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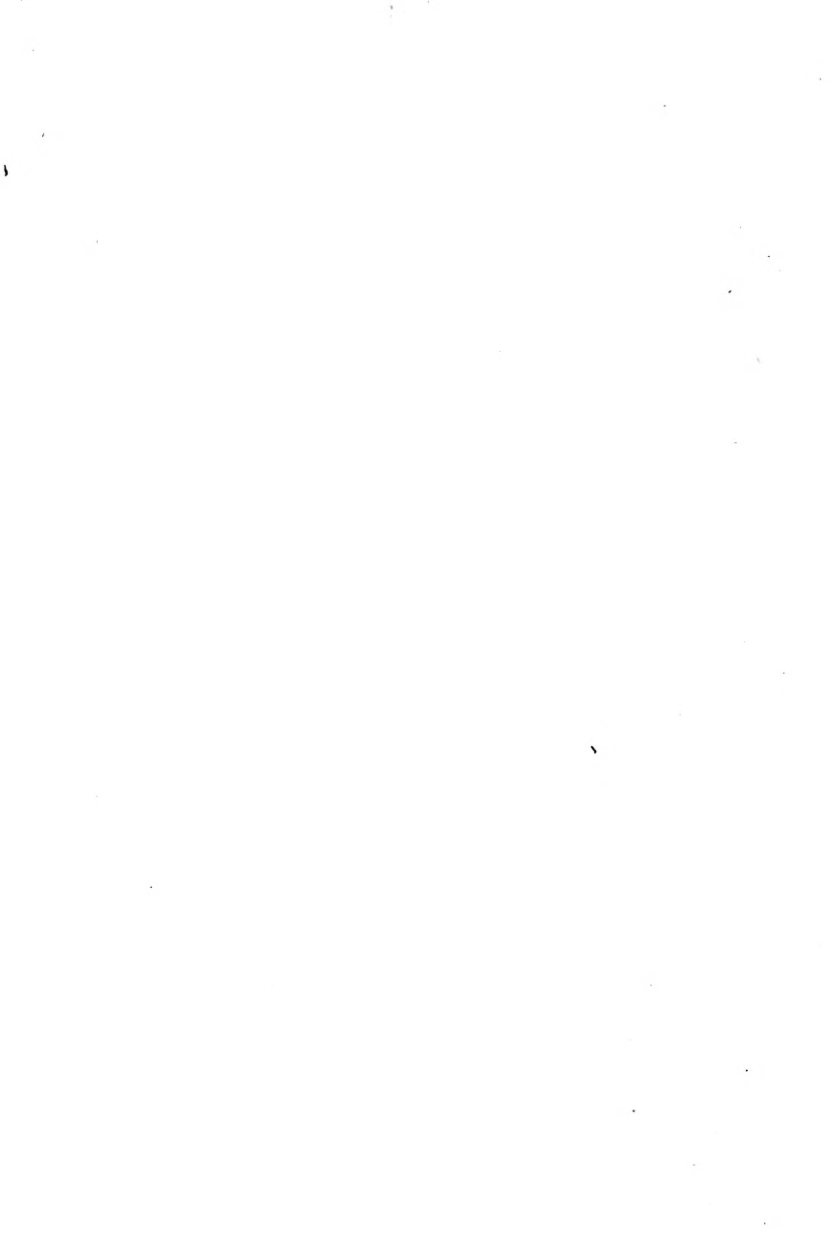
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TREAN
OR
THE MORMON'S DAUGHTER



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TREAN

OR

THE MORMON'S DAUGHTER

*A Romantic Story of Life among the
Latter-Day Saints*

BY

ALVA MILTON KERR

[WRITTEN WHILE LIVING IN UTAH]

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TREAN;

OR,

THE MORMON'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING.

IN every man's life there comes an hour which, not unlike a black or golden numeral in a long train of ciphers, stands out heavy with the invisible future. Looking back at last we see that hour distinct as a ship's spar thrust up into the dawn, and how it shot a shadow or a beam of light through all the bubble-hours that one by one rose after it!

To Paul Elchard, though he did not know it, such an hour had come. Riding along a mountain road where the world, just back of the peaks that face Great Salt Lake, rolls eastward fold on fold, toward the Weber River, he was overtaken by the sunset.

On all sides and near and far the landscape seemed to rise and pile away with ridge, and spur, and mountain-heap, lonely, desolate, and still. On

the left the land dipped downward, and, letting his horse follow the rugged road, in a moment he was riding toward a valley with here and there a little farm on either hand. Poor patches of four or five acres of sand and gravel they were, where the sage-brush had been cleared away, with a hut in the midst, and sparingly fed with water from unreliable rivulets. Dirty, half-clad children swarmed about the doors, with one and two and sometimes three wives at every threshold, or digging in the sterile garden-patches; an old cart, a pig-pen, a mule dragging a plow among the stones or browsing in the brush, and over all the spirit of want, of penury, and isolation.

“I can not conceive,” mused the young horseman, with a look that was half censure and half pity on his comely face, “why these people should try to wring a livelihood from such a wretched region.”

The query was a natural one, and the impression touching this people's fate borne out a thousand-fold by bitter fact. But he could not know, nor can any other single soul save that Fountain of Sense who is the Soul of all, the material poverty of these Mormon homes, the shrivelled hearts, the numbed, and dwarfed, and want-pinched lives among these mountain wastes.

Presently, as he passed down the slope, the settlement thickened a little with a sort of descending

gradation in the scale of obvious poverty, until at the heart of the little valley, where water seemed more abundant, there were small sweeps of vivid green, here and there a stunted orchard with a log house among the trees, and by times almost a suggestion of thrift. But over it all still brooded the atmosphere of isolation, and all the human figures and surroundings bespoke a cowed and blighted race of women, ignorant children, and a coarse and lumpish community of men. Lifting his eyes the young man saw a half-mile farther down the valley a sort of village about a Mormon meeting-house, the Bishop's rather pretentious residence, and a few long, low stores built of sun-dried brick. The straggling dwellings were mainly of hewn logs, with an occasional one constructed of adobe and plastered on the outside or painted red and striped with white in imitation of brick, but all mean of size, and always beside or surrounded by a sort of garden or mimic farm. These the wife or wives worked, with babes about them, while the older children herded sheep upon the mountain sides or watched the cattle browsing in the hollows. The men in large part were simply human drones; some were industrious, many were well-meaning, but most of them had drained the numbing upas-cup of polygamy and were morally and physically debauched and undone.

Just at the skirt of the village a cool-mouthed

canyon opened gradually into the valley. Through it a creek of water, clear and cold from chasm-springs and melting snow upon the peaks, came leaping and tumbling forward from the mountains. Crossing the bridge that spanned it the road became two, one turning across the valley, the other making downward through the town. Pausing there with indecision our rider at last dismounted, sprang over the fence, and crossed a tiny meadow to a house that stood among the trees. He was a tall fellow, blond-headed, with a mobile, pleasant face and clear decisive step.

The place was such a pretty one he could not choose but look about him. On the right lay a garden, and on the left a little orchard, while in front were rows of cotton-wood and locust trees. Close in front of the house, which was of hewn logs and rather large, were walks and beds of flowers, and blooming vines clambered round and over the doors and made a green net of the narrow porch that ran along the structure.

When Paul Elchard came up the walk among the flowers their many odors met him like a heart-easing balm. Away in the west the sun had sunk far down in a mountain notch, and was sending its last long rays across the valley and among and under the trees, spotting and spattering the leaves and log walls and the very ground with gold.

Approaching the open door, but looking at the

blossoms, the sound of a footfall touched his ear and he looked up. A young woman was pausing on the threshold as if she had come to meet him. Involuntarily she had put out her hands on either side catching the door-frame, and a startled look was flitting across her face, while on her hair and all down her fine strong figure trembled the spots of sunset light. Without being conscious of it the young man stopped and their eyes met; hers when lifted with the light upon them, looking not unlike two sombre violets, when averted seeming dreamy and almost black; his a gray blue, large, and alive with sparkles. For an instant something held them wordless, then he said civilly, but hardly with his usual easy fashion of speech:

“I wished to inquire if the road leading to the left hand would take one to the Eagle mines, and if it would be less long than the road running down through the village!”

“The one to the left is the shortest,” said the girl, “and it will take you to the mouth of Eagle canyon. You go up that to the mines.” Her voice was low and mellow, though she seemed slow and half sluggish with melancholy. Her dress was very plain, an old silk cord serving to draw it about the waist, while a bunch of dark roses, lay confidently upon her bosom. “But,” she continued, looking across the valley, then turning her eyes back to his again, “the creek ’ll have to be forded twice

going that way, and it's bad just there at the bend."

"Oh, I think I shall get through safely," he said. "It will be late when I reach the mines, and I wished to go the shortest road. I am obliged to you," and he lifted his hat. Then, as if it were somehow due this girl, he said: "My father and I are interested at the Eagle. He leaves the management a good deal to me, as he has other interests at home in the East. My name is Paul Elchard." Then, as if he was suddenly conscious that there was a lack of reason for saying this, he flushed a little.

"My name is Trean Hartman," said the girl, simply, and he bowed again, and, turning, with more of color in his cheeks than he came with, he strode swiftly across the little plot of green to the road, vaulted on his horse, and set his face toward the western mountains; and she turned and entered the house. But almost instantly she came out again, and looked from under the archway of her hand toward the ford below.

In a moment the galloping horseman entered a clump of trees, then reappeared and rode straight into the foaming creek. Near the water the track of recent passers turned down the stream to a new and safer point, but in the failing light he did not observe this. With the first plunge his horse was swept around and lost his feet, then caught upon a portion of what once had been the shoal, struggled

sank, then caught again, but lost it, and, whirled around by the boiling flood, turned over with his rider under him. In a heart-beat of time they were dashed into a sort of swirling bowl below, the man struggling with the horse, but thrown against the overhanging bank and bounding off with the shock; then they were both sucked round like lightning and flung down and outward, the man striking against a pile of logs half buried in sand and scooped-up silt, where he caught and hung, while the horse went whirling down the torrent, but got his feet at last and scrambled up the bank and shook his dripping hide. He seemed but little injured, but his master, half conscious and with some threads of red trickling down his temple and across his white neck, still clung to the logs. Suddenly the young woman who had watched from the orchard wall sprang down the bank with a face colorless. With the first sweep of her eyes along the edge a curious note of horror came through her lips, and she bounded across the logs and caught the buffeted figure. In her fright she seemed swift and strong almost beyond women, or rather the underlying power of this slow, hard-working, mountain-matured girl flowed through all her being, and she lifted the man up and across the logs much as if he had been a child.

“Are you hurt bad?” she panted, as she hung over him.

For answer, he turned his face, all pallid and pinched with pain, toward her, and tried to get up. He seemed to hear and see her, but could not speak save with the agony in his eyes.

"I am crushed in here!" he gasped, with his hand pressed against his heart. "I struck the rocks—it is dark to me, let me—lie—down!" and he sank forward upon the grass and was still.

"O, he'll die! he'll die!" cried the girl. "Father! father!" and her voice went ringing in a long, trembling echo across the valley and up the canyon. "Father! father!" Then she held her breath and hearkened. "No, he's not come yet," she panted, and bending down she laid her hand timidly upon the man's face. "He's fainted!" she said, and straightening up stood still in the gathering twilight.

Suddenly the man started up with a sound of agony, and the girl, with a startled, half-soothing exclamation, put out her hands and caught him.

"Are you better now?" she asked. He looked at her in a dazed way. "I am Trean Hartman, she said, "could you ride to the house if I helped you to mount?"

He looked round him curiously and his eyes grew clear. "Yes, I think so," he labored out. Then she brought the horse quickly and led it down a depression almost under the bank.

"Now," she said, "if you can step into the saddle from the edge I will hold your horse steady."

Slowly and with his teeth set to keep back the groan that came up from his heart, the young man lowered himself into the saddle.

“Lean forward with your hands on his neck, so,” said the girl; then grasping the reins just back of the bits she led the horse carefully up the bank and along the road toward the house. She said nothing, and the bruised rider, reeling a little from side to side, made no sound. Thus they went upward through the shadows; thus she brought slowly home—was it, her king?

When she came to the road which ran down to the village she paused and listened but nothing could be heard save the sound of approaching cowbells beating a dreamy march across the valley, and the low roar of the mountain stream rushing through its rugged channels to the vale.

“O, if father would only come!” she murmured; then led the horse onward, opened the gate, led him across the little plot of grass, on between the cottonwoods, and up through the flower beds to the door. Then she entered the house and came out with a chair and placed it by the horse. “Now, if you can get down!” she said, with strong concern in her mellow voice.

“You—are—very kind,” and something like a smile flitted across his pale face and vanished. Then slowly, and all but crying out, he got down with her help upon the chair, but when his

feet rested upon the ground he faltered out: "It —is—dark"—and wavered as if he would fall. She caught him instantly, and his head drooped helplessly upon her breast. A few feel something at the first spirit-touch, and some much when entities are crushed together and feel each other warm! She had no thought of right or wrong; of convention, reserve, or aim or end; the human in her went over these without a look to serve the human in the man.

For a few moments he seemed of lead, and she swayed with the burden, then muttering thickly he lifted his head and seemed to look at her. "It's —dark—and—warm," he murmured, "I wonder how far it is to Eagle's! It—hurts—me—there, mother, there—in—my—side," then his eyes cleared and he looked at her curiously, "Oh, yes," he said at last, "I—remember—now, I am giving you a great deal of trouble, I—am—sorry," and a glimpse of embarrassment crept into his look of suffering.

"No, you are badly hurt, I'm afraid," she said, soberly. "Can you walk a few steps, now?"

"Yes," and he drew his lagging feet painfully across the little porch with her help and into the shadow-darkened room. A great home-made couch stood at one side, and to this she led him, and he sank down upon it with a groan. Then she passed quickly back into the kitchen and in a moment returned bringing a lighted lamp. His large eyes were full of pain as he turned them about the room,

and the smoky ceiling; a huge cupboard filling one corner, heavy hand-made tables and chairs, an old-fashioned fire-place, and a bare floor with the girl coming across it looking large and dusky in the glooming light, made a picture to his stunned senses not unlike a dream. He closed his eyes, for it all seemed to swim about him, then heavy feet came tramping in.

CHAPTER II.

OTHERS APPEAR.

“HE got hurt at the ford,” Paul Elchard heard a voice saying which somehow sounded low and far away and to his half-numbed senses not unlike the lapse of bubbling water. Then, much as one who, rising from a great and shadowy depth, sees the daylight making crystal of the upper liquid and in a moment breaks through the oppressive medium into the light itself, the sufferer rose out of that darkness that lies beneath us like an unseen sea, and into which our star-like spirits fall and are seemingly quenched at last. Beside him, tall and dusky in the weak lamplight, and looking down intently on his upturned face, he saw Trean Hartman standing, and by her side a man of large and rugged frame, but hollow-chested and stooping a little at

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the shoulders, and with a white beard spreading over his breast. His eyes peered out of their shadowy caverns with an inquiring but not unkind expression, first at the girl then at the injured man.

"Well, darter," he burst out, "somethin' must be did!" and he began turning about helplessly.

"You stay by him, father; I'm going for the doctor," said the girl. "Fetch the brandy out of the cupboard and give him some, and get his wet things off; be careful, father, so you don't hurt him."

"Yes, Treany," and she was gone.

Out in the little strip of meadow under the cottonwoods she found Paul's horse feeding on the rich grass. Unbuckling the girth she threw the saddle off, and, leading the animal through the gate and up to a large rock that served as a mounting block, sprang upon its back and swiftly down the sombre lane toward the town. A thousand times, mounted upon the bare back of a horse, she had driven cattle about the meadows and mountain skirts in her childhood, and now she went flying along through the gloom without a thought of danger. The moon, like a huge red globe, was rolling into the valley far down at its eastern end, the pines that stood like a spectre army on the bench, or foot of the mountain, sent down a faint and dreamy hum, while the worlds that are the fire specks of the upper air to human eyes swung softly

into their places as she rode, but she did not heed them. Perhaps, in truth, she had never noticed the voices and the beauty that come of such as these, so wholly had solitude, a coarse religion, and the contact of hard and stunted natures, crushed back the spiritual perceptives that spring, or strive to spring, like rays of light from every woman's heart. Now, at least, she saw nothing definitely before her but the suffering man just left behind, and, perhaps, the light in his blue eyes as he stood among the flowers at sunset looking up at her.

In a few moments she came into the village, and beyond Bishop Parley's dwelling and the big meeting-house turned up a by-street on the right to Dr. Dubette's house. Dr. Dubette was of French extraction, small, swarthy, excitable, and a fanatic in all things Mormon. His small black eyes were wont to snap with zeal, or something worse, when the spiritual spurs were to be put to any lagging member of the fold who, perhaps with all but the bitterness of death, drew back from the revolting burdens laid upon the people. He enjoyed Mormonism himself, its tyranny, fraud, and animalism, and on that account, like most of his sort, believed in it, or what was worse, thought he did, and was keen to fasten it upon others. He had fallen in the way of Bishop Parley, when that portly worthy some years before had been fishing in the interests of Zion for the credulous and unwary in Southern

France, and, feeling this doctrine in consonance with his promptings, had crossed the ocean with one of the innocent but ignorant and deluded bands of converts gathered from the poor of Europe, and found, as he had reckoned, himself of weight and importance in the bullied and enslaved community of his choice. In a human way the odds and ends of creation were there, as in all the valleys of Mormonland, and the crafty and the strong through the people's vows, the dumb trust of ignorance, and their very helplessness, preyed upon them.

Dr. Dubette was an Elder, having received the Aaronic priesthood in the House of Endowments at Salt Lake City, and at meetings often sought with flowery and vehement clauses to more deeply imbed the sacred doctrines of tithing, polygamy, blood atonement, and special revelation in their minds. He worked hard for the church and had been "prospered;" four wives and the best property in the town, save the Bishop's, being the result, which was not so bad. Surely out of gratitude none should be more jealous of apostasy than he, or more alive in seeing that the church's pulse beat at least rapidly normal if, indeed, not rather high. His house was constructed of adobe, plastered and painted in imitation of brick, with a porch running along the front, and four entrances, one to each wife's apartments; in short the form of dwelling usual with the prosperous Mormon.

Some had two or three wives with their children and husband crowded into a single hut, where they sank through gradation after gradation of callousing torments to squalor and inertia.

Trean Hartman, whom for this digression we left at Dr. Dubette's gate, sprang down from Elchard's horse and went quickly to each of the doorways of the house. To the third door came a somewhat young lady dull-eyed and cheerless, much as if the fire and light and life were dead in her, and at the fourth door, a pretty vapid little thing, almost a child in years, with a babe upon her breast. At all the doors, save the last, children thrust their eager faces out, but about all the women there clung a visible heart-gloom and the spirit of blight. None of them knew where their husband had gone, but indicated with something like shame that he might be in the next apartment. Dubette and the Bishop were talking in subdued voices at the gate when the girl rode up, and when their eyes fell upon her they exchanged meaning glances and bowed obsequiously.

"Good evening," said the girl, hastily. "Doctor, can you come to our house right quick? A young man was hurt bad acrossing the ford, and needs you."

"Certainly," said the doctor, stepping about excitedly. "I will go directly, madam," and, with a kind of twisting bow, he was off for his instruments.

"Is the young man a stranger?" affably inquired the Bishop, who was a man of medium height, florid, large of girth, and with a cunning, greedy eye.

"Yes, sir," said the girl, "he was going from Gray's across the valley to Eagle's," and she turned the horse and melted out of sight, where the street curved into the shadowy lane.

"She's got grit and go in her when she gets awake!" said the Bishop to himself, and he shook his head doubtfully, and stood staring at the gloom-hidden ground. "But she will have to!" he muttered, presently, lifting his head with a dark sinister look, and closing his big jaw with something like a snap. "She will have to, that's all!" and he turned through the gate, and went in to comfort himself as best he might, with the company of his sixth, and last, yet all but stale-grown wife.

Meantime, up in the house among the cottonwoods, Burl Hartman, with a little flare of sympathetic light shining in each one of his shaggy eye-caves, had been busy rubbing the sufferer, and talking to him in his kind, garrulous fashion. He seemed a very soft-hearted, simple old man.

"There's nothin' like alkerhol to rub onto ye when yo'r bad hurt," he was saying. "Brandy air a pore makesheft fer rubbin' onter the outside. It air pert 'nuff fer drinkin', though I don't tetch it of'en an' never would on'y fer my weak lungs, but

on the outside it air too weak, it don't git holt like alkerhol. Lor', back in ole Tennessee a heap of whisky usted to be aguzzled an' agot away with when I was a youngster, but I couldn't never bear the pizen stuff! Now, I'll jest put this ere blanket over yo'; the nights in Utah in June air mostly cool, but ye'll be better fer it."

Thus he rambled on, falling into a fit of coughing now and then, and soon Trean came into the kitchen by the back-door and began building a fire. A glance through the door showed her the injured man lying quietly with eyes closed, but breathing hard. Presently Dubette came bustling in, and with him a slow-treading, ox-like young fellow of good form and features, whose eyes lit up a little when Trean stepped to the door and soberly admitted them.

"Orson Beam, he have become my pupil, Mr. Hartman," said Dubette. "I have brought him that he may see the injury and help me, for he is very strong."

The old man shook hands with them heartily and then turned to the couch. "Yes; now let us see! now let us see! Ah," began the little doctor, with professional bustle, "is it bad?"

Elchard, with pain in his eyes, gave him a searching look, then turned them on the ox-like Beam by his side. An honest light was in the big, square face, and Elchard put out his hand and whispered,

hoarsely: "Get these broken ribs off from my heart soon if you can, sir; the pressure suffocates me."

"Yes, sir," said the young fellow, with eager kindness, and all set to work. Two hours afterward, Eichard, with the broken parts adjusted, for Dubette was something of a surgeon despite the lameness of his nature, sank into that deep slumber which follows exhaustion. At last a faint glimmer began to grow upon the mountains. Beam, who was watching beside the injured sleeper, saw it and stirred in his chair. A moment afterward, the sound of a dress, sliding down the little stair, touched his ear, and Trean entered. She glanced at an old clock on the mantle; it was five o'clock.

"I will get you some breakfast now, Orson, before you go," she said.

"No, Trean, I will go down home, I guess. I will come up in the evening again; he will get along I think now," and their eyes turned to the sleeper's face. A pale film of dawn was creeping over it as they looked, and made clear the delicate chiselling of the nose, the refined outline of the forehead and the strong under portion of the face; then their eyes met and a glow of light like the dawn, save that it was ruddier, rose into the girl's face, and the ever-present blood in the young man's cheeks seemed to die back and leave them gray. Yet, perhaps it was only from his all-night vigil, and really the dawn striking its first faint color against her lineaments.

"I will go now, Trecan," he said, quietly, and passed out and down the lane and saw, yet did not wholly see, the morning stirring among the eastern peaks.

When Elchard opened his eyes a curtain had been lowered that the rising flood of light might not come in upon him, and Trecan was moving softly across the room toward the kitchen. The day's beginning, like most summer mornings among the Utah mountains, was beautiful; cool, luminous, balmy—the climate of Naples, the scenery of Switzerland.

It was quiet in the house a little time, for Trecan had gone through the orchard and was milking in the dewy strip of meadow that came from the valley and ran a short way into the canyon back of the house. After a time the father came into the room where Elchard was lying.

"Good mornin'", he said; "how air the hurts by this time?"

"Much better, thank you. Of course I am very sore, but I hope I shall not have to remain here troubling you long," with a smile.

The old man flung out his hands deprecatingly. "Don't ye be oneasy; we hev mo' house an' what we need, an' yo'r welcome. Treany air good an' handy, if she air so't of sad, an' she'll fix ye up a snack of somethin' 'at 'll coax ye to eat, so don't ye git nettly about going' funder, but lay still an' enjoy

yourself tell you're well 'nuff to move handy. The Lord don't of'en send us any good of much size to do here among these mountings of His'en, an' when it do come we air, I am hoping', ready for it," and he went to the kitchen door.

After a time the girl's footsteps could be heard moving about the kitchen, and presently she called her father quietly, and he went in to her. In a moment he came back, bearing a square kneading-board covered with a white cloth, and upon which in clean dishes rested a baked trout, baked potatoes, steaming coffee, toast, a saucer of fresh lettuce, a tiny dish of yellow butter, a tumbler of cream, and by the plate a bunch of flowers. The injured man's eyes turned gratefully toward the kitchen door when he looked at this.

"Your daughter is very good," he said, with something like a lump rising into his throat.

"Yes, few are more so, I hev an idee. She ken fix a snack of vittles 'at a'most anybody ken eat, I guess," and he placed the kneading-board carefully on a chair by the couch and helped Elchard to the food. When he had eaten what he wished, he said:

"Thank you, Mr. Hartman. Please thank your daughter, too, for me. Words are not much to give in return for such kindness."

"They are plenty, they are plenty! The one what does goed gits his pay in adoin' of it."

That evening, as the sun through the jagged mountain gaps in the west rolled slowly out of the valley, drawing its backward streaming veils of radiance down and out of the long vale after it, the daughter climbed to a seat among the pine trees back of the house, and sat down to sew and rest. But she had no heart for the needle, and sat with her fine, strong head thrown back a little, as if the sluggish currents of her life had quickened. Was it the setting sun that lit two tiny fires deep back in the blue darkness of her eyes, or were they sparks that her heart sent up? All day her blood had stirred with a faint and sweet delight, and now, when she thought of the grateful, approving look in the stranger's eyes, the same soft delight seemed to spread through all her being. For a moment the poverty of her life, the shadow of a dreadful future, and all her heaviness of spirit, seemed to sink away from her. But there below in the valley were the gables of Bishop Parley's house gazing angrily toward her, and beyond them two open doorways in the house where Orson Beam lived with his widowed mother looking sorrowfully up to her, and the night and the old darkness flowed over her again.

CHAPTER III.

A BIT OF HISTORY.

IN the evening, after the lamps were lighted, Orson Beam, with his honest, ox-like tread, came in at the doorway of the Hartman home. On the threshold he stumbled slightly and hesitated, then, with deepening color, nodded to Trean, who, from her sewing by the lamp, looked up gravely through the shade of gloom, which seemed always hanging over her face, and bent her head to him; then he advanced, and offered his hand to Elchard, who took it eagerly.

“How do you feel by this time?” asked Beam, unevenly.

“Oh, much better, much better, thank you,” said Elchard, with his face lighting up. “Let me thank you for your kindness last night, and for the pleasure your company again gives me. Miss Trean has been doing wonders for me, flashing his large eyes in her direction, with an admirable smile, “and I have really begun regretting already the necessity of getting well, and losing so much that is pleasant.”

“You must not hurry,” stammered Beam, while Trean’s eyes were fixed upon her work, with a tremor of almost invisible color fleeting up through the shadow that saddened her face.

“Yes, the doctor, who was here this noon, says I can not safely go on for two or three weeks,” he answered. “I am afraid they are already growing uneasy over at Eagle’s on account of my absence. I wish there were some way by which I could let them know.”

“I will go for you,” said Beam, taking up his hat.

“Thank you. Oh, not now, sir,” catching him by the hand in a grateful protesting way. “You are very good indeed, but in the morning will do quite as well.”

“If they are anxious I guess I had better go to-night,” he said, half doggedly, getting up.

“Oh, it will never do ; you slept none last night ; it is altogether too much !”

“I slept some to-day,” going toward the door with a feeble sort of laugh. Elchard reached out his hand. The other came and took it, and stood looking down at his hat. “You are a very good friend,” said Elchard, with a fine warmth in his face ; “you have me at a disadvantage now, but sometime I hope I may find a chance to return your kindness. My horse is at your disposal, as I, also, shall be in the future. Tell them, please, that I have a cracked rib or two, and that as soon as they knit a little I shall be over on the range. You had best wait till morning.”

“No ; it’s moonlight. I shan’t mind the ride.

I have work to do in the morning. Good night," and he tramped heavily out.

When he had gone Elchard said, softly, without turning his eyes from a great milky star that from over a far mountain top looked in through the open door: "I like him. He is a good, honest fellow, and seems like a brother."

"Yes," said Trean, quietly, and silence fell between them. After a time the girl's father came in with a weary sort of step. He sat down and said a few words almost with his customary childish cheerfulness, then fell to gazing moodily at the floor. He did not light his pipe as usual, and Trean went to the mantel and filled and brought it to him. She said nothing, only laid her hand on his shoulder with a fond and pitying movement, as he looked up in a half surprised and trembling, tender way. Then his eyes filled, and he sat a long time looking through the open door into the soft darkness, with his pipe unlit in his crumpled hand. Soon Trean arose and went droopingly about the duties common to the retiring hour, and ere long the old man went out through the kitchen and found her standing on the back steps, looking sadly up at the untroubled stars.

"O, my pore darter," he sobbed out, and he put his arm about her shoulders, "it's come out at last! Yo'r to be tuck away from me, my pore, purty gal! The Bishop's been moved by the Holy Sperrit to

make ye his wife. It's His will, but it's hard. O, it's hard to give ye up!"

The girl seemed to sink down for a moment, then she suddenly flung him off and stood erect.

"It's a lie!" she almost hissed, "the Bishop's told you a lie. It's the Evil Spirit has moved him, if anything! The Holy Spirit has been revealing itself to *me* the last two days, father," with softening voice. "Oh," it has been speaking to me in the silence that drops from the stars, the flowers round there in the yard have been whispering it to me, and the birds have been singing it up there in the pines! Oh, father, I can't marry the Bishop now!"

The old man looked at her with dumb amazement in his tear-wet eyes. He seemed to be feeling feebly after her drift, then suddenly he came toward her with outstretched, trembling hands. "Don't ye, darter! Don't ye sin agin the Holy Ghost!" he gasped. "Ye know that air the unpardonable sin, an' ken only be atoned for by the sheddin' of yo'r own blood! That air revelation, darter. Don't ye bring it down onto ye. The Bishop has seen it in a vision that ye was to be his seventh wife. Yo' kent marry no man but one of the Lord's Saints an' be saved! O, darter, be keerful! be keerful!"

She stood almost within his trembling arms looking dumbly up at the silver surges of stars, but not

seeing them for utter misery. Then a quiver ran through all her frame, and her eyes filled slowly.

“Is duty greater than love!” she said, hoarsely.

“Yes, it air, darter! Yes, it air! The Prophet in the Book of Doctrines and Covenants say it air!” and she turned away among the trees, and down at the foot of the orchard fell upon her knees and stretched her arms up in the moonlight toward Heaven. “Father, O, Father! have we women no souls?” she cried, brokenly. “Have we not hearts? Are we but beasts of burden, Father, that Thou hast thus loaded us with shame? Why didst Thou put love within us if its voice must be disobeyed? Is not love Thy voice, Father? What shall we follow, then? Clouds of misery? Man’s mean wishes? Pain and mockery, up to Thy throne?” and she fell forward upon her face, and, sobbing and imploring, had her dark hour there alone under the stars, as many and many another poor Mormon wife and daughter before and since.

At midnight she came into the house, looking as one might who had been beaten down and trampled under by the passage of some strange life-draining tempest of invisible influences. Elchard was asleep, his face looking pale and spiritual in the little halo the poor lamp made about it, and the girl paused and turned her haggard visage toward it an instant. Then the sleeper turned and muttered as from the flight across him of a prickly dream, and she crept

away and up the little stairway to her room, feeling bent, and weary, and old.

In the same hour Orson Beam was riding with foreboding heaviness through the mountain aisles beyond the valley. Now huge shadows were all about him with dark crags thronging into the moon above, then he was on the mountain side with a glinting, jingling stream below, as if the chasm were shaking a trough of melted silver ; then, after hours, he was riding back again along the silent mountain side and down through the dark aisles into the valley, and when the sun arose was working in his mother's garden.

All that day, like a Greek slave, Trean went about her work in silence. She seemed to move heavily, and her strong figure, as if it were freighted with some invisible burden, seemed less erect than usual. The father seemed more aged, too. His large, hulking frame seemed sagged a little more, and sunken in upon itself like some ancient habitation that falls slowly into ruin.

Elchard noticed this, though they did not come often into the room where he lay. In the afternoon the old man came in and sat down as if to talk, but fell to gazing out the door in moody silence. The injured man let his eyes rest listlessly upon him awhile, then began trying to think back along the life-path of this being before him ; of the coarse and uneducated region he had been reared in ; of its

lank-bodied, primitive people, their superstitions, and the crude influences that had made him capable of receiving this astounding system, this distorted imitation of the early Hebraic barbarism masked under the forms of religion. Then of the system itself, its ridiculous inception, the fraud of it; and after that the deception, knavery, theft, murder, lechery, and shame practised by and upon its ignorant followers. Then of the deadly and mysterious hold such dark beliefs seem to have upon such natures, clouding the whole mentality, making the very scum of thought seem sweet, unnatural deeds seem natural, and a thick and muddy heart seem filled with the light of truth. Could else than a sort of insanity have brought the people of these lovely valleys out from all the corners of the civilized world, to a journey of such length and cruelty as words can make no pictures of, here to dwell in all discomfort and such servility to those who had deceived them as would all but put a slave to shame? O, Religion! he thought, what wrongs have been committed in thy sacred name!

Suddenly the old man looked up, almost as if the matter revolving in Elchard's mind by some inscrutable process had touched and quickened the slowly revolving questions in his own. But perhaps it was only some vague mistrust of the sanity of his course, some throb of pity for himself and Trean, or a flinching doubt of his doctrines jarred

into life by the thought of losing her to such a bitter fate. "It's a hard way, a hard, miserable way we hev, amost on us, of a gittin' to Heaven," he said, with a weary sigh and shake of the head. "I never tole ye of our acrossin' of the plains adraggin' hand-carts after us, with our pervisions an' the sick an' dyin' in 'em, I suppose?"

Elchard shook his head and let his eyes rest upon him inquiringly.

"Well," he went on, "one may es well begin at the beginnin's es in the middle of a story an' spile it. Anyhow when I look back at that trip pine blank, rememberin' it all es if it was yisterday, I know I kent tell it, noways es it was, ner no other man alivin' ken either, ner mebbly dead, fer it's beyond the powers o' language.

"When the brethren was driv out of Nauvoo, some says fer thievin' and settin' up theirselves agin the law an' the like—though es fer believin' sech I leave that to other folks—they moved away, with what pain and sufferin' mortel tongue kent never tell, more'n a thousand miles over a burnin', houseless waste, an' through mountings, an' Injuns, an' snakes, an' rivers, an' starvation, to this region of God's preparin' fer em. But President Young was bound to git' em to a place of safety, an' he did."

[The thought was passing through Elchard's mind with some bitterness, how this false Moses

had crossed the desert in a carriage, had gotten immense wealth out of his misguided dupes afterward, played the King, committed crimes to keep his power, and had a harem full of women, but he said nothing.] “Then the servants of God was sent out preachin’ through all the world, an’ band after band follered through the howlin’ wastes, an’ the same mountings, an’ the same sufferin’, to these valleys of Zion. Thousands walked every step of the way, from the Mississippi river, over a thousand miles; an’ some what had no money, an’ had worked their way over in vessels from Europe, walked clean from New York to Salt Lake, nigh three thousand miles; some dyin’ on the way, an’ some dyin’ soon es they got here, an’ some livin’ to work fer the Lord in His vineyard.

“Well, they’d always try to come in bands, from the Missonri river anyway, caise the Injuns was bad. Sometimes es many es five hundred come in a band at once. So, es it tuck a good many yokes of steers to haul the pervisions an’ beddin’ fer so many, President Young had a revelation from the Lord that each one was to be fixed out with a hand-cart and haul most of his pervisions an’ beddin’ through with him es he come. Some was fer doubtin’ the wisdom of this, I hav heard, but the Lord’s prophet sent word through his servants that nothin’ could harm a hair of our heads if we trusted in the Lord, an’ had the kind of faith we

should hev. Well, I s'pose what he said was true es gospiel, an' the fault was man's some way, an' not God's revelation; but the journey was hard, hard es death, an' *was* death to lots of us, an' I'm bodily shore nothin' never could be harder!" And he shook his gray head and stared mistily a moment at the floor. "Well," he went on, "about that time one of the brethren come a preachin' down through Tennessee, an' me an' wife an' some more was turned from our follies, an' set out fer Zion. My wife Catherine didn't want to go, but the whole batch of us was nigh wild to git out of the wilderness of sin about us and gether to the Zion of the Lord here into the West, whar we was tole, I s'pose es a figger of speech, all was peace an' es if it was a flowin' with milk an' honey.

"We had had those children then, a little darter an' son that we'd buried, an' one livin' girl-child who's a wife of Elder Smoot's in Salt Lake now. It was pine blank hard a gettin' away from them two little graves of our'n, ye may believe. We knowed that es long as time lasted we'd never see 'em no more, an' I thought Catherine's heart 'd break that mornin' we left, an' mebbly it did! mebbly it did! fer she went upon the hill back of the house whar them little graves was under a tree, an' I seed her stan' awhile, lookin' down through the valley whar most of our kin folks an' friends lived, then I seed 'er turn round an' fall acrost them little graves of

our'n an' lay there es if the life had gone clean out of 'er. She laid so long there I was afeerd fer 'er, an' went up the hill to bring 'er back, fer the wagon was awaitin' to take us to the river landin' fer the boat. When I got there she was alayin' atwixt the graves' with a arm round each little mound, an' a cryin' an' moanin' turrible. When I got her up she fell down agin, an' kissed each little grave, an' put a pinch of moss from each one into her bosom, an' come astumblin' down the hill, for she seemed blind, an' got into the wagon an' we driv away. It was hard, but I guess I didn't feel it es much es her, fer I was reserlute an' determined an' filled with the sperrit of getherin' to Zion.

"Well, it was a long and tejus journey, from Tennessee to whar we jined the immigrant band of brethren in Iowa, but it was es nothin' to the travelin' after that. I fairly shiver w'en I think of it. The turrible, turrible tiredness, the heat, an' san' an' thirst, an' draggin' feet, the never, never endin' miles an' miles of trecless, trackless wilderness, the glare of the sun, 'en after while the cold, an' mountings, an' freezin' an' death, an' hoverin' savages, it all comes back afore me now an' strikes me nigh dumb," and the old man leaned forward upon his knees and shook his head, staring at the floor as if he saw some fearful picture there.

"We built the hand-carts in Iowa at a camp whar we met," he began again, "an' that was whar we

lost; it tuck to the middle of summer afore we was ready to start. We had been tole by the elders down in Tennessee,—an' them acomin' from other countries an' places had been tole the same, we found,—that the carts an' tents an' truck would all be a-ready for us at the meetin' place in Iowa w'en we got there; but nothin' had been done. Most ov us had sent money on ahead, er gin it to the elders to be sent, an' some gin nigh to all they had, but it had gone into President Young's fund at Salt Lake by mistake, an' so we had to git things ready the bes' way we could. Ef we could 'a' started right away we might hev got through afore winter, mebby; some companies did,—dragged carts cleán through, fer it was a test o' faith an' didn't lose very many; but we couldn't go no quicker 'en we did. Some 'at knowed the danger fit agin it; but we had meetin's every night, an' our zeal was high. The Lord would take keer of us, we felt, and we was happy. At last we started, started fer Zion more'n a thousand mile away into the west, a-pullin' our hand-carts after us. It was a wild trip; but the Lord was with us a-leadin' us on to His Kingdom."

CHAPTER IV.

THE JOURNEY.

“THERE were six hundred on us, men, wimmin, an’ children,” continued the gray old Mormon, “an’ we sot out in a fever of joy an’ zeal. But some seemed to feel what was a comin’ an’ their feet dragged from the start. My Catharine was heavy and droopy a good share of the time,—seemed like she was never herself after we left them two little graves in Tennessee; but amost on us was shoutin’ an’ singin’ an’ apraisin’ the Lord es we went on’ard fer the fust two or three days. Every night after the tents was planted we hild meetin’ an’ there was preachin’ an’ exhortin’. Some of the elders said no matter if winter did come the Lord would save us, no matter if we got sick the Lord would heal us, fer President Young, the Lord’s mouth-piece, had said so.

“Sometimes I felt a little jubious, I ken’t hep sayin’ pine blank, fer it *was* turrible labor draggin’ a loaded hand-cart day after day, with yo’r feet an’ hands blistered an’ the sun streamin’ down on ye. Then there was a thousand mile to walk, six hundred of it a desert an’ four hundred barren, injun-hanted mountings. It was a awful undertakin’! Then the carts was pore things made of unseasoned timber with bearin’s all of wood, an’ they broke down an’ wore

out, but still the host of the Lord went alaborin' on'ard into the desert.

“There was twenty of the carts to every hundred folks, the flour an' beddin' an' cookin' fixins fer five folks in every cart, an' five tents fer every hundred hauled in a wagon with three yoke of steers to it. Over half of every hundred was wimmin an' children, an' ole folks an' puny ones, so ye see what the strong ones had afore 'em! But none of us wasn't stout long. O, what days them was! What tired, long, feverish, dusty, awful days! Mile after mile we dragged on'ard, hour after hour, day after day, an' never seemed one step furdur to'ards the end. Two of the apostles an' some elders was with us till we got across the river at Council Bluff's, then the apostles an' most of the elders left us. They had three er four cerriges amongst 'em, an' two spring wagons with horses to haul their pervisions, an' es a squad of cavalry was goin' to Fort Laramie, they went along, an' was in Salt Lake before the snow flew.

“But what had we afore us but work an' sufferin', an' the plains stretchin' furever and furever away in front of us? We couldn't make fur in a day, not more'n ten er fifteen mile. Our shoes wore through onto our feet, an' our feet wore into holes, an' our hands was blistered an' cracked an' raw from a pullin' on the carts. Then our provisions begun to run low, fer we didn't hev enough w'en we started,

an' we tuk to sufferin' from hunger an' most of the time from thirst. Most on us prayed an' seemed to keep up faith, but all on us begun to git holler-eyed and silent. We seed that life an' death was afore us with life the furdest away, an' we strained forreds day after day with our teeth set a prayin' under our breath an' sufferin'.

“All through August the sun come up out of the plain to the east es red es blood an' went blazin' on over our heads es we toiled on'ard through the sand, an' red es blood sunk into the plain in the west, an' it seemed like we'd scurely moved. Then we'd be too wore out to pitch the tents, an' would jest drap down onter blankets er the bare ground, an' lay there tell that burnin' ball of blood come blazin' onto us agin from the east, an' we'd eat a little somethin' an' stagger on. It was turrible! Sometimes one er two of the puny ones 'd be dead when mornin' come, an' we'd bury 'em in the sand an' leave 'em. It seemed like it was furever a drouth in that desert;—dry, dry, dead-dry, an' always the waves of heat that seemed a million wrinkles of hot meltin' glass, would hover an' hover, an' quiver an' burn an' beat, tell one's eyeballs was red, an' some slavered at the mouth an' mumbled of water an' shade an' rest, an' wandered in their minds. An' sometimes, away up in the stagnant air we'd see the bodies of insects afloatin' like flakes of ashes, an' they'd flicker an' glimmer an' drap down onto us

nothin' but dead shells like bits of tinsel. An' the stream we was tryin' to foller got to be nothin' more'n a string of green pools sprinkled with scales an' dry fish-eyes, an' we'd creep down to it an' sip at it with cracked lips, an' stagger on agin.

"But at last we drawed out of that part of the desert, leavin' our pore dead behind, but it was the last of September afore the mountings hove in sight, an' the sun sunk down for a week amongst the snow-covered peaks. I remember, afore we reached 'em we was so sick an' lame an' wore out. I mind that all them days my head seemed goin' round an' round es I pulled, an' the blood kep abuzzin' in my ears, an' sometimes I'd get blind an' couldn't see nary thing afore me, but a sorter clear sense kep alive in my head, too, fer death was shorely afore us if we gin up. A good many did gin up, especial the ole an' puny ones, an' we'd seldom leave a camp-ground in the mornin' without two er three had to be buried. It was turrible! We didn't look much into each other's faces at them buryin's, fer we knowed what was afore us an' couldn't bear it.

"Well, at last we drawed into Laramie. O, how we'd looked forred to this! fer there the Apostles had promised that we'd find a supply of pervisions awaitin' fer us, but nothin' was there! Then things begun to look black. We had a meetin' an' figgered on our chances, an' we found that at the rate we'd ben a-travelin' an' at the amount of rations we'd

got each day, which was a pound of flour each, we'd not hev a mouthful left w'en we was yit three hundred miles from the end of our journey. So we cut down the ration to nine ounces of flour each fer growed folks an' four to seven ounces fer the young ones. Then we pulled ahead with what little strenth we had left, makin' every mile we could, fer it was life an' death with us. W'en we started there was four er five milch cows to every hundred persons, but now they was strung all through the desert, dead, an' we had to drink whatever we could git, which was mostly alkali water, that left our mouths bloody an' raw; an' our steers, too, had been stampeded by a herd of buffalos back on the plain, an' on'y one yoke of oxen each was left to a wagon, an' es they couldn't haul the wagons that way through the san' an' stones loaded so heavy, a sack of flour fer each of the hand-carts was tuck of'n 'em an' put onto us. It was like death itself to add another pound to the weight of 'em, fer lots of us could scurely hold up the handles much less pull, but the wimmen an' children would push behind an' some would git inside the handles an' pull, an' with some a-cryin', an' some a-prayin', an' some lookin' blind an' dumb, we struggled on.

“About that time, I mind, one day a party with three smart cerriges an' some light spring wagons come adashin' up behind us. It turned out to be three of the Apostles and four Elders an' a son of

President Young. They was a returnin' from a preachin' tour through the South. Well, they staid over night with us, an' in the mornin' Apostle Richards preached to us, rebukin' us fer the seemin' lack of faith amongst us, an' tellin' us the Lord would keep the winter back if need be on our account, an' that they'd hev pervisions sent out to meet us at South Pass. Then they rode away in their cerriges, takin' some of our best pervisions with 'em. They didn't realize our condition, I reckon; leastwise the mistakes of men don't affect the revelations of the Lord; them air above errors an' the like.

“But I must say pine blank most on us felt purty black around the heart them times. Some on us was dyin' every day an' bein' left under a pile of stones fer the wolves to dig at, an' the livin was starvin' an' adyin' by inches at the carts, but we striv on'ard in the desperation of dispair. Us two famblys from Tennessee kep together the best we could. The other fambly was pore like us an' had gin most what they had to the cause. The man had never ben stout an' now he got worst. He had two little children in his cart, an' his pore wife who pushed what she could behind had a little baby on her breast. It was awful to see 'em workin' with the shaders of death acomin' an' agoin' in their eyes. But we wasn't much better off, on'y I was stouter, an' Catherine, who was thin an' white es paper an' with eyes lookin' big an' wild like some

animal that sees it's agoin' to be killed, worked day after day mos' like a person that's insane. She never said nothin', on'y jest worked an' fit fer life. I think it was amostly fer me though, an' our little sick darter alayin' up there in the cart.

“ Well, about them days it fell to freezin' at night, an', whereas we could sleep an' rest some afore, now in the mornin' we was a crowd of dazed, shiverin', half-dead people. About a hundred had died up to that time, an' there was five hundred of us strugglin' an' fightin' ahead toards the darkness.

“ The man in our other fambly I could see kep stiddily failin'; an' one mornin' w'en we started it skeert me, he looked so like a corpse, an' his wife looked nearly like 'm; but they kep at it all day, staggerin' an' tuggin' an' draggin' their feet erlong. But all that day they was a-dyin', my friend, all that day they was a-dyin'! for w'en we stopped that night the man sunk down inside of the handles with his face betwixt his knees an' never moved agin. The wife fell onto her side along side the cart, but I got 'er up an', after getting their tent set up, laid 'er in it an' fixed 'er the best I could. In the mornin' she was dead, though, froze cold an' stiff, with the child dead, too, on 'er breast. There was six corpses in camp that mornin'. What days them was! an', God in heaven, what nights! We hadn't ben'lowed but seventeen pounds of clothes' an' beddin' apiece, an' we jest laid an' shivered in spasms of cold. I

s'pose amost of us 'd a died in our tracks on'y fer our faith, fer we did hang onter the belief that the word of the Lord's servants would come true. But it didn't; they made a mistake somehow, though it wasn't the Lord's fault. Winter come on earlier 'en common, an' there we was amongst the mountings, wadin' rivers, haulin' the carts up hills an' down through rocky gulches, with our shoes an' boots wore of'en our feet, er cut up to make boxen for the axles, a long string of haggard, corpse-like men an' wimmen and children stumblin' an' fightin' to'ards the bitter end.

“Then at last it got so there wasn't searcely strenth left to put up the tents at night, an' every mornin' from six to ten corpses had to be buried; an' some got stupid, an' some got savage an' lost their minds. My Catherine jest fit on'ard like a tiger. She never gin back. She 'peared to me like she was all eyes an' leaders; there was nothin' of her much, an' fer the last week of it she never slep ner et that I seed. I was one of the stoutest in the band—w'y, when I was young I could take a ox by the horns an' throw 'im!—but I couldn't nigh keep up with 'er. My Catherine was insane was the reason! I hadn't no heart in me after that, an' staggered like a drunk man from weakness, but I fit forred with 'er. We had our one little thing an' the two children of our dead friends in the cart, an' she thought they was all our'n, the two from the little

graves in Tennessee alive agin; an' she kep 'em kivered up an' fed an' tuck care of 'em, an' at times she'd seem happy jest like a child, an' stop an' play pickin' flowers along the way, an' laugh, an' talk of the thousands an' thousands of miles we'd come, an' of the thousands an' thousands of miles we'd have to go yit afore we got to Heaven; an' I'd jest lay my head down on the cart an' cry, it broke my heart so.

“ At last the storm came in earnest. It begun to snow an' blow turrible, but we stumbled on'ard blind-like all day. We seemed plum crazy to get out of danger an' our misery, but was runnin' furdur into it every step. What we suffered could never be put in language. I ken mind one pore gal with a awful look on her face ahangin' an' half draggin' all day at the cart next to our'n. She now lives near Salt Lake, a poor helpless cripple, fer both her limbs was froze that day an' had to be cut off. A pore ole woman was clingin' at the same cart, but she let go to'ards night and fell out of sight. No body could go back fer 'er w'en dark come, an' 'in the mornin' not fur from us some tore clothes an' hair was found, an' a human skull with the wet prints of wolf-teeth all over it. That mornin' we buried five froze folks in one grave, I mind, an' then went draggin' on'ard agin, but 'bout noon we could go no furdur, the snow was so deep, an' we stopped ready to lay down an' die. But some of the stoutest of us managed to get the tents up, an' fires

started, an' went back in the snow an' got the sick an' the froze, an' some what was out of their minds, an' got 'em 'round the fires. It was a turrible sight! My Catherine never said nary word that day. Her eyes looked big and glassy, and she went weavin' from one side to tother, but she kep her eyes on the children an' a tryin' to push. I could see the end was comin', but I couldn't feel somehow. I seemed to be jest movin' in a numb kind of awful nightmare. Sometimes I didn't seem to know whar I was; then agin things'd look clear, but wild an' strange, an' I seemed to be workin' with all my might, but I'm feerd it didn't 'mount to much.

“ Well, that afternoon hep come. One of the elders that passed us was shore we'd never get through, an' urged President Young to send us some pervisions. So that day two of a party reached us an' tole us teams with supplies would be there the next day, an' fer us to kill one oxen an' save ourselves. So we did, they a hepin' us, an' that evenin' we had big fires an' all the meat we keered fer an' used what was left of the pervisions, an' some on us got a little life agin. Bnt many was past all mortal hep, an' that night my Catherine died, an' just afore she passed away my darter Trean was born !”

There he stopped and sat looking heavily at the floor. A sweat broke out upon his furrowed fore-

head, and for a few moments he seemed stupefied by the shocking retrospect.

"I hain't no words to show ye it furdher with," he said, hoarsely, without looking up. "I've talked too much about it; it comes too nigh to me!" and he swallowed painfully, as if the vision his memory brought suffocated him. "I kent say nothin' furdher, on'y that the child was saved an' has always been sad-like, an' I've been a broken-down man ever since," and he got up and looked tremblingly out with something like a sob shaking his form.

Elchard had said nothing as the story progressed; and the alternate surges of anger and pity in his bosom had followed each other with no sign upon the surface, save a tightening and trembling of the fingers, clouds flying across the face, and a darkening and melting of the eye.

And when it ended he still remained silent, but with tears slipping from under the lashes of his closed eyes. What could be said? What else given such folly and suffering but tears? It was of a piece with other large examples of abuse in the world's life. One with the hurling together of countries in slaughter by designing tyrants; one with the enslaving of races by sleek opulence and greed; one with combinations on the food for nations, that a few might live fatly at the expense of general hardship; one with the stake, the chain, almost with the assassin's knife, this black abuse of

confidence,—and yet, alas! what else was there for it but tears? The deceived, the foully injured, still clung to the deceiver, still revered the destroyer, still knelt to the idols that drowned them! Aye, what could be said?

And what for the effect? Ah, it was one with the trust of ignorance in all ages; one with blind faith, one with reliance on a system in the stead of reason and simple righteousness. But what for the cause? Alas, there was no penalty, no law with which to blast it! Nothing but to leave it to the One in whose name it was perpetrated and to the long verdict of Time; and Paul Elchard, lying there, ground his teeth in silence.

Then nearly two weeks fell away sluggishly. Trean kept about her work and well under the shadow of her heavy sadness, coming not often into the room where Elchard lay, and saying little upon such entrances. The injured man, not knowing of the swinging over her of this latter cloud, laid, and naturally, her enduring sombreness to the grief and horrors that hung about her birth. His heart moved toward her with the thought. Day by day she was melting into him, and he could not put her back. She seemed like a twilight to his nature,—sad, soft, and beautifully sweet, spreading slowly throughout his being. It did not give him joy, thrilling his soul upward into ecstasy, like the coming of love to many, but pervaded him all the day long like a ten-

der music, sorrowful, haunting, but bringing a holy pleasure. When he lifted his eyes to hers the spirit of this was in them, and hers would flicker down and seem to swim in light as she turned away. Once he heard her break into a song when out among the flowers, that was so mellow and sweet, it thrilled him to the heart; then it fell away so plaintively, his eyes were bedewed and dim with pity. But she did not sing again, as day after day he lay watching the sunshine sleeping in soft flakes about the threshold, or trembling into little heaps of un-tinkling coin as the vine-leaves stirred. She kept herself apart, yet were they none the less together.

Her father remained much among his tiny fields, turning on the clear irrigating water, and feebly hoeing the sandy loam about his vegetables. He still brought the sick man his dainty meals religiously, but seemed depressed and talked but little. Dr. Dubette came frequently, talked much and turned his small, hard eyes about, but Trean remained to them invisible. Once Orson Beam came too, inquired of the sick man his health, delivered a message from the mines, and went his way. Then news came in by a neighbor that on the morrow, a Saturday, President Young would visit the settlement, and expectation rose on tiptoe.

CHAPTER V.

THE COMING OF THE PROPHET.

THE Mormon Prophet was making his annual tour through the settlements of the Territory, and was looked for to-day in Mooseneck. It was a visit of moment, and the inhabitants stirred themselves with the dawn in its anticipation. Paul Elcñard, too, was out for the first time since his injury, and, very carefully picking his way to a seat among the pines on the slope above the house, sat through the long, delicious morning looking down into the village. A fever seemed to pervade the thoroughfare that laid it open in two rather straggling halves, a bustle of men, women and children that was very enlivening to the numb and sleepy town.

By mid-morning two triumphal arches were sprung across the street, made green with twining vines and blooming sprays, and bearing legends of welcome wrought in flowers; on the one "Hail to the Lord's Anointed!" and on the other "The Lord's Prophet is Our King!" Many of the house-fronts, too, were made fine with floral greenery and welcoming devices. But all this was not quite so spontaneous as would seem; Bishop Parley had received notice of the

coming of this man who ruled them in every sense, and knew full well the seeming honors he was expected to provide, and how closely his own and the interests of his fellow frauds hinged upon it.

Now and then a bitter smile flitted across the face of the pale watcher among the pines. This truckling was wearisome, and yet it had a certain interest, a depth that was inscrutable, and he watched it. The spirit of it like a suffocating mist hung through all these mountain valleys; there below him passed the willowy figure of Trean across the yard, seemingly pressed down by it; it lay even upon his own wounded chest like an invisible weight, and he drew a long breath and made an involuntary movement of expulsion.

A smooth wind was moving the balsamic spires of the pines to a sea-shell sigh, great masses of snow-pure clouds were breaking open at the zenith, leaving vast blue holes, and farther westward were raking their fleece along the craggy heights, while below them patches of light slept upon the mountain sides like the white sheep of Heaven; surely it was a beautiful world, why should men fill it with hatefulness?

He fell to studying for a time with his eyes upon the ground, turning man round and round before him with an eye to those angles that fit no geometric rule, and the strange attributes that seem to have no cause, but put the mystery, the enigma, with its

baffling malady away from him at last with a sigh, as we all do.

When he lifted his eyes a detached mass of white cloud seemed to have lodged among the four huge prongs that made the Eagle Peaks and lay there motionless. To the right and below it in fancy he could see the mines and below them the yawning canyon with a roaring stream at the bottom and a gray road following it. Then suddenly the cloud-mass stirred as from an underwind and rolled out of its mighty nest and down the mountain like a torrent of froth. The air seemed stronger in the gorge, and it spread out upon that and fell down half way over the canyon's mouth, not unlike a softly unrolling fleece. Out from under that suddenly rode a train of carriages and behind them a cavalcade, all glistening and whitening in the morning light as they came upon the plateau at the canyon's mouth like some gigantic stage picture.

It was a propitious moment for the Prophet's entrance, however unworthy he and his mission, for the people at the sight set up a great acclaim. Elchard, too, grew interested, and looking downward saw the people from all quarters swarming into the main street of the town; then a smart cavalcade, with Bishop Parley and Dr. Dubette in a carriage at its front, set out across the valley, and meeting the incoming party escorted them in. Enoch Arsen, the bishop's clerk, when his master and party had

departed, formed by instruction a human lane of maidens reaching from one triumphal arch to the other, all standing with bared heads and with flowers in their hands and hair.

Presently the Prophet's train rolled slowly up the street. The whole populace of the valley seemed swarming there, and down the lane from the house Elchard saw Trean's father hastening, his bent form seeming more erect than its wont, and his face lit up with joyful anticipation; yes, gladly hastening to meet the man whose greed and falsehood had broken him, had lain his wife in a lonely grave among the mountains, and left in his child's blood a living bitterness.

As the Prophet's carriage, the finest in the Territory and drawn by four white horses, entered the throng the people parted and stood with uncovered heads. The concourse was a weather-beaten, sunburnt one, familiar with the soil, servility, and paying tithes. Here was the man among them into whose ear God whispered the secrets of the heavens and the earth, they thought; who saw visions and had celestial revelations, they were taught; and who, they knew, was the spiritual and temporal dictator of the land in which they lived. The ground fairly swayed beneath them, so much of holiness was crossing it.

The Prophet, a phenomenal deceiver, was a rather large man, of strong presence, silvery, sandy hair,

white beard, and cold, hard, urbane, austere, or passionate, according to the demands of the moment. About the mouth a look of firmness and decision, that deepened upon occasion into fiery cruelty and bull-dog savagery. But now his large face looked very placid as he held it up toward the sun and rode forward with his hands outspread as if to draw a blessing down upon the people. When he reached the first triumphal arch the lines of maidens bowed their heads, and as the train passed through the human lane they cast their flowers before the Prophet, and children walking before his carriage strewed blossoms along the ground to perfume the air and ease the turning wheels.

Upon the surface the thing was pretty enough, but at heart it was heinous. In the train were men whose hands had again and again been wet with human blood, Bishops Lee and Rockwell and others. Men whose souls were black with the belief that murder, and theft, and crimes that shall be nameless here, were righteous and commendable when perpetrated upon those outside of the pale of their "religion." The assumed Prophet himself, this man Young who rode in stolid dignity at the head, was low-born and uneducated, with a history clotted with crime and uneven dealing. His stealings from the poor people alone, upon whose collective neck his brutal foot rested, aggregated millions. He took from the enormous fund pressed out of the

people by tithing whatever amount he cared to year by year, for the fund was entirely in his hands, and during his life a settlement was never made, and erected a residence in every considerable town in the Territory and put a "wife" in it; had farms and mills and Government bonds, secretly bought with church money, to blind the blind as to his means of living; had a collection of residences, palatial for the time, at Salt Lake City, with more than a dozen wives to grace, or rather disgrace, them, and in the largest of which he held court and dictated the affairs of Utah to his own gain and glory; had an oath-bound band of red-handed tools who in the name of the Lord darkly did away with his rivals and his enemies, while year after year he rode among this people, a sort of imperious Saint-king, bringing the Almighty's will concerning them direct from His mouth, and ever secure in the fervor of their faith and ignorance.

At length his carriage came to a stand-still before Bishop Parley's house, and, taking the Bishop's proffered hand, he stepped on the ground, and, with a sudden glow of seeming sunshine in his face, began squeezing the hard-soiled fists of his followers to the right and left. How it thrilled them, poor dupes, to feel the grasp of his fat, white hand, the live touch of this well-fed animal, this sinless being who, they thought, walked and talked with God.

He affected to know every man in the Territory,

and, alas, every sister, too! He patted the little ones upon their heads and flashed his sunshine into the eyes of their flattered mothers. He was very gracious, indeed, this man who held the keys to God's spiritual kingdom here, and looked at will in upon the splendors and mysteries of the unseen world. But when he stood inside of Bishop Parley's office his brow darkened, his eyes grew hard and cold, and his first utterance: "Bishop, what's the matter with the tithing from your Stake?" fell harshly from his lips. The God-like smile had gone; he had returned to himself—a brusque and greedy collector of tithes.

Parley closed the door with increasing color in his heavy countenance, and a perceptible swelling of the dark sacks under his eyes.

"You're either using too much of the income yourself," the Prophet went on, "or Arsen an' you are not 'tending to your knittin'!"

"Neither, Brother Young, neither," said Parley, obsequiously, as he waddled forward and seated himself, "we've collected a tenth part of every thing they've produced this far in the season; every cent and pound, and in some cases more where we thought they could stand it. The trouble is they lost most of their stock in the snow-storms last winter, and that has played the d—l with things for us."

"Well, you don't want to let any of it get away

from you," said Young, somewhat mollified. "Let me see your books."

The Bishop drew them out of a drawer and laid them on a desk before his superior. As he did so, he said: "I would like to ask your opinion about a question that has been sprung on 'Arsen when out collectin' several times."

"What is it?" grunted the Prophet in his thick neck, as he leaned forward over the books.

"Why, you know, for instance, we collect one-tenth of the grain when it is harvested, and when what's left is fed into their stock, we take a tenth part of the stock. Some sharper has asked Arsen if that ain't taking more than a tenth part of the grain."

"Of course it is," blurted out the revelator, "that's why I set the tithing dates the way they are; we want to catch all of it we can. You tell 'em it's the Lord's will that the precise order of His Kingdom, as revealed to me, should be carried out; and do you see that none of it get's away, too." A mean smile came into the Prophet's face as he said this, but it died away, and the sentence ended with a menacing nod."

"Yes, I understand," said Parley.

After a time the Prophet pushed the books from him with a satisfied look. "Well, how are things going in the Stake, anyway, Parley?" he queried, patting himself on the chest over his side coat-

pocket, with a perceptible deepening of the satisfied look as his fat hand touched something there. "By the by, have you a glass and some sugar handy, Parley?" he queried again, as his hand went under his coat lapel and brought forth a little flask. He shook it up against the light. "Christopher!" he exclaimed, "but that's as clear and yeller as honey!"

The Bishop's expression changed instantly from uneasy expectancy to mouth-watering delight. "Uhuh, yes; I'll git you some sugar!" and he rose so quickly he turned over his chair. He did not wait to right it, but waddling quickly around the desk to a cupboard, he began fumbling in it. "I've got suthin' here," he said, pantingly, "that's fair, but nothin' like as fine lookin' a article as that in your hand, President!"

"The editor of our paper in Liverpool sent me a case of this last week," said the Mormon President, still shaking the flask against the light. "I've got a cellar full of stuff that's been sent to me here, but I don't use much, and I like it to be the best, you know."

"Certainly; yes, certainly," panted Parley, as he placed glasses, and sugar, and spoons on the table; "the best's allers the best, I think!" He seemed to lose his grip, in great part, upon both grammar and pronunciation in the presence of this golden poison; but after a bumper or two the cob-webbed condition of his intellect, as with most habitual drinkers,

seemed improved. Young looked at him keenly, as he finished his own second tumbler.

"For a man of God you take to it pretty smartly, don't you, Parley?" he laughed.

"Like a suckin' calf, b'gosh!" said the Bishop, bringing his big freckled fist down on the table with a crash, "how is it with the head of the Church? whoop-e-e!" and he bored his fingers into the Prophet's ribs and brayed with laughter.

"Have you got them window-curtains fixed so no one can see in here?" asked the Prophet, looking round.

"Yes; oh, yes, I 'tended to them when we come in," said Parley. "Don't get skeert, Brother Young; just wade in if you feel dry."

"Well, one glass more will do," said the Prophet. "I don't never let the stuff get the best of me, Parley; I aim to keep on top. I'm 'fraid you are getting a little too free with it, ain't you? Must look out and not get us into trouble, my man."

"Don't you fret, don't you fret, Brother Young! I never let it get me down. Acorse I like it well enough, but I'm keerful, Brother Young, I'm keerful."

"What's that?" asked Young, in a listening attitude. Parley hiccoughed and harkened.

"Oh, yes; Lee's preaching to the people over in the meeting-house park! I had Arsen put up a

platform there, thinkin' they'd expect some speakin' this afternoon."

"Yes, that's right."

"Yes, and I've 'ranged to give a ball in the school-house to-night for the brethren! Took all the seats out and had 'er garlanded up in style. The angels 'll all be there! turn me loose! whoop-e-e!" and the Bishop brayed again.

The Prophet laughed in a restraining way. "Be careful, Parley," he said, "remember your calling."

"Well, that liquor o' your'n, President, is the slambangdest, mos' satisfyinist goods I've tasted lately. Shake! Say," he went on, in a husky whisper, laying his finger on the Prophet's knee, "there's *the* finest girl up the road a piece here ye ever saw; a handsome, tall sort of young 'ooman, but sober and stately-like, that I've been aimin' to have sealed to me for some time, but she rather turns me the cold shoulder. I'd like to get you to help me a bit with her, Brother Young."

"Is she strong in the faith?"

"Ruther weak-kneed, I'm 'fraid."

"Well, I'm going to preach to-morrow, and I'll lay down the doctrine for 'em on several points. You can tell her I've seen in a special revelation that she's an unusual bright star in Zion, and that it's her duty to be sealed to you, as one having authority to exalt her to a high place in the world to come."

“Shake! Brother Young, shake! You’re kindness itself to your servants,” said the Bishop, feelingly.

“Yes, I know, and I expect you to look after these tithes pretty closely, too, Parley!”

“Yes, certainly; *most* certainly!”

“Have any of the elders counselled her to marry you?” queried the Prophet.

“Well, no; they seem sort of ’fraid of ’er. I’ve talked to her father, and, of course, he submits like a lamb, but she’s as stiff as steel and silent-like. I can’t figger with ’er someway.”

“Well, she’ll have to bend or break, that’s all. Are any of the young brethren standing in your way?”

“There’s several feedin’ themselves on secret hope, I think, for she’s a fine creeter; but she pays little attention to any of ’em, unless it’s young Elder Beam. I’ve had Arsen spyin’ and I guess that amounts to nothin’.”

“Well, if he gets in your way let me know, and I’ll send him off to Europe preaching.”

“Thank ye, Brother Young, thank ye kindly!” The Bishop ruminated a moment. “There’s a fellow, a down-Easter, up at their house who got hurt at the ford near there. But I guess there’s nothin’ atween ’em as yet, ner likely to be, accordin’ to Dubette and Arsen, whose been spyin’ ’em. Acorse

if *he* interferes I'll have him sent apreachin' to—well, sperrits of just men made perfect!”

“That's right; I guess you'll take care of your chances, Parley!” said the Prophet, with an approving grin. “Sweeten up a couple more sups and we'll swallow it to your success.”

The Bishop threw up his hat, they drank, and rose and with flushed faces went out.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME DECLARATIONS.

THE school-house in Mooseneck was a low structure, so low a tall man might lay his hand upon the eaves. In this regard its composition was strikingly Mormonesque. Hewn pine composed the walls and a medley of shingles and clapboards the roof. When it rained, a thing infrequent in this region, if administering Mormonism with an occasional pinch of earthly information in it chanced to be in progress, they simply adjourned. It mattered little anyway, considering the intellectual pap offered these unfortunate sucklings.

The place was a very dirty one, indeed quite in the Mormon way. The floor was of Nature's own furnishing, packed solid by countless foot-strokes

and, when unsprinkled, rising often in little smoky puffs to further aggravate the mental fog which seemed always webbing about the poor heads congregated there. Its area was the one redeeming feature, it being rather wide and deep upon the ground, a necessity obvious enough when the flocks of children in the settlement were taken into account. Indeed in Mormondom children are ubiquitous; they literally swarm upon and burden the eye-sight. Their production is a cardinal feature of the Mormon system; they vote ultimately, of course, and to insure the prodnet, the leaders have made woman's salvation depend in large part upon the number of bodies she furnishes the spirits that wait to pass through this existence to the next. The imposition is inexpressible. That night after the Prophet's coming, however, the old school-house had a holiday look. The seats had been removed, the walls decked with greenery, and the dirt floor swept and sprinkled. By nine o'clock the populace was there, a hard-favored, animal-looking crowd, yet with here and there a good form and gentle face. The ball was opened with prayer, one of the Salt Lake Elders offering the invocation, and that night ere the disgusting pastime had ceased a young man was killed upon the floor, and half the dancers were reeling with drunkenness. Quite all of them were members of the Mormon Church, but none were Christians; sincere Mormons there are in plenty, but never

Christian Mormons; the beliefs of the latter and the holy refinements of the former can not lie down together in the same heart.

Mormonism is not a religion; those fine, spiritual laws that mankind, after centuries of sifting, have found pure gold at the bottom of experiences are lacking. A shuffling and repulsive assumption of worship is put forward by the priesthood on all public occasions, no matter how secular and unholy. Worship is vulgarized, and life is largely brutalized. In all the back regions, where the contact and restraining pressure of the great world is scarcely felt, this feature turns most toward one. There it is frightful. At the best it is a home-destroying system, a lust-engendering, love-annulling, heart-polluting one, but there it is embruting and stupifying. At the heart Mormonism is criminal Masonry. The Priesthood, which is all-powerful, constitutes this body, and ceremonies are passed through and oaths taken that are frightful in aim and import. The outlying limbs of this grave Theocracy are cloaked with religion, and by its binding, persuading agency sustenance and power are forced back through the arteries to the false and lecherous heart. Its history can never be told; much of it is not for decent ears; God alone shall wholly treasure it up against the future in His all-preserving silence.

The morrow after the ball broke dimly; a mist, in which the mountains stood waist deep as in a sea

of milk, lay heavily upon the world. The air seemed clogged and scarcely respirable, a strange thing among the Utah mountains. When Elcharđ woke, Trean's father was tramping up and down the narrow porch; he could not breath when lying down, he said. He had heard of the murder at the dance, too, and was restless and stifled. Trean had not been there; he was glad of that; neither had she been with the rest to greet the Prophet at his coming, and he shook his shaggy head with trouble.

After an oppressive breakfast Elchard went out, and with a suffocating sense climbed the slope and sat down among the pines. The sun was a bleared spot above him, and only for a few yards about could objects be distinctly seen. It was easier breathing there, however, and he fell to thinking of his uncared-for affairs, and how he must try and go on when morning came again; then of this sad and beautiful girl there in the mist below him. Would she always go onward in the mist—that other mist which was felt and visible only to the spirit—and to what end! He rose up involuntarily, her future so came upon him, and stepped forward as if he would go to her, when suddenly she stood before him in the path.

How soft her form-lines in the mist! How wide and startled her eyes! She paused as if to turn back.

“Don't go, Trean!” he said, unconsciously extend-

ing his hand in an appealing way. "Stay with me; don't go back into the mist!"

"I didn't know you was here; I was going further up the mountain. I mustn't stay now," she said, with a kind of faltering gasp.

He came close to her, his face burning. "Trean!" he said, and that was all, but all that might ever be said of love was coaxing and pleading and throbbing in the word. A sweep of color ran over her neck and face, and she seemed struggling to go back.

"You mustn't; you don't know; I'm not fit; it might cost you your life!" she panted, drawing back.

"It's costing you yours, Trean!" and his hand was upon hers, and both were trembling. "Don't leave me, Trean! You are good and beautiful. Let me thank you here where we are alone for your kindness and bravery. Let me give you my love, Trean! Don't throw it from you, darling; don't put me away!"

She stood for a moment like one intoxicated, swaying upon his words, her eyes softly dilated, her bosom heaving. Suddenly she leaned toward him with an indescribable murmur of pleasure, and slipped down with her cheek upon his hands, where they folded over her own, and hung there. For an instant he felt her tears running over his hands and her lips kissing them, then she broke away and ran

blindly downward into the mist and was lost to his sight.

For a long time he stood still where she had left him, for the whole mountain seemed to beat like a soft pulse, the air seemed sweet, and the mist was but a halo about him. Then, with deep breath, like one who has drained a delicious cup, he turned and went up the mountain path much as one moves who is young and jocund and without disease.

After a time he emerged from the mist and stood alone upon the mountain side with the white sea all below him. Then in the silence and sunshine a loneliness that was a kind of doubt and fear came over him. Might this not prove a symbol of the future? Would she ever rise above the mist—that heavy medium in which she had always moved? Should he not stand alone at last upon the heights? He turned about and went downward into the mist. Nothing but death should sunder them, he said.

Yet the blood felt sweet in his veins, and his step was light; a single slow misgiving could never overtake and silence the many happy currents that went singing in and out his heart. When he approached the house the mist seemed to be lifting; a cool, under-wind had begun to fan it upward, and far and near the bosom of the world came heaving into view.

Trean was not visible. Up in her poor little chamber she was walking to and fro, her cheeks

carmine, her eyes shining. She paused before her little mirror; her face surely had blossomed! She pressed a hand on either side of the radiant apparition and leaning back upon her lissome waist gazed at it a moment in sheer delight. The veil of dejection had fallen from it; it was beautiful. She pushed back the soft masses of russet hair from her temples and pressed her hands there as if she were dizzy with happiness. Her heart throbbed as if it would burst. Oh! this was her first real hour of life! She turned about and broke into a snatch of song which was well-nigh a cry of gladness. She fell upon her knees before her bed and prayed that God would protect him who had taken her soul in the sweet snare of love, and even while she prayed smiles came and went upon her face so like a beating heart was happiness within her solicitude. She rose up and made herself as fine as her meagre wardrobe would permit, and stood a moment smiling at her image in the glass; then, as from the thought that her few poor trinkets would be as nothing to him, laid them aside and clothed herself in a simple dress of white muslin and went down, looking like a goddess of the dawn.

Elchard was pacing to and fro along the path before the porch, his head erect, his cheeks touched with a tiny flame. When she came out he was almost startled, so much had gladness changed her. With a quick step he was by her. "Trean!" but

she lifted her finger with a pretty sign of warning, her face flushed with happiness, and he only stood a moment by her side holding her hand tightly where it hung between them, and looking where the broken mist rolled up the mountains and caught here and there on spur and pine in mighty, melting tufts until, far in the heaven, at last it formed in floating isles of fleece.

“I am going to meeting soon,” she murmured, “please don’t go with me.”

He looked at her. “Why, darling?” He felt her tremble with that endearing name.

“It might not be safe!”

“What a religion!” he exclaimed, with sudden revulsion.

“Yes,” and her eyes were on the ground.

“O Trean! do you believe it?”

“It might be true, and bad men make it seem untrue.” He was surprised at the musical distinctness of her speech. Love seemed to have roused her from her squalid use of words.

“Yes, that is possible, perhaps, but I do not think it is so with this, Trean. The system seems bad—the invention of bad men. Yesterday I went down the street, there beyond the trees, and saw a woman of middle age knocking angrily at the door of a little house. Presently a young woman opened the door, when the one who came struck her in the face with a sharp rock, and felled and beat her there

upon the threshold. A bystander who parted them told me they were the wives of one man. It was shocking!"

"Yes, it was frightful," she said, thickly, drawing the back of her hand across her forehead with a helpless air, "but I don't know any other way; I never heard—I never was shown a better way."

"Love will show you, Trean; but let it, and love will teach you the way!" His voice was tenderness itself.

"I have been learning a little since you came," she said, looking up with smiling, swimming eyes. With a murmur of gladness he caught her to him and held her close for a moment there among the lilacs. Then steps sounded on the walk and they went back together to the porch with their faces beaming. Trean's father was coming round the house, and a look of astonishment spread over his sallow, haggard face. The daughter shrunk back an instant, then stood proud and erect before him holding Elchard's hand. What a fine picture they made!

"Mr. Hartman," said the young man, respectfully, "your daughter has honored me with her love. It gives me great happiness. Will you not permit her to take mine in return, untroubled?—the best gift I have!"

The old man's hands began to shake and his eyes filled. "I seed it a comin', I seed it a comin' from

the first!" he said. "But I've liked ye, an' believed in ye, an' I know yo'r worthy of 'er, but it's a great trial. It ain't accordin' to our religion, an' it's hard to giv' 'er up, it's hard to giv' 'er up!" For a moment he seemed unable to go on, then he faltered: "But I won't trouble ye, I won't come atwixt ye, for she's the best child God ever giv' me, an' has never had no one to love but me, an' now when I ain't got much longer to stay I can't take her away from one like yo'; on'y leave 'er a little while here; I shan't be long in the way!"

The two happy young hearts were touched; a tender dew sprang into the bright eyes, and the old man reached out his trembling hands and took in each a moist, warm palm and stood a moment, crying silently. It seemed a type of life; sorrow and happiness hand in hand, age waiting for death, and youth eager to take the path that leads to age.

After a long pressure of the warm hands that lay in his, the gray and broken man released them and turned away. He seemed to totter as he went in and something of the real gravity of love and existence seemed to descend upon the two whose young eyes followed him.

Standing under the blooming vines their lips met reverently, even so soon had duty breathed upon their passion, making it a thing more rational and holy.

"You will stay with him, darling, till—then?"

“Yes, I can't leave him now. I never had any one else to love until—you came, but him; he's good, and weak, and feeble, and needs me even more than—you.”

“Yes, but I shall not be far away!” and he smiled into her sober eyes and kissed her, and they went in.

The girl's father was standing near the farther door with his eyes fixed upon the floor. Elchard laid a hand gently upon his arm. “Don't feel badly about this, sir,” he said, cheeringly; “I am quite sure it will prove a blessing to us all. You will find me a good son, I am almost certain. You have been very kind to me, and I shall try to be as kind as I may in return.”

“O, it ain't that, sir,” he cried, hoarsely. “I know yo'r good, an' I like ye, but my darter's lost in doin' this! she's lost for turnin' agin counsel and revelation! You kent save 'er. Yo'r too fine an' proud to be bad, but yo'r of this poor worl', an' in the end she must go whar yo' do! O, sir, one wanted 'er that could 'a' lifted 'er up hereafter! could a' exalted 'er an' made 'er one of his queens in the eternal worl'! but now she's lost! she's sinnin' away the Holy Ghost, an' kent never be pardined but by the sheddin' of 'er own pore blood!”

Elchard stood aghast. What doctrinal abomination was this? The daughter seemed to reel and droop under it. Suddenly she rose to her full height, her

Grecian outline seemed to become firm and instinct with power. "It's a lie!" she cried, with white face and blazing eyes. "It's shame put on women for shame's sake! A thousand times I've implored God on my knees to tell me if I must become a vile thing—the mistress of a priest—to gain a home among the pure! I have begged Him to strike me dead if it were true and let me go into the darkness where nothing is ever known. But He never told me until He sent love into my heart. Here!" she cried, striking her bosom quiveringly, "here is His messenger that never did an unclean thing, and for days through every moment it has shouted: 'No!' in every dream it has whispered that it was not true. O, father, don't believe it any longer! A bad thing on earth can't be a good thing in Heaven; an evil can never save us! A thing that has no reason within or without can never be true! Love has told me this, and love is the voice of God!"

Elchard could have knelt and worshipped her. She seemed lifted out of her former self, out of her wonted use of words, out of all hopelessness. Her father fell back before her and stared in wonder.

"Trean!" he gasped, "Trean!"

"It ain't worth while to warn me, father," she panted. "Love is greater than belief, and love tells me that one man alone shall be mine and I alone shall be his. Love can't be divided, and he who practices that it can, but plays the beast! I put

their falsehoods behind me, their pretended revelations are but filth! Love is my revelation, love is my guide; that I know is sweet, and wise, and beautiful, and comes from God!"

"Treon! Trean!! *You've sinned away the Holy Ghost!*" and the bent figure wavered toward her and sank down at her feet and lay still.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME MORMON DOCTRINES.

THROUGH a half score of quick heart-beats the young couple stood speechless before this seeming suspension of life; then, with whispered fragments of sympathy and fear, they sprang to the fallen man. Instantly the daughter had the white head in her lap.

"The brandy in the cupboard!" she said. Almost at a stride Elchard placed it in her outstretched hand. Presently the dim eyes opened, then widened wildly, and the girl fetched a gasp of joy. Up out of the unseen soul two flames of horror seemed burning away through the glassy film that covered the eyes that stared at her, a great sweat broke out upon the forehead, and the whole frame quivered. "Father!" cried the girl, "father! don't you know me—your Trean!"

With an effort he sat up, still staring at her, then the eyes began to clear and he said, in a tone of hoarse inquiry: "It ain't so, then? yo' ain't ben tetched? O, darter, I've ben in hell! I've seed a vison 'er dreamed a turrible dream! I thought I was in the sperrit an' seed ye alyin' dead with yo'r pore throat cut for sinin' the unpardonable sin, but yo'r blood it seemed alive an' turned to fire an' flames an' run all around me, an' burned an' et into me, an' I couldn't put it out! O, I couldn't put it out! It was turrible!" and he seemed to writhe with the passage of the memory.

"There, father! don't mind; it was nothing but a dream," said the daughter, coaxingly, but with a touch of terror in her voice. "It was only a dream from your troubling so much."

He had her hand in his as he sat there drooping forward with his white hair falling about his face and he carried it to his lips and kissed it. "Yo'r a good darter," he murmured. "Yo'r good, an' I've wondered how God could cut off a good person, even if they did believe mebby what wasn't so. Mebby I'm wrong an' He don't, but I don't know. O, I don't know!" He made an effort to get up, and they helped him, and he went tremblingly into the other room and laid down upon his bed.

After that for awhile the daughter went to and fro in service to his comfort, then sat for a time beside him softly stroking one of his hands. Presently he

turned his eyes upon her. "Darter," he said, "yo' an' him had best go down to the meetin' now. It mus' be nigh time fer to go." Then, in response to her look: "Yo' needn't mind fer me, darter, I'm better now. I'd ruther you'd go; President Young's goin' to speak, an' I wish yo' an' him'd go an' hear him. Mebby, somehow, yo'll find the truth. If ye don't, then I'll say nothin' more. I'll promise ye then not to trouble about it no more. Mebby it's all a mistake anyhow," and he rolled his head weakly from side to side, as if he were lying under a burden that was ponderable instead of a simple though hateful belief.

The daughter rose up and kissed him and went out. The cloud seemed thick about her. Her heart was sweet at the bottom, but her father's trouble lay over it. Out under the trees Elchard was pacing to and fro, restless and distraught. She told him what her father had said. "Let us go," he answered promptly. "He is your father; it is due him."

A half hour afterward they entered the meeting-house. It was a large, plain affair, but not wholly uncomfortable. The body of the building was packed with laymen, a largely foreign, low-browed, dull, credulous-looking people.

As Trean and Elchard advanced down the aisle a very plain pricking up of ears about the pulpit might have been discerned. The Prophet's hard, cold eyes lit up with an unpleasing gleam, and

Parley's heavy, red face turned dark. The two young people found a seat near the front, and presently, after prayer and singing, preaching began.

The Bishop first offered some remarks that placed the Prophet on an exceeding high pinnacle, from which point of vantage he was presumably to cast himself down—upon the people. Among other rather astonishing assurances he proffered his flock the following:

“The word of our leader and Prophet is the word of God. We can't see God, we can't converse with Him, but He has given us a man that we can talk to and thereby know His will, just the same as if God Himself was present with us. I am no more afraid to risk my salvation in the hands of this divinely-appointed man than I am to trust myself in the hands of the Almighty. He will lead *me* right, and he will lead *you* right, if we do as he says in every particular. He holds the keys of life and salvation on this earth, and you may strive as much as you please and not one of you will ever go through the straight and narrow gate into God's Holy Kingdom except you go through the straight road he points out to you.”

To arise and meet the responsibility depicted in this, the virtual position of God on earth, would doubtless have appealed to most mankind as a rather daunting thing. But to this man Young it evidently seemed in no sense a heavy affair, for he

arose and placed his intellectual shoulder under the load with easy blandness. He was a heavily-built man, impressive in a way, and well on in years, but his great animal energy and greedy, fraud-carrying force were clearly unabated. He spoke slouchily, yet, after a time, with a certain heat and heavy hammering that doubtless was of welding and shaping effect with the dull and passive mass before him. He delighted in literal interpretations. Indeed, upon occasion, were the matter he presented ever so assimilable, the lingual vehicle in which he proffered it, to the decent, would have prevented its reception. In truth, gentlemen of the first refinement had, after more than one discourse during his history, felt it incumbent to apologize to ladies for having subjected them to the rather indelicate necessity of hearing him. Upon the present occasion, however, he was in somewhat cleaner feather, and after some extravagant and showy whittling away of rind and cuticle he began to slice off and pass over to his hearers some solid Mormon meat.

“The building of God’s earthly kingdom,” he roared, “for eighteen hundred years has been stayed, that you know. For eighteen hundred years, through man’s unfitness, the keys of prophecy and apostleship had been withheld. Then a man fit to bear them was born, Joseph Smith, the revelator; then they were restored to earth, and the operations of Zion with glory and power have ever since gone on.

When he died, a martyr in the cause of Christ, a sacrifice scarcely second to the Lamb that was slain on Calvary, God in His wisdom and love saw fit to place them keys into my hands. Yes, into my keeping He placed them, touched my lips with the live coal of inspiration from of His altar, breathed into my bosom the spirit of prophecy, and opened my eyes to see the angels and glories of the unseen world. Unto me, and even unto all His anointed Priesthood, power is given so that things bound by us on earth are bound in Heaven; and things loosed by us on earth are loosed in Heaven.

“Of what value, I would like to ask, is the God of the sectarian world? They hain’t seen him for eighteen hundred years; they receive no revelations from Him; He can’t assist them in any way. Let them keep their God; we don’t want Him. Our God can be seen and talked to. He’s of some account.

“Well, brethren, what do we want? Why, the Kingdom of God spread abroad until it shall fill the whole world; till every knee shall bow. And it must be God’s Kingdom, not man’s. God must rule it through His chosen Prophets, not by man-elected rulers. As it is here among us, the spiritual and temporal governments must be one, and God direct the workings of His Kingdom through the Prophet-head which He has chosen. And God’s revelations must be one law; they must be held superior to all

earth-made laws, and must be obeyed. Why, what does the law laid down by man amount to? There's no God about it! Whoever happens to be in the majority, good or bad, makes the law, and God has nothing to do with it. I tell you, if it gets in your way set it aside!

“Most of us have come out of and been mixed up with the world; we have been associated with, and have received our education and ideas in the midst of, corruption of every kind, and we have sucked it in as with our mother's milk. Even our religion has been corrupt, and our ideas of morality have been wrong; our politics, laws, and philosophy have all been twisted and perverted, until now it's hard for us to believe the strange and wonderful things God reveals to us. Why, when the Prophet Smith had anything to communicate to the children of men, or the church, what was it he had to fight against all the year around? Why, the prejudices of the people; and, in many instances, he could not and dared not reveal the word of God to the people, for fear they would rise up and reject it. It was just so with the revelation on Celestial marriage; that divine principle was revealed to him in 1831 and was practiced by him and a chosen holy few up to 1843 before God give him permission to communicate it to mankind.

“And right here I would like to ask what will become of them who have this holy law of poly-

gamy taught them if they reject it? I will tell you: They will be damned, saith the Lord God Almighty. For section 25 of the revelation on this greatest of all principles reads as follows: 'And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man who holds the keys of this power have a wife, and he teaches unto her the law of my Priesthood as pertaining to these things, then shall she *believe* and give him other wives and administer unto him, or she shall be *destroyed*, saith the Lord your God, for I will destroy her!' Now we are created for the express purpose of increase; that's why we are here. The Lord ordained marriage between male and female as a law through which pre-existing spirits could come here and enter into this second stage of existence. And, sisters, it's your business to provide these spirits bodies; it's your duty, and your duty must be performed if you ever expect to gain God's approval. Nay, even your soul's salvation depends upon it, for if you do not fulfill the commands of the Almighty as revealed through His Prophets you will be destroyed, if not here, then hereafter. The burdens may seem heavy, but, I tell you, you have got to round up your shoulders and bear them if you ever expect to be exalted to glory and queenship in the unseen worlds. And another thing I will tell you, sisters, you mus'n't marry outside of God's holy church if you care about salvation; you can't do it and be saved. Like apostasy,

that seals your fate. It is a sinning away of the Holy Ghost, and can only be atoned for and remitted by the shedding of your own blood.

“And, brethren, to you, too, I bring the message of the Lord; take unto yourselves wives, be fruitful and replenish the earth. If you are faithful servants of the Most High it is your duty and privilege, the same privilege that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob of old enjoyed, the privilege of Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, of many of the ancients who walked in God’s own footsteps, obeyed His commands, and were approved of Him. Why, we are certain, though the fact is not capable of positive proof, that Christ Himself was a married man. One thing is sure, there was several holy women who greatly loved Jesus—such as Mary and Martha, and Mary Magdalene. If all the acts of Jesus were written, we no doubt should learn that these beloved women were His wives.

“And, again, the grand reason for the burst of public sentiment in anathemas upon Christ and His disciples, causing His crucifixion, was evidently based upon polygamy, according to the testimony of the philosophers who rose in that day. Was not Jesus the bridegroom at the marriage of Cana of Galilee? Now, there was actually a marriage, and if Jesus was not the bridegroom on that occasion, please tell me who was? I see that some of the ungodly revile me for assuming this position. All

I've got to say in reply is that they worship a Saviour who is too pure and holy to fulfill the commands of His Father. I worship one just pure and holy enough to fulfill all righteousness; not only the righteous law of baptism, but the still more righteous and important injunction to multiply and replenish the earth. Why, it is the greatest principle of all! the kernel of creation. Without marriage, woman is lost; without the plural tie, the being sealed to a man of God, she can never, at least, be exalted to queenship in Heaven. She may be saved after a fashion without, perhaps; enter the very lowest courts of Glory like menials as it were, but her Heaven will scarcely be worth the having. You don't want to be servants and scullions in the mansions above? Then set your mark high, shoulder the celestially-appointed burdens that are laid upon your sex, and be queens in the Courts of the Most High.

“Now, there is another thing I'm going to be plain about, and that is an apostasy from God's Holy Church. There is a good deal of this going on among us, and it must cease. We must save these deluded persons if we have to take their lives to do it. It's God's will that we should. I tell you the time is come when justice must be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet; when we must take the sword and ask: 'Are you for

God? and if you are not heartily on the Lord's side *you will be hewn down!*

"It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for the sins of the fall and them committed by man, and yet men can commit sins which it can never remit. As it was in ancient days, so it is in our day. There are sins that can be atoned for by offerings upon an altar, as in ancient days, but there are other sins that the blood of a lamb, of a calf, of a turtle dove, or even of Christ can not remit: they must be atoned for by the *blood of the person himself!* And one of these unpardonable sins is apostasy, the falling away from obedience to God's revelations as given through His Prophets, and the divulgement to the wicked of the holy and secret ordinances of the gospel.

"But, says one, this is murder! I tell you it is not, it is atonement. You will find in that divine document, the Revelations on Celestial Marriage and the duties and privileges of God's Priesthood by the Prophet Smith, in sections 6 and 9, that the taking of *innocent* life and the shedding of *innocent* blood is alone murder. Now, the blood of an apostate, or other wicked person, is not innocent, and its shedding does not constitute murder, or even sin, when the spilling of it is necessary to God's glory. In the case of the unregenerated their death avails nothing toward their salvation, but with one who has once been regenerated and held the keys

to the kingdom, if they fall away, the sacrificing them before God restores their right to eternal glory, and remits their grievous sin.

“All mankind love themselves, still, but let these principles be known by an individual, and he would be glad to have his blood shed. This would be loving ourselves even unto an eternal exaltation. Will you love your brothers and sisters like this when they have a sin that can not be atoned save by the spilling of their blood? Will you love that man or woman well enough to shed their blood? That is what Jesus Christ meant when He commanded you ‘to love your neighbor as yourself.’ He never meant for a man or woman to love their enemy in their wickedness, never! Such a doctrine is revolting and impossible. His language was left as it is for those to read who have the spirit to discern between truth and error; it was so left for those who can discern the things of God.

“Now, I want to tell you that many a man has come to me and asked that his blood be taken, and further, I want to tell you that I could point you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain in order to atone for their sins since the setting-up of God’s kingdom here among these mountains. And I have known scores and hundreds of people for whom there would have been a chance if their lives had been taken and their blood spilled upon the ground as a smoking incense to the

Almighty. It is your business to watch over your neighbors, and if you see them falling from grace you know how they can be saved.

“This may seem like a very severe doctrine, but it’s God’s will and must be obeyed. You had better be lost to earth than lost to Heaven. The power of increase, the fruit of celestial marriage, wherein is dominion and exaltation and crowns of immeasurable glory shall be ours, while they who reject the Gospel as revealed in these latter days, who fall from once accepted grace, or shed innocent blood, shall be thrust away with the devil and his angels into outer darkness, beyond the spheres where flows the river of salvation or blooms the tree of life, there to suffer in hell for the period allotted by eternal judgment. But we shall be rulers over many things. In eternity we shall stand in the order of the family organization, and all things shall be ours. Of our increase there shall be no end.”

There was more of this terrible fulmination ; tithing, baptism for the dead, corporal and spiritual affinity, and other Mormon dogmas. Trean sat through the long harangue with eyes cast down, but Elchard’s eyes blazed against the speaker’s face, and when the Prophet ceased to speak he rose to his feet, and an unusual and extraordinary thing took place.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DENUNCIATION.

FOR a moment Elchard stood looking at the Prophet, his eyes snapping, his face white with anger, and the blue veins about his temples distended with burning blood.

“Can I speak a moment to this people, sir?” he asked.

The rustle that followed the Prophet’s finishing clause fell at once into silence. With an astonished look the great man stood and hesitated an instant, while a white film seemed to come forward out of the flesh of his large face and settle in a little pallid ring about his mouth. “Certainly, if you have any thing instructive to offer,” he said.

“Thank you; that is precisely the nature of what I have to say,” replied Elchard, and turning toward the people he drew himself up and looked at them. The stillness of death fell upon the house, this stranger looked in his anger so like a white human flame. The fine strong modelling of his form, the straight nose and dilated nostrils, the iron set of the lower face and the intellectual and delicate turn of the upper, and above all the flashing blue-gray eyes, swept such a thrill through the

audience as the baggy blowsy gentry of the pulpit platform might never hope to produce.

“My friends,” he began, “I do not wish to speak to you as a religionist, or as a minister of the Gospel, but as a man and as a brother. I am not a public speaker, but I could never look my fellows in the face again, and would never cease to execrate the cowardice of my own heart, did I let this hour pass by without warning you against this man. Brigham Young was born a poor man; he was a painter by trade and inured to hard work. When he joined this people he was still poor; when he came to these mountain valleys with you his circumstances were not yet improved; he had not yet risen to power. Twenty years of unexampled privilege with your purses and your liberties have made him not only one of the richest men in our federation, but has set him among the world’s great princes of fortune! You are poor; penury and isolation and tithe-paying is your portion, while yonder in the blooming basin of the Great Salt Lake he is fed like a King and housed palatially. To-day his workmen are finishing a palace for his favorite wife that cost one hundred thousand dollars: but a month since one of his wives brought suit for a divorce from him, alleging that his income was forty thousand dollars each month. Yet he has told you here to-day that the salvation of your souls depend upon the payment of one tenth of all your produc-

tions and earnings each year into a treasury of which he is custodian, and the condition of which he has not shown you for twenty years! Men! how long will you rest supinely in the arms of his perfidious assumptions and be plundered? When shall your hearts be open to the admissions of the burning inference of this most glaring fact?"

"That will do!" broke in the Prophet, with a rage, as he stood behind the pulpit, with many colors flying about his face. But Elchard gave him no heed, and went on with a rushing, clarion-like delivery:

"And he has told you here to-day that murder is a virtue, and has bidden you to take each other's lives! God in Heaven, what a monster! Oh, unspeakable, terrible advice! And he has adjured you, too, by as much as you long for a life hereafter, in as much as you hope to look upon the glories of a better world than this, to slay your love, the heart's sweetest and purest emanation, and sink it in appetite and the impartial division of the brutes. Oh, fiendish admonition! to bid woman upon penalty of loss of soul to become one of the many wives to the man she loves! to bid her as she hopes for Heaven to go out and solicit another to share her husband with her under the same roof! This can not be human invention, this is the ingenuity of hell! Oh, Father in Heaven! if I were one of Thy daughters here, I would repudiate Thy

Divine government. I would go up to Thy bar on the last great day and I would say: 'I go to perdition because Thou madest me a *woman*! I can not accept of Heaven at the price of earthly hell! I was true to the purest principle Thou didst ever plant in the human breast, and it made me a paradise down on yon little star called Earth; now if my reward is *fire*, give it me! The heaven I had won by purity, and I scorn to enter into this larger Paradise of Thine through wrong and unspeakable debasement.'

"Will you stop!" brayed the Prophet, coming round before the pulpit with his fists clenched and face pallid with rage. The other occupants of the platform were looking well-nigh as cut up as their maddened leader, while a straining embarrassment held the audience silent.

"No, I will not. No discourtesy to you, sir, can equal the atrocious attempt you have made upon this audience!" said Elchard. "This house is not yours; it is the property of this people, and they have not yet forbid my denouncing this sublimation of blasphemy which you have pronounced within it!"

At that moment John D. Lee and Bishop Parley stepped down from the platform with lowering brows and came toward him, but Trean Hartman rose up in the aisle before them, her face white, her bosom heaving.

“Stand back; don’t touch him; your words alone have given him pain enough!” she said, in a voice not loud, but sharp and hard like sound smitten from a piece of steel.

The two heavy figures stopped, with astonishment changing every line of face and form, then they advanced again, and Lee growled, roughly: “Stand aside, madam!”

But the statue-like barrier did not move, nor the repellent hand fall, while the girl’s eyes looked straight into the eyes before them with the burning steadiness of the eagle’s. What a superb bar in the way of violence!

“He shall say what he pleases,” she said, “and if you injure him you shall first pass over me!”

“Miss Hartman,” said Elchard’s voice behind her, “come, I cannot subject you to this,” and she turned and followed him out like an enraged queen.

No words were spoken until they stood among the sheltering lilacs; then he turned and looked at her. The eyes were full and swimming that she lifted to his face.

“You must go away now,” she faltered, “out of the Territory; it will cost your life for you to remain!”

“No,” he said, steadily; “my father’s interests and my own are over there, and *you* are here. These men are cowards; they cannot be else.

They will never molest me when the sun is over us, and I shall have a care where I am when that goes down. Treat, do you think I could leave you *now?*" and he held her hand tightly, looking fondly down into her face as they went slowly forward.

For answer her face fell with a rush of rose-bloom over neck and cheeks, but while her heart leaped there was a low beating at the bottom which said: "I shall lose him! Oh, I shall lose him because he loves me so!"

They found her father lying weak and silent when they went in, but he turned his eyes to them with expectant hope. What he saw in their faces, though smiles were there, made him turn his head away with a groan. So the magic of the Prophet had failed?

They did not touch that which had occurred with word—they had no need, the trouble of it was in their faces—but inquired after his feelings and his comforts tenderly.

Just after the sun went down he fell asleep, and, leaving a kiss upon his forehead, the daughter went out where Paul was pacing to and fro along the porch. The flame of his anger was still licking at his heart, but at sight of her face it died away, and they sat down and talked. Then slowly the twilight deepened, so slowly its changes could scarcely be followed, for when the eye was lifted,

the gold tips seemed leaden russet and the mountains solid umber at the base; and now the peaks were a dead umber, and the mountains black at bottom, but the eye had not been challenged; insensibly the colors had come and gone, pushed from their places by milder, sabler layers until all was shadowy and dark.

In the same hour another forehead was pushed out from among the lilac leaves, and another followed it, looking upon the lovers, but with a scowl. Was it the face of Orsen Beam or Enoch Arsen? A mask of shadows was over it, but through these veils that swung softly as the branches moved in the slow breeze, it seemed to writhe and scowl afresh, then fade back into deeper shadows and pass away. Perhaps it was only one of those fantastic semblances of the human face fashioned by moonlight among tree branches and nodding leaves; but, whatever its character, Trean, though unconscious of its presence, had shuddered and risen up, and he who stood beside her had folded her close and kissed her and led her in, leaving the lilacs nodding at the moon and the light winds gossiping in whispers among the branches.

At the sunset hour the Prophet, too, was pacing to and fro, but with a smarting heart. The blows dealt by Elchard had aroused all his hard and cruel nature. Of larger and stronger growth even than appetite in this man were greed for gold and power

and passion for revenge. Where he hated he was savage, and he hated whatever lifted hand, or voice, or law, or even love, in question of the system he had in great part erected, and whose honors and opportunities for gain were like a perpetual and intoxicating incense to his soul. Reared meagrely in every way, unschooled save by crude hardship into a gnawing avarice for ease and adulation, it could not perhaps be held unreasonable that the place he had achieved should seem exceeding sweet. But alas, the manner of his coming to it, and the infamy of the thing achieved ! A noble nature would have spurned them away as if they were attacking fires, but to this man treading to and fro in Parley's tithing office they were, perhaps, not as dear as life, but dearer at least than Heaven.

Parley was near at hand. Sitting with his chin upon his chest by a table on which rested a bottle and some empty glasses ; he looked dark and heavy, and now and then lifted a venomous, blood-shot eye to note the workings of his master's face. Presently there came a low rap at the door ; the Prophet said : " Come in," without pausing, and Dr. Dubette entered. He advanced at once to the table, wrote a number of names upon a paper, and handed it to his superior. Parley looked at it a moment, took up a pen, crossed out all the names but one, and handed it to the Prophet. That worthy nodded, sat down and quite filled a page with

writing, then handed it to Parley, and said: "Read this to him in person, then destroy it." The three then arose, clasped hands in a circle, stood a moment with compressed lips, and then passed out in silence.

An hour afterward Enoch Arsen, standing by the locust trees near the Bishop's gate, looked up with an evil grin, and in the same hour Orson Beam, upon his knees under the peach-trees in his mother's garden, with a sweat of agony upon his brow, was praying and wrestling before his Maker. At midnight, and distraught and struggling still, but miles away among the ashen sage-brush to the west, the moonlight found him. But when it had died away over the mountains, and the grizzled east here and there began to take fire again, he had returned and was standing far up the mountain side above Hartman's house. He was looking downward when some strips of cloud at the zenith began to glow from the great conflagration rising in the east, and the cabin rose slowly out of the shadows.

The same reflection lit upon his face; it was like the visage of a swimmer who, through a whole night, had fought the sea, and had lain hands a thousand times upon the shore only to be drawn struggling back. For a long time he stood there, haggard, hollow-eyed and weary, looking down. Presently a thin curl of smoke began wavering upward from the roof his eyes were resting upon,

then a human figure emerged from the porch and passed down into the little meadow by the ford. A horse was grazing there, and the man upon the mountain staggered and turned about like one beaten by an invisible tempest.

“He is going to the mines to-day!” he cried. “Oh, Father in Heaven, tell me what to do!”

What was the nature of the storm in which he had been wandering all the night? A tempest of conflicting forces, a battle of influences which, like clean and unclean birds, had fought all night over the rulership of his spirit. He had been commanded to commit murder. The man whom he believed God’s representative on earth, whose voice was the voice of the God whom he feared and worshipped, had laid this awful duty upon him. And the blood he was to spill! O bitterness! perfidy! it ran sweet and warm with love for the woman he himself loved! What propulsion and repulsion lay in the thought! It seemed to rend him. The putting out of eyes in which the green earth and blue sky, and a face that he loved, had been reflected, and had seemed dear and beautiful! The defacement and battering down of a living and comely image of God, and its burial forever from the eyes that loved it! The agony through all that sensitive, throbbing image itself as death was inflicted, and *her* suffering, and the anguish of a mother and a weeping father waiting in the East for one who

would never come! These and a thousand other shades and aspects of the deed at times swept over him like an engulfing wave and well nigh crushed him to the earth.

But he rose again. Was not his duty before him? Were not his vows on record both in earth and Heaven? Would not the guilt, if any, rest with God or His Priesthood? Might not *she* love him at last? love *him!* and after such a deed! This thought was more confounding than all the rest; it beat him about the mountain side like a material weapon, its every recurrence striking him an excruciating blow.

Suddenly he started down the mountain, and in half an hour came striding into the village. Scarce a motion of life was there, and he saddled his horse, vaulted upon it, and rode up the lane to Hartman's. Elchard's horse with saddle on was standing by the gate, but no one was visible. The horseman seemed to waver in his intention a moment, then rode on. A little farther up the valley he turned in the saddle and looked back. Two figures among the pines above the house made his blood leap, then sink down through all its channels like ice. His fingers clutched into themselves about the rein, and, turning his horse upon a winding path, he crossed the valley, entered the undergrowth that skirted the opposite range, found the road leading back down

the valley toward Eagle canyon, and rode forward with a dark and gloomy face.

A moment after he had disappeared Paul and Trean came down from the pines. A touch of Heaven was in their faces, but with it on the girl's there lay a shade of sore foreboding.

"On the fourth day from this you may expect me, darling," he said. "I will send a trusty laborer over from the mines with instructions to do whatever work is necessary about the place here. Use him in any way that you may need; have him watch with your father if it seems best, and should you need me send him at once."

"Yes," she half whispered, "I shall be anxious till you come. Don't go out after dark, will you?" and her eyes looked large and shadowy as she pleaded.

"No, darling; I shall be careful on many accounts, not the least of which is the look in these fine eyes before me!" and he mounted his horse, kissed his hand to her with a smile, and galloped down till at last the woods about the mouth of Eagle canyon received him from her sight.

CHAPTER IX.

A STRANGE CONVERSION.

THE sky was very high and blue, with here and there a flock of white clouds floating in the pure ether or resting upon the mountain tops; the valley, lined with many hues of brown and green, hung like a great map of light and color between the mighty ranges, and the vast ground seemed to murmur with the soft noise of happy insects. Perhaps it was this beauty of earth in conjunction with love that lighted his face and stamped a shining spirit there. We are of the earth; its moods are largely ours; death makes us sovereigns over them at last, perchance, but while we walk among these elements clothed in heated dust we shall walk in large part their joyous or dejected slaves.

So much, however, of influence do human sophistries and systems weave about us, so like invisible dogs are their exactions set upon us, driving us into their nets with fear, that even nature's hold upon the helm of action is often lost. Even there, while one rode forward with soul responding to the happy humor of the morning, another, responsive to a credal system, was creeping through the cool greenery with brow dripping, with pulse-beats strident and

uneven, fighting against yet panting forward before the unseen dogs that bit and bayed him on to evil.

Suddenly the undergrowth became thin, then opened out upon the road. He stopped; over top of the tangle he could see the unsuspecting horseman riding forward with face lifted and evidently with a song upon his lips; but the heart of the man who watched beat so loud he could not hear. Drops of sweat were falling from his chin, his great chest seemed to labor for air, and his hand that held a long-barrelled revolver shook as with palsy.

Should he do the deed when the man rode across the opening? Commit murder? Orson Beam a skulking animal athirst for blood? Orson Beam, who had preached a wrong-forgiving, enemy-loving Christ to humanity, to take the life from a happy, innocent fellow-man? Yes, but why was this man happy? Ah, why was he happy? And was he innocent? Who was this stranger that he should be mindful of him? Who that he should ride so jocund and joyous through a land won from the wilderness by a people he had denounced?

Like lightning these reflections fled across his brain. The horseman was entering the opening. Instantly all the pulses of his body seemed to stop; he lifted the revolver in both hands; it was motionless as a rock. The rider took off his hat, turned his face toward him with eyes lifted toward the mountain side; he took quick aim at the white

forehead; a strange clearness of eye and ear came over him; he could see the delicate grain of the fair skin, and the murmured song that came across the fresh lip below sounded strong and sonorous; he touched the trigger; a crash to his straining senses like thunder seemed to shake the world; the horse leaped into the air, the singer reeled round and sank forward, then with the next leap of the horse fell backwards limp and lifeless among the roadside brambles.

But what of Orson Beam? For a moment he stood stupefied by horror, with the little puff of revolver smoke melting upward among the leaves. The revulsion of mood was so swift it stunned him like a heavy blow. He stared before him with a dull, animal look an instant, glanced at the revolver in his hand, turned it over curiously, then suddenly started back against the tangle with eyes alive and wide, with arms outspread, and his heart, which had seemed to forget its function through the last few moments, booming heavily in his bosom.

What did he see before him? Not the deed he had done, not its effect upon a human body, but his own soul, blood-blotched, reeking, horrible! It seemed to stand apart from him, yet it was himself utterly changed and frightful with deformity. For only a little space he stood and stared at it, pressing himself back against the shrubbery, then the weapon dropped unconsciously from his hand, and with a

cry of terror he fled through the wood. His blood seemed on fire. Where was his horse? It was up there toward the mouth of the canyon among the shad-bushes! No, he had thought of bringing it there, but had left it secreted in a clump of willows back along the edge of the mountains. But what need had he of a horse? *He* had killed a man. He looked behind him in terror. Where should he go? Home to his mother? My God, no! Not where any human eye would ever look upon his face! They would all know he was a murderer! a *murderer!* Where was the revolver? Let him put out the flames of shame and horror that were burning in his heart! He stopped, and, panting heavily, opened his hands wide before him. What had he done with it? Why, what was this running out of his sleeve and across his hand and dropping from his finger-ends? Blood! *blood!* and he sprang sidewise and turned round and round, holding the dripping hand away from him and looking at it wildly and shouting at it with all but insanity. In a moment he stood still, save for his panting and quivering of limbs, and almost laughed. Why, it was his own blood! That was all right; let it run. But where did it come from? Oh, here was a bullet-hole through the top of his shoulder! That was odd; who had inflicted it? It had seemed as if he had heard two reports when he shot at Elchard; perhaps it occurred then; if so, in the strain of the moment

he had felt nothing. He looked steadily ahead of him for a little time but still breathed hard. Some one had attempted to take *his* life at the same moment he had attempted Elchard's. What an instant in which to send a human spirit to its Maker, just when it had foully sent another soul before it! Nay, would they not both have appeared before God in the same moment, the one happy and pure, the other mad and reeking? He shuddered and looked up at the sky. It was blue and deep, and white flocks of clouds were still moving across it; then he went on, with his frenzy fallen to a dead heaviness of heart that seemed fit to drag him to his knees.

In a few moments he came to the foot of the mountain. He felt sick and dizzy; he would look at his wound—well, let it bleed; perhaps God would have justice done now. He caught hold of the sage brush and pulled himself up the mountain side a few rods, and sank down just below a huge upshooting splinter of stone and tried to pray. But, though he essayed with all his strength, he could not. His tongue seemed thick and refused to articulate, while objects about him had a strange and hazy aspect. Was he dying, or was it the reaction after so long a period of strife and emotion? He turned and looked at the valley he loved; there was the distant village, his mother's little house among the trees on the hither side, Burl Hartman's

cabin beyond it near the pines, the fields and meadows divided by the creek as by a road of phosphor, but all seeming to rock and glimmer together as in a dream.

Suddenly some moving object upon the left challenged his eyes; he roused himself and turned toward it; *Paul Elchard, drooping over his horse's neck, was riding into the mouth of Eagle canyon!* and with a cry his would-be slayer fell forward in the chaparral and was silent. It was a dead faint. For a long time he lay quietly in his darkness, resting it seemed, then started, opened his eyes, sprang up, and looked about him. He threw off his coat, tore away his shirtsleeve, and twisting it into a knot thrust it into his wound, then went crashing downward through the bramble.

Soon he was near the little plot of green which opened upon the road; but as he pushed into it with eager foot the gnawing question at his heart melted into a great fear. When he lifted his eyes would not their sweet capacity be blotted out? their ability to ever again present him with the delights of happy vision be destroyed? Would not that form which Trecan loved, and which had yielded him such gentle greeting, be lying there beside the road ready to blast him?

No, it was not there! A great thrill of relief swept through him; he flung his arms upward with a cry of joy and turned about; the revolver was

lying before him ; he crushed it into the soft earth with his foot, crashed back through the tangle to his horse, vaulted into the saddle, forgetful of his wound, and rode away a free man.

A free man? Ah, no. The intent, the motive! Ah, was he not after all a murderer? No; the injury to the other, which would in large part have made him criminal, had been escaped. Yet his soul was blackened; he felt it heavy and loathsome within him. Like thousands more among those mountains, his was an honest nature, scrupulous in word and deed, and in the beginning drawn to this system by its seeming nearness to the Almighty, to become in the end bemuddled and befooled by priestly tricks, until the brutally material and the spiritually fine were blended and confused into one. Adam, through the same process, became God of this sphere under the Almighty, and afterwards came as Christ to redeem his fallen offsprings that they, too, might become gods rising in exaltation in the ratio of their progeny.

This was a piece of priestcraft, enslaving woman to the priestly will and yoking her with indescribable servitude. That such a doctrine, and others quite as revolting, should have passed into practice, is only explainable by the fact that an oath-bound priesthood, comprising one fourth of the people and including the shrewdest and most wealthy, utterly dominated every phase of life. In a dis-

course, delivered in the great Tabernacle at the centre of this theocracy, the Prophet Young, but little prior to the period with which this chronicle has to do, averred as follows :

“The Priesthood of the Son of God is from everlasting to everlasting; it is without beginning of days or end of years. It is virtually the power by which worlds are and were created, and the power by which they are now held in existence, and by which all that are to come will be organized, governed, controlled, and sustained. This Priesthood must come to the children of men, in order for them to understand the *modus operandi* of establishing the Kingdom of God upon earth. This Priesthood must govern and control the people who undertake to build up this Kingdom; and the rule of the Priesthood of the Son of God will extend to every avenue, and will control every department of the labor of those who are engaged in this great work. This Priesthood must govern and control, or else the *people* will not become perfect.”

So the people toiled forward under the yoke; the Priesthood was the State and every soul a slave. They were in the main sincere, else they could not have been trodden under foot; they wore the yoke looking for the soon coming of Christ and the ushering in of the millennium; they bent their backs for the lash of incessant outrage, believing they were suffering that God's kingdom might arise on earth.

The elements they fed upon were irrational and dementing, and had another fourth of a century passed without civilization having reached and forced a touch of relieving light upon them, doubtless their isolation and fanaticism would have ended in general madness.

As it was, when the iron highway and the locomotive reached them, through the doctrine of blood atonement, no life was safe, murder was prevalent, insanity rife, and a thousand outrages had been committed that shall be nameless here. Men were married to their half-sisters, their grand-daughters, wedded often to a mother and her two or three daughters, the old were mated to the very young, and such dementia and debauchery prevailed as sends a chill of horror through a gentle heart.

Man may not, even in so large a body as this, be long cut off from the fair reasonableness of general humanity with safety, or, so separated, be long fed upon sophistry and fanaticism, without endangering mentality and life; this is the great lesson of Mormonism.

Orson Beam did not come to his mother's house until the lamps were lighted that night. When she saw him standing in the door, she called out his name, with hands lifted and a look of unspeakable dismay, so much had hunger, weakness, and emotion changed him.

What had he done? she implored. For answer

he fell down before her, with his head in her lap, and cried like a child. He had done the Prophet's bidding, he sobbed, and his heart was broken! He had lost his innocence! Oh, he had lost his innocence! God had turned away His face from him, and he was in darkness, in bitter, bitter darkness!

The woman's lips tightened; then she began to moan over him. This crushed condition of her son was indeed inexplicable and appalling. Suddenly he leaped up, and cried out in strong feeling against the system under which they suffered.

"We are involved as in the meshes of a net; we have no freedom!" he cried. "O mother, this is not religion—this is villainy! We are not made free and pure by the Gospel, but enslaved and polluted! The woman sat and stared at him like one struck dumb.

"I tried to kill a fellow-man!" he broke out again. "I was bidden to do it by one who claims to be so pure that God speaks directly through him to us. O mother, it has taken away my innocence! I shall never be clean again!"

"Mother," he went on beseechingly, "you do not know how much of infamy there is in this. We of the earlier Priesthood have been compelled to subscribe to such oaths in the secret chamber of the Endowment House as would make your gentle blood run cold. I have vowed, under penalty of death, not to reveal them. But to-day, lying yon-

der among the bushes a culprit instead of a minister of the Gospel, the hideousness of it all rose up before me like a mountain of horrors. These men who are at the front are using us; from the incipieney of our cause have made us slaves and criminals for their own unholy end! I have done serving them, mother. To-day they came before me with every selfish purpose laid bare; their greed and moral deformities as clear to me as their physical parts would be were the walls of their bodies made of transparent ice. The whole system, too, from end to end, became illumined in my anguish of heart, became revolting! I am done with it!

“Look at me, mother! What has it done for me? Strive as I would after purity of heart and uprightness of spirit, it has left me defiled and miserable, a thing of loathing in the eyes of Heaven! Can such a system be Christian and the way of salvation? Never! O mother, lying out there I saw what it was! An ancient barbarism put away by Christ, but fastened again, by designing men, upon the present. It is the same, mother—the exclusiveness, the pretension of being the chosen and special children of God, all other people not in accord with us being supposably hated by Him, and our rightful prey, the practice of plural marriage, female slavery, blood atonement, tithing, government by prophets and priests, the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and a hundred other sins

and phasmas of old barbaric days. God's chosen people is the *human race*, mother, not a little handful of Mormons here among the mountains. He loves them all alike.

"Christ taught that we should forgive our enemies and do them good, and that nothing could justify us in doing evil. What are we taught here? Oh, we have been following the commands of a base man, and not the fine monitions of the Beautiful One of old! We have been deceived and deluded, mother, and must leave it now. I cannot live under it longer!"

The mother, while he had gone treading heavily to and fro and crying out against their religion, in his wild bitterness of heart, had swayed forward with her forehead in her hands and with tears slipping silently from her withered cheeks. She did not lift her head when he ceased to speak; and he flung himself down upon his knees before her, and, with his arm about her shoulders, kissed her silvery hair.

"Mother, you have doubted the truth of this system for a long time?" he said. She nodded assent, still weeping.

"You have not married again through disbelief in polygamy, nor passed through the Endowment House from fear of its obligations? You have clung to Mormonism on my account—because you thought I received it as truth and had entered its

Priesthood?" She bowed her head, with a sob. He kissed her again and rose up.

"We will leave it then," he said more calmly. "I shall get permission from the Bishop for you to go by the new railroad to visit your people in Vermont. You need never return. I have not finished my work here yet, but I will soon follow you. This little home of ours is as nothing—let it go. In the great free world we are going to I shall soon earn you a better one."

The woman rose and put her arms about his neck, and clung there weeping. He was her only child and everything to her. At length she looked up into his face with swimming eyes.

"How bad was it, dear?" she whispered. He winced at the query.

"Not murder, mother!" he cried hoarsely. "Oh, thank God, he escaped!"

"Was it the young stranger?"

"Yes, mother. Oh, he is one of nature's noblemen—brave and gentle; and my whole being is blackened by the attempt. When I have made restitution, and quit the system that has all but wrecked me, mother, then I shall be free again."

She kissed him then for the first time since his return, and after that he showed her his wound. The bullet had only gone through the flesh at the top of his shoulder, he said; he did not care for it. Who had furnished him with this evidence of hate,

or an evil and ulterior purpose, he did not know. He had seen no one save the young stranger as, with his hat in hand and enjoying the shade, he rode forward singing airily. It was a mystery, but it should not trouble him ; his own part in the outrage was all he cared to consider.

The woman washed his wound, in all tenderness and bound it with clean cloths. An utter weariness, had spread all through his being with the easing of his agony of mind ; and soon, in his little room, he had lost himself to all in slumber.

In the same hour, with her feeble father sleeping quietly in his dim room below, Trean was standing up at the edge of the pines, looking with longing eyes across the valley where the moonlight fell whitely over the Eagle prongs.

Thus love watched, as it ever watches, while moon and stars went slowly over and the great world slept.

CHAPTER X.

WHICH CLOSES WITH A PROPOSAL.

ELCHARD had escaped, but with a dark streak across his temple where the hissing lead had passed. Instant darkness had closed upon him ; and when the light came back again, he was lying upon the

thick tangle of shrubbery by the roadside. It had eased his fall with its mat of green sprigs; but he was dazed, and a deadly sickness seized him with returning consciousness. The half-healed injury in his side, disturbed by the fall, fetched a sharp twinge, too, with every breath he drew.

How swift a change had come upon his happy humor! In a few moments he got upon his feet in the road, but staggered about with dizziness. What had happened him? He pressed a hand upon either temple and shut his eyes tight in an effort to dispel the film in which his faculties seemed wrapped. He looked up at the sky; only a few fleecy clouds were drifting there: then it had not been a lightning-stroke? He seemed to remember a flash and a loud report; but they were so blent into the wave of darkness that engulfed him, that he could not bring the fact definitely before his mind.

The smarting line across his temple caught his attention; he ran his finger ends along it; a little groove had been cut through the hair where the leaden messenger had gone; he stood still looking straight before him, and his blood began to boil. It was clear enough now; that burning line was the pathway of a bullet! Ah, they had already returned the compliment! His denunciation had borne swift and unexpected fruit! His horse was nibbling among the bushes further up the road; he caught it, and mounting with a good deal of pain, in an-

other half hour he came to the mines. The men swarmed out of the works to greet him, and he had a smile and hearty shake of the hand for every comer. His sickness had gone, and the pain from his former hurt had subsided; he said nothing, however, regarding the attempt upon his life.

In the little office the foreman gave him an account of the mine's operations in his absence. After that Elchard despatched a man to Trean, with instructions for him to remain and assist about the little farm until recalled, and to assure the young mistress of the place that her former guest was well. He then sent another messenger to Salt Lake City, which lay beyond the next range of mountains to the west, with a letter from his affianced to her sister, Mrs. Smoot, conveying intelligence of their father's sickness, and craving her presence. Elchard also commissioned the young man to get his mail, and to call at the house where he lodged when in the city and bring from his room a Winchester rifle.

After these and other pieces of business waiting his direction had been put under way, he went up to his room above the office and lay down. He felt shaken and weary, but his thoughts went on a long excursion, to the East, and again and again to the woman he loved, and in and out his environment, and round and round in many a prying convolution, ere they would submit to slumber. Even then it

seemed but a moment ere they were awake again and weaving him a dream.

Trean seemed standing far on a mountain side, as he had stood once, with a great mist like a sea of milk below her. From top to toe she seemed apparelled all in glistening white. Even her hair and eyes were full of light, and with arms extended she was singing with her face to the sun. It seemed a wonderfully sweet song, and warmed him with pleasure. Suddenly as by a flash the fantasy ceased, and far below in the mist, figures were dimly moving and a voice was calling him, the same voice, but fallen into distress. In an instant, even before he could answer, it had changed and seemed the voice of Orson Beam calling his name so piteously he sprang out of slumber to answer it. But nothing was there save the plain furnishings of the little chamber, and the sunshine falling through the window upon the floor.

Dreams are but the grotesque or half truthful shadows of facts and former suggestions, perhaps; the re-illuminating of old mind-pictures, or it may be a full round thought or memory broken and distorted by the corporal darkness that trembles and lifts and settles about the never-sleeping soul. But whatever their significance, and that they have any lies much in doubt, some curious facts attend them. As in this instance, it may be, for at the moment of Elchard's dream his betrothed was standing on the

mountain side above the pines stretching out her hands in an ecstasy of feeling and singing a song of love toward him, while Beam was across the valley kneeling in the bramble praying, and now and then breaking out imploringly to the one he had wronged. Perhaps the two distant souls, straining so intently toward him, somehow projected the vision upon his mind in its all but abnormal condition. Be that as it may, he slept no longer, and after turning the dream about mentally for a little time went down and set to work at his desk.

Meantime the Prophet, with his train, had gone on his way with a balmy forgiving exterior but a cold and rankling heart. He had said with a holy smile of commiseration as his carriage was starting, "that the Lord would avenge the insult given His servant, and cut off the wicked in His own good time," but to Parley he had said: "Pick out a man to do the work if Beam fails; Rockwell and my men will attend to the fellow if he comes over to the city! you had best manage some way to send this very smart young sister over to Smoot's too, and I will see personally to her case."

And the Bishop had assented with great deference, but when the Prophet's carriages had gone, and he stood alone in the tithing office, he glowered darkly at the floor for a long time in silence. At last he threw himself heavily into a chair and brought his fist down on the desk with a crash.

“Who else, I’d like to know, is going to get between me and that girl?” he snorted. “Here’s Arsen and Beam, both under me, and this infernal Yankee, that I’ve got no control over, and now who but the President of the Church himself, with his foot on my gullet, has his nose pointed in the same direction! Now, blank me, if somebody ain’t goin’ to get fooled in this little affair! and if it’s *me*, I think the rest’ll find ’emselves in the same boat when the game’s over, or my name’s not Hyrum Parley!” and he glowered more blackly than ever.

At that there came a timid tap or two upon the door, and he growled, roughly: “Well, come in!” In response to his surly invitation one of his wives entered, a tall, well-formed, young Scandinavian woman, with light hair, fair skin, and blue but not very intelligent eyes. She was his latest acquisition, one of a band of Mormon immigrants sent to settle about Mooseneck. She had come without parent or relative, having been decoyed away from her pleasant home by the specious promises and saintly wiles of a Mormon missionary. Upon the arrival of the company she had at once been chosen by the Bishop as a servant, as is much the custom, and presently became his wife. For a time she had reigned as the acknowledged favorite, but her charm for her lord, which in such a case could hardly be else than of questionable and ephemeral character, had begun to wane.

“Well, what is it now, Cistene?” he asked, without looking up.

“Lucy hafe whipped my chile!” she cried, with quivering lip.

Lucy was the first wife, and rather old and acrid, and the Bishop's brow grew puckered and thundery. He made a movement as if to rise, then a thought seemed to intervene, and he smoothed the trenches out of his brow, and, with a rather sheepish blandness, drew the weeping girl down on his lap and kissed her.

“Cistene,” he said, “I am thinking of taking another wife soon, a girl who will make these fussy fools keep to their knittin’! Of course, Cistene, I shall always love you best, and I am going to build you a little house on the empty lot across the street there so you may live unmolested. Of course I want your consent, though,” he added, coaxingly.

The poor thing looked at him through her tears. “Why, iss there not now enough?” she implored. “Why do you need more when there iss so much tears now and misery!”

“Oh, that is the way the Lord's kingdom is built up, you know, Cistene! Besides, the Lord has shown Brother Young that it is my duty to take another wife; that I am to marry a certain party for His name's honor and glory. She will take your apartment in the house, Cistene, but you are to have

the little new house over the way when it is built, you know."

The girl disengaged herself and stood up. "You hafte stop the love," she sobbed. "When I been put away and leaf over there you not coome or care for me any more!" And she started toward the door. The Bishop got up and put his arms about her and began to coax and wheedle again. Among other cheerful things he told her it was the Lord's command that she should acquiesce willingly, and not complain to the neighbors or make unseemly scenes, and that the greater the number of his wives the more certainty there was of her own salvation and the higher her place in Heaven, since her salvation depended upon *him*, and *his* position in glory depended upon the number of his queens and increase.

He did not trouble himself about the other wifely partners in the ownership of his heart; they had all been displaced one by one, and would be pleased enough to see this blue-eyed favorite pushed from the seat of preference.

"Come, now, Cistene, I will go with you and see about this trouble," he said, cheerfully, and she followed him from the titling-office across the yard to the long dwelling and through that to the back yard. This large inclosure was divided into little squares of ground, into each one of which a back door entered from an apartment. Here in these little yards an attempt was made to keep the children

of each wife separate, and each wife was forbidden to punish the children of another. Back of the yards were large gardens, and on either side orchards; beyond the garden were barns and cowsheds, and beyond those were pastures and fields, and in all of these the wives and older children worked, in large measure supporting themselves.

Indeed, the keeping of this establishment was not nearly so taxing to its head as, to glance at its proportions, one might suppose. Almost every thing consumed by mouth within its precincts was produced from the soil by the wives and their offspring; great ricks of dead timber for fuel were "snaked" with oxen from the mountain sides without cost; two of the older wives were supplied with looms upon which the wool from a large flock of sheep was woven into cloth, supplying in great part the apparel of the family, while the Bishop in handling the tithes had the free permission of the Head of the Church to convert these large quantities of butter, eggs, grain, beeves, etc., into cash, and, after turning a certain sum into the church treasury, to reserve the remainder for himself. Thus the taking of another wife was to the Bishop of small import beyond the act itself, as indeed with most polygamists among these mountains owing mainly to the same ignoble cause.

When Cistene, weepingly, and her lord, now with a thundery front, entered the back yard an angry

scene ensued, a scene of accusation and denunciation that shall remain unpictured here, save a glimpse as it closed of a man seizing a woman with gray hair and faded face by the throat, and roughly thrusting her backward through a gateway and slamming it after her, with the rather heated injunction that she keep it and her mouth closed.

He had loved her once, when she was young and slender and fair, and had sworn to love and cleave to none other than she. But had she been faithful? Yes, as only a woman can be; had crossed a continent through suffering and peril to please him; had watched with him in sickness, borne him children, toiled at the loom to clothe children that were his but not hers, and had been worn out in his cause, yet had long been cast off and spurned about like an outworn garment.

But the doughty Bishop had placated Cistene, and that was the main point; the light flick upon the ear of her naughty child by a toil-worn, grief-tortured woman, whose place the child's mother had usurped, had been avenged.

The next morning, which was the second after Elchard's departure, the Bishop, clothed in his best apparel and most agreeable countenance, came in through Burl Hartman's gate and tapped respectfully at the door. Trean came in response, and with a start and change of expression betrayed her fear and dislike of their visitor. Very bland and

obsequious he was, however, as with hat in hand, his black hair plastered smoothly against his temples and roached up over a narrow forehead, his wide and bulky person clad in a heavy, ill-fitting suit of brown, and his dark eyes twinkling, he stood before her.

“Good mornin’, Miss Hartman!” he said, with explosive affability, putting out his fat hand, “how’s your father?”

“He is not very well, thank you,” said Treat, but she did not put her hand in the one extended toward her. If the penalty of refusal had been her life it seemed to her she could not; no, not after Paul Elchard had held her hand in his loving and unpolluted palm and kissed it. But she placed a chair for the Bishop and invited him to be seated with what decency of speech and manner she could command.

He accepted it without affecting notice of the affront she had proffered him, but with a smoky look about the eyes.

“When was Brother Hartman taken sick?” he inquired.

“Sabbath morning just before meeting.”

“Ah, yes; I remember I did not notice him there.” He might have added, had it been an interview less charged with a purpose personal to himself, that the lady before him had in his opinion shown just ground for censure on that sacred occasion, and

would be expected to disclose the spiritual condition of her heart to him, and that if too little faith and humility seemed in the keeping of that organ, its owner would be set apart for discipline. But the Bishop, for the moment at least, felt this course inimical to his purpose, and only added in effect that Dr. Dubette had apprised him of Brother Hartman's illness but the evening previous; that he would be glad to see him.

Trean went into the adjoining room, and, putting back the curtains from the little window that a stronger light might enter, bade the Bishop come in, then went about her household duties. When he came out she was sweeping in the porch. "Your father's feebler than I supposed," he said, pausing by the door with hat in hand.

"Yes," faltered the girl, with a pitiful look. She was standing back in the long, narrow porch, over which morning-glories and grape-vines ran, and her fine figure was starred with flakes of sifted sunshine.

"Yes, I'm 'fraid he's not long for this world," said the Bishop, coming toward her with his small, greedy eyes on fire with anything but sympathy. "You will soon be alone in the cold world, Miss Hartman, and without a home. Let me offer you a place in mine!" and he put out his arms as if to embrace her. The girl drew back as from something horrible. For a moment there was an expres-

sion of fear and loathing on her face, then she stood clear and erect, pouring a level, freezing look into his eyes.

"No," she said, "I can't even thank you for such an offer, much less accept it. I'd rather go into my grave than enter the filthy debasing union you hold out to me!"

In an instant Parley's heavy face was purple. "Tut! tut!" he said, coming nearer and putting out his hands in a mollifying way, "you're goin' too far now! What I offer you is the best place in the neighborhood. It's accordin' to scriptures, and the Prophet's indorsed it. I tell you you'd better take up with it on more accounts than one!"

"Stand back! don't touch me!" and the girl's face was white with anger. "There is the gate, sir! I am mistress here; you have invited me to a life of shame; go!" and with a curse the Bishop turned, and viciously grinding the gravel of the walk under his heels, passed out the gate and down the lane.

He seemed to grow shorter in stature, and to widen out with venom like a toad, as he walked along, sinking his freshly-polished boots deep in the dust and muttering angrily. His little eyes had a muddy, bloodshot cast, and the lower part of his face seemed to settle upon his thick neck in a way that made it look puffed and swollen. His anger changed him, not as some are changed as by a white

fire, but as if he had taken poison. His blood seemed to run thick and turbid, and the evil awakened in his nature darkened and deformed him. When he reached the Tithing House he locked the door after him, and going at once to the cupboard behind the desk, added further fuel to the evil that envenomed him. Then for a long time he walked up and down the room with fiery eyes and livid features, revolving such thoughts and laying such plans as are surely common only to the underworld.

That evening when he went to call upon Orson Beam he still looked roily and unsettled, but his disordered feelings were collected in a purpose, and he was pursuing it with an eager if rather unsteady aim. When he paused at the door of the cottage the young man, still white and weak from the previous day's awful struggle, was pacing slowly to and fro within. His mother was sewing in the lamp-light, and, saying that he should soon return, he walked out with Parley into the moonlight.

After they had gone a little way in silence, the Bishop said in a low voice: "What success?" Beam had his hands behind him, and he drew the fingers together in a quivering knot and swallowed as if his throat were parched; then he said, huskily: "I failed."

"Too bad," said the other; then after a moment: "Well, we'll get him yet. You wasn't discovered,

I s'pose?" The young man's fingers unlocked as if he would throttle the man by his side, but he replaced them again, and, looking straight before him, answered in the same husky tone: "I don't know; I think not."

"Well," and the Bishop had all but said, there's another job to be done; the other party must be disposed of, when he changed his mind, and said: "You may've been seen. Any way I s'pect you'd best go South, or to the old country, on a mission for a year or two."

The young man's hands fell to his sides. "Yes, I would like to go!" he said, and drew a deep breath of relief.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ENDOWMENTS.

THE day that brought Bishop Parley to Trean Hartman with his unfortunate matrimonial offer, also brought her sister, Mrs. Smoot, from Salt Lake City. Like most of her people she was tall, and would have been pleasing to the eye had not the unnatural burdens of her life robbed her of freshness. Sweet health, which once had rounded her form and plumped her cheeks, had been wasted in a serfdom as absolute as ever disgraced the Orient. Within the first fleet year that followed her bridal

day, the man who held her heart in his keeping, and who had vowed never to wed another, cast it aside and profaned their home and destroyed their sacred relation by bringing into it a second wife.

He had entered the Priesthood, and had been "counseled" by the Prophet to enter polygamy also, that inhuman license being considered an especial virtue in the Holy Order. It may be mentioned, too, though not as in any sense extenuating such a crime, that plural marriage was a portion of the royal road to favor in Zion, and that disobedience to "counsel" was dangerous to ambition and sometimes even life.

Near sunset of the day following her arrival, Mrs. Smoot and Trean, leaving Elchard's man beside their sleeping father, went up the path that led from the orchard and sat down in the cool fragrance at the edge of the pines. For a year they had not been together, and their sister-hearts were heavy with experience. What passed between them in love and confidence shall here remain inviolate, save such portions of the elder sister's revelation as seem pertinent to this chronicle.

"Trean," she said, after a silence, "I am going to tell you something which, at least while we are in Utah, is only for yourself. Some of the things I may tell you I once obligated myself never to reveal, but those vows were made under conditions which were compulsory and aided by false teach-

ings, and for a long time I haven't considered them binding. For two years my heart hasn't been with this cause. Books read secretly, the help of other than Mormon faces, and my own cruel experience, have liberated my mind. I am no longer a Mormon, Trean, and when the right time comes I shall take my children and leave it behind me."

When she paused the girl was leaning toward her, glad, half incredulous, her whole lovely form animate with expectancy.

"It is true," said Mrs. Smoot, "I have suffered enough!"

"Then we will go together," cried Trean, "for I disbelieve it, too!" and she put her arms about her sister's neck and kissed her, with tears welling into her shining eyes.

"Yes," said the elder woman, with heaving bosom, "when the right day comes, and I hope it is not far away, we will leave this region of slavery. Oh, Trean, I have suffered so! For ten years life to me has been like a heavy nightmare.

"I can't tell you, Trean, how glad I am that you have determined never to enter it. I have been troubled for years lest you should believe it your duty, as we are taught. The death that God gives would be better, dear; for polygamy to a pure woman is living death. I am glad you will never know its misery.

"Six months after Edgar and I were married he

began courting a young lady who lived but a few streets away. Every other evening he would dress himself carefully and go over and visit her as he used to me. No language can picture my anguish as I sat alone at home through those terrible weeks with hope, and love, and all that I had expected of the future, dying out of my heart. Insanity often seemed very near, and the first fruit of our love, a little life which had begun to feed upon my own, perished in my grief. After my sickness I arose, but to meet with fresh suffering, I could scarcely stand alone for weakness when the day was set for Edgar to be married to the young lady he had chosen. Words are poor things to express human feelings with, and I can only tell you of my racked and tormented heart; I can not show it to you.

“At length the day came, and I went alone to the Endowment House to meet my husband and his bride. If I should live a thousand years I could not efface that day from my memory. Its moments were not moments to me, but thousands of thorns over which I walked to meet the end of all that then to me seemed sweet. That day my love was murdered.

“I may as well describe the Endowment House rites from the beginning, Trean, for if I do not you will probably never know what they are like. It is the Freemasonry of Mormonism. No marriage is considered binding, you know, if in the beginning

or afterwards it is not celebrated there or in a Mormon Temple. No matter how long two persons may have been wedded, their marriage is not considered lawful and binding, nor their children legitimate, until they have been remarried and have partaken of these disgusting mysteries. Even then their children, born before, must be adopted by their parents or they are not looked upon as legitimate! This is according to the highest Mormon authority. It is with this as with the general laws of mankind, to our people they are as nothing if not indorsed by the Priesthood. Trean, it is shameful!

“ Well, at seven o'clock in the morning I arrived at the door of the building, and found my husband and his new love waiting in the anteroom. My limbs would hardly support me when I saw them, and such a weight seemed to descend upon me, I could only stagger to a chair and sink into it, gazing at them with horror and misery. It seemed to me I should never rise again. But Brother Lyon, our Mormon poet, came forward and reasoned and talked with me, showing me how it was my duty to go on with the ceremony, and Edgar came and kissed me, saying that he would always cherish me, and that his new wife and I should always be exactly equal in his affection. O, bitter, hollow mockery of a woman's love! So I got up with my burden, with my sick soul and broken heart, and went forward,

hoping to win Heaven by a life of sorrow and the outrage of my better self.

“I remember, though I was half dazed with anguish, that in the room there was a table by which a man was seated. Before him was a large book in which he entered our names and ages, and the names and ages of our parents; then we were supposed to be prepared for the ceremony. First we were directed to remove our shoes and leave them in the ante-room, and then we were led into a room beyond. This was a long bath-room, divided down the middle by a heavy curtain. Upon one side were bathtubs for women, on the other the same for gentlemen. Edgar was conducted to the men’s side of the curtain, and his betrothed and I to the other. Several other persons were waiting, but presently we were all bathed by attendants, each portion of the body being washed separately from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, and a formula repeated for each part. This consisted in a kind of blessing, such, for instance, as that the eyes might be quick to see the path of righteousness, that the ears might be apt at hearing the truth, that the mouth might with wisdom speak the words of eternal life, and the feet be swift to run in the ways of the Lord. We were also told that by this we were cleansed of sin, and that our blood henceforth should not be as the filthy blood of the world, and that we never should be partakers of the plagues and mis-

eries which are to come upon the earth in the last days.

“Then we were wiped dry, and anointed with olive oil, the oil being poured from a large cow’s horn into the hands of the priest or priestess, and applied to all parts of the body, accompanied with blessings and predictions as before. We were then given a peculiar garment to put on; one distinctly Mormon, and worn only by those who have passed through the Endowment House. It is simply a complete suit of under-clothes made in a single garment instead of two as is usual. This we were instructed to wear night and day, and in changing it never to wholly expose the person, but to change one half at a time, and that if we did so we would be protected from disease, and even death itself; that the bullet of an enemy would not penetrate the garment, and that from it even the dagger’s point would be turned aside.

“When we were thus arrayed, they put upon us a white night-dress, white stockings, and white linen shoes, and a new name was whispered in our ears. This name we were told never to divulge to anyone save our husbands in the Endowment House. By this name, which we were told would be our name in Heaven, our husbands are to call us up in the resurrection. If we have been unfaithful or disobedient, he need not call us if he does not choose, but can let us sleep on until the second res-

urrection, a thousand years after the first awakening, when the wicked are to be raised from the dead and brought to judgment. So, dear, our salvation depends upon disgrace here, and the good or bad humor of our husbands on the morning of the first resurrection! If he no longer cares for us he doesn't need to get a divorce, he can simply let us sleep on, and so get rid of us! Isn't it fine?

“Well, after this washing, anointing and partial dressing, the curtain was drawn aside, and we faced the male candidates. They were seated along in a row on the opposite side of the room, dressed much as we were, save that they had white linen caps upon their heads, and looked very ridiculous and silly. Then we were conducted into another room where a sort of drama was enacted representing the creation of man; then into another apartment representing the Garden of Eden; there persons purporting to be Jehovah, Satan, and Adam, the Serpent, and Eve, go through a performance that is supposed to depict the creation of Woman, her fall, and the cursing of the Serpent and earth for sin's sake. Portions of the representation are not at all delicate, and the chaste and refined find little that is entertaining in it. At a certain point Adam and Eve attire themselves in fig-leaf aprons, pieces of white linen, on which are sewn imitation fig leaves made of green silk. Then all the candidates were clad in similar aprons, and driven out

of the Garden of Eden into another room, which represented the world where we should earn our bread by the sweat of our brows. There we were informed that although we were driven out from the presence of the Lord, yet a plan of salvation would be devised for us by which we could at last return to our early estate.

“Then there was such an absurd mixture of persons and events that I could not exactly follow the idea that was intended to be conveyed—if there really was any idea at all. Men representing the ancient prophets entered and instructed the people for the first coming of the Saviour. Then we were taught certain passwords and grips, and then we were all arranged in a circle. The women’s faces were covered with veils, and we were all commanded to kneel down and hold our right hands up toward Heaven, while the awful oaths of obedience and secrecy were taken. We swore that by every means in our power we would seek to avenge the death of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and that we would teach our children to do so; we swore that, without murmur or question, we would implicitly obey the commands of the Priesthood in everything, and that we would hold their commands sacred, and to be obeyed in preference to the laws of the United States, and further, that we would never, under any circumstances, reveal that which had transpired in the Endowment House. The

penalty for breaking this oath was, that the bowels should be torn out while the victim was yet alive, the throat to be cut from ear to ear, the heart and tongue cut out, and in the world to come, eternal damnation! A curtain was then drawn back, exposing a human skeleton to view, and a voice said: 'Behold all that remains of one unfaithful to these holy vows. The earth had no place for one so vile. The fowls of the air feed upon his accursed flesh, and the fierce elements consumed his joints and marrow. Brethren, an ordeal awaits you. Let the pure have no fear, the false-hearted quake. Each shall pass under the searching Hand, and the spirit of the Lord shall decide for his own!'

"After these fearful oaths were taken, we were instructed in the signs representing the penalties, and given a grip peculiar to that degree. Then a long address was delivered by one of the Apostles upon Celestial marriage, which was disgusting in language and outrageous in sentiment. We were then led into another room for the purpose of passing through the second degree. When we were all arranged on one side against the wall, a number of individuals representing ministers of other churches came in, and began in great confusion, each one proclaiming his special creed. Among them was Satan preaching, too, and every now and then the others would stop and listen to him, and then go on declaiming after his fashion. Then in came men

representing Peter, James, and John, the Apostles, and drove all the others out. They then proceeded to organize the New Church, the scarfs that we had been provided with being changed from the right shoulder to the left, indicating that we were now of the true belief.

“The men were then formed in a circle round an altar, with arms linked and a hand upon each other’s shoulder. The women were also placed in a circle, but on the outside with veils over their faces. The High Priest then knelt at the altar, and, taking one of the men’s hands in his left, raised his right to Heaven, and prayed. He asked that the day might soon come when the Lord would avenge the murder of Joseph Smith upon the United States; that the time might hasten when they would be united no longer, but should fall upon each other and be destroyed, that the Kingdom of God might roll forth and fill the world. The priest said this was electric prayer; that the faith and strength of the two circles, being connected with him, passed up in his prayer and laid hold on the heart of the Almighty.

“We were then given an oath of special obedience to the Prophet, accompanied by a grip which is called ‘the grip of the nail.’ It consisted in clasping each other around the hand with the point of the index finger resting on the wrist, and the little fingers linked together, the point on the wrist where the index finger rests being the sup-

posed spot where the nails were driven through the wrists of Christ. The penalty for revealing this oath and grip is to have the heart torn out, cut up in small pieces, and thrown to the fowls of the air. This concluded the Second Degree.

“We were then led by a stairway to an upper room. The ceremonies had already lasted five hours, and I was so weary, and sick in body and at heart, I had to be assisted up the stairs. The room we then entered was divided by a curtain, and in the curtain was a door, and in the door a hole, covered by a lap of cloth, through which to pass the hand. The men first approached the door, and a person representing the Apostle Peter appeared at the opening and asked who was there. He was told that the Saints desired to enter. A hand then came through the hole and cut a mysterious mark in the men’s clothing over the heart, across the abdomen, and upon the knee. The women were instructed to imitate these marks in their own clothing as soon as they arrived at home. The applicant was then told to put his hand through the opening, give the last grip received in the room below, and whisper his new name in Saint Peter’s ear. He was then permitted to enter. This is called ‘going behind the vail.’

“From the curtained apartment we were ushered into the ‘sealing’ or marriage-room. Then came the hardest trial of my life. In the centre of the

room was a long, low altar, covered with red velvet, and an arm-chair placed at one end of it, in which sat Brigham Young. Here at this altar I was to give my husband to another woman! To have followed him to his grave would have been bitter indeed, but to see him the husband of another, to have to join their hands myself—O that was terrible! Yet, I had sworn to obey, and my life was at stake; I could not go back.

“The Prophet himself performed the ceremony. He sat at the end of the altar and we three knelt down, Edgar upon one side, and his affianced and myself upon the other. Speaking to me, the Prophet asked: ‘Are you willing to give this woman to your husband to be his lawful wife for time and eternity? If you are you may signify it by placing her right hand within the right hand of your husband.’ O, think of that moment! It was like death coming upon me. I tried to do as I had been commanded, but every thing seemed dark and swimming about me. I could not find the lady’s hand, and the Prophet had to guide my hand to hers; then the deed was done, and I fell back insensible upon the floor.”

The sun had long since consumed itself upon the western heights, and the shadows of dusk were gathering in the valley. They arose and passed down in silence; but half that night Trean Hartman mentally revolved her beloved sister’s story, and its

shame and heartless cruelty swayed her sensitive spirit like a reed. She felt, through her love for Elchard, how like tearing the heart asunder would be such an experience, and she promised her soul, as she lay there alone in the darkness, that whatever might come, even to death itself, she should never be untrue to the sweet light that pervaded it.

She tried to picture to herself what her sister must have suffered in the ten years that followed, in bearing that burden which, when it was laid upon her in the Endowment House, had crushed her senseless to the earth. She thought of her sister's first night of bereavement; of how much of agony must have been crowded into the hours as she paced to and fro in her room until the dawn came, with her husband and his new wife under the same roof. Surely souls in the nether world were never more wrapp'd in tormenting fire than was hers that night! Then the days that came after, stretching away into years, and each day a fresh wound, until at last love was dead, her bosom empty of hope, and she drifted away from the unworthy one who had been on her, like a wrecked ship from rotten moorings. This was polygamy!—the foundation of Mormonism, a religion which had dragged them away from home and kindred, across a thousand miles of desert with death and suffering, to penury, indignity and life-wreckage among these lonely mountains. The girl's heart ached, and tears stood in her eyes as she lay

looking up into the midnight darkness. But at last the darkness which is peopled with dreams closed mercifully over her, the tears dried upon her sweet cheeks, the dawn came, and with it Elchard, bringing light and love, but followed by evil feet.

CHAPTER XII.

AN ATTEMPT AT HEALING.

ELCHARD slept but little during the night that preceded his visit to Trean. He was writing until a late hour, and, after lying down, he busied himself with old memories for a time, then the present, with its chances of death, and its possessions of hope and love, held him in long and sharpest wakefulness. At three o'clock in the morning he arose, and, going to the corral in a clump of pines below the mines, saddled his horse and rode down the mountain side.

All about him rose huge battlements of stone, nature's vast masonry, heaped with black banks of darkness and ghostly with the groups of shadows and silent pines, while far above him hung the Eagle peaks grizzled and misty in the waning moon, and far below, the valley lay dim and formless and vague. The ride was lonely and unsafe, but what lover ever counted danger and darkness aught save

to make the smile seem sweeter which should meet him at the journey's close? Love is the mainspring that moves mankind; for woman, child, self, gold, gain, honor, ease, and aims and ends a thousand more, it sends us to and fro forever, and at last for sweet and beloved rest it sends us contented to the grave.

At the centre of Paul Elchard's life it was in fresh and fragrant blossom. He felt himself strong and warm with it as he rode downward through the moon-made fantasies of the night, and out through the monster jaws of the gorge. When he sank down from the mountain bench, however, into that deep wood, where only four days previous he had passed within a finger's breadth of death, his blood chilled a little and his flesh crept. But all was silent now, save the tiny harping of summer insects and a faint night wind breathing among the brambles. At Mooseneck the cocks were crowing and a gray froth of light, driven over the mountain by the luminous sea which was rising on its eastern side, flowed down into the sleeping town as he clattered through its streets. As he sprang to the ground at Burl Hartman's gate the moon was slipping out of sight in the west, and the stars, deep in the zenith, burned faint and white like a receding swarm of bees as they sank upward into Heaven.

For a little time he walked to and fro along the gravelled path before the house. All was silent

within, and he looked up at Trean's window with an impulse to toss a pebble against it to waken her, so eager was his love, but suddenly she came into the porch, and in a moment her hands were in his, and with full hearts they were standing together in the fragrant shadow of the vines.

After an hour had passed, Elchard went in to leave a pressure of the hand and a comforting word with the sick man; then he would go on to the Gray Peak mines, he said, and return on the morrow. He found his kind and simple-hearted old friend very feeble, but the eyes that looked up to him from their deepening hollows, and the trembling hand that was reached out to meet him, were alive with friendship.

"I'm glad to see yo'," he whispered, hoarsely. "Bishop Parley was here tother day an' tole me about yo'r speakin' yo'r mind tolerable sharp in meetin', last Sunday, but I tole him considerin' yo'r idees an' raisin', I didn't think it a thing to mind in ye."

"I was hasty," said Elchard. "I confess it was greatly out of place, and I regret it."

"I ain't much doubt but what all yo' said was good," whispered the sick man, turning his gray head to any fro upon his pillow in a troubled way. "I kent tell much 'bout sich things no more. It all seems dim an' unsarten like of late. I hain't never ben well since that terrible jant across the plains I

told yo' of, an' I've ben weak and mebby not fitten to judge. I knowed, though, that if yo' thought y'd not done jest square y'd say so like a gentleman, an' I tole Parley so," and he turned his eyes again to Elchard's face with a touching look of trust and admiration.

"Yes, I think I am always glad to rectify any wrong I have done," Elchard replied; "but in this case my conscience would hardly permit me to give the impression by an apology that I didn't believe in what I said. I hope no harm will come of it."

"O, no," in the same hoarse whisper, "nothin' 'll be did to ye. Our people ain't nigh what some makes 'em out to be. They used to be some things did, I guess, what was kind of hard, but I never paid much notice to some reports, not believin' 'em much. But in my darter's case it's differn'. O, I don't know what'll become of 'er!"

"I will care for her," said Elchard, gently. "Don't let it trouble you. As long as you need her she is yours," after that she shall have a home as pleasant and free of care and danger as you could wish."

"It ain't that; I a'most know what 'er life with yo' would be, an' I'm satisfied. Since I've been alayin' here these four days I've come to want yo' to hev' her fer yo'r own. But since Parley was here I've been troubled. I'm feerd somethin' may happen 'er. She don't say much, Trean don't, an'

never did, 'bout what's goin' on with *her*, but I guess Parley's been apressin' 'er to marry *him*, an' I've felt like somethin' might happen 'er."

Elchard got up and went out. In a few moments he re-entered with Trecan. "Your father thinks that Bishop Parley has lately invited you to a place in his household," said Elchard, with a smile, "and he is troubled about it. Cau't you reassure him on that point?"

The girl looked down with rising color. Clearly she felt the Bishop's offer a painful and humiliating one. "No, for he did," she said, lifting her head with a gleam in her eyes, "and I ordered him off the premises. I could't endure such a shameful thing!"

The old man struggled up and looked at her with consternation. "Trecan!" he said, in a loud whisper of expostulation. "O, my darter, what hev' yo' done?"

"I have treated a man who is unfit to speak to a pure woman just as he deserves," she said. "Do you think I could bear the outrage of such a proposal lightly!" and her great eyes blazed with memory of the insult.

Her father lay down. "Yo' two 'll hev to go now," he said, in a hopeless, mournful way. "Yo' mustn't stay here no longer; everythin's agin ye, an' it ain't safe."

"Oh, father!" cried the girl, "you know I can'

leave you ; whatever comes, my place is here, and, here they'll find me," and she took his withered old hand in hers and stroked it fondly.

"It'd be hard—it'd be hard to gin yo' up," he faltered, "but I ain't got many days to stay here, an' yo' hev' a long life afore ye, I hope.

Trean laid her face down in his wrinkled hand with a sob. "Don't talk so, father," she pleaded. "Don't ask me to go away from you when you're sick; when you're well we'll take you with us if you'll go, but don't trouble no more."

Elchard's eyes were wet. The pathos of the scene, quickened by his relation to the gnarled but tender old parent and his daughter, touched him to the heart. But he could not say there was no danger now, remembering his own experience, and many inclinations were pushing and pulling at his judgment. At length he said :

"Perhaps I had better go alone. If I were away no doubt all would become quiet again."

But before he had done speaking there came a rapping at the outer door, and leaving a protesting look of love with him, Trean went out to answer it. When Trean opened the door, there filed in a half score of Mormon brethren and sat down. They had come, their spokesman said, to anoint Brother Hartman and pray for his recovery. The Bishop had requested it; and they looked solemn and depressed.

The girl stood for a moment looking at them in

an irresolute way. Their faces were, many of them, familiar, and such heavy animal countenances in most part as she had seen about her all her life. Surely there was little behind those dull eyes and narrow, low foreheads with which to work miracles. Yet, some curious feats of healing, wrought by physical excitement in the patient, but credited directly to the intervention of Heaven, had been witnessed among this people. These seeming cures by faith had occurred even in the Hartman neighborhood, and, to Trean, had been the one inexplicable evidence of divinity in Mormonism. She was not aware that the phenomenon was a natural one—the excitement of the nerve centres and the arousing of the patient through mental contact, and that it was the most practised and most successful among barbarians and the ignorant and credulous. So a gleam of glad hope for her father came into the girl's heart, but died away in the same moment, as she remembered the lamentable results that had followed some of these oilings and noisy incantations about the beds of the feeble.

“I will see if father wishes it,” she said, and entered the other room. In a moment she came out, and, holding the door open, indicated by a look and an inclination of the head that they might enter. Elchard arose and stood near the sick man while they came in, thumping the floor heavily with their thick boots and jostling each other awkwardly, but

with the most solemnly stolid of countenances. The finely-bred face of the young man took on a curious, questioning look at this sudden influx of blowsy visages, and some of the visages seemed quite startled out of their stolidity by seeing him there.

Most of the visitors had been beyond the sea, and were simple, credulous members of the peasant class. It would be unfair to say that they were not men, as a rule, aiming to live lives that were not vicious but it may be stated truly that they were in the beginning that next thing to viciousness—heavily animal—and that their beliefs had only the farther fed and fattened the original fault. The outrages suffered by Elchard and others, as recounted in this narrative, it may be said, also, were hardly to be laid to the Mormon people as a whole, but to the system that made such conduct possible. As a body they had lived in social servitude in other lands, and here, with the added pressure of a religion admittedly copied after early Hebraic barbarism, they were utterly enslaved.

When the men entered to pray with Burl Hartman were fairly in the room, Elchard turned to the bed and took the hand of his aged friend.

“I must go now,” he said. “I will be back tomorrow, and hope I may find you better then. Good-bye.”

The old man held his hand a moment and looked at him in a beseeching way. “Yes,” he whispered,

“I want to see yo’ to-morrow. Think of what I said, an’ don’t wait too long. Good-bye,” and Elchard passed out, followed, since that fine unflinching face of his was turned from them, by the general visual condemnation of the heelerers.

When he had gone they gathered about the sick man’s bed, and each one in turn took its feeble occupant solemnly by the hand and stood a moment in silent prayer. It was in a way very nerve-disturbing even to the sound, but upon the enfeebled and superstitious old man it was fairly transforming. A kind of flush came into his pallid cheeks, the pupils of his eyes dilated, and his hands twitched nervously. Trean had parted with Elchard at the porch, and came and stood by the window in her father’s room watching him with alert and sympathetic eyes. His look seemed to trouble her before the first part of the ceremony had ceased, and she made a movement as if to interfere, but at that the sufferer sank back upon his pillow with closed eyes, and apparently calm, save that his hands shook involuntarily, and wave-like tremors now and then passed over his emaciated frame.

At the close of the silent hand-shaking and prayer, one of the healers, with oil bottle in hand, began praying audibly for the sick man’s recovery, and anointing his forehead and temples, hands and feet. Then four of them, each with his right hand

placed upon the sick man's forehead, began a sort of mixed invocation and exhortation, while the rest, upon their knees, were groaning a prayerful accompaniment. Suddenly the sick man started up, and with a scream the daughter sprang toward him. His eyes were protruding and wild, the cords of his neck were drawn, his lips gasping, and his fingers catching at the air. The healers fell back from him, and one of them, lifting his hands toward Heaven over the startling figure of the dying man, cried with a loud voice:

"Brother Hartman, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, I command thee to arise and be whole!" and the gasping, white-haired man, even in death obedient to the power that brought him to it, sprang forward and fell half way from the couch and lay there limp and motionless.

"He's saved! he's saved!" shouted the half-crazed men of prayer, crowding toward him, but to right and left they were hurled back as their hands reached the insensible man. "Fools! murderers! stand back!" cried Paul Elchard, and he caught the drooping form and laid it back upon the pillow.

"Open that window!" he shouted. "Let in the air! Now leave the room! You've done your worst; you've killed him!"

The men fell back aghast on all sides. Trean was lying in a faint at the edge of the bed, with an arm reached out about her father's body, and Mrs.

Smoot came hastening in from the orchard, where, as with Elchard, who had paused to talk with his man at the gate, Trean's screams of consternation had reached her.

"The brandy from the cupboard, please, Mrs. Smoot," said Elchard, quickly, as the lady appeared at the door. "Now, you men—no, I will not call you men," he cried, in his hot ire; but the brandy was put in his hand as he spoke and he returned to the bed. "Please take charge of Miss Hartman, Mrs. Smoot, she has fainted. I will see if your father can be revived," and he worked swiftly, wetting the ashen lips and the pulseless temples and wrists with the liquor. Then he laid his hand over the man's heart; the spirit was still faintly fluttering it, and he lifted the helpless head a little with pillows and began chafing the cold hands again. But a moment afterward he sought the heart again, and it was still. The breath of life, with prayer, or song, or bearing words of love or anger, had ceased its journeyings over Burl Hartman's lips for ever.

Elchard looked at the men clustering with frightened faces about the door, but he said nothing; he was in the presence of death. Trean was lying with her drooping head in her sister's lap, and he turned to her. A moment later, responding to the sharp liquor, the blood came bounding into the girl's white cheeks and gray lips, and her eyes

opened. Those orbs, which to Elchard were sweeter than the stars, had come to shine of late with a clear violet light, but now they were somber and misty with sorrow. She did not seem to see Elchard, but rose with a wavering movement and turned her face toward her father. She did not cry out, but her face flashed white again, and she staggered back at the sight. Then she turned toward the men about the door, and the love and pity and fright died out of her face.

One by one the poor fools who had prayed so fatally slunk by her and passed out into the sunshine. Some of them paused before her with stammered apology as they went, but she did not move her lips to answer, only stood still and looked straight before her with bitter contempt. When they were gone she closed the door, and then sank down upon a chair and seemed to break her heart with sorrow. Elchard came and put his arm about her, and she rose and went weakly into the dead man's room, and falling upon her knees, laid her head down on his breast and moaned and sobbed in desolation.

When a week had gone, Trean locked the door and passed out through the gate by her sister's side. Her father had been borne through a throng by this same path to the little burying-ground upon the mountain bench four days previous, and Elchard had gone to the Grey Peak mines at sunset the day

before, promising to meet his betrothed at Mrs. Smoot's in Salt Lake City, the third evening afterward. Then, if the way seemed open, they had planned to leave these slavish valleys for the freedom of the East. But dragons, lying in wait, were all about them in human guise. Elchard felt this now; but in Trean the sense of dread and insecurity had been for the time all but obliterated by sorrow.

She had clung to Elchard's companionship and aid through all the heavy heart-breaking week that had gone by, seemingly oblivious in her grief and need of some one she trusted to lean upon, that their dangers might be augmented by his presence. And Elchard, unable to break away from the woman he loved in her sore bereavement, had remained directing and aiding in all things unweariedly.

Many bitter looks had been given him by the Eldership of Mooseneck Stake, but he had affected no concern. Smoot had come from Zion's capital on the day of the funeral, with an important city-air about his person, and, contrary to his intentions, had returned the same day. He could not bring himself to affiliate with a hated Gentile in such close relationship; besides, the hated Gentile, and even his own wife paid him little heed, so why should he remain? The lack of attention at this point, however, should seemingly have caused him little concern, as three other women, celestially

sealed to him for time and eternity, awaited his return, and his great heart was even now sweetened by the contemplation of sealing to himself a fifth! But he had aimed at remaining long enough to have himself appointed administrator of the little estate yet that could be seen to further on; in the meantime he would see the Prophet about this young interloper in Zion.

Bishop Parley had not appeared at all, save as an onlooker at the cemetery. This fact occasioned comment indeed, but it was exactly as he wished; it gave him a latitude of action in another direction which deep down in his black heart he was hungering after like a beast of prey. In time all should know why he did not attend upon the dead as seemed his duty. They should hear, as he had already stated to some, that the apostate daughter of Burl Hartman had ordered him off the premises when he had called to counsel her in regard to her wavering faith. They should hear that she had fallen indeed, fallen into shame, as well as unbelief, from love of an unbelieving scoffer, and that by the request of her sainted father, the injunction of the Prophet, and the commands of duty, she had been saved by the shedding of her own blood. This, and more, should be known to his people, should the deadly thing he contemplated ever reach the general light.

But Trean Hartman rode away in the carriage

with her sister that day with no thought of the dangers that were thickening about her young life. She hoped to come back to this rude but dear old home once more before she parted from it forever, but it might be that she could not, and her heart bled with the parting. So they rode on in silence, and when they rose on the bench at the mouth of Eagle canyon they stopped the vehicle, and, looking back, kissed the little farm and the new grave at the mountain's foot with their eyes and with wet cheeks passed from the bright valley into the shadows of the gorge.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE START FOR FREEDOM.

THE evil natural to Bishop Parley's nature was in ferment.

His very dreams were polluting, and now that anger was eating at his heart, and he had added to it the dark intention of taking an innocent life they were filled with violence. Cistene became afraid of him; the black humor the man was in seemed to affect the chemistry of his blood. Of Cistene, however, he became curiously fond. He

often put his arms about her endearingly, and felt her white throat with his coarse fingers, and asked her with a show of playfulness, "how she would like to be blood-atoned." Then to allay her fright, he would say, "that she was the only one of his wives who loved him; indeed, the only person that really so regarded him, and that for her sake he was not going to take a new wife as he had intended, but that she should be his last, best love, and favorite wife," and the simple soul, despite her fears, was as happy as the day was long.

But the one ally Parley had learned ever to count upon in schemes of shame and wrong-doing was not at hand. Enoch Arsen, the tithe-gatherer, was missing. On the morning Paul Elchard had ridden away from Burl Hartman's, followed by the troubled eye of Orson Beam, the tithe-gatherer had gone, at his own suggestion, to Salt Lake City, and had never returned, Parley could not fathom it. He had sent two messengers to the city in search of his congenial companion in crime, but no trace of him could be found. The Bishop needed him, and pondered and ruminated over the mystery, dropping the plummet of conjecture in all directions for the reason of his absence, but in vain. Enoch Arsen never returned. A mystery had overtaken him, and a reason for absence beyond the finite reach of Parley's plummets, but open to him who follows the chronicle to its close.

So the Bishop of Mooseneck Stake was in a quandary, wanting, as he did, a partner to his frightful scheme ignited by sufficient hate or insane enough with zeal to take a harmless woman's life. In Dubette, diseased with solicitude for the Mormon cause, he found him. Dubette, who was always fearful lest the Kingdom of God on earth should suffer shipwreck, and carry little Dubette and his harem down with it, had been wild and all but incoherent in denunciation of Elchard and Trean, after the Sabbath episode of two weeks previous, and being cognizant of their conduct of a like spirit had fanned his feelings into foam.

Yes, he was ready for it, he had said, when Parley, the night after Burl Hartman's burial, called him out into the gloom and muttered his soul-straining suggestions in his willing ear. Yes, the Prophet had said "the time had come when they who were against the Lord should be cut down," and he was ready to obey the injunction. But wouldn't they need some one else to help them? Could not Orson Beam be again brought into service? Nothing bound the young brethren so closely to the church as a little blood-letting in its defence.

No, the human raven had croaked in the darkness, Brother Beam had been sent upon a mission, and had already started, taking his mother with him.

No, they had better attend to it themselves and keep it quiet.

Very well, the little zealot had answered, when should they do it? When the girl went to Smoot's, the raven had said, as of course she would, or when she came back, though it ought to be at night and soon, for they might leave the Territory, though of course the girl owned a half interest in the little farm and might not go until that was disposed of.

How about the young hound of Satan, was he to be allowed to escape what was due him? the little zealot had inquired. Well, about the worst thing that could happen to *him*, the raven had surmised, would be the loss of the girl. But Brigham was interested in the young liar, and would see to him, both on account of the insult given himself and the further temerity of running mines in the Territory. Few things roiled the head of the church like this latter item. It was bound to bring in Yankee immigration, and that must be kept back at any cost. Smoot had promised to report to Brigham, and the little zealot need not fret, the blanked young whelp would be sent to a warm climate flying across lots. Which pleasant information seemed very satisfactory to the zealot, and, after some farther conjectural conversation touching the mystery of Arsen's absence, the two professed followers of a Saviour who knew no virtue so great as love and tolerance, melted away in the darkness.

But the object of their malice went undisturbed through the canyons, on around Eagle mountain, and down through the long gorges into the green basin of the Great Salt Lake. The Bishop saw her ride away with Mrs. Smoot, and marked her pale face drooping with sorrow, but his heart went untouched of pity or relenting.

A half hour after they had gone by he mounted his horse and set out upon the road they had taken, but at the mouth of Eagle canyon he turned and came back; it would not do to carry his design into effect while the sun shone, even on these mountain roads: besides, Mrs. Smoot was with her.

No, he would wait a time and place of smaller risk. The next day, however, he went to the city and had an interview with the Prophet. It might be, however, that her relations with this young disturber from the East would take her out of the Territory if something were not done. But the President had promised to send Rockwell and his secret service up to his mines some night soon and dispose of the young upstart, which would doubtless keep the young lady in her place. Yes, let the Prophet remove the young man, but *he* would see that his holiness didn't get possession of the blossom the slain man had hoped to wear upon his heart! The following morning he returned to Mooseneck, and, like a spider bloated with venom, set himself to watch for his victim.

The same day, in the afternoon, Paul Elchard rode down through Emigration canyon into Salt Lake City, and just before sunset, having procured another saddle-horse, came by the residence of Elder Smoot. Trean was pacing to and fro in the garden of flowers and shrubs that lay before the house, now scenting a rose, and now lifting wistful eyes with hope of Elchard's coming. Clad in the soft and clinging garb of sorrow, she looked, indeed, superb.

"We will have an hour to ourselves now, darling," said Elchard, as they rode northward through the town. She gave him a grateful look. Presently they passed the Prophet's residence, a large, square house with a double porch encircling two of its broad sides, and crowned with a stone beehive. On its left another long building, surrounded by a high stone wall, was joined to it. This was the Prophet's harem, into which he could pass from the main building at his pleasure. Over the door lay a carved lion sneering at the world with stony muzzle, much as the master sneered with stony heart, while across the street a fine residence for his favorite wife was coming to completion, and just beyond the Prophet's dwelling a great gate, surmounted by an iron eagle, entered the grounds.

Trean looked at it all with a shudder. To her it was a polluted spot, the home of tyranny and shame. Here, from this house, had come the power which

had crushed her whole life into obscurity, had brought death to those who gave her life, and her sister years of misery. With a chill she turned away, and lifted a piteous look to Elchard's face. It had a bitter expression mingled with disgust for all the coarse display of tyrannous emblems about the place.

"Will it always remain so—the sin and its power to injure others?" she asked.

"No, darling, it will fall," he answered.

"Oh," she cried, with feeling, "I wish it might hasten! When I think of all the poor, struggling, blind souls we shall leave here among these mountains it makes my heart ache. Can't we help them some way when we are free?"

"I hope we may," said Elchard gravely. "I at least shall give time and strength and money to it."

"Oh, thank you so much!" said the girl, gratefully, as if she were speaking for her whole people. "I am sure you can do a great deal," and she looked at him with loving eyes.

In a few moments they came to the edge of the town, and, following a road that passed up a considerable height and wound away into the Wasatch range, in a little time they came out upon the side of Ensign Peak, then turning their horses' heads upward they rode around its green dome and presently stood upon its summit.

When Elchard helped his betrothed to the ground

he held her a moment in sheer rapture of heart. They were so far above the earth, so closed round with balmy solitude, with the evening-tinted sky so near above, and the vast ring of swimming distances so beautiful below, their spirits leaped together in ecstasy.

He took her hand in his and they walked across the summit and looked down. Below them the whole city spread out like a vast, gray fan, worked with emerald tracery of innumerable tree-tops, and shot with the silver of quivering streams. Above it all rose the white work of the great Temple and the huge pan-shaped roof of the Tabernacle. Beyond it the river Jordan, pouring through the purple mountains thirty miles to the south, came down through the vast basin, cutting it in twain like a highway of pearl. Close upon the left the earth dropped downward into a great canyon, which, with its bottom lined with greenery, seemed to shake a creek of clear snow-water whitening and jingling downward into the mill-races of the city. Beyond the canyon the mountains rose again and swept on round in a mighty curve, notched and peaked, and decked with glinting ribbons of snow, until the Jordan cut it far in the south. Then the range rose again and swept on in a grand mountain wall far around to the west, huge, many-colored, domed, and transfigured in the sunset.

To the right, as if the earth were holding up a

vast shield of polished steel in a hand whose finger-ends were peaks protruding above the gleaming rim, lay Great Salt Lake. Like a Dead Sea, indeed, it slept among its grand surroundings, still, passive, and unruffled by a sail. In its midst were mountain islands, dead blue and seeming to lie motionless upon the motionless water. Away in the north were villages, dim with distance, and a train like a tiny worm creeping from west to east on the great Transcontinental Line, and beyond that, mountains filmy as in a dying dream. Directly beyond the city, and to north and south, lay a thousand farms, checkered by ten thousand fields of green and gold, dotted with scores of orchards, and flecked with mimic lakes and streams.

After awhile they sat down upon a projecting shelf of stone, over which the dry gray moss of the mountain-top lay in a mat, and watched the sun melt out of the world. Their mood was out of the common, so great and beautiful was the picture before them, and they talked on with something like music in thought and word.

"It makes one think of the Creation and the making of mountains," the girl was saying with her great eyes glowing in the sunset.

"Yes, said Elchard his whole attitude alive with fancy. I am often struck with the vastness and extent of these Rocky Mountains. They are not a simple chain of peaks, but a whole tumbled sea of

mountains seemingly a thousand miles in all directions. Yet the real sea, thousands and thousands of years ago, I suppose, flowed over their tops, and vast icebergs, many times larger than the mountains themselves, were harnessed to the storms and plowed up the continent as we see it. How it stirs one to think of that kind of furrow-making! But it is grander still to fancy how the world-making Spirit drained off the angry waters at last, and the gaping wounds left by the ice-plows and earthquakes became these grass-lined valleys fit for the use of man."

"Yes, it is beautiful to think of," said the girl. It made her heart light to hear him talk. His very speech had been from the first like a revelation to her, it was so different in matter and language from the coarse thought and rude delivery of the folk with whom she had always lived. They were looking toward the north, where, in that strong, low light of gold which sweeps the earth just when the sun is sinking, a locomotive was trailing a tiny thread of smoke across the valley.

"That is one way of escape," he said, "only we shall find our starting-point behind these mountains where the railway passes up the Weber river. I think we should go to-morrow night. Are you willing, darling?"

Trean's cheeks flushed rosy red at the question,

and she lifted eyes of such glowing gratitude to his that Elchard's filled with tears.

"Yes, we will go to-morrow night," he said. "I will take you to Mooseneck in the morning by carriage to procure what you wish, and leave you there to divert suspicion should there be any, while I will return to the Eagle mines, for there are matters there I must attend to before I go; then I will come back for you at night by the out-of-town road, and we will go by the Gray Peak road to the northeast and find the railroad on the Weber in the morning. By ten o'clock we will be gone, melted out of the land of our enemies like a dream of the night," and he ended with a smile.

Trean was smiling, too, but a shadow was coming and going in the sunshine of her face.

"What is it, darling!" he asked.

"Will I be—am I fit to go to your home among your people?"

"O, Trean, a thousand times, yes. You are good and beautiful, and you shall find such a welcome at the door of the old home on the hillside above my native town as you probably will never receive again this side of Heaven! I have written them all about you.

The sun had gone now, but the great floods of its light came through the canyon into the valley from the west, and streamed quite across the great basin-like roads of gold. The mountains had

turned as blue as the outer deep, and the long lake a dead green, spanned here and there with transparent bridges of yellow and rose. Enraptured with the regal scene they walked on around the summit, then mounted their horses, and still lingering, looked away on the fading panorama, but at last with a sigh passed downward into the world again.

Next morning, just as the sun looked down over the Wasatch range and began to illumine the orchard tops and quivering streams, they rode out of the city. The early morning in the mountains was elixir, and made all that was before them seem sweet and alluring. By ten o'clock they alighted at the Hartman gate, and Elchard rode back to the Eagle mines again.

All day Trean was busy arranging for flight. Elchard's man was to come on the morrow and remain in charge of the little farm until it was disposed of. On a certain day, too, he was to bring such things as the girl made ready to the station on the Weber and ship them East. By sunset she had all in readiness, and sat down upon the porch to wait, but in a moment arose and, putting on her hat, passed back through the orchard and up among the pines, then down the mountain bench to the little cemetery and her father's grave. There she sat a long time, grieving to go forever from it, while the tides of the dusk flowed into the valley

mingled with muffled voices, the lowing of cattle and the dreamy beat of bells.

After awhile she was again in the porch, listening for Elchard's coming. They were not to set out until the moon arose at ten o'clock, but she had expected him sooner than that. The stars shone, but it was quite dark; she was lonesome and uneasy, and walked out and leaned upon the gate to listen. Suddenly a shadow passed close before her, and another seemed to rise close by her side. Her blood leaped into her heart, and she started back with a cry, but a great pair of arms clamped about her, and a heavy hand came crashing upon her mouth. With the strength of one insane she flung the figure off and, springing through the open gate, fled down the lane toward the town. The two shadows followed swift and panting. They gained upon the flying woman, but she passed under a row of trees where the gloom was thick; they followed, and suddenly she seemed just before them, and with a plunge they seized and bore her to the earth. Now the heavy hand was on the soft throat and the first wild scream ended in a gurgle, a block of wood was forced into the mouth, a blanket thrown over the head and form, the hands and feet tied, a buggy driven out of the shadows, the figure lifted in, and all melted away into the darkness.

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CHAPTER XIV.

A NIGHT OF STRANGE EVENTS.

THE lamp left sitting on a table in the Hartman house by Trean burned on steadily hour after hour, but no one came. A little cloud of fire-worshipping insects throbbed about it with a faint purring murmur, and crickets in the grass-fringe along the edge of the porch softly filled the silence. The old clock on the smoky wall ticked on as steadily as the lamp burned, and so clearly in the dead stillness that a tiny squeak was discernible in the turning of the wheels. As each hour closed, it heralded the event with a beat and whirr so abrupt that the little cloud of insects swayed to one side, and the crickets ceased their rasping. But in an instant silence had fallen, the insects were back with the lamp for a heart, and the crickets began to file in rhythmic unison again.

But no one came. The lives this room had sheltered for twenty years were not to enter it again: out into the darkness the inherent tragedy of the place had extended as in a widening circle.

When the dusk of evening began to creep up the rugged sides of Eagle mountain, Elchard was writing busily in the little office by the mines, and

when, at length, the sable sea rose to the mighty prongs, and, at length, closed over them, submerging all in darkness, he was still driving his pen across the paper. Guiding instructions must be left for the operation of both the Gray Peak and Eagle mines, until such a time as a general manager could be sent from the East, and he had been unable to begin this work until almost night. He hoped to complete it by nine o'clock, then he could reach Hartman's by eleven, perhaps, and they would start. He had expected to be at Trean's side just after darkness gathered, but found that impossible. He thought of her now with a feeling of uneasiness, and wrote on hurriedly and eager for the close. He had told no one of his intentions, and the men had all gone down to the bunk-houses that stood upon a little plateau a half mile farther round the mountain. It was still and lonely about the office, and he drew a revolver out of a drawer of his desk, and laid it beside him. He seemed to feel indefinitely the approach of danger. It may have been only the general spirit of his situation that bred this uneasiness about his heart, but it still remains true that his sensitive life in that hour was a fixed point, toward which the elements of death were moving.

At four o'clock in the afternoon three horsemen had ridden out of Salt Lake City along the broad road that leads toward the west. Their destination

seemed any point other than Eagle mountain, for they were riding almost directly away from it, but after proceeding some half dozen miles in that direction they turned, and describing a large half circle were at the base of the mountains on the east by dusk. Just after night had begun to gather another horseman rode swiftly out of the city toward Eagle mountain. For days he had been watching for this movement, and it had all but escaped him. His heart was burning; perhaps he was too late and would not succeed. Each time the thought occurred to him it seemed to bend him forward in the saddle like a wave unseen, but ponderably driving him onward. Yet he dared not ride too rashly, for should he be discovered by the others the loss of his own life might prove the only result of his attempt to rescue the man who was writing in the little office upon the mountain. He had no means of knowing if they had passed on into the range, or, riding on that half circle, had not yet arrived at the foot of the mountains. But until the range was reached he rode swiftly, urging his horse with low but sharp and impatient words. Then he paused and listened, but could hear nothing. Perhaps they had not yet entered the main highway from the side road, and if he pressed forward he might warn Elchard before they arrived. The thought made his blood leap, and he galloped up over the bench and onward into the long gorge

that burrowed darkly through the first range. Hundreds of times he had passed through the great defile, and now he let his horse go freely in the darkness. But presently he bethought him how, in any case, these men commissioned to do a deed of blood would ride slowly; even if they were behind him he need not hasten, and if they had preceded him by haste he might defeat himself, so he subdued his eagerness and took a more cautious pace.

At length he reached the eastern end of the great canyon, and passed down into a hollow. Just beyond it the vast bulk of Eagle mountain loomed against the spangled sky, with only two of its grand steeples visible, owing to his nearness. Suddenly he reined his horse back and stopped; not a half mile before him, carried by the road up over a point on the mountain side, three horsemen like dim statues were standing against a background of stars. Evidently they were listening. He stood still awhile, with throbbing pulse, and presently they passed away. Ah, then his mission would prove more difficult than he had thought! There was no other road than this, down which the ores were hauled to the smelters in the Great Basin. It wound around the lower part of Eagle mountain and some distance down Eagle canyon, then turned to the right through a gorge, and presently climb-

ing out of that, turned back and upward half way around the mountain to the mines.

If he followed the horsemen he might be discovered, and even if he should escape that misfortune the assassination might be consummated before he could interfere. He looked up at the huge looming face of the mountain. Oh, that he might mount directly to the mines! But that seemed impossible. No, he must follow and be close upon them at the end. He dismounted, led his horse into some undergrowth and tied it, then pulling off his boots, and taking them in one hand and his revolver in the other, he pressed forward noiselessly through the gloom. But when he came to the elevated point where the horsemen had stopped and listened he looked up at the great looming mass again. Suddenly he drew on his boots, threw off his coat and hat, placed the revolver in its holder, and started up the mountain-side. Up, up through the stunted tangle and stones he went, swinging over ledges, plowing through stretches of yielding gravel, then again fighting through the stunted tangle. He was a strong young fellow, but his brow was quickly dripping, so great was the strain. In a little time he came to a wall of shattered stone that soared two hundred feet above his head. He paused a moment before it with all his pulses beating loudly, then he began to climb. Often from the valley below he had marked how this great belt of

granite girdled half the mountain, and knew it must be scaled or his mission prove abortive.

Perhaps no human foot had ever mounted it, but he did not care, *he* must gain the summit, and panting and half dizzy with the heady condition of his blood, he fought his way upward. At points huge knots protruded like knuckles of a fist, and around these stone contortions he crept on narrow ledges, then on up splintered slides, and over holes and furrows and gaping crevices, until at length he came out upon a broad shelf and looked upward. The wall still hung above him like a seamed and jutting forehead; he looked downward, all was faint and formless with shadow. He felt tremulous and exhausted, but he could not wait to rest. It seemed to his excited consciousness that he could see the enemies of Elchard's life stealing up the dark gorge beyond the mines; but no, they could not have reached that yet; still he must hasten! and he dashed the sweat from his brow and hurried toward the right in search of a foothold. But none could be found. Then away to the left and over some ragged points, and up a chaotic slide of rock he went again. Up, up out of the dim gulf, with laboring breath, with throbbing temples, straining and struggling toward heart-light and the sweet kingship of himself.

At last he lay on the summit of the great ledge, gasping for breath and with the blood roaring in

his ears. But he could not wait, and getting upon his feet pushed on up the mountain. Again, it seemed for hours, he was struggling through the tangle, wading through steeples of gravelly ashes, the silt of seas in old eons, and clambering around huge jutting horns of stone. Now he must be near the mines, but he had passed to the east of and above them, for there was Elchard's lamp glimmering down below him to the west. He grasped his revolver and hurried toward it, then stopped, and drawing off his boots went stealthily forward. The window of the little office was open toward him, and he could see Elchard's bowed head in the flare of the lamp. The door, too, was open, throwing out a stream of light for a score of feet along the ground. Suddenly, as he came noiselessly forward, a human figure crept into the stream of light, raised upon its knees, lifted a rifle, and took aim at the bowed head beside the lamp.

God in Heaven! he had come too late. His heated blood flashed to ice, then to fire again, for the figure in the light shifted its position and lifted the rifle again. But the rescuer did not wait; with a bound he went over the assassin, striking him a terrible blow with the revolver, and sending man and rifle rolling in the dust, then on through the door and flung it shut. Like lightning Elchard snatched up his revolver and fired, and the wild, begrimed and panting apparition fell crashing beside

him. In an instant Elchard was on his feet presenting his weapon again.

“Don’t shoot me again!” gasped the fallen man. “I’m Orson Beam! I’ve come to save you! Men out there are going to kill you!”

Elchard gave him one look of wonder and consternation, then leaped over his body and bolted the door, whirled about and shut the window and dropped the shade over it, then he returned to Beam.

“Oh, my poor friend, where did I hit you?” he groaned, falling on his knees beside him.

“In my side here. I guess it’s not bad. I fell mostly from exhaustion, I think,” panted Beam. Elchard tore open his clothing and found the wound. It was not serious but bleeding freely, and he sprang up the little stair to the room above, drew a sheet from the bed, and descending, tore it in large strips and bound them tightly around the man’s body. Then he brought a pail of water from a corner and bathed the face and hands of this grimy savior of his with the tenderness of a woman.

“Where did you come from, and why did you do this?” asked Elchard gently.

“I came from town,” said Beam. “I found out by accident that they meant to—to kill you to-night. I wanted to prevent it.”

“What got you in such a plight?”

"I had to climb the face of the mountain; they were ahead of me."

Elchard gave an exclamation of astonishment. Beam got up waveringly and looked at him. Elchard put out his hands gratefully, but the wounded man drew back and his eyes filled. "No," he said, "I'm not fit. I tried to kill you the other day. This is my restitution, and if you can forgive me it is all I ask."

Elchard stared at him in dumb amazement for a moment; then he caught the man's hands and wrung them. "You are free," he said. "You have earned forgiveness, and it is yours."

They had scarcely thought of the assassins, their meeting had been so strange: but now they listened. Evidently the men had fled. Elchard turned to Beam. "I was going to start for the East to-night," he said. "Miss Hartman is waiting for me."

Beam's paleness deepened, and he leaned against the desk for support. "Yes—yes, you—should go," he faltered.

"But I shall never go and leave you in this accursed quarter of the world," said Elchard. "It was reported that you had gone, but now I see why you have remained, and I shall not desert you."

"No, you must not wait for me; I can not go yet," said the other. "Not now—not yet; when I am better I will come," and he wavered about and sat down. Elchard looked at him with swimming eyes.

He could not divine what was in this man's heart, but something about him touched his own heart with a great pity.

"If you would help me down to the bunk houses," said the wounded man, wearily, "I will stay there till morning. Then one of the men may be can get my horse and clothes and go with me to the railroad. If I'm not able to go they can get me the doctor, and I will stay here a few days, then start. Mother is waiting for me at Cheyenne; she will be glad to know of this; it will be my greatest reward."

"I will wait and take you to her," said Elchard, resolutely.

"No," said Beam, with something like consternation. "No, I must not. I cannot go yet! We are friends now; please let me wait until you are gone and we shall remain so. Miss Hartman is in danger every moment; you must go to-night. If you feel what I have done makes you my friend; if you are obliged to me, please—take—her—now—before harm comes to her!"

Elchard put his arms around the man's shoulders and held him a moment; his heart was full. The truth as to this brother-being was glimmering in his consciousness. He said nothing; words were not for such a case.

He went up-stairs and brought down some of his own clothing and left them by the man, who sat

with head leaning forward upon the desk. "Please occupy my room until you are well," said Elchard, huskily. "I will send up a man to watch with you, and another to guard the place. You shall not lack for friends and comforts until you are ready to go. Good-by."

Beam lifted up his head and put out his hand. Elchard took it in both of his, stooped down and kissed it with a broken "God bless you," and passed out into the night. In half an hour he was driving down the mountain.

But what of the woman whom these men loved? What of the human wolves from whom she had fled away into the darkness?

In the same hour that Orson Beam was toiling up the face of Eagle mountain one of the saddest tragedies that ever stained the Wasatch range was occurring over at Gray's peak. When the carriage bearing the three figures drew out of Hartman's lane, it passed across the stream and directly up the valley. The tires of the wheels were bound with cloth and the horse's feet were muffled. It moved forward in the darkness like a phantom. Ever and anon the woman struggled, but the two men held her like a vise between them. Her breathing was labored and difficult, the block being between her teeth and her head covered, and her hands tied in a painful position behind her. Ah, God, how cruel

it was ! and how fierce and low Thy creatures sometimes are !

At length they left the valley and entered a gorge which ran along the west side of Gray's peak. When they had entered its jaws they seemed swallowed up by the earth. An unseen stream gurgled and murmured along the canyon's bottom, and on either hand the huge walls piled upward in dark outlines against the stars, while the gray arch of the milky-way hung over the gaping chasm like a bridge of spangled mists. It was lonely and haunting, and for a long time the carriage went slowly onward through the gloom. The men had never spoken an audible word since they started, and the woman now ceased to struggle. Apparently she had become unconscious. After a time they turned into a smaller canyon that ran up the mountain toward the east. Here the road was not good, and the smaller man got out and led the team. In a little time the canyon seemed to cease, and they came out upon the side of the mountain. Then they stopped. Just above them was the dark opening of an abandoned miner's drift. They lifted the helpless figure from the carriage and laid it upon the ground. Then the small man knelt down and prayed with his wild, dark face turned up to the stars. Before he had finished the muffled figure began to strain and struggle, and when he had said "Amen" he arose, and handing the large man a

surgeon's knife, turned away with his face toward the mountain's top. As he looked the rim of the moon came into a notch near the summit, he heard a strange noise behind him, a sound to be remembered in dreadful dreams, then a hoarse horrified kind of shriek that whirled him about with its frightfulness. Half of the moon was throwing its light down the mountain side, and Hyrum Parley was staggering back with arms lifted and eyes protruding. "I've killed Cistene!" he shouted. "O God, I've killed Cistene!" and he caught his hands in his hair and plunged about like a drunken man. His limbs seemed to double up under the weight of his body, and in a moment he fell headlong among the stones and lay there beating his face among them in frenzy.

The little man stood still and gazed in horror. Ah, they had shed innocent blood! The unpardonable sin was *theirs!* And the moon swung into the notch, and looking down a moment with ineffable sorrow, passed slowly behind the peak and left them in darkness.

The explanation was this: Cistene, jealous of her lord, had watched him slip away mysteriously toward Hartman's, and had followed. Standing in the darkness under the trees to watch for him, the poor woman had seen Trean fly by her like a midnight spirit, and, stepping forward in fright, was hurled to the earth by the girl's pursuers and gagged

and bound. It was a sad ending to a sad deception. Far away in Norway, the same moonlight which had just shown her pallid face to Parley had fallen but a few hours before on the cottage roof which sheltered her through all her peaceful childhood, and had looked down with seeming pity into the eyes of her gray-haired parents, eyes that longed and hungered for their child, but should never be satisfied.

But Trean? She had fled on through the darkness, with her heart shrinking and her feet winged with fear. She knew nothing of the cruel miracle which had saved her, but, in fancy, feeling the rough clutch of horrible hands upon her still, she strove only to gain her lover's side. Just beyond the row of trees, into whose protecting shadows she had plunged, a large gate stood open. Through this she ran, and on across the fields and around the town. In a short time, from sheer exhaustion, she ceased running, but still hurried forward with quick breath and fluttering pulse, and ever and anon looking back into the gloom with a throb of horror and fear. When she had entered the road below the town, she suddenly remembered that Elchard was to come by the other road, and she turned back into the fields, and, crossing the valley, found the way dim and hastened on.

It was a long walk to Eagle canyon, and lonely as death, but at last she reached its gloomy mouth

and entered. Then on and on until it seemed her weary limbs would fail her. At the entrance to the smaller gorge she stopped, not being sure of the road beyond that point, and sat down in the darkness by the wayside, quivering with weariness. The moon was lifting its pale disk over the mountains now, and presently the yawning chasm broke open as by magic, with all its huge boulders, gnarled pines, and lowering ledges turned to grotesque phantasmagoria in the misty light.

Then suddenly three horsemen came riding down the gorge; the one in the centre, who was evidently wounded, being steadied in his saddle by the other two. The girl shrunk into the shadow, and they passed away toward the city. She could wait no longer after seeing that, but fled like a wild thing up the canyon toward the mines with her heart crying out in apprehension. But soon the blessed sound of carriage-wheels came to her ears. It was like music, and she hastened on. When Elchard saw her standing by the road, with her hair fallen down her back and her large eyes lustrous with fear and yearning, he gave a cry of amazement. In a moment she was in his arms, clinging to him like a hunted thing.

“O Paul, take me away from this awful place!” she implored.

“Yes, darling, we will go now,” he said, and be-

fore the dawn broke they had passed from these valleys forever.

Dr. Dubette, too, was never seen again in Utah after that night. Long afterward it was rumored that he had been seen in old Peru, a human wreck wandering about the lonely borders of the world, and all but mad with the belief that he who sheds *innocent blood* can never be forgiven. Bishop Parley died within that year of continuous drunkenness, and at the last laid bare the pitiable secret that tortured him out of the world.

But what of Arsen, the tithe-gatherer? Months afterward a youth searching for lost cattle found him lying in the bramble directly across the road from the spot where Orson Beam had stood when he attempted Paul Elchard's life. In his hand was the weapon whose bullet had stung Beam through the shoulder, and in his brain the lead which had left Beam's weapon, stinging Elchard's temple in its fatal flight. Why the man was there, and which life he had aimed to end, must ever remain a mystery. Perhaps he, too, had deceived his cruel heart with hopes of Trean Hartman's love, and thought to rid the field of Beam just when that honest but creed-ridden youth should silence Elchard. Be that as it may, his life was taken from him; he had become unworthy of it, and its aim and ultimate end are hid in shadow. Mrs. Smoot now lives in the East, and breathes the free air with

ever-increasing gratitude. Orson Beam is minister of a saner, sweeter gospel, and Paul Elchard, helped by his faithful and worthy wife, both upon the rostrum and in the halls of law, has labored long to bring in that dawn which at last is softening the gloom of Mormonism.

[THE END.]

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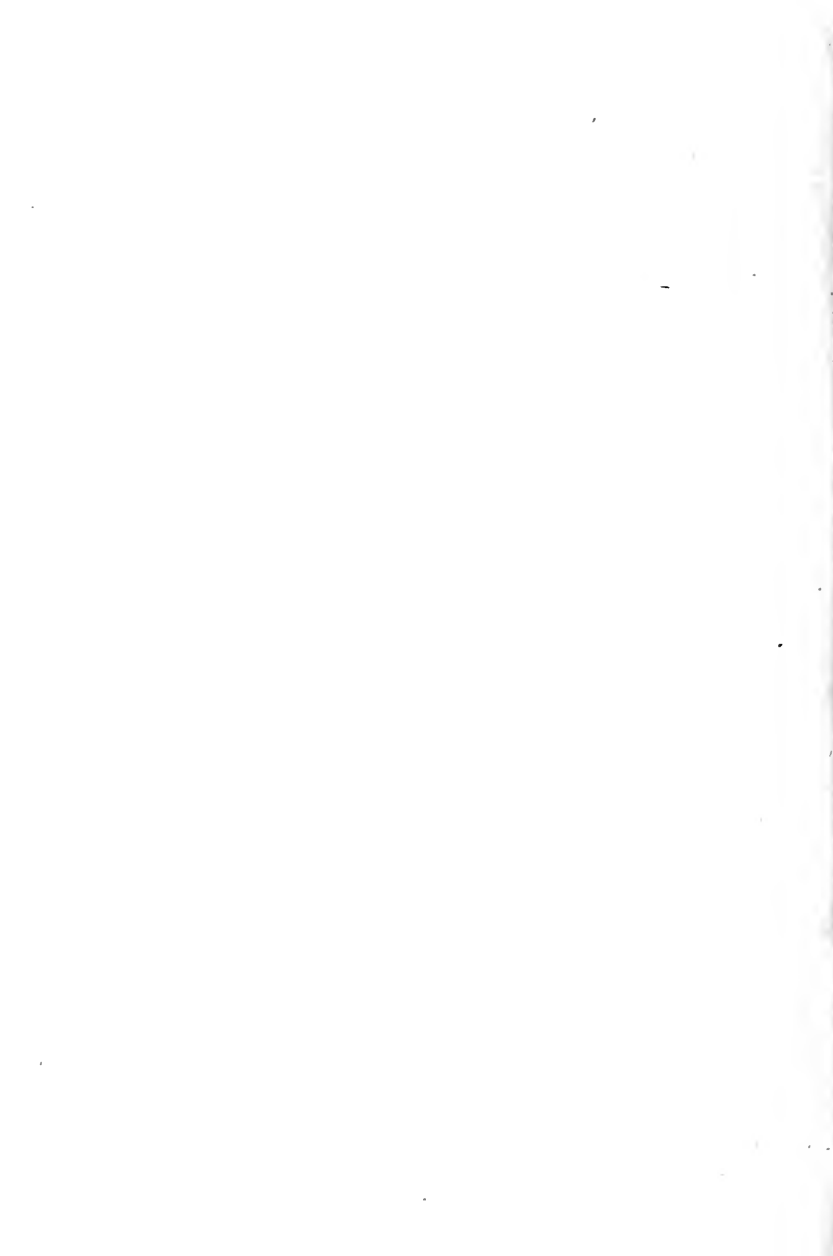
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