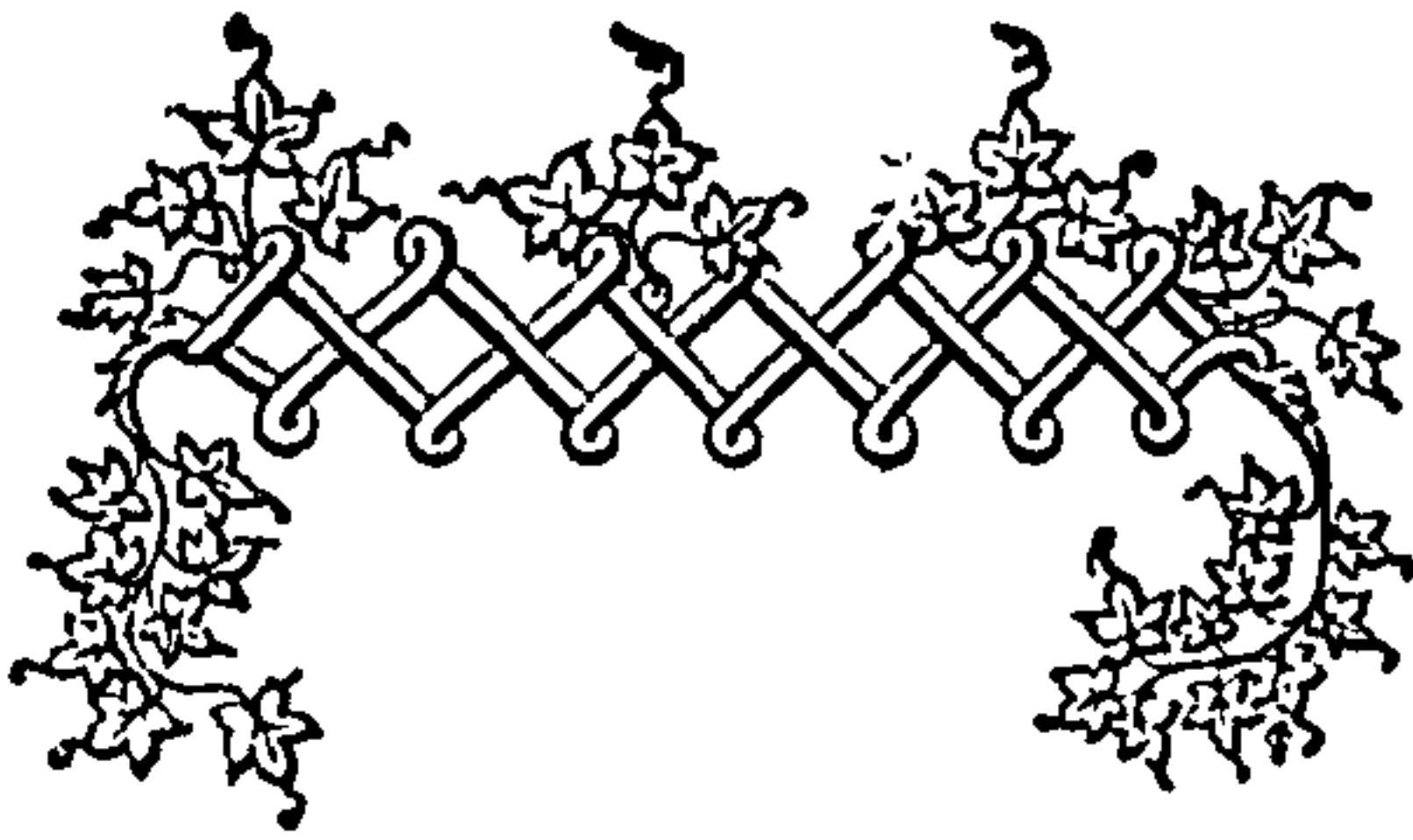
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CHAPTER IV.

Mormon Doctrines.—Engagements of the Prophet.—Joseph borrows Money of Brothers and myself.—Death of my Wife and Sons.—Elder Smart detected in a Popish Plot, and Joseph Smith in a State of Intoxication.—Commencement of Polygamy.—Misfortunes thicken upon the Family of Brothers.—Joseph refuses to repay our Money.—Death of Brothers and his Wife and Daughter.—Vengeance comes upon the Prophet.—My awful Dream.—Death and Burial of Joseph.—Flight of young Brothers.

ALTHOUGH I was inwardly grieved and distressed by the marriage of my daughter to Elder Bangs, I submitted without murmuring, as I believed it to be the will of the Almighty. During the week I was generally engaged on my little estate, and on Sundays I regularly attended the meetings held near the temple. Many doctrines were now prominently taught, of which I had heard comparatively little in England. Great stress was laid upon the material nature of the Deity, who was declared to be possessed of body, parts, and passions like a man, and to reside in a distant planet de-

nominated Kolob. A great deal was said about the future residence of the saints, and we were told that after the resurrection they will need houses and clothing as in the present world, that they will marry and have children, and cultivate farms and flower-gardens. Wonderful things were predicted respecting the speedy restoration of the Jews to the land of Canaan, the overthrow of the Pope, and the commencement of the Millennium. It was apparently taken for granted that we abounded in the gift of tongues, and in the miraculous powers of casting out devils, healing the sick, drinking poison with impunity, and handling vipers and rattle-snakes without damage. I am not able to affirm that I was a witness of anything very remarkable in these several respects, though I constantly heard of wonderful prodigies reported to have been seen by others. We were, however, strongly advised by our teachers to abstain from tobacco and strong drink; and I certainly beheld with my own eyes the uncommon spectacle of a large and hard-working community living in a state of almost universal sobriety.

Although I had been taught, while among the dissenters in England, that the demand of tithes was an infamous exaction and robbery, I now contributed, like the rest of my neighbours, a tenth part of all my receipts and earnings to the maintenance of the Mormon hierarchy. Meanwhile our prophet was engaged in various ways in advancing the cause of Zion. Sometimes he appeared in the

uniform of a general, with a sword by his side and epaulettes on his shoulders, reviewing the Nauvoo Legion, a standing army of nearly two thousand men. Sometimes he sat in his editorial chair, preparing for the "Times and Seasons" leading articles, which to the minds of his followers partook of the character of inspired revelation. Sometimes, as mayor of Nauvoo, he presided over the debates of the corporation, and controlled the decisions of the obsequious aldermen. Sometimes he appeared as a merchant or as a dealer in land, in both of which capacities he displayed even more than the ordinary shrewdness of a Yankee. Sometimes on the platform in the grove, at the place of meeting, he held forth as a preacher, and by his rude oratory enchained the minds of the listening believers.

Months passed away, and the prophet all at once became exceedingly sociable with Brothers and myself. There was a jovial manner about him, mingled with a peculiar kind of rough humour, which, although very different from what might have been expected in a prophet, now exercised a strange fascination over us. In the autumn, after we had gathered in our crops, Mr. and Mrs. Brothers, with their son and daughter, were violently attacked by a fever. They would not allow of a medical attendant, but sent for the prophet, that he might lay hands upon them, and raise them up from their bed of sickness. The prophet accordingly came out from Nauvoo in his carriage, drawn by two spirited horses, and having put up his vehicle in the barn,

proceeded to perform the anxiously desired ceremony. He prayed the Lord to heal the sick persons, after which he placed his great hands upon them, and anointed them with oil from a phial which he carried in his waistcoat-pocket. He then directed his conversation to Brothers and myself. He said that he was in great want of money, having been called upon unexpectedly to pay a debt due to a troublesome Gentile in Montrose. He did not wish the "Church" to suffer in public estimation, and as he had heard that we were in possession of ready money, he wanted to borrow of us a sufficient sum to meet the exigency. Brothers, in a faint voice, said that he had a hundred pounds remaining, which he had laid by against a rainy day. The prophet simply replied, "The Lord hath need of it." Poor Brothers crept from his bed, went with some difficulty to a chest, from a corner of which he took the required sum, which he had tied up in a leathern bag. Joseph untied the bag, counted out the money, and transferred it to his own capacious pocket, assuring Brothers that he would repay him on demand, and that the word of a prophet was better than any bond. Meantime I ran over to my own dwelling, and soon returned with a hundred and fifty pounds, nearly the whole amount remaining to me after my losses and sacrifices. The prophet took the money very coolly, and giving me a verbal assurance, like that which Brothers had received, removed his horses and carriage from the barn, seized the reins, leaped into the

seat, flourished his whip, and drove homewards at full gallop.

Brothers and his family soon afterwards recovered, and ascribed their restoration wholly to the miraculous touch of Joseph. The prophet after this spent many of his evenings at my worthy neighbour's house, and his manner towards Miss Brothers was more like that of a suitor than I should have expected in a married man and the father of a large family. But I had little time to think on the subject, for a calamity was impending which turned my mind in a very different direction. The fever attacked my wife and my two sons, and the disease soon assumed a terrifying appearance. I went to Nauvoo and besought the prophet, with tears in my eyes, to come over and lay hands on the sick, that they might recover. He answered more abruptly than kindly, and said something about people coming and worrying him when the Lord knew he had enough to do already; however, he said he would come over in the course of the evening, and I returned homeward oppressed by a strange feeling of desolation. The evening and the night passed, and half another day, the patients growing worse and worse, and being now in a state of delirium. At length the prophet came as before, tied his horses to the fence, and entered the sick room with a heavy tread and a demeanour which struck me as somewhat unfeeling. He laid his hands on the sufferers, applied his oil, and went off as abruptly as he came. I watched in vain

for symptoms of amendment. I earnestly prayed the Almighty to bless the imposition of the hands of the prophet. But alas! during the night John departed this life, and in the morning Francis followed him. Mr. and Mrs. Brothers shewed me the utmost kindness on this melancholy occasion, and the same afternoon we dug two graves in my garden, and committed the remains of my two dear boys to their kindred dust. In my wretchedness I turned over the pages of the Book of Mormon in search of consolation, but no comfort was to be found. I suddenly recollected my father and his old Bible; I could almost discern the image of my venerable parent as he calmly perused the well-worn volume. In the agony of the moment I could almost have dashed the Book of Mormon to the ground and trampled it under foot, as the cause of all my miseries. Had the prophet then appeared, I verily believe that I should have inflicted personal chastisement upon him, and driven him from the house with execrations.

I heard a step, and beheld my daughter approaching, pale and miserable, and shedding many tears. She had heard of the death of her brothers and the illness of her mother, and had come to render such assistance as might be in her power. But Mrs. Richards was beyond human help, and her end was rapidly approaching. After remaining some hours in a state of stupor, she at length opened her eyes and calmly enquired respecting her children. Being told that their sufferings were

past, she faintly said, "The Lord's will be done," after which she relapsed into a state of insensibility. About midnight she suddenly revived, but her eyes gleamed with the unnatural fire of insanity. She spoke rapidly and incoherently, but I could distinguish the words, "Dear England—dear children—horrible Bangs—horrible, horrible prophet—oh! horrible prophet—God will judge—the will of the Lord be done." After a few more exclamations of this nature she fell back, closed her eyes, and I was a widower. With the help of Brothers I interred her the following day by the side of our children. Elder Bangs came immediately afterwards for his wife, and took her back to Nauvoo, though she clung to me and evidently desired to remain with me as long as possible.

I felt utterly stunned by my calamity, and for many days Brothers and his wife were wholly unable to administer the slightest consolation. But by degrees I recovered myself, and, as the effects of the shock subsided, Mormonism gradually regained its strange ascendancy in my mind. After a few months I even paid more attention than ever to the new "revelations" which appeared from time to time, and I was decidedly more enthusiastic than my neighbours in my anticipations of the coming glories of Zion. In the meanwhile, with a heavy heart, I continued to work upon my farm, and in the following spring I saw my roses again in bloom, and my fruit-trees promising a plentiful crop. But of what avail were the roses to me now? Those

were gone for whose sake alone my garden had been a source of delight. As for my only surviving child, I seldom saw her, and had too much reason to fear that she was far from happy.

Some time in the following summer, I went one morning to Nauvoo with Brothers, to transact some little business in which we were both concerned. Passing the residence of Elder Smart, we saw a crowd of persons collected around the door, many of whom were uttering expressions of anger and indignation. Upon making enquiry, we were informed that Elder Smart had been detected in a popish plot, and had decamped during the night, in order to escape summary punishment. A letter addressed to him, with the St. Louis post-mark, had been surreptitiously opened by Mr. Bangs in the post-office of Nauvoo, and exhibited by him to the prophet and his council. This letter appeared to have been written by one of the Jesuit fathers, and implied the existence of some correspondence between the parties. It transpired that Smart had conceived the bold design of introducing the whole Mormon community into the Romish fold. He had zealously preached up baptism for the dead, because he regarded it as a preparation for a belief in purgatory and masses for the departed. He had magnified Mormon miracles, because a habit of regarding them with wonder would prepare the way, he imagined, for a belief in the miracles of Rome. He had denounced the English Church and Prayer-book, the English version of the Scriptures, and the

English episcopate, in the hope of unsettling by means of Mormonism the foundations of the Reformed faith. He had extolled the practice of anointing the sick with oil, because he fancied that he saw in it the germs of extreme unction. He had maintained the absolute necessity of a body of living apostles and an infallible prophet, because he saw that this idea, when once established, might be applied to a college of cardinals and an infallible pope. It appeared, from some papers discovered at his residence, that he believed the time was now near at hand when his plans would be ripe for execution, and when he would be in a fair way of becoming a cardinal at least. He evidently calculated that the prophet would soon destroy himself by some act of egregious folly, and that, by dexterous handling, the bulk of the scattered saints could, in that event, be secured to Rome. Joseph was at first in a state of great fury and excitement at this discovery; but in the afternoon he cooled down, and produced a paper containing a prophecy which he said he had written down four years previously. The prophecy was to the effect that Elder Smart would turn out to be a Jesuit in disguise, a wolf in sheep's clothing. Elder Bangs extolled the supernatural wisdom of the prophet, declared that he had himself never fully confided in Smart from the very first, and expressed his extreme horror on account of his former intimacy with such an abandoned wretch, and so artful an impostor.

But a still more astonishing discovery was made

by me within a week afterwards. Having occasion to cross the river to Montrose about the purchase of some cattle, I happened, on leaving the ferry-boat, to take a path which conducted me near a shop which had been established for the sale of whiskey. I heard a voice which sounded like that of the prophet, and looking over a fence I saw Joseph Smith himself lying alone on the grass, with a whiskey bottle by his side, and decidedly far gone in a state of intoxication. He was talking and laughing, and evidently congratulating himself, in a soliloquy, on the success of his devices. "I am a prophet," he said, "a profitable prophet; a profitable prophet indeed I am. Prophetical profits are good profits, very good profits, capital good profits, I'll be hanged if they ain't. The saints are a pack of fools; but I am a prophet, a profitable prophet, a prophetic, prophesying, profitable prophet. What was Mahomet compared with me? He was a jackass. What was Napoleon? He was a numbskull. What was Alexander? He was a blockhead. I am a greater man than Moses,—hurrah!—I am a greater man than Moses,—hurrah!—hip, hip, hip, hurrah!"

I might have heard much more, but I retreated precipitately, full of horror and consternation. I re-crossed the river, and hastened to Brothers, who was at work in one of his fields. "Oh Brothers, Brothers," I said, "I have seen and heard such dreadful things. My heart is almost broken. This is worse than all." I shed many tears, and at last described the scene which I had witnessed at Mont-

rose. Brothers was very much shocked, and for some time we were both speechless. At last my friend observed, that he had heard one of the elders say, that, although Joseph Smith was a prophet, still, after all, he was only a man. David was a prophet, but, nevertheless, he sometimes fell into great sin. Indeed, he thought it quite possible that Satan might completely get the advantage over Joseph or any other prophet; but that even in that dreadful event, the truth of his revelations and prophecies would in no respect be affected. Considerations of this nature somewhat calmed my mind, but from this moment I looked upon Joseph in the light of a fallen angel. The real depth to which he had fallen was as yet, however, beyond my conception.

Not long after my adventure at Montrose, fresh disclosures were made which harrowed up my feelings to the utmost. Miss Brothers, a fine young woman of eighteen, had been for some time in a melancholy state of mind, and had been entirely changed from her former self. She now fell into a dangerous illness, and it was evident that some painful secret was weighing upon her mind. Her father proposed to send for the prophet to lay hands on her again, but she promptly and positively refused to see him, and burst into a fit of weeping which for some time was uncontrollable. At length, after much solicitation, she made known to her mother the secret which was weighing her down to the grave.

It appeared that the prophet had privately informed her that the Almighty had given him a revelation to the effect that he was permitted to take several wives, after the manner of the patriarchs of old. He assured her with a solemn oath that she had been appointed in heaven to become one of his brides, and that the relation was destined to continue to all eternity. She was at first unspeakably overcome by this announcement, but finally, believing it to be the Lord's will, she complied, and was married to Joseph the same day, in the presence of two of his elders, a strict promise of secrecy being exacted from her on the occasion.

I will not attempt to describe the horror and indignation which seized on the parents. Young Brothers, now a vigorous youth of twenty, uttered the most tremendous imprecations, seized a loaded rifle, and was on the point of rushing to Nauvoo, in order to destroy the author of all this misery; but we restrained him for the time, and I reminded him of one declaration in the old Scriptures, which at that moment came into my mind with astonishing force:—"Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

In the course of a day or two our minds were sufficiently calm to allow of our considering what was our best course under our present circumstances. We were almost peniless, and we thought it expedient that, in the first place, Brothers and I should go to the prophet and request him to re-

turn us the money which we had previously lent him. Accordingly we proceeded to Joseph's house, where we found his wife, Emma Smith, cooking the prophet's dinner on the hearth. She looked at us rather sorrowfully when we came in, placed two chairs for us, and silently proceeded with her work. In a few minutes the prophet entered in his shirt-sleeves, asked us how we did, and sat down. According to previous agreement, I introduced the subject by informing Joseph that we were greatly in want of money, and that we should feel obliged to him if he would repay us the sum which we had advanced him some time before.

Joseph affected to receive this communication with astonishment. He rose from his chair with his hands in his pockets, and said to us,—“Didn't I tell you both that the Lord had need of that money? Well, now I say the Lord needs it still. I have spent your money for the advancement of the great work of the Lord in these last days. I have suffered all but death for Christ's sake, and now you come troubling me and wanting to live at ease yourselves. What a pitiful fuss you English people always make about your money! You ought to be contented with living in this fine and beautiful country, where you are in the midst of miracles and revelations from the Lord. But if you ain't satisfied, don't come whining to me about your money, but go back to England, where you came from, and go to perdition.”

Shocked as we were, we knew we had no redress,

and walked home. Brothers did not utter a single word, but on entering his door his strength failed him, and he fell to the ground. Mrs. Brothers was already ill from grief, and on the following day the two parents and the daughter were in a condition which left small hope of recovery. Young Brothers and myself attended to them as well as we could, and even obtained the services of a physician. But all proved fruitless; they died one after the other, and, on the first day of June, 1844, Miss Brothers, who survived her unhappy parents, was buried by their side in the little garden.

Young Brothers shed no tears, and it was plain that some fixed purpose had gained possession of his soul. As soon as his sister was dead he collected all the Mormon books in the house, tore them to atoms, and committed the fragments to the flames. He then solemnly exclaimed, "Now I have done with Mormonism for ever and for ever." From a Church of England Prayer-book, which happened to have been preserved on account of some dates on a fly-leaf, he read the burial-service over the three graves at his sister's funeral, with a calm and collected voice. He then threw the Prayer-book into the open grave, and exclaimed in the same firm voice, "Now I have done with all religion, and that too for ever and for ever." He then filled up the grave with his own hands, stood upon the turf which he had carefully placed on the top, and deliberately uttered the most awful speech which I ever heard from the mouth of mortal man. He

declared that henceforth "he would devote himself to the work of vengeance; that he would follow Joseph Smith as a hound follows a hare; that he would have his heart's blood, but not yet; that he would feast his eyes with gazing on the stiffened corpse of the prophet, but not until he had seen his infamy exposed before the noon-day sun, and his name a byword and an execration." Looking me full in the face, for no other person was present, he concluded by saying, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." Before I had time to interpose, he had seized his rifle and powder-horn and was gone.

About a week afterwards, viz. on the 7th of June, a newspaper called the "Expositor" suddenly appeared in Nauvoo, being issued from a press lately established in the city. The editors, whoever they were, professed to admit the truth of Mormonism as contained in Smith's earlier revelations, but protested against the more recent developments of the system. They had the boldness to assert that the prophet's pretensions to righteousness were altogether hypocritical, and that under a new and secret system of "spiritual marriage" so called, he practised outrageous abominations. It was asserted that my son-in-law Elder Bangs and other eminent dignitaries were accomplices with Joseph in these infamous proceedings. The editors blamed the prophet for his present ridiculous attempt to become President of the United States, and alleged that he was unworthy of power, since he had taught that the Gentiles ought to be "spoiled" by the saints. They also declared their intention of advocating the

unconditional repeal of the several charters by which the prophet was enabled to maintain his position as Mayor of Nauvoo, Regent of the University, and General of the Legion.

The publication of this paper exasperated the prophet beyond all measure. He summoned his council on the 8th, and again on the 10th. The prophet and his brother Hyrum^a made several speeches against the "Expositor," and declared, with awful effrontery, that the statements respecting "spiritual wives" were utterly false. Joseph required the aldermen to decide upon the total suppression of the newspaper as a public nuisance. This was promptly agreed to, and the prophet ordered the marshal of the city to destroy the printing-press of the "Expositor," and burn every sheet of the paper which could be found. The Nauvoo Legion, now a well-armed and disciplined body of about 3,000 men, was also ordered by the prophet to hold itself in readiness to execute his ordinances.

On the evening of the 10th I was in Nauvoo, and saw the press destroyed, the type scattered in the street, and the paper consumed, a large mob being concerned in the riot, and the authorities of the city being actively concerned in all that took place. The proprietors and editors of the "Expositor" fled for their lives, and escaped to Carthage, the county town, about sixteen miles distant. Here they complained to the magistrates, and procured a warrant against Joseph, Hyrum, and sixteen others who were engaged in the fray. The constable came to

^a This name is always thus spelt in Mormon documents.

Nauvoo, and served the process upon the accused, but Joseph refused to acknowledge its validity, and having appeared with the others before his own municipal court, all were (as might have been expected) honourably discharged, while the constable from Carthage was marched out of the city by the Mormon marshal.

The county authorities could not permit this affront to the laws to go unpunished, and the militia of the State was ordered out to support the county officer in arresting the two Smiths and their sixteen confederates. Messengers were also sent to the governor of Illinois, who considered the circumstances so threatening that he took the field in person, and arrived at Carthage on the 21st of June. He found the people assembled in great numbers awaiting his orders, and promptly discovered that in the present state of excitement nothing but the utter destruction of Nauvoo would satisfy the exasperated "Gentiles." On the other hand, our Mormons in Nauvoo put the city in defence under the direction of the prophet and his chief officers; ammunition and provisions were procured, cannon were posted in various important positions, and the Legion was ordered out and placed under arms. From all parts of the country the followers of the prophet hastened to render assistance at this terrible crisis, and all things seemed to portend a sanguinary civil war.

On the night of the 24th I was at my desolate home, oppressed with many anxious and conflicting

thoughts. About midnight I fell asleep, or seemed to do so, and immediately found myself in a dream of an unusual character, which I truly believe was something more than a dream. I imagined that I stood on a wide prairie near Nauvoo, upon which the moon was shining in undisturbed serenity. All at once I heard a song, the tune and words of which resembled those which I had heard on board our ship at the time of our departure from Liverpool, though the cadence was unspeakably mournful. I clearly distinguished the words,—

Yes, our native land, we loved thee,
 All thy scenes we loved them well ;
 Friends, connexions, happy country,
 Did we bid you all farewell ?
 Did we leave you,
 Far in distant lands to dwell ?

A long procession then passed across the scene, consisting of all those who had perished on account of Mormonism, from the very commencement of its propagation. On they came, slowly advancing, with their eyes fixed upon me in a manner which made my blood run cold. I saw before me an apparently innumerable multitude of men, women, and little children, all arrayed in the garb of death. A voice seemed to whisper in my ears,—“ These are they who were slain by mobs in Missouri, on account of their belief in Joseph Smith. Those were drowned at sea, and were never more heard of upon earth. The next troop died on the Mississippi by conflagrations and explosions, when near their journey's end. The

last and largest company perished by disappointment and disease, after their arrival at Nauvoo."

While I was gazing on the last melancholy band as it drew near, I distinguished the countenances of my wife and of my two dear sons, as they appeared on the day of their departure. I was about to rush forward and embrace them, but they sadly shook their heads and waved their hands, as if to discourage the attempt. I would have forced myself, notwithstanding, into the midst of the ghostly company, but an unseen power held me back. Then came my old friend and companion Brothers, with his wife and daughter, beating their breasts and uttering mournful lamentations. Then I saw the two Englishmen who had preceded us in our little farms, and whose bloody necks indicated foul play. Soon afterwards the procession was at an end, and the spectral multitude arranged itself in a vast circle upon the wide prairie, the moonbeams casting a wan lustre upon their half-transparent forms. Suddenly I heard a deep voice, which seemed to come across the prairie from the direction of Carthage,—
"Vengeance is the Lord's, and He will repay." The last word was taken up by the multitude, and I heard the thrilling response of a myriad of ghosts,—
—"Repay, repay, repay." Again the deep voice came over the prairie,—
"The doom of the false blasphemer is at hand;" and again I heard a thrilling answer in tones of exultation,—
"At hand, at hand, at hand." A rushing sound followed, like that of a gentle wind among the leaves, the multi-

tude disappeared in an instant, and the prairie was again unpeopled.

I awoke in terror, with a cold perspiration upon my brow. After recovering myself in some measure, I hastened to Nauvoo, where I found that Joseph and his brother had just determined to surrender themselves to the governor, under a promise of protection. The prophet was aware that the militia of Illinois at the disposal of the governor amounted to eighty thousand men, while the Nauvoo Legion and every volunteer on the Mormon side did not altogether exceed four thousand. Joseph had a presentiment of evil, and said, when he gave himself up, "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter." I could by no means acquiesce in this view of his case, for, like many others, I now viewed him as a cruel and rapacious wolf, unwillingly caught in a snare, from which he would gladly have extricated himself by any compromise, had it been possible.

I accompanied the accused persons to Carthage, where the rioters entered into recognizances for their appearance at the next term of the circuit court, and most of them were allowed to return home. But before the papers were completed, a writ was served on Joseph and Hyrum Smith on a charge of treason against the State, and other offences. They were remanded to prison, to await their trial on the following day, the 26th, and the governor sent a captain of militia and sixty men to preserve the peace at Nauvoo.

I afterwards ascertained that the destruction of

the two Smiths had already been spoken of among the people as being absolutely necessary to their safety, and that the great body of the "Gentiles" in the county were privy to a determination that these two men should not leave Carthage jail alive. At the same time their friends were busily engaged in devising measures for their liberation, and disguises were prepared to be sent to the jail in order to facilitate their escape.

On the 26th the two prisoners were brought up to answer to the charge of treason, and levying war against the State of Illinois. I secured a place in the crowded court-house, where I could distinctly see and hear all that passed. Joseph was accompanied by two friends, one on each side, and was guarded by a detachment of militia. His bold and swaggering manner had quite forsaken him; his cheeks were blanched with fear, and he had all the appearance of a guilty and cowardly culprit. I saw young Brothers among the crowd, and endeavoured to speak to him, but he avoided me. He was evidently describing his wrongs to various knots of eager listeners in turn, for as he spoke I beheld eyes full of fury and indignation directed against the wretched and helpless impostor.

After a good deal of informal conversation on the part of the justices and lawyers, the hearing of the case was deferred to mid-day on the 27th, as it appeared that the attorneys of the accused were unprepared with a defence. But as one of the justices was a captain of militia, under orders to march to

Nauvoo on that day, the trial was further postponed to Saturday the 29th, the Smiths offering no objection.

The mob breathing vengeance against the prisoners, and the militia evidently sympathizing with the populace, the governor, at the request of some of the leading Mormons, placed a guard over the jail, and visited the Smiths in their confinement on the afternoon of the 26th, in order to assure them of his protection. It was now rumoured among the mob that the governor had taken the part of the prisoners, and intended to allow them to escape. Young Brothers and several persons who had suffered like him declared that now was the time for vengeance, and succeeded in stimulating the excitement to the utmost by the recital of atrocities which they had known and witnessed. A numerous band of men accordingly resolved that, "as the law could not reach the Smiths, powder and shot should."

On the following day, (Thursday, June 27th, 1844.) the governor, having disbanded the militia, excepting two companies appointed to guard the jail, set out for Nauvoo about mid-day with sixty horsemen, and arrived at the "holy city" between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. He made a speech to about five thousand Mormons who had assembled to receive him. He told them that they were the aggressors; that their leaders had deceived them, and that any new aggression would unquestionably occasion their extermination. After con-

cluding this address he set out on his return to Carthage.

But before he arrived at his destination the appointed vengeance was complete, and the false prophet had met his doom. The jail at Carthage was a large stone building in the outskirts of the town, and in the direction of Warsaw. The Smiths having complained to the governor of the rigour of their confinement, they had been allowed to take up their quarters in an upper apartment usually occupied by the family of the jailor. The windows of this room were not barred, and as the weather was warm, two of them were open, with a curtain hanging in front of each. The two companies left as a guard by the governor, were encamped, by some strange mismanagement, in the public square, nearly a quarter of a mile distant. From these companies small detachments, of eight men each, were successively sent to keep watch at the jail. Some of these guards were in the act of regaling themselves, together with the prisoners up-stairs, over a bottle of wine furnished by the prophet. I had stationed myself in front of the jail, at a distance of about a hundred yards, expecting to be a witness of something strange and awful.

At a quarter past five in the evening I saw a band of armed men approaching from the direction of Warsaw. When they came near I perceived that their faces were painted by way of disguise. Among the foremost and most active of them I distinguished the form of young Brothers, with his

rifle and powder-horn. When they reached the jail they commanded the guards to surrender the prisoners, and were met by a refusal and the ineffectual discharge of a few muskets, purposely fired over their heads. A portion of the assailants gained the stairs in a moment, fired through the door, and in five minutes all was over. Hyrum Smith was the first to die, one bullet passing through his eyeball and another through his body. The prophet opened the door and discharged three barrels of a revolving pistol at the crowd ascending the staircase. He then retreated to a window and sprang up in order to leap out. As he threw aside the curtain I saw him for a moment, and heard his despairing cry, "Oh my God!" In an instant a number of rifles were discharged from the outside, and the prophet fell through the window fifteen or twenty feet to the ground. Five or six of the assailants raised the body and placed it in a sitting posture against the coping of a well. Young Brothers and three of his companions then reloaded their rifles, advanced from the front rank, discharged their bullets through the body, and, unless my own eyes deceived me, spurned the slaughtered impostor with their feet. In a few minutes the crowd had dispersed in different directions, and all was still.

A messenger, conveying intelligence of the murder, was at once dispatched to the governor, and met him on his return from Nauvoo while about three miles from that city. He was not allowed to proceed any further, and the Mormons in general were

designedly kept in ignorance of the prophet's death until the following morning.

On arriving at Carthage the governor found that the public records had been removed to another town for security, and that the inhabitants had fled, dreading the vengeance of the Mormons and the Nauvoo Legion. Cannon, ammunition, arms, and valuable property, had been left behind by the panic-stricken fugitives. Even the men of Warsaw removed their wives and children to a distance, while the militia partook of the general infection, scattered themselves abroad without waiting for orders, and made the best of their way to their respective homes.

The governor was overwhelmed with mortification and regret on account of the catastrophe; but endeavoured to allay the prevailing panic by a proclamation, in which he assured the people that the Nauvoo Legion had surrendered to him their arms, and had submitted to his authority.

The inhabitants of Nauvoo, on the other hand, were no less terrified than their adversaries, expecting every moment to be attacked by the "Gentiles" and ruthlessly massacred. They made preparation, notwithstanding, for the funeral of the two Smiths, which took place at Nauvoo, on the evening of Saturday the 29th. On my return homeward I accompanied the persons in charge of the corpses, which were conveyed in two waggons from the jail at Carthage to the precincts of Nauvoo. As we approached the "holy city" we were met by a vast

multitude, consisting of no less than eight or ten thousand of the "saints," many of whom were uttering loud wailings and lamentations, and imploring the Lord to avenge them of their enemies. The procession stopped at the "Mansion House," where various orations and addresses were delivered, the speakers extolling the murdered men to the skies, and comparing them to Saul and Jonathan, but at the same time exhorting the saints to preserve the peace. During these proceedings the bodies were secretly interred in some unknown spot, as it was commonly reported that certain parties in Missouri had offered a thousand dollars for the prophet's head.

My own feelings were now of a strange and complicated character. I had long since come to the conviction that Joseph Smith was utterly profligate and abandoned, and I was sure that, although unlawfully put to death, he was anything rather than a martyr. Still I clung to the idea that in earlier life he had been a channel of divine revelations, and I retained a strong persuasion that Mormonism, properly understood, was a saving doctrine. I thought that in permitting the death of Smith, Providence had removed a great obstacle to the advancement of the truth, and hoped that henceforth the system would appear in all its native purity, and that we should no longer be distressed by swindling transactions, and by the hateful doctrine respecting spiritual wives. Of one thing I had always been fully persuaded, namely, that

polygamy is contrary to the Christian religion, as understood from the beginning. I felt confident that so monstrous an innovation would never be tolerated among us, and often quoted to my neighbours a passage of the Book of Mormon itself, which may be found in the sixth section of the second chapter of the book of Jacob^b:—"Behold, thus saith the Lord, This people begin to wax in iniquity, they understand not the Scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves because of the things which were written concerning David and Solomon his son. Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, *which thing was abominable before Me, saith the Lord.*" At all events, I determined not to leave the saints during their adversity; I therefore returned to my solitary home with the intention of proceeding with my industrial pursuits, so long as the Gentiles might be disposed to leave me unmolested.

In passing the residence of my late friend Brothers on my way home, I heard a voice in the desolate garden, and perceived the son of my friend standing by the three graves and pouring forth the emotions of his soul. "Now, dear father," he said, "you are avenged; now, dear mother and sister, I have faithfully discharged my vow, and, as far as lay in my power, have redressed your cruel wrongs. I have shed the heart's blood of him who ruined you, I have trampled under my feet the carcass of the accursed wretch to whom you owe your death.

^b Page 126 of the original American edition.

Farewell, ye silent remains of our once happy family. Farewell to this habitation of sorrow, farewell to this detested land, for ever and for ever. I flee to other regions, a fugitive, like Cain, and a vagabond henceforth upon the face of the earth."

So saying, he laid down his rifle and powder-horn upon his sister's grave, and, notwithstanding my attempts to detain him, was gone in an instant, and disappeared among the trees of the forest.

