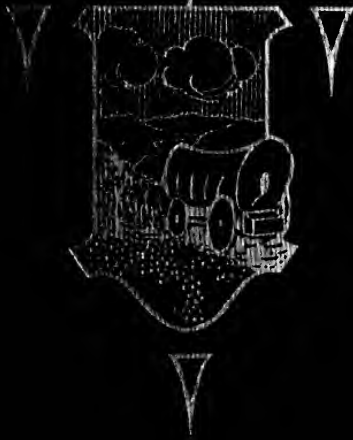


JOHN ST. JOHN

BY NINEPHI ANDERSON



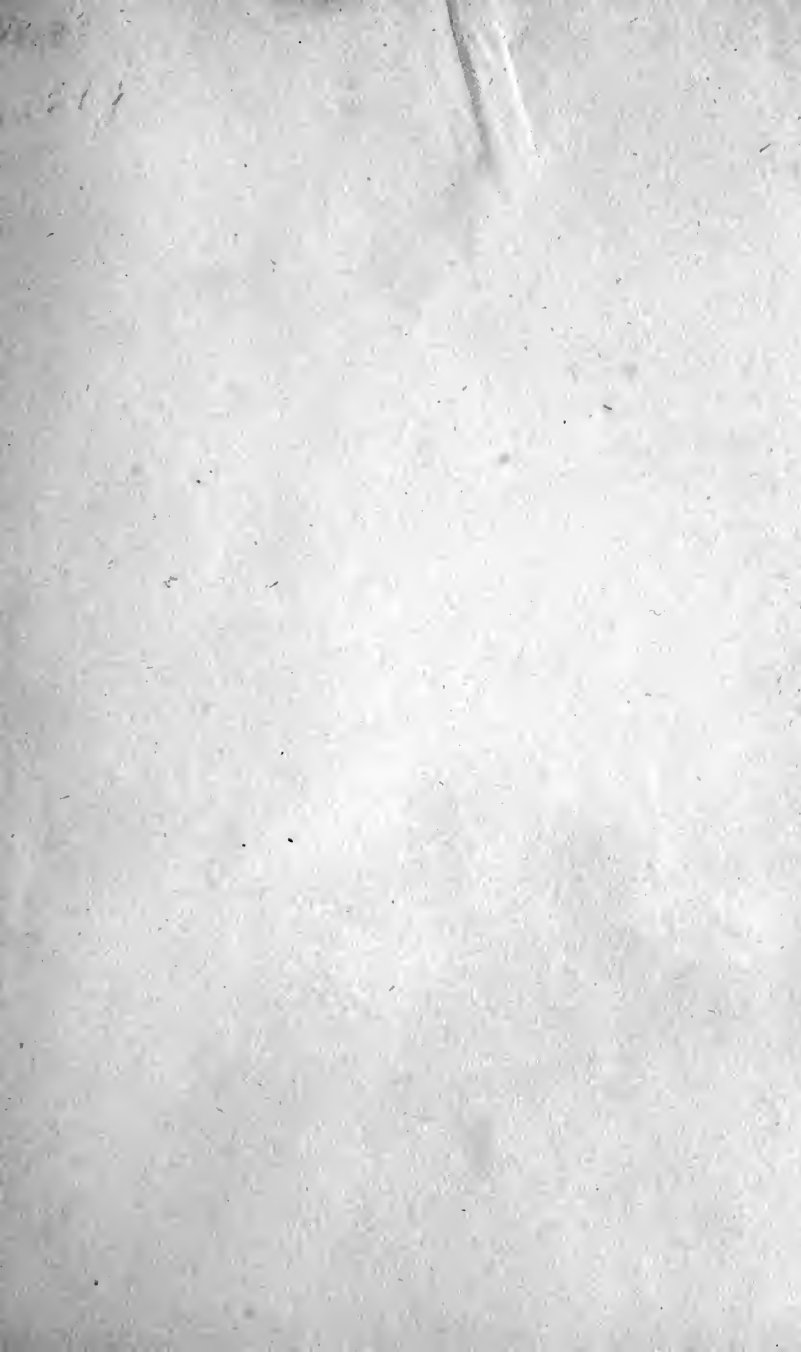
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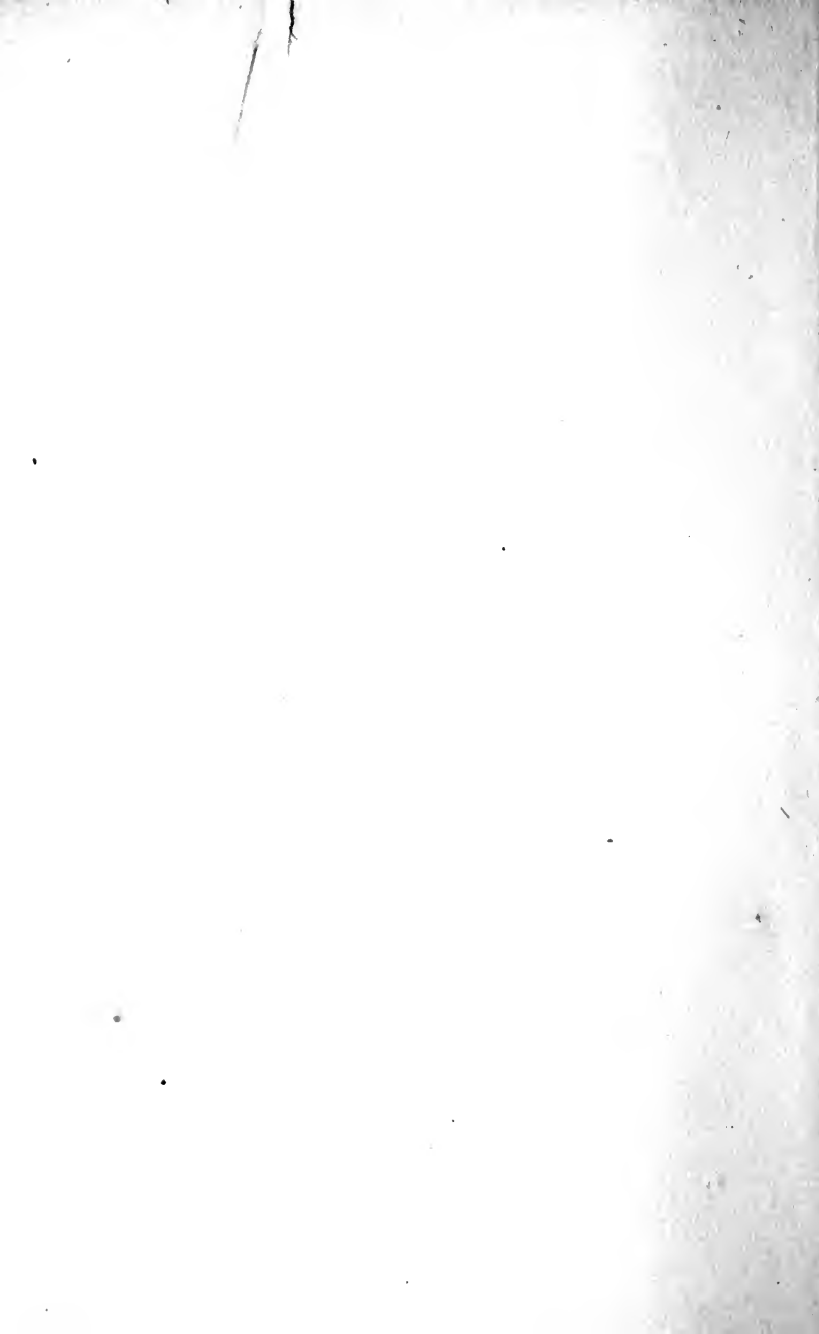
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“Our history, as a Church, has been like a drama. No scenes acted upon the theatrical stage ever possessed more engrossing interest than have the scenes of our lives as Latter-day Saints.”

—*George Q. Cannon.*



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JOHN ST. JOHN

A Story of Missouri and Illinois.



By

NEPHI ANDERSON,

Author of "Added Upon," "The Castle Builder," "Piney Ridge
Cottage," "Story of Chester Lawrence," "A Daughter
of the North," "A Young Folks History
of the Church," etc.

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1917

1917.

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JOHN ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER ONE.

“John,—Mr. John St. John!”

A little girl looked timidly into the room as she pushed the door half open. A stream of sunlight entered with her and lay as a patch of yellow on the rich brown carpet, burnishing, as it swept by, the golden tresses of the child.

The young man sitting by the open window on the other side of the room did not heed the call, so absorbed was he in his book.

The little girl stood still, hesitating whether or not to disturb him. It was only for a moment, but the silence seemed a long time. Then she called again:

“John,—Mr. John St. John!”

The young man looked up. “Is that you, Jane? Come in,” he said.

“That’s an awfully interesting book, isn’t it?” she asked, as she slipped in and closed the door.

“Why, yes—but I didn’t see you; truly, I didn’t.”

“You didn’t hear me either.”

“I’m ashamed of my stupidity. Come here, Jane, and tell me I am forgiven.”

He drew her close to his chair. He stroked her hair and looked into her big blue eyes. She laughed merrily and shook her curls.

"How old are you, Jane?" he asked.

"Guess."

"Half as old as I."

"But I'm more than half as big. Stand up and see."

John arose, and he and the girl measured side by side. She reached nearly to his shoulder.

"See!" she cried, "and I'm ten years old to-morrow."

"Well, I can beat you twice, and then some."

"I'm to have a party, and I came to invite you to it."

"Thank you; I'll come. What shall I bring?"

"Yourself, of course."

"Nobody else?"

"Why, Dora will be there already, and—oh, yes, bring your mother. I just love her."

"To take care of her big boy—that's a good idea. All right, won't you sit down now."

"I think I'd better go. I'm so busy getting things ready; and Dora won't help me today; she's interested in a book, too."

Jane peeped into the pages of the volume which John had been reading, but which now lay open on the table.

"I think it isn't interesting," she remarked.

"What makes you think so?"

"There isn't any talk in it. I like the thin places in a book."

John smiled. "You like a story, don't you?"

"Yes, with a lot of fighting in it."

"Jane, Jane, I am surprised!"

"You needn't be. Is there fighting in this book?"

"Yes, a lot of it. It's about the Indians. It tells how the Indians came to be Indians."

At this interesting disclosure, Jane looked more closely at the pages. "*Book of Mormon*," she read. "I never heard of this book before."

"It's a new one. A preacher left it here last week." John closed the book with a mark between the leaves, then he arose. "Jane, I'm going home with you, to help you get ready for the party."

"Oh, will you? but Dora won't look at you," she warned. "Her nose is in a new book also."

The young man laughed softly at this as he slipped on his coat and put on his hat. He took Jane by the hand, and they went out. They paused on the porch, impressed with the bright June day and the beauty of the scene.

Back of them, a mile or so, lay the city. At the left and in front were the distant hills, then the nearer forest and the broad stretch of fields and meadow through which flowed a small creek. These were all bathed in a soft, pearly haze, through which the sun's rays filtered to a pleasant warmth. At the right, less than a quarter of a mile away, the Fenton house could be seen among the trees. A private path led down to the orchard, through the field, and across a rustic bridge which spanned the creek, then up to Jane's home. Along this path, John and his little friend walked leisurely this afternoon. The wheat fields were waving, the meadows shone in growing green. Crickets chirped their welcome, and a catbird called from a nearby tree.

"There's Dora on the porch reading," announced Jane, as they neared the house. "She doesn't see us. Let's scare her."

The two stepped softly on the grass. When within a few feet of the porch, Jane gave a lusty shout, at which the reader raised her head.

"We're Indians," cried the little girl in glee, "and we've come to take you."

Yes, she was worth the taking, thought John St. John as Dora Fenton arose to welcome him. Nearly twice the age of her sister Jane, she was tall with big blue eyes and light wavy hair. The two sisters were very much alike. Jane was a bud, Dora, the full-blown flower. John seated himself near Dora, while Jane perched herself on the porch railing.

"Jane tells me you have a very interesting book," began John.

Dora handed the volume to him.

"*Pride and Prejudice*," he read. "A new book by a new author. Is it interesting?"

"It's rather unnatural. It seems strange to us that there are people in England who do nothing all day but dine, call on each other, play cards, and gossip, as this book describes."

"But John has a much more interesting book," interrupted Jane. "It's about Indians."

"I fear, Jane, that you have a wrong conception of my book," replied John.

"What is it?" inquired Dora. "Some deeply philosophic volume, I suppose."

"It's a very strange book," explained John. "It claims to be a record of an ancient people who

lived in this land long before Columbus discovered it. The Indians are a remnant of this people. It's a sort of American Bible."

"A Bible—how can there be more than one Bible?"

"Well, of course, it's a rather strange idea to us that there should be more than one Bible; but, really, when one thinks about it, if a civilized people once lived on this continent, and they were a branch of the Hebrew race, why shouldn't their records and history be Scripture?"

The older girl looked at the speaker for a moment, then her gaze went out past him to the distant hills. John did not continue the theme. He did not wish to discuss religion with Miss Fenton, as his past experiences in that line had taught him that it might end unpleasantly; and John did not like unpleasant things. Jane soon left to be about her important preparations.

"It's a most beautiful day," said John; "let's take a walk."

They strolled down the path leading to the brook and the bridge. The young lady's curiosity regarding the new book was not quite satisfied.

"Where did you get this book about the Indians?" she asked.

"A young traveling preacher left it at the house last week. He explained that the book had been translated from some golden plates by a young man, Joseph Smith by name, whom he called a prophet."

"A prophet!"

"Yes; this prophet had received visitations of angels and many wonderful manifestations, he claimed."

"Angels—a modern prophet?"

"I'll lend you the book."

"Thank you; but I think I shall not care to read it."

They stopped on the bridge as they always had done for many years. As boy and as girl these two had waded in the stream and had fished for minnows in its pools. The bridge had been their place of meeting, for small boys and girls are equals, and meet each other half-way. The weather-beaten hand rail over which they now leaned, as they looked down into the water, was decorated with jack-knife carvings. In the center of an elaborate, if not artistic, design were the letters J S J - D F, carved by John St. John in his younger days. Frequently, as they had lingered on the bridge, he had cut the letters deeper in the wood. Even that afternoon, he mechanically took his knife from his pocket and began to carve.

Dora looked at him. "Don't you think these letters are deep enough?" she asked, with a smile.

"Perhaps; but somehow, I want to be sure—want to be certain that these two names will remain side by side always, in spite of wind or weather."

Dora again dropped her eyes to the pool, and a soft glow mounted to her cheeks. John had never before made love to this girl in bold, open word or action; but always there had been a tacit understanding that they were lovers. As children in play, they always paired. Later, when separated by school and business, they had kept in touch by letters. Now, when they were both at home, they were much together, talking and reading; or riding through country and town. It was a foregone conclusion by all who made it their

concern that these two, so eminently fitted for each other, would some day marry. John and Dora themselves could not remember the time when they were not conscious of this taken-for-granted idea. To them, so far, the course of true love had run very smoothly. And they lived their days in sweet affection which bathed their lives as the autumn sunlight bathed the earth that peaceful afternoon.

The sun sank behind the big trees on the hill. The birds twittered sleepily. The distant low of cattle came from the meadows, mingling with the call of the herdboys.

And as the dusk of evening fell, John and Dora were still talking on the bridge. Their tones were low. They gazed, for the most part, into the darkening waters below, as they leaned on the railing. They stood quite close together. More from the power of instinct than of purpose their hands had come together with a firmly tender clasp.

Jane Fenton came out on the porch for the third time, looking for the missing couple. She caught sight of them down on the old bridge, and looked at them for some time from under her hand.

"Huh! I thought he was going to help me crack nuts!" she said.

CHAPTER TWO.

John St. John was the only son of an only son. Thomas St. John, his father, could trace his lineage to the English nobility. Whether the title was now "dormant, obeyant, or forfeited" Thomas St John would not say, and John did not care enough to find out. There was still a Mosstone Manor in England, and there had been a coat of arms with a "lion rampant" as the chief figure on the field. Thomas' father had been called Sir George for a time after his landing in New England. He had, however, soon become Americanized, and had done some fighting in the Revolutionary War.

Thomas, as a young man, had moved West, and then as a middle-aged man had moved farther West. He was one of the founders of Belford, had grown in wealth with the city's growth, and was now the principal banker of the town.

Fifteen years ago, he had built his home—one befitting his rank and income—well out in the country. He called it Moston. The town, since then, had extended after him, but it had not, as yet, reached him. Moston still remained the quiet home with its dignified air of seclusion and rest. The trees had grown big. The house and grounds had taken upon themselves a becoming age.

Here at Moston John St. John had lived most of his life. As yet, he had not chosen any life's work, and, truth to tell, his father was getting a little impatient at

his son's lack of decision. As an only child, the young man's later years had been spent amid the luxury which money can provide. Much of his time from home had been spent at school. He had made various trips to New York and to Boston. He had visited Europe, whose charm had made him restless to go again. Now he helped in the bank a few hours each day, but he showed no signs of wanting to master the business so that in time he could relieve his father. John had been given full freedom of choice in the matter of choosing a vocation. His father found no fault with him because he did not take to banking, but he thought his son should soon choose something—let it be lawyer, doctor, or anything creditable.

For a year past, John had been reading much. He read again his *Pilgrim's Progress* and his *Paradise Lost*. He read for the first time Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, and became deeply interested in Martin Luther.

"Well," said the father, "if he is cut out for one, let him become a preacher."

But John read rather more for the joy of reading than for any more definite purpose.

When the missionary, only last week, had left the Book of Mormon, John's curiosity was aroused. Here was a new book on a new subject. Before he had half completed its reading, he discovered that here was something not only new, but different from anything else he had ever seen.

Rebecca St. John, very likely, had spoiled her son in the way that only sons are frequently spoiled; but she was also her son's salvation. She had early trained him to have no confidant before her, and so he had

always brought to her all his trials and troubles, little and big. Many a time his mother had saved him from physical and moral dangers because of this close companionship.

The day after John had told Dora of his "find," in which that young lady had shown such little interest, he took the Book of Mormon to his mother. She was sitting by the big window with her sewing. Here the light was good and the view was beautiful. The young man stood for a moment looking out on the velvety lawns, the closely clipped hedges, the flowers and the walks.

"Have I ever told you, mother, that this view always reminds me of the grounds of what was once the famous Mosstone Manor?" asked John.

"Yes; you have said that before. England must be very beautiful."

"It is. If I were not an American, I believe I would live in Europe. There is much elegant ease there, which appeals to me."

The mother looked up into his face.

"I don't know from whom I inherited that disposition," said he, as if he ought to apologize for it, "Certainly, not from you or father. Perhaps from some distant ancestor of Mosstone Manor. But, mother, here is something I wish to show you." He handed her the book.

"What is it?" she asked.

"You remember that young missionary who called here last week?"

"Yes."

"Well, he left me this book, and I have been reading it. I want your opinion of it."

The mother examined the volume carefully. She read the title page and turned over some of the leaves. It was a common looking book, and yet, what a train of mighty events would spring from the perusal of its pages!

John seated himself and repeated to his mother what the missionary had told him. She neglected her sewing. Her beautiful gray eyes opened wide at the narration. Her face beamed. He read to her from the book. For an hour he continued until he was reminded that it was time for him to go to Jane Fenton's birthday party. The mother had declined the invitation, and so when John had left, she picked up the book and continued reading.

When Thomas St. John came home at early twilight, he found his wife sitting by the window turning the pages of her book to the fading light.

"Mother," he greeted, "you'll be straining your eyes. Shall I light the lamp?"

"Oh, is it you?" She closed her book, her fingers still between the leaves.

"What have you there so interesting?" he asked.

"A wonderful book, Thomas."

"One of John's, I suppose."

"No; a missionary left it. Sit down here, Thomas, and let me tell you about it."

The husband pushed the window blind further up, then seated himself in the chair which his son had occupied earlier in the afternoon. He was a good look-

ing man, smooth-shaven, with closely cropped iron gray hair.

The mother told the simple, surprising story which the son had told her, adding what she had found first-hand in the book. She spoke as a child speaks of a wonderfully beautiful story which she believes to be true, and which, as a matter of course, the listener would also be pleased to hear. Thomas St. John bore with the narration patiently. He tried always not to offend the deeply religious nature of his wife, but this "fairy tale" taxed his patience. He kept his temper and his counsel, however, and when she had finished, he simply changed the subject of conversation.

John came home early. Usually, of late, there had been walkings with Dora back and forth across the bridge, under the stars or the moon; but this evening John felt as if he wanted to come home, and to his mother. A strange soul-hunger was upon him. The father was away for the evening, so there was no reason why mother and son should not contentedly sit together under the evening lamp and read the Book of Mormon.

Nothing more was said for the next few days to either Dora Fenton or Thomas St. John about Joseph Smith or the Nephite Record; but mother and son communed in word and spirit closer than they had ever done before. On the evening of the fifth day the reading of the book was finished.

"Well, mother, what do you think of it?" asked John.

The mother did not reply for a moment, but she opened the book again and turned to a page nearly at the end.

“Here is a wonderful promise,” she said. “I noted it when we read it the first time. Listen:”

“Behold I would exhort you that when you shall read these things, if it is wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down to the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye should ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, and with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.’ ”

The mother closed the book. “John, my son, I have done that. Yesterday, I finished the reading alone—I could not wait for you—and then I found that promise. I have asked ‘with sincere heart,’ and Oh, my boy, the Lord has revealed unto me that this Book of Mormon is true.”

The mother laid her hands tenderly on her son’s shoulders, and they stood looking into each other’s faces, as she said:

“What this knowledge will bring to me, to us all—I cannot say; what trials it may bring—”

“Mother!”

“But this I know that now my heart is full of joy, and that in the end, if I am faithful, it will bring salvation in God’s kingdom. My boy, you also, must get this testimony. You, at least, must be with me. I can not stand to be alone in this.”

“How shall I get this testimony?”

"In the same way I did."

"But I don't know how. When I pray, I still repeat the simple prayer you taught me long ago. How can I do this, mother?"

"Talk to your Father in Heaven as you would to your earthly parent. Ask him as you ask me, my son, but ask 'with a sincere heart.'"

"Mother, I am not a religious man. You know, I never was much of a church goer."

"But this is different. This I feel is real, God-given. This will appeal to you more and more. Your father and I may have spoiled you in many ways; but you are clean; and, somehow, John, I feel that in this which has come to us, you will prove yourself true and strong."

They were standing by the favorite window. The red of the sky fell on hill and meadow and river; it streamed through the window and glowed on the thoughtful faces of mother and son standing close together.

"Mother," said John, "I also believe, and I'll try to get the same fuller knowledge which you have received."

She put her arms about him and kissed him tenderly.

CHAPTER THREE.

John St. John and his mother were in the rear garden early that Sunday morning. The June apples were reddening fast, the peaches were putting on color. The upper part of the orchard was inclosed with a low brick wall, now quite overrun with ivy. The side bordering the path which led to the bridge and the Fenton home contained a ragged breach, which because of a neglect to repair it, became a short cut between the two neighbors.

That morning, Jane Fenton climbed nimbly over the broken wall and ran up to Mrs. St. John.

"I brought you a piece of my birthday cake," she said.

"Thank you, Jane, I am sure it is nice."

"Don't give John any. He ate his share last evening." She looked at the young man as if daring him to deny that.

"I surely did," laughed John. He picked the reddest apple he could find and tossed it to Jane. "Try it, it's nearly ripe. Little girls as well as big boys like the taste of a new apple, just a little before it gets ripe."

Jane nibbled at the apple. "M-m, it's good," she declared.

"And how's Dora this morning?" he asked.

"She wasn't up when I left."

"Well, Jane, when you go back tell her for me that I'll drive around for her this afternoon. I want her to

go to town with me and mother to attend that meeting I spoke to her about."

Jane promised to do this, though she was tempted to tell of the cross things her sister had said about this very thing. However, she said nothing, and after lingering in the garden as long as she thought proper for a little girl, she went back home with her message, and another apple.

"Do you think father will go with us?" asked John of his mother.

"I think not. He has said very little about the excitement which the meetings are creating in town, and that, as you know, is not a good sign."

Mother and son walked about in the garden, talking. They were much together of late. The missionary who left the Book of Mormon had visited them again and had talked further with them. He and his companions were holding a series of meetings in Belford. John and his mother had promised to attend their meeting that afternoon.

Shortly after one o'clock, John drove his span of grays up the gravelly path to the Fenton house. Mrs. St. John sat in the back seat alone, Mr. St. John having gone to town earlier. He would join them later,—perhaps. Mrs. Fenton had said she could not go, Jane had not been invited, so Dora appeared alone, all ready. John alighted and helped her up. She chose the back seat with the mother, at which John grumbled goodnaturedly.

Belford was going to church when the banker's carriage drove into town; but the Sunday-clad people were not going to the unpretentious hall where the

“Mormons” were to preach. There were comments and shaking of heads when they saw John drive up to the “common” hall, tie his team and help his mother and Miss Fenton to alight.

The meeting room, though small, was only half filled. Mrs. St. John felt a little nervous; Dora was not at ease because of pride and prejudice; but John was at home. He shook hands with the missionaries, and introduced them to his mother and Dora.

The services began with song and prayer. Then, one of the Elders, as the preachers called themselves, began to speak. John listened closely. The discourse must have been carefully planned. Point by point the theme was developed, every position clearly stated, then proved by scripture and logic. His language, his reasoning, was faultless. His sentences rung clear and strong. Surely, here was an orator of no small ability. But what was *he* doing in this humble church whose ministers preach without a salary?

He was followed by the second Elder who was shorter in stature and older in years. His speech was somewhat halting and his expressions crude. He did not attempt to deliver a well-planned discourse. He told a straightforward story of the earthly visitations and ministrations of heavenly beings. He spoke of the restoration of the Gospel, of the organization of the Church, of the young Prophet who was even then, with his brethren seeking a place in the West, “near the borders of the Lamanites,” where his persecuted followers might rest and build up the latter-day Zion. Fervently, simply, he bore his testimony to the truth of these things. As John listened, his heart burned as

with a sweet fire. The first speaker had appealed to the intellect, the second spoke to the heart, and moved it to joyous response.

When the speaker closed, John turned to the shining face of his mother, and said simply, "He told the truth."

Dora was silent on the way home. In fact, there was very little said by any of them. Dora declined John's invitation for her to continue on with them to Moston, so he lifted her down at her own gate.

Thomas St. John was already at home, awaiting wife and son. When John saw his father, he had forebodings of coming unpleasantness. Up to this time, the father had treated with silent contempt this new religious propaganda. Foolish, fickle people might take up with faddists and imposters, but his own family, surely, would not. Even when the Elders of the new faith had been to the house a number of times, he was merely annoyed. But now he was angry.

"I feel outraged in my feelings," he said to them. "You have invited these men to our home, and now you attend their meetings. You will be the talk of the town. Who is this Joe Smith, anyway?"

The others said nothing. They knew from experience, that at such times, silence was the best.

"A treasure digger, a gold-plate fakir, an ignorant fanatic!" exclaimed the father, in answer to his own questions. "If *you* want to get religion"—turning to John—"get some respectable kind that will not disgrace us all. . . . And remember, I will not have you dragging your mother about with you on this business!"

I went of my own choice, Thomas," quietly declared the mother.

"And I supposed you urged Dora to go with you, though I happen to know that it was against her wishes," he continued, speaking directly to John, who answered:

"She appeared willing enough to go, father,—and I'm sure she heard nor saw nothing to be ashamed of. I think there is a lot of good common sense in this 'Mormonism,' and if you, father—"

"Well, think as you please. You've had pretty much your own way all your life, and I suppose if you take a fancy to this crazy thing, *my* warning will not turn you from it."

"Father, I know I have everything a young fellow could ask for, and I want you to know that I appreciate all you have done for me. I haven't amounted to much, so far, one way or another; but I must admit that what I have learned from these men, does take hold of me. It clears much that has been dark and answers many questions which have found vague lodgment in my mind."

"Well," grunted the father in a somewhat calmer mood, "that, I suppose is something to be grateful for."

By this time, the three had seated themselves about the dining room table, on which the father drummed with his fingers.

"Yes, I think so, too," replied John, seeing that his father's anger had modified; "and I can promise you, father, that I shall not join the 'Mormons' until I am perfectly satisfied that it is the right thing to do. I am not in that condition yet. Surely, there can be no

harm in reading their books and listening to their arguments. I've done that, more or less, with nearly every religion in the neighborhood, and you've never objected before."

"That's different."

"In what way?"

"I—I don't know, only that it is—I'm not going to argue with *you*. Young man, you do as I tell you. Behave yourself and leave Joe Smith and his golden Bible alone."

The father arose, walked to the open window. The mother slipped out. There was silence in the room for a time, then the father turned again to his son.

"John," he said with quiet emotion, "you are my only child, and all I have is yours. You know that. You are to carry on our name and all that it has honorably stood for in the past. I am depending on you. . . Do not disappoint me."

"Father, I hope I shall never disgrace our name, but—"

"Then stop this 'investigating' as you call it, of the 'Mormons.' It is unsafe. The Rev. Mr. Thomson has told me all about it, and what trouble the sect is creating wherever they locate. Don't mix up with them. Dora doesn't like what you are doing. She's a mighty fine, sensible girl. Marry her, and settle down to a good Christian life here at Moston, or any where else you choose. I will give you what start you need in any line of activity."

The young man was deeply moved by his father's earnest words. Was it not true, all this which his father was saying? The prospects held out were cer-

tainly very pleasant, very alluring, especially so when placed against the dark picture which the missionaries had at times painted. John looked about as if he wanted his mother, wanted to get her hand and hold it. The young man dropped his head and looked down to the table.

“Now then, my boy,” pleaded the father, “go right over to Dora and tell her what I want you to.” He looked out of the window. “I think she is out on her porch now, waiting for you.”

The father left the room. John sat in deep thought for a long time, but he did not go away from the house. It was late that evening before he found his mother alone.



CHAPTER FOUR.

The strawberries were ripe in Mrs. Fenton's garden, and she was out in it superintending the picking. Since her husband's death, some five years ago, she had become a capable business woman. The strawberry crop was large, this season, and the market was good. Enwrapped in a big blue apron, and shaded by a straw hat, she worked with cups and cases all morning.

Jane was at school. Dora was housekeeper. After the noon-day meal of berries with cream and bread and butter, the mother went back to the picking, while Dora washed the dishes and tidied up the house.

In the middle of the afternoon, John St. John came. He found Dora on the porch with sewing in her hands. John perched himself on the railing, and fanned his hot face with his hat. Dora's dress of pale blue was protected by a white apron. She looked so fresh and sweet that John's eyes could not long rest on any other object.

Strawberries were talked about for a time. Then John changed the subject with: "Dora, father told me you went with mother and me last Sunday against your wishes. Is that so?"

The color deepened in the girl's cheeks. "Why, no—" she began evadingly. "I was glad enough to go with you, John; but I don't want to go again."

John left the railing and seated himself more firmly in a chair near the girl. He looked at her in a way he had seldom done.

"I am sorry I was the cause of your annoyance," he said. "I'm sorry, also that you will not go again, for I think I shall."

"Of course, you may do as you please about that."

"Dora," continued John in the same even tone, "all our lives we have been together. I cannot believe that we have now come to a parting of the ways. I have never thought of anything other than that we two should be together always." His hand closed firmly on hers as it lay among the sewing. She did not object, but as he spoke, she sat very still, the color in her cheeks alternately glowing and receding.

"I hope, Dora, that because something really serious has come into my life you will not think the less of me."

"You should let forbidden things alone," she suggested.

"Forbidden things? What are forbidden things to you? Surely, religion is not one of them."

"Some kinds are—Oh, John, please don't be foolish."

"I am trying hard not to be; but, Dora, something has come to me not altogether of my choosing. God knows that—and now that it has come, I must meet it manfully. I have trodden the velvety path all my life, and I may have become weak, but I hope I am not altogether devoid of manly strength. I want to meet this situation fairly. I hope I shall never be afraid of the truth, let it come in whatsoever guise it may, even if it should lift me out of the deep rut of ease."

John looked his best as he thus talked, and Dora did not fail to see it. Her heart went out to him, though

she was concerned at his attendance at the "Mormon" meetings. She did not want to be lifted out of her "rut of ease." She did not court a stern, hard duty which would surely bring her into the contempt of her friends. She said to herself that her soul was not in immediate danger, neither was John's. Why, therefore, all this heroizing?

The afternoon sun becoming uncomfortably warm, Dora invited John in. They took their accustomed places in the long cushioned window seat. Dora tried to lead the conversation away from disturbing themes, but John would not follow. At the first opening, he said:

"Dora, I've about given up that trip to Europe."

"Is that so—why?"

"I think I'll go West instead."

"West? How far?"

"To Missouri."

"Oh, John, not to the 'Mormons!'"

"Yes; I want to see the people. Dora, I want to see Joseph Smith."

Tears welled into the girl's eyes, whether of sorrow or of vexation John could not tell. After a pause, he went on:

"I've been reading a lot of their literature; now I want to see the people themselves. I want to see and hear the Prophet. I think that's the only way I can get the light I need to help me determine what I shall do."

"But, John, you'll not become a 'Mormon,'" she cried in real alarm as she clung to him.

"That, dear girl, I cannot say. I am going to

prove this thing, if I can; and then, we'll leave the result with the Lord. I hope He will give me strength to do the right, at the same time that He gives me light to see it."

"What does your father say?"

"Father, I fear, does not understand; he is angry with me, I am sorry to say."

"And your mother?"

"Mother is different."

"Yes, I've noticed that."

There was little more to say just then for either of them. Jane came rushing in from school, rejoicing in the fact that vacation was near at hand. John was treated to a heaping dish of berries before he left to attend to a matter of business in town.

June roses bloomed profusely in the gardens at Moston and at Fenton's. The busy strawberry time passed, and other fruits came into season. Mrs. Fenton was still busy, and for that matter, so was Dora and Jane. John visited as usual, though sometimes now he missed a day or even two, making up afterwards by long daytime visits. Mrs. Fenton noticed the changed manner of the young couple. Their long intimate talks which sometimes ended in tear-stained faces did not disturb the mother. These things were frequently favorable indications of a near approach to a happy termination.

June passed into warmer July, and changes seemed to come to the people as well as to the months. Thomas St. John was more firmly set than ever against the course his son was taking. The mother, naturally quiet and gentle, became even more subdued. Dora

did not laugh so much, nor did she read so many of the latest English novels. Jane, at the sight of the sober faces about her, was not in the mood to tease her sister and her "big brother John." Mrs. Fenton even began to worry about the outcome of the match upon which she had set her heart, and began to lay the trouble to "John's adventures in religion."

To John St. John, that summer was ever memorable. Being born again of the Spirit is no trivial matter. John's nature changed. From a somewhat careless manner of life, he took upon himself a strictness which reached even to his habits of thinking. He quit using tobacco in any form, and ceased indulging in the "social glass." He attended the church services at Belford, first one and then another of the denominations, not only to test out his own growing convictions of where the truth lay, but also somewhat to appease his father.

The "Mormon" elders did not come any more to Moston, but John met them in Belford, attended their public meetings when these were held, and sat for many hours with them in their lodgings. From them he learned the latest news "from the front." The "Mormons" had been driven from Independence, and were now located in Caldwell and adjacent counties, where they were making the wild prairie lands into farms. The town of Far West was growing, and prospects for comfortable homes in that and nearby communities were promising.

The tie between John and his mother grew even closer, if that were possible, during those summer days, when, try as he would to prevent it, the rift between

himself and his father, grew wider. Mother and son could talk plainly and without restraint on the truths which had come to them; and when they thus communed with each other, the sorrow in their hearts because of others was alleviated by the sweet peace which the Gospel brings. The mother admonished John to be, more than ever, kind and considerate in dealing with his father; "for," said she, "if the restored gospel is what I think it is, it will make all whom it touches more gentle and more forbearing." And John heeded his mother's advice, and tried, with varying success, to curb his temper and his tongue.

As July closed, John became restless to be off to the West. The father told him at last to "go and get your fill." The mother, though yet somewhat fearful, thought it best for him to go. Dora was mute, Mrs. Fenton was angry, and Jane was tearful. Nevertheless, John made ready for the trip.

The evening before his departure, John was at the Fenton's. He tried his best to be cheerful, and he succeeded fairly well. Mrs. Fenton reminded him that all seriously-minded young people pass through a period of religion-getting, even as children have the measles. Usually, it passes off, leaving them none the worse. But this case of John's was getting abnormal. John merely laughed, and then suggested to Dora that the garden was enticing by the light of the rising moon.

As they walked down the gravelly path that evening, neither could tell whether or not this parting might not be forever. It was quite possible that here and now their ways would part, and this possibility weighed heavily upon them both.

At last, when they had been sitting in silence for some time on the rustic seat, Dora found her tongue, and pleaded with him not to go. "You are your parents' only child. Your father needs you—his hopes have been with you—you will break his heart."

"No; I'll not do that," he replied. "I'm doing nothing of a heart-breaking nature. It's only a visit, Dora. Very likely, I'll be back before winter."

"I'm so fearful."

"There is nothing to fear." He drew her close to him. "But there is much for which to be glad."

"It's a long way to Missouri, and the traveling, I understand, is often rough and dangerous."

"It's nothing serious, I am sure. I'll write you often and tell you all about it."

"What is it, John, that draws you away from me? I can't understand."

"It seems that only those who get the call can understand."

"Have you received a call?"

"In a way, yes."

"In what way—tell me."

"He who is not willing to leave father and mother, houses and lands—"

"It hasn't come to that yet?"

"No, my dear, not yet."

"But it may?"

"Yes, it may."

"And then, John, Oh, then?"

"Why then, Dora, we must all be brave and strong. We are all in the hands of the Lord."

"John, you are leaving me! I *do* love you, John. You know that."

"Yes, Dora, I know—and I love you, too. All our lives we have loved each other, but it is only within the last few weeks that we have told it in words. It's all so strange, so sweetly strange, my darling."

They clung to each other silently, these two, as if they had forebodings of what lay before them. The faint night-noises sounded loudly on the still air

"Dora, do you know that I am doing this as much for your sake as for mine?"

"No, John, I do not," she whispered.

"I am. I can't quite explain it even to myself, but I *feel* that way. Some day I'll know, and you'll know," he said prophetically.

Then they walked slowly back to the house. Apparently Jane and her mother had gone to bed. John and Dora lingered on the porch. He kissed her tenderly before he would let her go, then she ran into the house.

John walked slowly down the path. Then the door opened again, and Jane's voice called: "John, Mr. John St. John, you didn't say good night and good-by to me."

John turned. Jane was standing on the steps in her white night-gown. He came back to her, and she clasped him about the neck.

"Goodby," she said with a catch in her voice.

"Goodby, Jane, and God bless you."

He kissed her, and she went slowly back.

CHAPTER FIVE.

Far West, Missouri,

September 15, 1838.

My Dear Father and Mother:—I am in the midst of wonderfully strange scenes, scenes quite different from the peaceful quiet of Belford and Moston. I am not at all clear just what will be the outcome of all this unrest, but I mean to remain here for a time, and, perhaps, find out.

In my brief letter which I sent from St. Louis, I told you the most important happenings up to that time. We left St. Louis the next day, steamed up the Mississippi river to where the Missouri enters, then proceeded up that stream. We stopped for a few hours in Jefferson City, where I began to realize for the first time that I was in Missouri, for we heard a lot of talk about the "Mormons," and what a wicked, lawless people they were. A man whom I met in Jefferson City, and who came with us up the river, advised me to keep away from the upper part of the state, for, said he, "it will be only a short time until the 'Mormons' will be entirely driven from the state."

The Missouri river is surely the muddiest, crookedest, snaggiest, of streams! Progress was slow. Sometimes we would travel thirty miles around a promontory where the land distance across the narrow neck would be but a few miles.

One afternoon, a party of us left the boat and walked across just such an isthmus. The captain said

he would pick us up before dark, but the boat ran into a sand-bank and did not reach us until the gray of the next morning. And there we were! Luckily, we had no women with us. We built a big fire and made the best of a bad bargain. My, but didn't the corn bread and bacon taste good that morning!

Life on board a river steamer is full of varied experiences. The passengers are a strange mixture. Those on our boat ranged from a grave college professor from St. Louis, out for a vacation, to the "toughs" who carried the cord wood on board and fed it to the furnace under the boiler. There was some high life on board, and I am sorry to say, a lot of whisky drinking and card playing. I found my Jefferson City friend who had such a poor opinion of the "Mormons" among those who spent most of their waking hours about the card table.

Even on board, there was a lot of talk about the "Mormons." Nearly everybody freely expressed opinions, and for the most part, no one had a good word for them. The Prophet was spoken of as "Joe Smith," or "Old Joe Smith."

It pained me to hear a man whom I hold in high regard talked of in such disrespectful terms. I said nothing, however, as I did not feel able, with my limited knowledge of local affairs, to enter into any dispute. One young man attracted my attention the second day out from St. Louis. He was a quiet, gentlemanly sort of fellow who frequently stood listening to the talk about him. One day I was sure there was a pained expression on his face as a half tipsy man was boasting of what he had seen and done in Jackson County. The young

man moved away to the railing, and stood looking wistfully at the woods which stretched away from the left bank of the river. I felt as if I wanted to speak to him, so I went up to him and said:

"I am John St. John. I am on my way to Far West. Perhaps you are going in that direction."

He looked at me searchingly for a moment, then as if satisfied, he held out his hand.

"I am," he said with a smile. "I am glad to meet you."

"And I want to tell you," I continued, "that I am not yet what the Missourians call a 'Mormon,' although I am leaning strongly that way. I am going to Far West to learn more about them. You appear to be different from the other men on board."

"Thank you," he said. "My name is Henry Freland. I hope I am different." He hung on to my hand longer than is usual at first greetings. "Come over here where we can talk more freely."

We walked forward to the end of the boat and sat down on some coils of rope. Then we talked. He seemed overjoyed to find someone he could speak freely to, someone he could trust, as he expressed it.

Henry Freland had a long story to tell, and I can only give you a small part of it in this letter. He said he was a member of the Church called "Mormon." He was just returning from a preaching mission to Kentucky and Indiana. He had stopped for a few months at St. Louis working to earn a little money, but on hearing that there was trouble brewing again for his people, he left his work to hasten homeward. Five years ago, he told me, he, with father, mother and

two sisters had been driven from their home near Independence, in Jackson County. They had purchased a farm there, and had it well under way for the raising of good crops. They had built a rude but quite comfortable log house, and were happy in the thought that they were helping to lay the "foundations of Zion."

One cold, wintry night, while both he and his father were away, a mob drove his mother and sisters out from their shelter. Then they set fire to the house. Father and son found their loved ones wandering in the woods with many others who had suffered the same mistreatment. Henry, (I call him that already, for we are like brothers) choked in the telling of his story. Tears trickled down his face, and I fear my eyes were wet also, of which I am not ashamed.

The morning after, early, I found Henry gazing intently at the shore. He smiled when I came up to him.

"What are you looking at?" I asked.

"Do you see that elevation just to the right of those trees? Well, I've stood on that many a time and looked at the glories of Zion. We are now skirting Jackson County, and about five miles in this direction lies Independence. As you see, the country is beautifully rolling, and there is no finer spot in all the world than the 'Center place of Zion.' Our farm is about in this direction, as far as I can make out. It is a lovely piece of land. I suppose some member of that mob had his eye on it and is occupying it by now."

"Surely not! What about the law?"

Henry laughed, and simply shrugged his shoulder. That you, father and mother, might more fully

understand, let me explain as Henry did to me, that the Lord indicated to Joseph the Prophet that Missouri is the land of promise and the place for the city of Zion; and Independence is the "center place." Even the spot for the Temple has been selected and dedicated. The "Mormons" began gathering to Independence in 1831, but were driven out by mobs in 1833, going north across the river into Clay county and then later into Caldwell and adjacent counties, where they are at present located.

We left the boat at Lexington Landing. When I asked my friend how we were to get to Far West, about thirty miles away, he said: "Walk." That did not appeal to me. I could, perhaps, have trudged the distance, but Henry had quite a bundle, in which was hidden a rifle—the best he could buy in St. Louis, he told me, with fire in his eye. There were no regular stages up into Caldwell which we could use, so I determined to buy a horse—which I did. Henry agreed that a horse would be a useful animal to have.

We loaded what baggage we had on Nig, as we named our horse, and we took turns riding while the other walked. We got along very well this way. We passed through some beautiful country, now adorned in its autumn colors. The scarlet of the sumac and the gold of the hickory relieved the green of the forests. Wild grapes clung to magnificent oaks. The persimmons needed a little more frost to turn their acid juices sweeter.

We were really two happy fellows. Henry is about my age, a little older. He has such laughing eyes, which can, I reckon, do more at times than laugh.

His smile is like a girl's. (You will discern by this time that I am quite in love with him).

He insisted on my doing most of the riding. He said he was used to walking, having "legged it" over a good part of the states of Kentucky and Indiana. So while I rode, he walked by me with his hand on Nig's mane, and told me more about his experiences in Jackson County. He changed the subject, at times, by explaining many of the principles of the gospel.

Never mind, mother, just how we passed the night. We were quite comfortable, not far from Nig.

On the second day, about ten miles from Far West, we were met by a party of armed horsemen. At the sight of them in the road ahead, Henry, who was walking, instinctively placed his hand on the bundle as if he would pull his rifle from it; but he did not do so. The party rode up to us with a clatter, and one whom I suppose was the leader, greeted us with:

"Halloo, men, where to?"

"Just up into the country, looking about," I replied.

"Mormon?"

The question was directed to me, so I could truthfully say I was not; but the fellow angered me by his insolence and I could not refrain from asking him: "What's that to you?"

"Young feller," he replied, "in this state there are two classes of people: 'Mormons' an' whites. It's lucky fer you that you belong to the whites."

"Well, gentlemen, I don't know much about the 'Mormons;' but this is a free country, isn't it?"

"You bet it is, an' we're using our rights as free

American citizens to rid the country of the pesky 'Mormons.' We'd advise you to keep away from any of their towns."

"Thank you, gentlemen," I said, in as free a manner as I could, giving my horse a kick to urge him forward.

They did not hinder us from going on. They appeared to hold a council after we had passed, whether or not to let us go, but after a time, they rode away.

Henry had been very quiet during the interview. Now he breathed a sigh of relief. He acknowledged that it would have been hard for him to have let them taken us prisoners without a fight. "Some of them, and very likely, some of us would have been hurt," he said. "I'm mighty thankful, for your sake, that they did not try."

We arrived in this place (Far West) last week. Henry did not meet his folks as they had moved to a place called De Witt. We will remain here a few days, and then I think, I shall accompany my friend to his new home.

This place is a brand new town, alive with growth. Most of the houses are log cabins, but there are stores, shops, and hotels. The streets are all laid out at right angles, with a public square in the center. I hope to tell you more about the country later.

I am well and feeling fine. Give my love to the Fentons. Tell Dora I shall write her shortly. Address your next letter to Far West, Caldwell County, Mo. With love to you all, I am, sincerely your son,

JOHN.

P. S. Yesterday, after I had written this letter, I saw the Prophet for the first time. As this letter is already long, I shall tell you all about it in my next. J.S.J.

CHAPTER SIX.

De Witt, Carroll Co., Mo.

Oct. 10, 1838.

Dear Folks at Home:—It is now nearly a month since I sent you a letter from Far West, in which I promised to write you regarding my meeting with the Prophet; but things have happened so swiftly since then that I have been hindered. Even now I may be interrupted at any moment. Sister Freland insists that I write this letter, and Louise is backing up the demand by flourishing Henry's new rifle. But more of the local news later. Let me tell you about the Prophet.

I had been in Far West a few days before I saw Joseph Smith. He is a very busy man, going from one settlement to another, giving instruction to the people, and trying to adjust the difficulties which are constantly arising. I had stopped one sunny Saturday afternoon to watch some boys who were playing ball on the public square, when a man who came swinging down the street attracted my attention. Just then, the boy at the bat sent a high-fly away to right field where there was no fielder at the time. The man saw the ball coming, ran quickly under it, caught it neatly, and with an easy swing, threw it in. He laughed with the boys as if he enjoyed the sport as much as they, which he no doubt did, for it was the Prophet Joseph Smith. The boys would not now let him go. They urged him to come and take his turn at the bat, which he did, and he kept the fielders busy for a time.

As I think of it now, it seems strange that my first meeting with the Prophet should be in such a simple, everyday manner; and yet it agreed with the manner of the man. After he had batted the ball for a time, he left the boys and came on down the street where I was standing watching the game. I wanted to speak to him, but debated with myself whether or not it would be proper. However, he seemed to discern my thoughts, and when he reached me, he stopped, looked at me keenly for an instant, then with a pleasant smile held out his hand.

Although I knew I stood in the presence of a prophet of the Lord, all timidity left me. As he held my hand, he seemed to draw me to him with a magnetic power. I talked to him as freely as I would to an intimate friend. I told him my name and why I had come to Missouri. I shall never forget the smile on his face, the few words he spoke, and the manner in which he placed his hand on my shoulder and blessed me. That was all, and he was gone.

I have tried not to have any false or foolish notions of what a prophet should be. I never did think it necessary for a prophet to be a long-faced, sanctimonious personage with hands clasped as if in perpetual prayer, and eyes turned up to heaven, so I was not disappointed in Joseph Smith. *He is a man.* That tells it better than much description—a fine, vigorous, young man, thirty-three years old; over six feet high; expansive chest; soft light-brown hair, inclined to waviness; keen, clear, penetrating eyes of bluish color; clean shaven face, with his soul shining unhindered through a clear complexion.

The next day was Sunday, and I heard him preach. I have heard many preachers, but none like this one. He truly spoke as "one having authority." His language was neither polished nor always grammatically correct, but his voice was wonderfully sweet, not with the melody of words, but with the power of the Spirit; and by that same Spirit, what he said was carried with convincing force to the hearts of his hearers. I, with others, listened enraptured. Although our seats were made of rough lumber and our meeting place was crude and cold, yet these things were immaterial. He spoke of the gospel truths, not as if he had learned them from books, but as if they were a part of him, springing up naturally from some inner source.

I have heard him a number of times since that first day, and always have his words sunk deep into my heart with convincing power.

But now I must tell you a little of my doings and the people about me, both the good and the bad. I am writing this at the home of the Freland's. I came here from Far West some two weeks ago with Henry. Before leaving Far West, I purchased another horse and a wagon. The wagon is not in the best condition, but it carried us and a few boxes of provisions safely to this place. Brother and Sister Freland received me as if I were one of their own, and it *is* good to have such friends in this new and strange country. When I carried my boxes into the house, I explained to Sister Freland that a boarder should pay something for his keep.

Henry has two sisters; Louise, aged about nineteen; (I should judge) and Marinda, who is fifteen.

(I have her own word for Marinda's age.) They are two very good girls, taking with good courage this pioneer life and its hardships. Marinda is a frail girl, not having been well since the Jackson County mobbing when she caught a severe cold. This family left a good home in York state to gather with the people of their own faith. It's hard enough to settle a new country without having to be driven about by mobs while doing it.

"Isn't it, Louise?" I looked up from my writing and asked.

"Isn't what?"

I read to her the sentence I had written. Tears welled in her eyes, but she brushed them away and smiled. She had placed Henry's gun in the corner again and was busy with some sewing. I went on with this writing.

I ought to explain that most of the people here are still living in wagons and tents, not having had time to build houses. Brother Freland has a two-room log house. Crude and rough it is, but its occupants bring into it a good deal of cheer and comfort.

We are not free from molestation. On the twelfth of last month, a large party of men, made up of mobocrats from other sections threatened this place, notifying the people of De Witt that they must leave by the first of the month. However, the people here have a legal right to remain on their lands and in their homes, and they have appealed to Governor Boggs for protection. As yet, we have heard nothing from him. Meanwhile, there is much unrest and uncertainty.

I—

Far West, Mo.

Oct. 15, 1838.

I observe that I broke off writing from DeWitt somewhat abruptly. I shall now try to explain, and to finish this letter. Just as I wrote the last line, Henry Freland entered the house hurriedly.

"The mob is here," he announced, as he snatched up his rifle and a bag of ammunition. I left off writing and went with him to where the men of the town were gathering. There was much excitement, for parties of mobbers were coming from various directions for the evident purpose of laying siege to our little settlement.

We were in no condition to fight them, even if that had been advisable. For a number of days we watched them gathering. On the second, they began firing at us. Although they had a cannon and plenty of small arms, the enemy did very little personal injury, not being near enough to us. The firing continued the next day. Then we organized ourselves for defense under Colonel Hinkle, and returned their fire. I don't think we inflicted any damage on our enemies, but it relieved somewhat the pressure on our feelings. Henry looked as if he could defeat the whole band of mobocrats. I'll admit I was a raw soldier, this being my first experience with actual warfare.

There was very little food in the settlement, and now, when every avenue of supply was cut off, provisions became scarce. The little I had brought with me helped us materially, though, of course, we could not be selfish, but divided with our neighbors. The whole community was soon reduced to rations, and

then shortly there was nothing to divide. Our cattle had been driven off, and oftentimes in the night we saw the fires by which they were roasted to feed the mobbers. If any of us ventured beyond the settlement in search of horse or cow, he was shot at. The nights became cold. The few houses, ours among the rest, were crowded with women and children. Henry and I slept in a wagon box with a canvas for cover.

In the midst of this plight, the Prophet came to us. How he had escaped the vigilance of the mob was a marvel; but by traversing unfrequented paths through woods under cover of darkness, he had managed to reach us. We were wonderfully cheered by his presence.

The messenger which we had sent to the Governor now returned, and he delivered this reply: "The quarrel is between the 'Mormons' and the mob, and they must fight it out."

There was no hope, we could see, from those whose sworn duty it was to give us protection. We were being worn out and starving. The mob said that if the "Mormons" would leave, they would pay them for their lands. As nothing better seemed possible, the people of De Witt entered into an agreement to leave. There were very few horses or oxen with which to move. One of my horses was lost. All Brother Freland's cattle and horses were gone. Our one remaining horse was hitched with a neighbor's to my wagon. Place was found for the women and children of both families, and a few bundles of clothing were crowded in. We started for Far West on the afternoon of the eleventh. There was many a sorry spectacle in that company, for we were already a sad, wornout lot of people. As we pulled

out across the country, the mobbers occasionally fired after us. We were not sure but that they might come upon us and destroy the whole company. That day we traveled about twelve miles toward Far West and camped in a grove.

Never before have I been so tired and hungry, and yet I could not rest nor sleep. Some of the brethren, however, lay down on the cold ground and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion. What a night that was! I want to forget it, though I seem to hear yet the moans of the sick and the dying, and the pitiful crying of the children in the cold night!

About midnight, Henry came to me as I was taking my turn to stand guard.

“Marinda is dying!” he said.

“What? Oh, Henry!”

“Yes, I couldn’t stand it, so I came here. The folks are with her.”

I put my arms about him. He was trembling, mute for a time, and tearless. Then he managed to say: “Let me take your place. You go and say goodby to her. I—have—already—done so.”

I could not protest or refuse. I went to the wagon, and by the dim lantern light I saw the frail form of the little girl lying with her head in her mother’s lap. She recognized me as I bent forward into the light. Her eyes opened for a moment, she smiled faintly, then in a few moments, she died.

(I have for the first time been in the presence of death. I can not tell you here what were my thoughts and feelings.)

Next morning the camp was astir early. Then we

learned that Marinda's spirit had had company heavenward: a Mrs. Jensen, still very ill from child-birth, had died during the night. Graves were dug that morning, and Marinda and the mother were laid away without coffins or burial clothes. And there, under the sod, in unmarked graves, they lie until the resurrection day.

On the twelfth we crawled into Far West.

Dear Folks, I am writing all this simply because I promised you I would withhold nothing. I do not like to distress you with a sad narrative, but perhaps there will be some good come out of my story.

And now, I am going to tell you a very important piece of news: yesterday, I was baptized. I am now a member of the Church, which means, I suppose, that my lot for good or ill is cast with this people. I am convinced that what I have done is right. I couldn't wait longer. I needed the strength which a membership in the Church of Christ gives; I needed the endowment of the Holy Ghost; I need to be a part of the Vine—one of its branches—that I may draw substance from a Divine source.

My letter is again long. I want to tell more how I *feel*, but I'll wait until I write again. Love to you, dear parents—and to the Fentons. I shall write again to Dora, soon—tell her. I am eagerly waiting to hear from you all. Meanwhile, may the peace and the protection of the Lord be about us, is the sincere prayer of

Your Son,

JOHN.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

Far West, Missouri,
Oct. 20, 1838.

My Dear Mother:—I have just received your letter written from Belford. It has given me both joy and pain—joy to hear from you, pain to learn that my father has cast off his only son. Well, dear mother, I shall remember him still in my prayers, as I am sure, you always do. Dora might have inclosed a note, but I shall try to be satisfied with her love message sent through you.

May I forget for a few moments the scenes of sorrow and dread about me as I make my pen talk to you. I wish I could be with you for a little while, to sit with you in the window-seat. I could tell you of many things which I have learned. (Not the least of my happiness would be in the knowledge of a pantry full of good things; or perhaps, Jane—bless her heart—would come running to us with a plate of cookies, all made by herself.)

There has come to me a wonderful peace since I joined the Church—a peace easier to feel and know than to describe. It is not a surface satisfaction—for often I am fiercely angered by what I see, but cannot prevent—but it is as if a light came directly from the Celestial Presence and shone into the innermost recesses of my heart, there to glow with warmth and peace and love. It must be, dear mother, a taste of

that peace spoken of by Paul as the fruits of the Spirit which "passeth understanding."

I grieve for father, and truthfully, I am sorry that I am to lose what means he was to have given me; for it would be foolish to say that I care not for money, and the things that money will buy, yes, for myself and also for those about me whom I love.

Recently, I have been thinking about my changed condition in life. Here I am, a "Mormon," harassed and driven to and fro. A year ago I was the pampered son and heir of the banker of Belford. Well, truly, mother, I am not sorry. A life of slippered ease does not tend to develop the best in a man, and I understand now that my manner of life was having its effect on me. Had I continued a few years longer, perhaps I should not have been able to break through the inclosing crust. True, I always had longings for something else, something indefinitely higher than the life I was living, and that led me to much reading and some travel. You, I am sure, had something to do with that longing, but it was the coming of that Elder and the Book of Mormon which was the beginning of a new dispensation to me. Had not these come when they did, I might now be viewing the art galleries of Paris instead of seeing the outrages of Missouri mobocrats. But Truth came, beckoned, and I followed. I passed out from the dim uncertainty of a deadly quiet into sun and air and sometimes wind and fierce storm; for in God's Great Open one must not expect to always bask in sunshine and calm.

Now, mother, do not be unduly alarmed when I tell you that I have bought me a gun and fifty rounds

of ammunition. I am now a warrior, both in body and in spirit. I am going to march shoulder to shoulder with my dear friend Henry Freland and help to defend our God-given right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and to worship God as we please. My grandfather fought for these rights, and why should I be deprived of them by lawless mobs?—and think of it, mother, mobs led by so-called Christian preachers of the Gospel, for such is the case here. Is there a more glorious cause for which to fight, yes, and if need be, to die?

Brother Joseph is among us, doing his utmost. Whatever he may think and feel, he always counsels peace and respect for the law. Yet the country is in an uproar, and there is a great hue and cry against the "Mormons." I cannot understand it, knowing the character of our people as I do. Of course, we are not perfect, and there are some among us who grumble and complain. By what I have learned lately, there are likely, some traitors with us. Some who have left the Church, I am sorry to say, spread all manner of lies about the people here, and these wild tales are no doubt believed by our enemies and are used as justification for their acts of violence against us.

Conditions here at Far West are getting serious. Practically, all of our people living on nearby farms or in adjacent settlements have been driven in to this place, until now every house contains two or more families, and tents and wagons are pressed into service to give some sort of shelter. The weather is cold, and food is getting scarce. Recently, Henry and I went with a brother back to his own farm to get a load of corn.

It had to be done by night and by stealth for fear of the mob. What do you think of having to "steal" from one's own cornfield to get bread to keep one's family from starving?

The mails are very uncertain. One is to leave tomorrow, and as I desire to write to Dora, I will close this one. Will you please deliver Dora's to her as I shall send it along with this one of yours. With kindest regard and much love,

I am, your son,
JOHN.

Far West, Mo., Oct. 20, 1838.

Dear Dora:—I do not know how often you visit Boston, and how much you know of that which I have written home, for, you see, you have not told me. I presume, however, that you are informed somewhat of the troublesome times we are having, so I shall not repeat my tale of woe to you.

I am fortunate in having found some very good friends with whom I live and who treat me as a member of their family. Brother and Sister Freland are from the best families in York state. Their daughter Louise is about your age. Henry is two years older than I. These people have suffered much for their religion. Henry and I have been chummy ever since I came. Never having had a brother, I cannot say just how I would feel toward one, but I imagine, it would be just as I feel toward Henry.

This is a wild, rough country. The Indians are just west of us, (tell Jane) and I fear many of the early white settlers are among the lawless sort who are not

comfortable in more thickly settled communities. There are, of course, many honest people who came here to obtain cheap lands and make homes. Life, you may imagine, is primitive. The log cabin floor is either of puncheon (split poles) or of packed earth, and the furniture is of the crudest kind. Corn is the principal article of food which is pounded or roughly ground into meal. I have operated a coffee mill, myself, to make coarse meal for bread. There is considerable wild game which furnishes meat. We are a long way from the eastern factories, so store goods are scarce. Louise's everyday dresses are made from the wool which Henry clipped from the sheep and which she and her mother carded, spun, wove, cut, and sewed. Possibly, these dresses are not up to the latest in style, but they are very, very serviceable! Her Sunday dress is of gingham, all the way from St. Louis, and when she puts a faint crimp in her brown hair, and ties it up with a red ribbon, she is not a bad looking girl. I am writing like this of Louise because I imagine girls are interested in such things, and, of course, I can write to *you* of Louise the same as I can of Henry.

I hope you have not entirely forgotten me. I often think of you and our two homes side by side, bound together by a link woven by frequent passing to and fro. Do you remember the last time we were up in the "Nest?" . . . I believe the big tree sympathized with me. It seemed to lean its branches caressingly toward me. I said a lot, you remember, but you were silent. Perhaps trees can understand unspoken messages, but humans must have some sign or token. And I did not understand you.

You will know by this time that I have joined the Church of Jesus Christ, and the world may call me a "Mormon." I hope this will make no difference in the condition which exists between us. I presume you were hurt by the news, but I beg of you to withhold your judgment for a time. The Gospel and membership in the Church mean so much to me; and whatsoever of good things come to me, Dora, you also must share. I have had no other thought or purpose in this but that you will be with me.

Do you ever wander down the path to the bridge? Next time you do, just give our initials a little dig, down deeper into the wood. Write me a nice, long letter, and tell me all about yourself. With love to you and all, I am,

Yours as ever,

JOHN.



CHAPTER EIGHT.

Quincy, Ill., March 2, 1839.

My Dear Mother:—Those that are left of us are resting quietly here in Quincy, Ill. I am still somewhat unstrung, and my head, at times, is in a whirl because of the great storm of persecution from which we have just emerged; therefore, I do not know how well I shall tell my story of the last four months. Thank the Lord, there are some of us left to tell the story, and to carry on the work.

From time to time, I have sent you brief notes, letting you know that I was still in the land of the living. Now, it seems, that we are safe for a season, and as I have time for writing I am impressed that I ought to record some of my recent experiences. My narrative may be somewhat disconnected, but I shall aim at the simple truth. If it shall please God to give me posterity, I want them and their contemporaries to know what their fathers suffered and endured in order to lay the foundation of the great Latter-day Work. Those of the future will read, and I hope understand and appreciate and profit.

° Mother, is America the “land of the free and the home of the brave?” Is Missouri a part of the United States? Is it not all a wild dream of the night that thousands of men, women, and children have been dispossessed of their property, driven from their homes in the depths of winter, and forced from the

state? As I look about me on my scattered people, I realize that it is not a dream.*

I do not remember just where I left off in my last narrative letter to you, but I believe it was before the fight at Crooked River and the massacre at Haun's Mill. I am not going to dwell in detail on these gruesome events for I was not directly connected with them. Henry and I both proffered to go with Captain Patten and his company to defend the people at a place called Log Creek, but we were told that we were needed at Far West. Captain Patten met the mob on Crooked River, and a fight ensued. The captain, who was one of the Twelve Apostles, and a number of others were killed, and some others were wounded.

The massacre at Haun's Mill occurred a few days later. A mob of two hundred forty men came suddenly on the little company camped peaceably about the mill on Shoal Creek, six miles from Far West. I cannot tell you what horrors were there committed, but when it was all over and the women and children and few men remaining crept from their hiding places, they found that nineteen men and boys were dead or mortally wounded, and about fifteen others were badly hurt.

Conditions were getting desperate, so we at Far West decided to organize in self-defense. About this time we learned that Governor Boggs had issued an order to General Clark, authorizing him to raise two thousand men and march against us. "The Mormons," the Governor declared, "must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state."

On October thirtieth, just as the sun was setting

at Far West, we saw a body of men approaching at a distance. At first we thought they were some of our own men reconnoitering, but we soon discovered that they were the Governor's troops. They camped some distance from the town, and that night we threw up some breastworks of logs and earth. If we had to fight for our lives, we would sell them as dearly as possible. During the night, the enemy received additional recruits of men fresh from the scenes of the Haun's Mill massacre. Among them was one Gillium who was called the "Delaware Chief." He was the leader of a cut-throat band of mobocrats who decked themselves out as Indians, and acted the part of savages very well.

But we were destined not to fight. Colonel Hinkle, who had charge of the Far West militia, came to the Prophet Joseph on the afternoon of the thirty-first and told him that the officers of the invading army wished to have an interview with him and some others of the brethren. Accordingly, Joseph with four others accompanied Colonel Hinkle out some distance from the town to where General Lucas with fifty guards were stationed.

"General Lucas," said Colonel Hinkle, "these are the prisoners I agreed to deliver to you."

Colonel Hinkle had turned traitor, and had betrayed the brethren into the hands of their enemies!

The prisoners were then taken to the enemy's camp amid the most diabolical din and demonstration. Gillium's "Indians" whooped and brandished their weapons in true savage fashion. All that night, the brethren lay on the wet ground in a heavy rain, having

to listen to the vilest language from their guards who boasted of their devilish deeds of violence perpetrated on "Mormon" men, women, and children.

During the night a court martial was held. The prisoners knew nothing of this until next morning when they were informed of the results. It was ordered that General Doniphan should take Joseph Smith and the other prisoners into the public square of Far West and there shoot them, at nine o'clock in the morning. General Doniphan, however, refused. "It is cold blooded murder," he declared, "I will not obey your orders." General Doniphan's courageous stand saved the brethren, for the order was not carried out.

We at Far West passed a most anxious night. We could do nothing. The Prophet and his brethren were in the enemy's hands, and resistance on our part would mean death to them. We were told that if we wished to be spared from immediate extermination, we must give up our arms, which we reluctantly did. Immediately, the mob poured into town. Under pretense of searching for arms, they entered houses, tore up floors, demolished furniture, upset haystacks, and carried off whatever struck their fancy. They insulted and abused the people. My pen halts when I attempt to tell what unspeakable outrages were perpetrated on some of our dear sisters!

On the morning of the third, Joseph with his fellow prisoners—Hyrum was now with them—were brought into town. We hoped they would now be released, but they were returned only that they might bid farewell to their families. This was a most heart-rending sight. Many of us gathered on the public

square to take what might be our last look at our beloved leaders. They were then taken away under a strong guard, for what purpose, we knew not; only we surmised that some opportunity might be sought for their murder.

Some of the brethren were later released and joined us again. From them we learned that the prisoners were taken to Independence where they were "exhibited" to the curious. They were then taken to Richmond, chained together, and thrust into a vile prison. After a farcical trial, some were released, but Joseph, Hyrum, and a number of others were committed for treason and sent to Liberty jail, where, as far as we know, they are at this writing.

On November fourth, General Clark arrived at Far West with two thousand more "soldiers." He took a great many of the brethren prisoners. I presume that Brother Freman was too old and feeble, and Henry and I were not "prominent" enough to be molested. The inhabitants of the town were placed under strict surveillance. Most of the owners of property were compelled to sign deeds of trust to pay the expenses of the "war." General Clark made a speech in a public gathering in which he advised us to scatter abroad and never again organize with bishops, priests, etc., lest we excite the jealousy of those who do not believe as we do! Then he assured us that the fate of our brethren who had been taken prisoners was fixed, and that we would never see them again. It was the most outrageous speech I have ever listened to. I was reminded of this from the Fiftieth Psalm:—"Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by

sacrifice"—but be sure, might be added, that the place of gathering be not anywhere in the state of Missouri!

It was evident that the whole people would again have to leave and give up once more all their earthly possessions. Many had farms which they had purchased from the government, and were getting comfortable homes. Brother Freman had as yet very little to leave. My property consisted of one horse, one poor wagon, and a few hundred dollars in money, which the mob did not know about—thank the Lord. But where should we go? Further into the wilds of the West or the North we could not move because of our impoverished condition; Jackson County lay at the south; so our only hope was eastward into Illinois.

The mob was verbally willing that we should remain until spring, but that promise was given the lie by their brutal actions. Active preparations were, therefore, made for as many as possible to leave. Brigham Young, the President of the Twelve Apostles, took a leading part in seeing that every member of the Church who needed help to remove was assisted. I obtained another horse, and by repairing the wagon, we thought we might make the two hundred mile trip to Illinois. Brother and Sister Freland would have to ride most of the way, as they were feeble. After we were meagerly fitted out, I turned over to the committee what little money I had left to assist those poorer than we.

(It is late and I am tired. I shall finish this letter in the morning. From the next door, I hear the strains of a melodeon and some singing, and the music brings me back to Moston, with you, mother, at the organ,

and Dora and Jane and I standing about you singing. . . Goodnight.)

Next Morning.

In looking over what I wrote last evening, I note that what I have put down is largely of a general nature. Now I must tell you what has happened to me and to my friends, the Frelands. It is a sad story, and my heart is full as I write it.

After our removal from DeWitt, we occupied rather poor quarters in the outskirts of Far West. In the overcrowded condition of the town, we could not be too particular. Provisions were getting scarce and this also worked a hardship on those who were already weak from exposure and privations. We all mourned our little Marinda. Louise kept up her spirits bravely. Henry—well, the smile seldom left his face, even in the most distressing situations. He kept his strength and his evenness of temper remarkably well. As for me, I will admit, I was at times discouraged and sometimes I grumbled. On such occasions, Henry, with a word of encouragement or with a joke helped me out of the Slough of Despond.

One morning—we were about ready to move—one of the brethren came to me and asked me if I had a horse.

“Yes,” I replied, “two of them, if they have not been stolen over night.”

Then the brother explained to me that some one was wanted to do a little scout work. Suspicions were felt about a band of mobbers encamped down near the junction of Shoal Creek and Goose Creek. It was feared that they were planning an attack, just

when and where, we ought to know, if possible. Brother Rockwell, who generally did such scout work, was away. Would I undertake such an errand? I had a horse, I was not well known, the brethren trusted me—there would be some danger, but—

“I’ll go,” I replied. “I want to do what I can. As for danger, there is that everywhere just now.”

The brother thanked me, gave me further instructions, and then before parting, he gave me a blessing which thrilled my very soul.

I told the folks what I was about to do. Henry said he envied me, but the others were perceptibly worried. They did not object, however. I was not to start until night, so I gave my horse a good rub-down and a feeding of the best hay I could find. I packed a lunch of corn bread and bacon, and at dusk I was ready. I had no weapons. With tears in her eyes, my “Missouri Mother” kissed me goodbye.

I knew the lay of the land pretty well, and avoiding the public roads, I managed to cross Shoal Creek at a private ford without being seen by any of the mobbers who encamped along the stream. As the night was cold and there were prospects of snow, I saw that the men kept pretty near to their camp-fires. Once passed the creek, I made a detour to the south so that I might approach the camps from the direction away from Far West. I rode up to within a quarter of a mile, then dismounting and fastening my horse in a clump of trees, I walked carefully to within safe distance of the camp.

I tried to get close enough to the men who were preparing supper to overhear their talk, but I soon

found that if I was to get information of any value, I would have to go right into their camp and mingle with them. I hesitated about doing this, but at last I asked the Lord for guidance and protection, and then I walked boldly up to one of the groups and asked if they could spare a hungry traveler a bite to eat.

Mother, I had to tell some lies and to swear a little in order to convince these men that I was one of their kind. I think, perhaps, the Lord magnified in their ears my tame oaths and emphasized my small untruths, for they seemed satisfied. They gave me some supper and I sat with them about the fire, listening to their talk. As far as I could learn, there was no design of concerted action in force against us. They were there to get what they could, either of land or of property, when the "Mormons" were driven out. And this I also learned, that at the foundation of all their words and deeds lay a deep, insane, uncalled-for hatred of the "Mormons."

This particular group told some bloodcurdling tales of what they had done—some of them had been at the Haun's Mill massacre. Three men who posed as officers in the mob-militia boasted that they made frequent excursions into town "after women." I managed to appear unconcerned, even mildly interested in what they said. After supper two men came and joined the group. They had with them a jug of whiskey which they passed around. I went through the motions of drinking when it came to me.

Some men from nearby groups sauntered in. They, no doubt, had seen the whiskey jug. One of them looked keenly at me, and then called me by name, and

wanted to know "what in hell" I was doing there? Had I quit the "Mormons" as some of the most sensible were doing?

I could not reply on the instant. I had been discovered, and how should I get out? I tried to keep my wits, and swiftly, silently sent a petition for some overruling providence; immediately, my prayer was answered.

It seems that there was some bad blood between some of the men. The whiskey had set this blood on fire. (For once, blessed whiskey!) Angry words soon turned to blows. The rifles were stacked, but some of the men wore pistols, and a number of shots were exchanged. In the excitement, I easily slipped away from the camp, ran to my horse, unfastened him, mounted, and rode away.

The night was now dark. The wind had risen, and snow had begun to fall. Should I continue my investigations? There were other groups which I could visit. But I might be missed and a search might be made. I concluded that there was nothing to learn which would justify this danger, so I turned my horse homeward, where I arrived without further adventure.

It was nearly midnight, yet Brother and Sister Freland were up. The mother was sitting by the table, the fear in her face being made gruesome by the flickering tallow dip. The father was putting on an overcoat, preparatory to going out. I asked what the trouble was, and they told me this:

About two hours before, Louise had gone to the shed, where we still kept a cow, to get some milk for a sick child. The shed, it might be explained, was some

distance from the house, across a vacant lot. Yes, she had taken the lantern with her, which, I mentally said, would not only light her way to the shed, but also show others to her. Henry had come home from guard duty an hour ago. Immediately, he had gone out to the shed, but neither of them had returned yet. The father was preparing to go out into the stormy night to investigate.

"You stay here," said I, as I put some wood on their dying fire. "I'll go out and find them. Don't worry."

I led my horse to the shed, wondering what it could mean. Everything was dark there, and quiet. After putting up my horse, I looked about, but no trace of the missing ones could I find. The snow-fall had been light, and had now nearly ceased. Outside the door which opened pastureward, I saw footsteps in the snow, and by close examination I found smaller prints mingling in a confused way with those of men's. These prints led out from the shed toward the prairie—out, it suddenly came to me—toward the camp of the mobbers!

My heart gave a great bound of fear. Had Louise been kidnapped? And where was Henry? Should we arouse the brethren, so that we could go in force to the rescue? That would take time, and time was precious in this case. Instinctively I followed the trail out on to the prairie. I had no weapons, but I sought and found a heavy stake. What could I do alone? I had no idea, but I would have to try something.

For a mile or so I saw or heard nothing. Then I was sure I saw a dark spot ahead moving across the

snow. I quickened my steps. To the right extended a fence, nearly parallel to the trail. I left the trail so that I could travel faster under the protection of the fence. I now gained rapidly, and shortly I could see more clearly the movements of the party ahead. I now discovered that I was not alone in my trailing. Another man was following the party. It must be Henry! I watched him crouchingly steal along, taking shelter behind every friendly tree or post. The mobbers evidently were not fearing immediate pursuit, or Henry—for I was now sure it was he—would have been discovered.

I must join him before he should attempt any rescue, but it was risky to be seen out in the open snow-covered prairie. In time I maneuvered so that I thought I was within speaking distance. Then I carefully called, "Henry." He did not hear, and I tried again. His whole attention was directed ahead. I crept nearer, and then called again. He stopped and listened. I crept closer, and once more spoke as loudly as I dared, "Henry, it is John.—Wait a moment."

He recognized me, and I soon joined him as he crouched behind a small bunch of brush. He clasped me with strong, nervous grip and whispered,

"Thank God, you have come—They have kidnapped Louise—How can we get her away—How can we kill the devils before they hurt her?"

"I don't know, Henry; but we'll make a fight. Have you any weapons?"

"Not a thing," he admitted despairingly.

I displayed my heavy stick, but he shook his head, while I tried my best to reassure him, and at the same

time think out some plan of rescue. We advanced again slowly, silently. I could feel Henry tremble as we now faintly heard Louise's sobbing coming to us through the night air.

"Shall we rush them?" I asked.

"No; not yet; we must abide our time and take advantage of the best moment."

They were now nearing the creek, and getting dangerously near their camp. Suddenly, they disappeared behind a bank. We watched for a moment, but they did not reappear. Evidently, they had gone down into the creek bottoms. We ran forward, a little to the left of where they had disappeared and to the leeward of the wind. We saw them under the bank, resting on a fallen tree. There were three of them only. Louise was crouching in the snow by the tree. Being well out of sight, we crept up closer so that we could hear nearly all they said. Apparently, they had no suspicions that they were being followed, as their guns stood leaning up against a tree, and the men were sitting on the fallen trunk. The snow-clouds were breaking in the sky, and a half-formed moon shone furtively down on the scene.

We learned from their talk that two of the men could not agree on where they were to take their "young lady." The third man seemed to have no interest either in the girl or their disputes, wanting only to get to camp as soon as possible. He did a good deal of reckless stamping and swearing, so that much of what the other two were saying was lost to us. However, they seemed to have come to some agreement, as they now arose and tried to get

Louise to go on with them. She refused, pleading piteously for them to let her go. We were lying flat on the snow close to the bank, and just as the ruffians laid their brutal hands on the girl to lift her up, Henry jerked the stake from my hands, and with a wild yell rushed forward, making the bank with one leap. I followed. Henry struck fiercely but accurately at one of the men, and he fell as though dead. The other two, surprised for an instant, failed to reach their weapons before we grappled with them. We fought fiercely. My opponent cursed and swore, but I had better use for my breath. Henry soon had his man down, but it was not so easy for me. Back and forth we struggled. My adversary was bigger and stronger than I, but I had the advantage in skill. Eventually, I tripped him and pinioned him to the earth, where I knew I could easily hold him.

At the moment of attack, Louise sprang up with a cry of terror, which turned to one of joy when she saw who had come to her rescue. She now stood looking first at one and then at the other of us. But Henry was not holding his own. His burly opponent managed to fasten his fingers in Henry's throat, and would soon have choked him to death had it not been for Louise. She snatched up one of the guns, cocked it, and pressed the muzzle against the mobber's head.

"Let go, or I will kill you," she said.

The villain scowled up at the girl, but did not loosen his grip.

"Let go this instant, or I shoot!" Louise emphasized her threat with a sharp poke of the gun against his

head. The man loosened his hold and soon Henry was again master of the situation.

But what now could we do? The third man whom Henry had felled now groaned and moved, but he soon lay still again. Although these men would have killed us if they could, we did not want to kill them. We wanted to get away. If these men were secured for a few minutes, we could get out of their reach. At this thought, I told Louise to get a knife out of my coat pocket, and cut some broad strips from her skirt. I knew the cloth in it was strong for she had made it herself. She did not hesitate to do this, and in a few moments, with her help, I had my man's hands securely tied. It was now an easy task to tie Henry's opponent in the same way.

Just as Henry staggered to his feet, I saw the man whom we thought was still insensible, rise to a kneeling position, aim and fire a revolver at Henry. With a cry, Henry reeled, and would have fallen had Louise and I not both reached him.

"I am shot," he moaned.

Just then we heard voices some distance away. We could not know whether friend or foe was coming, but we would take no risks, so we hurried away as fast as we could with Henry between us. He urged us to hasten, saying that his wound would not amount to much, and we must get out of reach of the mobbers. We soon learned, however, that Henry was seriously hurt. For a matter of ten minutes or so, he managed to walk along between us, but then he sagged down.

"You two go on," he whispered. "You'd better—let me—lie here."

We managed to reach the shelter of some bushes. I hastily made a brush bed for Henry to lie on to keep him from close contact with the snow. We heard the approaching party find their bandaged friends, but evidently, they did not think it worth while trying to find us, for they soon left.

Henry grew weaker. We opened his clothing and found a big, ugly wound in his side. Louise and I looked at each other in dismay. What could we do? Should I run for help? But I could not leave them; and Henry was sinking. All we could do—his sister and I—was to pray for him. He lay with his head on Louise's lap, with his pale, beautiful face upturned to the moon-bathed blue heaven. In ten minutes he died! Dear, dear, Henry, my friend, my brother—but I can write no more about him—only that I covered him lightly with some willow brush. He would have to rest alone until morning,—which was not far away—until I could bring some help.

Then I took Louise by the hand and we started homeward. The lights twinkling in the town directed us. Silently we trudged along. I was tired, but the poor girl was weary nearly to exhaustion. I wondered at her strength of mind and body. As we neared Far West, we saw a dull, red flare shoot into the graying sky. A house was burning! As we went on, we found that the flames were in the direction of our own dwelling. This quickened our dragging steps, and sure enough, when we were near the town, we saw that our humble abode was in flames. Mobbers had fired it, and then ridden off. When we arrived, Brother and

Sister Freland were standing bareheaded, looking in a dazed way at the burning home!

Our household possessions were meagre enough, but they were all destroyed. Kind friends provided for Louise and her parents. I directed a party to where Henry's body lay, and we brought it to town. He was buried at Far West. Many of the leading brethren attended the funeral services, and spoke highly of him.

About a week after this night of terror and sorrow, we left Far West. We gave up the idea of traveling all the way by wagon, so we boarded a steamer on the Missouri river at the nearest landing, went down that stream to the Mississippi, then up the river to this place. And so, here we are, as I said in the beginning, what is left of us.

It is now past noon—I have been writing a long time. Sister Freland has just come in to tell me that they are waiting for me at the table. She asked me to whom I was writing such a long letter, and when I told her, she said:

“Give my love to her.”

I gladly do, dear mother.

Your loving son,

JOHN.

CHAPTER NINE.

Nauvoo, Ill., June 29, 1839.

My Dear Dora:—Your brief note inclosed in mother's latest letter has been read and reread in hopes that I might get from it a little more assurance that you still think me worthy of your love. I sometimes fear you misjudge—I am sure that you do not fully understand. My dear, let me repeat: My joining the Latter-day Saints has *not* lessened my love for you; on the contrary, the new light and the added hopes which have come to me have deepened that love until it has become a most holy thing. Will you just wait—be patient with me—let me prove myself.

Gladly would I have returned home after our exodus from Missouri; but as you may know, father does not want to see me, so I thought it best for me to remain away. I hope you will believe me when I say that I long for a look at you all, and to hear your voices, and become a part of the dear home scenes. Perhaps, if I were nearer you, I could keep your heart right—in my direction.

I am writing this letter from the window of my new home; for you must know that I am building a house: I must have some place to keep my guests when they come from Moston and "the neighborhood." (When you come, bring a root of the climbing rose bush from the west wall of your home). My writing table is a smooth board, resting on the window sill. My pen and ink, as you see, are not of the best; but I still have

some of the paper you gave me. There was a stack of it, you remember.

If you want to know where I am located, let me tell you how you can learn. Get out your map of the United States. Find the southern boundary of Iowa, and trace it eastward straight across the little jog in the corner until you reach the Mississippi river. A little south of this point you will see a bend in the river. Within the bend on the Illinois side lies the site for the future city of Nauvoo. The big river sweeps around us on three sides. The ground slopes gradually up to the level of the prairie extending eastward.

I am building my house on the gentle south slope. As I write, I can look out on our city in its first stages of building. We are as yet in the midst of a wilderness, with just a few houses going up here and there. It is evening, and the sound of saw and hammer has ceased. Not far away, straight ahead, the Father of Waters sweeps majestically by. Nearly amidstream is a wood-clad island, and beyond that on the Iowa side is the new town of Montrose. The island attracts me. I would like to live on it—have it for my very own, like another Robinson Crusoe; only, of course, I wouldn't want to be too literal about the Crusoe business, as I would want a Mrs. Crusoe to share with me the charming exclusiveness of the island!

The air is delightful this evening. The sky has been clear all day. Now the shadows are long and deepening. West of me there is a small grove of trees, which, because of its standing in a future street, must be cut down. (I wish I could transplant some of them to my lot near the house.) The river is now a stream

of dull, gray metallic substance, and as I gaze upon it, my mind's eye lifts beyond the river across the land to Moston and the stream and the bridge—and on the rustic seat which I made, there sits a girl. It is mid-summer. Her white dress is trimmed with blue. The gallant Sun, loath to depart, leaves what he can of his choicest gifts with her; and for this reason, the warm sunlight shines from her face, glows in deep color in her lips, tinges her cheeks rosy-red, and lurks in the big, soft coils of her hair. Ah, dear me, how envious I am of you, Mr. Sun!

Do you think, my dear, that all this is only a case of distance lending enchantment? Many a time at home have I thus thought of you, thus seen you, even though I may not have expressed it. Never has there been any other girl just like you: you stand out sharply from the great mass, and I have seen many people in my time. Never have I seriously doubted that you and I were meant for each other. Even now I do not doubt, —I am merely a bit afraid!

Do you think it strange that I should become a carpenter? You see, we must learn to do many kinds of work here. I laid most of the stones in the foundation of my house, likewise did most of the woodwork and the painting. So, you see, this house is strictly "home made." My hands are rougher than they ever have been, and my clothes smell of paint. And that reminds me of an incident.

The other day Elder Brigham Young—he is president of the Twelve Apostles—came by my house while I was painting. He saw at a glance that I was a novice, and he very kindly gave me some suggestions,

even taking the brush from my hands and showing me how. He is a painter and glazier by trade, and yet he is one of our leading men and best preachers. Now, this may appear strange to you, who, all your life, have thought of ministers of the gospel as being men apart from common workmen. However, I read,—and so may you—that Peter was a fisherman and Paul was a tentmaker. So, you see, the latter-day apostles are, in this respect, very much like the former-day disciples of the Lord.

The light is growing less, and I am tired. Write to me again, this time, a long, sweet letter, full of that sunshine with which you yourself are charged. Give my love to your mother and to Jane. Tell my friends, if I still have any, that I often think kindly of them; and finally believe me to be

Yours as ever,

JOHN.

Nauvoo, Ill., July 5, 1839.

My Dear Father:—I hear of you regularly through mother, even though you yourself do not write, and I want to tell you that I think of you often—think of you as the kind father you have been to me ever since childhood. I grieve that I have caused you sorrow recently, and that I have so disappointed you.

If I never see you again, or if I am never to reach you by spoken word, I want to tell you this: What I have done in joining the “Mormons” has been actuated by the sincerest motives. It has not been dictated by a spirit of adventure. In casting my lot with this “peculiar people,” I have not depended on the testimony of

others, but I have sought out the truth myself and have tried to follow the light as it has been given to me. You may think me fanatical when I say that I have a testimony that God lives and that He has raised up a prophet who speaks with as much power and authority as any ancient prophet ever did. I see that prophet nearly every day; I hear his voice; I feel the sweet influence of his presence; my soul is nourished by his teachings.

Yes, all this in the midst of poverty and trial. Yet I know that we are at the beginning of great things, and it gives me courage when I think that I may be a humble instrument in helping to lay the foundation of a great structure. Either this city, or some other, is destined to be great in the elements of true greatness which lie in the hearts of the people rather than in material things.

When I look back to my childhood days and try to recall my religious impressions, I find much vagueness: God was a something which no one could conceive of, let alone describe; angels were beings with wings and harps and crowns; heaven was a place where all the converted went; hell was a place of never-ending torment. I used to be an inquisitive boy, and many a minister I have annoyed by questions which he could not answer. I remember a revival where a number of my acquaintances "got religion." I asked some of them how they got "it," but they could not explain. Everything about it was so hazy, principally a matter of the emotions, I suppose.

I do not pretend to know much yet about the great world of truth, but I am sure I am at the thresh-

old, and am in the right way to learn. Ever since I was old enough, I have thought one should have some philosophy of life. Before I met the Latter-day Saints, I rarely found anyone who could satisfy my queries of why and whence. All life about me was largely chartless and rudderless. My own life was, I am sure, much like a fallow field which, I fear, in time would have been choked with useless weeds. Now, I am equally sure, if I do my duty, even though my life may lead through struggle and trial, some day there will come a fruitful harvest.

But I do not want to preach—only I wanted to express my inmost heart to you. I hope you will never cease thinking of me as a son, even as I shall ever hold you as a father. Some day, as sure as God is in Heaven, all will be well—if we live up to the light which comes to us.

I believe, father, that this town would be a good place in which to begin business. Nauvoo is a coming city, and a bank would do well here—not just yet, but after a time. Think about it.

I am sincerely your son,

JOHN.

CHAPTER TEN.

Nauvoo, Ill., Aug. 30, 1839.

Dear Mother:—I was not satisfied with my brief letter to you last month, so I shall try to make amends.

Lately I have been thinking of our recent experiences in Missouri; and I must acknowledge that I cannot quite understand why we should be driven from a land which the Lord has pointed out to be the gathering place of His people. Perhaps we are not good enough yet. The Savior likened the kingdom of God unto a net cast into the sea, and wherein all kinds of fish were caught. Well, we have all kinds of people with us, the trials of Missouri having revealed their true nature. I fear that the unwisdom of some and the wickedness of others have been, largely, the cause of our suffering. However, back of this exhibition of human weakness shines the everlasting light of God's truth, and that assurance gives me comfort and hope.

I am now quite alone. The Frelands have moved a short distance up the river. Though old and ill, Brother and Sister Freland were determined to try beginning again in a small way for themselves. Louise keeps well and strong and is a great help to her parents.

When we first came here in the spring, the place was very unhealthful. The small village of Commerce lay near the river in the malarial lowlands. As there were but few houses, many lived in their wagons, in tents, and others camped in the open air. Our people, weakened by the Missouri drivings, had not the vital-

ity to resist disease, so, many of them became ill. Brother Joseph had given up his simple house to the sick and he lived in a tent. No doubt, all this suffering of his people moved the Prophet greatly. On the morning of July 22 he arose, and with the power of God resting upon him, he began to heal the sick. First, he administered to those in his own house and dooryard, passing along to all within reach. Then, with a number of the Twelve, he crossed the river to Montrose and healed the sick there. Some of those who were healed—notably a Brother Fordham—were at the point of death. It was a very remarkable demonstration of God's power, and it has taught us clearly that the promised signs follow the believer in our day as well as formerly.

Since the Prophet has returned to us, he is again the center of our life and activity. We are all very busy building up our new city, and bringing the adjacent country under cultivation. Since I left your sheltering roof, dear mother, what a variety of work I have done! Just now I have obtained a small farm eastward from the city, but I doubt whether I shall ever be a successful farmer. When it comes to manual labor, I think I am apter with tools. A brother acquaintance is planning to go into merchandising here, and he wants me to join him. Perhaps that will be more in my line.

Now I must tell you of a visit paid me by Brother Joseph, as we frequently call the Prophet. I was sitting by my open window after a hard day's work. (I had been helping a brother raise the walls of his house.) I was tired, and did not care even to read my

book. There had been light showers during the afternoon and a warm, honeyed perfume stole through my window. Joseph and Hyrum came down the street. Seeing me, they stopped. Hyrum went on, and Joseph came to where I was sitting. I placed him a chair, and he drew it close to mine, indicating that he wanted to be companionable. Joseph's smile seems to come unconsciously as if reflecting his beautiful soul. Although I felt rather than knew I was in the presence of a great man, yet I was not ill at ease. There is that about the Prophet which draws like the warmth of the sun. He is very simple and natural in manner and address, and yet there lies deeply in those blue eyes of his the wisdom of worlds!

When I told him my name, he said he remembered me from Far West. He wanted to know how I had fared since then and I rehearsed to him my story. When I spoke of the death of my friend Henry Freland, there were tears of sympathy in his eyes.

Then he began to talk. I have told you how he can hold an audience, and now the same wonderfully sweet, magnetic voice was giving utterance to divine truths in my lone presence. He told me of his vision, while yet a boy, of the Father and the Son, and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He did not dwell long on the unpleasant history of his sufferings in Missouri prisons, but he entered into an exposition of the gospel. He took me back to a pre-mortal existence, and pointed out to me the glories of worlds to come. It was wonderful. My heart truly burned within me as he talked. I cannot repeat to you all he said, for some of it is not to be revealed as yet to the world. He left

me with a blessing which lingered as a benign influence for hours as I sat there alone with the open heavens before my eyes.

Mother, many a dream have I had in the past, even as a boy,—day dreams they were,—visions which I could not mentally grasp even to the extent of talking about them. I think now that they were glimpses through a partly opened door into Glory-land. Joseph opened widely that door, and my soul feasted.

That night I dreamed again. I do not know whether I was asleep or not. I saw a beautiful Temple stand on the highest point of land not far from my humble home; and I heard the singing of angels, and I saw white-robed men and women in that Temple on the hill.

And now, dear mother, there is a bit of news for you. The other day a message came to me that I was wanted to go and preach the gospel. Would I, could I go? I answered, yes, with a quaking heart. What else could I say? So I am called on a mission, and will start within a week. I am to go up into Michigan and perhaps to Canada. A family, just arrived from the East, will finish, then occupy my house. They wanted to buy it, but I do not wish to sell. In the building of this little home, I have had fond anticipations which I want to see realized. This may be the last letter I may write from Nauvoo before I leave, but I shall try to let you know from time to time of my doings.

I note in your letter how father received my communication to him, and how he handed it to you. I hope some good will come of it. Remember me kindly

to him,—and the others. God bless you. Do not forget me in your prayers. I shall need them more than ever, for I shall need all the strength I can muster for this mission.

Sincerely your son,

JOHN.



CHAPTER ELEVEN.

Nauvoo, Ill., Nov. 1, 1842.

My Dear Mother:--As you see, I am back in Nauvoo again. I arrived here some time ago, but I have been too ill to write before. I am better now, and so I shall try to make up to you for lost time.

You will remember that in my last note I sent you from Canada, I said that the climate did not agree with me, but thought that when I got back to Nauvoo, I would soon be well; it has taken me three months to get out and around again,—three of the longest months I have ever experienced. Brother and Sister Freland, with others, have again been very kind to me, and nursed me in my sickness.

As you know, dear mother, I have always enjoyed good health, and so this also was an experience. My Heavenly Father has surely taken me in hand. Through all my afflictions, His Spirit has been my constant companion. I suppose it has been for a wise purpose that at this stage of my life I should learn what physical pain and suffering is; and so, I am ready to acknowledge the hand of the Lord both in my sickness and my restoration. Suffering seems to touch certain deeply hidden springs of the soul, (You, dear mother, know) springs which otherwise never would have been reached. I hope I shall be better, wiser, kinder, braver, and more faithful now than ever before.

I am not now going to enter into a detailed account of my missionary experiences or add to the brief let-

ters I sent you from time to time from the mission field and when otherwise engaged away from that work. (I want to reserve that telling until I can sit near you and look into your dear face.) However, this I must say, that my experiences in the field have been wonderful. I never fully realized before what joy there is in bringing the truth to others. "Man is that he might have joy," and now I know that the greatest joy comes from unselfish service.

Our city has made a wonderful growth since I have been away. I hardly recognized the place again. People are thronging in, and a wave of prosperity seems to be sweeping toward us. Many people are coming from England, and work of various kinds must be provided for them. This makes our city a hive of industry, the Prophet, as always, being the center of activity. New stakes are being organized in the region around about.

My little place has been well taken care of and the farm land is under cultivation. My tenants are now about ready to move into a home of their own, so I shall soon take possession again of my little abode. There are some repairs to make and some improvements which I have in mind, but these will have to wait.

Louise is to be married next week. I am glad that she is getting a good young man, by name, William Dana.

Have I ever told you that we are building a temple? At the April conference of last year, the corner stones were laid with impressive ceremonies, and witnessed by a large concourse of people. It is being built on the elevated ground a few blocks up from my house. (I saw it in vision before I went on my mission). The

Prophet has been telling us that it is necessary to build a temple wherein there shall be a font in which to perform baptisms for the dead. This is new doctrine to the modern world; but it is a beautiful idea, is it not, that all those who have not heard and obeyed the gospel in this life may hear and receive it in the next, and that we who are living may be baptized for those who are dead. At the last October conference, Joseph spoke very emphatically on this subject. Some baptisms for the dead had been performed in the Mississippi river; but now, the Prophet declared, there should be no more such baptisms until they could be performed in a font in the Lord's House. Those who attend to this ordinance become saviors on Mount Zion. Jesus, while His body lay in the tomb, was a ministering Spirit to the spirits in prison. "There is never a time," said Joseph, "when the spirit is too old to approach God." (When I heard this, I thought of the eternal-hell-fire sermons which Parson Tomkins used to preach.) Joseph enlarged on this theme, and said that those who neglect this work for their dead relatives, do it at the peril of their own salvation. (Father's genealogy, running as it does into the English nobility, is well kept. What about yours?)

I am sending you the *Times and Seasons* as it comes from the press so that you can see more fully than I can write what is being done and taught among us. I call your special attention to the translations which the Prophet has published, called the *Book of Abraham*. Is it not a marvel that Abraham should know more about the stars, planets, and worlds in general than the wisest of present-day astronomers!

The Prophet is a very busy man. (You note, mother, that I cannot get away from his sayings and doings; but you will understand the reason for this.) Besides preaching, baptizing, and counseling, he takes an active part in the temporal welfare of the city. All this work is done under heavy handicap. Much of the time this summer and fall Joseph has had to remain in hiding in order to keep out of the way of his enemies. Last May, ex-Governor Boggs of Missouri was shot and severely wounded. Although Joseph was in Illinois at the time, he was accused of the deed, and the officers tried to have him brought to Missouri to stand trial. But Joseph would not go to Missouri to be butchered, and we are glad of it.

Now I come to a personal matter. Mother, I want to see you; and as I cannot go to Moston for that purpose, will you not come to Nauvoo? The journey need not now be hard, as most of it can be made by boat on the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers. I can make you quite comfortable now. And mother—happy thought—get Dora to come with you. The trip would do her good. If Dora would come and see and listen for herself, she might be impressed. Of course, I would not want you to do this without father's full consent. Think and pray about it. The first I have done, the second I shall do.

With greetings and love,

JOHN.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

Moston, Nov. 1, 1842.

Mr. John St. John,
Nauvoo, Ill.

Dear John:

Your father died yesterday evening at 7:30. He had been ill but a week, and we did not think it was serious. I can't write very much now, but will try again later. I think there is no need of your coming home, as all his affairs are in the hands of his lawyers. They called today and said they would take care of everything. At least, wait until you hear from me again before you think of coming.

Your loving mother,
REBECCA ST. JOHN.

Moston, Nov. 7, 1842.

My Dear John:—Sweet, womanly little Jane Fenton is here with me—right here with me in the room while I write this letter. She is not only my “body guard,” she says, but my “mind mentor” also. She has visited with me a good deal during the past year, and she has been with me all the time since your father died. Mrs. Fenton has kindly “loaned” her to me. I don't know what I would do without her. She helps me very much to keep my mind off my sorrows.

Now that I have introduced this letter by a pleasant bit, I must tell you some things which are not so

agreeable. Lately, as you know, I have not been sending you much money, because I have not had it. The fact is that your father was hard hit in the panic which swept over the country a year or so ago, and he has been barely able to struggle along. This, no doubt, was one cause of his death. The lawyers have been working with his books and his affairs for some days, and today they informed me that the bank and all its interests go out of our hands. Moston is all that is left me. I am glad to say that to the last your father was strictly honest in all his business transactions, and so he made it possible that when we laid him away in our private graveplot at Moston, though he left no wealth, he owed no man anything. I only wish he had also been a little more proudly exact with himself and his soul's salvation.

Since you left home, your father hardly ever spoke of you; and I fear that even if he had left a fortune, none of it would have gone to you. During the last few days of his life, when he was lying still and speechless, slipping quietly away, his eyes would frequently open and fix on your picture which stands on the bureau. One day, when I was out of the room, he motioned for Jane to bring the picture closer to him. And so, from little things like that, I am satisfied that his heart was softened towards you at the last.

I am sure now that you need not come home. Instead, I am coming to you! I have about decided that to be the best I can do. Your life—heart and soul, is with your people,—as it should be. I glory in your steadfastness to the truth. My prayers have always been that the Lord would grant you success in what you

have set out to accomplish,—preserve you from falling back into a listless world. As you well know, my heart is also with the restored gospel. I know that it is the truth. I am coming to Nauvoo, and if the Lord will be so gracious to me, I am going to be baptized by the Prophet himself.

But I shall have to content myself to wait until spring. Have your little home ready for me. We two, if no more, shall live there in peace with the saints of God. I shall sell Moston, and with the proceeds you may get a start in business in Nauvoo, if you think that is to your liking. You see, my dear boy, I have made beautiful plans, and I am going to try to turn the Lord's trials into the Lord's blessings.

But what about Dora? asks your questioning heart when you read this. I have said nothing about her in my plans. Well, I do not know what to say. She is a puzzle. Sometimes I think she loves you very much. Beautiful she is as ever, and good, too, and tender of heart; but she appears incased in a hard, worldly shell which, I fear, cannot be broken by gentle means. For her sake and for your sake, I hope the Lord will take her in hand.

Mrs. Fenton and the girls have been a great comfort to me. Mrs. Fenton's knowledge of business has assisted me in some things which I fear I could not have accomplished alone. They want me to close up Moston and come and live with them, but this I cannot do. Mrs. Fenton has kindly permitted Jane to remain with me as long as I desire, which Jane says shall be "forever and ever,"—bless her heart.

Moston is lying peacefully under its first cover of

snow which came last night, so Jane and I shall house up to day. We make good use of our indoor times. Jane is a good reader, and she takes delight in reading the Book of Mormon aloud to me. The other day, when our hearts were very sad, Jane opened the book to III Nephi, chapter eleven, and read the beautiful account of Christ's appearance to the people on this continent. How very sweet that story is! There were tears in our eyes.

"I never dreamed that such wonderful things could be true," said Jane. "Think of it—the Lord coming right down from heaven to the people, speaking gently to them, and inviting them to come and feel of the nail prints in His hands and feet, so they might know for sure that He was the Jesus who was crucified. I wish I had been there."

"Yes," I said, "it was indeed wonderful. Many a time, as a child reading about the Savior, I wished I had lived in the days of Jesus and the apostles; but we must not forget," I reminded her as I looked into her shining eyes, "that the Lord has visited the earth in our day, and that right now, He has a prophet who can speak in His name."

"And John has seen and heard that prophet," added Jane, with implicit trust in the truth of her statement.

"Yes, dear; and so I hope shall—" I was going to say "I" but "we" came instead. I hope it was said with a spirit of prophecy: for John, I have this plan which I might as well reveal to you now:

I do not want to travel alone to Nauvoo; I shall want Jane to go with me; then Mrs. Fenton will want

Dora to go along to look after her younger sister; I shall be Dora's chaperon; so, you see, the arrangement will be complete. Am I not a schemer? Do you think you can take care of such a lot of visitors?

Later.—Dora came to supper, and has spent the evening with us. She is very thoughtful about calling to see us. She told us all the latest news from Belford,—about which I do not care,—and then when she learned that I was writing to you, she said: "Give him my love—and, mother,"—she calls me mother when she is in her sweetest mood as she was this evening,—“tell him that we are all coming to see him and his wonderful city in the spring.”

I looked at her in astonishment. I had never spoken to her about such a journey, yet the idea was already in her head.

“All right, I'll tell him,” I replied; “but when it is said, you must keep your word.”

She put her arms about me and smiled into my face.

“Mother,” she protested, “I may be a foolish girl in many ways, but I always keep my word, do I not?”

And I had to admit that she does. And so, you see, things are coming your—yes, our way.

Dora has gone now, and Jane says it is time for me to go to bed. She is right, for I am tired, so good night to you from your loving

MOTHER.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

John St. John received the definite word early in the spring of 1843 that his mother, Dora, and Jane were coming to Nauvoo. He read and reread the brief letter of announcement which was signed formally by the three, and a wave of joy surged through his heart. Yes, the Lord was good.

John had built two more rooms on his house, which brought the number up to five. With the expectancy of his loved one's coming always before him, he had finished and furnished his rooms as well as the times and his means would permit.

Before and after his working hours at the store where he was employed he busied himself within and without his home. Early that spring he laid out walks, sowed lawns, and fashioned here and there some flower beds, which he planted with what hardy seeds he could obtain. His front yard lay toward the south and the river, and by the side of the house, where the view of the water was clear, he built a rustic seat, above which on three sides extended a trellis on which the ivy was to climb. In his lot at the back of the house John planted some grape vines, apples trees, and peach trees, and his vegetable garden was among the best in Nauvoo.

In all this activity John realized the joy of work. He often thought of the past and what might have been, but he had now no vain regrets. Had he not joined the "Mormons" and had he remained at home,

his father would have built for him and for Dora a much finer house, and he would not have needed to soil a finger over its building. But what he would have missed! Surely, there is no joy that can take the place of this simple home-building when most of the work is done by those who shall dwell therein!

And John St. John's home was only one of many which were being made in Nauvoo. On every hand, the city was growing like magic. Houses were springing up, gardens and fields took the place of wilderness and prairie. Skilled workmen came from the East and from England, for whom workshops and factories were erected. Addition after addition was platted and made a part of the city, until soon its limits reached three or four miles up and down the river and the same distance eastward on to the prairie. Nauvoo's fifteen thousand inhabitants, living contentedly within the half encircling arms of the Father of Waters, occupied the finest site in the state for a big city. Chicago, across the state on Lake Michigan, was as yet a struggling village.

Mrs. St. John and the girls arrived at Nauvoo early in June. Of course, the boat from St. Louis was late that day. John knew it would not arrive until noon, but he began watching for it hours before. Sister Freman had come to help him keep house and prepare a welcome for this guests. For a long time, these two watched and waited. Then at last, well towards evening, when they saw the smoke of the steamer down the river, John hurriedly put in readiness the carriage and the wagon for the trunks. When

the steamer paddled slowly up to the landing, he was there, waiting.

Quite a company of Saints was on board, and so John and his small party were not conspicuous in the general bustle of embarking. The driver of the wagon was given instructions regarding boxes and trunks, and then the mother and the girls were helped into the carriage. As the distance to the house was not far, Sister Freman soon welcomed them from the doorway, bidding John to hurry them in to the delayed dinner. That young man soon helped his passengers to alight; and as he swung Jane, the last of them, to the ground, he remarked:

“Why, Jane, you’re as heavy as your sister.”

“I ought to be,” she replied, “I am as big.”

Sister Freman now took the arrivals in charge, while John went out to dispose of his team. This done, he came back, but lingered on the outside as if timid about going in. But that was not wholly the reason. He wanted the joy of this occasion to come to him dignified, unhurried. He wanted to control any indiscreet rush of feeling. It takes time for happiness to sink deeply into the heart. . . . His mother had aged since he had last seen her, but the same sweet face had pressed his during their greeting in the same peculiar way she had always had ever since he could remember. Dora was older, too, graver, yet more beautiful. And Jane—how she had grown! She was nearly a young lady herself.

The trunks now came, and John helped to unload them. Dora asked to have hers placed in her room, as she needed some “things” contained therein. When

all were ready for dinner, Mrs. St. John and Jane had only "washed up a bit," but Dora had changed her traveling dress for a beautiful white gown, trimmed with blue. At sight of it, John's eyes opened wide and his heart leaped: she looked so much like the dream-picture of her which he had carried in his heart for so long!

Lamps were lighted and blinds were drawn before they sat down to the table. John declared he was not very hungry, so he claimed the privilege of seeing that all the others were helped, even protesting Sister Freman.

At first, there was very little said by those about the table: deep joy need not be expressed in words. All in their own way were drinking thankfully of the spirit of gladness which was present. The mother's eyes were on her son. He had left her a boy; he was now a man, bigger, broader of shoulder, a little changed in face; wiser, no doubt, in the wisdom of God as well as of man. No wonder that Dora's glances turned repeatedly toward him, and that Jane openly told him how handsome he had become.

As Jane's hunger became somewhat appeased, her tongue found ready words. She answered John's questions about Moston, and went into details regarding the journey which to her had been delightful. At the close of the meal, John suggested that the weary travelers might want to retire early.

"I'm not a bit tired, now, after that good dinner," said Jane. "I want to see the Prophet."

"Jane," admonished Dora. "Don't be so foolish."

John laughed. "In good time, Jane, you shall see him."

"Tomorrow?" she asked.

"I can't say as to that. He's not always at home. Tomorrow we'll take a ride about the city, and then Sunday we'll go to meeting. Very likely the Prophet will speak, and then you'll both see and hear him."

The next day was clear and beautiful. When Jane got up, followed by Mrs. St. John and Dora, John had already gone to the store to do a little work and to get excused for the day. Jane soon explored the garden, and looked critically at John's attempt at beautifying the grounds. When she discovered the rustic seat, now partly hidden by the ivy, she called for her sister to come and see. The two seated themselves and looked toward the town and the smoothly flowing river.

The mother quietly looked about the house which was now to be her home; for she had sold Moston, and had left it and all else which had bound her to her old world and its life. She had now cast her lot definitely with her son and his people, who shortly would also be her people.

During the day, John showed them the points of interest in the new city. The temple, its gray limestone walls now about twenty feet high, crowned the highest point in the center of the city. John called his visitors' attention to the signs of growth and prosperity everywhere, and explained that this had been accomplished within the short space of three or four years.

That first Sunday (which was June 11) John and his company went to meeting in the Temple. To those who had been used to worship in the small, cushioned-

pewed church at Belford, this big, open-aired congregation gathering within those unfinished walls, was new and strange. The floor was made of unplanned boards. The seats were of unpainted lumber. Above the rough masonry of partly completed walls extended the open blue of heaven.

Great crowds came and seated themselves in order. The leading elders of the Church took their places on the stand, among them Joseph Smith, the Prophet. At the appointed time there was singing, then prayer, and singing again, after which the Prophet arose to speak.

"I am a rough stone," he said. "The sound of the hammer and chisel was never heard on me until the Lord took me in hand. I desire the learning and wisdom of heaven alone. I have not the least idea, if Christ should come to the earth and preach such rough things as He preached to the Jews, but that this generation would reject Him for being so rough."

John looked at Dora. He did want her to get a favorable impression, and he was a little fearful. Joseph's manner of speech was frequently blunt. It lacked the fine polish of the educated preacher of the world with his "firstly's" and his "finally's" and his ministerial intonations. Sometimes Joseph was "rough" as he had indicated, and sometimes people were offended. John hoped Dora would not be offended.

Joseph continued: "The main object (for the gathering of the Jews) was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom,

and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose."

"It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, etc. One of the ordinances of the house of the Lord is baptism for the dead. God decreed before the foundation of the world that the ordinance should be administered in a font prepared for that purpose in the house of the Lord.".....

"Many men will say, 'I will never forsake you, but I will stand by you at all times.' But the moment you teach them some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are retained in the heavens and are to be revealed to the children of men when they are prepared for them, they will be the first to stone you and put you to death. It was this same principle that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cause the people to kill the prophets in this generation."

"The righteous and the wicked all go to the same world of spirits until the resurrection. The great misery of departed spirits in the world of spirits, where they go after death, is to know that they come short of the glory that others enjoy and that they might have enjoyed themselves, and they are their own accusers."

"Gods have an ascendancy over the angels who are ministering servants. In the resurrection, some are raised to be angels; others are raised to become Gods."

"These things are revealed in the most holy place

in a Temple prepared for that purpose. Many of the sects cry out, 'Oh, I have the testimony of Jesus; I have the Spirit of God; but away with Joe Smith; he says he is a prophet; but there are to be no prophets or revelators in the last days!' Stop, sir! The Revelator says that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy; so by your own mouth you are condemned. But to the text. Why gather the people together in this place? For the same purpose that Jesus wanted to gather the Jews—to receive the ordinances, the blessings, and glories that God has in store for His Saints."

At the close of the meeting John walked homeward with Dora, hoping that she would make some comment on what she had seen and heard; but she was silent. Mrs. St. John also was quiet, as if what she had heard was more suited for contemplation than for expression. But Jane could not keep still, and Mrs. Freland, at least, was a willing listener.

"And what do you think of the Prophet?" asked Mrs. Freland.

"Isn't he fine. You can't help but listen when he speaks. And he says such wonderful things."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, I didn't understand all he said, but I *felt* that it was true. Why, thrills went through me when I looked into his face and listened closely to him. There wasn't much chance to go to sleep in *that* church, was there?"

"Well, you see, there was plenty of fresh air."

Shortly after the service Mrs. Freman parted from her friends to return to her own home. Mrs. St. John, with the two girls as helpers, now took charge of the

household affairs, and John was glad to see them go about the work so light-heartedly. Dora donned a big work apron which, to the young man's adoring eyes, became her beautifully. Neatly, deftly, she went about the work! There was grace even in her dish-washing!

Around the table that evening, the talk turned to what the Prophet had said about the temple. He had urged all to do what was in their power to help complete the building so that the blessings spoken of might be enjoyed by the people. Mrs. St. John had brought with her the price of her home. From this, she explained, she would give a liberal donation to the Temple Committee. There would still remain enough to pay John's few debts and to establish him in a small business. They talked these things over freely as though they were all members of one family whose interests were common. True, Dora said very little, and when at last John turned to her for an opinion on a business venture, she said:

"If you do that, it will mean that you will have to remain here for a long time—for years?"

"Yes; of course. We are to stay here and grow up with the country."

"Then—then, I don't know," she faltered. She became quiet again, and shortly arose and went to her room. John looked anxiously at his mother.

"Mother, go to her and do what you can for her—and for me," he whispered.

"Not now," she replied; "after a while."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Sunday following, they came in touch for the first time with the kind of trouble which had now become the common heritage of the Latter-day Saints. It happened in this way:

They were all again at the services in the Temple Sunday afternoon, June 25. While one of the elders was preaching, Patriarch Hyrum Smith came into the meeting and strode to the stand. The speaker ceased, and Hyrum, turning to the meeting, asked the men present to meet him at the Masonic Hall in thirty minutes. The men left immediately, and the meeting came to a close.

"What is the matter?" asked Mrs. St. John of her son.

"I do not know, but I fear Joseph is in trouble."

"Is there any danger?"

"Not for us. You folks go home, and I'll no doubt soon follow, and tell you all about it."

John with his brethren gathered to the designated place; but so many responded to the call that one fourth of them could not get in the room. Adjournment was therefore taken to the green where a hollow square was formed. Hyrum then told them that Joseph had been kidnapped by Sheriff Reynolds of Jackson County, Missouri, and Sheriff Wilson of Carthage. He explained as far as he had learned what had happened to his brother, and then asked for volunteers to go to his assistance. About three hundred men answered to the

call, from which seventy-five were selected. These immediately provided themselves with horses and equipment, filling their powder horns and flasks from Wilford Woodruff's ammunition barrel, and were soon off for the rescue, while seventy-five others took passage on the "Maid of Iowa" up the river.

John was among the number whose services were not required, so he returned home, where he found his mother and the girls nervously awaiting his coming. He told them what he had heard, and what had been done.

"But why are they after the Prophet all the time?" asked Jane. "Why do the Missourians want him?"

"The complete answer to your questions is a long story, Jane. Although Joseph is not guilty of the crimes they lay at his door, you will notice this"—John addressed himself to the little group about him—"that the enemy always strikes at the head. The head of the Church must always stand the brunt of attacks."

"But I don't understand," persisted Jane.

"No, neither do I, nor any of us, only that this is merely an example of the eternal conflict between the evil powers and the work of the Lord. However, there seems to be discernible causes for much of our trouble. I doubt whether the Missourians would bother themselves about us if it were not for the work of traitors!"

"Traitors!"

"Yes; one of the saddest things is that men who have been one with us at least outwardly, and have been in the confidence of the Prophet, have now turned

against him. They have become so embittered that they would kill him if they could."

"Gracious!"

"John C. Bennett was once mayor of the city and Joseph's friend. Now he is among the chief conspirators for his destruction."

Dora listened, without comment, to John's explanations, only raising her eyes now and then to his as she went about her work in the room. The mother ceased her reading of the *Times and Seasons*. Jane for once was content to sit still and listen while John talked as he did that afternoon.

Meanwhile, what was happening to Joseph?

A few days before, the Prophet with his family had gone to visit with his wife's sister who lived near Dixon, some two hundred miles north from Nauvoo. Governor Ford of Illinois, on a requisition of the Governor of Missouri, had issued an order for Joseph's arrest, based on the old treason charge. By passing themselves off as "Mormon" elders seeking the Prophet, Sheriffs Reynolds and Wilson had found where Joseph was staying, and they pounced upon him one day while he was walking in the yard. With cocked revolvers pointed at his breast, they swore with shocking oaths that they would kill him if he attempted to escape.

"What is the meaning of all this?" inquired Joseph.

He was answered by more oaths and threats.

"I am not afraid of your shooting," declared the Prophet. "I am not afraid to die." He bared his breast and told them to shoot away. "I have endured so much oppression, I am weary of life; and kill me, if

you please. I am a strong man, however, and with my own natural weapons could soon level both of you; but if you have any legal process to serve, I am at all times subject to law, and shall not offer resistance."

Stephen Markham, who had come posthaste from Nauvoo to warn the Prophet, now appeared on the scene. When the sheriffs saw him coming, they turned their weapons on him, threatening to kill him if he came nearer. Markham paid no attention to their threats but continued to advance. They then turned their pistols on Joseph again, jamming them against his sides, ordering Markham to stand still or they would shoot Joseph through.

The officers now hurried their prisoner around to the front of the house and into their wagon, and were about to drive off without letting him get his hat and coat or say goodby to his friends and family. Markham now sprang to the horses, and seizing them by the bits, held them until Emma, Joseph's wife, could come out with his clothes. The officers again threatened to shoot, but Markham replied that "there is no law on earth which requires a sheriff to take a prisoner without his clothes."

Then away they went full speed to the town of Dixon. Markham followed on horseback. For eight miles, the dastardly officers jammed their pistols into their prisoner's side, desisting only on being reproached by Markham for their cowardice.

Arriving at Dixon, Joseph was thrust into a room, and communication denied him with any person. Mr. Dixon, the owner of the house, and some of his friends, being aroused to the gravity of the situation, now took

a hand to see justice done, with the result that Joseph obtained a writ of *habeas corpus*, returnable before Judge Caton of Ottawa. Markham now swore out writs against Reynolds and Wilson, and they were accordingly placed under arrest by the constable. In this way, the whole company set out for Ottawa for trial.

They stopped for the night at Pawpaw Grove, thirty miles on their way. The news of Joseph's arrival was hastily circulated about the neighborhood, and very early next morning, the largest room in the hotel was filled with citizens who were anxious to hear the Prophet preach. But Sheriff Reynolds entered the room, and pointing to Joseph, said:

"I wish you to understand that this man is my prisoner, and I want you to disperse: you must not gather around here this way."

At this an old lame gentleman advanced toward Reynolds, and bringing his large hickory walking stick with a thump to the floor, said in no uncertain tones:

"You damned infernal puke, we'll learn you to come here and interrupt gentlemen. Sit down there. (pointing to a very low chair) and sit still. Don't open your head till General Smith gets through talking. If you never learned manners in Missouri, we'll teach you that gentlemen are not to be imposed upon by a nigger-driver. You cannot kidnap men here, if you do in Missouri; and if you attempt it here, there's a committee in this grove that will sit on your case; and, sir, it is the highest tribunal in the United States, as from its decision there is no appeal."

Joseph was permitted to address the people for an hour and a half.

At Pawpaw Grove it was learned that Judge Caton was not at home, so the company returned to Dixon. Obtaining new warrants, they set out for Quincy; but on the way, Joseph convinced his attorney that the courts at Nauvoo had the necessary authority to try him, so the entire party headed for that city.

And now small companies of men—Joseph's friends who had come from Nauvoo—kept joining them. Wilson and Reynolds, on hearing that their destination was now Nauvoo, became fearful. With such friendly forces at his command, Joseph now had the best of his kidnappers. "I am not going to Missouri, this time," he said. The sheriffs planned without avail to get their prisoner away, but as they themselves were prisoners also, this was no easy task. They now became very uneasy, but the Prophet assured them that they would not be harmed.

Early Friday morning, June 30, 1843, word reached Nauvoo that the Prophet and his party would arrive in the city about noon. Preparations were immediately made to give him a royal welcome. At half-past ten the brass and the martial bands left the city at the head of a procession, to meet the incoming company. In this train were Emma, Hyrum, and many of the principal citizens. Shortly after eleven o'clock, when about a mile and a half from the Temple, the two companies met. Joseph rode in a buggy, the officers and lawyers in a stage coach. About one hundred forty mounted men under Colonel Markham formed a

guard. These horsemen had decorated their horses' bridles with the wild flowers of the prairie.

Joseph was a prisoner in the hands of Reynolds and Wilson; these two officers were in turn prisoners in the hands of Sheriff Campbell of Lee County; and all these were now in charge of Colonel Markham and his horsemen, who saw to it that all concerned were safely delivered into the hands of the proper authorities at Nauvoo.

Joseph leaped from his vehicle into the arms of his wife and his brother who shed tears of joy at his safe return. Tears of gratitude also stood in the eyes of the multitude who gathered silently about. Once more their prophet had been delivered from the hands of his enemies.

Joseph now mounted his favorite horse, "Old Charley," and with Emma at his side, and the band playing "Hail Columbia," the united companies moved on into the city. The streets were lined with people so that at times it was difficult for the procession to pass. The people cheered lustily, guns were fired, and cannon boomed. On arriving at Joseph's house, his aged mother met him at the door. Tears of joy rolled down her cheeks as she embraced her son. His children clung to him.

The people stood about as if unwilling to disperse. Then Joseph mounted a near-by fence, and looking out upon the multitude, he said:

"I am out of the hands of the Missourians again, thank God. I thank you for all your kindness and love to me. I bless you all in the name of Jesus Christ,

Amen. I shall address you at the grove near the Temple at four o'clock this afternoon."

The crowd now dispersed. Joseph and about fifty of his company were served with dinner. Sheriffs Reynolds and Wilson were placed at the head of the table, and Emma herself waited on them!

In due time the Prophet stood trial before the proper authorities in Nauvoo, and was acquitted. A full report of the case was sent to Governor Ford, to inform him what had been done.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

Nauvoo's golden days followed. The young city grew rapidly in beautiful homes, new gardens, and larger fields. And the Prophet had a period of rest from persecution when he could mingle freely with the people and give to them the visions of heaven which seemed to be continually before his eyes.

Mrs. St. John gloried in the new life into which she had come. She was eager to be baptized, but John asked her to wait a little in hopes that Dora also would go with her. Dora was not one of the impulsive kind, John explained to his mother. She, no doubt, was weighing carefully all the evidences in favor of such a step, and in due time she would be convinced. Meanwhile, they would have to be patient with her.

The summer days were full of work for them all, full of interest, full of beauty. John was very happy. Hardly a day passed but some soul-uplifting truth came from the lips of the Prophet or some of the other brethren. Whenever his mother and the girls were not in attendance at the meeting to hear, John brought the news home, and they talked it over about the table. On warm evenings, the moon or the stars drew them out, and they sat in front of the house.

On one of these beautiful Sundays in July, after the afternoon meeting, they all sat near the rustic seat. A soft, cool breeze came up to them from the river. A Sabbath quietness brooded over the land and

all its inhabitants,—all but Jane Fenton. After a space of five long minutes, she at last exclaimed:

“How lovely all this is!”

John, seemingly, was of the same opinion, for he replied:

“I am glad to agree with you. I am fairly in love with the world today.”

“In love with the world?” questioned Jane.

“Yes; and everything in it—at least, everything that the Lord has placed in it.”

There was a pause. Jane knew how to get John to talking: she had no intention of having him cease now.

“Well, who else but God had anything to do with making the world?” she asked.

“No one that I know of,” he replied; “but the devil has tried mighty hard to spoil what the Lord has done.”

“Tried? Has he succeeded?” continued the girl.

“Jane, Jane!” admonished Dora. “Don’t ask so many foolish questions.”

“Oh, they’re not foolish,” corrected John. “They indicate an inquiring mind; and that is usually a hopeful sign.”

John went indoors to get his mother’s light shawl which he threw over her shoulders. He also brought with him a book.

“Jane wants to know if the evil one has succeeded in spoiling the handiwork of God,” said John. “Let me try to answer her. You may listen.”

Dora looked silently down to the shining river and to the dim Iowa side beyond.

“So far as the evil one has tempted men and women to sin and thus brought evil into the world, so far has the beauty of God’s works been marred; but we must remember that this world of ours is the handiwork of God, and as such is essentially good and beautiful; we must also bear in mind that the earth is yet in the process of making. The devil is only roiling the water, so to speak. This earth ‘abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law.’ ”

“What does that mean? That last part was a quotation,” declared observant Jane.

“You’re right. It’s from one of the revelations—one which you must read some day for yourself. Well, I understand the meaning to be that the earth is behaving itself, and that it is spinning along in the ‘straight and narrow way’—if I may say that of a body whose path is nearly round—in the course which its Creator marked out for it. It is not transgressing the law of its being, and, therefore, it will reach the goal of its creation,—celestial glory.

“I have heard preachers in my day cast all kinds of evil repute on our earth and everything on it. If they could see, not only the present, but the potential beauty and grandeur of our mother earth, they would not do this. The earth, they say, is a very evil place, and in theory, they want to get away from it as soon as possible. As for me, I want to stay here as long as I can; and then, when I die, I want to get back to it as soon as it is permissible.”

“I want to go to heaven,” suggested Dora.

“And so do I,” said John; “but where is heaven?”

Jane pointed up into the blue sky, but no one answered more definitely.

"Well," John went on, "I suppose there are more heavens than one. Paul, I believe, writes of the third heaven. The Book of Abraham, from which I was reading to you the other day, tells us that one of the great stars in the firmament is called Kolob, and that it is set 'nigh unto the throne of God,' where the Eternal Father dwells. That surely is a heaven, but one about which we know very little as yet. When we attain to that heaven which is designed for us, it will be right here on this celestialized earth. Mother, you are a scriptural student, what does the Bible say about it?"

"'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,'" quoted the mother.

John opened the book which he had brought out. None of the others had anything further to say, but were in a mood to listen to him, so he went on: "Let me read to you a few paragraphs from a revelation given to Joseph on this question of the earth and its destiny."

"We're listening," said Jane.

"The redemption of the soul is through him who quickeneth all things, in whose bosom it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it.

"Therefore it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory;

"For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father;

“That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified.

“‘And they who are not sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom.

“‘For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom, cannot abide a celestial glory;

“‘And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom, cannot abide a terrestrial glory:

“‘He who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom, cannot abide a telestial glory; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory.’”

John put his whole soul into the reading, and the light which seemed to radiate from his face was surely a reflection of that intelligence which is the glory of God. The little group sat under the spell of the inspired words, as the reader ceased and became quiet with them. Dora's eyes wandered from river to town, glancing only in transition at the handsome face beside her; but Jane, with unabashed frankness, looked at John for some time, then:

“Tell us about it, John.”

John smiled at her. “I don't think I can make it any plainer than the Lord has made it,” he said.

“It's too deep, or high—or something, for me,” explained Jane. “Tell it to us in plain, every-day language.”

“Well, there seems to be grades of attainment in

the worlds to come as well as there are in this. The earth, as we have learned, 'abideth the law.' When it shall have completed the course the Lord designed for it, it will become celestialized. Just what that means, we, of course, cannot say; but it must be a very high degree of development. 'Crowned with glory' is one descriptive term. Now, it is reasonable to conclude that all those persons who have also abided the law, who have been celestialized and crowned with glory will find this earth exactly fitted to their needs and conditions. All who are not able to live up to the high requirements of celestial glory, must go to a lower condition or kingdom, called the terrestrial; and those who are not able to abide the terrestrial law will find their level in the telestial world. And some, it seems, not being able or willing to live even the telestial law, must be content with a kingdom without any glory at all. You remember, Dora, the other evening we read from the revelation called 'The Vision' more about these degrees of glory."

Dora nodded assent, but Jane spoke again:

"I suppose, John, that you'll want to go to the highest kingdom."

"Well, Jane, I am a candidate; but I may not be able to 'abide the law.' "

"I want to go there, also. Tell me—tell us all—the way."

"Yes; we all want to be together. I fear it would not be a perfect heaven if we had to leave behind any of our loved ones. And how shall we get there? Let me read again, this time from 'The Vision' wherein the Prophet saw those who had inherited the celestial

world. Speaking of these, he says: "They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name, and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he has given.

"That by keeping his commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power.

"Who overcometh by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.' "

"There are other requirements," commented John; "but these are some of the essentials which lie at the foundation or the beginning of the upward climb."

"What does 'buried in water' mean?" asked Jane.

"It means to be baptized in the right way and by the proper person. We were sprinkled as infants, but you, as a Book of Mormon reader, know what the Lord says about that."

John's words seemed, for the most part, to be directed to Jane; but he hoped that they would also find lodgment with Dora. The afternoon darkened to evening. Through the still air came the lowing of cattle, and now and then the voice of some one singing the songs of Zion. There being no large meeting rooms in Nauvoo which could be lighted, evening services were not usually held. Thus the Sabbath evenings were profitably spent at home.

"I think I'll go in now," said Mrs. St. John.

"I'll go with you," added Jane.

Arm in arm, these two went into the house. When

the lamps were lighted and they saw that John and Dora were not coming in just then, they were in no hurry to set the table for the cold lunch which they ate on Sunday evenings. Jane drew Mrs. St. John to a seat by the window.

"I'm going to write mama," said the girl, "and ask her if I may be baptized when you are. May I?"

"Why, yes, my dear, if that's the way you feel."

"You have been waiting for Dora, I know. But wait for me, too. I want to go with you. I—I am ready."

The mother drew the girl close and kissed her. They clung to each other in silence. Both their eyes were wet with tears, though they were not so dim but that, when they looked out of the open window, they could see that John and Dora had retreated to the rustic seat where the ivy was climbing protectingly up the trellis.



CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

Mrs. St. John and Jane had gone to the Frelands for the afternoon, leaving John and Dora to keep house. Supper time was approaching and Dora was setting the table. John was pretending to read, but what printed page could equal in interest the personality of such a girl as Dora Fenton! There was a winning charm in her every movement, as she arranged to a nicety the plates and the cups and polished once more the glasses. The setting sun poured its red light through the west window into the room, and Dora walked about at her work in its warm glow.

"I fear the water is not fresh," she said, as she went to the pail to fill her pitcher. She smiled archly at John.

"I'm glad," he declared.

"Glad? Why?"

"Because I want to *do* something. I want to help you." He brought a pail of cool water from the well, and filled the pitcher.

"I think everything is ready," she announced.

They sat on opposite sides of the table and ate their supper. Indeed, they looked very much like a young married couple in the cosiness of their home. Dora appeared to be content with the pleasantness of the moment; John's happiness was dulled by the knowledge that the girl before him had so far refused to give him any definite promise. Dora chatted freely, and John was content to listen, and to think. He was

glad she had not been in Missouri. Could she have stood those soul-trying times? But were they now free from mobs? Perhaps not. John knew very well that the Prophet had looked far out westward into the Rocky mountains for a place of refuge for his people; but what would be the cause of their removal, and who of them would go? Was that vision of loveliness before him fit for tragic scenes? The twilight deepened as the meal ended.

“Shall I light the lamp?” asked Dora.

“No; and leave the table as it is. Let’s go outside and see the coming of the stars.”

The girl made no objections. They took chairs with them. The sky was clear. The evening star shone above the darkening western horizon.

“When will Jane and your mother be home?” asked Dora.

“Depend upon it, Sister Freland will keep them as long as possible; and then, you know, there is that wonderful new grandson to be inspected and pronounced good.”

A neighbor going by, paused at the gate with a greeting, and then passed on, for which John was grateful. Opportunities to be alone with Dora were not many; speech was easy between them that evening, and John hoped they would not be disturbed for some time.

“A penny for your thoughts,” said John as he saw his companion with a far-away look in her face.

“I was thinking of Jane.”

“Yes; what about her?”

“I suppose she’s more religious than I. Ever since

that talk of yours the other day about the earth and the degrees of glory, she has been reading your books, and, as usual, she has put two and two together."

"Yes?"

"This is what she asked me the other day: If this earth in its perfected state is to be inhabited by celestial beings only, what is to become of those who attain merely a terrestrial or a telestial glory? Where will they live?" The girl looked at her companion as if she had "cornered the preacher."

"Children's questions are not so foolish as they sometimes appear to be, for frequently they give utterance to that which comes naturally into their hearts, uncontaminated with the teachings of the world. Jane's question may not be answerable, but it is not foolish. I have an idea—mind you, only a theory of my own—regarding it. Would you like to hear it?"

"Surely."

"I'll have to begin at some distant point and lead up to it." He looked up into the sky where many of the brighter stars were now plainly seen. "Have you ever studied astronomy?" he asked.

"Very little."

"Well, I know merely the rudiments of the science, but it is a wonderfully fascinating study. I have heard Orson Pratt lecture on the stars, but he became so mathematical that I could not follow him."

"Tell me about them, if you can, without being scientific." Evidently, Dora had already forgotten her original question. Both were now looking up into the sky.

"The thousands of stars which we can see on a

clear night," began John, "are a long, long way off. They appear to us to always occupy the same position in the sky, therefore they are called fixed stars. Among these many fixed stars, there are, as far as we have discovered, six exceptions. Six of the stars move, for we see them in different positions in the heavens. For example, that beautiful clear star just about to set behind the western horizon is, doubtless, the planet Venus. Sometimes Venus can be seen early in the morning, and is then our morning star. These six stars are not all seen in our heaven at the same time; some are in the hemisphere on the opposite side of the earth, and some are in our heaven in the day time, and therefore, cannot be seen by us. These seven stars are the planets which revolve around the sun, and constitute what we call the solar system."

"Are there seven? You said six," corrected Dora.

"At first I was speaking of the planets we can see in the sky. The seventh is our earth, which is one of them."

"Is our earth a star?"

"Our earth is one of the seven planets which revolve about the sun. To an observer on one of the other six, the earth would be seen as a star. Now, these seven planets are comparatively close together. They, with the great central body—the sun—form a group. We are more especially interested in this group because it is our own family, so to speak, and we know more about it. Let me tell you a little about each of the planets of this solar system.

"The planet nearest the center of this group is called Mercury, which is about thirty-six millions of

miles from the sun, around which it revolves in eighty-eight of our days. It is smaller than the earth. Next comes Venus, our present evening star. It is nearly the same size as the earth, and its year is two hundred twenty-five of our days. Through a telescope we can see its disk, and that it has phases like our moon. Our own earth comes next in order, being about ninety-three million miles from the sun. As this is a lesson in astronomy and not geography, I'll not say any more about the earth."

"You told us something about the earth the other day."

"So I did. Mars comes next in the circle. Mars shines with a reddish color. It is one of our nearest neighbors. At certain times in its course, Mars gets so near the earth that we can study its surface more closely and see that it is something like our own planet."

"With people on it?"

"That we do not know, though there's no known reason why there shouldn't be. The next planet is Jupiter, the giant member of the sun's family. It is bigger than all the other planets put together. It is five times as far from the sun as the earth, and it requires twelve of our years to make its yearly revolution about the sun. Saturn, the next planet, is a little smaller than Jupiter. It has some strange rings about it, and its year is twenty-nine times as long as ours. Then, as far as we now know, the outermost planet is Uranus.* It is nineteen times as far out from the sun as we are, and it takes eighty-four of our years to make its journey around the sun."

*Neptune was not discovered until 1846.

“What long seasons there must be on Uranus,” suggested Dora,—“just one of each in a lifetime.”

“Of course, we know very little about conditions on these planets. Very likely, most of them are uninhabited, being yet in the early stages of creation.— Oh, I nearly forgot the Asteroids. They are very interesting.”

“What are they?”

“In the orbit between Mars and Jupiter (by orbit we mean path around the sun) there have been discovered a number of small bodies called Asteroids. Four have already been found, with the likelihood that there are many more. Think of it, some of these little spheres are no more than twenty miles in diameter—regular little doll worlds! How would you like one of them for a plaything?”

“They *would* be cute, wouldn't they?”

“Jupiter doesn't appeal to me as these Asteroids do. Just imagine one of these little worlds given to you,—say a round globe two or three hundred miles in circumference, perfect in hills, meadows, forests, lakes and rivers, with blue skies and floating clouds! I would like it just as it came, newly made from Nature's hand, without the grass being cut, or flowers cultivated, or trees trimmed in any way. I wouldn't want roads, or fences, or houses, for it would be my work and my pleasure to subdue it and cultivate it myself.”

“All by yourself? Are you not selfish?”

“Selfish? Oh, I hope not. I would want you to be with me, Dora. I was thinking of this as merely the beginning of our kingdom of glory. I suppose this

world idea is only an elaboration of my boyhood Robinson Crusoe fantasy; but to be alone, —Oh, no.”

Dora was silent, but she was not displeased. After a time, she asked: “What about the moon?”

John laughed. “The moon—Oh, yes— we have nearly forgotten the moon, which is a somewhat smaller body revolving about the earth. Most of the planets have one or more moons. Seven have been discovered as belonging to Saturn.”

“There must be a lot of moonlight there.”

“Well, you see, Saturn is so far away from the sun that she might need more light reflectors.”

There was a pause in their talk, during which their eyes followed the lights of a steamer which was slowly pushing up the river. When it had disappeared behind the trees on the island, John resumed:

“Now, Dora, I am ready to answer your question.”

“What question?”

“Why, Jane’s and yours.”

“Oh, yes, I had forgotten. All right.”

“I have been telling you about these various planets which belong to our immediate family. The earth is one of them. The Lord has told us that the earth ‘abideth the law of a celestial glory,’ and at some time will be the abode of celestial beings. Now, isn’t it possible that some of these other planets are destined for the terrestrial and the telestial glories, and that they also are filling the ‘measure of their creation’ to become fit habitations for those who will receive these glories? Undoubtedly, there will be vastly more of those who will attain to the lesser glories than those

who will reach the highest. Jupiter would be able to provide for a lot of these!"

Dora looked her astonishment. "What a dreamer you are, John!" she said.

"Mind you, I'm not teaching this as doctrine. It's only a bit of my own fertile fancy."

"Mormonism seems to have quickened that fancy considerably."

"It has. There are more wonders in heaven and on the earth than men have ever dreamed of in their philosophy; and Mormonism has unbarred the way to many of these wonders. In fact, Dora, I am beginning to believe that the most beautiful dream of which I am capable, may some day be far surpassed by the reality! Did you read those writings of Abraham, translated by Joseph and printed in the *Times and Seasons*?"

"Yes, I did some reading, but I remember distinctly that I understood but little of it."

"Then I'll tell you about these things, for they fit in very appropriately this evening with our astronomical studies. Something was revealed to Abraham which our astronomers have not as yet demonstrated. Now, you will have to go with me on a journey far out into space, away from this little solar system of ours to other solar systems."

"Other solar systems?"

"Yes. All these stars, with the exception of our seven planets, are also suns, and undoubtedly, have planets revolving about them. Abraham was shown the 'set times of the greater light'—meaning the sun. He was also shown the 'set times of all the stars.' This would seem to indicate that the stars also move about

some central point: that is, the sun, with all its attendant planets, and the stars with their planets, all move about some great central world."

"John, John!" exclaimed Dora, "stop a moment."

"What is it?"

"I can't follow you. I'm lost in this maze of worlds."

John reached for his companion's hand and held it firmly. "Now, you stay close to me," he advised smilingly, "and we two shall travel together to the utmost bounds of time and space. Do not be afraid."

"The universe is so immense!"

"Yes; but it is God's universe, remember that. . . . And the 'light of Christ proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space!' By that light we may go without fear to any part of God's domain. . . . Now, the Lord told Abraham the very name of the star which governs all those which belong to our order of worlds, which name is Kolob. Kolob is the greatest of all the stars shown to Abraham, 'because it is nearest unto the throne of God.' A day on Kolob is as a thousand years with us, and this is the Lord's time of reckoning.

"Then Abraham was told that there were other great stars which were also governing ones—that is, about which other stars revolve. Then, Dora,—hold tight—I surmise that all these systems also revolve about a common center."

The girl was silent.

"Now let me repeat, just to get the thought clear in my own mind," said John, as he looked steadily out into the blue heavens.—Dora was listening to what

seemed a carriage up the road.—“The moon revolves about the earth; earth with its moon revolves about the sun; the sun and the other sun-stars, together with their accompanying planets and moons, revolve about Kolob; Kolob, then, is the center of a great system; there are other systems like that which Kolob governs; and all these great systems revolve about another common center; and—

“John, somebody has driven into the yard.”

The folks had come home. They alighted from the carriage and entered the house. As John lighted the lamp, Jane caught sight of the neglected supper table.

“Mother St. John,” she exclaimed, “look at that table!”

Mother looked, but did not scold. Mother knew: who could see an unkept table when the light of stars was in their eyes!



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

Colder winds and rains heralded the coming of autumn, and yet Mrs. St. John was not formally a member of the Church. John had pleaded with her time and again to wait a little longer in hopes that Dora would accompany her to the waters of baptism, until at last he was ashamed to ask for further delay, and the mother went without the company of the young woman.

John had been very patient with Dora. It is not given to all to grasp the truth readily, he reasoned. Some must be carefully and patiently taught. He must give her more time. She would come, for how could such a good, sweet girl harden her heart against the truth? And did they not love each other? Love, surely, would melt away any barrier between them.

Nevertheless, John was keenly disappointed when Dora was not baptized at the time his mother was. The joy of having his mother with him in the faith was overshadowed by Dora's procrastination. On the evening of the baptism, there was a little extra on the table by way of celebration, but John's heart ached when he observed that Dora, apparently, had no regrets. She was as carefree and as cheerful as ever. Evidently, she had not been "pricked in the heart," and thus awakened to repentance and the need of a remission of sins.

The very next day John attended a meeting with the brethren where he learned clearly and definitely the

doctrine of celestial marriage. He had heard rumors and second-hand accounts of the revelation containing this doctrine, but the matter had not been plain to him. In fact, as expounded by gossiping neighbors, the new teachings were not very clear. That evening, however, John St. John sat under the spell of the Patriarch's voice and heard the revelation read in full. John had noted the part which dealt with the plurality of wives, but, somehow, that had not impressed him deeply. That which shone with a beautiful new light was the doctrine of the eternity of the marriage covenant. Gospel truths had usually come to him slowly, opening to his understanding as a flower opens to the sun; but this truth came to him as a great flood of light, and his whole soul bathed in its effulgent rays.

It was late that evening when John walked homeward in a state of rapture. The house was dark, its inmates being asleep. How could he wait until morning to impart that which he had received? But he went to bed and lay a long time awake, indulging in dreams far surpassing those which come in sleep.

John overslept next morning, much to his annoyance, and had to rush off without saying much to the folks. When he came home for dinner, Dora was not in good humor. She showed him a letter from her mother.

"Any bad news?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Jane before Dora could answer.

"She scolds us for staying away so long," explained the elder sister. "She wants us to come home."

"I'm sorry—" was the extent of John's comment.

"I suppose mama is lonesome," said Dora, "and we ought to go home."

"She might come to us," suggested Jane. "I like it better here."

But the sister would not discuss that possibility; she seemed to favor their going home. John was silent and soon went back to his work.

But that evening John could keep still no longer. After supper, he asked Dora to walk out with him. The evening was clear and cold, so wraps were needed. Their steps led toward the river. If the cold weather continued, the river would freeze, navigation would cease for the winter, and Dora would not be able to go home.

"Where are we going?" she asked.

"Just for a walk. I want to be out in this bracing air."

"What is the matter, John?"

"Nothing—and yet so much! O, Dora, can't you see, don't you know?"

"Know what?"

They paused in their walk as John took her hands firmly in his.

"I want you, Dora—I want you for my wife. You've known that for a long time. Stay here with me. I fear you are going to leave me, and I want you more than ever *now!*"

"Now?"

"Yes; last evening I heard something wonderful, Dora, something which affects me and you. That which prophets have but seen, and poets merely sung about has become a fact to us here and now!"

"You are always finding wonders."

"Yes."—He was yet blind to her hidden meaning. "I've heard the revelation on celestial marriage."

"Celestial marriage! What's that?"

John told her; but he felt that his words were halting and his expression poor; his vision suffered very much in the telling. Dora listened silently, patiently, and after he had talked himself out, she said:

"But, John—all this does not apply to me. I do not belong to your church, and all these wondrous promises are for its members only."

John was silenced. He had not even kindled an interest in this girl, and he had thought to have set her heart aflame! She was cold—cold spiritually and bodily, so he took her home, and without many words, bade her goodnight.

John, however, went out again; and for an hour or more he walked, brooding, thinking, trying to get rid of a great fear in his heart. The promises of the Vision with the degrees of glory came again to him. The terrestrial world was composed of those who receive not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it. Then it would be too late for his purpose. Dora, certainly, was not "valiant in the testimony of Jesus" Ever since he had received a knowledge of what the future held out to God's faithful children, he had set his heart on attaining to the condition where he might "dwell in the presence of God and his Christ for ever and ever," and that he might be "heir to all things, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come." These aspirations shone in his heart as the Holy Spirit of promise. And always

in his visioning Dora had been by his side. What would celestial glory be without her? for had she not grown to be a part of his very being? But Dora, that very evening, in a matter-of-fact way, had called his attention to the difference between them, and she had said it as if she either did not care, or that she did not understand. . . . "For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him and he receiveth not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift." Was it possible that Dora was one of these unappreciative ones? So far, he had failed to see in her any "rejoicing" over the "gifts" which he had brought her. . . . Would the time come when he would have to make a choice between his vision without Dora, and Dora without his vision? Would he have to make such a choice? "If so, God help me," prayed John St. John.

John arose early next morning. The Lord had sent him sleep, the restorer and comforter to help him and give him new hope. Dora was very kind to him that day, as indeed, also the days which followed.

The winter months passed somewhat uneventfully. Mrs. Fenton's letters came regularly. Sometimes they were "very nice," and at other times they displayed a spirit of fearfulness as to her daughters' safety among a people of whom she had heard so much that was not good. Early in the year 1844, it was evident that Mrs. Fenton was aroused to an apparent danger. Mrs. St. John added her letter to those of the girls to try to allay the mother's fears, but it seemed to no purpose. All this annoyed Dora and worried

John. At last, Dora wrote her mother that she would come home as soon as the river traffic opened. She kept this letter a number of days before she took it to the post office, but eventually she posted it without saying anything to John. A few days after, realizing that she had not been quite fair, she told him.

"Do you mean, Dora, that you are going to leave me—that you are not going to stay here?"

"I must go home to mother. She is so worried."

"But you'll come back?"

"I—I can't tell."

"O, Dora!"

They were walking from the store where she had been to make some purchases, and as it was about closing time, he was going home with her and carrying her packages. The darkening evening was wet. The snow had gone from the sidewalks, but there was mud in places over which they had to pass with care. . . . John realized that, do what he could, she was drifting away from him. He had some news which he was also keeping from her; he had been fearful of the consequences. But now he might as well out with it. There would be nothing more to lose, and perchance, there would be something to gain by speaking.

"Dora," he began, "I do not question your right to go to your mother. Under present conditions, perhaps, that is the best thing to do, for it seems now that I also shall leave Nauvoo."

"To go with me, John?"

"Oh, no, my dear. My journey is in quite the opposite direction. You may have heard of a prospective move westward. Well, the Prophet, seeing, no

doubt, that the old troubles may come upon us again, has determined to send a body of men to investigate locations in California and Oregon, where, after the Temple is completed, we can move, and, as he said, 'Where we can build a city in a day, and have a government of our own, get up in the mountains, where the devil cannot dig us out.' The party is to be well provided and armed. 'I want every man that goes to be a king and a priest,' said Joseph, 'when he gets on the mountains, he may want to talk with his God.'"

"What odd expressions the Prophet makes!" commented Dora. "He is not at all like other preachers."

"No, thank God, he isn't," said John with unusual vehemence.

"Have you been called to go?"

"Oh, no; volunteers only are wanted; but I have partly promised to be one of the party."

"But it's nothing but deserts and impassable mountains out there, I have heard."

"Then the better would we be protected from mobs."

"And Indians—"

"Indians can do no worse than what I have seen done by so-called civilized men."

She clung to his arm as if there were real danger of losing him. John was glad he had told her.

"If you are going to leave," he went on, "I also might as well. We might as well be two thousand miles apart as one thousand. but I don't know about mother."

"She can come home with us," said the girl as if the thought was a happy one. "She mustn't stay here

alone, especially as you say there is likely to be more trouble."

Before he could reply, they were at the door. Jane held out a letter for her sister. "It's mother's handwriting," she declared, "but look at the postmark!"

"St. Louis," said Dora. She hastily opened the envelope and read the letter.

"Well?" questioned Jane impatiently.

"Mother is in St. Louis," announced Dora, "and she's coming to Nauvoo on the first steamer!"



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

During the first days in March, the boats began to come up the river from St. Louis. John met them each day. A few days after Mrs. Fenton's letter, she herself arrived.

There were joyous greetings all around. Mrs. Fenton was tired and glad to end the longest journey she had ever taken. Jane relieved her of her bonnet, Dora of her wraps, and then she sank into the easy chair which John placed for her.

"Gracious," mildly exclaimed Mrs. Fenton, "had I known this place is so far away from home, I never would have undertaken the trip."

"But we are so glad you came," said Dora, to which Mrs. St. John agreed.

"Well, at any rate I am glad to be here safe and sound."

"Have you had any trouble on the way?" asked John.

"Not exactly trouble—but the talk I've heard!"

"What have you heard, mother?"

"On the boat from St. Louis—I was scared nearly to death. There were some men on board—they said they knew what they were talking about. One was a preacher, and others, from what I could learn, were Mormons living here in Nauvoo."

"Well, what did they say?"

"It makes me shiver to repeat it. They said—that Joseph Smith had men's heads cut off in Missouri,

and those whom he wanted put out of the way were stabbed to the heart! They said that the Mormons were thieves and robbers—and everything wicked. I wondered what I was coming to!”

“Were you frightened, mama?” laughed Jane.

“Well, I didn’t know what to think.”

“Does Nauvoo impress you as being a robbers’ den?” asked John.

“No; everything here looks peaceable enough. I don’t understand it. What do mobs want to come here for?”

“Mobs?” questioned Dora.

“Yes; the men on the boat said that it would be a matter of only a short time when the citizens of the county would drive the Mormons from the state. In fact, they claimed that they were organizing now for that purpose.”

Mrs. Fenton was assured that there was no immediate danger of such lawlessness. There had always been some agitation against the Church, but as for mobs, the Nauvoo Legion was strong enough to protect the city from any such attacks.

During the next few days, Mrs. Fenton looked about the city, scanning the town carefully with her business eye.

“What do you raise here?” she asked.

“Anything that you can raise at home,” explained John.

“Strawberries?”

“Yes; but we have had to plant corn and grain first. We have all kinds of fruit, and I am told that the location here is good for grapes.”

"You certainly have a big, fine place here; but what assurance have you that you will be permitted to remain and develop the country?"

The two girls joined them at this point, and John hesitated in telling Mrs. Fenton the exact truth regarding her last question. However, it must be answered, and answered right.

"We have no such assurance," he said. "In fact, it is probable that we shall move again soon."

"And where this time?"

"Westward into the Rocky mountains."

"My! but your mother can't make such a journey, and my daughter shall not, if I can help it."

John did not reply, and so Mrs. Fenton went on: "I see more trouble ahead for you, John. Why not all of us go back to Belford? Why can you not live your religion there as well as here? Why these prophets? Why this new church? Why this gathering? Why so much that people talk about and people hate you for?"

Dora was fearful that John and her mother would get into an unpleasant discussion on religious themes; but her forebodings were groundless. John very quietly and carefully tried to answer the flow of questions.

"As to gathering," said he, "it is natural that like attracts like. People whose religious beliefs are the same can better put that belief into practice if they come together in organized bodies. Naturally, the race is social. Living alone is not conducive to the best growth. I have an idea that the Lord's early declaration that 'it is not good for the man to be alone' has a wide signification. We ought not to live so far apart that we have no one to bump against."

“Bump against?” reiterated Mrs. Fenton—“and to be hurt?”

“Yes, perchance—and to put up with, to pity, to sympathize with, to sacrifice for, and to love.” John’s eyes fell on Dora as he said this. “But one of the chief purposes of our gathering is that we might build a temple.”

Mrs. Fenton did not care to talk about temples. She was a practical woman whose practicability did not reach very far into the spiritual world. The greater part of her religion consisted of church-going; and taking part in benefit socials, entertaining the minister, and donating to the foreign mission fund, were the chief auxiliaries. John knew this. He understood her view-point and the little that religion meant to her and to those of her kind. And the young man, when the occasion was opportune, tried to impart to her his own broadened views.

“Religion,” he said, “is not something that can be added to or taken from one’s natural life. Religion—true religion, of course,—*is* life, life from the beginning of time to the end, if such limitations can be conceived. The faith which is given to the true believer is the moving force of all action. That faith, therefore, directs the individual to come or to go or to remain; for in it, as in the Divine Life, we ‘live and move and have our being.’ “We—” unconsciously, he made his talk personal—“gather together, we move from one state to another, we build, we plant and reap, we go on missions, we marry and rear families—yes, we are born and we die—and it is all a part of our religion.”

Mrs. Fenton pushed her glasses to her forehead

that her view of John might be clearer. She admired his fine face, finer than ever, she thought, when he "got to preaching."

Shortly after Mrs. Fenton's arrival, a large public meeting was held within the Temple walls. This was her first opportunity to see and hear the Prophet. The first meeting began at nine in the morning. The Prophet was not present at the opening, but came in later. Hyrum was on the stand, as were Brigham Young and several others of the Twelve.

Hyrum spoke first on the need of everyone assisting to build the Temple. The sisters, he said, were going to raise means by the aid of a penny fund to buy the nails and the glass; he expected the brethren to do the rest. Presently, Joseph came in to the meeting, and soon took the stand. He did not begin his remarks with a firstly, and then develop a sermon by logical steps. He flung out thoughts, admonitions, comments, as they seemed to come to him with little sequence. Instead of preaching from a scriptural text, the Prophet spoke of the questionable actions of some lawyers in the city. "We have a gang of simple fellows here," he declared, "who do not know where their elbows or heads are. . . . I fear not their boiling over, nor the boiling over of hell." The speaker referred to a disgraceful article about the Latter-day Saints in the *New York Tribune*, and reproved the writer, who, presumably, was a local person. At this point a man arose in the congregation and asked if the speaker had referred to him.

"No," said Joseph, "I do not know you."

Hyrum then spoke again, but his remarks were in-

errupted by a dialogue between a man in the audience and Joseph. It appears that the Prophet's remarks about pettifogging lawyers had angered the man.

The meeting closed at twelve, and at two o'clock the people assembled again. Mrs. Fenton said she wanted "to see it out," so she was there. The first speaker was Brigham Young. Mrs. Fenton approved his remarks as being "full of common sense." He was followed by John Taylor who explained that certain articles were badly needed to carry on the work on the Temple. A man was waiting to take a steamer to St. Louis to buy these articles, but he had no money. A collection would have to be taken up. Elder Taylor ceased his preaching while this was done, then he went on with his talk.

Mrs. Fenton went home that afternoon in a confused state of mind. She felt as if she had not attended a religious meeting. That evening she gave John her views.

"I do not want to criticise," she said, "but your services appeared to me to be largely devoted to temporalities."

"Yes, that is true," admitted John; "and I am sorry that you did not hear a good doctrinal sermon at this your first meeting. Today's services were devoted largely to the matter of completing the Temple. It is important that the Temple be built. The Temple—that is, the walls, the floor, the roof, etc., are material things, but the use to which the building will be put is wholly spiritual. You see, the spiritual and the temporal are very closely connected. Our bodies are temporal, and we must care for them; but they are merely

tabernacles for the spirit. We cannot neglect the one without the other being affected."

"But at times Joseph Smith's language was a little rough," demurred Mrs. Fenton.

"Yes; he himself admits that he is an unpolished stone. He sometimes says things in a blunt way, but by so doing he arouses attention. I'll grant the manner of saying a thing is important, but the more vital issue is whether the thing said is true or not. Did you notice that those whose consciences were clear were not disturbed by the brethren's criticisms. I fear the cap fit Brother Foster; he seemed eager to put it on."

"Anyway, I'm disappointed in the Prophet."

"In what way?"

"He doesn't look like a prophet."

"Have you ever seen a prophet before?"

"Well—no."

"Then how can you tell what a prophet should look like?"

Mrs. Fenton did not say.

"The trouble is this," reasoned John. "We have been without prophets for a long time, having been in touch with them through the printed page only. 'Prophets were men of God who lived two thousand years ago' might well be a modern definition. As distance lends enchantment, a sort of halo has formed about these historic men, and we have conceived them to be different from other men, and, of course, very, very holy. Then again, the paintings of the masters have frequently augmented this wrong impression of prophets and apostles."

Jane nodded at this point as if she wholly understood and agreed.

“And now, Mrs. Fenton, I take you to see a prophet—a real, live one; and what do you find? An individual bearing the common name of Smith. He is a fine, clean-looking, red-blooded young man, with no long beard or pious look. He dresses like the rest of us. There is nothing about him suggestive of a mil-dewy past, but he lives very much in the present, reflecting in his blue eyes the smiling sunlight of the sky above him here and now. All this does not tally with what you have conceived a prophet should be, and so you are disappointed.

“Had we lived in the days of the ancient prophets, we would have seen that they were men like unto those about them. Even of Jesus, it was said by his own people: ‘Is not this the carpenter’s son?’ His beauty was not so apparent that men desired Him, but He was despised and rejected and numbered with the transgressors; and yet, think of what the Savior of mankind really was! Perhaps we would have been like the large majority—blinded to the greatness of that which was with us, with our eyes holden so that we could not see, but I hope not. I do not want to be numbered with those who garnish the tombs of the dead prophets, but kill the live ones of our own day.”

“I don’t want to either, John.”

“Of course not, Mrs. Fenton. Now, here is the thought I want to make clear, if I can: For myself, I want to appreciate to the fullest, the significance of the present. I am trying to glorify the present because in it I live—through the here and the now solely do I

come in contact with life. I am traveling through eternity. Only by one small point, like a moving needle on a disk, do I touch life, and that point is the *now*.

“A hundred years from now, Joseph Smith will be considered a great man. That being true, he is great now, and I want to realize it. I’ll be dead in a hundred years. My children or my children’s children will say ‘If we had only lived in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith’—perhaps overlooking the fact that they in their own time also have a prophet. Well, I live in the days of this first latter-day prophet. He is *my* prophet, and the only one who concerns me very much. All others I can merely read about; this one I can go to, I can see his face, grip his hand, hear his voice, and receive his counsel.”

Mrs. Fenton listened attentively. She did not fully grasp what he was saying, but she had a feeling that it was true.

“As I have remarked before, Joseph Smith is not so smooth in words and action as the modern preacher. His school has been that of rough knocks, though the Lord has been his teacher. Joseph is like the granite with the glint of gold shining through. Most preachers whom I have known have a flow of rhetoric at hand to veil a confusion of mind; Joseph’s expressions may be faulty, but they convey to us, clear-cut and comprehensible, God’s eternal truths. Religious teachers of the day are often like still pools, asleep in the shade; Joseph is like the ocean—elemental, big, everlasting, powerful, moving, rough at times, but also smooth and sunny and peaceful like the whisperings of the Spirit of God.”

Dora who had been out, now came in, leaving the door open as she stood listening to John's closing words. A warm breeze with a hint of spring in it reached Mrs. Fenton, and her thoughts easily shifted from that of prophets to that of spring planting.

"Girls," she said, "begin to pack right away. We must be off as soon as we can get ready. I must get home to my garden."



CHAPTER NINETEEN.

March was true to her fickleness that year. Mild winds were followed by rain which sometimes turned to sleet and snow which speedily melted before the warm sun. When the grass shot out tender and green and the buds began to swell and burst, Mrs. Fenton could content herself no longer. Now they would have to go home.

John made no further objections, although he felt keenly that Dora would not remain with him. He—well, he was not going to plead. She must choose, and be left free in that choice. The grain of comfort left was that Dora had not refused him. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and John vigorously fanned his spark of hope by calling to mind all sorts of foolish and unconvincing reasons why she should go. However, the plain fact of the matter was that Dora could have remained had she herself simply willed it. Though the mother was somewhat fearful of threatened mobs and the talked-of western migration, yet she would not have refused John his right to take Dora with him as his wife, had that issue been definitely raised.

At the close of the day before their departure, John and his mother had a few friends come in to spend the evening. John thought to ask the Prophet to visit with them, even if only for a few minutes, but when he called at the Mansion and learned that Joseph was not at home, he attempted nothing further.

The evening turned out cold and stormy, so a fire in the grate added cheer to the gathering. When the lamps were lighted, the company sang, "Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation," and "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning." Then a Brother Brown, in a clear, rich voice sang:

"This earth was once a garden place
With all her glories common;
And men did live a holy race,
And worship Jesus face to face,
In Adam-ondi-Ahman."

John explained to Mrs. Fenton that these songs were composed by W. W. Phelps, and were sung at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. The singer was there at the time, and now he was asked to tell the company some of his experiences on that eventful occasion.

"Yes, I was there," said the brother, "and a most glorious time it was. I helped build that Temple also, you know. We finished it in the midst of poverty and the threats of evil men. When I attended the dedication services I felt the Spirit of God which filled the house. President Rigdon, in his talk, called our minds back to the times when these walls had been wet with our tears, while we, in the silent shades of night, had prayed to the God of Heaven to protect us in our labors. The Prophet delivered a beautiful dedicatory prayer.

"At the closing session, President Smith told us not to quench the Spirit, but to arise and prophesy good concerning the Saints. Brother George A. Smith be-

gan to prophesy. Immediately there was heard a noise like the sound of a rushing, mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation arose, being moved upon by an invisible power. Many spoke in tongues, and many saw glorious visions. The Prophet declared that the Temple was filled with angels. The people of the neighborhood, hearing an unusual sound within and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple, came running together with great astonishment. Yes, it was a most glorious time, one, I expect, which will not be repeated until the dedication of another temple."

The evening passed pleasantly in reminiscences and songs. John told some of his own missionary experiences, doing his conscious best in the telling, hoping that somehow all this might touch Dora's heart and perhaps her mother's. John had barely concluded when Dora slipped into the kitchen, and presently she and Jane came back with trays containing a dainty, delicious lunch. The conversation now turned to Missouri experiences, to which Mrs. Fenton was a silent, careful listener.

When the party broke up and the house was quiet again, John and Dora found themselves alone. The south bound boat was due on the morrow, so this was their last evening together for some time—perhaps for all time. Deep emotion usually checked John's power of speech. Dora, too, was silent: that was better than a talkative indifference.

John went to the window and looked out. The storm had ceased and the clouds were breaking. He stood there for some time, and when he felt Dora's

presence near him, he was tempted nearly beyond his power, to turn, seize her in his arms, and hold her for good; but he only grasped the hand that touched his own and held it firmly while they stood side by side looking out into the clearing sky.

"Dora, aren't you coming to bed?" asked Jane from the doorway.

They turned, with hands apart. "Yes, in a few moments," replied Dora.

"Mama said we must get a good night's rest to be ready for tomorrow."

"That's right, Jane," agreed John. "Go with her Dora—and good night."

"Good night, John."

And that was all there was to an evening which, in all reason, should have witnessed the exchange of vows, of loving tokens, of endearing promises, long to be remembered.

Mrs. Fenton and the girls were ready in good time next day. John early had their baggage to the landing. Shortly after noon all the family followed. Mrs. Fenton did most of the talking, being busy with a sort of onesided planning of what they all should do. The boat delayed its coming; but as the weather was now warm and pleasant, the waiting was not uncomfortable.

"How belated are these boats, usually?" inquired Mrs. Fenton.

"All the way from an hour to a week," answered John, "depending, of course, on the state of the weather, the number of stops the boat must make, and the condition of the officers and the crew—not mentioning that of the boat itself."

"Dear me! We may not get away until tomorrow."

"Perhaps not—I hope not," laughed John.

"Well, we'll camp right here until it comes, if it's all night."

"I don't think you will have to wait that long—there's the smoke now, see, up the river."

A few other passengers now arrived, and some men were busy with a shipment of freight. In the dusk of the evening, the boat lay slowly up to the landing and made fast. There being little freight and few passengers to embark, the boat was soon ready to leave. John hurried the baggage on board, then came back to where his mother was bidding her guests goodbye. He dutifully kissed Mrs. Fenton, then turned and looked into Dora's shining eyes. Just for a moment he held her in his arms while his lips touched hers. Then, at the mother's call, they hurried on board.

Where was Jane? he had nearly forgotten her. She was already on the boat, sitting forward on a box.

"Jane," John shouted. "I didn't say goodbye to you."

"No!" She sat with her head bowed. John sprang on to the boat and ran to the girl who arose to meet him. She stood there now nearly as tall as her sister—and a vision of loveliness forlorn. Tears were in her eyes and her lips quivered. Her hat was off, and it seemed to John that some lingering rays of the day's departing light had taken refuge in her curls. How foolish of him to have nearly forgotten Jane!

"Goodby, Jane," he said as he drew her close and kissed her. "Be a good girl—as you are—as you have been."

"John," she stammered, "I—I want to tell you something—something I haven't told you before—is there time?"

"Yes, there's a minute; what is it?"

"I don't want to leave—and, John, I believe—Oh, I believe," she sobbed.

"Believe what?"

"All that you have told us—the gospel, John—I believe it all. I want to stay with—with—the Saints, your people."

"I'm glad to hear you say that; but you must go with your mother; that's your duty now. And my dear girl, there are trials and hardships ahead of me. Go back to your sheltered home."

"I can stand the trials. I can, for don't you see, I believe!"

John was amazed at the girl's fervent declaration. He looked into the beautiful face, now shining with the light of a divine confession. He glanced quickly about to see that the gang-plank had not yet been removed, then back to the girl.

"Jane," he said gently, "to believe is not enough. One must know in order to stand what I fear is coming."

"But I do—I—"

"Go with your sister and take care of her. She needs someone. I wish I could go, but I cannot. You, Jane, with your faith, take my place. Do this for *me*, won't you, Jane?"

Mutely, she nodded.

Then he kissed her again, and sprang lightly to the landing as the boat was ready to leave. From the slowly receding deck three white handkerchiefs waved farewell as long as they could be seen in the darkening night.

CHAPTER TWENTY.

John and his mother went slowly back home. Darkness fell over town and river, and the lights of the departing boat could be seen creeping down stream. From the doorway of his house, John gazed at it until it was lost to view.

The mother, busying herself about the supper table, now urged him to come and eat; but instead, he went to the lounge by the window, sat despondently down, and mutely shook his head at the invitation. His spirit which he had for the past few days kept so well in hand, now seemed to break; and his soul seemed to be crushed under the weight of his bitter disappointment. Struggle as he would, the tears wet his hands into which he had bowed his face.

The mother went to him, and when he felt her hand on his head, he clasped her passionately, hiding his head as if for shame in her bosom.

"It's all right, my boy," she said tenderly, "cry away, and don't hold the tears back. Only your mother will know, and she understands."

And so John St. John, the man, wept as a child in his mother's arms, which, she knew, was the best thing he could do to get heart relief. Then, after a time, when he had become quiet, she talked:

"I know it is hard to part with her; but John, if Dora could not be brought to see the truth of the gospel, she never would do for your wife."

"Yes, mother, I know that full well; but that

doesn't make it any easier. O, mother, she is so good in every way—so gentle and so sweet! Then why, Oh, why?"

"If you have to sacrifice for the gospel's sake, remember what the Lord has promised—a hundred fold of what you have given, and then life everlasting."

"But, mother, what would life everlasting be to me without *her*? What would a hundred wives be, if that were possible, without the one I want and love beyond my power to tell. Without her, the world is void and all else is without value. Mother, why is it that I have been permitted to thus fix my heart on someone that I cannot get? Why should one little person among all the world's millions be the standard by which my happiness must be measured? Mother, I cannot understand."

The mother took his hand and held it for a time as if she were afraid her son would leave her. Then with the pain in her voice unhidden she said: "Right now it seems to you that all is lost; but after a time you will realize that you have yet something to live for, and that you have many blessings, now hidden behind your cloud of sorrow. Try—try to trust the Lord."

John looked up into his mother's face, and there saw the marks of suffering. "Mother, forgive me," he begged. "I ought to be ashamed of myself. I have the best mother living. I have *you*—I have always, always had you." He took her into his arms and kissed her lovingly.

"You have more, much more than your mother," she went on. "You have your Father in Heaven. You, John, are a King and a Priest unto God—and you

know that. You have right to commune with the Heavens and to Him who rules therein."

"Yes—yes."

"You have the Holy Priesthood, a power for righteousness which the world knows nothing about. If it is God's will that Dora Fenton shall be your wife, that will come to pass, if you do your part. But if she is not to be, then again God is able and willing to compensate you for the apparent loss. I say apparent, for there can be no real loss in accepting gratefully that which the Lord has planned to give us as a reward for faithfulness. He sees from the beginning to the end; we see very poorly and only a short distance. So I say again, John, trust in the Lord."

Thus for an hour or more mother and son talked with each other regarding that which lay closest to their hearts. Then John urged his mother to go to bed and get her needed rest.

"And you, John?"

"I want to go out for a walk. I'll not be long. Now, don't you worry any more. I'm all right, thanks to you, my dear mother." He kissed her again as he went out.

As he walked down the street, he bared his head to the night air. He would go to the river. Somehow, there was comfort and rest in sitting on its bank and looking at the great stream making its irresistible way to the sea.

The night was late enough for most of the lights in the city to be out. However, the sky was clear, and John knew every part of the river bank well. He left the street and made his way along a path which led

into a grove of trees in which the underbrush had not been cleared. He knew of a small clearing near the river where he could be alone.

A short distance along this path, he met two men. They stopped, looked into his face, and recognized him.

"Is it you, Brother John? What are you doing?"

"Just out for a walk. What are *you* doing?"

"We are now on the police force. There are a good many suspicious characters in the city, and we are on the lookout for mischievous plots. Well, good night."

John went on. He thought no more of what the policemen had said, but made his way to the secluded spot by the bank of the river, and sat down on a stump. He looked out on the water, thinking of the past day and what it had brought to him.

Presently, he heard the dip of oars from the river, and then he saw a boat drawing near. There was no landing at that point, and he wondered what might be doing. Then, not far away from under the river bank, which was high enough to hide a person, he heard a subdued call which the men in the boat answered. Carefully, the boat drew near the shore where it was lost to John's sight.

In a few minutes he heard men talking. They drew nearer but stopped just as he thought he was discovered. John surmised no evil; he was merely annoyed that his privacy should thus be disturbed. He was about to get up again and go on, when some words reached him which made him pause. The men were hidden, but he could now hear quite distinctly what

they said. There seemed to be quite a company—a dozen or more. He listened intently. Could he believe his ears? Why, these men were plotting to destroy the Prophet Joseph and others of the leading brethren!

John seemed rooted to the spot. Not wishing to be discovered, he crouched low. Now there came to him as a flash what Joseph had said only last Sunday, that there was a conspiracy on foot to take his life. The Prophet even named some of those who were engaged in it, and they were or had been some of the most prominent men in the Church—the Laws, the Higbees, Dr. Foster, and Mr. Jackson. John knew some of them, but he could not identify any of them by the voices he now heard.

One of the men who seemingly had come to the rendezvous by boat, claimed to be an officer from Missouri. He presented a plan by which Joseph, at least, could be taken off their hands—for once safely into Missouri, he would assure them that the Mormon Prophet would never get back to Nauvoo. His plans, however, met with little favor; the kidnapping scheme had been tried before without results. No; something more definite would have to be resorted to to put the tyrant out of the way. "What? How?" a number of them asked.

"We must organize," said one, "and get as many as possible to join us. There are a lot of dissatisfied people in Nauvoo. They must be won over. Each of us who live here can do our share in this."

As John listened his heart beat nearly to bursting. Forgotten were all his own troubles, swallowed up as

they were in this frightful danger which threatened the beloved President of the Church. But what could he do? One thing he began to realize—that he was a spy, even though an unwilling one. He must not be discovered by these plotters; men who were eager to do the wicked deeds they were planning, would think nothing of killing him!

All the conspirators agreed that the Prophet must die, but there were so many methods proposed that no unity of procedure was arrived at. The discussion, at times, became quite animated, and some of the louder ones had to be quieted.

For what seemed a long time John lay without moving. The party was about to break up, much to John's relief, when some one reminded the rest that a new member had joined them that evening. He had better take the oath.

Yes, certainly, all must take the oath.

John could not see, but what he heard seemed to curdle his blood;

"You solemnly swear," said a voice slowly and distinctly, *"before God and all holy angels and these your brethren with whom you are surrounded that you will give your life, your liberty, your influence, your all for the destruction of Joseph Smith and his party, so help you God!"*

"I do," came in a somewhat faltering tone. Evidently, this person did not relish the ceremony.

As they were separating, the final announcement was made again: "Don't forget. A week from tonight at Brother Law's."

John now thought to get away; but as he was

crawling across the open, two of the men came along and nearly stumbled over him. Startled, they rapidly pulled out their pistols, and with oaths demanded to know what was there.

John arose and stood before them.

"A spy, a damned spy!" they exclaimed. "Halloo, men, here's a spy," they shouted. "Come back."

"I am not a spy," protested John.

The men gathered again hurriedly. "What is it? Who is it? Why it's John St. John," said one.

The young man looked into the faces of his captors, and his worst fears were realized. Two men whom he had always thought of as brethren, and who had been close associates of the Prophet, were among them. Nor were they at all abashed at being discovered in such company, as they pressed forward and peered into John's face.

"What are you doing here, if you are not a spy?"

"I was just taking a little walk," John tried to explain. "I often come here."

"At this time of the night? How long have you been listening."

"Not long."

"What have you heard?"

John did not reply immediately.

"He has certainly heard too much," declared one. There was much flourishing of knives and pistols.

"What have you heard?" again was demanded.

"Brethren—gentlemen," said John, "I cannot repeat to you what I have heard. I was just resting here when you came up. What I have heard is quite fragmentary and indistinct."

"But you got the gist of what we are doing?"

"Yes—I think so."

"Then"—with an oath—"you'll have to join us. The easiest and quickest way for you out of this is for you to take the oath and become one with us."

"Oh, I couldn't do that!"

"Either that or die right here and now. Is not that so, gentlemen?" appealed the spokesman to his party.

"It is—sure—certainly!"

"Do you think we'll let you go back to Joseph Smith and tell him all you have heard! Not by a damned sight!"

John stood there in the dim light of the stars, surrounded by these men. What could he do, what could he say? How could he answer their questions? To take their oath and to become one of them—that he could not do; but then they would kill him. In self-protection, they could not let him go. Well, was this the end—end of his life, and all his hopes? What would become of his mother—and Dora—well—"

One of the men who had been prominent in the Church now pushed his way closely to John. "Listen to me, Brother St. John," he said. "Joseph is a fallen prophet, and if his wicked career is not checked, he will lead the Church to destruction. That's the reason we are planning as we are. It's for the best good of the Church, or we would not be doing this."

John did not reply.

"Yes," added another, "Joseph is fallen. He receives revelations from the devil, and he is deceiving the people. He is a wicked man."

"But, friends," suggested John, "if Joseph Smith is such a person, why not let the law handle him."

"We can do nothing with him by the law. He always evades. Besides, the law is slow. We must have something swifter and surer. The Church will have been destroyed before the law can reach him. We must act. Come, join us and share with us the honor in such a worthy undertaking. Take the oath with us."

"I—I don't think I can do that."

"You'll have to. We cannot let you go. You know too much."

"Dead men tell no tales," came from someone at the rear.

The men closed in on him. Then a number were detailed to guard the prisoner, while the rest withdrew a short distance to discuss further plans of action. John could not hear what was being said, but he was made aware of the presence of his guards by their guns being poked into his sides. They would surely kill him: they were perhaps discussing the manner of his taking off. Would they leave his body in the brush or would they throw it into the river. Would his mother ever know. As for Dora, perhaps she would not care.

The time dragged, and the guards became impatient. There seemed to be a difference of opinion among the conspirators. It was surely past midnight. The city was very quiet. John shivered with cold. Then he thought of that moonlight night in Missouri when Henry Freland's dead face was turned so peacefully up to the sky. Would he be like that?

The conference now seemed to break up and some

of the men left. Those who remained said that they had been appointed a committee to dispose of their prisoner in case he still refused to do what they required. These again pleaded with him and then threatened, but without avail. They then took him down to the river bank.

When John came in sight of the water, he wondered in a confused way how far Dora was down the river. His mind persisted on this speculation, and he had difficulty in bringing his thoughts to bear on that which vitally concerned him at that moment—how to escape. There seemed no possible way out for him, and so why not let his mind travel in that enticing channel after Dora, Mrs. Fenton, and Jane—Jane, the little girl who had so suddenly grown up and who had clung to him so closely in their parting only a few hours ago. In a moment of time, he followed them on their long journey. He saw them arrive at Belford, drive out past Moston to their own home on the other side of the creek which was spanned by the rustic bridge. He even saw plainly the carved initials on the hand-rail of the bridge; and the vision of a beautiful girl in a white dress trimmed with blue, stood before him! . . .

“Come, now, for the last time, what shall it be?” broke in a rough voice. “We cannot remain here longer. We must do our duty while it is dark.”

John gathered himself together with an effort. “Men,” he began, “I admit freely that I do not know just what to do, but this I know that the Lord is a Great Helper. If, as you say, you are in the Lord’s service and are doing His will in this matter, He will

also make plain to me my duty. Be patient with me a moment longer while I ask Him."

The young prisoner stood out in the open with bared, bowed head; the men drew back into the deeper shadow, watching, waiting. A night wind whistled softly through the trees.

John prayed for help in this his hour of need. His lips barely moved, yet his heart went out to God. And then there came to him, more as a deep undercurrent of feeling than of thought that he was a King and a Priest—"I want every man who goes to be a King and a Priest; he may want to talk with his God."—The supplicant was not yet on the mountains, but surely God could be reached in such hour of need in the valley as well. "Lord, deliver me from the hands of these wicked men"—and then, as with an inspiration, swift as light, he went on—"not only for my own sake, but that I might warn thy servant the Prophet of his danger."

When the men again drew close and called, "Time's up," John was calm and assured. Whether this indicated an easy, painless death or a deliverance, he could not decide; but he was at peace, and his thoughts were clear as he faced his captors, and said:

"Listen once more to me. As I was coming here this evening, I met two of the new city policemen. They knew me, stopped and spoke to me. I learned from some of your conversation that a number of you men also had a meeting with these policemen. Knowing me, and presumably, knowing you, they had no suspicions that we were up to any mischief at this uncommon time and place. Now, you men, tell me what you

will have to say when I am found missing in the morning?"

"Nothing can be proved on us. We'll take care of that."

"Many of you men are already under surveillance," continued John, in a clear, firm voice. "It will be rather awkward for you to explain my disappearance. I was last seen here near to you men. My friends of the Legion will want an accounting from you—from you, remember, and you, as you are well known in this community." The speaker pointed directly at them. "Now go ahead with your murdering!"

One of the men drew his knife, muttering curses and declarations that *he* was not known, and *he* was not afraid; but he was restrained by others of the party. They were evidently considering what John had said.

Just then in the clear stillness of the night, there came a call from up the street:

"John—John!"

It was the voice of his mother, calling to him, as she had done many times, when as a boy he had lingered into the night down by the creek or in the meadow.

"John—Oh, John!"

The voice was nearer. She no doubt had seen John walking toward the river, and she was seeking him. The men became nervous. If she came that way, they would have to move on; but where? Fear seized some of the men, who realized the force of John's statements. They were in no mood to be sacrificed for the cause in which they were engaged.

The mother's voice rang out again.

And the Lord used that voice to save John St.

John. It was not a loud, shrill voice, but it pierced the hearts of the wicked to the quick.

"Come on, let us go," said one, as they were about to retreat; but another, fearful of the greater danger involved in releasing their captive, shook his fist in John's face, and with an oath warned him that if he ever breathed a word of what he had seen and heard that night, he would be shot at sight. With this admonition, agreed to by all the others, they withdrew, and John was left alone.

John stood still, dazed somewhat by this sudden release from danger. Then with heart full of gratitude to his Heavenly Father for this miraculous escape, he sped swiftly along the path into the road, where he saw his mother coming slowly toward him.

"Mother," he called, "I'm coming."

He took her in his arms. "You are trembling, mother. There, now, I am safe, thank God!"

"My boy, my boy, where have you been? You also are trembling."

"I have been in great danger—but I am safe now, saved by the Lord and by you! Come, we must go home. You are cold."

He took her gently back on the homeward road. She clung to him. "Why did you stay out so late? I went to bed, but couldn't sleep. Something drove me out to seek you. Oh, John!"

"There now, mother. I'll tell you about it tomorrow—perhaps. Now you must go to bed—and I, too, for I am dead tired."

As they reached their gate and walked up the path to the house the early cocks were crowing and the eastern sky was brightening with the coming day.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE.

John and his mother slept for a few hours that morning. Towards noon, he went to the store, but soon returned. He could not get his mind on anything, save that which had happened to him the night before. His mother was up preparing something to eat. She saw his restlessness and concern.

"Tell me what happened. May I not know?" she asked.

"Yes, I will," he replied decisively. I have been debating with myself whether or not to tell anybody, but I cannot hold it back from you." He drew her down on the window seat near him; and here in the warm sunlight, screened somewhat by the curtains, he told his story. When it was finished, he felt better, and the mother, with arms about him whispered:

"Thank God, you are here safe with me."

"Yes, mother, the Lord was with me. I am sure I was saved that I may warn Brother Joseph."

"But their threats!"

"I am not afraid. I promised them nothing. I must find the Prophet right away."

"Wait until tonight. These men are surely watching you. There can be no immediate danger to the Prophet, for it seems that their plans are not fully matured?"

"Perhaps you are right. There can no harm come from being careful."

"I'll take a little walk this afternoon and drop in at the Mansion and learn if Brother Joseph is at home. You know he is a busy man, and is in and out of the city."

"What would I do without you, mother. You saved me last night. I am sure of that."

"I? What do you mean?"

"Your calling me in the night seemed to turn my captor's wavering minds in my favor. I don't know whether it was the mother-voice which touched a spot in their hearts not yet hardened, or whether they were afraid; but your coming, I am sure, saved me."

"Now I know the Lord answered my prayer," said the mother. "I went to bed as you suggested, for I *was* tired. About eleven o'clock I awoke. I looked into your room, but you were not there. For some time I waited, but as you did not come, I dressed and went out. It was passed midnight then. I called softly, but there was no response. Again I waited, and fear crept into my heart. You had never before remained away so late without letting me know where you were going. I walked timidly down the road, then back again, with a prayer in my heart all the time. How long I did this, I cannot tell. Then at last I boldly ventured into the night again, this time calling you aloud, and it was not long before you came to me."

Mother and son clung affectionately to each other.

They lingered for some time over a simple luncheon, then the mother dressed and went out.

John remained quietly at home. Then he tried to work in the garden, but with little success. He must get into seclusion and think without interruption. He

wondered more and more at what he had discovered regarding conditions in the Church at Nauvoo. Joseph had declared: "We have a Judas in our midst,"—and here were many of them. How could men who had tasted of the heavenly light of truth drop so deeply into the dark!"

Mrs. St. John returned within an hour. The Prophet, she had found, was not at home; but Emma would tell him that John wished to see him. And Joseph would use discretion in his calls. So John and his mother contented themselves by remaining quietly in the house all the afternoon.

In the dusk of the evening Joseph and his brother Hyrum called. This was not the first time the home had been honored with the presence of the Prophet and the Patriarch, and always their visits were received as a special blessing. The love for the Patriarch was no less than that for the Prophet. While Joseph was the President of the Church and the mouthpiece of God to the Church, Hyrum also was a man of devotion, of kindness and peace, full of love and charity. And these two men were deeply attached to each other, for together they worked in a common cause. They had shared much joy as well as sorrow. Together they had suffered by the drivings of mobs, and in chains in prison. John and his mother could not know that in a few more days only, these two brothers would also go together to martyrs' graves!

John told his story to his visitors, and he was listened to without interruption. They did not seem surprised, for there was nothing new or unusually startling in this disclosure. They told him they knew

of the plottings of these men. However, they thanked him for what he had told them and blessed him for his courage and devotion. He was promised that he would not be harmed, for these men would not have power to injure him. With this assurance, they left as quietly as they had come.

John and his mother were greatly comforted, and they went about their daily duties, much as before.

A few days after John's night adventure, the April conference of the Church was held. The weather was beautiful, and many people came from the surrounding country. Mrs. St. John attended all the meetings, but John could not get away from his work until Sunday. However, his mother gave him a synopsis of the discourses preached by Joseph and Hyrum. Sidney Rigdon occupied part of the time on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in a continued discourse on the history of the Church. At two o'clock Sunday afternoon, the Patriarch spoke on one of his favorite themes,—the completion of the Temple. At three-thirty President Smith began a discourse, it being the funeral sermon of Elder King Follett who had been accidentally killed about a month before.

John sat with his mother among the great throng which listened to that wonderful discourse. He was in a receptive mood that afternoon, and he drank in the marvelous truths as they fell from the lips of the Prophet. Some of the most impressive expressions which John treasured up in his heart were:

"I want to ask this congregation . . . to answer this question in their own hearts, what kind of a being God is? Ask yourselves; turn your thoughts into your

hearts, and say if any of you have seen, heard, or communed with Him. This is a question that may occupy your attention for a long time. The scriptures inform us that 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent'

"I will go back to the beginning before the world was to show what kind of being God is. What kind of being was God in the beginning? Open your ears and hear, Oh, ye ends of the earth.

"God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil was rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make Himself visible,—I say, if you were to see Him today, you would see Him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image, and likeness of God, and received instructions from Him, and walked, talked, and conversed with Him, as one man talks and communes with another.

"These are incomprehensible ideas to some; but they are simple. It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with Him as one man converses with another, and that He was once a man like us: yea, that God Himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ Himself did.

"Here, then, is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God,

the same as all Gods have done before you,—namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection from the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power

“These are the first principles of consolation. How consoling to the mourners when they are called to part with a husband, wife, father, mother, child or dear relative, to know that, although the earthly tabernacle is laid down and dissolved, they shall rise again to dwell in everlasting burnings in immortal glory, not to sorrow, suffer or die any more; but they shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit the same power, the same glory, and the same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a God and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone before. What did Jesus do? Why, I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out His kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that He may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt Him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take His place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all His children. It is plain beyond disputation, and you thus learn some of the first principles of the gospel.”

The vast audience sat entranced under the spell of the voice of the Prophet. The flood of light on the nature of God and man seemed to lift John St. John from earth life to one of a heavenly order. As he watched the glow of inspiration on the face of the speaker, he could not help but contrast that appearance with the murderous hatred which showed in the faces of Joseph's enemies. The speaker went on:

"The first principles of man are self-existent with God. God himself, finding He was in the midst of spirits and glory, because He was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like Himself. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. He has power to institute laws to instruct the weaker intelligences that they may be exalted with Himself, so that they might have one glory upon another, and all that knowledge, power, glory, and intelligence which is requisite in order to save them in the world of spirits.

"This is good doctrine. It tastes good. I can taste the principles of eternal life, and so can you. They are given to me by the revelations of Jesus Christ, and I know that when I tell you these words of eternal life as they are given to me, you taste them, and I know that you believe them." ("Amen" said John in his heart.)

"What promises are made in relation to the subject of salvation of the dead? What kind of characters are those who can be saved although their bodies are mouldering and decaying in the grave. When His commandments teach us, it is in view of eternity; for we

are looked upon by God as though we were in eternity. God dwells in eternity, and does not view things as we do.

“I have a declaration to make as to the provisions which God hath made to suit the conditions of men—made from before the foundation of the world. What has Jesus said? All sins, and all blasphemies, and every transgression, except one, that man can be guilty of, may be forgiven; and there is a salvation for all men, either in this world or the world to come, who have not committed the unpardonable sin, there being a provision either in this world or the world of spirits. Hence God hath made a provision that every spirit in the eternal world can be ferreted out and saved, unless he has committed that unpardonable sin which cannot be remitted to him either in this world or the world of spirits. God has wrought out a salvation for all men, unless they have committed a certain sin; and every man who has a friend in the eternal world can save him, unless he has committed the unpardonable sin.” . . .

John’s thoughts went to his father who had gone into the world of spirits unconverted. Surely, there was yet hope for him.

“I rejoice in hearing the testimony of my aged friends,” the Prophet concluded. “You don’t know me. You never knew my heart. No man knows my history. I cannot tell it: I shall never undertake it. I don’t blame anyone for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I could not have believed it myself. I never did harm any man since I was born in the world. My voice is always for peace.

“I cannot lie down until all my work is finished.

I never think any evil, nor do anything to the harm of my fellow-men. When I am called by the trump of the arch-angel and weighed in the balance, you will all know me then. I add no more. God bless you all! Amen."

Mother and son passed slowly out with the moving crowd. Some lingered to discuss what they had heard, but not so with John and his mother; to them these things seemed too sacred to talk about except in solemn, quiet, sacred places. As they walked homeward, the soft air of spring from the river blew into their faces. John's peach trees were in full bloom, and he noted that he would have to get busy in his garden.

As they entered the house and put away coats and wraps they instinctively went to the "cosy corner" which already had become a spot sacred to Godly themes. They sat silently for a few moments, then the mother said:

"Was it not wonderful!"

"I am trying to realize fully that we are living within sight and hearing of a living prophet of God," added John reverently.

"I am trying to be grateful for that."

"Is Joseph a fallen prophet? When I think of what those men told me, and when I compare their spirit with that which flowed from Joseph this afternoon as a stream of light, then I can see how wickedly false are their accusations. Mother, had I never known that Joseph Smith is an inspired teacher, I can never deny that knowledge now."

"You are right. The truth 'tastes good,' as Joseph said."

“Think of what we have just heard! For ages men have been trying to find out God. Having had no light but their own learning, they have groped in the dark, and instead of finding God, they have departed further from Him. The purpose of the universe has been a riddle, and no man has been able to solve it. And now here, to us, a poor, despised people, the curtain has been lifted, and we have been shown the transcendent truth. Why, mother, when these things are published, they will set the world afire!”

The mother smiled at his enthusiasm. “It would seem so,” she said; “but the world hasn’t been very much moved by other truths which have been given by the Prophet.”

“That’s true; but why I cannot quite understand.”

“The things of God are understood only by the Spirit of God; and that is obtained only by obedience to the gospel.”

“Yes. All during the meeting I wished Dora were with us in hopes that she would be impressed. But my hopes were guided by my heart, I suppose.”

“Dora, the same as all of us have been, must be born again before she can see the kingdom.”

“The kingdom! Oh, mother, how it opens to us! *‘God Himself was once as we are now.’* That sings and sings in my heart. *‘God Himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ did!’* God, then, is a man, now a glorified being, but still a MAN; and Jesus Christ the Son of God is, therefore, the Son of Man. We also are children of God and brothers of Jesus Christ. Jesus did what He saw His Father do, and we are admonished to follow in the footsteps of

Jesus.....God has won His way up through the worlds by conquering all forces, both good and evil, adding knowledge to knowledge, power to power, and glory to glory until He has reached His present exalted state. Jesus has been following the Father along the same celestial pathway, and now it is our privilege to do the same.....Yes; I can see the Savior's mission plainer now. The Father is so far ahead of us, has attained to such an incomprehensible degree of glory and exaltation that there must needs be an intermediate and a way-leader nearer to our human plane, and that Mediator, Leader, Lord, is Jesus Christ. He represents the Father. We come to the Father by Him. We must go in the way He has pointed out, and follow in His steps."

"Why, John, we are not only of the royal English line, but we are in the lineage of the Gods!" added the mother reverently.

"We are not really 'worms of the dust,' only so far as we degrade our heavenly birthright. We are gods in embryo; and although we may yet be a long way down the scale, still, eternity is before us and the heights are there for us to climb. Mother, I am lost in the contemplation of these things."

The day merged into twilight. John pushed up the blind, and they sat for some time silently in the pale light. The mother now offered to prepare supper, but John detained her.

"Do you remember the questions I used to ask you about time and space?" he went on. "I used to imagine a straight line from the earth to the sun, then on to

some star, then on, on into the depths of space to the end—then what? There would *have* to be something on the other side of the end, which means, of course, that there is no end. There I was lost and had to come back home. Then as to time: there always was a yesterday, and there always will be a tomorrow—using earthly figures to express the idea—consequently, there can be no limits either way to time; and so again I was lost and would have to come back to the present. The Prophet's remarks this afternoon have set my mind going again. As time, space, element, and intelligence are eternal, so also must be the race of Gods. If the Great Eternal is a Father, He first must have been a Son; that Son must also have had a Father—which line of reasoning only pushes the query one step further back, and where can we stop? Nowhere. We are lost, and again we must come back home."

"All right, John. Now let us stay here. Aren't you hungry?"

"Just a moment more, mother. You see, I want to talk about these things now while they are new to fix them in my mind. Some day I hope to tell my children about them.—This other thought I wish to express: Jesus lived here on this earth. He was hungry, tired, tempted, and suffered in every way as we suffer. When our Heavenly Father passed through His earthly probation, He also must have tasted of the ills of mortality. With the knowledge thus obtained still abiding with Them, these Two can feel for us, plan for us, and help us. They have gone before and They know the way. Mother, what sweet assurance that is to us who are trying in a weak way to follow!"

That night, before retiring, mother and son sang a hymn, and then said their prayers together. When John kissed his mother goodnight, he held her face between his hands, and, looking into her eyes, said:

“Mother, dear, never more ought I to complain. Have I not the gospel—and you?”



CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

In due time Mrs. Fenton, Dora, and Jane arrived safely home again. Dora informed John of this in a brief note, followed two weeks later by a long letter. John scanned this letter carefully to see what of hope or comfort he could get from it. Then he handed it to his mother.

"Tell me what you make of it?" he asked.

"She wants you to come back to Belford."

"Do you think she means that? She doesn't say so."

"Only between the lines, where many letters say the most."

As John read his letter again, he agreed with his mother. Dora told him that they were about to sell their country home and to move into Belford. Of course, there was much more life in town, and Jane was to go to the high school. It was with a sad heart that the writer contemplated saying farewell to their beautiful home. Frequently she wandered disconsolately about the grounds, her steps naturally leading her down the path to the creek. She usually stopped on the bridge. (And John stopped with her: he saw splashing water and heard the low, sweet piping of a bird from the bushes). "One day," the letter ran, "just as I was going to move on, a young man suddenly turned the bend and came on to the bridge. He paused, he stopped, he begged my pardon, for he evidently saw the distress in my face. He spoke very kindly to me, and was very nice. He was the new occupant of Moston." John

smiled at the writer's subtle attempts to make him fearful.

Dora's letter was answered at length and in full, as John usually did. Then he honestly tried not to let thoughts of her worry him. He was aided in this resolve by what was happening in Nauvoo, which largely occupied his thoughts and attention. The plots against the Prophet and the leading men, of which John had such first-hand knowledge, daily became more manifest. Wicked apostates showed their hatred more openly. Those living in Nauvoo conspired with the enemies of the Church in surrounding towns, and the spirit of mobocracy again became rampant.

One day at the store a number of men were railing against what they called the unjust domineering of the Prophet. John hardly ever took part in public discussions of such topics, but on this occasion he was led to ask one of Joseph's accusers if he had ever read the Prophet's views on Priesthood domination. On receiving a negative reply, John took down from a shelf a copy of the *Times and Seasons*, from which he read:

"The rights of the Priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven. . . . and the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control, or dominion, or compulsion, upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and

when it is withdrawn, Amen to the Priesthood, or the authority of that man. We have learned by sad experience, that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion."

Some of the bystanders grunted an assent to this.

"Just a moment, friends," said John, "Let me read a little further: 'No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the Priesthood, only by persuasion, by long suffering, by gentleness, and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile, reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love towards him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; that he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death; let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly, then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God, and the doctrine of the Priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy sceptre an unchanging sceptre of righteousness and truth, and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee for ever and ever.' "

"Men and brethren," commented John, "that's the doctrine of Joseph Smith. No man, having in his heart to tyrannize over his fellows, would be foolish

enough to teach such principles." John looked straight into the men's faces. "Do you men believe that doctrine?" he asked. "Do you practice it? Some of you claim to hold the Priesthood. Before God, you will be held accountable, if you use it in any other way than here enumerated, 'by persuasion, by long suffering, by gentleness, and meekness, and by love unfeigned!' Again, I know, as well as some of you know, that Joseph measures fully up to his own doctrine. Let his enemies say what they will, let them do what they can, even to the taking of his life, I know the power of the Priesthood is with him. The pure in heart who know him best love him most, and testify of his faithfulness."

John surprised his friends as well as himself by his defensive attitude, but he felt good about it, nevertheless; and as he walked home that evening he thought of the serious condition the city was getting into. Men who had stood high in the Church and the community had been excommunicated and were now bitterly fighting the Church. They openly advocated the repealing of the city's charter because, they claimed, the city authorities, with Joseph at their head as mayor, were tyrannical and unjust. These agitators now announced that they would publish a paper in Nauvoo to further their cause.

The first number of the *Nauvoo Expositor* was issued June 7, 1844. It scandalously attacked many of the most respectable citizens of Nauvoo. What could be done about it? The problem was fully discussed by the city council. To suppress the nasty sheet would be construed as an attack upon the inalienable American

right of free speech. To permit it to publish its falsehoods would in a short time arouse the country to such an extent that the mobocratic scenes of Missouri would be reenacted. The city council chose the lesser of two evils, as they thought: they passed an ordinance declaring the *Nauvoo Expositor* to be a nuisance, and directed the city marshall to destroy the press.

This was done. Naturally, the hatred of the conspirators became intense. In their desperation, some of them set fire to their own houses, then they fled to Carthage, the county seat, with terrible tales of what the Mormons were doing. Their lying stories spread like wild fire among the susceptible people.

A warrant was now issued for the arrest of Joseph Smith and the entire city council, charging them with riot in destroying the *Expositor*. The warrant was served, and the officer was determined to take his prisoners to Carthage for trial. However, the law provided that they could be tried in some other court. On the refusal of the constable having them in charge to grant this, they were all released by writ of *habeas corpus* issued by the municipal court of Nauvoo.

Indignation meetings were now held in the towns of Carthage and Warsaw, wherein were adopted resolutions with many high sounding "whereas's" and "resolves," stating that the life and liberty of the country were in danger, and declaring that the resolvers held themselves in readiness to co-operate with their fellow citizens of Missouri and Iowa "to exterminate, utterly exterminate the wicked and abominable Mormon leaders, the authors of our troubles." They further resolved that all Mormons "should be driven from the

surrounding settlements in to Nauvoo;" and then if Joseph and "his miscreant adherents" were not delivered into their hands, "a war of extermination should be waged to the entire destruction, if necessary for our protection, of his adherents."

Wild rumor flew about the country. Excitement grew. The leaders at Nauvoo worked unceasingly to present the truth both to Governor Ford and to the people at large. The city officials went before Squire Daniel H. Wells, then not a member of the Church, who, after giving them a careful hearing, acquitted them. The accused also expressed a willingness to go before the circuit court. But all these efforts for peace proved futile. Mobs began to gather and to threaten. Those who lived outside of Nauvoo and who would not take up arms against Joseph Smith and his associates, were told either to give up all their weapons or to get out. Many moved into Nauvoo for protection.

Brother and Sister Freland were among the first to arrive. A day or two later William Dana, wife, and child came. John and his mother made them welcome and as comfortable as possible. Louise was near a nervous breakdown. When Sister St. John placed an easy chair for her, she sank into it, and clasping her child close to her breast, she sobbed aloud in a heart-breaking manner.

John reassured them to the best of his ability. They would all share alike of what earthly possessions he had. Mobs could not take Nauvoo, he said. The Legion was a strong military organization. Let no mob venture against them!

"No death could be sweeter than fighting against

the accursed mob!" said William, with a quiver in his voice. Louise raised her eyes questioningly, while John pressed his hand in mute assent.

When mobs became more threatening, the city was placed under martial law, and the Legion was mustered into service. John and William marched away together, leaving the tearful women at home. The Prophet took command of the troops. In full uniform, he looked a general in very deed. Mounting the frame of a building near the Mansion, he addressed the Legion and the people who had assembled:

"It is thought by some that our enemies would be satisfied with my destruction," said Joseph; "but I tell you that as soon as they have shed my blood, they will thirst for the blood of every one in whose heart dwells a single spark of a fulness of the gospel. It is not only to destroy me, but every man and woman who dares believe the doctrines that God hath inspired me to teach to this generation."

"We are American citizens. We live upon a soil for the liberties of which our fathers periled their lives and spilt their blood upon the battle field."

"Will you all stand by me to the death, and sustain at the peril of your lives, the laws of our country, and the liberties and privileges which our fathers have transmitted unto us; sealed with their sacred blood?"

"Aye!" shouted the thousands as with one voice.

"It is well. If you had not done it, I would have gone out there—" pointing to the West—"and would have raised up a mightier people."

The Prophet-General drew his sword and presenting it to heaven, said: "I call God and angels to

witness that I have unsheathed my sword with a firm and unalterable determination that this people shall have their legal rights, and be protected from mob violence, or my blood shall be spilled upon the ground like water, and my body consigned to the silent tomb. While I live, I will never tamely submit to the dominion of cursed mobocracy. I would welcome death rather than submit to this oppression; and it would be sweet, Oh, sweet, to rest in the grave rather than submit to this oppression, agitation, annoyance, confusion, and alarm upon alarm, any longer.

"I do not regard my own life. I am ready to be offered a sacrifice for this people; for what can our enemies do? only kill the body, and their power is then at an end. Stand firm, my friends; never flinch. Do not seek to save your lives, for he that is afraid to die for the truth will lose eternal life. Hold out to the end and we shall be resurrected and become like Gods, and reign in celestial kingdoms, principalities, and eternal dominions, while this cursed mob will sink to hell, the portion of all those who shed innocent blood.

"God has tried you. You are a good people; therefore, I love you with all my heart. Greater love hath no man than that he should lay down his life for his friends. You have stood by me in the hour of trouble, and I am willing to sacrifice my life for your preservation.

"May the Lord God of Israel bless you for ever and ever. I say it in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and in the authority of the Holy Priesthood, which He conferred upon me!"

"Amen!" responded the full-hearted multitude. ❧

O, Brother Joseph, Brother Joseph! What do your

words imply? Is this your farewell to us? Are you going to leave us? Are you going to die—to die for us? No, no! let us die for you. We will protect you—we will shed our last drop of blood for you! Brother Joseph——

Hush! Still the throbbing, yearning heart. The man of God, the prophet of the last dispensation, the true Brother, the unalterable Friend, stands in the majesty of his person, and smiles sweetly as he looks out over the multitude.

His time is come. His work is done. He has delivered his last spoken word to his people!



CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE.

The excitement in and about Nauvoo continued. Pickets were placed to guard all approaches to the city, and the Legion began throwing up entrenchments against possible invaders. The leaders at Nauvoo kept the governor informed on what was transpiring, and they appealed to him for protection against the threatening mobs. The governor came to Carthage. He requested that representatives be sent to him from Nauvoo, which was done. They found Governor Ford surrounded by the bitterest anti-Mormon leaders who acted as his advisers and who insulted the Nauvoo delegation with impunity. The result of this conference was that the governor made a demand on Joseph and his associates that they come to Carthage for trial. When the danger of this was pointed out, the governor pledged his faith as chief executive of the state that these men should be protected.

What should the brethren do? Should they submit themselves to the mercy of the merciless, or should they try once more to save their lives?

Then a plan presented itself to the Prophet.

"It is clear to my mind what to do," he said. "All they want is Hyrum and myself; then tell everybody to go about their business, and not collect in groups. There is no danger; they will come here and search for us. Let them search; they will not harm you in person or property, and not even a hair of your head. We will cross the river tonight, and go away to the West."

Late that same night, Joseph and Hyrum, with two trusted brethren, rowed across the river to the Iowa side, where they began making preparations for their western journey.

But that was not to be. Joseph's wife sent word to him, begging him to return. Others also advised him not to go, intimating that it was a cowardly act to thus leave the flock to the mercy of wolves. This decided him.

"If my life is of no value to my friends, it is of none to myself," he remarked. To Hyrum he said: "If you go back, I will go with you, but we shall be butchered."

That afternoon Joseph and his party rowed back across the river to Nauvoo. Then he sent word to Governor Ford that he would come to Carthage next morning. Would the governor send a *posse* for his safe conduct? No, was the reply, Joseph was to be at Carthage without escort the next day, or Nauvoo would be taken by armed force!

Early on the morning of the twenty-fourth of June, Joseph and the members of the city council against whom complaints had been made, rode out of Nauvoo for Carthage. As they passed the Temple, Joseph remarked:

"This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens; little do they know what awaits them!"

John St. John and his friend William, coming home from picket duty early that morning, saw the little party set out for Carthage. They knew the temper of the mobocrats and had heard of Joseph's forebodings; their hearts were heavy. They stood looking along the

Carthage road until the Prophet and his company disappeared from view.

"I wonder if that is the last time we shall see him," surmised John.

"I hope not," replied William. "The Lord will protect them. What would we do if they were taken away?"

The other did not answer for a moment; his eyes were fixed on the distant road; then as he turned to his companion: "Well, if God wills it so, we must learn to stand alone. Perhaps that also is a part of our schooling. Come, let us be going."

At home, the two young men ate some breakfast, and then lay down to rest. Shortly after noon John went to the store, but there was very little buying and selling, the people, for the most part, being unable to do much of the regular business of the day. All were eagerly awaiting news from the county seat. Would Joseph and Hyrum have a fair trial? Would they have a chance? Would Governor Ford protect them? What would be the outcome of this new trouble? These, with kindred questions, were in the hearts and on the lips of the people.

Early in the afternoon, the Carthage road was again darkened. A company of mounted militia rode into Nauvoo. Joseph and his brethren were with them. What did this mean?

The governor had ordered all the state arms to be collected from the Nauvoo Legion. This company had come to carry out this order.

John and William were among a group of men who had learned of this. "What?" exclaimed John, "are we

to be disarmed again so that the mob may do with us as they please as they did in Missouri? Never! We'll stand for no more driving. We'll die fighting first!"

"Amen!" "We're with you," came from various of the group.

"Shall we tamely submit?"

"No, never!"

"Then get your arms and meet me at the Temple in an hour. Tell the news to others. Rally the brethren. We'll fight this out as our American forefathers did. Patrick Henry had no more reason to shout 'Liberty or death' than we have!"

With a subdued cheer, the men scattered, They went to their homes with a determination to come armed to the rendezvous and resist any effort to disarm them or to insult them. If only Joseph would lead them! If only he would say to them, "Come, all ye faithful and true, let us stand our ground!" If only he would!

But no; Joseph himself had countersigned the governor's order, and had come back to Nauvoo to assist in carrying it out. To the last, he would respect lawful authority. The legion must obey the command of the governor. There was to be no fighting.

There are things harder to do than not to fight; and this, to John and William, and many others, was one of them. (No doubt, it would have been easier for Peter, of ancient times, to have fought and died for his Master than to see Him led away to the cross.)

The state arms were collected. Twice during the afternoon, Joseph bade farewell to his family. He appeared solemn and thoughtful and expressed him-

self to several that he expected to be murdered. On the road to Carthage Joseph said:

“I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am as calm as a summer’s morning. I have a conscience void of offense toward all men. If they take my life, I shall die an innocent man, and my blood shall cry from the ground for vengeance, and it shall be said of me, ‘He was murdered in cold blood!’ ”

And now the city became strangely quiet as if, with bated breath, the inhabitants were waiting for some dire calamity. The night and the next day dragged by. On the twenty-sixth, the suspense became painful. Travelers from Carthage reported that Joseph and Hyrum were in jail, and the common rumor there was that they would not leave the town alive. Some of the mobocrats now wanted to march against Nauvoo and put the city to sword and flame, but others seemed content for the present in having in their power the Prophet and the Patriarch.

On the twenty-seventh, the governor with a following of officers and troops came to Nauvoo, leaving the Carthage Greys, the most bitter of the troops, to guard his prisoners. Several thousands of Nauvoo’s citizens gathered at the corner of Main and Water streets, where the governor addressed them in the most insulting manner, unjustly accusing them of unlawful acts for which they should be punished. The governor and some of the officers visited the Temple where some of them were guilty of vandalism. At six-thirty that evening they rode away with great military display as if they wished to impress the people.

That evening John St. John, with mother and

friends, spent at home, as restfully as possible. Very quietly they ate their supper, after which they sat for a long time outside in the cool of the night. Neighbors visited with each other to learn, if possible, any news. A feeling of apprehension rested heavily upon all. At last they went to bed, but there was little sleep. John and William lay talking until late in the night.

They were up at daybreak. John went out into his garden. The city lay as if yet sleeping in the cool, quiet of the June morning. He lingered a while to let the peace of the garden soothe his restless soul, then he stepped into the street.

Shortly after sunrise, two horseman, with jaded animals, were seen coming along the road. They stopped at the Mansion where about a dozen men were gathered. John quickened his steps, and soon joined them.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Joseph and Hyrum are dead!"

"Oh!"

"They were shot to death yesterday afternoon in Carthage jail."

"While the governor was here?"

"Yes."

John St. John stood in dazed inactivity for a few moments. Then he slowly went back home with the sad news. They all knew now what the forebodings of evil had meant.

That afternoon ten thousand people went out to receive all that was mortal of Joseph Smith and Hyrum, his brother. About a mile east of the Temple, on Mulholland Street, they met the company coming from

Carthage. Reverently, silently, the people opened a way to let the sad procession through; and as the wagon containing the two rude boxes covered with an Indian blanket came into view, a wave of lamentation swept over the multitude. It was the low, heart-rending cry of a people mourning for its dead!



CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR.

The Prophet and Patriarch were dead. They no longer were to be seen on the streets of Nauvoo, in shops and stores, viewing and directing the work on the Temple, riding with the Legion, visiting the homes of the Saints, or delivering the word of God to listening multitudes. Joseph and Hyrum were gone, and there was a void in the hearts and the haunts of the people.

How could the sun, as usual, bathe the earth in warmth and beauty? How could the breeze joyously rustle the corn and bend the flowers? How could the waters murmur peacefully on? How could the birds sing, the bees hum? Were not Joseph and Hyrum dead?

The Latter-day Saints were as children bereaved of their parents, as a flock without a shepherd. All but two of the Twelve were away on missions. These two had been with Joseph and Hyrum in Carthage Jail. John Taylor was seriously wounded and might die. Willard Richards, who miraculously escaped the bullets of the assassins, was alone of the Twelve to comfort and to reassure the people.

Thoughts of revenge were swallowed up in grief. The Nauvoo Legion could have marched to Carthage and could have swept the people and the town from the earth; but that would merely have been revenge, and vengeance belongs to the Lord.

John St. John shared the troubles of his people. He listened, usually without comment, to their dis-

cussions of what should now become of them and who should lead them. He did not say much because he had no definite opinion as to how matters would turn out. His faith was left him, however, and he had a profound assurance that the same divine power which had established the Church would see to its perpetuation. He prayed fervently that the Spirit of the Lord would guide him and his friends, as well as the whole Church membership, in this their hour of trial.

Early in August of that year Sidney Rigdon came from Pittsburg to Nauvoo. He had been counsellor to Joseph, in which position he had become such a burden to the President that he had "thrown him off" his shoulders. At the services held in the grove Sunday morning, August 4, Elder Rigdon addressed the people. He said he had received a vision at Pittsburg in which he had been told that a guardian should be appointed to build up the Church to Joseph. He called attention to the fact that he had often been a spokesman for Joseph, and he proposed to continue in that office, though how that was to be done, was not made clear.

Sidney Rigdon's words did not ring true to the Saints. Usually an eloquent speaker, he now failed to make the impression he desired. The people were not satisfied.

A few days later, six of the Twelve having now arrived, the leading brethren held a meeting, the principal theme discussed being Sidney Rigdon's claim to the leadership of the Church.

A general meeting was appointed for Thursday, August 8, at the grove, where the whole question of succession in the Presidency would be submitted to the

Church. The Frelands had gone back to their homes, so John and his mother went early to the meeting to get seats well up to the front; and as they sat and waited for the people to gather, they talked to each other.

"I can't get a favorable impression of Elder Rigdon," said John. "He has been with us so little of late; and again, how can any man be a spokesman for Joseph. Joseph is in the spirit world, and although his desires are yet for the welfare of the Church, his sphere of action is changed. We now want a spokesman for the Lord, just the same as Joseph was. Presidents will come and go, as all mortals do, but the Lord abides. We want, it seems to me, one who can say, 'Thus saith the Lord,' not one who will say, 'Thus saith Joseph.' "

"I don't like the way Elder Rigdon speaks about the Church and himself," added the mother. "He talks as if the predictions of all the ancient prophets had reference to himself. Besides, he ignores the Twelve."

"Well, the Twelve are here now. Joseph trusted them and relied upon them. There's Brigham, Joseph's right hand man in Missouri; and there's John and Heber and Willard and Parley and Orson and Wilford and George A.— all true men of God. We have heard many times, mother, that Joseph rolled the responsibility of carrying on the work on to their shoulders."

"And they are here to carry it."

"Yes; I recall the revelation which states that the Twelve stand next to the First Presidency, and they form a quorum equal in authority to the three presiding High Priests. Naturally, then, when there is no First Presidency, the Twelve is the next presiding body;

and in case the Twelve should disappear, the Seventy would have the power to set the Church in order."

A large congregation had now assembled. The wind being unfavorable for speaking from the stand, a wagon was drawn to a position opposite, and in this Sidney Rigdon, William Marks, and a number of others took their place. After the opening exercises, Elder Rigdon spoke. He was visibly embarrassed, his speech being slow and labored. The congregation listened patiently. The people were deeply in earnest, wanting to hear the voice of the true shepherd; but when Elder Rigdon had spoken for an hour and a half, they became restless. They who had been wont to sit spellbound, listening to the Prophet, heeding neither time nor weather, now became uneasy. There was no charm, no spirit in the former eloquent man.

Elder Rigdon ceased and sat down. Immediately a voice spoke from the stand, and the audience turned about to listen, their backs being now to the wagon and Elder Rigdon.

The sound of that voice coming clear and distinct from the stand swept away the lethargy of the congregation. There was something strangely different in that voice, and it seemed to pierce the listeners to the soul.

Mrs. St. John clasped the arm of her son. "John, who is it?" she whispered.

"It's President Brigham Young."

"No—it's Joseph—see—can't you see it's Joseph!" President Young was speaking again.

"Listen, Mother; Brigham is speaking again; but

he is transformed—he looks like Joseph, he is speaking with Joseph's voice—Oh, mother!"

President Young spoke a few words only, but those few words thrilled the congregation. Hearts were filled; doubts vanished; assurance came back to halting minds. Now they knew where the power of presidency lay. They had heard the voice of the true shepherd. When the meeting was dismissed, the people with beaming eyes and eager lips said to each other:

"The spirit of Joseph rests upon Brigham."

"Yes; as the mantle of Elijah fell upon Elisha, so has Joseph's fallen upon Brigham."

"Brigham has always been Joseph's right hand man."

"And he is President of the Twelve."

"'And God has set some in the church, first apostles—'

"Praise the Lord! He has answered our prayers!"

It is not the purpose of this brief narrative to tell in detail all that took place in Missouri and Illinois when the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had its sojourn there for a few years. John St. John was only one of many with like experiences, and if we can enter somewhat into what he thought and did and suffered, then also we may realize to some extent the history of thousands. He was only one of a people called to endure much for the gospel's sake, and to lay the foundations of the great latter-day work. Let the generations following be grateful for what these early-day men and women did.

The Twelve were sustained as the leaders of the

Church. A few were dissatisfied and followed various factions, but they did not prosper. The Saints at Nauvoo now directed their energies to complete what Joseph had begun. Work on the Temple was quickened, with the result that the capstone was laid on the twenty-fourth of May, 1845. In October of that year, the Temple was so far completed that meetings were held in it. Part of the building was dedicated in November, following which a large number of Saints received their endowments. On the first day of May, 1846, the Temple was publicly dedicated.

For a short time after the martyrdom, the people of Nauvoo enjoyed peace. Then, their enemies, seeing that the taking away of the Prophet had not destroyed the Church, again began agitation. Crimes of all kinds were laid at the door of the people of Nauvoo. No matter how many times these accusations were denied, or how much the citizens of Nauvoo courted investigation, wicked rumors spread far and wide. In January, 1845, the state legislature repealed the charter of the city and the Legion, thus leaving the citizens more exposed than ever to the fury of their enemies.

In the fall of 1845, anti-Mormon meetings were held in various nearby towns. Mobs again began to plunder. Not only Mormons suffered, but all who were in any way friendly to them or who opposed lawlessness were made to feel the cruel hand of oppression.

The cry everywhere became, "The Mormons must leave the country." They were advised to go to California or to Oregon as the great West was called. "Go out there and make a nation of your own." Perhaps these advisers knew of Joseph's prediction that

the Saints would eventually go to the Rocky mountains. At any rate, President Young and the leading men had not lost sight of that prediction, and now public announcement was made that the people would leave the state just as soon as they could dispose of their property and get ready, in the spring.

During the fall and winter of 1845, the people were busy selling property and procuring what was necessary for such a far journey. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and wagon-makers worked incessantly. The Saints in the nearby settlements sold their property—if they could—and came into Nauvoo, where they made preparations for the great move.

And amid these busy scenes, the finishing of the Temple was not neglected. Though the Saints were getting ready to leave it, they would complete it as the Lord had commanded, even if they had to do so with the trowel in one hand and a weapon of defense in the other.

The enemies of the Saints were impatient to have them go, so early in the month of February, 1846, ferrying began across the river. The weather became so cold that the river froze over, allowing hundreds of teams to cross on the ice. Many of the Saints left the "Beautiful City" with the comfort of good homes, and slowly wended their way westward. They were soon lost to view in the snow-covered plains of Iowa.

Brother and Sister Freland, William and his wife and child were among the first to leave. They had disposed of their property, getting barely enough out of it to poorly fit them out. "However," said Brother Freland, "if there is a place on God's earth where mobs

cannot come, I want to find it." The aged brother and John's "Missouri Mother" were none too strong, and John's heart ached for them as he bade them goodby on the Nauvoo side of the ice-bound Mississippi. He also would have gone, but his mother was not well, and he had not as yet been able to get even a little for what property he owned. Values were shrinking terribly in Nauvoo. John St. John's worldly prestige and wealth had nearly reached the vanishing point.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE.

The September air was cool, but the afternoon sun shone warm through the closed window to where Mrs. St. John sat with her sewing. John came in quietly.

"Mother," he reproved, "why didn't you stay in bed as I told you?"

"There is so much to do, John, so much mending for the poor people who must leave. I want to help a little."

"Yes; but you are sick—see, your hands are trembling, so you can hardly hold the needle. Come, put away your work and lie down here to rest."

He arranged a pillow for her on the sofa, and she willingly did as he directed; for, truth to tell, she was not well. He spread a cover over her, then drew his own chair up close.

"What's going on in the city?" she asked.

"A number of brethren came from Mount Pisgah and Garden Grove today. They report long trains of wagons traveling westward."

"And we remain—"

"Just for a little while longer. You'll soon be well again, and then we also shall go."

The mother did not reply. John stroked gently the whitening head.

"The mobs are threatening again," he said; "I may be called out at any time—but how can I leave you, mother?"

"When you are protecting the city, you are pro-

tecting me. Do your duty, John; I do not want to fall into the hands of mobbers."

"And you shall not while I can prevent it. Governor Ford has sent us Major Parker to raise a company of volunteers to defend the city. The Carthage mob is led by old man Brockman, and reports are that he is about ready to march on the city. All who can are getting away either up or down or across the river. I am telling you this, mother, not because it is good news, but because I think you ought to know the truth."

The mother reached for her son's hand and held it with gentle firmness for some time. The sun sank low in the cloudless sky, and John pushed back the curtains. The mother lay in the fading light. Mortality seemed to have nearly passed from her dear face. How beautiful she was! Was he to lose her? She was his last earthly tie. All the summer she had been ailing, getting a little weaker day by day, fading slowly as a drooping flower. She seldom spoke now of the long, hard westward journey before them. She seemed satisfied to lay her body to rest in a spot of earth in the City of Joseph, rather than to drag it out into the wilderness.

"When duty calls—go, my son," said the mother. "I shall be all right."

A few days later, a watchman on the tower of the Temple announced that a body of men was coming toward the city on the Carthage road. The western move had drained the city of most of its able-bodied men, but what few remained collected and marched out to meet the invaders. Besides the regular volunteers,

a body of select men for flankers and sharpshooters were organized under the leadership of Captain William Anderson. They called themselves the Spartan Band.

The mob forces advanced along the road, firing their cannon into the fields, and making great havoc among the corn stalks. There was a din as of battle eastward near Squire Wells' residence when the mob forces came to a halt about a mile from town.

The defenders had no artillery to train against those of the invaders. What could be done? Two steamboat shafts were found near the river. These were cut in two, plugged, and made into rude cannon, from which bags of scrap iron were fired, to the surprise and consternation of the mob forces. All that night the defenders were busy strengthening their earth entrenchments. John St. John had reported for duty early in the afternoon, and he spent the night in the trenches with gun and spade.

The next morning, it was observed that the enemy were cautiously advancing. Squire Wells' house was fired at, and though the family was at home, no one was hurt. A ball from the enemy's cannon took the roof off a small house near by. In wild affright, an old woman rushed out and pleaded with the mobbers saying that her husband was sick and could not get away. The heartless wretches dragged the old man from his bed and house, took him away, and it was learned, later, ducked him in the river. As an explanation of his death, they said they had only intended to "baptize" him, but they had perhaps held him under too long!

All that day the gallant band of defenders bravely resisted so that the attacking force could not reach Mulholand street. The sharp-shooters and the home-made cannon did good service. Tired, grimy, hungry—John was glad when night and comparative quiet came and he could hurry home for a few hours.

He found his mother in her easy chair, keeping up bravely. Her work had dropped from her hands, and she seemed too weak even to pick it up. A lunch was awaiting him on the table. He first put his mother to bed, then ate his supper, afterward sitting by his mother and talking to her until his tired eyes closed in sleep.

Before daybreak John was again at his post. That morning a messenger came from the camp of the enemy with a flag of truce and a communication addressed to the "Mormon forces" demanding their surrender on terms that they give up their arms and permit the invaders to enter the city. Major Clifford, who was now in command of the Nauvoo forces, sent back a refusal of the mob leader's demands, stating that he and his forces were acting under authority of the governor and commander-in-chief of the Illinois militia.

On receiving this reply, the mob renewed its attack with much vigor, and the battle of Nauvoo was on again in earnest. Captain Anderson, of the Spartan Band, led his men in a gallant fight. A musket ball pierced his breast, and he fell.

"I am wounded!" he exclaimed, "take my gun and shoot on!"

The captain's fourteen year old son, Augustus, who had fought by the side of his father, was hit by a

cannon ball and died shortly after. A number of others were wounded in this fight, which eventually ended in the mob forces retreating to a place of safety.

Early on the morning of the fourth day, John St. John plodded homeward on a brief respite. He was tired to the very marrow. He could hardly drag one foot after the other. He paused to rest at a brother's home near the Temple, and in the dim light of morning, he saw the faithful sentinel on the tower, whose duty it was to report the movements of the enemy. Entering the house, he found the women folks busy cooking breakfast. He was invited to remain a few moments and he would be served.

John sat down to rest and to wait. Had the appetizing odors attracted others? for three more men soon arrived. They, however, did not sit nor wait nor eat, but they hurriedly took everything that was prepared and carried it away to the fighting men in the trench. The good women looked at each other and then at John, and then they became busy doing their work over again. The hungry guest laughed good-naturedly at the "joke" on him, and said the men did exactly right. He went on home without waiting for the second cooking.

The sun was rising as he entered the door of his home. Everything was still. Evidently, his mother was yet asleep. He walked quietly about, and then he peeped into her bed room. Yes, she was in bed, lying very quietly—so quietly that John was startled. He stepped in and placed his hand on her forehead. It was cold. He felt of her hand, lying on the coverlet. It also was cold and lifeless!

“Mother! Oh, mother!”

But that mother would never more speak with mortal lips. She was dead.

John stood dazed in his agony and yet as he looked into that stilled face, he saw traces of that peaceful passage which is promised to those who die in the Lord. They “shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them.” Yes, death must have been sweet to his mother—a passing from scenes of mobocracy and violence to the restful Paradise of God.

The mother had evidently prepared herself for this final leave taking. Her house was in order. She herself was clothed in a flowing white dress and dainty cap. She lay in her bed as if she had been placed there by other hands. The coverlet was smoothly undisturbed. John stood looking at it all in pained wonder for some time. Then he left her room, and closed her door; as he stepped out into the bright morning, a boom of cannon greeted him from the direction of the battle field.

John went back to the neighbor’s where the second preparing of breakfast was about completed. A number of others—women, children, and old men had gathered to this place with the feeling that there would be more protection so near the sacred precincts of the Temple. Besides the cooking, many were occupied with moulds and moulten lead, making bullets for their soldier brothers and husbands. When John appeared on this busy scene, the munition makers, thinking he had come for ammunition, pointed to a bread-pan half full of bullets and told him to help himself. But before John

could explain, he was taken in charge by a sister who knew of his first visit there that morning.

"Have you eaten yet?" she asked.

"No, thank you, but—"

"Just come into this room. I'll find something for you."

"Just a moment. I must tell you first that my mother is dead."

"Dead! Oh, Brother St. John!"

"Yes; I found her in bed this morning. She must have died during the night. She is now safe—out of danger. I wish all you sisters were as safe from harm as she."

"Shall we go over to her?"

"That is not necessary just now. Keep on with your work. Now I'll eat a little and lie down to rest for a while, if you'll keep a lookout on our house."

As John lay in a quiet corner of the house trying to sleep, he heard the sentinel on the Temple call out his tidings of how the battle was going. Between the distant rattle of guns and the nearer noises of the house, he heard the fretful cry of children and the suppressed sobs of women, and his heart ached in pity for them. However, he could better serve them if he could get a little rest, so he gave himself up to sleep for a few hours. Shortly after noon, he was again with his brethren, fighting with more abandon than he had ever before shown.

Overwhelmingly outnumbered, and outclassed by resources, the defenders now realized that sooner or later, the invaders would win. A treaty was, therefore, made by which the besiegers were to enter the city, but

they were not to molest the citizens. The defending forces were now disbanded.

John hurried home to prepare for laying his mother to rest. There was not a man in the city, known to him, that he could get to make a casket, so John himself went to work at the sad task. The result was crude, but it was the best that could be done. The sisterly hands of the neighbors assisted, and as soon as possible, the little procession was ready to proceed to the burial ground.

At that moment, a number of mobbers came to the house. They were drunken and insolent. They announced that they had come to search for arms, and were about to crowd past and disarrange the funeral proceedings. In righteous wrath, John commanded them to stand back.

"I have no gun," he said, "but the first man who attempts to enter shall be brained."

The intruders were of the kind that whiskey makes cowardly instead of brave. When they saw the young man standing erectly against them with a large shovel in his hand, they slunk, muttering, away.

The little procession moved peacefully through the streets to the cemetery. On every hand could be seen the devilish work of the mob. About fifteen hundred of them had moved into the city and had camped at the foot of the hill near Parley street. Soon parties of armed men had roamed the street at will, insulting, threatening, robbing, and ordering families to leave on short notice. No respect had been shown to age or infirmity. They had entered the Temple, had rung the bell in the tower, and yelled with frenzied glee:

"Who is the keeper of the Lord's house now?"

After John had performed the last sad rites for his mother, he wended his way back home. The excitement in the town was abating, and campfires were being prepared for supper making. A neighbor warned John that he had overheard some of the mobbers, whom he had defied earlier in the day, planning to "get even" with him. It would be safer if he did not occupy his house that night.

Well, he had nothing now to keep him at home. Now he could follow the main body of the Church westward. He would leave immediately. He could do this. The business at the store had been closed some time ago, and what had remained of that wreck had been spent during the last days of trial and trouble. He had tried to dispose of his small land holdings, but to no avail. No one wanted to invest during such uncertain times. John's convertible earthly possessions could be made into a bundle which he could carry away.

By ten o'clock that night John was down by the river. He found one leaky boat still unused. He paid the owner two dollars for it, baled it out, calked its biggest seams with rags, placed his bundle in the prow out of reach of the wet bottom, stepped carefully in and pushed out into the stream.

Goodby to Nauvoo! The moon was hidden. The night was still, and the city and the river lay peacefully under a cloud of darkness. John was glad to get away, and yet, as he rowed across the river, it seemed to him that he was leaving the world in which he had thus far lived his life, and going to another world—one which lay in the dim, untried unknown.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX.

John landed on the Iowa side of the river about midnight. Here and there, dim lights flickered. Fretful cries of children and groans of sick men and women rose on the night air. Hundreds of people were camping on the river-bottom land, refugees from the stricken city across the river. Most of them now lay in the open with no shelter from the cold. When John stepped about, many awoke from their uneasy sleep, fearful that the enemy had already followed them.

John had no particular place to go, had no one to inquire after. He walked aimlessly about the pitiful scene until he was attracted by a small group watching over a dying woman. She lay on a piece of mattress, covered with a quilt. Over her had been stretched a sheet to form a sort of tent. A tallow candle, sheltered by a paper shade, sent its flickering light over the scene. A man, evidently the woman's husband, was holding her head and occasionally placing to her lips a battered, blackened tin cup containing river water. Out a few feet from the dim circle of light, sat two little children on a piece of drift-wood, pouring out their heart-smothering sobs.

The wanderer paused, watched, and waited, wondering if he could be of any service; but mortals had done their worst and best for this woman, and in a few moments, her Maker took her in hand!.....John passed on and came to a group very much like the one he had just left. A number of women were busy about

a sick sister's rude bed. As he approached, he heard the faint cry of a new-born babe—just come into the world! John turned away.

A short distance away burned a small drift-wood fire near which sat two men. One was old, nearly to dotage, the other a young man who appeared to be very ill. Coatless and hatless, the sufferer crouched by the fire with his head hanging between his knees. John touched him on the shoulder, at which the young man tried to raise his head.

"He's sick," muttered the old man. "He's my grandson.—He gave me his coat."

John took off his own coat and wrapped it about the younger man, who smiled faintly at the kind deed, but shook his head as if it all were useless. Then John bethought himself of his bundle which he had left at the river bank. Two quilts were in it. He hurriedly fetched them and made a bed by the fire. Into this bed he tucked both the sick boy and his grandfather, telling them to go to sleep; he would watch and tend the fire.

In this way the night passed. John dozed a little, but the chill of night made it too uncomfortable to sleep. The camp was astir at dawn. The old man had slept fairly well, and the young man said he was better. John shared with them what little food he had, and told them to keep the quilts.

By the light of the day, John saw a most pitiable condition. The poor, the sick, the old, the infirm—all who had been unable to leave Nauvoo earlier were now huddled together on the bleak river bank. Their only hope now was that their brethren might come from

the temporary western settlements to their rescue. If this failed, they would perish miserably where they were.

John St. John with his lightened bundle, went about the camp trying to form some plan of action for himself. Going back to the river where he had fastened his boat, he found a man and his wife in deep distress. They told him that they had lost their little seven year old daughter. In their hurried flight from their home, they had thought she was with some neighbors; they had found their mistake when it was too late. She must still be in Nauvoo somewhere—had been there all during the night. Was this boat John's? Could the man use it to get across the river?

But neither the man nor the boat was in a condition for such a trip. The man was not well and the boat was half full of water. John looked at the distracted parents, and then at the boat. He had been seeking something to do. Here was something right at hand.

"I'll go back and try to find your daughter," he said. "Tell me about her."

They told him where their home was in the city and described their little girl. By the aid of the father, John drew the boat on shore, baled out the water, and tightened the calking. By noon he was pulling steadily at the oars, the boat pointing to the Nauvoo side of the river.

On reaching Nauvoo, John went directly home. Mob-soldiers were still about the city, but he was not molested. He saw that his house had been ransacked during the night. Practically every movable thing of

value had been taken away or badly broken. He found one of his discarded coats, which he now gladly slipped on. He looked about the desolate place for a few moments, then passed up the street toward the home of the little girl he was seeking, on the further side of the city.

The town was deserted, empty of inhabitants. How quiet it was! Lots and gardens lay neglected, houses were vacated. The stores were closed, the workshops were still. The afternoon sun became warm, and a mellow autumn haze bathed the town.

John readily found the house he was seeking. The wicket-latch clicked loudly as he stepped on to the path leading up to the door, but no one came to meet him. The front garden glowed with marigolds, dahlias, and heavy-headed sunflowers—and John caught himself thinking that he would get seeds from these for his own planting. He pushed open the unlocked door and looked into the deserted rooms. No one was there, save a little kitten crying loudly for companionship.

Inquiry of the few people who were about brought no information regarding the little girl. Not far away the Battle of Nauvoo had been fought. John looked again on the trench he had helped to dig and defend. He passed through a battle-scarred orchard where he picked and ate a few apples. Nearby wheat fields, yellow ripe, lay trodden on the ground. A number of houses in this part of town showed marks of cannonading.

After some hours of fruitless search, John returned again to the child's home. Once more he looked through

the rooms, and there, in a corner, huddled on a pile of rags, she lay. Her uncombed hair hung over a tear-stained face. Fright, hunger, and exhaustion had done their work, and now she lay fast asleep with the little kitten curled up in her lap.

At John's footsteps, the kitten sprang up, mewed, and rubbed its arched back against his legs. With a start, the little girl also awoke, and seeing the stranger, she began to cry.

"Don't cry, little girl," said he, "I will not hurt you. I have come to take you to your mamma."

"Mamma, Oh, mamma, where are you?"

"She is across the river. They missed you. Where have you been?"

"When the wicked men came, I hid, and—well then I went out—and then the dark night came on, and—"

She could explain no further, for her experiences had unnerved her. John picked her up and carried her out. "There now, don't cry any more. You are all right now." He managed to get her something to eat and then he took her to the ferry where some people whom he knew were about to cross. He sent the little girl to her parents with them.

John was not ready to recross the river. He wanted to get some more clothing, if possible, and he wanted to try once more to dispose of his property. He was practically penniless. He could not make the western journey without a team and provisions. He must try again to sell or trade his bit of land.

Leaving the ferry, he passed up the street and by the post office. For a long time, he had received no

mail. Perchance there would be something for him. He went in and asked. A number of papers were handed to him, and, yes, there was a letter—one from Dora.

It was the first he had received for over a month. He fingered it lovingly. What had she to say? Where could he read it in peace? He would go to his deserted home. He would be absolutely alone there to receive what message Dora had for him—either good or bad. He slipped the letter into his pocket and went to his house. The chill of evening was already in the air, and he thought a fire would add both comfort and cheer. The mobbers had not taken away all his wood-pile, so he carried a number of large armfuls in near the fire-place, and soon had a blaze. There was still light enough from the west window by which to read, so he sat down on the seat in the “cosy corner,” opened his letter and read:

“Dear John:—I have been ill for three weeks, but I forbade mother or Jane to write you about it: we know somewhat of your troublesome times, and I did not want to add anything to your worry. But I am better now, and I am sure that Dr. John St. John could make me completely well.

“But there—pay no attention to that last sentence. No earthly power could make you come to us instead of going with your people, so I shall not try to influence you—and John, really, I don’t know whether or not I want you to come or to go. Can you make anything out of my confused state of mind?”

“The autumn is glorious here at Belford. I went out to Moston yesterday for the first time in weeks. I

was, of course, reminded of our *good old* times, and I fear I dropt a tear down to the minnows in the creek—yes, the initials are still there. I wanted to dig a little at them, but I had no knife. I am still a goose, you see.

“How is your mother? Has the excitement at Nauvoo abated? Are you still planning the big westward journey? Jane fears the Indians will get you if you venture. At any rate, if you go to California, you will very likely, never come back. The distance is so great, besides—and so—

“We had strawberry tarts for supper.

“We had some of your missionary elders preaching in Belford last Sunday. Mother and Jane went to hear them and brought them back home for supper. They were very nice young men; and—I suppose—seeing that I could not go to meeting, they brought the meeting to me. They explained the doctrines of faith, repentance, and baptism—all of which I need.

“Jane is getting along fine in school.

“A young fellow by the name of—well, we call him Nat for short, persists in coming to see me. Next time he comes I *must* tell him—what?

“I was working in a store in Belford before I became ill. Mother said the work would be good experience for a girl who would likely have to earn her own living. I don’t know whether I can get my position back now or not. Do you not need someone to measure calico at your store?”

Thus the letter ran to the end. Daylight had about departed. The fire in the grate leaped brightly up the chimney. He had better screen the light. Luckily, the blind was still intact, and he pulled it down.

He found an old chair and sat down near the fireplace and looked into the blaze. Then his thoughts went back to former times, and to Dora. Dora was the same sweet, light-hearted girl, but he could find no trace of any religious awakening in her letter. Could he still continue to hope against hope? Between the lines, she plainly said she still cared for him. Did that give him joy—or was it added pain? Well, perhaps his own mind was in as confused a state as Dora said hers was!

John was hungry and weak from long fastings and strenuous work.

And the devil, taking advantage of his condition, came and tempted him.

John St. John was shown the glories of the world: wealth, position, the honors of men; ease and comfort all his days; Dora, as wife, with children playing about his hearth; and Moston, beautiful old Moston, might have been his. But why bewail the past? whispered the tempter. You are yet a young man. All this is still within your reach. Go back to the girl who loves you and will make you happy. Get into the world again and win back what you have lost by joining this unpopular church. Go east where there is beauty and culture and civilization. That postponed trip to Europe—with Dora—may still be realized. You were to climb the Alps together, do you not remember—you were to sail the Italian lakes—you were to linger in the lands of roses and of sweet song.

Dora persisted in his vision, and he made no attempt to banish her. She stood before him, calling him by loving look and word. With shining eyes,

golden hair, rosy lips and cheeks, she tenderly bade him come!

Was he drifting away, away from his fast moorings? Was he getting lost in the sea of doubt and uncertainty? He struggled to get control of himself again that his thinking might become clear and sane. He knew the gospel was true. He said it aloud that he might hear his own voice proclaim it. He could not deny that.

He that seeketh to save (in this case, wife) he forced himself to reason, shall lose. He that loseth shall find. Would the words of the Master apply to his case? The Priesthood had the power to unite man and wife for time and for eternity. Outside this Church, this Priesthood, there is no such power. He could go to Dora, marry her and make her his wife for this life; but to have her for eternity, he would have to prove himself true and worthy. As things were now, therefore, he would have to leave her in order to get her: to find, he would have to lose; to live, he would have to die!

“If I but knew that some day you’d be mine,
Seas might divide us, mountains lie between,
And years, and even life itself go by
Before my hungry eyes could rest upon
Your face—I’d be content—content to wait—
If I but *knew* that some day you’d be mine!”

The fire in the grate burned low as John St. John, in his wrestling and his praying and his agony, came from out his Gethsemane!

Then he arose, shook himself as if to get rid of the

last vestige of mind darkness, went to the door and looked out into the night; then he lay down peacefully by the warm hearth and went to sleep.

John awoke next morning feeling himself again and with a deep sense of gratitude for the Lord's protecting care. All that day and other days following, he spent in Nauvoo and surrounding places trying to dispose of his property for something with which he could make the westward journey. At last he found a man who, after a trip of inspection to Nauvoo, was willing to give him a team, a fairly good wagon, and a stock of provisions for his holdings. The trade was made, and one of the first days of October John's outfit was ferried across the river.

John found that a number of relief teams had arrived from Winter Quarters to assist the poor to remove west. He reported his team to the leader of the company, asking that as he had no one dependant on him, he be allowed to take under his charge the sick young man and his grandfather to whom some time before he had given his blankets. This was readily granted, much to the joy of these two worthy brethren.

And so in a day or two, the camp was organized and ready to move. John was as eager as the rest to be off. That first morning when the company moved slowly up and away from the river, he was well in advance. On an elevation, he stopped his team by which he was walking, and turned and stood looking at the straggling remnant of his people, slowly forming into traveling order. As he stood there, he bared his head to the morning breeze. The sun shone full on his thread-bare coat, his coarse trousers, his well-worn boots; but a

finer picture of a *man* the artist would fail to find anywhere else in all the world!

And John St. John was a man, in every way. Thanks to the Lord and His providences, his having been born into wealth and affluence had not been permitted to stand in the way of his development in all the things which make for true character. How he did glory in that thought, for it came to him as he stood there that morning. His heart was full of gratitude as his soul was full of peace. He had found himself. For the first time in his life, he realized more fully his powers as a child of God, in the track, and on the way of his Eternal Father. One great epoch of his life lay behind him; and he felt that he had strength given him to meet and to take advantage of the one which stretched out before him into the invisible future.

Goodby, Nauvoo, goodby, goodby! In the distance the morning sun touched the towers and walls of the Temple. John's eyes rested lovingly on the sight, but only for a moment. The company was moving, and he must not linger. Again he turned his face and his steps to the West.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN.

BY WAY OF POSTSCRIPT.

John St. John's mercantile establishment occupied a prominent corner in his home town; his homestead stood about two miles out on the county road in the north-west corner of his farm which sloped gently westward toward the Great Salt Lake. He was both merchant and farmer, and as the year had been a prosperous one with him, he could well afford to send his two sons on the mission to which they had been called at the recent conference of the Church.

Their farewell home party was this evening being held in the large, roomy country residence. The parlor and the dining room, thrown into one by the open folding doors, were now glowing with light and gorgeous autumn leaves. Early in the evening, there were busy scenes in the kitchen, and although the workers tried to keep the odor of cooking from the other parts of the house, this was difficult to do. Anyway, the smell of roasting meats and baking pies is not offensive to hungry boys and girls.

No effort shall be made in this postscript to give the names and the number in John St. John's household. Rest assured, there were a lot of fine, healthy, growing children. The family line coming down through an only son of an only son was now beyond the danger of becoming extinct. Of the two missionaries, Joseph, the oldest, was twenty, and Hyrum was nineteen. They were big, broad-shouldered, clean-faced, clear-

eyed fellows, full of fun as well as sense, and as a rule, willing enough to play with their younger brothers and sisters. However, this evening they were unusually quiet and sober, for were they not going to leave home tomorrow for the first time in their lives—going on missions to far-away England to preach the gospel, and remain away for two or three years! Surely, it was a sobering prospect.

Now the dining room table was stretched out to its full "Christmas length," and for some time the girls were busy setting it. Some of the larger children were trying to keep the smaller ones to a semblance of decorous order in the parlor end of the big room.

In due time, supper was announced, and the family took their places about the big table. The father's blessing on the food was a little longer than usual, as befitting the occasion, and then the clatter of a busy table began.

The meal ended in good time with the leisurely eating of the home-made ice cream and cake.

"Now," said the father from the head of the table, "whose turn is it to play?"

"It is Mary's."

"All right, Mary. Make the step a lively one, for we want the table cleared in good time this evening."

Mary went to the organ and played a march. The smaller children again retreated to the parlor, while the older ones, both boys and girls, attacked the dishes with such dispatch that they were soon cleared away and washed. Then the whole family gathered in the room, awaiting further directions. They knew that

on such an evening as this, the father would have something special to say.

"First we will sing," he announced. "Mary, remain at the organ. We need no books, for we all know 'Come, come, ye saints.' Before we sing it, I want to read again all the verses. Listen carefully, for there is deep meaning in every line. When you can see the picture of the moving camps of Israel and enter somewhat into their feelings, then only can you sing the song with the proper spirit."

They had sung this song many times, and they sang it well. The father had explained its meaning before, so the children knew why there were tears in some of their eyes when they began on the last stanza:

"And if we die before our journey's through"

When the song was ended, John St. John arose to his feet. The occasion called for this formality, he felt. For a moment he looked about on his assembled household who sat in silent and respectful expectancy. Then with a deep impressive voice and a wave of his hand, he said:

"All this—and the gospel!

"Let me explain," he continued. "At one time in my life I thought that poverty, hardship, and persecution were inseparably connected with the gospel of Jesus Christ. My experiences in Missouri and Illinois and in the beginning of our settlement of this valley seemed to imply this; but now, I see that I was mistaken, for now I not only have the gospel, but peace and plenty—and *you!*"

"My heart is full of gratitude to my Heavenly Father for all this. The Lord knows I am thankful,

and I want you to know it also. I am grateful for the wealth of love all of you have brought to me. We haven't a black sheep among our large flock. Two of you are now ready to go on missions, and from now on I want always to have a representative of our family in the field. As soon as Joseph and Hyrum return, Henry should be ready, and then Heber should be next; and then the honor should go on down to the other boys, and perhaps to some of the girls. We cannot do less to show our gratitude than to pass on the blessings we have to others.

"When you boys arrive in England, and when the time is opportune, I want you to go to the ancient manor of Mosstone. As you know, your great grandfather came from England, a descendant of the people who now live at Mosstone Manor. If you can get the records of the family, trace your pedigree back as far as you can. That will be necessary for temple work.

"I want you to stop over at Nauvoo—and you would better do this on your outward trip. You'll have no time for stop-overs on your return, for when you are released, you'll make a bee-line for home. If I guess right, you'll not be able to hold Joseph, at any rate."

The father looked knowingly at his eldest son who smiled good-naturedly at the personal reference. The young man did not deny the possibility of his speedy homeward trip, once he was released; rather, he corroborated the statement by placing his arm about the blushing young lady at his side. She was not yet a member of the family. Miranda Dana, daughter of his old-time friend and neighbor, William Dana, was,

on Joseph's account, a specially invited guest that evening.

"Children," continued the father, "I have told you before how the Lord brought a testimony of the gospel to the hearts of your grandmother Fenton and her children, and how I went back over the Plains to Iowa to meet them; how grandmother Fenton died and lies buried at Mount Pisgah, and how her two daughters came on to the Valley with me. It may be difficult for you boys to stop at Pisgah at present, but I want you especially to spend a few days at Belford. I shall give you letters of introduction to some old-time friends. I want you also to go out to Moston and the Fenton home. These may be well within the city limits of Belford, but in my young days—our young days," he corrected as he looked at the two mothers sitting with the children—"these places were well out in the country."

The father went on telling incidents of his boyhood days. Then, as the evening advanced and the smaller children dropped off to sleep, they sang a song and had family prayers. A recess was taken to allow the younger children to be put to bed, then a few of the older ones, with father and mothers, gathered about the dying fire in the grate for the more quiet, closer, farewell communion.

Miranda shared Joseph's intimate company with his mother. Hyrum and his mother kept close to each other on the other side of the hearth. These two comely, well-preserved mothers, one a little older than the other, but looking very much alike, with the same blue eyes and the hair yet golden, presented the picture of happy

contentment, even though on the morrow their sons were to leave them for a long journey. They were going on the Lord's business, and He would protect them and bring them safely home.

The father now talked more intimately to his missionary sons, telling them what they might meet in the world, and warning them of dangers which might beset them. Then, at last when it was time to separate, and they were all standing together for the good night's greeting, John St. John, looking with loving eyes on his boys and their mothers, seemed to bethink himself of something.

"Boys," he said, "when you get to Moston, if there is no great change in the country, you will find a bridge spanning the stream which flows through the meadow about half way between my old home and the Fenton's. The bridge is old now, but it was well made, as I remember. I want you to look on the hand-railing on the right as you cross from Moston. About the center of the railing, you will find some initials cut into the wood. I'm sure they are there yet."

"What are they, father?" asked Joseph.

" 'J. S. J.' and 'D. F.' I cut them deep, so that they would remain a long time." (Did this father with whitening hair at his temples redden a little at the expression of this bit of sentiment?) "When you find them, just dig them a little deeper."

"Let me add a correction," said Hyrum's mother.

"Well?"

"On the other side of the 'J. S. J.' you will find the initials 'J. F.' "

"I did not put them there," remarked John St. John somewhat stupidly.

"No; but I did," said the younger mother, with a twinkle in her eye, "and while your knives are sharp, give those also a little more depth, please."

"Well,—certainly—well—" laughed the father—"but do as you are told, boys."

The young men promised.

"Now good night all. We must be up early, you know."

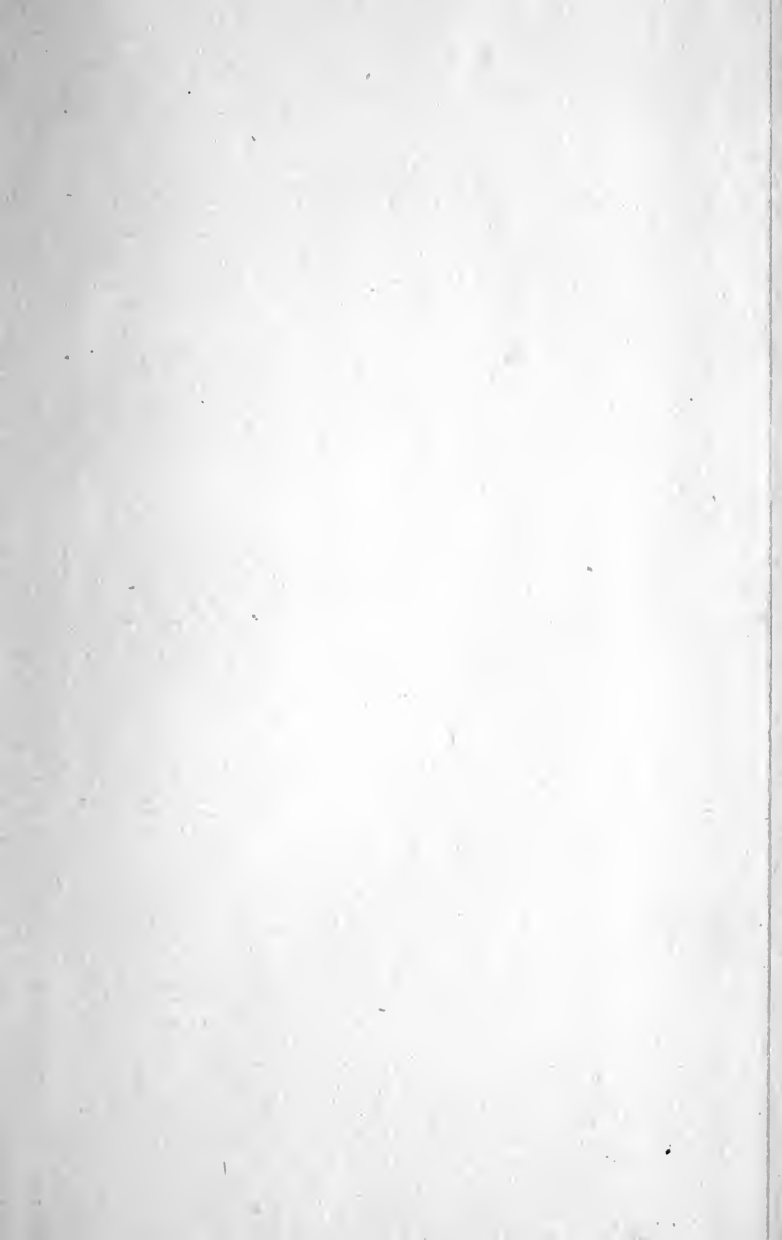
Hyrum gave his goodnight kiss as he passed about the group. "Goodnight, mother," he said; "goodnight, Aunt Dora."

Joseph followed: "Goodnight, mother; goodnight, Aunt Jane."

THE END.



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