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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK JOHN STEVENS' COURTSHIP: A STORY OF
THE ECHO CANYON WAR ***

John Stevens' Courtship.

A STORY OF THE ECHO CANYON WAR.

By SUSA YOUNG GATES

Salt Lake City. Utah.
1909.

TO THAT OTHER JOHN, TO DIAN HERSELF,
AND TO WALTER,
THE THREE FRIENDS WHO HAVE MADE "JOHN STEVENS" POSSIBLE,
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE.

A story of love, in the rugged setting of pioneer days, is the theme of this book. The characters of the story move among the stirring incidents of the Echo Canyon War—an affair absolutely unique in the history of the land. The scenes and events depict faithfully the conditions that, according to the historians—Tullidge, Whitney and Bancroft—prevailed in and about the Territory of Utah during the period of the "War." Much information has also been gathered from Vol. II of the Contributor and from numerous pioneers who recall vividly the intensity of feeling that characterized the days of "Johnston's Army" and "the Move." The characters of the story are, of course, mainly fictitious and have had an existence only in the author's mind. John Stevens is a composite; his outer appearance was faintly suggested by an obscure character of pioneer days; many pioneers knew and will recognize Aunt Clara; Diantha was modeled after a woman yet living in the prime of her life.

Young people often think that romance and thrilling episodes, for which youth hungers, are not found within daily life; and frequently go to perilous lengths in search for that which in fact is

right at home. An avowed purpose of this book is to show that there is plenty of romance and color in every-day life—if the eye be not life-colorblind. If, therefore, John Stevens, with his big, generous heart can awaken the soul of one youth to a higher courage, a more manly outlook upon the splendidly hard discipline of pioneer Western life; if Diantha's suffering and sweet Ellen's sad death help just one vacillating girl to a realization of the dangers with which the path of love and youth are always strewn, then indeed will the author be satisfied. The last two chapters were written at the solicitation of Diantha herself. She begged that the "girls" might be made to see how sweet and enthralling true, pure and sanctified married affection can be.

It is fitting that acknowledgment be here made of the careful and helpful service rendered by the many friends who have read, re-read, suggested, corrected, approved, criticized and molded "John Stevens" into a somewhat passable shape. To these friends, grateful thanks.

The pioneer days were days of beauty and rich emotions. That their memory should be perpetuated is the author's chief justification for the writing of this book.

SUSA YOUNG GATES. Salt Lake City, July 24, 1909.

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I.

THE PIC-NIC IN THE WASATCH

"Dianthy, how are you going up the canyon? Are you going with me and your brother?"

"No, I think not, Rachel. I promised to go with John Stevens. And the very next day Henry Boyle asked me to go with him; wasn't that a shame?"

"Wasn't what a shame? That Henry should have the impudence to ask you to go with him? I should think he'd find out after awhile that you are not in love with him and never will be."

"I'm sure I can't tell how you know so much about me and my affairs, Rachel. I haven't told any one I am or I am not in love with Henry Boyle. And I can't see how it is that you have such a prejudice against Henry. I'm sure you can't find any fault with him. He's a perfect gentleman—far more civilized and polite than a whole town full of men like—like—well—like many of our Utah boys. And he's ambitious, too; wants to make something of himself; which is more than some of our boys do. Just see how he came here from England two years ago; left his home and all his relatives, and in less than a year worked up till he got the position of clerk in Livingston and Kincaid's store."

"Exactly! And now he is a gentleman in very deed, for he wears store clothes every day in the week, and the finest worked ladies' buckskin gloves on Sunday. What more does he require to be a gentleman?"

"See here, Rachel, I want you to answer me one question. Do you, or does my brother Appleton, know anything wrong about Henry Boyle? Isn't he a 'Mormon,' in good standing and repute? Doesn't he pay his tithes and donations, and attend his meetings regularly? What more can you ask?"

"Oh, Dian, you wear me out completely. Stick to your 'Enery, if you want to; but he'll never amount to a row of pins. He's a real namby-pamby man; and that is about all he is likely to be. I should think you'd want a being with some life and spirit."

"Like John Stevens, perhaps. Well, I've never seen any evidence of this wonderful life and spirit you folks are always talking about, in John Stevens. The only fiery thing about John, that I've ever discovered, is his red beard."

With a half sarcastic smile, the girl dusted the last speck of flour from her cotton apron, went to

the wash bench and calmly washed the flour and tiny bits of dough from her hands; then, drawing a clean cloth over her wooden bread trough, she set it on the kitchen table for the night.

Rachel Winthrop sighed as she watched these proceedings and hushed her baby to sleep, in the small, yet comfortable rush-bottomed rocker, which was such a luxury in early Utah days. She admired and loved her husband's youngest sister, with all the strength of her affectionate soul; and she yearned with the tenderness of a mother over that indifferent, self-centered, yet handsome and sensible young person.

"I don't wonder that men admire you, Dianthy," she said, at last. "You're a fine looking girl."

"You mean I've pretty good taste in fixing myself up. People wouldn't admire me so much if they saw me 'off parade' a few times. It's my clothes and the way I put them on that wakens admiration, Rachel. Just look at my nose!"

She stood a moment, with her arms akimbo, her face tilted as she tried to squint with half-closed eyes down at the offending organ.

"There's nothing the matter with your nose, Dianthy, only it's got a patch of flour on the side of it just now. But come, I must put baby to bed, so we can finish up, or we'll never be ready to start in the morning."

It was the evening of the 21st of July, 1857. All Salt Lake was astir with preparations for the famous outing to Big Cottonwood Canyon, where the Twenty-fourth—Pioneer day—was to be spent. Candles sputtered and burned down, were snuffed and finally replaced with new ones, as the women of the young city worked hard yet happily the night through, baking great banks of pies and loaves upon loaves of tender, yellow cakes; cooking beef, lamb and chickens; roasting young pigs before the open fire, in the brick ovens, or in one of the few step-stoves. Serviceberry preserves, and plenty of thick amber-colored molasses were stored in all the pails and jars obtainable. Such creamy-brown loaves of yeast or "salt-rising" bread; such pots of sweet, yellow butter; such crisp doughnuts and delicate "dutch cheese," never before had been seen in such profusion during the brief ten years' history of the Great Salt Lake Valley.

As Rachel Winthrop laid the child in its cradle and prepared to finish her ironing of print dresses and blue chambrey sunbonnets, the young girl, who had pulled down her sleeves and adjusted her collar, went slowly out at the front door, as if watching for someone. Then, turning back into the sitting-room, she seated herself at the small melodeon in the corner, and began to play softly. Her touch upon the tiny ivory keys was very sympathetic and musical. Waltzes and schottisches poured out in mellow harmony upon the heated waves of the July evening. Then, as if filled to the full with the spirit of music that she had invoked, she lifted up her voice in song. "Shells of the Ocean" and "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother," betrayed a quality of tenderness in the soul that the somewhat proud exterior did not warrant.

"Oh, Dian," called her sister-in-law, "why do you sing such mournful songs? You give me the creeps."

"Do I?" asked the girl. "I wasn't thinking; but someway, I feel sad tonight, just as if something were going to happen."

"Something is, Dian; we are all invited by President Young to spend the Twenty-fourth in Big Cottonwood Canyon. And there's lots to do before we go to bed."

"Just one song then, to cheer us up, Rachel, for the evening's work" and the gay voice trilled out the rollicking changes of "We All Wear Cloaks," and ended with the evening hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints, No Toil Nor Labor Fear." Before she had finished the first stanza of the hymn, her brother, Bishop Winthrop, had added his musical bass, and the sixteen year old Harvey was putting in a fair tenor and playing the air as well on his concertina. Rachel herself sang the alto. Then, with a quiet reverence, the Bishop said, "Let us have prayers."

The quiet of the night closed in with starry radiance upon the little family, the children asleep, while the women worked, conversing in subdued voices. Few were the hours of sleep that memorable night in Great Salt Lake City, for most of its citizens, to the number of three thousand, had been invited to spend the day at the headwaters of the Big Cottonwood stream, in the little dell far up in the tops of the mountains. All the city was astir to assist in the unusual festivity.

In the morning, the Winthrop household was boiling and bubbling in the excitement and heat of preparation.

"Dian," said the distracted Rachel, "you go out to the wagon and get the Bishop to put in all those things that I have laid at the side of the appletree."

Out in the back yard could be heard the frequent small explosions that preceded such scenes in the Winthrop household.

"What's all this trash, Diantha? Does Rachel think we are going to cross the plains again? She's got enough stuff here to feed an army and to house a regiment," this as the Bishop selected

various of the bundles and bales sent for the wagon's supply. "Who on earth but Rachel would ever think of carting a heavy wooden tub, flat irons and popcorn up Big Cottonwood? Popcorn on a picnic! And she's actually got a feather bed in this pile! Humph!" and the snort of disgust ended only as he tossed the bed back into the crotch of the young apple tree.

"Now, Appleton, that bed must go, so just do be good and let's not waste time this way. Here; it can go right on top of the boxes and we'll have it handy for the children to sit on," Dian worked as she talked, for she knew how little value to attach to the warmth of her brother on such occasions. "Here, Harvey, pack that shovel into the crevice there, will you?"

"Shovels on a picnic! Does she think we are going to locate mines? And rakes! My soul, but we will never get up the canyon with this load. You'll all have to walk, I'll tell you that."

"All but the baby and Rachel, Appleton. I am going to ride in John Stevens' wagon, with Aunt Clara and Ellie Tyler."

"Is that so, Dian? Well, that's fine." And in the pleasure of this announcement, the Bishop stowed away most of the things awaiting their turn on the grass.

"Salt! Why, Dian, there's twenty pounds of salt in this sack," and the Bishop fairly shouted in astonishment. "Salt by the bushel! Does Rachel imagine we are going out to pickle meat? There's salt enough for three thousand people, to last them a week."

"Exactly, Appleton; you know well enough that other people forget things, and Rachel has to be general commissary for the crowd," calmly replied her unmoved defender.

"Upon my word! Do you mean that I am to be made a general pack-horse to carry all the forgotten things for other people?"

"Appleton," this was said skilfully, and by way of diversion, "are we to have a dancing pavilion up there?"

"Two of them, Dian. And I don't want you sky-larking off with all the young men in the company, if you are to go with John Stevens. You won't get another chance like John, let me tell you. A member of the legislature, a man without fault or blemish, and as good as God ever made a man."

"There's the rub, brother. I'm not good enough for such a paragon. And I don't like paragons."

"You're an obstinate girl, Diantha."

The girl laughed merrily, now that she had diverted the attention of her irascible brother to herself, for he had packed away even the despised salt, and was putting in the tent poles and tents on top of the other bulky but light loading, while they were talking.

"Come, Rachel, we're all done. What are you laughing about?" sang out the Bishop. "Are you ready to start?"

His wife emerged from the house, all smiles, and with a cup of cool buttermilk to refresh the weary husband, who had dealt so generously with her packing arrangements.

"Thank you, Dian," she said softly, as the girl hurried into the house to complete her own preparations.

It was in the early afternoon of that day, when a double team—the wagon fitted with bows, but the cover folded in the bottom of the wagon box—drew up to the Winthrop house with great dash and clatter. Four good spring seats rattled emptily as the driver threw on his brake and gave a loud "Hello" to the people inside.

The front door opened and Bishop Winthrop came out.

"Dian will be ready in a moment, John. I am glad she is going with you, for I know you'll take good care of her."

"Just as good as she'll let me," the young man smiled down at his friend.

"Oh, Dianthy's all right, only she's a little high-spirited. Give her plenty of time, John; you can afford to wait," said the elder man, in confidential tones.

At that moment Diantha herself came out with her two nieces, and looking at the empty seats, she asked, "Where's Ellen Tyler going to ride? I'll sit with her."

"All right," answered the young man calmly "Only you'll have to sit three in a seat, as Charlie Rose put that middle seat in for himself and Ellen."

John sat patiently waiting for the girl to make up her mind, and not offering to assist her in. Perhaps his horses were fractious. At any rate, he sat watching them, now and then flicking a fly from them, apparently indifferent as to the result of the girl's decision.

"I suppose I shall have to ride in front, then," Dian murmured, and began climbing over the wheel, "although I like to be invited to sit by young men."

"You may sit on the back seat if you want to, and let either Aunt Clara or Tom Allen or either of the two little girls, Lucy or Josephine, sit here," said John, as he smiled down into her averted face, his gray eyes flashing with suppressed amusement.

"No, thank you. I've had trouble enough to get where I am, without any help; I don't care to climb any more. Get in, girls," she added.

"Where are you going now, John?" asked Diantha, as they drove off at last.

"For the rest of the folks," and away they clattered and rattled, the horses requiring careful handling, they were so full of eager life.

John drove rapidly to the home of Aunt Clara Tyler, where he was to find the others of his party.

A moment's wait, and then Ellen Tyler came out, followed by the others. Her brown curls fell from under the white sunbonnet which surrounded her face like a ruffled halo. The delicate cream of her skin but made the glowing brown eyes and the scarlet lips the lovelier by contrast. Her pretty teeth gleamed through the curved line of parted lips as she bounded smilingly down the flower-bordered path. She had a great bunch of spice pinks and blue bachelor buttons in her hand, and as she reached the wagon she threw the blue blossoms into Dian's lap, saying gleefully, "These belong to you, Dian."

"Why?" cried out Charlie Rose, who stood waiting for his partner, at the wheel, "do you think Dian is destined to be a blue-stocking or will she marry an old bachelor?" and the young man sprang gracefully to assist Ellen to her place.

"Dian's never blue herself, and so she may have my bluest flowers," said Ellen, as she leaned over the seat to give her friend a good-morning kiss.

Fat and jolly Tom Allen had thoughtfully brought out a chair on which stout and kindly Aunt Clara could climb safely into the back seat with him. Lucy Winthrop and Josephine Tyler, as inseparable childish friends, occupied the other seat.

Soon all were seated; the plethoric baskets were disposed of; and the merry party dashed through the tree-bordered streets, John Stevens managing his double team with the skill of long practice.

Just at the edge of the town a young man galloped up on horse-back, and raised his straw hat gracefully to the ladies, reined in his horse near Diantha Winthrop, and sat on his trotting steed in true English style. Diantha greeted the young man as Brother Boyle; and at once gayly devoted her attention to him, ignoring her partner, John Stevens, with girlish obliviousness.

There was a great clattering of wheels and many gay jests, with gusts of youthful laughter floating out from that wagon-load of happy hilarity. The placid Aunt Clara Tyler looked on from her vantage point in the back seat, with sympathetic companionship. They overtook and passed scores and hundreds of teams, all traveling in the same direction. And each party was given, as they passed, the greetings of long friendships and mutual pleasures.

When they reached the rendezvous at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon, they found the narrow passageway between the hills looking like a tented field. Out in the open square of the regulated camp, the strains of "Uncle" Dimick Huntington's Martial Band saluted the ears with tingling effect, as the fifes piped out shrilly the melody of "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

Charlie Rose assisted Aunt Clara and Ellen to alight, while he sang in merry accompaniment the words of the song. Ellie's own dancing feet were tripping, almost before she touched the greensward; and Charlie seized her hands and together they flew and pirouetted and bowed and danced to the strains of that inspiring sound.

Henry Boyle, who was off his horse before the party halted, quickly appropriated Dian's willing fingers, and together they tripped in all the gay disorder of impromptu dancing over the open square, as the music shrilled and floated out on the cool, canyon breeze.

Even Aunt Clara's feet tingled with the sound; but she refused to accept jolly Tom Allen's invitation to join the merry throng now quickly gathering on the sward, for she was very stout; but she smiled sympathetically into John's face as he glanced quizzically at his own partner now whisking away merrily with another, and at his associate youths who had left to him all the labor of unhitching and preparing camp for the night. But John was not a dancing man. He cared little that he was left alone. His animals were very dear to him; for his lonely domestic life had brought him in close association with the dumb beasts that carried him over trackless plains and mountain peaks.

Soon the word went forth that President Young was approaching the rendezvous, and all hastened to greet their friend and leader. As his buggy, driven rapidly through the dusty road, came in sight, the Nauvoo Band poured forth its brass blare of welcome; the boys pulled off their

hats; the girls waved sunbonnets; and the whole group stood at attention, with affectionate greetings written upon their smiling faces, and waving their hands, to welcome Brigham Young—Governor, President, friend, and brother.

Thereafter followed the peaceable family of Bishop Winthrop. Comforted and rested by the soothing assurance that wife and children were well and with him, and that his precious young sister, Diantha, was for once in the care and company of the man he loved best on earth, Bishop Winthrop had driven his light spring wagon joyfully, and withal as rapidly as his farm horses would permit, in the wake of the President and his immediate family, with Rachel and babe crooning happily beside him, and the merry youngsters behind, who were too interested in the gigantic picnic before them even to indulge in a childish squabble.

At late sunset, the bugle sent forth its insistent call for silence. Rapidly the company of over three thousand souls, encamped for the night beside the brawling Big Cottonwood stream, gathered in one glowing mass of color and motion. Then youth and age knelt reverently on the sward, while devotions were offered to the kind Providence which had permitted them to begin their long-planned festivity.

An hour after the evening service was over, the pleasure seekers had retired into wagons and tents, and the silence of the peaceful hills brooded over the encampment.

II.

DIANTHA FORGETS JOHN

The next morning at daybreak, the party began the long steady climb amidst crags and pine covered hills, up through the rocky windings of "The Stairs," and still up. The party laughed, sang, walked, climbed, or rested for a moment beside the churning, foaming mountain stream or beneath the shadowing pine trees which bordered the newly made road. As the long cavalcade wound in and out between the hills, the two girls in the wagon drawn by John Stevens' spirited horses, sang and laughed in gayest abandon. Aunt Clara's eyes were full of tender gratitude for such happiness, for she had known the sorrows of many mobbings and drivings. This haven of peace and joyous plenty was a foretaste of heaven to the faithful heart which had braved more than the persecution of strangers; for Aunt Clara had left home, parents, and all she held dear for the sake of that Gospel which spelled Truth and Life Everlasting to its faithful votaries.

"Oh, John," cried Diantha at last, "You must let Ellie and me walk; I just can't resist the pleading call of those gorgeous flowers. Bluebells, and red-bells—and oh, the exquisite columbines! Look, Ellie, look! Stop, John, stop! Ellie and I will walk."

John himself was walking beside his team up the heavy, seemingly never-ending grade of that twenty mile ascent, while Tom Allen and Charlie Rose placed an occasional block under the wheels or stood upon them, while the panting horses rested for a moment.

"Here you are," called Charlie, as he heard Dian's plea, "my waiting arms will hold you," and he held out his arms in mock pleading.

"Aunt Clara's lips will scold you," jeered Dian as she climbed safely down on the other side. But Ellen jumped gayly into the grasp of the waiting cavalier, whose modest action in placing her gently on the hillside belied his bombastic appeal.

"Spirit of the hills, descend and greet,
The pressing of her eager feet,"

sang Charlie as he followed the flying girls, gayly improvising his boyish madrigals to meet each incident of the day.

The girls climbed from point to point, always going upward, but keeping out of the way of passing teams. Their arms were soon filled with the blooms of riotous colors and perfume which intoxicated them with the blush and glory of the color song of peak and mountain vale.

"Her spicy cheeks were red with bloom,
Her colored breath was panting;
As with a thousand flowers of June—"

Charlie paused to block the wheel, and Diantha finished his doggerel for him,

"She mocked at Charlie's ranting."

and Aunt Clara who felt faint herself from the rarified air that they were all conscious of, looked

anxiously at the somewhat delicate frame of her foster-daughter.

"Tom, I believe you, too, are uncomfortable."

Tom Allen was almost speechless, for his bulky form was nearly overcome with the constant climbing; but he would not betray the fact to the scorn of Charlie Rose: for Tom dreaded to be teased quite as much as he loved to tease others. So he quieted his panting breath to say, "Aunt Clara, I think I heard some one say you had some doughnuts in one of those baskets; where could we find a better place to eat our frugal meal than beside this purling stream."

"Just a mile or so, more," interposed John Stevens. "We are almost there; can't you exercise patience for another hour?"

At that moment, however, word was passed down the line that all would pause half an hour to rest animals and men.

The cavalcade had passed the two lower sawmills, with the roomy cabins decorated with waving flags. Now they halted beside the third and last mill, nestled in the crevice of the canyon. Its buzzing industry was stilled for this wondrous day, while the workmen and their families gathered in the grassy space to meet and welcome the company. For their pleasure they had not only made the last five miles of that difficult road into the vale of the Silver Lake, just above, but had also erected three spacious boweries with comfortable floors and seats to accommodate the gay revelers.

Everybody seemed moved with a common impulse for "doughnuts;" for the President himself, as he halted at the "saw-mill," stepped up to Aunt Clara Tyler and accepted courteously her offer of fried cakes.

The impatient girls were glad, nevertheless, when the half-hour was over, and they could once more resume their places in the wagon for the final steep climb to the place of destination. When they mounted the last summit of that low northern rim encircling the valley of their desire, both girlish throats were at once filled with excited exclamations of delight, as the fairy scene burst upon their view.

An emerald-tinted valley with a silvery lake empearled on its western rim lay before them, cupped in a circle of embracing hills and snow-covered crags. The summits of the eastern and western hills were crowned with pine, which here and there, like dusky sentinels, traced their lines down, down to the water's edge. That gleaming, brilliant, silent water! Every tree upon its brink was reproduced, and even the clouds above floated again in soft, tremulous pictures beneath the surface of this beautiful mountain mirror. Sheer above the lake on the south towered white granite cliffs, holding here and there a whiter bloom of snow in their pale embrace.

Ellen jumped excitedly from her seat to lean over and hug her friend Diantha, as the wagon rolled slowly down the smooth road to the spot which John had selected for the Winthrop and Tyler tents, close to the marquee of President Young. Dian put up a caressing hand to the soft cheek of her enthusiastic friend, Ellen, and leaned her own cheek tenderly against the one bending over her shoulder.

"Oh, Dian," breathed the happy girl, "I never thought there was so much beauty in all Utah."

"Utah is the home of beauty and goodness," said Charlie Rose gallantly, and even Dian could not answer this trite compliment saucily, for her heart was melted with rapture at sight of so much grandeur.

The camp was located on a fairy-like spot, overlooking the surrounding meadows and lake. The boweries, President Young's marquee, and President Heber C. Kimball's tent, occupied an open space amid the small copses of pine on the north side of the lake. The tents, carriages and wagons, were soon grouped about these central points. A massive granite rock, fifty-four feet in circumference by fifty-four feet high, stood at the entrance of this lovely, natural bower; from the center of this spot, and apparently without earth to sustain them, grew three pine trees, which were fringed round at the top of the rock with a thick cluster of young pines, about two feet high. A large flag was suspended from these trees, bearing the motto "Clear the Way," with an all seeing eye in the oval of the upper margin, above two clasped hands, under which, inscribed on a scroll, were the words, "Blessings Follow Sacrifices." A representation of the Pioneer company crossing the North Platte River, on rafts, occupied the central space of this great flag. Below was another legend, "The Pioneers of 1847 at the Upper Crossing of the Platte, in Pursuit of the Valleys of the Mountains."

A little farther to the right, and near the northwest corner of the great, central, hundred foot bowery, was a stately pine, from which floated the loveliest flag on earth—the Stars and Stripes—its silken folds now whipping out wide and full now curling in graceful half circles around the unique flagstaff.

Another banner near by, bore the representation of a bundle of sticks, bound together with strong cords, and the inscription, "The Constitution of the United States. Equal Rights! Woe to the Violators!"

From the front of the central bowery hung three great banners, the first having painted thereon a rock in the midst of billowing waves; from the summit of the rock floated the starry flag, and below was the inscription, "The Constitution of the United States! The 'Mormons' will Defend the Rock! Who can Prevail Against it?" The second banner had the picture of a lion, with one paw upon a rock above which was the inscription "Utah Courage," and underneath in golden letters, "The Spirit of '76 is not Dead." The third banner had a lion standing beside the docile figure of a recumbent lamb, with the inscription, "Peace Reigns Here," painted across the silken surface beneath.

On the tallest pines at the crowning point of both eastern and western summits, there floated great flags, the red, white and blue of their glory accentuated by the clear, brilliant blue of the sky, and the deep green of the wooded slopes.

Scattered here and there were massive swings for the youth, while the little ones were well provided with low swings and wide seats.

Major Robert T. Burton, of the Nauvoo and Utah Militia, with a detachment of life-guards, had charge of the swings and the rafts on the lakes, to guard against accidents. John Stevens was detailed to his own full share of this guard duty, and was therefore soon absent from the merry party he had brought so carefully to the camp.

The labor of setting up tents and arranging camp filled the remaining afternoon hours, and Dian was glad when her brother said, "You can go now, my girl; Rachel and I will finish; take this feather bed over to Aunt Clara's tent, for Rachel wants her to be comfortable."

"What a kind thought, Appleton; Aunt Clara does so much sick nursing that she needs to have a good bed. Tell Rachel I think she is pretty good to give up her own bed."

"That's all right. Rachel and I are young, and can sleep on the ground, when we need to. She says Aunt Clara was so anxious to make you young people happy that she gave up all the room she could for your spring seats and yourselves."

"Aunt Clara is good to us, and Rachel is good to her. Pretty good religion that, brother, eh? Rachel is very thoughtful, Appleton."

"Yes, she is the best woman on earth, Dolly. I appreciate her, if I am cross at times. Hark! That's the bugle call for prayers. Run along with your bed, Dian."

"Allow me to assist in this operation," and merry Charlie Rose appeared just in time to carry the bulky bed into Aunt Clara's tent.

The camp gathered in the central bowery, at the cool sunset hour, and the choir sang "Come, Come Ye Saints."

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear,
But with joy wend your way;
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive,
Our useless cares from us to drive.
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! all is well!

Why should we mourn, or think our lot is hard?
'Tis not so; all is right!
Why should we think to earn a great reward,
If we now shun the fight?
Gird up your loins, fresh courage take,
Our God will never us forsake;
And soon we'll have this tale to tell—
All is well! all is well!

We'll find the place which God for us prepared,
Far away in the West;
Where none shall come to hurt or make afraid;
There the Saints will be blessed.
We'll make the air with music ring,
Shout praises to our God and King;
Above the rest these words we'll tell—
All is well! all is well!

And should we die before our journey's through,
Happy day! all is well!
We then are free from toil and sorrow too;
With the just we shall dwell.
But if our lives are spared again
To see the Saints, their rest obtain,

O, how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! all is well!

After the song, the attention of the assembly was riveted upon the dignified form of Brigham Young as he advanced to the edge of the raised platform and said:

"We unite, my friends and brothers, and sisters, in gratitude to that Father who has permitted us to enjoy this festal occasion. Tomorrow morning, at seven o'clock, the bugle will call you here to morning devotions, except those who are detained at their wagons. We wish those who have children here to see that they are in the tents, and not have the cry go forth that this, that and the other child is lost. I also wish to give a word of caution to all who may visit this lake or the ones in the hidden vales above us. I would rather have stayed at home than to have it said that a child has been lost, or any person drowned through visiting this place.

"Suppose a child was lost in the woods and could not be found; suppose you should lose a sister, a daughter, or a companion on this lake; you would always think of your visit to Big Cottonwood Canyon with bitter regret. A circumstance of this kind would mar the peace of everyone. I wish the sisters and children to keep away from these rafts, unless they have some person in their company capable of taking care of them; if they know enough to do so as they should, they will listen to this counsel.

"Here are swings and boweries prepared for your enjoyment; here are most beautiful groves, meandering streams, and lovely sheets of water, amid the towering peaks of the Wasatch mountains. Here are the stupendous works of the God of Nature, though all do not appreciate His wisdom, manifested in His works, but are tempted to recklessness through the buoyant feelings of youth and health, and without caution, are liable to run into danger.

"Some, if they had the power, would be on the other side of those lofty peaks in ten minutes, instead of calmly meditating upon the wonderful works of God, and His kind providence that has watched over us and provided for us, more especially in the last fifteen years of our history. I could sit here for a month and reflect on the mercies of our God, and humble myself in thankfulness because of His favors to myself as an individual, and to all this great people.

"What do you think the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum, the Patriarch, would have given to have seen this day in the flesh, and to have been here instead of being taken to Carthage, like lambs to their slaughter, and butchered by their enemies? We are hid up in the Lord's secret chambers, according to His promise, where none can molest us, or make us afraid."

Diantha's whole body shivered in an inner resistance as the President uttered this joyful challenge to fate. But she listened attentively as the further quiet words fell from his lips:

"Here is a good floor which we have prepared expressly for your enjoyment, there are two other boweries for the mothers and their children, and here are three bands of musicians, together with our Nauvoo Brass Band and Brother Huntington's Martial Band. The Springville band and the Ogden band will both assist Professor Ballo who has charge of the great orchestra provided for dancing. Before we have our evening prayers, Professor Ballo will favor us with one of his classical selections,—'what do you call it, Brother Ballo?'" asked the President calmly, across the pavilion, and the musician flushed slightly as he responded from the opposite platform:

"It is the Overture to Tancreda," profusely bowing in his embarrassment.

And with that the band struck up the exquisite strains of that tuneful offering to youth and courage, while the people listened with well placed musical sympathy, to this unusual burst of melody, in the virgin solitudes of this sylvan vale. The very hills took up the theme of that lovely opera by Rosinni, and echoed and re-echoed the fine harmony with all the Silver Lake's famous echo.

As the massive form of the President's Counselor, Heber C. Kimball, stepped out to offer the evening prayer for that happy camp, sweet Ellen's soul sang and sang the words of the prayer into the straining melody of the Overture to Tancreda, but alas, Ellen's music was hidden in her soul and had not been taught to find expression on her lips, or from her finger-tips.

After prayers, the people dispersed to their tents to finish preparations for rest, or to join in dance and song around camp fires or in the great boweries.

At the Winthrop tent, Rachel was completing her camp arrangements.

"Just see 'Enry B'yle 'ang 'round Di," muttered Dian's brother Harvey to his chums as they carried bundles and boxes from the wagons to the tents, "He is too fine to chop and dig; he leaves that to John and father."

"I'm going to tell mother to set him to work, said Lucy, who at once ran to put her threat into execution.

"Miss Diantha, what can I do to help you?" asked the gallant young man, on receiving the hint from frank Rachel Willis. Thereupon he took bundles and parcels from the girl, she laughing again and again at his awkward attempts to be useful around a camp fire.

The camp-fires, now began to shoot steady flames into the darkening sky; the squeak, squeak of the fiddles was answered by the toot of the brass horns, and martial and stringed bands united their forces in loud, triumphant invitations to "dance."

And how they danced! Old and young, short and tall, fat and slim—the temporary floor groaning and shivering beneath the hundreds of merry, flying, stamping feet.

Huge camp fires, all over the valley, flung dancing flames and sparks high into the fleecy evening clouds, while at each corner of the pavilion, great pine trees, brought from the hills and set upright for the purpose, burned a spicy, fragrant glowing radiance into every crevice and corner of the bowered halls.

"Are you going to dance with me?" drawled John Stevens, through his long beard, as he suddenly appeared at Diantha's side. She stood in the brilliant light of the burning pine tree, near the bowery, her tall, graceful figure melting into divine curves under the simple, white frock she wore, her arms uncovered to the elbow and her lovely neck just bared to show the proud lines which dipped in smooth beauty from ear-tips to shoulders. Her columned throat pulsated with bounding life under the snowy skin, as she moved her pretty head from side to side, while the crown of her yellow hair which was coronaded in heavy braids around and around the shapely head, broke into tiny curls on her temples and at the white nape of the neck, and was a glittering mass of spun gold in the dancing flames which heightened both color and quality of that mass of silken charm.

"Why, of course, I am, if you ask me to," Dian replied frankly.

She knew John was not much of a dancer, being very tall, and not very fond of gyrating around as rapidly as the swift music demanded. However, she took his arm and they walked out upon the floor; a waltz was called, and then the girl looked up in her companion's face with a dismayed glance, and he gazed at her with a quizzical response to her misgiving. Of all dances, he was least at home in a waltz.

Once,—twice,—they tried to turn around but without much success. They stumbled over other couples on the floor. In spite of Dian's heroic efforts to keep her giant upright and in time with the step, he stopped suddenly and exclaimed: "I think we shall have to call that a failure."

She looked up quickly to see if there was not a shade of disappointment on his face, and she rejoiced with a wicked joy, when dapper young Henry Boyle came up immediately and carried her off to dance, with all the grace and rhythm that was so necessary a part of a perfect waltz.

They passed John once or twice, as he stood under the blazing pine, stroking his beard and watching the dancers with an inscrutable expression.

Diantha forgot him by and by, and did not again think of him, for her time was so filled with calls for dances that she had no time to think of anybody or anything but her own excited self.

After a few hours of dancing, the girl accepted Henry Boyle's invitation to walk out around camp awhile, and together they traversed the small valley. As they passed their own camp-fire, where sat her sister-in-law, Rachel Winthrop, chatting with Aunt Clara, she suddenly wondered where John Stevens had been all the evening.

"Have you seen John, this evening?" she asked Rachel.

"Yes, he has been here, once or twice, getting some cakes and milk for himself and partner, I guess, for he took two plates."

"I thought I was his partner up here," said Diantha, in a somewhat injured tone.

"Haven't you seen him this evening?" queried Aunt Clara Tyler.

"Oh, yes, but I have been dancing so hard, I forgot all about him."

"You may find some day, Dian, that two can play at the forgetting game," said Aunt Clara, with a tenderness that robbed the speech of any bitterness.

"I wish they would," answered the girl indifferently.

Nevertheless her vanity was touched, a few moments after, when she and her companion passed a rustic bower of boughs, twined and twisted into a lovely green retreat, where there was a small camp-fire smouldering in front, and a low couch inside, covered with softest buffalo robes, whereon sat her dearest friend, Ellen Tyler; and stretched out with his long legs to the fire, his arm supporting his head, and his face turned very intently to the young girl near him, was that recreant, John Stevens, who ought just now to be suffering all the torments of a discarded lover.

It was annoying to say the least. Dian acted as if she did not see them at all, and whispered with much animation to her companion, as they passed the light of the fire.

She hurried at once to the bowery and none were more sprightly and gay until the ten o'clock bugle sounded throughout the valley, and then she allowed Henry Boyle to accompany her to the

tent where the elder ones still sat chatting and enjoying themselves.

Diantha Winthrop was pre-eminently sensible. She was sometimes annoyed with the frequent compliments she received as to this trait of her character. She was rarely angry with people; she never gossiped about anybody, and if she had nothing good to say, she rarely said anything at all. She was not impulsive, nor was she unduly swayed by her emotions, deep as they sometimes were. She acted upon mature thought, and only the few who were her intimate friends, really knew the value of her sterling character.

Henry begged his companion to stroll up the hill-side a little, just fairly out of range of the jokers by the camp-fire, and the girl was the more willing because of that other couple under the pines across the tiny valley.

"Here you are, Dian," cried out Rachel. "I was just wondering if you would not like to get that pop-corn and pop some for the crowd."

But Henry was still begging under his breath, for her to come up in the shadow of the pines, and away from the crowd.

"Can't Lucy and Josephine pop the corn, Rachel?" asked Dian, at last.

Both children protested their utter weariness.

"Ah, child," said young Boyle, patronizingly to little Lucy, "just pop the corn, like the leddy you are."

"I'm not a 'leddy'," flashed the child back, "and I don't think it's fair, so there."

"Don't cry," still teased the young fellow; "do be a good girl," then joking in his rather clumsy fashion, he added, "Come and kiss yoo papa."

"Never mind, youngsters," sang out Tom Allen, "I'll help you," while Harvey and Josephine both flew to assist Lucy Winthrop.

Lucy sprang into the tent in an angry flame, while her mother followed, herself too annoyed at the liberty the young man had taken to answer at all. But she soothed the two little girls, and they all came out and finished the corn. Rachel herself carried some up to Henry and Dian, who now sat cozily far up on the hill-side, under the dense shadow of the trees.

The younger ones slipped away from the fire, and the laughter and song there died down; but the young couple still sat under the dark shadow, far up on the hill-side.

Henry was entertaining Dian with long tales about his former home in the British Isles. He gave glowing pictures of the castle belonging to a distant relative in Staffordshire. The girl listened with increasing interest; for who could fail to sympathize with the neglected cousin, even if a third one, of a real lord and earl. The narrator's allusions to himself were a little broad and fulsome, but Dian was inexperienced, if shrewd by nature. A feeling of deeper respect for this good looking and highly connected youth was growing momentarily in her breast—he certainly was such a fine dancer, and he always picked up a handkerchief so gracefully! She could but feel flattered by these confidential revelations of superior virtues and titled relations. The sounds were hushed from tree to tree, and the canopy of silence was unfolding in all the majesty of the mid-night hour.

Suddenly there was a pounding crash and roar above them on the hill-crest, and down through the brush and trees came bounding some terrible wild animal.

Dian screamed, and Henry jumped wildly in the air, yelling at the top of his voice.

"Run, run; it's a bear."

He took his own advice so quickly that the girl was barely on her feet before he was half-way down to the camp fire, still yelling, "Run, Run!"

As the young man reached the full blaze of the fire, a quick chorus of childish voices, above them on the hill-side from which he had fled, high falsettos, trebels, and one deep bass voice, united in a blasting sing-song:

"Come and kiss yoo papa; come and kiss yoo papa."

And the children, in one derisive row of merciless tormentors, stood just in the upper shadow line, repeating the refrain with painful insistence, until Boyle himself was glad to retreat into the silence of his own tent for the night. There were sounds of laughter from every near-by tent. What Dian thought of this absurd adventure could only be conjectured from the scornful expression of her rosy lips, as she gathered the two little girls in her arms and drove the still jeering boy, Harvey, and Tom Allen in the darkened back-ground, away into the far seclusion of their own tent.

But even as she fled, she heard in the near distance another shrill cat-call, "Come and kiss yoo

papa." And she joined with one smothered hysterical burst of laughter, the two girls, who were still in her arms, in laughing at their discomfited enemy.

III.

"COME AND KISS YOO PAPA"

It was barely five o'clock the next morning, and long before the lazy sun would climb the high eastern hill, when Brother Duzett's drums rattled and rolled their startling reveille, echoing from peak to peak. In a moment, the quick bustle of camp life broke the stillness of dawn, and the neigh of the tethered horses, and the low of the oxen in the meadow, added a note of surprised domesticity to that wild scene. Then, before these sounds were fairly through echoing and re-echoing across the silver sheeted lake, two rounds from Uncle Dimick Huntington's cannon were answered by two others across the vale fired from Elisha Everett's fieldpiece. The booming volleys were swept from crag to crag, and went rolling and tumbling in wild confusion down the canyon's winding glens, and were just losing themselves in silence, when the three brass bands united in one great glowing tribute to liberty, in the entrancing melody of the loved "Yankee Doodle." After this even the children could sleep no longer, but dressed as best they could with half-frozen fingers in the dim dawn of the snow-cooled air.

Out from tent and wagon-box they poured at eight o'clock, these merry, happy revellers, filled to the brim with joyous anticipations of all that the day and the years would bring to them.

As Dian and Ellen met each other, both with cheeks of rosy hue from their hastened toilet, and ready to go to the bowery for morning prayers, they heard that shrill call, now muffled by the busy morning noises—

"Come and kiss yoo papa," and Dian knew that the young avengers were again hot on the Englishman's trail.

"What's that?" asked Ellen.

Dian explained her midnight adventure, but she asked no question of Ellen as to her own whereabouts the night before, as she really was indifferent on that subject. She had known and loved Ellen a good part of her life, and she did not propose to let a silly thing like John Steven's diverted attentions come between her and her friend. Dian was much too sensible for jealousy as a pastime; it might do in real love; but jealousy in the abstract had never been a part of her character. Dian was surely sensible.

The girls were that moment joined by Charlie Rose, fresh, dapper, and full of morning "poesy."

"The stars have left the morning skies
To beam in Ellen's lovely eyes,"

he began, when Dian interrupted saucily, "Well, I'll declare!" then he finished—

The rose has left the dawn so meek,
To bloom in Dian's beauteous cheek."

"Well, Charlie, you are at least impartial with your ridiculous compliments," laughed Dian, "but I wish you wouldn't go on about my blowzy cheek."

"I said beauteous," corrected Charlie.

"Where's Tom Allen?" asked Ellen.

"Oh, he's fishing, as usual. Did you folks have plenty of fish this morning?" and then Charlie told absurd Munchhausen fish stories till the girls were convulsed with girlish laughter.

"What became of Boyle, the elegant?" asked Charlie. "Me thinks I see not his fringed pantaloons, nor his gay, red shirt. Hast seen his ludship this bright morning?"

There was a wicked echo in the back regions of the Winthrop tent as Charlie asked this, and a chorus of childish voices piped up, "Come and kiss yoo papa," and Dian and Ellen were again too overcome with successive peals of cruel, heartless merriment even to reply to Charlie.

"Dian," called Rachel, from the tent door, "come here a moment. I want you to find that flat-iron you laid away somewhere."

"Why, Rachel, the bugle has sounded for us to gather for morning exercises in the bowery. What

do you want of the flat-iron?"

"I want the tub, too; Harvey, you carry that tub right down to the creek this minute, and if I catch you up to any more of your monkeyshines, I will have your father punish you. Do you hear, sir?"

"Why, Rachel, Rachel," protested Dian, "don't get angry with Harvey up here. Surely he is not up to mischief in this lovely place?"

"Do you know what he did?" exclaimed his mother, more inclined to laugh after all than to scold, "he took Henry Boyle's new red shirt out of his tent and then soused it in the creek and left it soaking there all night. He dragged it this morning through the black mud of this horrid valley until you can't tell what it is. Brother Boyle can't get up, I tell you, till I wash and iron his shirt. I am almost inclined to whip Harvey myself."

But she refrained; and the two women dragged the shirt out amid smothered peals of laughter, and sent Harvey to his duty in the crack juvenile regiment of Rifles, while Dian herself was not unwilling to be urged by Rachel to go on with Ellen to the exercises, permitting her kind-hearted sister-in-law to prepare the shirt for future service.

And still there floated at mysterious intervals that jeering cry about the tent of the fallen hero, as he lay ruminating within the inner sanctuary of his own tent on the mischances of fickle fortune.

"Come and kiss yoo papa," wailed the children, as they, too, departed for the exercises in the bowery.

The scene in the central pavilion was impressive! After prayers had been offered by Apostle Amasa Lyman, the great silken flag, taken down through the dewy shades of night, was unfurled from the tallest tree in the vicinity, by the youthful John Smith, son of the murdered patriarch, and once more the bands broke into crashing melody, and again the cannon roared across the affrighted silence, while the people shouted as the emblem of Liberty was unfurled to the morning breeze.

The regiments of the Utah militia which had been drawn up in rigid lines before the central pavilion, now saluted the Governor of the Territory, Brigham Young, and then began a series of brilliant evolutions. The marching and counter-marching of this tried and trusty band of mountaineer soldiers made a gallant display which was eminently fitting to time and scene, in its evidence of loyal devotion to freedom's rights.

"Dian," whispered Ellen, as the two sat watching the maneuvers, "don't you just love a soldier? The sight of those brass buttons is just thrilling to me."

Dian's answer was more moderate, but she would have been less than human if she had not been thrilled by the sight of the so-called "Hope of Israel," the Juvenile Rifle Company which was now led out by the handsome young son of the President himself, John W. Young; for all those youngsters were less than sixteen years old. Her nephew, Harvey Winthrop, was in that gay company, as she noted triumphantly. And their marching and counter-marching, their saluting and drilling was a sight to touch the most sluggish heart into warmth of admiration.

"Oh, Dian, isn't that the cutest thing you ever saw in your life?" again asked happy Ellen, as they watched the youthful soldiers finally trot off to the silence of the trees beyond.

"Let us go, Dian, now that the military exercises are over. I have just been longing to climb those peaks, and see the lakes above us. Come quick; let us go now," and the restless girl pulled at her friend's sleeve.

"Why, dear, you must be one of the reckless spirits the President was talking about last night. We ought to stay and listen to all the program in the Bowery. Let us go with the crowd and not sneak off alone."

But Ellen could not wait, so eager were her feet to press the forbidden slopes of the hills above. She longed to fly, so vital were her pulses. The girls compromised as usual and finally walked over to the swings on the north side of the lake, and both swung themselves into happy weariness in half an hour's time.

"Where are the boys?" asked Willie Howe, as the two girls strolled about.

"John is doing guard duty; Charlie is down the canyon with the horses; Tom declares he will bring us a whole wheelbarrow of fish for dinner, so I suppose he is somewhere on the lakes fishing."

"And where is Henry Boyle?"

At that Dian remembered his plight and her ready laughter bubbled up to eyes and lips. She told the shirt story midst peals of wicked laughter. Youth is so cruel!

IV.

THE ECHO DOWN THE CANYON

The two girls now strolled outward toward Solitude. On and on they went, drawn by the beauty of the scene about them. As the upward path brought them into the over-arched seclusion of the eternal quaking-aspens, towering in highest majesty above them, their very tones were hushed to reverence by the surrounding loveliness.

"Oh, this is indeed Solitude! Such solitude as only God can make possible," exclaimed Diantha as the two emerged from the long path among the tall trees, and saw the tiny gorge below them, ending in the frowning, locked fortress above.

They lingered on the upward climb to Lake Solitude to gather bluebells and columbines, and when they at last emerged on the rim of the rock which stretched from peak to peak, enclosing that hidden, silent sheet of glassy water, both felt that they had no words left to express their pent-up feelings. It was gloriously beautiful! And so they sat down upon the brink, and cast stones into the surface of the pool. They were all alone in that retired spot. Their merry companions, and the thousands of revellers had evidently taken other paths among the many, each one of which led to other and more entrancing scenes than the last.

And in that silence and seclusion, the two girls, for the last time in this life, opened to each other the heart's secret recesses, for each to gaze upon. The sweetness of that confidence hallowed, for all time, the place and the day. The tragedy of life hovered close to both innocent souls, and above and about them hung the curtains of the uncertain future. Ellen was never before so lovable and dear to Dian, while Ellen, dear, affectionate Ellen, fairly revelled in this rare and unreserved confidence shown to her by her adored friend.

A distant "Hello" reminded them that they had promised to be back at camp in time to take the long trip up to an upper lake, and they answered with another cry of "Hello," which was caught and repeated a thousand times in the mysterious echo nestling forever under the shelter of the chalk-white peaks. And back they sped, under the giant quaking-aspens, to the edge of Lover's Lane. Just as they reached the forest, Henry Boyle met them, his handsome young face glowing with the exertions he had put forth to locate these wanderers.

"Hurry, the crowd are all waiting for you two. Aunt Clara has put up our luncheon; John Stevens has got off guard duty for two hours, and Charlie and Tom have both arranged to make the trip up to the upper lake."

The girls ran down the slope with him and found the young people all ready at the edge of the bowery.

"Are you children going?" asked Dian, not too well pleased to find a group of noisy, half-grown children as part of their equipment.

"Ah, let them go, Dian," begged Ellen; "I will look after them, and I know Harvey will be good, and the girls will stay right with me. Won't you, girls?"

And with this promise, the whole party started up the steep ascent towards the upper lake.

"In all my life," said Ellen, as the children swarmed around her, and she found that John Stevens was to be her escort, for that portion of the trip at least, "I was never so happy. I could sing if I only had Diantha's voice; or I could dance, if I had Lucy's hornpipe steps; but as it is, I must just shout aloud and cry 'Hello.'" And suiting the action to the word, she put her pretty hands to the side of her lips and cried down the valley:

"Hello! Hello!"

Ellen stood some time at this viewpoint on the southern peak, and the children gathered around her and John to admire the exquisite beauty of the scene spread out in the fairy dell below them.

"Was there ever anything more beautiful on this earth, Dian?" she asked, in triumphant tones. "There is nothing to hurt or make one afraid in all this holy mountain, is there, John?"

"Hush, Ellie," answered John. "I don't like people to fling the gauntlet in the face of fate with such careless words."

"But, John, did you hear what the President said this morning?"

"Yes, I did. And it chilled my blood to hear him speak so; I have heard him do such a thing only once before. Do you recall how he said, the first year we came here, that he wanted just ten years of quiet and peace and he would ask no odds of anybody."

"I don't remember it, John. I was only eight years old then, you know."

"True, child, I forgot. It is just ten years this very day since the pioneers entered this valley."

"Oh, John, don't be superstitious. I must not listen to you if you are going to prophesy evil. Come, the children are all going, and we will lose our dinner. But listen once more while I cry 'Hello'," and she cried again "Hello!"

Was it John's fancy, or did he hear afar off a long shuddering echo which clung with sinister repetitions to every distant crag and peak?

"Why, John, what are you listening for? You scare me! I thought you were the bravest of men."

"The bravest men take no chances with fate or men," answered John, resuming his long upward stride beside his companion.

They found the whole party already gathered on the little island which lay in the center of the second lake.

As John and Ellen reached the great rock on the south side of the lake, they heard the sound of music floating in enchanted waves through the vale of glory around them. John paused to listen.

It was Dian singing as she spread the homely viands on the smooth, white rock which was to be their table on the Island in the center of the lake. The sheen of her hair was caught by the sunbeams as they danced across the still water, for she had thrown her sunbonnet down upon the rock, as she plied her homely tasks. The boys had caught some fish, and she was stooping over the camp fire to brown them for the coming meal. Her stately beauty was never more apparent than when some task of seeming ugliness brought the color ripe and rich to cheek and neck, and thus she bent above her tasks, every detail visible in that clear atmosphere to the watchers across the little lake.

Dian sang to the accompaniment of her brother Harvey's concertina, all unconscious of the picture she made across those magic waters, so near and yet so far away from those who loved her best. The soul of her was still wrapped in dreams, and only half awakened to response by her friends or family. And as she stirred about or bent above the blazing fire, her voice swept poignantly over the distance as she sang "Kathleen Mavorneen" in the reckless abandonment of tone taught her by the little Italian music professor who loved to put his own fervid soul into the unconscious voices of these youthful, sylvan artists, whom he had so unexpectedly found in this strange country.

"The Day Dawn is Breaking," sang Dian, the concertina wailing and mildly snorting in its brave efforts at complete harmony with Dian's sweet voice, and Ellen listened, her own heart beating in her throat with an admiration that was too generous to be envy. But oh, why could she not sing?

"You people would better come over here if you want your dinner," called Charlie Rose. And as he spoke the odor of the frying trout made invitation almost needless.

"Beside the lake their tryst they kept,
And rested not, nor ate, nor slept,"

sang Charlie.

But Diantha caught his words and added,

"The fish was gone, the lovers wept;
And wished their promise they had kept!"

"If you folks don't hurry, we'll have every scrap of the fish eaten up."

The prosaic appeal reminded Ellen that she had left her friend alone with the work of preparation of the dinner, and so they hastened down to the other raft and soon paddled across to the island.

The picnic dinner was scarcely over before Tom Allen was down on the narrow beach and calling for all hands to embark. The children followed him quickly, and he managed to secure both Charlie Rose and Diantha as his other passengers; just as Henry Boyle came running down the rocks, Tom called: "Get the pole and give us a push from shore."

"Wait," called the young Englishman.

Boyle seized the pole, and sprang for the raft, but in an instant he was waist deep in the icy water, and the raft was floating off beyond his reach.

"Come and kiss yoo papa," yelled out the piping chorus of children's voices, while Charlie recited dramatically, "The boy stood on the burning deck," with his own absurd modifications of the original text.

Dian was angry with the children, thus to taunt their helpless and now uncomfortable friend, but the children only cried out the refrain, again and again, and that piping treble swept over the waters, as the poor youth left behind waded up on to the shore of the island and turned his back resentfully upon his jeering tormentors.

At that moment, John himself rounded the island with his own raft and picked up the discomfited youth, whose once brilliant red shirt, freshly ironed that morning by Rachel's kind hands, was once more faded and streaked, and added to that humiliation was the awful discomfiture of those dripping, wet, and heavy leathern pantaloons, bordered with dripping fringe. Surely his punishment was very heavy.

"Hurry home," said John, kindly, as they landed, "and get on some dry clothing."

As poor Boyle plunged and swashed on his hurried homeward way, the cluck of those swishing breeches and the sluice of his brand new but water-filled shoes made it difficult for even Ellen to keep herself from joining the children in their peals of naughty merriment.

Yet, with all the sundry small mishaps, surely there had never been so happy and so blissful a day vouchsafed to the "Mormon" refugees in all their tempestuous short existence.

But the echo calls and calls from peak to peak and cries the challenge out to happiness and freedom. And who shall answer, O spirit of a nameless past, so long pent up in these hoary mountain vales!

V.

"THE ARMY IS UPON US"

Oyez!!

It is a long and a difficult climb into the tops of the Wasatch mountains; and it takes hours and hours to climb; and the knees grow weak, and the breath comes hard, and the body bends to the grass.

Oyez! Oyez!

And the news of the evil day may travel so fast or travel so slow, good sir, but it travels apace, and reaches the hills by a steep and a difficult road. And long are the miles and dusty the path which stretch between the rolling river Platte and the tops of the Wasatch hills. But men must ride, good sirs, when they bear the message of evil report, for evil finds wings of wind, while good goes only by post, good sirs. And the men must ride fast, and the men must ride far, for the miles are many and the road is long that stretch between the Platte and the Wasatch hills.

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

The people in the hills are happy today, for they see not, neither do they hear, the echo which flies in sinister message from peak to peak as the men ride fast and spare not, climbing and climbing still, to reach the tops of the Wasatch hills. And the echo is caught and stilled in its upward peal by the curling folds of that star-lit flag which flutters and flies at full-masted pride on the top of the highest tree on the top of the Wasatch hills.

Oyez! Good Sirs, Oyez!

The young people ran and danced and sang on their way down the road from the upper lake, but run as they would Ellen was ahead of them all, and she reached the spot where she and John had lingered on their upward way, at the jutting promontory, and the whole party stood breathless and silent in speechless admiration.

But it was more than the beauty of the scene which caught and riveted John's attention. He stood on the very edge of the precipice and shaded his eye with his hand, then quickly took out his field glass.

"What is it, John?" asked Charlie Rose, sober in an instant at the look upon his friend's face.

"Show me; let me help to make things attractive," said Tom, with a teasing note in his voice.

"What do you see, John? I can see three horsemen coming up the Valley trail. They are just now turning the point," said Charley.

"Oh, I see them," shouted Harvey, in a boy's excitement and with a mountaineers clear vision, he added, "And they are not our folks. They look too tired and rough for any of our folks. Say John, isn't that Porter Rockwell, with his hair braided round under his hat? Look! I thought he was out on the Platte River."

But John had caught the profile of the man afar off and he turned down the dangerous short cut

and was galloping down the path with the speed of a panther. The remainder of the young men followed helter-skelter and the two older girls were left to go down the safer and slower path with the little girls, with what speed they could muster.

"I think we are silly people to run for nothing," said Dian as they flew down the path, but she was ahead of Ellen even as she spoke, and for some unknown reason, her own blood was a tingle with the electrical disturbance in the spiritual atmosphere about her.

"The United States is sending an army to destroy us."

Almost before they had left the dense woods this message had flashed into their ears.

"The United States is sending an army against the Saints."

The people whispered it, spoke it, shouted it, and hissed it as they passed group after group. The children cried it; the women moaned it; and even the trees caught the sinister echo as it drifted from peak to peak and lost itself among the chalk-white cliffs as they gazed down in silence at the sudden excitement, spreading like a pall over that happy group. But as swift as the rumor spread it was followed as swiftly by a whisper of "Peace" and again "Peace, the Lord is on the side of the innocent," and the men drove off the frown of gloom, the women smiled again in trusting hope, and even the children forgot to cry as the influence of the leader, Brigham Young, spread out like a bright cloud, and the spoken word of quiet peace was passed from camp to camp.

The men might ride, and evil tidings come, but into the very woof and web of Mormonism was woven a trust in Providence which no careless hand might sever.

"Can Aunt Clara feed these hungry travelers?" asked John Stevens, half an hour later, as he raised the flap of her tent, and introduced the three dusty travel-stained men, accompanied by Judge Elias Smith, who had been their companion from Great Salt Lake City. Abram O. Smoot, tall and eagle-visaged, his splendid limbs stiff and worn with the long ride between the Platte and these peaceful glens in the Wasatch; Porter Rockwell, his hawk-eyed glance narrowed into one glittering line as he swept off his worn and ragged hat, was crowned by a wreath of burnished braids that many a woman might envy, but which no woman's hand might ever clip, for death would find him still crowned with those dark and burnished tresses. And last, Judson Stoddard, alert, resourceful and intrepid rider, soldier and friend. Aunt Clara ministered to them all, giving milk and food to refresh, while she brought ice-cool water to lave the tired hands and brows of her friends and brethren.

"The President wishes you to meet him in the council tent in one hour," said John, to the three men, as he left his mountaineer friends in Aunt Clara's tent, and strode away to join his youthful companions and to dissipate, as best he could, all the thoughts of gloom and care; for now his own troubled fears had fled, surmounted by a certain knowledge of what they had portended. He knew his leader's policy too well to go about the camp with anything but a cool and quiet front. Fear had passed; now came action.

Bishop Winthrop, with a word whispered from John, strolled leisurely away to the marquee, saying to his wife, Rachel, as he passed: "You had better go on with dinner, Rachel; I may eat with the President, I wish to speak with him a few minutes."

There was no further excitement in the Winthrop camp, for even John Stevens threw himself on the ground, and lay looking up into the bright blue sky above him, calmly waiting for that important function in every man's life, his supper.

It was rumored quickly during the afternoon, that the three men, A. O. Smoot, Porter Rockwell, and Judson Stoddard had brought other details of this startling news, but after the first shock was over the people leaned upon the sagacity and inspiration of their president, as if he were a very part of the rocky bulwarks surrounding them.

That night, the bugle called the whole camp, as usual, together for prayers, and it was then that the formal news was communicated to them: "Buchanan is sending an army to exterminate the 'Mormons.'" It was all true then.

The two girls, Diantha, and Ellen Tyler, sat together in the bowery, when this announcement was made, and they looked at each other with wide open eyes. They were both children when brought to these valleys, and the thought that the terrible scenes at Nauvoo were to be re-enacted in this far distant Territory, caused both of them to pale with fear and dread.

With a common instinct both looked around for John Stevens. Henry Boyle stood near them, and he answered their questioning look with a little pallid smile. Dian felt that the young man was as frightened as she, and again, in spite of herself, she felt contempt for him.

Away off in the lower corner of the bowery, stood placid John Stevens, stroking his long silken beard, with as much composure as if the announcement was a party to be given in the Social Hall. He did not look at Diantha, but seemed to be thinking of something very intently, which was not unpleasant, and she wondered what it was.

"Why doesn't John come over here?" asked Ellen, as she, too, discovered the tall figure of their

friend.

"Little goose, do you fear that the soldiers are within a half-mile of this place?" asked Diantha, laughingly. "Hark, President Young is going to speak," and then both sat with silent, spell-bound hearts, listening to that clarion voice, which uttered the sentiments of a people, harrassed, driven and mobbed.

His reassuring words, and the strong, calm spirit of inspiration which spoke through the brief sermon, filled every heart with renewed confidence and hope. What the future held in store for them as a people or as individuals, no one could say; but one thought buoyed up every heart; God was with them and they could not feel dismayed.

The rejoicing and merry-making was not interrupted for long; for after supper the bands tuned up, the pine-trees were lighted anew, and the merry hearts and the dancing feet filled the pretty vale with rollicking pleasure.

"Where is John Stevens?" asked Dian of Henry Boyle, who came up to claim her for the first dance.

"Oh, he had to go home on some business for the President," answered Ellen Tyler, who sat near.

"Without saying one word to me?" indignantly protested Diantha.

"He asked me for my horse," said young Boyle, "and told me I might drive you home in his place."

"Well, of all odd fellows, surely John Stevens is the oddest," answered Dian, none too well pleased with this summary disposal of her valuable person. She would certainly have to take the trouble to teach that young man a lesson some day, when she had time; perhaps when all this army business was over, she would seriously take him in hand. Not that she cared a rap about him, but it was not a good thing for a young man to have such careless ways of treating her sex, fastened upon him by long continued habit. Diantha was pre-eminently given to setting people right, and she did not intend that her gentlemen friends should escape her molding hand.

There were many wakeful hours spent in that gay little tented village and long before the peep of day the next morning, men were hitching up and packing wagons. Ere long the whole cavalcade had taken up the line of march, and soon the silence of the mountain peaks chained the whispers of pine and quaking-aspens within the long vale, leaving the circling memories alone to sweep forever over the lake like shadowy wraiths of summer mist.

VI.

WHO SHALL FEAR MAN?

At the time of this story (in 1857-8) there stood in Salt Lake City, in the Thirteenth Ward, a small adobe house of four rooms, with the tiny square-framed windows, set at regular intervals from a central brilliantly green door which gayly faced the street. Not only was the green door rare because of its extremely unconventional color; it was also unusual in its quick response of welcome to black or white, bond or free, in a place where welcome grew more lavishly than did the grass in the streets. There was something so aggressively bright about that loudly painted door that even the Indians grew to love its restful color and the atmosphere that it betokened for all who pushed ever so lightly at its ready portals. The green was such a happy blending of the dark shades of the cool pine with the yellowed masses of creeping mosses that one's eyes were rested just to glance at it. None who passed within could fail to recognize that some one out of the ordinary lived behind those gaudy yet pleasing door-panels. The poor, the sick, the halt, the lame and the blind, all learned the ease with which that bright door opened, and the wealth of gentle welcome which spoke in the brighter eyes of dear old widowed Aunt Clara Tyler. The Indians, too, knew where they would receive plenty of "shutcup," and if one had a bruise or a wound, only Aunt Clara's hand could soothe and dress, to the complete satisfaction, the injured member.

Dear Aunt Clara! The mind traces in golden light her lovely picture. Bright and black were her eyes, but never sharp and cruel; she had a sweet mouth and the blackest of hair. She was short and very stout; but who ever saw aught but the lovely spirit which was enshrined within her active body. People used to wonder why Aunt Clara had no enemies, and why everything animate looked to her for succor and protection. The secret could all be told in two words—womanly sympathy, such sympathy as the noblest of women and the purest of angels can bestow; a sympathy which never encouraged evil because it made a sharp distinction between sin and sinner, but which drew the whole sting from the wound before dropping in the needed tonic of wise counsel, and covering all softly with the vial of loving tenderness. That was the secret of her

popularity with young and old in the whole neighborhood.

She had no children of her own, which enabled her to be mother to the whole town. But her dead sister's child, Ellen, was as dear to her as an own child, while she had a deep and abiding love and confidence in the other motherless girl, Diantha Winthrop. She had no money of her own, and being a widow, she had few old clothes or supplies to dispose of; yet, somehow, she was a veritable Relief Society. These organizations were not then in working order; and dozens of mothers with big broods of children could have told how Aunt Clara's winning voice and manner drew from them all the half-worn clothes they could possibly spare; and how such a mother would laugh as she saw some podgy Lamanite squaw going down the street with her own jean skirt on, patched by Aunt Clara's thrifty fingers and clean for the last time in all its final mournful existence. It was quite natural for the Bishop to send ragged children or newly arrived emigrants to knock at Aunt Clara's friendly green door, for help, spiritual or temporal.

No wonder, then, that the night after the return from the celebration in Cottonwood Canyon, a dozen young people sat in the comfortable rush-bottomed chairs within the opened portals; and while Aunt Clara moved quietly among them, putting the finishing touches to her evening work, they talked with excited voices of the impending danger.

Aunt Clara saw that something was necessary to drive away the alarm. Going into her bedroom, she drew out six large skeins of woolen yarn.

"Here, girls, I have a chore for you to do. I want this yarn wound off for it is to be knitted up at once. Boys, you can help by holding the yarn nicely and properly, and the one who is done the soonest shall have one of the dough-nuts left over from my pic-nic."

"What's this for; to knit stockings for our soldiers?" asked Diantha, who was, as usual, the center of the group.

"It's to knit socks for the Bishop and the boys; I am sure I don't know, nor do I care, whether they go out to fight as the defenders of our country or not. It will be all right whatever they do. Didn't you hear President Young say that God would fight our battles for us? Let that be sufficient."

"Don't you think we are going to have a war, Aunt Clara?" ventured timid Millie Howe, who was one of the group.

"No, I don't. Of course I don't know all the facts of the case, but I have heard President Young say many times since we entered the Valley that we should not have to fight any more battles, for God would fight them for us. I have perfect faith in his word."

"Nevertheless, Aunt Clara," said a voice at the open window, "I want to borrow your father's old Revolutionary musket, which you keep hanging up over your bed."

Two or three girls screamed at the suddenness of the sound, and the young men started in their seats.

"Oh, John Stevens, why do you frighten us like that?" called Ellen. "Come here and give an account of yourself. Where have you been since you left us in the canyon, and what did you leave us so unceremoniously for?"

"Business, business," answered the young man, entering the room as he spoke. "What are you all doing here, winding yarn as peacefully and calmly as if there were nothing of more importance on earth."

"Well, is there anything of more importance, John?" asked Tom Allen. "Think of it, man, holding yarn for the prettiest girl in Salt Lake. I know what ails you, you have no yarn to hold. Here, Aunt Clara, give him some yarn to hold, and there is Ellen. She can wind up that slow-moving tongue of his at the same time."

"The yarn around and round she slung
To make him loose his sluggish tongue,"

cried Charlie Rose, tauntingly.

"Oh, John, do tell us the news. Don't bother with Tom and Charlie; tell us the news," Ellen persisted.

"If Aunt Clara will give me one of her dough-nuts, I will tell all the news I have to tell."

"Why don't you say that you will tell all there is to tell, John; you are so non-committal?" chimed in Diantha, who understood how much and how little might be expected in the way of telling or talking from John Stevens.

Aunt Clara went out and brought in a pan of dough-nuts and a pitcher of milk, which kept the young people too busy for a few minutes to talk anything but nonsense.

"If I could find a girl that could make as good dough-nuts as you can, Aunt Clara," said Tom Allen, with his mouth half-full of cake, "I would marry her tomorrow."

"Would you, indeed," cried Ellen Tyler. "Then you must learn that catching comes before hanging. I made those dough-nuts myself, young impudence, while Aunt Clara was fitting my dress to wear up in the canyon."

"Ellie, I shall certainly have to take you as my wife. You know that I have already been engaged several times. But you shall have the privilege of being my very last sweetheart. The last is best, you know, of all the game. You are second to none in the matter of dough-nuts. Please, Ellie, give me another fried cake."

"Another plate-full, you mean. I certainly shall not accept your offer, for if I did I should have nothing else to do the rest of my life but fry dough-nuts for you."

"Ellie, haven't you heard that the nearest way to a man's heart is—"

"Oh, don't say such horrid things. We all know where your heart lies, Tom, so don't bother to tell us," said Dian, with a disgusted air.

"What on earth is the matter with me," began Tom, rising in mock indignation from his chair, but the girls cried out in dismay, and John Stevens, who sat nearest the offending youth, pulled him down into his seat again, and growled at him in so low a voice that no one but Tom could hear him, "There is nothing the matter with you, only you make yourself a little too prominent." And John indicated his friend's adipose with a slight blow. Tom was so tickled with the joke that he determined to repeat it even if the girls should be more shocked than ever, but Aunt Clara came in and asked John to tell them the news of the army.

"Yes, there is really an army en route for Utah, but they will forever be en route, either to Utah," after a pause, he added under his breath, "or to hell."

"What are they coming here for?" asked Aunt Clara, again.

"No one knows, unless it is to rob and murder us again, as mobs have tried to do so often before."

"And will they do it?" breathlessly asked Ellen.

"Not this year," grimly answered John. "There is only one entrance into this valley, through the canyon. And forty men could hold an army at bay for a year in our canyons."

"But, John, where are they? and how many are there of them? and when will they get here? and who is going out to meet them and fight them, and—"

"Well, Ellie, we shall give you the credit of asking more questions in a minute than even President Young could answer in a day. Say, boys, where is Henry Boyle?"

"Henry Boyle, did you say, Henry Boyle?" and Tom Allen, who had thus repeated the question, began to laugh, and as he laughed he fairly tumbled off his chair in his efforts to control his merriment. The others smiled and some even laughed aloud to see fat Tom laugh, for his merriment was always as contagious as a clown's.

"Do tell us what is the matter with Henry Boyle?" snapped Diantha, at last, worn out by his long continued, mysterious laughter.

"Oh, dear, I forget all about it, this war talk drove it all out of my head. But it is too ridiculous for anything," and he went off into another peal of laughter and exhausted himself, before they could calm him down to tell his story.

"You see, early this morning, far too early, it could not have been more than half an hour after sunrise, I was just taking my last beauty sleep, when a little boy rapped at my door; and when I succeeded in tearing myself from the arms of Morpheus sufficiently to find out what he wanted, he said Brother Boyle wanted to see me. I got myself over to Henry's and on entering the room," here another burst of laughter rendered Tom speechless for a moment, "there lay Henry on his bed, his legs stretched out and covered with his hard shrunken buckskin pants. I don't know where he got those pants, but they were not half tanned, and yesterday after that fall in the lake with them, fringes and all, he slept in them, for he said he could not get them off; and he had to let Charlie Rose drive the folks down in the wagon, while he coaxed another family to let him travel down in the bottom of their wagon, for he couldn't bend his knees. He got on to his bed someway, and there he lies. He wanted me to help him out of his scrape, for he says he can not afford to lose his precious pants; they cost him too much."

"What did you tell him to do?" asked Ellen.

"Oh, I ordered him to live on fresh air and cold water for three days, so his legs would shrink, and then left him to time and fate."

"I am ashamed of you, Tom Allen, for treating anybody so, especially one who is a comparative stranger to these mountains and our customs."

"Oh, Dian, if you are going to lecture me, I shall have to have another of Aunt Clara's dough-nuts."

"Come, my dears," said Aunt Clara, "sing me a hymn. Here is Harvey with his concertina, and he will help you. Sing 'O, ye mountains high'," and then, gradually quieting down, the young people joined in that thrilling hymnal of Mormon independence. Strange people they were, with strange notions of life and destiny.

"Well, I am going home," announced Diantha, at last, and she arose at once to get her hat.

John Stevens took up his own hat quietly at her words, and she was pleased that he did so, for she wanted to ask him more about the coming trouble, and she knew that he would say nothing of importance in that crowd.

"You asked me to stay all night with you, Dian, do you want me to come home with you now?" queried Ellen Tyler.

Half annoyed that Ellen had thus rendered it impossible for her to speak alone with John, Dian was yet too courteous to let her friend know of her feelings. As soon as Ellen started out Tom Allen snatched up his hat, and so Dian had to accept the double interruption of her anticipated confidential talk.

There was no such a thing as quiet or sensible talk with Tom Allen and Ellie along; but just before they reached her gate, Dian managed to ask John quietly to go down to Henry Boyle and release him from the effects of Tom Allen's cruel fun.

John parted with them all, and after a brief visit with Henry Boyle, wended his way to President Young's office, where he was soon deep in council with his leaders and the associated friends of the Nauvoo Legion.

The middle of August found John Stevens enlisted as one of a small, trusty band of Utah mountaineers under Colonel Robert T. Burton, with faces set to the east, where they were soon out of sight and sound of civilization, riding toward the coming troops.

VII.

VAN ARDEN ENTERS THE VALLEY

In the early morning of the sixth of September, 1857, a solitary horseman was slowly making his way down Echo Canyon, thoughtfully observing the features of the narrow and circuitous route of the everlasting hills as he rode. The morning sun glinted and shimmered upon the gaudy gilt buttons and epaulettes of his dark blue coat. His cap bore upon its visor the arms of the U. S. He was clearly an army officer.

The bright fluttering leaves on the oak and maple brush that clothed the mountain sides in their gaudy, early autumn dress, formed a vivid contrast to the tiny groves of cedar which clung closely to the mountain tops or hung in straggling beauty to the side of some precipitous cliff. The bare, brown earth, dotted with bald white and gray boulders, showed its plain face here and there, and far from the eye, the dull brown shade was gradually melted into a pinkish purple haze, too full of wild barbaric beauty to escape the attention of the young rider who sat his fine horse with a proud military firmness.

The officer was evidently upon the alert for any surprise, for his eye glanced quickly ahead and around; his whole bearing suggested a sharp, suspicious attention to every detail of road and overhanging rock. As he turned a sudden curve in the road, he met a tall, silent horseman, who sat his restless steed, in a manner no less firm and commanding than that manifested by the gayly-clad officer of the great army of the United States.

"Good morning, sir; may I ask whither you are bound?" said the mountaineer.

"Certainly, I am traveling to Salt Lake City. Permit me to pass, if you please."

"Just one moment; do you come on an errand of peace or otherwise? You must know something of the condition of affairs in this Territory, and I assure you I have full right and authority to ask this question."

The officer glanced shrewdly into the face of his opponent, and after a few moments' careful scrutiny, which was apparently satisfactory, he leaned easily over the horn of his saddle, and answered quietly:

"I accept your declaration and as a civil answer to your somewhat unusual question, I am quite willing to tell you that my name is Van Arden, and that I am bound on an errand to Mr. Brigham Young."

"I do not ask the nature of that errand, for I don't suppose you would answer me if I did; but I shall take the liberty of accompanying you from here to the City."

"Very well, Mr—."

"Stevens," laconically answered the other, slowly wheeling around his horse and trotting along by the other's side.

The remainder of the morning was spent in a somewhat desultory conversation, the officer doing most of the talking, as he was determined to retain a measure of friendly intercourse, no matter whether it was pleasing to his companion or not. Towards noon, they halted beside the mountain stream, and each produced a modicum of luncheon, which was partaken of in semi-silence; a few questions from the officer accompanied the meal, with exceedingly brief, although not uncivil, answers from the mountaineer. As they arose to resume their journey, a small party of horsemen appeared just in front of them, and without a word of greeting or questioning they joined the two, and silently followed closely upon the heels of the strangely associated companions.

Arriving in due time in Salt Lake City, the gallant captain was escorted by his silent guard to excellent quarters in the hotel on Main Street. As he was about to dismount, he turned to his late companion and courteously asked:

"Would you kindly convey, for me, a message to Brigham Young?"

Stevens drew himself up in his saddle, and with his eyes sternly set upon his horse's ears, he said coldly:

"If you have any messages to send to his excellency, Governor Young, I will deliver them."

"Then be so good as to convey my compliments to His Excellency, Governor Young, and inform him that Captain Van Arden is the bearer of important messages for His Excellency which, from their nature, should be delivered at once."

Without a word of reply, Stevens wheeled his horse around, and, after a brief parley with his men, who quietly accepted his orders, he rode hastily up the street. He was admitted at once to the office of the Governor, and gave a brief, yet vivid report of his three weeks' sojourn in the mountains, and then stated the nature of his errand and message.

"I am under orders from Colonel Burton to keep a strict, but civil watch over this officer, who left Fort Leavenworth, July 28th, with six mule teams, to attend upon you with some demands or requests. We have not yet been able to ascertain the nature of his mission, but feel sure it is of a peaceful nature, as he left his teams and escort at Ham's Fork, and proceeded from thence alone."

"What was his object in leaving his teams?" asked Governor Young.

"I think he feared his mission might be misunderstood, and he, perhaps be barred from entering the valley at all, if he attempted to bring them any further. He said as much to me today."

"What is your opinion of the man?" asked the Governor.

"I take him to be a gentleman. He met some of our apostates, who have, as you know, hurried out of Utah to join the army, and they have, one and all, tried to scare the life out of him, with blood and thunder yarns about our people. But he has traveled straight along, and appears to be a firm, yet a sensible and peaceable kind of man."

The President-Governor sat a moment in silent meditation. Then, with an upward glance of his piercing blue eyes, he asked:

"Did you say that he wished to see me tonight?"

"He did not mention any set time, only that his business was important and he wished to have an interview as soon as possible."

"Brother Wells, will you send a message to Brother Bernhisel, asking him to be present to accompany us in half an hour to the hotel?" said the President. Then turning to Stevens, he added:

"You will hold yourself and a small escort with you in readiness to accompany us upon this errand."

In a short time the party arrived at the hotel, and the guard were stationed at different points around the building, while the gubernatorial party entered the parlor, and sent a courteous message to Captain Van Arden.

John Stevens lingered behind the rest of the party, but General Wells came to the door and called quickly:

"Brother Stevens, the President desires you to come in with us."

John quietly accompanied his general, and as they entered the parlor, they found the captain shaking hands cordially with the Governor. Who could resist the magnetic courtesy and geniality of the "Mormon" leader when he chose to exert it!

In a very short time captain Van Arden discovered that instead of a bold pirate and trickster, he had encountered a master spirit, and if he would succeed in his appointed mission, he must treat his powerful guest as all great men are treated—with the most elegant diplomacy and subtlest deference.

Without a word of anxious curiosity or vulgar assumption of power, Governor Young allowed the captain to choose his own time for the desired interview, and ten o'clock the next day was accordingly appointed as the best hour.

The captain accompanied the governor and the rest of the party to the porch of the hotel, and as they moved off into the clear, pleasant autumn darkness, he looked up into the blue vault above him and said to his own soul:

"What cowardly fool and lying trickster has persuaded the President of the United States to send out here the flower of the American army to subdue, or perhaps destroy, this innocent, loyal, and simple people? Brigham Young is the peer of any statesman in the United States, or I cannot read human nature."

VIII.

THE WINTHROPS ENTERTAIN

The next morning, the 8th of September, when Captain Van Arden went down to the breakfast table, his whilom companion, the silent Stevens, was already enjoying himself at a table in the corner of the dining room. The captain at once joined him, and found that the silent lips could open, and the reserved manner melt, when the owner so willed it. At ten o'clock the two wended their way in friendly chat to the Social Hall, the place appointed for the proposed meeting.

The captain found the room a well-lighted, large hall, with a raised dais or stage, in the east end, surmounted by an arch which evidenced a curtain, perhaps for the purpose of dramatic entertainments. As another surprise, the captain caught sight of a plaster cast of the Bard of Avon in the center of the proscenium arch, smiling down upon any Thespian devotees who might be present. The floor was mostly covered with a bright rag carpet, and the windows were tastefully draped with dark red hangings.

President Young came forward, and again the captain found himself under that magnetic charm; but he was himself a man of the world, and he was moreover exceedingly anxious to carry his point with these people, however much he might sympathize with them after learning their true character and position. He was in the employ of the United States army, and had a most important duty to perform. Accordingly, as soon as the preliminary greetings were over, he addressed himself to the "Mormon" leader, and preferred his request.

"Governor Young, I come with a letter from my superiors and with orders to purchase stores and forage and lumber with which to make our soldiers, who are on their way here, comfortable during their journey."

"May I ask, Captain, what soldiers are on their way here and what brings them out to these western wilds?"

The captain was off his guard for the moment at the unexpected questions. He was aware that everyone present knew beforehand the answer required at his hands, and he hesitated at the choice of proper terms with which to convey the unwelcome intelligence which all were already in possession of; however, the questions must be answered.

"Through some unhappy misunderstanding, Governor, the President of the United States has been informed that the records of this Territory have been burned, and that the people here are inimical to the ruling government."

"The records of the Territory are in the proper receptacle for such documents, and this people, as you can testify, if you will use your eyes and your ears, while you are with us, are as peaceful and as law-abiding citizens of the great United States as any that dwell beneath the shadow of the flag. I see no justification for thus sending down an army upon us."

"Permit me to observe, your Excellency, that the army is not sent out here to do harm or to annoy the peaceable and law-abiding citizens of this Territory, but to protect such from all out-laws and murderers, whether Indians or whites."

"We have a fully organized and properly acknowledged corps of territorial officers, and are and have always been able to protect the inhabitants of this Territory from insult or injury."

The captain proceeded as delicately as he could to convey the information that a new governor had been appointed for the Territory, who was with the main body of the troops, and would enter the Territory and assume his office as soon as circumstances would permit. He was a wise and prudent man, this new governor, by name Cumming, and he would be a friend to the people, and a support to all concerned—so the captain endeavored to assure the assembled council.

"I am the governor of this Territory," answered Brigham Young, "and as such, shall take the proper measures to insure the life and liberty of the patient, peaceful inhabitants of these valleys. You may tell your commander that we, as a people, have been robbed and murdered, our wives outraged, and our men massacred, being driven from state to state, until we came out to this desert wild, and here, by the blessings of God, we have made the desert to blossom like the rose and the wilderness to gush forth. We have asked no help from the United States save that given to any other distant territory. After we came here, we planted the flag of our country upon our Ensign Peak within twenty-four hours, thus taking formal possession of this country in the name of the United States; and from that hour we have held out our welcoming arms to the honest and peaceable of all nations and tongues. We love our country and would take up arms in her defense, as our own 'Mormon' Battalion has so well shown, but we shall never submit to being murdered and pillaged by a lot of cut-throats and out-laws, for we will die, ourselves, before we submit to such indignities again."

A low murmur of approval went round the assembled council, and it was some moments before the officer could be heard, explaining that the United States had no intention whatever of committing any depredations or offering the least violence to any person or set of persons.

"We do not want to fight the United States," said the Governor, "but if they drive us to it, we shall do the best we can; and I tell you as the Lord lives we shall come off conquerors. The United States are sending their army here simply to hold us until some mob can come and butcher us as has been done before. We are supporters of the government and love the constitution and respect the laws of the United States; but it is by the corrupt administration of those laws that we are made to suffer. Most of the government officers who have been sent here have taken no interest in us, but on the contrary have tried to destroy us. What do you think of the patience of a people who have submitted to seeing a pimp set up as our honorable judge, to seeing him bring his strumpet with him and have her sit close beside him on the judicial bench, while he delivered his unrighteous rulings? Others like him complain that there is no civilization in Utah because, forsooth, there are no gambling hells or houses of prostitution. The officers sent here are often the vilest and most wicked of men."

"Most of the men sent to the Territory," answered the diplomatic captain, "have received their office as a political reward, or as a stepping stone to some higher office; but too often, they have no interest in common with the people. The greatest hold that the government now has upon you is in the accusation that you have burned the United States records."

"I deny that any of the books of the United States have been burned. You are at liberty to examine the books as proof of this statement," said the Governor. "I have broken no law, and in the present state of affairs, I will not suffer myself to be taken by any United States officer to be killed, as they killed our own beloved Prophet Joseph Smith."

"I do not think it is the intention of the government to arrest you," said the captain, "but to install a new governor in the Territory."

"I believe that you tell the truth," returned the President, "that you believe this—but you do not know their intentions as well as I do. If they dare to force the issue, I will not hold the Indians by the wrist as I do now, for white men to shoot at; they shall go ahead and do as they please. If the issue comes, you may tell the government to stop all emigration across the continent, for the Indians will kill all who attempt it. And if any army succeeds in penetrating this valley, tell the government to see that it has provisions and forage in store, for they will find here only a charred and barren waste. We have plenty here of what you want, but we will sell you nothing. Further than this, your army shall not enter this valley until I say so."

The captain was overwhelmed with surprise; he expected to find a few fanatical fools, and found himself confronted with an assembly of shrewd, determined men. Their talk was the talk of an equal power measuring arms with the great body of the American people.

He tried to show the President that it would be useless to thwart the government in its plans to station troops in Great Salt Lake Valley. If such was the determination of the central government, a handful of mountaineers, albeit shrewd, hardy, and fired with religious zeal, which was the bulwark of all lofty courage, would nevertheless sooner or later be compelled to submit.

"We have no fight with the United States," said Brigham Young, "but when these troops, which you say must eventually quarter in this Valley, arrive, they will find Utah a desert; every house will be burned to the ground, every tree cut down, and every field made into a barren waste. We have three years' provisions on hand, which we will cache, and then take to the mountains; and we shall receive from them the protection which we desire and which we have always deserved."

The interview was thus terminated. The captain had come to impress this set of fanatics with the might and majesty of the United States government; he was, instead, impressed with the strange, unnatural earnestness of this band of gallant men, whom he could but see were honest, pure and intelligent.

At the close of the council Captain Van Arden was invited by the governor to share the hospitality of his home for the remainder of the day. As they left the hall, the Captain found his old traveling companion standing upon the steps, and the President invited John Stevens home to dine with them, and to spend the afternoon.

As the party walked up the short hill towards the President's house they met a small group of young people, and John's eye, from under the broad hat, recognized pretty Ellen Tyler and the elegant form and handsome face of Diantha Winthrop. Some young men were with them, and momentary greetings were passed between John and his friends.

After the meeting was over, Ellie turned to Diantha and asked her eagerly:

"Did you ever see such a handsome man; oh, isn't he just superb?" And she gave herself a tiny hug in evidence of the sincere admiration she felt for the brilliant stranger they had just passed.

"He had a very fine pair of side whiskers, if that is what you mean. And his coat was very blue and his buttons were very bright also," answered Diantha, laughingly. "You can always pick out handsome men, Ellie, but we passed so quickly that I did not get a good look at his face."

"Who on earth were you looking at, then?" asked Ellen, "I can't see how it is, Dian, that you are so slow to see people. I see everyone at a glance."

"I was looking at our President and thinking what a glorious leader we have."

"I guess you also saw John Stevens," said Tom Allen, who was walking beside Ellen.

"Oh, yes, I saw John. Who could help seeing him? He is too big to escape anyone's eyes," answered Dian, indifferently. "Here comes my brother Appleton."

The days following were filled with appointments for Captain Van Arden to meet and share the hospitality of the leading men of the Valley. The gravity of the situation seemed swallowed up for the time being by a burst of genuine hospitality.

The third day the captain promised to spend with Bishop Winthrop, who proposed a ride to the Warm Springs in the afternoon, returning to the house for an early dinner when the Captain was to meet the ladies of the Bishop's household.

The expected day came all too soon for the women folks, who had much work to do to receive their guests in proper manner. The riding party was to be home for dinner at four o'clock; and at that hour, Aunt Clara Tyler, who had been invited, and the two girls, Diantha and Ellen, stood in the front room, watching for the party.

"Oh, isn't it perfectly lovely to think of seeing and talking to that splendid captain, Dian; I am just trembling with excitement," and Ellen Tyler fluttered restlessly about, going from window to window, in utter inability to control her impatience.

Aunt Clara stood looking down the street, and at the words of the impulsive girl, she turned on her those gentle yet steady black eyes, and chided:

"My child, there is nothing remarkable about this captain. He is good looking, to be sure, but that is a very small matter. He wears a uniform, but that, too, is of little account. He comes to this people in an official capacity, and as such, our brethren have thought proper to show him all courtesy. But let me tell you, neither your father nor President Young himself would permit this man, nor any other stranger, to enter within the inner portals of his family life. You are a silly girl to waste a thought upon him."

Diantha sat rocking herself coolly in the big rush-bottomed rocker, and with whimsical contrariness, she took up Ellen's argument.

"I don't see, Aunt Clara, why one man isn't as good as another, if he behaves as well. I don't know anything about this captain, but suppose he or any other non-Mormon who is a good, honorable man, with not a shadow of sin or vice in him, should happen to take a notion to me, I can't see where the harm would be in taking a notion to him. Surely you don't mean to imply that all the good men, and all the desirable men are 'Mormons.' I think that is a very narrow view. What are your reasons?"

"There are two reasons, my dears. One is the solemn fact that a marriage ceremony solemnized by any other than by one divinely appointed and having authority from God to do so, ceases at death; a separation from a loved one after death, to continue throughout all the ages of eternity would be far more agonizing and intolerable than the mere earthly separation which is for a few flying years."

"Well," answered Ellen, flippantly, "that's not much of a reason. If you are sure of being happy

here, why not let hereafter take care of itself? 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'

"Ah, my child, you speak with the bitterness of the world-old scepticism and unbelief on your lips. That vain philosophy has wrecked more hearts than any other phrase ever uttered. There is also another reason; a very present and most cogent reason; one that effects our every day lives. It is this: Married people should be mated on the three planes upon which human beings meet and mingle—the physical, the mental and the spiritual. If they be mismated on either the mental or physical planes, a harmonious adjustment may be possible through the diligent exercise of the spiritual graces. But if the mismating is on the spiritual plane, such a couple will surely find their happiness shipwrecked, sooner or later. Try as you may, twist as you will, you nor none other may ever escape the bondage and sorrow that comes to those who are separated by a spiritual gulf. I have never seen happiness as the result of such unequal yoking, and I never shall. When, as sometimes happens there comes a measure of peace to such mismated couples, it is simply and only because the one has sunk, or has risen to the spiritual plane occupied by the other. Mark what I say, Ellen, my girl."

"Well, I shall marry for love, Auntie; and I shall never take a sorrow on my heart which I cannot kick off from my heels."

Aunt Clara did not turn around to face the speaker; she merely said:

"I don't think God makes mistakes; and He has said, through his former and latter-day prophets, that it is not right for the believer to mate with the unbeliever."

"Oh, here they are, Auntie; here they are!" cried Ellen.

Ellen turned and ran impulsively out on the front porch; Aunt Clara and Diantha followed her in a more leisurely manner, while Sister Rachel Winthrop, the hostess of the occasion, joined them as soon as the word reached her, and thus the four women stood waiting to receive their guests under the shaded porch.

President Young led the way up the steps with Captain Van Arden close by him. The President introduced the captain to the ladies, since Bishop Winthrop was still busy at the gate with others of the party.

The captain looked with genuine yet well-guarded interest into the faces of the two young "Mormon" girls, almost the first he had met. His interest grew into admiration, as he noted the lovely brown eyes, and the curling tresses of glossy brown hair floating around the head of sweet, fascinating Ellen Tyler. Her lips were curved and rosy with health and beauty, and her low brow and delicately-traced eyebrows were like those of a Grecian goddess. Her sparkling charm was not alone in the regular and beautiful features, nor in the well-molded yet dainty form; but in and through every glance, every word, there sparkled an indefinable attraction which no one could resist. Women loved her, men adored her. And this stranger instantly felt the force of her loveliness. He was a man of the world, too prudent to manifest much interest in women of this peculiar and just now excited people, but he shot a glance of daring admiration into the brown depths of Ellen's eyes, which she, as daringly accepted.

Diantha was a little behind the others, and as she came forward for an introduction, the captain mentally exclaimed: "By Jove! where do they get such beauty from?" For the elegant dignity of the girl's carriage was fully warranted by the superb outlines of her face and form. Her head was crowned with its soft weight of yellow hair, braid over braid of its golden glory breaking into tiny waves on her brow; the neck curved gradually into the loveliest shoulders and bust he had ever beheld; and these lines melted into so round and pliant a waist that he felt sure she could well pose in marble for a perfect Hebe. Her face was not so beautiful as that of the brown-eyed maiden, but it was so engaging in its details of coral lips, parting over teeth like white shells, richest pink cheeks and a full, strong, pink chin, that no one could withhold the meed of admiration which this magnificent girl demanded. She had such a cool, superior way of looking at people, with steady eyes and even eyelids, that even this worldly wise captain wondered if the girl were a perfect woman of the world, supremely conscious of her own charms, or was she simply utterly ignorant and therefore unconscious of the impression she made upon every one who saw her.

Both girls were dressed in white; but Ellen's dress fluttered and broke into endless intricacies of bows, ends, ribbons, flounces and rosettes, while Dian's hung in long, simple, classic folds from the short, baby waist to the toe of the tiny boots. Clearly, thought the captain, as his artistic eye noted these details, some inherent art has taught these two girls the secret of their own beauty and how best to emphasize it.

All these thoughts flashed through the captain's mind in an instant; and yet, if he was shrewd enough to cease his earnest attention to the girls before it became noticeable, his mind was busy all that afternoon, in spite of the effort to control his words, with surmises and a most natural desire to see more and hear something about these beautiful girls.

As the party came into the house, Diantha found herself close to tall, quiet John Stevens. She looked at him in surprise; she did not remember to have seen John look so handsome. He had on a new suit, and he looked so clean and wholesome, so true and so brave that she instinctively

accorded him a rather more gracious smile than she altogether intended. She did not notice this latter fact, however, until she saw how coolly he accepted her unusual demonstration of welcome. Then, to be sure she felt humiliated to think that she had been even a little glad to see him.

"Did you ever see Ellen Tyler look so sweet in her life?" asked John. "Ellen is a fine girl."

Now, Dian was and always had been a very generous girl, but this unexpected and utterly uncalled for remark on the part of John Stevens was not precisely to her liking. But as he looked so unconscious of her pleasure or displeasure, she wisely refrained from offering any sharp admonition or spicy council, as was so natural to practical Dian.

"I am of the opinion that your gay captain has the same way of thinking," she answered, and as she spoke, John looked in the captain's direction, and he, too, could see the vain attempts of the officer to keep his eyes away from Ellen's fascinating features. At once John sauntered up to Ellen and never in her life had Ellen known this reticent man to show so much animation and gay interest in her as he did that afternoon.

"Why, John," asked Ellen herself, banteringly, "what has come over you? I have tried my best to go with you for two years past and you have insisted on being only friendly and brotherly and all that; and just now, unless I am mistaken, you are trying pretty hard to flirt with me. What's it all about, anyway?"

John answered her in his grave, quizzical way that his meaning was even more earnest than apparent, and then begged her to go out in the garden while the others were at supper.

"I can't possibly, I must help wait on the table, you know. I am to have special charge of the head of the table, so won't I have a fine chance to catch the captain's eye?"

Just then Diantha was invited to sing, and she sat down to the little melodeon with modest assurance. After she had sung twice, Harvey joined her with his concertina, and they both sang and played with charming compliance to the repeated calls of "more, more."

Finding that it was impossible to take Ellen away, John followed the party into the dining room, and was delighted to find himself seated next to Captain Van Arden. He felt all the current of mutual admiration and silent understanding that passed between the lively girl and the blue-coated stranger, and he ground his teeth in silent rage that he was unable wholly to intercept the glances and occasional words that passed between them.

After dinner Bishop Winthrop led the way to the gardens, and the talk turned upon the determination of the President and his people to leave this whole city in ruins behind them after their flight to the mountains, provided the army should obtain entrance to the valley.

The captain was walking with Aunt Clara, whose gentle face and charming manner had captured his heart completely. He felt that she was a good and noble woman, and he wondered how all this sanguinary talk would affect so womanly a creature.

He looked down into the kindly black eyes and remarked:

"I hope, madam, that with such gentle counsels as yours, these strong men will not carry out such a dismal threat as the President has just voiced. I could not imagine tender women and helpless children driven from these peaceful homes and inviting surroundings."

"Be assured that if our brothers and fathers feel that it is best for us to give up our homes and once more be wanderers upon the earth, we women will accompany them as cheerfully as if we were taking the safest pleasure journey. I know of no cowards among our women."

"What, madam, would you consent to see this beautiful home destroyed and this fruitful orchard ruined?"

"Yes, I would not only consent to it, but with my own hands set fire to my house, and cut down every tree in the orchard and uproot every plant."

The captain stood in silent amazement. What was the moving force that bound this singular people to such united action! Surely there was a sociological puzzle here for some philosopher to fathom.

The party soon dispersed, and other days of like pleasure made the hours fly until the Captain had been in the valley nearly a week.

IX.

JOHN OPENS HIS MOUTH

On the following Sabbath Captain Van Arden attended divine service, and he was not as surprised as he would have been a week ago, to hear and see the calm, mighty courage which animated every face and spoke in every voice. Here was a handful of wronged and hunted religionists, whose only crime was in desiring to serve God in a way peculiar to themselves. He had walked the streets at darkest midnight, and not once had he seen or heard one word of drunkenness, ribaldry or obscenity. He had failed to find any traces of licentiousness, such as the ugly rumors he had heard before coming here, had led him to expect. Instead, he felt himself surrounded by an implacable circle of watchful care, which prevented him from entering into any relations with women, even the harmless one of mild flirtation with the pretty brown-haired girl he had met at Bishop Winthrop's home. Certainly he had received some enlarged ideas on the subject of religious persecution.

He listened attentively to Apostle John Taylor, who, at the close of his remarks, repeated the statement he had heard before, that the army should not be allowed to enter the Valley; and then, in ringing tones, the preacher asked all who would apply the torch to their dwellings, cut down their trees and lay waste their farms, to raise their hands.

The captain rose in his seat to see the effect of this powerful appeal. Not one hand in that vast assembly of four thousand people, was left to rest in cowardly silence in its owner's lap; but like a unit, the clouds of hands arose. Some horny and worn with toil and poverty; others, soft and white with youth and womanhood; and even little children in their eager, unconscious zeal, elevated their hands high in sympathy with their elders.

The captain felt awed and overcome. Up in his throat rose a lump of sympathy and admiration for this heroic people. He expected to find a seditious and priest-ridden community, mouth-valiant and few in number, whom the mere appearance of troops would tame into submission. He found instead, a handful of enthusiasts rising against the might of a great nation.

When President Young arose to speak the Captain felt a genuine response in his own breast to the vigorous and manly sentiments uttered by the "Mormon" leader:

"When the time comes to lay waste our dwellings and our improvements, if any man undertakes to shield his, he will be treated as a traitor. Now, the faint-hearted can go in peace, but should that time come, they must not interfere. Before we will again suffer as we have in times gone by, there shall not one building, nor one foot of lumber, nor a fence, nor a tree, nor a particle of grass or hay that will burn, be left in the reach of our enemies. I am sworn if driven to the last extremities, utterly to lay waste this land in the name of Israel's God, and our enemies shall find it as barren as when we came here."

At the close of the services the Captain sought President Young, surrounded by his friends and associate pioneers; the officer grasped and held the hand of the maligned leader, and with a voice shaken with emotion, declared his sympathy and fellowship with this band of earnest enthusiasts.

"President Young, my whole heart goes out to you in this cause. I am sure no one in the central government understands the real condition of affairs here. I shall hasten to President Buchanan and when he understands the true situation, be assured there will be a cessation of this war-like movement."

"Perhaps," said the President, "he will not accept your version of the affair."

"He must listen; he shall be convinced. By the eternal heavens, if our government pushes this matter to the extent of making war upon you, I will withdraw from the army, for I will not have a hand in the shedding of the blood of American citizens."

"We shall trust in God, Captain. He will open our way before us. Congress has promptly sent investigating committees to Kansas and other places as occasion has required; but upon the merest rumor, it has sent two thousand armed soldiers to destroy the people of Utah, without investigating the matter at all."

"The government may yet send an investigating committee to Utah, and consider it good policy to do so, before they get through."

"I believe that God has sent you here, Captain Van Arden, and that good will grow out of it. I was glad when I heard you had come."

"I am anxious to get back to Washington as soon as I can. I have heard officially that General Harney has been removed to Kansas. I shall stop the trains at Ham's Fork on my own responsibility."

"If we can keep peace for this winter, I think that something will transpire that will stop the shedding of blood. God bless you, captain, in all your labors and efforts to bring about so desirable a condition."

Notwithstanding the gallant captain's generosity and nobility, John Stevens, who had heard every word uttered between him and his own beloved leader, was greatly pleased and relieved to receive orders to accompany the Captain early the next morning on his homeward destination.

John felt no shadow of fear or doubt about the coming issue between the picked army of the United States and the struggling guerillas of his own Territory; but it filled his soul with a vague dread and alarm to look forward to a possible contact between the youth of his people and the alluring sins and vices of the world at large.

He was surprised, therefore, as the two men rode along in the cool, September morning, up through the rough canyon gorges, to have the captain turn to him with a question upon the very subject which was occupying his own thoughts.

"Stevens, was I wrong in supposing that although your people greeted me with such noble welcomes, yet there was a barrier raised between any especial friendliness between me and any of your women?"

"Did you make any effort to be especially familiar with our women?" asked John, cautiously.

"Ah, Stevens, you are a genuine Yankee. You answer my question by asking another; and I may not care to commit myself. You have some very fascinating and really intelligent women among your people. I saw some lovely faces in your bowery yesterday."

"Well, yes, our girls are tolerably good-looking."

"Oh, Stevens, no wonder your girls long for a breath of worldly freedom, if all your young men are as cautious and unenthusiastic about them as you seem to be," laughed the captain.

"Do our girls long for worldly pleasures?"

"Another question; I see, my taciturn friend, that the only way to open your oyster of a mouth is to turn confidential myself and open my own heart to you. I confess to some curiosity as to the inner condition of your social affairs. Now, I am quite willing to further confess that I was never more impressed with the grace and magnificence of womanhood than I was when I saw it embodied in those two young girls I met at your Bishop Winthrop's. Such unconscious charm and beauty, I had never seen before. And the brown-haired one was evidently not unkindly disposed to me; however, of course I had not time, even if I had been given the opportunity to go deeper than a profound admiration for the lovely and winsome sprite. She was not forward, although perfectly free and familiar, if I may so express it."

"Did Ellen, for that is her name, express to you any such feelings as you infer our girls possess?"

"Well, yes; she casually mentioned her desire to see and know something of the great, beautiful, unknown world stretching out behind these rugged mountains."

"And you?"

"I was a guest and a stranger, and, I hope, also a gentleman. I could not but admire and be impressed by her innocence, but I also respected and guarded it."

"I believe you are a good man, Captain Van Arden; but you are not of our faith. And if you read the old Scriptures, you will find that God sets a curse on those of His chosen people who marry with unbelievers. God surely knows why this should be so."

"I can't see for the life of me, why one good man is not as good as another; if you believe in the Bible, you must acknowledge that we are all one family, and all children of one Father. Why should you presume to be better than I?"

"It is not an assumption, or an impudence. There is an eternal law which underlies this principle. Perhaps I cannot make it plain to you, but it exists, else God would not have announced it. God is a Master gardener. He does not mix His blooms and fruits, but sets each to multiply with each; nor does He ever mix the birds and animals; else sterility would result. But to His children He has given their agency as their dearest possession; and they use that agency like the reckless spend-thrifts and bunglers that they are. Only man may mix his seed and still retain a measure of fertility. We are eternal. Our spirits sang together when this earth was created, and to each is allotted a time and a destiny; but always our free agency comes in to disturb and confuse that destiny. Yet, only by using that free agency, can we work out our exaltation in the world to come. If we would be prudent, we would let the great Gardener train and trim our lives to His own matchless design. It is the ancient Hebrews, who have preserved to the world the best that we

know of home, brotherhood, love, and life eternal; and in their national individuality and history we have the most perfect example of the fruits of careful breeding. Where they have observed the traditions of the fathers, they are strong, domestic, clean, faithful, loving and true. This fact, with all the Israelite's faults, is the lamp which has lighted Christianity for the rest of mankind to see by. If the Jews had mixed with all creation, where would their autonomy be today? Why shall the true Christian hesitate to abide by an eternal truth because of ridicule? The religious emotions are the deepest founts of the human soul. Make them muddy, confuse their source, and you have lost their purity and their worth. All men may believe in Christ, but all do not follow Him; for He came to fulfil, not to abrogate the laws of Moses. Love is too often the result of propinquity, or passion. More: I am convinced that God has mated His children in spirit before they ever dwelt upon this earth. There is a divine belongingness in marriage; and if we will follow the guidance of that unerring spirit, we will not mix our lives nor confuse our destiny; there will be no bungling confusion or muddled strains in races or religions. I do not think all people will be converted to the Gospel in this life; nor that they could be. Nor that all men and women are rightly mated. But all will have a chance behind the veil, for we hold the doctrine of salvation for the dead to be as true as Peter and Paul held it. ^[A]

[Footnote A: Read I Peter, 3rd chap. verses 18 to 20; also I Peter, chap. 4, verse 6, and I Corinthians, chap. 15, verse 29.]

"Our religion, like our politics, is much a matter of temperament. But the day will come in the great hereafter, when gradually all men will learn and accept the perfect Gospel of peace and right. Meanwhile, let not those who have been so greatly blessed as to see the Truth, confuse themselves and weaken their powers for good by joining themselves for life with those who know not and love not the Truth. As is the husband, so is the wife. As is the wife, alas, so becomes the husband, sooner or later."

"Stevens," said the captain, "you can expound and exhort like the rest of your elders, even if you do not waste time in general conversation," then with a twinkle in his eye, the captain added, "You recall to my mind a scathing assertion I heard uttered by an apostate in your Valley. He said that you 'Mormons' believed that no woman could be exalted in the Kingdom of Heaven without a man. Is that so?" and the soldier looked shrewdly at his companion.

"Yes, captain; that is correct."

Astonished by this frank admission, the captain rode on in silence for some moments. Then, as if to add point to his rejoinder, John Stevens drew in his horse, and turned in his saddle to look his companion full in the eye:

"Yes, sir, that is our belief. But we also hold that no man can be exalted in the Kingdom of Heaven without a woman. Don't you recollect that Paul says the woman is not without the man, nor the man without the woman in Christ Jesus?"

And long before John had finished, the captain was laughing so heartily that he lost his reins.

"Well, Stevens, I give up. You are a better scriptorian than I am; even if you may be inclined to appropriate quotations a bit for your own advantage. That's no more than we all do."

John shrewdly put another question.

"Would you be willing to see your sister marry a Mormon elder?"

The captain looked amused, then amazed.

"Do you mean to imply that 'Mormons' are orthodox Christians?"

"I imply nothing. I only wondered if you would be willing to have your sister marry any virtuous man, no matter what his other condition might be, spiritual or physical."

"Well, Stevens, I fear I could not convince you, and you only further puzzle me. One thing, though, I do maintain, and that is, that every American citizen, woman as well as man, should have the right to choose his own path and companion in life. It is our birthright."

"It is, when we are old enough to know our own mind; but you would not throw your half-grown son and daughter in the midst of temptation and leave them there unprotected, to carry out that argument."

"Perhaps not, perhaps not. You have given me new food for thought, and I already have much new and valuable material for reflection and study. Let us hasten now or we may not reach our evening camp before dark."

As he lay in camp that night, the conversation repeated itself over and over in the troubled mind of John Stevens. Oh, what was the right? How he trembled at the thought of strange and scornful men being brought into this peaceful valley, and left to corrupt and estrange our thoughtless youths and beautiful girls.

He knew something of the moral conditions of men in the world and he also knew much of men in

general. He felt that nothing but the keenest religious conscience could protect men from immorality of life. He raised his hand in silent agony to heaven, and swore that his whole strength and life should be devoted to protecting and shielding the youth from this terrible fate—that of too many youths in the outside world. And yet, as he himself had said, there was the divine right of self-choice, or man's agency. He groaned as the consequences of thrusting upon innocent and helpless women, as would be done, opportunities to seek their companions among camp-followers, miners, and other transients of that day. Human agency was an agency fraught with dire consequences. Would we have to meet its terrible responsibility, he asked himself?

What did the future hold in store for this hunted and persecuted people? God alone knew! It was so difficult for a man of John's temperament to say God's will be done, when it involved the life, or worse, perhaps, the virtue of men and women. For he feared for the virtue of the youths among his people quite as much as he dreaded the temptations to be offered to the maidens. To John Stevens virtue, of both man and woman, was far dearer than life.

He felt as if he must arise, and with mighty power, seize and flee with his loved ones to the safe fastnesses of the mountains.

X.

IN ECHO CANYON

It was a lovely day in the last of September, a few days after the occurrences related in our last chapter. The air was cool, crisp, and full of the odor of pine and sagebrush. In a mountain retreat, around a gleaming fire, sat a group of men with serious, eager faces, and their talk was carried on in guarded tones.

The country was wild and barren, except that here and there along the course of a stream the willows and brush gave a little protection to man and beast. On a low hill-side to the right of the camp-fire, were tethered horses, picking a scant supper from the fall-dried plain. Not very far away yawned a huge black opening in the side of the mountain, which gave the name of Cache Cave to the spot.

The leader of the party, General Daniel H. Wells, sat in the center of the council, his fine large head and prominent features giving him a massive appearance well calculated to inspire respect and confidence. He was listening to some recital of a recent expedition from the lips of a tall, red-bearded, slow-spoken man.

"What did General Harney say when Captain Van Arden had explained to him the condition in our Territory?" asked the General.

"The General replied with an oath, 'I am ordered to Salt Lake City, and I will winter there or in hell.'"

The men around the camp-fire uttered various exclamations of determination that the violent general should be well supplied with opportunities to join his friends in the latter warm retreat.

On the right of General Wells sat an immense, broad-shouldered fellow, bearded and with eyes like an eagle. He said little, and kept his face in his hands while listening to the report of his fellow-soldier, Stevens.

"Major Smith," remarked General Wells, turning to this silent, keen-eyed giant-like officer, "you will at once proceed to the enemy's camp, and deliver these documents which have been entrusted to my care by Governor Young. Wait for a reply, see all you can, hear all you can, and make yourself, if possible, more familiar with the country surrounding us than you are at the present. There is much for you to do in the near future, if we would prevent this army from entering the Valley this winter. Do you wish any one to accompany you?"

"No, sir, I am foot-loose, and when alone, can ride as fast as I please."

Accordingly, that night, while the others were fitfully sleeping, Major Lot Smith proceeded silently out of the camp to go on his mission to the United States army, now pressing forward to Fort Winfield. Not a detail of the lonely road, not a bush nor rock; not the slightest undulation in the silent hills escaped the keen eyes of this traveler.

Arrived at the army's headquarters, Major Lot Smith was conducted to the United States General's tent, where he was received with great dignity. His papers delivered, he waited in stern silence, the reply of a tall, heavy-set, dark-complexioned man, whose prolonged silence gave him an opportunity to observe underneath the apparent coldness, a shade of anxiety and care on the officer's face, which the eagle eyes under the heavy red brows read as plainly as he did the rock-

strewn roadway along which he had traveled.

"Major-General Harney has been ordered back to Kansas," remarked Col. Alexander, after reading the despatches, "and Colonel Johnston, who succeeds him, will be here in a few days. Meanwhile, I will myself undertake to reply to these remarkable documents, and shall send the answer by you, if you can wait for a few hours."

"I am here under orders to await the answers to these papers, sir," answered Smith.

"Very well, my men will attend to your needs, and while you are eating dinner, your horse shall receive attention."

Lot Smith made no reply, but bowed himself out of the presence of the officer. Instead of accepting any hospitality for himself, he eagerly, yet quietly, spent the few hours of his stay, in mastering every detail of the camp, and fixing upon his mind every word he chanced to overhear from the soldiers.

He soon ascertained that the present commanding officer was Colonel Alexander, and that the colonel was in some anxiety as to what move to make next. Smith discovered this from the remarks of a young, dark-mustached officer, who sat chatting with his companion outside of a tent door, utterly oblivious that "Mormon" ears were taking note of his extravagances.

"I have told the Colonel repeatedly," announced this young braggart, "that the only honorable and manly course to pursue, is to follow the plan laid out by Harney. Harney is a trump, by—, and I wish we had him here again instead of this wavering, chicken-hearted present administration. All we have to do is to secure most of our troops and supplies in Fort Winfield; then a few hundred of us with our knap-sacks on our back could make the valley in a few days, surprise the fanatics and poltroons down there, take possession of old Brigham's harem for our own comfort and pleasure, quarter our men in their church, and the thing is done."

"Old Brigham himself might have something to say about that," remarked one of the loungers at the tent door. "Van Arden says he is a fighter of no mean ability."

"Bah! Van Arden is easily frightened. The very first thing to be done is, of course, to string up such rabble as Young, Kimball and Wells, with others of their ilk, to the nearest tree. I have no patience with men who play into the hands of heathens and tricksters. What were we sent out here for, anyway?"

The young man looked around the circle with a sneer upon his handsome mouth, and as he met the eyes of one or another, they gave him varying replies either by word or by glance.

"I don't think any one knows just exactly what we were sent out here for," at last answered the tall, gray-eyed man who had spoken before. "I don't know that Harney, Alexander or even Buchanan himself knows exactly what we were sent here for. Presumably to install Cumming in the office to which the President has appointed him."

"And do you think that it will take the flower of the American army, and millions of dollars to do so simple a thing as that? Come, now, Saxey, you are not so innocent as that. We have a whole Territory to subdue and the seditious priests of this most villainous community are to be tried and hanged, or hanged anyway. That's what I came out here for."

"Well, I am prepared to follow my orders, no matter what they may be; but I have no desire to take part in street fights, or brawls such as was witnessed in Illinois ten years ago, when the leaders of this people were killed by the border ruffians of that State. I know something of this people from my brief association with a part of the "Mormon" Battalion, which answered our government's call for troops to march into Lower California. I never saw a braver or more devoted body of men. And I will not be a party to another outrage upon an innocent people." So spake Col. Saxey, gentleman, soldier and man.

"You and I do not indulge in street fights or brawls," replied the braggart, "but we are determined to see order and decency maintained in this government, no matter if it be at the cost of a few lives of such lecherous scoundrels as old Brigham and his priests. Why, their doings are a blotch on the escutcheon of our proud country. It is an introduction into our midst of the rotten lives and practices of the Turks and Orientals. The manhood of this nation will not endure it."

"Let us see, Sherwood," interposed the grey-eyed man, withdrawing his cigar to give emphasis to his words, "how many of Brigham's daughters or concubines have you decided shall form part of your establishment this winter?"

"Oh, plague on your Quixotism; you make no distinction between the amours of a gentleman and the vile practices of the heathens and 'Mormons.'"

The silent listener at the other side of the tent found it impossible to keep his teeth from grinding together at this moment, but he was suddenly approached by a subaltern who requested him to wait at once upon the commanding officer for his messages to Utah.

Obtaining the despatches, Major Smith started upon the return journey. It was high noon in the

camp of the mountaineers, when dusty, travel-stained Lot Smith rode into the small circle. He was ushered into the tent occupied by General Wells and staff and there delivered his messages. For the first time since leaving his own camp, the Major sat down and proceeded to satisfy a soldier's appetite, and although weary and worn for sleep, he was glad to satisfy his cravings for food before resting or sleeping.

The general saw the worn condition of his faithful officer, and ordered him to his own tent until the next morning. Meanwhile a courier was sent to the valley with the despatches from the army, and a full report from General Wells and his scouts.

All that night General Wells and his staff talked, planned, and counseled. It was but little after seven o'clock when the council assembled the next morning to hear the verbal report of Major Smith and to decide upon future action.

"I overheard much of their vaunting, blasphemous determination to enter the Valley, kill or imprison our leaders, and to capture and ruin our wives and daughters. There are a few cautious, sensible men among them, such as Col. Saxey, whom you all know by reputation at least, but the majority, especially the officers, who are mostly young men of hot passions and romantic temperament, are determined to force Colonel Alexander to proceed at once to the Valley with a light detachment, to be followed by the masses of the troops, as fast as is convenient."

"Colonel Alexander informs me in his letter," said General Wells, "that he will submit our letters and despatches to General Johnston immediately upon that officer's arrival in camp; and, that meanwhile the troops are there by order of the President of the United States, and their future movements will depend upon the orders issued by competent military authority."

"What shall we do under these circumstances?" asked one of the officers.

"This is the plan adopted in our council before leaving Salt Lake City, and there sanctioned by President Young. We were to ascertain the location of the troops as soon as possible, which has now been done by Major Smith. Then we were to proceed at once to annoy them in every way possible. We are to use every exertion to stampede their animals, and are to set fire to their supply trains whenever practicable. Burn the whole country before them, and on their flanks. Keep them from sleeping by night surprises, blockade the roads by felling trees or destroying the river fords wherever we can. Watch for opportunities to set fire to the grass on their windward, so as to set fire to their trains. Leave no grass behind them that can be burned. We are to keep our men concealed as much as possible, and of course we are to guard ourselves against surprises continually."

"What if we meet a detachment and are compelled to fight," asked one of the men.

"I anticipate no such catastrophe," answered General Wells. "Brother Brigham has said that the Lord will fight our battles for us, and if we follow his counsel to the letter, we shall also be able to comply with his strictest injunctions, which are, to spare life always when possible, and not to shed a drop of blood when it can be avoided. 'Say your prayers and keep your powder dry,' was his parting admonition."

The General sat some time as if in silent meditation, and the officers present remained silent, unwilling to disturb his reflections.

At length the chief raised his head, and looking straight into the eyes of Major Smith, he asked:

"Major, do you think that you can take our small force, about forty men we have here now, and passing in the rear of the enemy, turn back and burn the supply trains on the road?"

The Major returned the intent gaze of the General, and while a dusky gleam shot through the red-brown depths of his own eyes, he only replied in words:

"Yes, sir; I think I can."

"Very well, sir, you can consider yourself under orders to carry out the plan I have just now indicated. The council is adjourned."

That these men could, at the close of their portentous council, kneel down and ask God to bless them and assist them in their undertaking, may seem strange, but they were banded together to protect the lives of their fellow-men shut up in the narrow valleys of the lower country, and they felt that if God did not interpose His power, the soldiers, accompanied as they were by a horde of blasphemous, reckless, licentious camp-followers and brawlers, would not only kill and plunder, but they would also decoy and destroy their fair wives and daughters.

They were facing no imaginary terrors, for the pangs of Illinois and Missouri were not yet blotted from the memory of even their babes. No blood would be shed, except in self-defense, but every man there was prepared to pour his life-current out like water upon the ground, if necessary, to protect their beloved homes and families and their honored leaders. God was their father and to Him they appealed.

"Say your prayers and keep your powder dry," had been the counsel of President Young, and they

were united as one man to carry out his instructions.

One of the first men spoken to by Lot Smith was quiet John Stevens, a man after Smith's own heart. No need of much talk between these two, as they divined each other's wishes and purposes without need for words and explanations.

There was some delay, consequent upon breaking up camp, so that it was early twilight when the small detachment rode out upon the open prairie. The Major called John Stevens to his side, and to him in a few words related as they rode along some of the conversation overheard in the camp of the enemy.

As John listened to the wicked threats of the dissolute officers concerning the fair daughters of his people, he was seized with a sudden, passionate anger, and for a few moments he could think of nothing but to heap curses upon their wicked heads, and he longed with murderous longing, to have one of them just now under his own clenched hands that he might strangle the pride and the devil out of him.

His curses were not uttered aloud, however, and when he recovered himself, he heard his commanding officer ask:

"What's the matter, Stevens, are you annoyed?"

"Perhaps! I was not old enough to do any good in Illinois; but now—well, I am glad, major, that you permitted me to accompany you on this trip."

"Stevens, we are of the same stripe; but we must both remember our orders, and no matter what the provocation may be, we must shed no blood, unless compelled to do so. We both understand this, and yet, it is as hard for me as it is for you, my friend."

The next morning, just before sunrise, Major Smith called John's attention to a speck on the eastern horizon.

"Let us go forward carefully, Stevens; we must be sure as to numbers and conditions of this oncoming train."

"There are only half a dozen teams as I make them out."

An hour's ride verified Stevens' keen power of sight. Riding swiftly up to the flurried teamsters, Lot Smith pre-emptorily ordered them to turn back; and turn back they did. But our mountain soldiers had other work to do, and so they rode forward for an hour.

"Major, I have a feeling that it would be well to take a look again at those teams we ordered to follow us. I can't see anything of their dust," said John, as they rode along.

The major turned on his horse and scanned the horizon behind them with shaded eyes and thoughtful mind.

"Stevens, take fifteen or twenty of the boys and go back there, and see if our orders have been obeyed. Meanwhile I will ride forward slowly."

Three hours after this, Stevens returned and reported that he had found the train once more headed westward; whereupon he had unloaded the freight, and set fire to the whole lot. The teamsters were preparing to come eastward again on their animals.

"Good, now let us ride eastward as fast as we can."

Turning in the direction of the Green River bluffs, the men rode into a small clump of willows by the stream, and decided to get some sleep before proceeding further. It was sorely needed, and proved refreshing to the band of weary men.

The next morning before daybreak they were in the saddle; and before riding an hour, the major discovered a cloud of dust coming from the old "Mormon" trail.

Riding fiercely into camp, Lot Smith demanded to see the captain.

"Captain Simpson is out huntin' cattle; and I guess if you want him you will have to hunt him," replied one of the teamsters.

"I'll look after your captain," bluntly announced Lot, and then cocking his own gun as a signal to his men to follow suit, he quietly added, "but you fellows can just fork over your shooting irons; we are wanting some implements of that kind just now."

There was a flash in the red-brown eyes of Lot Smith, and every teamster carefully gathered up his pistol or gun and delivered it over to Stevens, who distributed them among the men.

Leaving Stevens in charge of the camp, Lot Smith rode out to meet the captain, whose name was Simpson. He was driving in some animals, and Lot simply said: "Captain, I am here on urgent business."

The man addressed was no coward, and his eyes flashed as he demanded the nature of that business.

"Just hand over your pistols, and I will let you know the nature of it," answered Smith.

Spurring his horse towards the train, Simpson replied: "No man ever took my pistols yet; and if you think you can without first killing me, try it."

They were all the time riding full gallop towards the train.

"I admire a brave man, captain, but I don't like blood. You insist on me killing you, which would only take a minute, but I don't want to do it. If you will take the trouble to look that way, captain, instead of glaring into my eyes, you will see that your teamsters are in a ticklish situation."

They had ridden as close together as their panting, reeking horses would allow, each looking fire and death into the blazing eyes of the other; but when Simpson raised his eyes and saw his own teamsters huddled together, unarmed and shivering, under the cocked guns of the mountaineers, he turned to Smith and muttered: "You have me at a bitter disadvantage."

"We don't need that advantage, captain. What would you do if I should give up your arms?"

"I'll fight you," answered the captain, between his teeth.

The two had now reached the camp.

"Well, we know something about that, too, Take up your arms."

The teamsters shrank back as one man.

"Not by a d—d sight," one of them exclaimed. "We came out here to whack bulls, and not to fight."

"What do you say to that, captain?" asked Smith.

With another violent oath, the captain ground his teeth and replied: "If I had been here before, and they had refused to fight, I would have killed every man of them."

Major Smith was too brave a man not to be touched by this manly, yet reckless spirit; and after some parley with Stevens, he ordered his men to give Simpson two of the loaded guns, with two of the loaded wagons, to keep his men from starvation until their return to the Eastern States, and then ordering all out of the way, he called out for a big burly Irishman, a non-"Mormon," who had followed Stevens from the trains the day before, and had offered to join their forces: "Here, Dawson, you can put the torch to these trains; it is very proper for the Gentiles to spoil the Gentiles."

The whole train of fifty-two wagons was burned; after which the mountaineers rode away, telling the teamsters that they could take what provisions they had secured for themselves to their comrades, a few miles away, and then return; and if any attempt were made to extinguish the flames, summary punishment would be administered to the offenders.

XI.

"IN THE VALLEY OR HELL"

The details of that peculiar and providential winter of 1857-8 are written in lines of vivid interest and incident through the pages of recorded history. The pen would fain linger to describe how Lot Smith and his brave companions followed up their arranged course, burning grass and trees, tearing up bridges, and demolishing houses or huts of shelter everywhere along the road.

Fort Bridger, the point to which the army of Utah had made its slow, plainful way, was a mass of ruins when entered by Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston and his half-frozen soldiers and the remnants of his trains and stock. I cannot refrain from giving the words of the report of this awful march, made to Congress by the two commanding officers, Colonel Johnston and Colonel St. George Cooke.

The condition of the main division is thus stated by Colonel Johnston:

"The expedition was now ordered to Fort Bridger, and at every step the difficulties increased. There were only thirty-five miles to be traversed, but excepting on the margin of a few slender streams, the country through which our route lay is the barest of desert land. There is no shelter from the chilly blasts of this mountain solitude,

where even in November, the thermometer sometimes sinks to 16 degrees below zero. There is no fuel but the wild sage and willow; and there is little pasture for the half-frozen cattle. Our march commenced on the sixth of November, and on the previous night five hundred of our strongest cattle were taken by the 'Mormons.' The trains extended over six miles, and all day long sleet and snow fell on the retreating column. Some of the men were frost bitten, and the exhausted animals were goaded by their drivers, until many of them fell dead in their traces. At sunset the troops camped wherever they could find a particle of shelter, some under bluffs, and some in the willow copses. At daybreak the camp was surrounded by the carcasses of frozen cattle, of which several hundred had perished during the night. Still, as the trains arrived from the rear, each one halted for a day or more, giving time for the cattle to graze and rest on such scant herbage as they could find. To press forward more rapidly was impossible, for it would have cost the lives of most of the draft animals; to find shelter was equally impossible, there was none. There was no alternative but to proceed slowly and persistently, saving as many as possible of the horses, mules and oxen. Fifteen days were required for this difficult operation."

Arrived at Fort Bridger, though they found the whole place in ruins, the camp was struck, and tents were erected. Here the army of the United States wintered, calling the camp Fort Scott.

A fine commentary on the foolish extravagance and thoughtless waste of money involved in the fitting out of this disastrous campaign was furnished by the opening of the few supply wagons left them by their relentless pursuers. The wagons loaded with provisions had been burned; the wagons that survived were filled with bedticks and camp kettles. For two thousand six hundred men, wintering in a region seven thousand feet above the sea level, where at night the thermometer always sank below zero, there were three thousand one hundred and fifty bedticks, and only seven hundred and twenty-three blankets; there were one thousand five hundred pairs of epaulettes and metallic scales, but only nine hundred coats and six hundred overcoats; there were three hundred and seven cap-covers, and only one hundred and ninety caps; there were one thousand and ninety military stocks; some of the men were already barefooted and others had no covering for their feet but moccasins, while there were only eight hundred and twenty-three pairs of boots and six hundred pairs of stockings. One wagon was entirely freighted with camp-kettles; with nothing to cook, and no salt with which to season their nothingness.

An extract from Colonel St. George Cooke's report gives quite a dismal picture of his own division. He says:

"The north wind and drifting snow became severe; the air seemed turned to frozen fog, nothing could be seen; we were struggling in a freezing cloud. The lofty wall of Three Crossings was a happy relief; but the guide who had lately passed there was relentless in pronouncing that there was no grass at that point. As he promised grass and shelter two miles further, we marched on, crossing twice more the rocky stream, half-choked with snow and ice; finally he led us behind a great granite rock, but all too small for the promised shelter. Only a part of the regiment could huddle there in the deep snow; whilst the long night through the storm continued, and fearful eddies, above, below and behind, drove the falling and drifting snow. Meanwhile the animals were driven once more across the stream, to the base of the granite ridge, which faced the storm, but where there was grass. They refused to eat; the mules huddled together, moaning piteously, while some of the horses broke from the guard and went back to the ford. The next day, better camping ground was reached ten miles farther on. On the morning of the eighth, the thermometer marked 44 degrees below the freezing point; but in this weather and through deep snow, the men made eighteen miles, and the following day nineteen miles, to the next camping ground on Bitter Creek, on the Sweetwater. On the 10th, matters were still worse. Herders, left to bring up the rear, with the stray mules, could not force them from the valley, and they were left to perish. Nine horses were also abandoned. At night the thermometer marked twenty-five degrees below zero; nearly all the tent pins were broken, and nearly forty soldiers and teamsters were on the sick list, most of them being frost-bitten. The earth has no more lifeless, treeless, grassless desert; it contains scarcely a wolf to glut itself on the hundreds of dead and frozen animals which, for thirty miles, nearly blocked the road."

Such was the condition in which this flower of the American army found itself when about ready, as they supposed, to enter the Valley of the Great Salt Lake and subdue a handful of unoffending and simple-hearted people. Something was certainly done by the small band of hardy men who followed and surrounded the army with harassing circumstances; but they did little compared with the forces which were brought to bear by the God of nature, who undertook to fight this battle according to His own good pleasure and plan.

XII.

THE FRIEND OF BRIGHAM YOUNG

The bright fire upon the wide hearthstone in Aunt Clara's sitting room in Great Salt Lake City seemed all the brighter to the young man who opened the cheerful green door late in the afternoon on the 24th day of February, 1858. The slow moving figure of Aunt Clara swung around from her busy loom in the corner, as she looked to see who her visitor was.

"You, John? I thought you were in Echo Canyon or in San Bernardino, or on the Southern Mexican route."

"So I was till this morning; I have come to see if you will take a stranger for a few days, who is sent to you by Governor Young."

"Anyone sent from President Young is welcome, and John, anyone you bring is welcome also."

John Stevens thanked her and added that he would return shortly with his guest, and then departed as silently and swiftly as he had come.

"Ellen," called Aunt Clara to the girl whose spinning wheel whirred from the kitchen, "bring some more wood for the fire-place, and put the clean white blankets in the front bedroom. Have we enough white flour to make some biscuits?"

Ellen came into the sitting-room, followed by her friend Dian, who was busily engaged in knitting at some large, coarse but warm socks. Dian did not stop as she walked, but knitted away as if life depended upon the "stunt" being accomplished before the dusk should come upon her.

"Why do you want to make biscuits tonight, Aunt Clara?" asked Ellen.

The answer produced much scurrying of the girl's quick feet, and in less than half an hour, the table was set in the clean front sitting room, shining with the few cherished china pieces brought from the early colonial days into these bleak mountain valleys by this Puritan daughter from New England's wave-washed shores. Ellen set some eggs to wait their turn at the great open fire-place, and in the covered bake skillet were browning the cream biscuits which only Aunt Clara could compound from the various chemical resultants of lye made from wood-ashes and the pleasant acid of soured cream. Serviceberry preserves glowed darkly through the one precious glass dish, and soft Dutch cheese was molded into oval richness on a china saucer. A pitcher of foaming milk testified to its recent cold storage; and a plate of doughnuts flanked the cheese. It was a hasty meal, but none the less appetizing; and was ready none too soon.

A strong yet quick rap at the front door introduced John Stevens, to be followed by a dusty, travel-stained man, of small stature, and of an exceedingly dignified mien, yet looking very feeble and ill.

"Mrs. Tyler, let me introduce Dr. Osborne," said John gravely, and the gentleman bowed courteously over the extended hand of his hostess. The lady looked at the traveler with a curious half remembrance in her black eyes, but the "doctor" responded with only a grave salute, as he followed his hostess into the low-ceiled bedchamber, just off the sitting-room.

"John," said Aunt Clara, when she returned, "I have surely seen that gentleman somewhere, but I can't tell where for the life of me. He is very tired and looks sick," and she gazed thoughtfully and inquiringly at dusty John Stevens, who only stroked his long beard and gazed kindly at her without reply.

"Hurry, John," called Ellen from the inner kitchen door; "supper is all ready, and if you are going to eat with this gentleman, you will need to hurry and wash. Come out here to the porch; I have water and a clean towel for you."

Dian was still knitting away for dear life, near the small-framed west window; John halted a moment at her side.

"What's the hurry?" he asked, laconically, as he touched the dark grey ribbed stocking swinging from the shining needles in her deft fingers.

"Oh, it's for the Utah militia boys. Aunt Clara has kept us girls knitting and spinning, sewing and weaving, night and day, for the soldiers. We don't mind, for it's all we can do to help along."

"Any particular soldier?" he queried, indifferently. Dian glanced up to discover a latent meaning, but John's cool gaze gave her no clue. However, a girl flings many chance shots, and some are

sure to hit. So she replied with a supercilious accent: "Oh, I promised Charlie Rose to knit all the socks he needed for the expedition. Will you take these to him?"

"Certainly," answered John, gravely. He turned and left her, saying: "Charlie will be real grateful for your kindness."

"How provoking men can be," thought Dian.

Left with Dian, Aunt Clara stood in the center of the floor, her dark eyes fixed in an absent-minded stare, so common to her when she was trying to puzzle out some mental problem that eluded her. Where had she seen her visitor? Dian hurried away to her home across the way, ignorant both of Aunt Clara's problem or its possible solution.

As soon as the supper was despatched, Aunt Clara followed her two guests out of the front door, and said softly to John, "Come back after your interview with the President, John; I have something to tell you."

John nodded assent, and he and the traveler melted away into the freezing gloom of the winter's darkness.

But John did not return with his visitor till after midnight, and then, finding the front door on the latch, as was usual in that safe and honest pioneer town, he guided his guest by the light of the fire into the front chamber, now somewhat warmed by the open door from the sitting room, and, lighting the tallow candle left on the light-stand by the bedside for his guest, he softly made all as comfortable as he could and then left the traveler to seek a much-needed repose.

Who was the traveler and what was his business with President Young? This was the thought that flashed and wandered in and out of the sleepless brain of Aunt Clara, hour after hour, in that still and cold night. She knew much of her people's inner, unwritten history, for hers was the silent tongue and quick sympathy which drew all men, as well as women, to her tender heart and warm hearthstone for help and counsel. She had been the trusted friend of the great Prophet Joseph Smith, and to him she had given more than a human devotion; she had accorded him his place beside the greatest martyrs in Biblical history. She was likewise the confidential friend of his successor, Brigham Young; to Aunt Clara the great Pioneer often looked when he had a delicate task which needed the quickness and subtlety of a woman's help. And now she could not sleep till she had puzzled out her puzzle, and had answered the challenge of her unerring memory.

Daylight had brought the answer. Aunt Clara was up early, and, by the light of her candle, was kneading the loaves for the day's baking. To her soon came Ellen, intent on finishing her spinning and reeling before daylight should bring breakfast and interruption.

"Do you suppose that this is another of those splendid United States soldiers?" asked Ellen, her feet stepping off the regular rhythm of the whizzing yarn, as it whirled and spun from the steel point into fine threads under the flying fingers of the industrious girl. Her wheel paused in its onward circling flight to catch Aunt Clara's answer:

"No, dear; if he were, John would have taken him down to the Salt Lake House. And how could John bring in a soldier? They are all out east. John has been down to San Bernardino."

Evidently Aunt Clara herself had been busy with the same question, which still did not possess so vital an interest for youth as for experienced age. Youth leaned upon the wisdom of Brigham Young, and the proved Providence which drew them safely from most difficulties; maturity grasped the dangers and difficulties with surer fear, and sought to find answers to every problem.

"Well, one thing is certain, Aunt Clara. President Young has kept the soldiers out of the Valley, and the winter is half over."

"True, dear; but no one but God knows what is ahead of us just now. One thing just now, however, is to get this yarn all spun, reeled and woven into good coats for our soldiers;" and Aunt Clara slid into her seat before the huge loom, as if to shut off further discussion.

When the traveler came into the room two hours later, he found the wintry sun well started on his morning pilgrimage and his hostess placing his modest breakfast on the table in the sitting room; he noted every point of the innate refinement and peace which filled the small place with more than human sweetness. The delicately crocheted white window-curtains, the cushioned rush-bottomed chairs, all of them garnished neatly with antimacassars, tied with green ribbons; the windows filled with geraniums and blooming petunias; and the great hand-loom in the corner of the roomy sitting-room only added to its homelike air.

He walked up to the fire-place and as he stretched out his hands to the blaze, he said cordially:

"Well, Aunt Clara, have you found me out yet?"

"Yes, Colonel Haines, I discovered you not more than three hours ago."

"What was your clue?"

"You spoke of our people last night as your friends; there is but one man in the United States who thus refers to this hunted people."

"I had no idea that I could remain so long incognito to those keen eyes and ears of yours, Aunt Clara. You see I've not forgotten the quaint Yankee term by which all of your friends designated you in Nauvoo?"

"Have you had your interview with the President?"

"Yes, and I must say again, what I have said before: if the government of this country knew Brigham Young as I know him, they would honor themselves by honoring him with every trust and responsibility they could bestow."

"Ah, Colonel, how few men ever get human perspective. Only a true man himself may discover truth and honor in another."

"I find your people very sore, and naturally so; but President Young has wisely agreed to welcome Governor Cumming into the Territory, and I think he will permit the army to be quartered somewhere, not too near your settlements; I can appreciate his dislike to bringing the turbulent elements of army life into too close a juxtaposition with your innocent and sylvan communities. Yet the great government of which we are all proud factors has sent an army here—right or wrong—to be quartered within the confines of this Territory; and I was sure that President Young only needed the assurance that Governor Cumming comes here as an element of peace, and not as a casus belli, to accept wisely and quietly the unfortunate situation. Captain Van Arden has been a good friend to your people, my dear lady. We are to hold another council meeting this morning, and then I shall take myself from under your hospitable roof and go on my way."

"Surely, Colonel, you will not think of taking up another journey in this terrible winter season, and you in the delicate state of health which is evidenced in the lines of pain just now showing upon your face?"

"Fear not, friend Clara. Your president promised me last night that my life should be spared to complete this and other good works; and you know that I look upon Brigham Young as a prophet."

Aunt Clara moved quietly about the room for a few moments; then, coming up to the table once more, she said reverently, with the deep tenderness that only a devout woman may express in voice and eyes:

"Friend Thomas, I feel that God has sent you here to put a stop to this terrible misunderstanding and tragedy."

"Dear old friend, you are just repeating the words of our mutual friend and President, Brigham Young, last night, as he gave me his goodnight hand-clasp. And now tell me who is that exceedingly pretty girl who was in here last night?"

"That is the daughter of my dead sister; she lives with me and assists me as my own daughter would have done, if she had lived."

"She is certainly good to look upon. May I charge you to look well after her? The future advent of many strange men into this primitive society of yours will call for the closest watching and the most loving care on the part of you older ones."

"Ellen is the light of our eyes; she is a good girl, Colonel Haines; very loving and sincere; she is easy to lead and asks only for love in return."

"Ah, Aunt Clara, it is the paradox of human nature that man, who should be the protector of woman, is too often her assailant; and that the kindly virtues of a woman which make her the best of wives and mothers, too often renders her the easiest prey to a wicked man."

"Have you noted anything wrong with my Ellen, sir?" asked Aunt Clara, in mournful surprise.

"Not so. She is just a little too endowed with natural loveliness for her complete safety in this unhappy world."

Then, saying a few words of gratitude, the Colonel, or "Doctor Osborne," arose and put on his heavy army cloak.

"May I ask you one question, Colonel?"

"A dozen, if you will."

"Why do you come here to us under an assumed name?"

"Ah, that is easy to answer; for you yourself have riddled me my riddle. I had received such generous and courteous treatment in your old unhappy city of Nauvoo, and had made so many warm friends there, that I wondered if it could be that you had changed into the creatures that your enemies in Washington tried to convince me you were; so I chose to come under a borrowed

name, and thus test all round your quality of hospitality. And my good friend Aunt Clara Tyler has proved for me all that I sought to discover."

The interview at the President's office that day was so satisfactory that within twenty-four hours, John Stevens was once more at the head of an escort which was to convey Colonel Haines, the mediator, the friend, and the great heart, on his mission of mercy and peace into the lines of Federal armies quartered at Fort Scott, on Black's Fork.

XIII.

DIANTHA WEARS CHARLIE'S RING

The mission of Colonel Haines was of immediate effect. The fear of desperate warfare was over. But there yet remained much for the people of Utah to do and suffer.

John Stevens was constantly in the saddle during the few months of the Spring of 1858, though this did not prevent him from keeping a pretty close watch on Miss Diantha Winthrop. He was quite familiar with the tenor of her recent encouragement to Charlie Rose. He was also aware of the quiet yet effective snubs she had administered to that resplendent young Englishman, Henry Boyle. In a way known only to himself, John Stevens contrived to be aware of most things in which he himself was interested.

It was early in the evening of the first week of April that he rode down from the northern camps into the valley; as he passed the first farm-houses outside the city, he caught sight of a wagon-load of young people, evidently just returning from some merry-making, and he was conscious of the glory of Dian's hair and the flash of her bright eyes, even before he heard the silvery peal of laughter with which she was adding to the stings of a taunt administered to some luckless wight of the party. The music of her laughter was at once the charm and the despair of all Dian's lovers. The notes of that peal always reminded John of a chime of Swiss silver bells, with which a strolling musician had once delighted the city. They rippled and trilled along the waves of ether with enchanting melody. Her friends will remember many youthful graces of this well-known Dian, but none which were more charming than her ready, irresistible, musical laughter. It was never forced nor insincere, but was always the expression of the truth-loving and buoyant soul within. It did not add to John's own merriment to see the girl enjoying herself so heartily while under the gallant protection of Charlie Rose; as his horse lingered some distance behind the wagon, he could pick out the "crowd" even in the cool dusk of the early evening, and locate all the incipient flirtations. It may be that the tired man felt the incongruousness of laughter when his own heart was hot and sore because of the events just now transpiring; but he was too just not to recognize the further fact that youth is a time for joy and forgetful laughter; and, furthermore, all possible excitement and fear had been wisely suppressed by Brigham Young. As soon as he reached a side street, John turned away, and cantered into the city to deliver his messages.

The next evening, as he was striding down the State Road he met the "crowd" face to face. They were returning from singing practice.

"Oh, John," called Ellen, "do tell us all the news. Here's Tom Allen trying to make us believe that the President is for deserting our good homes and leading us into the wilderness. It isn't true, is it?"

"Would you rather stay here under the rule of an army, or follow your leaders into another place of safety and peace?" asked John, gently and seriously.

"John," said Charlie Rose, now sober and earnest, "I am trying to get these girls to understand that they are about to have a chance to be brave and womanly. It's stiff work trying to make a girl see that there is anything but fun ahead."

"Some girls," corrected Diantha, with lofty emphasis.

"Come into Aunt Clara's sitting-room and let me get a word with her; then, maybe, you shall get another," said John, quietly.

Sobered and awed, the little group of young people filed, almost silently, into the familiar gathering place. Dian refused to sit down; her quick thought had followed the serious mood of John Stevens and instantly her whole attention was fixed on one idea; what could she do in this crisis—a girl—and yet so full of devotion to that cause her friends were defending?

"Aunt Clara, you can tell the crowd how very serious our condition is at present. They seem to have forgotten Nauvoo," said John, possibly glad to sober these young people. Charlie Rose, whose face was quite flushed with the news he had just heard on the streets, walked over to the

loom in the corner and waited impatiently for Aunt Clara to finish tearing off her last thread.

It was impossible for John Stevens to be unconscious of the fact that Charlie Rose was standing very near to Dian, as she leaned against the loom, so near that almost the loose flying tendrils of her yellow hair were against his shoulder. But with stern grip on his own nerves, he sat carelessly on the bench and bent his head slightly as he examined the pattern of his braided buckskin pantaloons.

Aunt Clara felt the tense atmosphere surrounding her, and she waited in silence for John to speak, for she was sure he had something serious to tell them. That he had something to say was sufficient for others to remain quiet.

"Boys, how many of you can be ready to start at midnight for the army of the United States camped now at Fort Scott?" There was a breathless silence for an instant, and then:

"All of us," quietly answered Charlie Rose.

"We shall leave the Eagle Gate, then, at twelve o'clock, boys; I shall expect you to be there. Bring your usual outfit."

"John," said Aunt Clara, with a note of anxiety in her voice, "what is it now?"

"We are to meet and escort Governor Cumming into the Territory."

"Governor Cumming? Is Brigham Young no longer Governor of Utah then?" asked Charlie.

"I have this day delivered the official information that the President of the United States has appointed a new Governor for our unhappy Territory. It is for this reason, ostensibly, that the flower of the American army has come out into the wilderness of the West. Thousands of trained soldiers have been sent to install one man in a Territory of a few hundred pioneers." John spoke bitterly, but it was not his to question. He was but to obey.

"What is the name of this new Governor?" asked Dian with quick sarcasm in her tones.

"His name is Cumming, and so far as I am able to judge, he is not to blame for this blunder of Buchanan's. But, boys, meet me at the Eagle Gate at midnight."

"Oh, John, will the soldiers kill us all, or drive us from our homes?" asked Ellen, tearfully.

"Only God can answer that," replied John, solemnly.

The heart of every girl was thrilled with the sense of personal and communal danger. Yet, there mingled with it all a paradoxical and feminine joy in the intrepid character of the men who would protect them and their homes in life or in death.

Ellen ran up to Dian, and with her arms around her neck, begged her friend to "stay all night." Ellen felt suddenly a sense of coming disaster; her very heart was choking in her throat, and she felt that she must have many people near her. Dian was glad to stay; although her own thoughts were not busy with herself, but dwelt upon the larger interests of the starving army beyond the mountains, who were all human beings, even if enemies. Her soul bowed in prayer for Brigham Young and the other leaders of her people, whose judgment and wisdom must be supreme in this the people's most trying hour.

The days that followed were filled with vague rumors of coming disaster. Women clung to their little children; men gazed upon their innocent daughters and wondered what the future held in store for all. They had seen their dear ones mobbed, driven and plundered, time and again in the past; what would this new disaster bring forth?

Fear and suspense—are they not man's most dreaded foes? Anything which comes is better than the undefinable things which are so feared but which rarely happen. And thus the days and weeks of that month of suspense which followed John Stevens' expedition into the eastern mountains were far more unendurable to Diantha and her girl-friends than the simple events which followed. For, after all, when the day came for the entrance of Governor Cumming into the Territory, the sun shone, the meadow-larks piped out their usual notes of musical inquiry into the state of the worm and bug market, the crickets hopped nimbly out of the way of the oncoming posse of mountaineer soldiers who acted as the gubernatorial escort, and the whole party drew up to the Salt Lake House, clattered under the broad eaves of its western porches, and debouched quietly within. The first great act of the expected sensation was over, while the second act was quite small and inadequate to the tremendous overture of dread which had been pounding at the ears of the small inland city for so long. Governor Cumming proved to be a very generous, whole-souled man, and in the historic interview which followed between the new and the old Governors of the then distracted Territory of Utah, both men discovered the elements of candor, truth and sincerity in the other, and the bond of mutual understanding was not long in forming. The days of adjustment and readjustment which followed were not days of unmixed confusion and disturbance, for time was taken in which to dispel fears and to form new ties.

Diantha Winthrop was conscious, in those uncertain and troublous days, of a certain

dissatisfaction regarding the outcome of the dramatic beginnings which her quick intelligence had discovered in this appalling incident. Like most noble if youthful minds, her thoughts had been busy with the high purpose and exalted ideals of the people. Unlike her volatile friend Ellen, Dian's gloomy fears at this period settled around the leaders of her people; while to little laughing Ellie the one important feature of it all was little Ellie's own connection with each and every happening. It was therefore somewhat of a disappointment to both girls that there was such a tame ending to so tragic a beginning. Governor Cumming was in the city, he had been properly received by Governor Young, and the whole incident was closed, apparently, without even the hoisting of the flag. The girls mentioned the matter to Aunt Clara, and that good lady only answered:

"None but poets and prophets know the difference between tragedy and comedy. What you feel is going to be tragedy turns out to be comedy, and what starts as comedy too often turns into tragedy."

And thus life poured its turbulent stream down into the channels of Utah's history and the evening and the morning made up the scintillating days of that trying season.

Suffice it to say, Governor Cumming was duly escorted into the city, and he and his gentle lady-wife were suitably quartered. To him Brigham Young turned over all the Territorial records, the great seal and all insignia of his exalted office; all were delivered over safely and formally by the maligned "Mormon" leader. But our friend John, with his companions Charlie Rose and Tom Allen, was kept long weeks in active service out in Echo Canyon. The city seemed very lonely to Ellen and Dian during those long spring weeks.

One day in the early spring, some weeks after Governor Cumming's entrance into the Valley, Dian sought a quiet interview with Aunt Clara, hoping to ascertain something definite as to the real nature of all the rumors and forebodings again quivering in the very air of Great Salt Lake City.

"Dear Aunt Clara," said Dian, when they were seated and busily knitting—oh, those active, flying hands of women which never rested, scarce night or day, during those trying months—"I am so troubled; my nights are full of unhappy dreams and my days are so restless that I cannot accomplish anything worth while. What is all this about? Please confide in Ellie and me, dear Aunt Clara. I know you enjoy the confidence of the leading brethren, and I long to know if it is true that the soldiers are going to be allowed to enter our beloved Territory? And is Governor Cumming really our friend?"

"Governor Cumming is a very liberal and humane man, my dear. But it is apparently true that we shall have to bow to the will of the government of this great nation which we all love so well, and allow these soldiers, this terrible army, to come into the Territory and quarter themselves here, for how long no one can tell. Ostensibly the army came to install Governor Cumming; but as you know, Governor Cumming has been peaceably installed, yet General Johnston insists on coming into the Valley. President Young has turned over the records and great seal of our Territory which our wicked enemies swore to President Buchanan we had destroyed, and now Governor Cumming has notified Brother Brigham that a Peace Commission may be sent out to this Territory to hand us out a Proclamation of Amnesty. And there is the full story."

"What's a Peace Commission and what is amnesty?" asked Ellen.

"Surely, my dear! What is amnesty? It is forgiveness. And why the United States should deem it necessary to send an army out here to crush us into submission, when we had never revolted, and then think it necessary to send us a proclamation of amnesty, when we have done nothing to be forgiven for, is more than a poor woman can understand. However, the plain English of it is that someone wanted the army out of the way in Washington, others wanted the money that comes to contractors, and still others don't know anything about it, except someone has raised another cry of 'Down with the Mormons.' Governor Cumming hopes to clear everything up with the aid of this Peace Commission. But, girls, I have something very serious to confide to you; next Monday we are to pack up everything that can be loaded into wagons, leaving the rest piled up with kindlings ready to burn, and then we are to start for the South."

"For the South? Where?" asked the two girls in one breath.

"I cannot tell. Some have already gone quietly ahead. We shall pack up everything that we can pile in our wagons, and with sufficient provisions to last us a year, we shall once more go out into the wilderness. This time we shall take to the mountains."

"Oh, Aunt Clara, surely you are not in earnest?"

"Girls, this is no time for any of us to be in jest. We know not what a day may bring forth. Do you get to work at once. And then, when all is ready, we shall fill this house with sufficient kindling to burn every stick and log within twenty-four hours of the time when the word is given."

"Aunt Clara! Burn this house which you love so well? With this dear green door? It's the only green door in the city. And all this comfort which you have worked so hard to secure? Oh, I can't bear the thought. And the lettuce and radishes which you sowed on the snow and which are just now ready to eat? What about everybody else?" asked Ellen, incoherently.

But no amount of grief on the part of the girls could change the condition of things, and after awhile the prudent counsels of their good friend calmed undue excitement, and they resigned themselves to the common fate, willing to share in the general affliction as they had shared in the common good. Here was tragedy, surely! When least expected, here it was! Nightfall found them all tired out with the day's labor and excitement.

Evening brought Charlie Rose to the door of the quiet sitting-room, and even if they were tired, they were glad to see his welcome face.

"Oh, Charlie, will we all have to go South?" asked Ellen, unable to restrain her excitement.

"Yes, Ellie, I bring word to Aunt Clara that she and you must be ready to start tomorrow morning for the South. Dian, your folks are to go tomorrow also. We didn't expect to go for another week, but the government is going to send some peace commissioners out to the Territory, and they may be as dangerous to our welfare as the peacemakers at Carthage. So we shall get away tomorrow, as many as can, and as fast as we can. 'Boil and bubble; toil and trouble,'" quoted Charlie, mournfully.

"Aunt Clara, if that is the case, I must hurry home and help Rachel; she may need me; and you and Ellen can get along without me," said Diantha.

"Oh, I shall be frightened, Dian. Just Aunt Clara and me here all this dreadful night," cried out Ellen.

"Hush, child! Why should we be frightened? No one wants anything of us. Go right on, Dian; you are needed at home. No doubt my sister will be here before long," expostulated Aunt Clara.

Ellen was fain to be comforted; her heart yearned for the presence of her dear friend Dian in this hour of common peril and distress. Yet she had Aunt Clara, and she must be content.

As Dian left the door, Charlie stood beside her and she whispered:

"Go back, Charlie, and stay with Aunt Clara awhile. I am not a bit afraid to run over home alone."

"Dian, let me come with you. I will come back to Aunt Clara; but I can't bear to see you or any of our girls out alone on the streets."

"Why, we always go out on the streets alone, when we have any occasion to; why should we be afraid now?"

But the young man was walking by her side even as she protested. As they reached Dian's gate he put a detaining hand upon her arm and said, earnestly:

"I have to go back to camp in Echo Canyon tomorrow; Dian, will you miss me?"

The dim darkened new moon was shining down upon the young people with the tender radiance of spring folly; they were young; Dian's heart was very sore with the quivering emotions wrought up in the last twenty-four hours. She liked Charlie Rose, for he was as wholesome and pure as he was honest, and he was always bright and gay. The night was very lonely.

"Of course, we shall miss you, Charlie. All the boys, even to Tom Allen, are out in the canyons. It is very lonely."

"You have Henry Boyle left," said her companion, somewhat maliciously.

"Pooh!" contemptuously. "He is almost ready to apostatize; he is scared to death over this army business. He has asked Governor Cumming to let him go out of the Territory under the protection of the soldiers."

"Can that be true, Dian? I would not have thought him a traitor as well as a coward."

"Are not all cowards traitors?"

"Hardly, Dian. That's too sweeping. But I am surprised about Henry. He cut quite a shine here for months."

The girl began to open her gate; she knew that her brother did not approve of young people standing at the gate in the late evenings.

"Dian, listen just one moment; here, wear this ring for me while I am gone; won't you?" As he spoke he drew a pretty ring from his finger, evidently an heirloom in his family. Rings were rare in those days, and Dian's eyes sparkled. She knew that she was not in love with Charlie; but neither was she with anyone else. Why should she not wear a ring?

"I will wear it awhile, Charlie, but I won't keep it. You must give it to the girl you are going to marry."

"That's what I'm doing, Dian."

The tone of his voice startled her with its intensity; she drew away from him, half frightened.

"Here, Charlie, take your ring; I do not want to wear it."

But with instant comprehension of his rashness, the young man said with a light laugh:

"Oh, pshaw, Dian! Oblige me by wearing my ring until I find the girl I am to marry. Then I will come to you for it."

Pacified, the girl pushed the ring back on her finger, and then at once turned into the gate, saying as she did so:

"I shall not forget you nor any of the boys in my prayers, Charlie. Goodnight and goodby."

And the young man was fain to be content with this general parting wish.

XIV.

"TO YOUR TENTS, O ISRAEL."

"To your tents, O Israel!"

What a picture of quiet despair melting into calm resignation those spring months presented! In April there had begun that wondrous move into the unknown which had been the inspiration and yet the dread of President Brigham Young. Only a patriot such as he could appreciate the love of home and country which had forced this people ten years before into a trackless wilderness; no one but a patriot could guess what these new sacrifices must mean to the hunted and driven people. Ten years of peace! Ten years of hardest labor ever performed by any people, at any period; and now to start out into the wilderness again! Who could tell the suffering, the anguish of a people whose hearthstones were their altars, and whose religion was a home!

As the wagon driven by Aunt Clara's own delicate hands turned into the State Road on the morning of the 12th of May, 1858, she saw a long, straggling trail of wagons ahead of her; old and weather-worn most of them were, having crossed the plains many times in the last twelve years. There were crowds of little children packed in many of the wagons, and in some there groaned and writhed the sick and helpless. But all faces wore the expression of exalted determination borne only by a people whose devotion could help them to bid adieu to comfort and ease when duty or inspiration gave the ringing cry:

"To your tents, O Israel!"

Ah, how often in their broken and turbulent history as a people had that clarion cry sounded in their ears!

And now, once again, Israel was on the march!

The usual chatter of women, the laugh of children, the merry exchange of field and farm gossip from the men, these common features of their communal life were almost hushed in the common sorrow which gripped the vitals of every wanderer in that straggling train which was conveying twenty thousand souls from Great Salt Lake City alone, and thousands more from the northern towns, to the mountains! From the Eagle Gate clear to the "Point of the Mountain"—that longest straight street in all the world—the whole length of that twenty miles of road, straight as engineering skill could plant—was one moving mass of wagons, with and without covers; some with quilts over the wagon boxes, and some without boxes or covers; driven by men, by women, and by little boys. Great oxen on some of them lumbered heavily along; horses, mules, and even patient cows were harnessed in the procession. The dust was blinding; the day began to be hot. Out in the western horizon shone the silvered edge of the Great Salt Lake, glistening, diamond-bright, under the ardent sun.

At Dr. Dunyon's place at the Point of the Mountain the wagons of the Winthrop family drew alongside the slower mule team driven by Aunt Clara's slender but capable hands; and the voice of Ellen Tyler called out from under the dusty wagon cover:

"Rachel, where's Dian? I have been looking for her all the morning."

"She is just behind in the last wagon. She thought she could help grandmother if she stayed in that wagon. You get out and ride with her; there's plenty of room in there;" and Rachel halted to chat awhile with Aunt Clara.

Ellen quickly accepted this welcome invitation, and hurried back to her friend.

She found Diantha sitting uncomfortably on a high box, leaving the spring seat to be occupied by the old lady who was showing signs of great weariness.

"Oh, Ellie, I am so glad you have come. Help me to unroll this bedding and get a place fixed for grandma to lie down. I was sure she could not ride on the spring seat, but she wanted to try it to save trouble."

The girls quickly unfastened the huge roll of bedding, and with the aid of the lad who was driving the team, they made a fairly comfortable bed on the boxes inside the wagon.

"Now, grandma, you try to sleep a little; you have not slept a wink all night."

"Who could sleep, dearie?" answered the plaintive voice of the old lady.

The girls covered her feet with her shawl, and then both of them crowded into the spring seat with the driver.

"Say, Dian, whose ring are you wearing? It looks like Charlie's," said the quick voice of Ellen.

"Whose ring but my own, silly? Should I be wearing other people's rings?"

Ellen was abashed with the little rebuff. She was too proud to ask for confidence not willingly shared, yet she was sure the ring belonged to her friend Charlie; she hastily turned the talk into safe, impersonal channels.

"Don't you wonder where we are going, Dian?"

"My brother Appleton says we are to stop in Provo for awhile, until we know what the army is going to do."

"And where do you think we will go after that?"

"No one seems to know. I guess President Young knows; he knows everything. But he is too wise to tell anybody what he thinks, till the time comes for action."

"I have heard Aunt Clara speak as if we were bound for a place in Mexico, called Sonora."

"Well, I am sure I don't care where we go. We have had to pick up and leave our beloved homes again, driven by those who hate us for our religion. Aunt Clara says that not all of these men in Washington are so cruel; Col. Haines told her that Captain Van Arden was our true friend. And there are doubtless others."

"Did he say that of Captain Van Arden?" asked Ellie, her eyes aflame with some pleasant recollection of the gallant captain's visit.

"Indeed he did. And he, together with Colonel Haines has persuaded President Buchanan to send some peace commissioners out here to try and fix up this awful blunder made by Buchanan himself. I wonder how it is that men are so easily prejudiced against our people?"

Ellen was not given to general reflections; to her, life was an extremely personal affair. So she began a running chatter about the news they had received of John Stevens.

"Did you know that John is now one of the chief officers in the Utah militia?"

Dian turned the ring round and round on her finger and said nothing in reply to Ellen's chatter. She was not a bit interested in John Stevens, nor was she prepared to open her own thoughts for the keen eyes of her loving friend. There are some things that are too hazy in a girl's mind for analysis; and Dian was content to listen while she idly dreamed of Charlie Rose and what he would do about the ring, when he really fell in love with a girl. And what would John Stevens think about her wearing Charlie's ring? But the hours dragged along, night came, and the weary travelers camped wherever water and wood could be found. Next morning's sun found most of the mighty host once more on the dusty highway, faces to the South, and with uplifted hearts to a Providence that had never forgotten Zion.

"To your tents, O Israel!"

Israel was on the march! The high road of Destiny might be dusty with blinding prejudice, and hot with men's hate and scorn. But Israel was just a band of loyal men and women who trusted God and feared no man. And so they went forth, this modern Israel, singing hymns while the issues of life and death wove themselves into intricate patterns on the web and woof of the mysterious future!

The evening shades of the second day found our friends halted on the Provo river bottoms, a part of that temporary encampment which made the small city a veritable summer pioneer metropolis.

The long, tiresome journey was at last completed, and the Winthrops and Tylers could find no better place in all Provo than a low adobe hut, which was then used as a bear den by the family who had built themselves a new house further up the street. Mr. Bruin was taken summarily out

of his quarters, the boys and children spent several hours cleaning out the hut, while the women cooked their frugal supper over the campfire, and then all retired at a late hour, weary with the long two days' travel.

XV.

I'M A MORMON DYED IN THE WOOL.

Meanwhile, the men on the frontier in Weber Canyon were uneasy and as full of vague forebodings of the future as were the women and children left in the safer shelter of the lower valleys. To be sure, the army had been kept out of the Valley for the whole winter; and spring had come, and they were still outside the confines of the Territory.

On the morning of May 28th, Colonel Lot Smith was ordered to the headquarters of the Utah militia. He was closeted with the General for an hour. When he emerged, he went at once to the tent of John Stevens.

"Captain Stevens, get Corporal Rose and a squad of six men and meet me outside of the lines in half an hour; you have an important duty ahead."

The order was instantly obeyed, and soon the little squad was riding out towards Camp Scott.

Arrived there, after hours of hard riding, they showed their passports to the pickets, and were at last allowed to enter the lines. As the little squad rode rapidly up towards the camp of the army, in the near distance, the mountaineers noted with interest the picture of tented life, now grown so familiar to Stevens, but so novel to the eyes of the other young Utahns. The white Sibley tents, now brown and rusty with the winter's use, were planted about the log and wooden structures in regular form in the center of the encampment, while blue-coated soldiers could be seen through the outer motley fringe of the camp's usual followers, pacing in sentry duty, or moving to and fro on other duty. The great white city rested on the brown and pale green landscape of the foothills of the Rocky Mountains like pinioned birdwings, brooding over the nest of mighty enterprises.

John turned to his companions and said:

"Corporal Rose, I shall leave you and the men here to rest quietly until my return. Remain in your saddles and prepare for quick action."

"Do you anticipate any trouble, Captain Stevens?"

"Soldiers do not anticipate. They prepare. I may not go armed into the presence of civil and military authorities on a message of peace. Hold my weapons and my horse until my return."

Handing his musket to his companion, and striding steadily forward, Captain Stevens was soon within the outskirts of the great camp at Fort Scott. In the rough camp life of the hordes of camp followers were mingled shouts of drunken laughter, oaths of anger, and the shrill cries of ribald women. He entered the narrow streets of rude houses in the edge of the camp, which consisted of half shacks, half wigwams, and all of them altogether abandoned in their reckless atmosphere of rude frontier conviviality. The look on the face of the mountaineer as he walked hastily through this outer fringe of corruption to reach the inner city of white orderliness was grim and foreboding.

Passing one of the larger tents in the motley village, a drunken man suddenly emerged therefrom with his pistol swinging in his reckless grasp.

"Who are you?" he demanded of John, reeling up and cocking the pistol directly in the face of the mountaineer. The drunken eyes of the soldier noted the rude garb of the stranger and with drunken quickness of malicious wit, he shouted noisily:

"Are you a damned Mormon?"

With a terrible look in the flashing eyes which passed along the gun barrel and pierced the very marrow of his assailant, John Stevens answered, through his clenched teeth:

"Yes siree! I am a 'Mormon!' Dyed in the wool!"

With a shaking hand the pistol was lowered, and the soldier said unsteadily:

"Well, you're a damned good feller."

John Stevens turned away in disgust and yet with a quick gratitude for the speedy deliverance.

And now he reached the entrance to the real Camp Scott.

He showed his passports to the sentry, and passed quickly into the tented enclosure, where he was soon ushered into the presence of Governor Cumming and a group of officers, among whom were the Peace Commissioners, no doubt, whom John Stevens had come to seek.

Governor Cumming's countenance lighted as he met the flashing gaze of John Stevens.

"So, Captain Stevens, you are to be my escort into Great Salt Lake City this second time also?"

"If that is my duty, I shall perform it even more cheerfully than I did before, Governor Cumming."

"Spoken like a soldier. But, friend Stevens, I want you to enlighten these gentlemen. Excuse me, gentlemen, I desire Captain Stevens, who has so recently come from the Valley, to tell you officers how cordial and friendly his President is."

Stevens' smile was very grim as he answered:

"President Brigham Young is always cordial to his friends."

"And always generous, even to his enemies, hey, Stevens?"

"He is just to every one."

The Governor hastened to cover the slight confusion he felt at his failure to draw happy assurances of peace from the mountaineer. At that moment a slim, dark, handsome young officer, whom Stevens recognized with a flash of his keen eye and quick memory, stepped jauntily out of the group beside the Governor and said lightly:

"My good man, why does your rebel leader court death and extinction in this defiant fashion?"

John strode towards the insulting speaker, and at that moment the Governor of the new Territory realized that he had more than a war of two belligerent forces; he had a religious as well as a sociological problem on his hands. He felt his own powerlessness, even to prevent sudden conflict between these two rash youths.

Suddenly an orderly entered and after saluting he announced:

"Governor Powell and Major McCulloch."

The entrance of these two men made a diversion. But neither the soldier nor the mountaineer forgot his personal grievance.

"Major McCulloch, here is the leader of the escort which Governor Young has sent to convey the Peace Commissioners into the Valley. I trust you will be mutually benefited by your acquaintance. Stevens is a fearless soldier and a just man. Captain Stevens, Major McCulloch and Governor Powell of Kentucky are the two Peace Commissioners sent out here by our gracious executive, President Buchanan."

"Captain Stevens, were you one of that gallant band of boys who went to San Bernardino in the 'Mormon' Battalion?" asked Major McCulloch.

John signified that he was, and the bluff old soldier grasped his hand and shook it heartily.

"Well, sir, I may think your leaders a damned set of hypocrites, but you men, and the women too, as to that, sir, who undertook that most damnable and difficult march in the way you did, and carried it through so gloriously, sir, you have all my hearty admiration. I am glad to see you, sir."

John responded to this genuine outburst with mingled feelings; he could but acknowledge the genuineness of the man, but the strictures upon the leaders of his people stung John almost to the quick reply. Again Governor Cumming was to the rescue.

"Gentlemen, we have no time for reminiscence. We must to business! There is no time to lose."

"Damn me, sir, I am not wasting time when I tell a man he is one of a body of heroes. Damn it, man, do you know anything about that tremendous march of half-clad, half-starved troops through a howling barren waste, over deserts and mountains, burying their dead, and nursing their sick, without one day's rest or pause? Damn it, man, you seem to be pretty ignorant of the greatest march undertaken by American or other soldiers. Do you know, sir, that that company of rough, untrained soldiers planted the first American flag on the soil of Lower California? Stevens, I am proud to take your hand. I saw your name on the muster roll and am glad to meet you."

Governor Cumming was nervously aware of the stare of contempt indulged in by more than one of the officers in the tent at this outburst of the peppery but generous major; but he was fain to wait till the soldier's tongue was tired, and then he hastily proceeded to outline the plan of action.

As the council proceeded, John Stevens perceived that, inadvertently perhaps, the Governor held

out as a sort of peace-sop the picture of the comfortable homes down in the Valley below: the smiling farms, the young orchards and the fruitful gardens; these he hinted to the assembled officers would make life very enduring to all who might find shelter beneath the snowy peaks of the mountains towering above the lakes and valleys of that inhabited desert.

John was forced to listen in silence to the seeming bait which was held out to the weary soldiers who had wintered almost where Gen. Harney said they would—in "hell"—and "hell" it had been to those restless men in the frozen passes of the desert mountains.

"How can all this be true, Governor?" asked ex-Governor and Senator-elect Powell, the other member of the Peace Commission, "when it is hardly ten years since these people came into these barren wastes?"

"My dear sir, these 'Mormons' have done more marvelous things than ever did Moses. And they have even put the Pilgrim Fathers to the blush with their gigantic toil and its marvelous results. They call it the special providence of God; hey, Stevens?" to the young man whom he was anxious to placate and who was listening savagely to this somewhat indiscreet parley; "but the blossoming desert below may be called, in all reason, the result of energy and grit. Yankee grit! Why, sir, you will find that those people down there are mostly of pure New England descent. A very few English, and fewer Europeans. Yankees they are, most of them. And a very courageous lot of Yankees they all are. They are the peers of any in the matter of sobriety, courage and industry."

John could but feel that Governor Cumming was trying to be fair in his explanation, and that helped him the better to bear the insolent airs of some of the blue-coated officers, who gazed at him loftily. His manhood could hardly be insulted by such personalities.

As he waited without, after the conference had been broken up, and the Governor and Commissioners had withdrawn, he noted one of the officers, whom he had heard called Col. Saxey, trying to still the wild boasts of some of the younger men, who could not quite rid themselves of the prospective triumph over the "damned Mormons."

"This whole business," asserted Saxey, "is nothing but a scheme on the part of King Buchanan to get the flower of the Union troops out here just to further his own wily political ends. He is the king of blunderers, say I!"

John moved hastily away; he was aware of the few wise heads in that vast army of ten thousand, but he also knew that time and time again, the demons of mobocracy had broken over all civil and military control and had plundered and driven his poor and unhappy people. And now, behold, he was to escort the Peace Commissioners into the Valley! Well, he would do his full duty.

"I have sent a message to General Albert Sidney Johnston," said the Governor, after they rode out of camp under the protection of the "Mormon" squad, "charging him to remain here quietly until you gentlemen of the Peace Commission have done your work, and until it is quite safe and proper to debouch our army into the valleys below."

"And do you expect General Johnston to obey your orders?" asked Major McCulloch. "If he remains in camp one day after we leave it, it will be because he wishes to do so, not because you command it."

"What do you mean Major. Am I not the head of the government in this Territory? Who shall command, if not the representative of the United States government?" and the gentleman proudly swept his glance over the generous form of his companion.

"My dear fellow, that is a question that lies too deep for a soldier to answer. Which shall rule in this Territory? The civil or the military? Can you unriddle me the riddle, Governor Powell?"

That gentleman merely raised his eyebrows, as he sought to keep a steady seat on his fiercely trotting cayuse pony and said:

"Quien sabe?"

"There must be no mistake," said Governor Cumming, anxiously; "if there is any measure of peace to come into this unhappy Territory—and you gentlemen have been commissioned for that purpose and no other—I must be allowed full control as the civil head of this part of our Nation. There has been no rebellion, gentlemen; I beg you to remember that;" and John, who had heard all, loved the kindly, determined gentleman who maintained that fact in the face of all opponents. "You may patch up a peace as best you may. But it will never, can never, be done at the point of the sword."

"Quien sabe?" again asked the political Powell, who was open to conviction on either side.

And so the cavalcade rode swiftly on its way. They reached the entrance to the canyon at dusk; after a brief rest Capt. Stevens insisted that they should continue on their line of travel, because of the possible danger of attack from Indians or other stragglers in the mountains. And so it was that the party traversed the whole of the canyon fortifications under cover of darkness. And whatever John's motive in so doing might be, it was not communicated to the others. But when

they passed peak after peak, all brilliantly illuminated by camp fires, around which men stood silent and grim, Governor Cumming felt some doubt as to whether this glowing tribute was a token of respect for themselves, or a skilful multiplication of resources on the part of the mountaineers.

XVI.

THE PEACE COMMISSIONERS

As the small and weary party of travelers went into camp that night a messenger rode quietly up, and gave a small packet into the hands of Stevens. John did not unfasten the packet at once; he had much to do in making camp and preparing things for the night. But when the stillness of late evening brooded over them, John drew out from the wrapping a half dozen letters, among them being two of instructions to himself from General Wells; among the letters from friends and relatives to the Utah squad, there was a small missive, written in a delicate, familiar hand, addressed to Charlie Rose. John immediately went over to the far side of the camp fire where Charlie lay at ease, and delivered the small letter. He was quick to note the sudden excitement which quivered along every nerve of the young fellow, as his fingers grasped the expected note from Diantha Winthrop. Both knew who had written the letter. Both were mountaineers; ready of action, but slow to confide.

John took careful notice of all his own instructions, read by the light of his heaped-up fire. But in and through it all his thoughts were centered on that missive lying on the heart of Charlie Rose. The remembrance of that letter lay in his own breast for many days, like a coal of fire.

As the party emerged, two mornings later, June 7th, 1858, from the last of the canyon defiles, they were at once struck with the wild beauty before them. It was a barren valley, through which flowed a few green-fringed streams, a silvery line of shimmering water on its western horizon betokening the presence of the blue salt sea, and near the northern mountains the prosperous beginning of that inland empire, now dotted here and there, over the checker-board regularity of its wide-streeted design, with the green of planted fruit and shade trees. The geometrical fields around and beyond this incipient city amazed the party with their regularity.

"They plant their whole civilization in accordance with the line and plummet of order. Irrigation makes the system and regularity a vital necessity," explained the Governor.

"How distinctly you can see in this wonderful atmosphere," exclaimed Governor Powell. "I should think that town but a few miles away, and that lake shimmering in the distance is, how far away? A dozen or so miles?"

The Governor smiled as he explained distances and details with the growing enthusiasm which ever belonged to even temporary ownership in Utah scenery.

"This is the most wonderful place in the world. The eye is not weary, the brain is not taxed, nor the body aged, by life in this salubrious climate. And you can see objects many miles away. Indeed the clearness of the air makes distance a very deceptive matter."

"Make it all a little more civilized," growled the weary Major.

As the party rode down into the streets, the tomb-like silence greeted them uncannily, and the faces of the Commissioners were puzzled and anxious.

"What does all this deserted look mean?" asked Major McCulloch.

"Sir," answered the Governor, "I must now inform you of a condition in this Territory which I had hoped would be over and done with when we returned to this Valley. Brigham Young told me some weeks ago that he should vacate every town and hamlet in this Territory. More, he should set fire to every house, destroy every green thing, and leave behind him a desolate waste, such as he found when he came here."

"Zounds, man, how can the old rebel dare to do such a thing?" asked the Major.

"Major McCulloch, Brigham Young may be a fanatic, but he is not nor never has been, I am persuaded, a rebel. He loves his country as dearly as ever you did. And, sir, I cannot hear him vilified, even by a Peace Commissioner." The tone of gentle quiet in the last words robbed them of their ironical sting, and the irascible old soldier grunted as he shifted his position on his tired steed.

"These people have been most unjustly treated, so they think, and if you are to be peacemakers, you must meet them on their own footing, and not on any stilted plane of your own setting up."

The silent streets, the empty houses, the absence of even a dog or other animal was very mournful, and not a man in the party but felt the pressure of that heavy grief. The rattle of their horses' feet echoed far up the empty street. Zion had fled!

"What a pity there were not poet or artist here," said Governor Powell, as they rode with noisy echoes along the silent roads. Overhead the young cottonwood trees were throwing delicate shadows upon the trickling streams that coursed down by every sidewalk. In the well fenced city lots, surrounding the comfortable but lonely and deserted houses, had been planted generous kitchen gardens, now withering and dun in the sweltering sun. The forge of the blacksmith was silent and black through its widely opened door, and most of the windows and doors were barred and closed, while the flaunting weeds in all the streets and sidewalks bore eloquent evidence of the desertion of man.

"This is most damned lonesome, Governor Cumming. Not much like your gaudy pictures drawn out in camp."

"I had hoped that Brigham Young would repent himself; for I promised to make peace and to keep it."

"Pretty bold of you, sir, I must say, sir." And the old soldier sputtered with annoyance.

"Major, I brought my wife in from Camp Scott, as you know, last month. And when we came into this deserted city, partially deserted even then, she could not withhold her tears. She wept like a child to see this terrible sight. She besought me as only a tender woman could, to do everything in my power to bring this unhappy and wronged people back into the homes that their toil and sacrifices had created in this desert wild. And, sir, it is because of those tears, and that tender pleading, that you are here today. I have neither taken sleep nor food, except by necessity, till President Buchanan has listened to my appeal and has sent you gentlemen out to undo this most awful blunder."

"Sir," answered Governor Powell, with a note of reverence in his voice, "your judgment is no less to be commended than your sentiment."

"Quite right, sir; quite right," and the bluff old Major blew heartily at his bugle of a nose. "I wish we may see all this unhappy business well settled. But, sir, I don't like this damned loneliness!"

And neither did any of them.

XVII.

BROTHER DUNBAR SINGS ZION

The old Council House was a scene of profound excitement the next morning after the events recorded in the last chapter. There were gathered in its square brick walls the leaders of a people who had been suspected, made an incipient war against, tried and found guilty, and who were now about to be forgiven, when according to their own ideas they were not guilty of one single count in the whole indictment. Up from the South where the people were bivouacked, had come two score of the leaders and elders. Within the larger council chamber there was not much talk that morning and few outward semblances of the suppressed excitement. These men were too accustomed to action to do much talking in the face of danger.

Here and there were a few groups talking of the possible outcome of the day, while still others exchanged whispered items of news of the families in the South and the mountaineers in the eastern canyons.

As Brigham Young entered the room, accompanied by Heber C. Kimball, whose eloquent, snapping black eyes, shining bald head and kingly form towered above many of those assembled near, they were greeted cordially by their associates, and at once took their seats on the small raised platform at the western end of the room. Almost at the same time a whispered word went round that the Commissioners were at the door.

Captain Stevens flung open the inner door of the council chamber and announced quietly:

"President Young, I beg leave to announce the Peace Commission."

As these two gentlemen entered, followed at a little distance by Governor Cumming, who had lingered to exchange a word with some one in the hall, Brigham Young arose and cordially extended a hand of welcome to his new visitors.

John stepped back into the hall to exchange greetings with some of his friends and as he stood

chatting for a moment he was tugged by the coat-sleeve and turned around to find Tom Allen's jolly eyes beaming into his face.

With the sympathetic ear of a good listener, John was soon deluged with verbal pictures of conditions down in Provo and vicinity. He discovered for himself the bear-hut, and saw its present rejuvenation, filled with the families of Winthrop and Tyler, who used the two rooms as dining room and kitchen; the half-dozen wagon boxes, as of old days on the plains, served as bed-chambers for the two groups of families. He knew in a trice about the birth of the Mathews twins, the quarrel of Annie Moore with Stephen Grace; he grasped almost before it was told, all the details of that strenuous and yet rather monotonous existence down on the banks of the shallow Timpanogos or Provo river, as he caught at random the pictures flung at random by his old friend and associate.

"And, oh yes, don't go yet, John; I must tell you the very latest. Diantha Winthrop is wearing Charlie Rose's ring. How's that for high?"

The arrow struck where Tom vaguely hoped it would. If there was one thing above another that pleased jolly Tom Allen it was to stick teasing arrows into his friends. But he did not have the satisfaction of even guessing how near his shot had struck home, for he was instantly swung round and out of the way by Corporal Rose himself, who thus addressed himself to John:

"Captain Stevens, the President is just calling the council to order, and it is desired that you shall be with us in the council."

John instantly accompanied Corporal Rose into the inner room, and Tom Allen was left to his own conjectures and the silence of the deserted hall.

Within, the groups of stern-visaged men had settled themselves in orderly lines upon the rows of benches, and on the raised platform sat those tried and true friends, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, with handsome young Joseph F. Smith and General Wells; and here John went quietly to find his own seat among the few Utah officers sitting near General Wells. In the center of the aisle sat rough old A. P. Rockwood, the commissary-general, with utter indifference to his rawhide boots and faded blue overalls, but with a perfect appreciation of his own great sagacity and importance.

Already the council was in operation. Governor Cumming introduced ex-Governor Powell to the assembly, and that gentleman proceeded in his customary smooth language to recite the facts connected with the presence of the Commissioners in Utah. He referred to the action of the President of the United States in sending out the Commission and read in solemn tones the pardon sent out by that great executive. The pardon was couched in somewhat elusive terms, but it was plain that the "Mormons" were accused of over fifty crimes and misdemeanors, for all of which his excellency, the President, offered amnesty to all who would acknowledge the supremacy of the United States government, and in this acknowledgment permit the troops now quartered outside the Territory to enter and take up quarters within said Territory. The paper concluded with a pledge of good faith to all peaceable inhabitants of the Territory, and an assurance that neither the Chief Executive of the Nation nor his representatives in the Territory would be found interfering with the religion or faith of the inhabitants of this region. Governor Powell emphasized the pledge on behalf of himself and associate Commissioner. He explained somewhat loftily, yet in good grace, that they did not propose to inquire into the past, but to let all that had gone before alone, and to talk and act now only for the future.

Brigham Young called upon one of his near associates to speak: John Taylor, whose dark eyes looked out from under his splendid brows, and whose dignified, courtly manner won the admiration of even that bluff old Major McCulloch. This valiant friend of their late martyred Prophet, Joseph Smith, gave utterance to some fiery discourse, tempered with the desire to bring about peace, if it could be a peace with honor. He was followed by Brigham Young's nearest friend, George A. Smith, who told the Commissioners in ten minutes more of the "Mormon" people's past history than even Governor Cumming had ever known; he told them that the "Mormons" had come out here to these barren vales "willingly because they had to;" and he added that they were ready "if needs must or the devil drives" to seek other homes in the same manner. Some few but fiery words were spoken by Adjutant-General James Ferguson, and John's whole soul went out to his superior officer, who voiced the sentiments of the whole Utah militia. And then Brigham Young arose slowly, as though he were too full of thought and the responsibility of his position to act except with full deliberation. His voice was stern and cool, but vibrant, and it cut into every corner of that council chamber with thrilling if somewhat sharp enunciation. If his action were deliberate, there was no hesitancy in his speech. He said:

"I have listened very attentively to the Commissioners, and will say, as far as I am concerned, I thank President Buchanan for forgiving me, but I can't really tell what I have done. I know one thing, and that is, that the people called 'Mormons' are a lawful and loyal people, and have ever been. It is true Lot Smith burned some wagons last winter containing government supplies for the army. This was an overt act, and if it is for this that we are pardoned, I accept the pardon. The burning of a few wagons is but a small item, yet for this, combined with false reports, the whole 'Mormon' people are to be destroyed. What has the United States government permitted mobs to do to us in the past? Gentlemen, you can answer that question for yourselves. I can also, and so can thousands of my brethren. We have been plundered and whipped; and our houses

burned, our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and children butchered and murdered by the scores. We have been driven from our homes time and time again; but have the troops ever been sent to stay or punish the mobs for their crimes? No! Have we ever received a dollar for the property that we have been compelled to leave behind? Not a dollar! Let the government of our country treat us as we deserve. That is all we ask of them. We have always been loyal and expect to continue so. But hands off! Do not send your armed mobs into our midst. If you do, we will fight you, as the Lord lives. Do not threaten us with what the United States can do and will do, for we ask no odds of them or their troops. We have the God of Israel—the God of battles—on our side; and let me tell you, gentlemen, we fear not your threats. These, my brethren, put their trust in the God of Israel, and we have no fears. We have proved Him, and He is our friend. Boys, how do you feel? Are you afraid?"

Instantly there was a crash of voiced response to the man Brigham's fearless words. They might be termed fanatics—these men—but they could never be called cowards.

John held his breath as Brigham Young continued:

"Now let me say to you Peace Commissioners: we are willing those troops should come into our Territory, but not to stay in our cities. They may pass through this city, if needs be, but must not quarter nearer than forty miles to any city. If you bring your troops here to disturb this people, you have a bigger job on your hands than you or President Buchanan has any idea of. Before the troops reach here, this city will be in ashes, every tree and shrub will be cut to the ground, and every blade of grass that will burn shall be burned. Our wives and children will go to the canyons and take shelter in the mountains; while their husbands and sons will fight you to their last breath. And as God lives, we will hunt you by night and by day till our army or yours is wasted away. No mob, armed or otherwise, can live in the homes we have builded in these mountains. That's the program, gentlemen, whether you like it or not. If you want war, you can have it; but if you wish peace, peace it is; we shall be glad of it."

Once more Governor Powell arose and in honeyed tones he soothed the tumult of emotions now swelling upon the high tide of that stern-visaged assembly of men. He dwelt with moving eloquence upon the great clemency of the President of the United States and the magnanimity of that authority in setting aside all past offenses, and he told of the bright future which awaited a new Territory begun under such favorable auspices of frugality and industry. He praised all for their temperance and toil. He grew eloquent as he moved along the current of his own fervid imagination, and his pictures of the coming era of peace and prosperity caught, not only his own hearty sympathy, but mollified and quieted the turbulent elements there. He assured them that the army of the United States would not enter the Valley, only as they were given permission by that gallant and humane Territorial executive, Governor Cumming. And he was in full cry upon a swelling compliment to that genial peace-promoter when the door of the hall was flung open, and a barbaric figure, hard-riden through miles of flying dust and unwashed haste, flung himself into the room. The old slouch hat upon the head of that dramatic figure was drawn down upon a mass of braided hair, wound round and round the bullet-shaped head. The hooked nose, the sleepy-lidded eyes, half closed upon the eagle glance of that "Mormon" scout, Indian fighter, sheriff, and free-lance, Porter Rockwell, sent a shivering thrill of apprehension into the breast of every mountaineer in that chamber. Porter Rockwell bore no trifling message!

A moment of converse followed in hasty, lowered tones with Brigham Young behind the back of that eloquent Kentucky politician who was just then extolling the orderliness and clemency of the troops, now quietly resting in Fort Scott; and then, up rose, without haste, but in sudden sternness, Brigham Young, as he said in piercing accents:

"Governor Powell, Major McCulloch, are you aware, sirs, that those troops are on the move to this city?"

"It cannot be," answered the orator, Powell, as he swung instantly around to face his questioner. "For we were promised by General Johnston that they should not move until after this meeting."

"I have received a dispatch, sir, that they are on the move to this city, and my messenger would not deceive me."

There was a hush as of the tomb on every lip and heart in that assembly. The thunderbolt had fallen.

In that same severe but perfectly self-possessed voice, Brigham Young asked:

"Is Brother Dunbar present?"

"Yes, sir," answered that flute-voiced musician.

"Brother Dunbar, sing 'Zion.'"

And in the electrical silence which ensued, rang out the clarion tones of the "Mormon" battle-hymn, if such it could be called, since it embodies a spiritual triumph rather than a temporal subjugation. Brother Dunbar sang:

O! ye mountains high, where the clear blue sky

Arches over the vales of the free,
Where the clear breezes blow
And the pure streamlets flow,
How I've longed to thy bosom to flee.
O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free:
My own mountain home, now to thee I have come,
All my fond hopes are centered in thee.

Though the great and the wise all thy beauties despise,
To the humble and pure thou art dear;
Though the haughty may smile,
And the wicked revile,
Yet we love thy glad tidings to hear.
O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free:
Though thou wert forced to fly to thy chambers on high,
Yet we'll share joy and sorrow with thee.

In thy mountain retreat, God will strengthen thy feet;
On the necks of thy foes thou shalt tread;
And their silver and gold,
As the Prophets have told,
Shall be brought to adorn thy fair head.
O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free;
Soon thy towers will shine with a splendor divine,
And eternal thy glory shall be.

Here our voices we'll raise, and we'll sing to thy praise,
Sacred home of the Prophets of God;
Thy deliverance is nigh,
Thy oppressors shall die,
And the Gentiles shall bow 'neath thy rod.
O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free:
In thy temples we'll bend, all thy rights we'll defend,
And our home shall be ever with thee.

It was impossible to calm the tumult any more for that day. Peace or war, the situation was very much in the hands of Brigham Young for the time.

As the three Eastern officials made their way slowly out of the door, with mingled chagrin and anger, Governor Cumming asked his companions:

"What would you do with such a people?"

"Damn them, I would fight them, if I had my way," answered Major McCulloch, unconvinced that the rumor was in any degree true.

"Fight them, would you?" answered the Governor sadly. "You might fight them, but you would not whip them. They would never know when they were whipped. Did you notice the fire and flash in those men's eyes today? No, sir; they would never know when they were whipped."

"I fear," said Governor Powell, reflectively, as they retraced their way sadly through the silent echoing streets to one of the few inhabited houses in the city, the hotel on Main Street, "I fear that the messenger was right. I had occasion to doubt the rashness of General Johnston's temper before we left the camp. Yet, I hope, I hope it is not true. I am loath to see the blood of good men shed for naught. But what a strangely dramatic people! They sing their defiance instead of announcing it."

There was another council held the next day; messengers were sent from both the Peace Commission and Governor Cumming to Camp Scott, and at length the whole matter was patched up, and the Commissioners were permitted to have their way. But meanwhile Brigham Young, with all his associates, had fled once more to the South and the deserted streets of the city were pressed only by the feet of the few and scattered non-"Mormons" who had chosen to remain through all these troubles within the borders of the unhappy Territory.

XVIII.

THE ARMY ENTERS THE VALLEY

The armies of the United States were to enter the valleys of Utah. President Buchanan had said

they must, the Peace Commission and Governor Cumming said they ought, and Brigham Young said they might.

On the twenty-sixth day of June, 1858, at daybreak, the advance column of the army began its march through the streets of Great Salt Lake City.

The soldiers, whose eyes had for so many months rested on desolation, looked down from the mouth of Emigration Canyon with a pleased surprise on all the goodly evidences of civilization about them. Houses, with blinking windows and comfortable porches; wide streets, flanked on either side with running streams of clear, cold, canyon water, over whose rippling surface drooped in graceful lines the native cottonwood, which had been dug from the neighboring canyon streams and planted along every water-course to furnish shade and rest for man and beast; commodious homes, barns, fences and outbuildings gave this unique city a look of mingled rural simplicity and urban attractiveness. The huge blocks were laid out in large lots, whereon sat with sturdy independence each snug house, its surrounding fruit and vegetable plantations fenced in with poles or cobbles, thus forming a generous combination of orchard and kitchen garden.

The soldiers were not more curious nor more deeply impressed with the queer appearance of this well-built yet deserted city than were the officers, who rode here and there inspecting their various divisions. Colonel St. George Cooke, who had been in service with the "Mormon" Battalion in Lower California, rode through the city with bared head and gloomy eye, as a silent evidence of a respect and sympathy which did his head no less honor than his heart.

One handsome, dark-eyed young officer looked about and rode from side to side of the silent streets, at last opening a gaping gate wide and riding within the yard, as if unable to restrain his curiosity. As he rode around to the back of the house, a door opened, and a man stood silently watching his approach.

"Well, my good fellow," patronizingly said the young blue-coated horseman, "can you tell me the meaning of the extraordinary appearance of this extraordinary city?"

"What's extraordinary?" asked the bearded man, leaning against the doorpost.

"Do you mean, what's the meaning of the word? or what's extraordinary about the town? You must know, my man, that it seems very strange—to use the simple terms suited to your capacity—to find all these good houses, barns and gardens empty and to find no living soul moving about. Not a woman or girl, not even a child or dog, to give active life to your rural scene. Where are your women and children? I have seen one or two men, but not a woman."

"Don't see a woman, hey?" and John Stevens looked about him with indifferent insolence; "well, I don't either."

"Can't you answer a civil question, my surly fellow? Where are your families?"

"They are out of your reach, scoundrel, as well as out of your sight! What are you going to do about it?"

"Oh, I'm not afraid; the women will find us out. They have a particular fondness for brass buttons, you know. I have no doubt that we shall find all the women we want, provided that you big strapping fellows have a few dozen over and above your own needs."

The sneering yet airy tones of this speech made John Stevens clench his hands in silent yet mighty anger. But, under orders to maintain peace, he merely turned around and sauntered towards the barn, leaving his questioner to go or stay as he pleased.

"What in the name of mischief does this deadly quiet and desertion mean?" asked the same officer, as he rode out into the street and found his companions still streaming down the silent road.

"I have just heard the Colonel say that these people have followed their leader, old Brigham, down to the southern part of the Territory, and that they intend to emigrate to Mexico, or—who knows—to Brazil, maybe. They were determined to give us no excuse to kill them or to even administer the punishment they so richly deserve."

"Run away, have they? Well, that's cool. Here we've come out over the most forsaken country in all the United States; have passed the beastliest winter ever seen by soldiers, since Moscow, and yet when we are here ready to get in our work, behold the sacrifice has picked up his heels and fled ingloriously."

"Not even having the grace to leave us a scrubby ram caught in the thicket. Too bad, old fellow. What about all your plans for a modern seraglio? No doubt the women are kept under the closest surveillance, wherever they are."

"Oh, well, as I told a raw-boned fellow in the dooryard back there, if the women get a sight of us, they will follow us without our even going to the trouble to whistle for them. I have known the dear creatures all my life, don't you know?"

All day, the tramp, tramp of armed men, the rattle of heavy field-pieces, the jingle of swords and guns, the rumble of baggage wagons, with occasional bursts of music from the regimental bands—these were the only sounds heard through the tomb-like and deserted streets. So profound was the silence that, at intervals, between the passage of the columns, the slight monotonous gurgle of City Creek struck on every ear. The only living creatures to be seen was the group of men who stood around Governor Cumming on the Council House corner and waved a cheerful yet subdued salute to the troops, as they filed lustily by. Inside of many of these houses, no sign of inhabiting life remained; the furniture was piled in great heaps, with under portions of shavings and kindlings and straw, ready to be burned at a moment's notice; while in a few houses there were eager watching, silent men inside, who held flint and steel ready to apply to these crisp piles of shavings if ever the marching feet outside had stopped and attempted any desecration. Outside, everywhere, great piles of straw lay upon grass, garden and outbuildings; all ready for the instant torch of destruction.

All day, all day, the marching feet and wondering eyes passed through the desolate streets. There were no stops, no breaking of ranks, save here and there, where some daring soldier's hand would seize and pluck a fragrant bloom from a flaunting rose-bush, or a thirsty, dust-stained soldier would stoop, and making a cup of his hands, drink of the running, sparkling streams along the road. The divisions clanged heavily along with no rest to the steady, onward, measured march. The fragrant grass-grown streets were not more eloquent of a whole people's sorrowing desertion than were the sun-rotting barrels and buckets near the unused wells of water.

Forty miles to the south there awaited in the silent desert the spot where these journeying troops would halt in their march, and striking permanent camp, sojourn for a season. But the army would camp for the night on the dry plain across the river Jordan to the west of the City.

As the last company of soldiers filed past the western streets in the late summer evening, John Stevens warily closed his own and other doors in the neighborhood, and together with a party of scouts, he rode stealthily down to the army camp, made temporarily a couple of miles beyond the river Jordan. He watched in silent suspicion the whole night through, and when morning light found men and camp-followers astir, he, too, was on the alert, and at a safe distance he followed the long moving column for two days as it stretched from the banks of the river Jordan down through the narrow pass beside the treacherous stream's banks. On and on the marching lines flowed heavily down the southern road, past the northern edge of the lovely sheet of blue, clear water called Utah Lake; around and around this lake the road ran, past the northern shores of its clear blue glory; past the chain of canyon defiles which opened at last into the Cedar Valley, and down into the heart of that desert vale, where only the cricket and sage-brush gave evidence of animal or vegetable life. Here on the valley's one water course the army halted. They made their permanent quarters there and called their first Utah camp "Floyd," in honor of the Secretary of War.

Here, then, the army of the United States was quartered, with the approval of the great and distant heads of the Government, and the disapproval of the surrounding bands of half-hungry and half-frightened Ute and Pauvan Indians; with the grudging consent of General Albert Sidney Johnston, and the silent acquiescence, that armed truce, of the intrepid "Mormon" leader, Brigham Young.

As the last tent was set, and the whole machinery of camp life once more set in motion, Captain John Stevens found himself at liberty to ride, with his companions, into the southern rendezvous of his people, at Provo, and to make due report to his commanding officers. As he turned his face eastward and rode at the head of his company his relieved thoughts flew from those larger affairs of state to his personal affairs; and he wondered silently whether it were whim or affection which kept Charlie Rose's ring on the finger of Diantha Winthrop. If it were whim—well, eternity was very long; if it were affection—

"Corporal Rose," he said, somewhat sharply, "we shall take no rest for dinner, but press on at once for Provo."

And Corporal Rose, albeit full of wonder as to the sharpness and the haste, was very glad to ride straight on to Provo.

XIX.

TOM ALLEN DREAMS A DREAM

Most of the Saints had halted in Provo; here on the banks of that brawling river, called by the Indians, in soft labials, Timpanogos, had grown up a large temporary metropolis; and that half-tented, half-domiciled host, whose human hearts beat with hopes and fears, and whose tongues and thoughts were still very human, in spite of the past, the discomfort of the present, and the

grave uncertainty of the future, carried on life's daily details with fitful regularity. Thirty thousand people were encamped in the beautiful Utah Valley, around the borders of Utah Lake.

The swimmer, across the Grecian gulf was far more interested in the exact measure of his stroke than in the record he would make in future history. So, too, on the banks of the Timpanogos, men were more interested in the withering crops in the Salt Lake Valley than they were in the secession of the South or in the possible outcome of their own difficulties. So there sat in Provo, in a small, dingy back room, two girls, just now vitally interested in making a huge pot of cornmeal mush for the supper of two or three associated families. The unwieldy vessel swung from the crane over the huge fire-place. The strenuous excitement of the Move had gradually subsided, leaving the young people at least once more gaily afloat on the seas of their own impulses, their own fears and their own loves.

"Don't stop stirring that cornmeal, Dian, until it is thoroughly cooked," said Rachel Winthrop, as she entered the hut. "You know that your brother hates raw mush; and it is a science to know how to cook it. When it has boiled a good half hour, I will come in and stir in the flour to thicken it."

The girl bent over the fire-place and stirred the bubbling mass in the pot, while her pink cheeks turned to rosy red.

"Oh, Ellie, what a nuisance a fireplace is, anyhow. I didn't half appreciate our good step-stove until I came here and had to work on this."

"Never mind, Dian, I shall have these batter cakes in the skillet baked in a minute, and then I will stir it for a while."

"Standing over a fire like this makes my cheeks just like ugly old purple hollyhocks. It's all I can do to get along with my homely red cheeks under ordinary circumstances, but when I get over a fire it simply makes me hideous."

"Oh, no such thing; why do you care, anyway, Dian, there's no one here to see you?"

"Don't need to be! I am conscious of it and that is enough."

"Say, Dian, do you miss John Stevens? I am just homesick to see him. We have scarcely laid eyes on him this winter or spring."

"No, I can't say that I care. John is good enough, but he is so quiet; I believe he is too tame to really amount to much."

"Tame! John Stevens tame! Well, Dian, I gave you credit for more discernment than that. Why, I don't believe that there is a braver or more passionate man living than John Stevens."

"Oh, I don't say but what he has temper enough; the flash in his eyes tells that; but I mean he is tame around women. He pokes around as if he didn't care whether you were alive or dead. I like some one with eyes and ears. Some one who has a grain of gallantry in him. Not such a stick as John Stevens."

"Why don't you set your cap for Tom Allen? He has eyes and ears for nothing else than women."

"And his dinner! Tom Allen! Oh, my! He has no more romance in him than a dinner plate. Just think of it!"

And the girl laughed and laughed that silvery, teasing, rippling laughter, till her mush sputtered and boiled over with indignation, into the glowing coals of the fire-place.

"Well, you may laugh, but I really think that Tom Allen is as nice as he can be. He may be funny and droll, but he has a great big heart in him, and if he wasn't engaged to Luna Hyde I would set my cap for him myself."

"Oh, Ellie, Ellie; you could flirt with anybody, and could, I verily believe, love anybody that gave you good reason not to, but my heart is of less impressionable material. It isn't so gentle and lovable as your dear little one."

Evidently Ellie wanted to turn the talk away from herself, so she offered to stir the mush, while Diantha watched the cakes. The conversation drifted to their immediate surroundings.

Several families had decided to put their fortunes together during the Move period, and the Winthrops, Tylers, and a family of Prescotts, who had several little children, and Tom Allen and his mother were all living crowded together in one or two little log houses on the Provo River's banks. Ellen's mind was dwelling just now on jolly Tom Allen, who spent no time at work or play which was not well interspersed with fun; fun which was innocent in itself, but which sometimes led to injured feelings.

"Come, girls," said Rachel Winthrop, entering the kitchen, "I know you must be ready and the folks are gathering in for supper. Here, Dian, stir in this flour slowly and carefully, and I will be ready to take it up in just one minute."

The united families were soon gathered at one long table, each person impatient for his frugal meal, and each filled with the primal thoughts and impulses common to all humanity. Had any one of them been conscious of the real pathos of their situation, the scene might have melted such an one to tears. Driven from comfortable, hard-earned homes, through fear of armed violence, these four or five families—like thousands of their friends—unable even to get a home to shelter them from the winds and storms of the late spring weather, were all huddled together in these three small log rooms. They were compelled to make beds on the floors for the children and to use their wagon-boxes for their own sleeping compartments; and the utmost precaution was necessary to maintain order and decency in their crowded condition. The good people of Provo were taxed to the extreme to give shelter and comfort to the fleeing thousands who had suddenly called upon their hospitality. Tents, boweries, shanties, and rude structures of all kinds were pressed into service. And the people who could secure shelter of any sort were deemed fortunate. The work pressed hardest upon the women. Compelled to carry on the common vocations of life under such circumstances, the weekly washings, ironings, cleanings, and cookings taxed even the most patient and strong to the uttermost. Our friends were lucky in having Aunt Clara Tyler included in their number, for she went about in her quiet way, healing wounds made by thoughtless tongues, and holding back the quick anger which pressed so hard upon irritated nerves and worn-out bodies. There was a saying, when Aunt Clara invited someone to take a walk along the river bank with her, "There goes Aunt Clara—not to cleanse the cups, but to mend some broken heart."

Aunt Clara and her friends were not the only ones who took walks by the river banks. It came to be a common thing for Tom Allen and Ellen Tyler to stroll up and down its winding paths, talking sometimes seriously and sometimes in that quizzical way so common to Tom. Sweet little hungry heart! Ellen was a loving soul, whose worst fault was a selfish weakness, a trait often admired in a sheltered woman, but dangerous in one thrown upon her own strength. She must, however, learn her lessons, as we must learn ours.

One day in the late spring, Ellen came home from her walk unusually pensive and thoughtful. She waited till after the evening prayers, and then asked Diantha to go with her down by the big cottonwood tree, for she had something to tell her. Sitting down on a grassy knoll, under the twinkling young stars, Ellen poured out her heart's confidence.

"You know how much Tom thinks of his religion, Dian, in spite of his odd ways. He is as good a Saint as the best, if he does make light of some things. I know his heart, for he has shown it to me, and I know he is one of our best men."

Dian looked as if she would like to introduce some of her own reflections upon the sincerity of Tom's religious professions, but from the serious tone of her friend's voice, she felt constrained to be as charitable as possible. So she contented herself with saying:

"Oh, yes, Tom is good enough. I don't believe he would do anything really dishonorable or bad for the world."

"Oh, Dian, he is really and truly a dear, good soul. I want you to know him better. For if you do, you will surely love him better."

Again Diantha looked her doubt upon this point; but the dim light of the young moon did not betray her opinion, plainly as it was expressed upon her mobile face.

"Dian, I am going to tell you something and ask you for your advice. You know I have great confidence in your judgment."

"Better ask Aunt Clara," said Diantha, afraid to trust her own opinion, where Tom Allen was concerned.

"No, I want to talk to you. Maybe some day I will tell Aunt Clara, too; but, just now, I feel like telling you."

The girl sat with her hand resting on her cheek, gazing into the clear starry sky above them. After a pause she said slowly:

"Dian, do you believe in dreams and visions?"

"Why, yes, of course I do; if they are of the right kind, and not brought on by eating too much."

"Well, I believe that we get many revelations through our dreams, if we only knew how to interpret them." Another pause; then the girl said softly: "Dian, Tom Allen has had a dream or vision about me."

The idea of Tom Allen having anything so serious as a vision almost upset Diantha, but she controlled herself and asked:

"What was the vision?" Diantha was rather curious now to know if she had been really mistaken in her estimate of Tom's character.

"Tom dreamed, or was carried away in a vision, and thought he lay upon his bed, very sick and

nigh to death. As he lay there, pondering upon the past and future, he said he saw his door open softly, and, surrounded by a white light, I entered the room, with a banner in my hand, on which was inscribed: 'Marriage or death.' Then the dream ended."

Diantha looked at the serious face of her friend for one moment, and tried to get up and get away, but it was no use. Her keen sense of the ridiculous rendered her so weak with inward laughter, that, at last, she sank back upon the earth, and broke forth into peal after peal of ringing, hearty, uproarious laughter. She fairly screamed at the last, the absurdity of it all so overcame her that she could not control her mirth.

"What is the matter with you girls?" asked Rachel Winthrop, coming out of the house to see the cause of this violent laughter.

"Nothing, only one of Tom Allen's jokes," answered Diantha, for Ellen was too offended to say anything at all.

"Why, Dian, don't you think he dreamed that?" Ellen asked at last, in a hurt, low voice.

"If he did, he dreamed it with his eyes wide open, depend on that. Oh, Ellie, Ellie; anyone who pretends to be good and who is good to you, can pull the wool over your eyes, you dear little confiding thing."

But Ellen felt as if some one through this act, small as it seemed, had torn from her eyes a veil of confidence in things good and true that no one could ever replace. If things could only be different in this life! If she had only told Aunt Clara, she would have so measured her judgment and comment that this event would have strengthened Ellen's faith, while pointing out the absurdity in a sweet, motherly way! But to have Tom tell her such a thing; thus treating a sacred sacrament as a matter of light ridicule—this was most galling; and that she could believe it, too! It cut Ellen to the soul, to have her friend laugh so, as much at her own childish simplicity as at Tom's foolery. Oh, it was cruel!

But Diantha could not help laughing. The ridiculous picture, the banner; the inscription; it was too funny! Ah, foolish youth, so credulous, so incredulous, so tender, and yet so cruel! And only poets and prophets may tell us which is comedy and which is tragedy. For laughter may presage death, while death itself is the door to love and life eternal!

XX.

A SOLDIER IN DISTRESS

There was a coolness between the two girls after the dream episode, which lasted for a number of weeks. Diantha could not see why her friend should take offense at such a trifle, as she termed it.

As for Ellen, she felt in an indefinable way, that somebody had, with the tiny point of a pin, shattered what to her had been the most beautiful bubble she had ever possessed. She was too little inclined to look back of events for causes, to attempt any rational explanation of the whole matter; she only knew that it had been delightfully romantic to fancy herself the subject of a vision and to feel she was the chosen of heaven for exalted positions; and when her one foolish trust had been shaken and her dream rudely dispelled, she felt as if there was not truth or stability in anyone or anything. The blow was crueller than her friend had any idea of; what the results would be only time and the offended girl's actions could tell.

Ellen now took her walks by the river alone. She shunned Tom Allen as coldly as she did Diantha Winthrop. She would wander off, and with a pensiveness peculiar in one so light-hearted, avoided everyone, whether friend or stranger. She would go to the old bathing place and after lying on the grass for hours in moody silence, slip on her old home-spun bathing dress, and plunging into the cool waters of the river, she would lave her hot and tired limbs in the cooling waters, after which she would feel better and able to go back once more to an existence which had become monotonous and dreary. Love and admiration are as necessary to women of Ellen's affectionate nature as are sunlight and warmth to growing plants.

One late spring afternoon she was, as usual, sporting and dashing around in the clear, swift stream, when suddenly raising her eyes, she saw on the opposite bank of the river a young man on a fine, restless, white charger; he was dressed in the becoming blue of a soldier; on his coat glittered and dazzled rows of brass buttons, and on his shoulders gleamed the insignia of army rank. He was looking at her very earnestly, and yet without seeming rudeness. Ellen sank at once into the water, so that nothing was visible but her head, and, turning away her face, hurriedly made for the shore, creeping along under the water as it grew shallower. The horseman, divining

her fright, or actuated by some other motive, turned his horse's head, and galloped away in the direction of the ford, a quarter of a mile above where she had been bathing.

Oh, if she could only reach the shelter of her own home before this stranger could find her retreat! She flew to her leafy dressing-room, and with flying fingers adjusted her clothing, flinging her bathing-dress on the bushes and with heavy heart-beats in her throat she sped along the path to her home. She found that Aunt Clara had gone to a distant house where a child had died. Aunt Clara was away from home very much in those long summer days. She was busy with the sick bodies of her people; alas that she knew naught of the sick soul of one of the creatures that she loved better than she did her own life!

How Ellen longed to spring into her friend Diantha's arms, and to tell her all that had happened! But Dian was not at home, and when Ellen learned that she had gone out horseback riding with Tom Allen she wondered with a queer little hurt in her heart if a small jealousy had prompted part of Diantha's cruel mirth at her own expense.

Three days passed before Ellen ventured to take her customary walk by the river side. Then, indeed, her heart fluttered and sank, as she approached her leafy bower. But she saw no one and heard no sound to disturb her peace. She almost wondered, as she visited the spot day after day, if she had not possibly dreamed she saw the soldier on the opposite bank. She was getting silly on the subject of dreams, she told herself, scornfully.

One lovely afternoon, as the canyon breezes were blowing down from the many clefts in the eastern mountain walls, with the bees humming about her the song of the desert as they seized the sweets of every flower in her path, and the distant sound of the foaming river just insistent enough to mingle with the rustle of the cottonwood trees over her head, Ellen strolled along the accustomed path, and with nimble fingers wove for her uncovered brown braids a wreath of wild grasses and the pale purple daisies which skirted every path in generous profusion.

She thought resentfully of the many flowers which Aunt Clara said grew in such generous loveliness in her own native Massachusetts hills; there was nothing but hardship and desolation in Utah, with common daisies and cheap grasses for flowers. But on she wandered, sometimes humming softly and sometimes bitterly reflecting on her many trials, as she recalled the daily annoyances of her life. Suddenly she saw, a little ahead of her and out in the thick brush, a blue-coated man, either dead or asleep.

Her first impulse was to fly as with the wind, for her own safe home. But there was a sort of unnatural look about the figure; a distortion which could not mean sleep. She paused, her heart making such confusion that she had to hold her hand over it for a moment to still its wild beating. Then, with a vague, dark fear, her heart now choking her delicate throat, she cautiously approached the recumbent figure. No, he certainly was not asleep, for his head hung down limp over the bushes in a helpless way which could never be sleep. And as she approached nearer, she saw his arm flung out, the sleeve drawn tightly up, and a stream of blood pouring over the white cuff of the shirt and staining the outer blue sleeve with its dull sanguinary hue.

She looked at the face! It was colorless, and the lips were parted under the dark mustache, as if in death itself. What should she do? Again the wild impulse, the whispering voice in her heart, clamored for her to turn and flee to her own home and send some one out who could do much more than she, an ignorant girl. But what if the soldier should die while she was traveling all that distance? She looked into the face; it was handsome in the extreme, and about the whole figure there was an indefinable clinging fascination, which drew her onward so unconsciously, that she hardly realized what decision she had made until she found herself on her knees beside the recumbent form, tying up the gaping wound in the arm as tightly as she could with her own homely but strong cotton handkerchief; then over her own, she tied his own large handkerchief, which she did not fail to notice was of the finest texture and of snowy whiteness. She ran down to the river, and filling the pretty blue soldier cap with water, managed to get a little between his lips, and then she bathed his head and moistened his pale brows.

It seemed hours to her, but it was only a few minutes, before the dark eyes opened and gazed with seeming stupidity into her own. Then life returned to his face with a look, which in some way thrilled her to her very finger-tips—she could not say whether it gave more pleasure or pain—as it crept into the eyes of the soldier, and he gazed silently into the face bent over him.

Ellen colored and turned away, ostensibly for more water. The young soldier again seemed to sink into a faint and again she bathed and soothed his lips and head with the cool water, using her own modest apron to lay across his head as a bandage.

Without opening his eyes, the young man faintly gasped:

"Will you tell me where I am and what has happened?"

"Indeed, sir, I do not know. I found you lying here when I came along the path, and have done what I could to help you to recover."

Ellen asked no questions of the young man, her native modesty closing her lips; yet she was deeply anxious to know what had caused the singular accident.

"Be good enough to hold my arm up, so the blood may not surge so painfully in the wound, will you?"

Ellen obediently held up his arm, resting his elbow on her own knee to give it a firmer support.

"The last I remember," whispered the young man, "two horsemen were coming towards me, and one seemed to threaten me with an open knife or dagger. I threw up my hand to ward the blow from my heart, and I knew no more."

This peculiar story seemed to imply to Ellen's mind that some of her own people had noted the young man, and had tried either to kill or maim him. But she said nothing. Presently the girl grew brave enough to look at the handsome face beside her, as the eyes now remained closed, and the stranger seemed too exhausted to talk more. How fine and silky was the dark mustache which drooped charmingly over the well-cut mouth. The lips were very full; the chin was not so handsome and well-cut as the mouth; but the nose was fine, and the nostrils were delicate and arching; while the whole face was the handsomest she had ever seen, excepting that always handsomest of soldiers, Captain Van Arden.

A vague wonder possessed her, why it was that her own boy friends and lovers were never so brilliant, so stately and so fine-featured as were the few strangers she had seen. Were the "gentiles" all thus fascinating and charming in every way? Why must "Mormons" be always plain and uninteresting?

"Do you think you could help me off these beastly bushes?" asked the young man. "They make a very uncomfortable resting place."

Ellen hurriedly sought a place where she dragged away a few loose dried sticks and other debris, and then with all the strength she could muster, she half dragged, half assisted the stranger to the soft earthy couch under the willow and cottonwood trees.

The light of the afternoon sun fell in dancing glints and shadows on Ellen's brown tresses. The flowers on her hair gave her the look of a woodland sprite, which the dun-colored gown she wore, plain of skirt, but trimmed with ripples and ruffles of cunning device about the arms and shoulders, only increased. The flying draperies caught and flecked the sun and shadows of the cottonwood shade above them, making her resemble indeed a leaf-clothed maid, the occasional sunbeams deepening her eyes to their richest shade of chestnut brown.

"My name is Captain Sherwood, of the United States army. I came over here for a little hunting and fishing," the young man said after his removal to more comfortable quarters. "I hope I have not frightened you, for I am not worth the pain I fear I have given you. Please do not be afraid of me; I will get away from here just as soon as I can move, and shall not trouble you again."

"Oh, I guess I shall get over my fright. I am glad I could be of a little service. It is my duty to be kind to everybody, and especially to a brother officer of Captain Van Arden. I knew him when he was here a year ago."

"My child," said the officer, with emphasis, and speaking in a serious tone, "you have saved my life, and I shall never cease to be your most humble and grateful friend, no matter where you go, or what may become of me."

His dark eyes looked into her own with a soft appeal for sympathy and tolerance which was irresistible to the tender-hearted girl.

"Indeed I have done but little; I have only helped you to recover from your faint from loss of blood."

The young man winced at the simple, honest explanation, but sought again to impress his heartfelt gratitude upon the charming nurse he had secured.

"Perhaps if some wandering 'Danite' had discovered me, in my helpless condition, instead of your gentle self, I should now indeed have no need for help or comfort in this life."

"Indeed, sir, you mistake my people. They are not murderers nor cut-throats. I have heard that the 'gentiles' think that there are wicked men among us banded together to kill people, but in all my life I never saw or knew of such a band or ever saw such a being as a 'Danite.'"

The officer saw he had gone a little too far, and so he turned his face away and with a sigh, he moved toward the fast-setting sun, and murmured, after a short pause:

"How beautiful the effects of the parting sun-gleams are on your charming wild valley, with its glistening, turquoise lake, the snow-topped mountains, cleft and seared into gorges and canyon defiles, their uneven sides touched here and there with the deep green of the oak or the paler maple. You have a grand old castellated bulwark for the setting of your rural home."

Now, all this was astounding to simple Ellen. To hear her gray, sage-covered, barren valley home described as in any way beautiful, and to know that such lovely descriptive albeit high-flown and theatrical words could be used in connection therewith, was a veritable revelation to her.

But the allusion to the setting sun awakened other thoughts in her heart. Hastily rising, she sought her sun-bonnet, as she said:

"I must go. It will be twilight now before I reach my home. I shall send someone down to help you and bring you to where you can be taken care of."

Evidently this was not at all to the young man's mind, but repressing outward expression of his feelings, he simply asked, "Will you not go back to the place of my accident, and see if you can see anything of my horse? I don't think he would wander away from me, he is too much of a pet; and if you can find him, I am sure I shall be able to mount and get back to my quarters without putting you or your people to any more trouble on my account."

By some queer mental process, Ellen inferred that the soldier had good cause to fear the ministrations of her own people, and yet she did not know how to answer such an inference. So she simply hurried back to the spot indicated, and there, not twenty feet from where she had found the officer, she saw the white horse, quietly barking the cottonwood tree to which he was carefully tied.

She unfastened him, and leading him onward, remarked:

"I guess your enemies, whoever they are, did not intend real harm to you for they have left your horse securely tied not far from where you lay."

"I certainly owe them my heartfelt gratitude for that much; and to you I owe, what shall I say?" She was assisting him now to rise, and her face was close to his own, while his eyes shone with the look that had dazzled her once before. "Shall I say that I owe to you not only my heartfelt gratitude, but its inmost devotion?"

Ellen trembled, with a vague feeling which was half repulsion, half enchantment. She had never in her most romantic dreams imagined anything half so sudden, nor half so eloquent as she felt this warm, openly expressed admiration to be. She hardly knew whether it pleased or frightened her most. One thing was sure, she was so anxious to get back home that she hardly said another word to her companion. As he stoopingly bent over his horse in evident weakness and raised his cap with his uninjured hand, he said in a low, thrilling tone: "This beautiful green retreat will be to me for the rest of my life a sweet, solemn temple. For here I have met not only a threatened and averted danger, but have seen and known its high priestess to be a maiden with an angel's face and a heart of gold. May heaven guard you, my sweet friend, till we meet again."

Ellen gave him one shy, half-frightened glance, and then with her heart choking her throat with violent emotion, she sped like a timid hare to her home, through fast deepening twilight. The soldier, once the girl was out of sight, coolly straightened out his arm, put the bandage in his pocket, snapped his fingers at the distant mountain peaks and rode away whistling a French love ditty.

At the door Ellen met Aunt Clara, just going out with a bowl of gruel to a neighbor's sick child. Aunt Clara noted with her ever observant eye the quickened breathing, the air of indefinable excitement about the girl, even in the gloaming twilight, and pausing to stop Ellen from entering the house, she asked quietly:

"What is the matter, dear? You pant as if you were excited, and your eyes shine so in the dark that they look like stars. Have you been frightened, and where have you been?"

"Oh, I've just been running a little, for I stayed down the river too long, and had to run to get home before dark. No, I haven't been frightened, at least not to speak of. You know," she added, with an uneasy laugh, for Ellen had not learned yet to tell a direct lie, "that girls are natural cowards, Aunt Clara, and are frightened at their own shadows."

"Well, girls should always be careful, and especially at these times. Why, Brother Winthrop says all this excitement about the army coming in has made the Indians very uneasy and uncertain, and you girls have no business away from home, especially alone. What if some of those wicked soldiers should take it into their heads to come over the valley snooping around here! Let me warn you, Ellie,—for I feel the spirit of it strongly upon me, for some cause or other,—don't you ever venture away from this house, either night or day, unless you have safe and sufficient company."

For one breathless moment Ellen longed to throw herself into those blessed, kindly arms and sob out her whole confession. But Aunt Clara turned hastily, and said as she started away, "Some day, dear, you and I will talk more about this matter. But I must hurry away now to see Sister Harris' baby."

XXI.

JOHN VISITS ELLEN

The days came and went after this, with pain, pleasure, work, and mingled hopes and fears. Life was just now full of exciting plans, forecasts, and prophecies.

Dian Winthrop went on her own sensible yet self-contained way. As her friend Ellen seemed able to do without her, she was content to be left alone. She worked and laughed and dressed and thought her own, serious, deep thoughts about life and her own being upon the earth, untroubled by fears, and full of the common trust in the God of her fathers, knowing that she would be well taken care of by her friends and family, no matter what might happen.

She "kept company" in an eminently sensible way with Charlie Rose, whenever he sought her out. While congratulating herself on the invariable frankness with which she showed the young man that good as he might be he was not her ideal, yet she allowed him to spend all his spare means in taking her to their simple picnics and visits with which the young people whiled away their leisure time of waiting.

She did not allow the least attempt at a flirtation with Tom Allen. She had not enough regard for him to make herself agreeable to him. But she herself was such a fine, handsome, superior looking and acting girl, and so admired by everybody, that Tom could not resist the temptation once in awhile of taking her out and thereby giving her a chance of understanding and appreciating him at his own advanced valuation.

Poor little Ellie, starved for her friend's confidence, shrinking with dread of what the future might bring her, and yet longing to meet and greet that danger, was half the time full of an unnatural gaiety, half the time moody and preternaturally grave and silent. One night, when she and Aunt Clara sat in the front door of the hut, watching the moonrise in unequalled splendor over the gap in Rock Canyon, they heard a horseman coming up the street, and in a moment he appeared in front of their gate. His cheery "whoa" to his animal caused Ellen to run hastily out, exclaiming,

"Why, it's John Stevens! Oh you dear old John, how glad I am to see you!" and as John sprang from his horse, she threw her arms around his neck, as if he were her own dear brother, and thus she sobbed out her joy and her vague fears on his friendly shoulder.

The tall, silent man allowed her to cry until she was calmed, and while he felt every throb of her tenderness in his own responsive soul, he felt, too, that underneath it all, there was something deeper and more serious than he could at present fathom. He left that to a future, better understanding, however, and contented himself with gently stroking her soft brown braids, while he chatted with Aunt Clara about matters of interest to both.

Once inside the house, and John's supper over, Ellen seemed a very spirit of mischievous attraction. She fluttered around her great, big, red-bearded friend; and with the sweetest smiles and most coaxing fascination, seemed a very magnet of charm. John did not try to resist this unconscious effort of Ellie's to be winsome and loving as he sat with his eyes bent gravely upon her, occasionally answering her witty sallies; inwardly, however, he was anxious to unravel the whole of this perplexing, if delightful, mystery.

Aunt Clara noted all these things, for when did she ever fail to see all there was to be seen when she was present? But she wisely left the young people to arrange their own affairs, discreetly proceeding with her knitting, and putting in a remark now and then, only as occasion seemed to require.

Was Ellen in love with him? This was the question which forced itself upon John's mind, in spite of his modesty. Or, was there something else which caused all this excitement?

XXII.

IF YOU LOVE ME, JOHN

The question with which John Stevens troubled himself is one which any modest man dislikes to put to himself. If love comes in answer to the solicitation of love, the question is rarely asked; but

if love has come from an unexpected source, the result is an effort to reciprocate that affection, or else a vague annoyance, a feeling of being injured in some inexplicable way, which will intrude upon the consciousness.

The afternoon after his arrival John spent with a hungry, passionate longing at his heart for a welcoming word from the one woman he had loved so faithfully and so devotedly for years. As Diantha passed out of the house on her way toward the river, he wondered why it was his heart should cling so tenaciously to her, in spite of her coldness and her neglect.

Why could not he love sweet Ellen best instead of the indifferent Dian, she who sometimes wounded her best and dearest, if it happened to meet her mind to do so? No use to ask; however, he knew that if he could not win her love, eternity would hold a regret for him, for this woman had become necessary to his happiness.

He sat under the cottonwood tree in the front yard as these reflections passed through his mind, and pulling his long beard with some impatience, he looked up in time to catch the laughing eyes of Ellen Tyler as she passed one of the front windows.

"Why, John, you look as if you saw a whole cavalcade approaching our house to drive us into the mountains. What on earth is the matter?"

"Nothing much, Ellen; come out and let's take a walk."

"All right, if you will go with me up into town, for Sister Winthrop wants some things from the Tithing Office."

"Come on, then." And away they sauntered in the warm sunshine, John determined to conquer his heart by the mere force of will, and Ellen as determined to grasp this straw of protection and comfort which seemed held out to her by the strong, safe hand of her loved friend.

John was really lover-like in his manner this afternoon, and poor, perplexed Ellen's heart opened to the warm sunshine of that sympathy like a half-withered, thirsty flower. Little by little, she confided to him the story of Tom Allen's unfortunate dream, and she felt comforted and strengthened by the serious and kindly way in which John explained to her the irreverence manifested by Tom in thus attempting to jest upon such a holy, solemn subject. And John was wise enough to palliate Tom's error, so that Ellen was left with a peaceful, quieted heart, which held no bitterness for Tom and very little of anger against Dian for the unseemly mirth that young lady had manifested. How good, and how wise John was! What a splendid soul was hid beneath his cool and deliberate manner! Surely she could win his heart; at any rate she was going to try.

"Do the soldiers come over on this side of the valley very often?" she asked, as they had exhausted the other subject.

"I should hope not. I would not want to find any of them prowling around here; it might be the worse for them, if I did," answered John in a sort of low, threatening growl.

"Why, John, you would not object to their breathing the same air as we do, would you?"

"It depends. I don't want them near this town, be assured of that."

A dim suspicion that the young officer she had met so often of late was right in his surmise that her own people would kill him at sight if they found him near their towns, made her ask another question:

"John, if you should happen to find one of those soldiers out shooting or fishing near the river, would you try to do him any violence?"

Something in her tone gave him a vague uneasy twinge. He looked quietly into the flushed face and bright uplifted eyes for a moment, and then asked instead of answering:

"Ellen dear, have you ever seen one of those soldiers on this side of the river?"

It took a great deal of courage for Ellen to answer that question truthfully; yet with those keen, kindly, piercing eyes upon her, she could but tell the story of her first meeting with Captain Sherwood, leaving her story at the close of that long interview without adding anything as to further meetings and conversations.

She was very glad she took this precaution, for she was fairly frightened at the terrible expression of wrath which overspread the features of her companion. He said not a word for several minutes, and she grew seriously alarmed at the anger in those eyes, always bent upon her in such kindness, as she wished heartily that she had said nothing whatever about the matter. At last she ventured to say:

"What is it, John; are you angry with me? I could not help it."

The man divined at once that he had startled the girl, and perhaps closed her lips for the future; so with a profound effort, he stilled the tempest of wrath in his heart, and made out to laugh a little, as he replied:

"What a bear I must be, to frighten an innocent child like you. No, my dear girl, I am not nor could I be angry with you. You could never give me cause for anger. I might be hurt or sorry about you, but you would never make me angry."

He paused again, as if to collect himself still further, and then said:

"Tell me about it again, Ellen dear."

Thus quieted, Ellen began at the beginning.

"Did he say that the 'Mormons' had stabbed him?" asked John.

Ellen had to think a moment, and then answered: "No, I don't think he mentioned 'Mormons,' but of course, I thought he meant 'Mormons.'"

As the story proceeded, John stopped her at every point, and insisted on having the most explicit explanations. When the story was again completed, John turned the keen, kindly eyes on her pleading face and said:

"You were a brave, true girl to defend your people against the slanders about the 'Danites;' and I don't think you have it in your power to run away from a sick kitten, much less an injured man, if you thought you could help him. So don't blame yourself one bit, it was all right so far as you were concerned. But as for that devil in human form, let me show you how improbable his whole story was. For instance, do you think a man like that would ride around here to hunt and fish? He has seen some girl down here"—Ellen was glad she did not say anything about the bathing incident, "and has come over here hunting our girls to ruin and destroy them. And do you think he would come without a pistol? And if he had one, would he let someone get near enough to stab him? And if a man wanted to kill him would he stop short with a cut on the arm? And then, would such a man tie up the soldier's horse, safely to a tree, so that he could get up and run away whenever he wanted to? Bosh, it was a trick which no one but a trusting, unsuspecting woman would have been ready to accept as a fact. But there, my dear, you are not to blame at all; it is all over now, thank God, and I am very sure you will not go out alone again, especially near the river, or far away from home in any direction."

"Why, John, all our folks go down to the river at times; did not you see Dian starting for a walk down there just as we were leaving the house to come up here?"

Again that white, silent wrath spread over the face of her companion, and added to it was a flaming redness which seemed to leap into his eyes instead of his cheeks. The effect of her words frightened the girl at his side. Truly he had seen Dian start out that way; he remembered it all very clearly now, but in his proud endeavor to drive her out of his heart, he had also driven her out of his mind.

"I dare say, John dear, she is expecting to meet Tom Allen or Charlie Rose down by the river, for you know Dian has a way of always having a string of beaux running after her."

This was said to comfort John, and to assist in driving from his face that awful anger whose white silence so terrified her.

After a pause John asked her:

"Do you want to go with me down to the river and show me where it is that you met this man? It is barely possible that Dian may have gone in the same direction."

They were returning from town now, and Ellen answered:

"Of course she has, for the place where I met him is just where Dian and I cleared away the underbrush purposely for a little shady retreat for the both of us, and until we were mad at each other a few weeks ago, we never went there alone, and rarely missed a day but washdays and Sundays of going there to talk and rest. Of course, I will go with you, only let us go by the house, so I can leave these things there for Aunt Clara."

There was very little said on that riverward walk. Ellen was thinking sadly of the many times she had met and talked with the young stranger, of which she dared not speak to her companion, and of how foolish she had been to run such risks. She was thinking, too, of Dian being down there, and wondering with a vague jealousy if Dian had also been there when she knew it not, and if she too was courting the admiration of the officer. But she put this away in a moment, for she would not do Dian the injustice to suppose that with all her proud and self-centered spirit, she could deliberately do such a criminal, deceitful thing as that would be. She forgot to designate her own conduct as severely as she was doing the faintly supposed conduct of her friend. But, then, Dian was such an eminently proper young woman that no one ever suspected, much less accused her of doing anything unladylike or at all imprudent.

As for poor John Stevens, he had been laboring for years, ever since he had been a man, with a man's understanding of life and its responsibilities, for the acquisition of the severe self-control necessary to subdue his passionate nature. He had fought such a gallant fight against his love for Diantha Winthrop, that no one, not even Dian herself, suspected the profound emotions which

had been so hard for him to control. He had learned to control his temper, that fierce, vicious thing, which his dead sainted mother had trained him from early youth to hold in check; about which he had often prayed, aye, and even fasted, that it might never rise beyond his power of government; but now, indeed, when he felt both love and anger flooding his soul in such an overwhelming tide, he was powerless to hold both flood tides in check. His hands kept clinching and twisting in unavailing impotence, and his throat was so dry and parched that he could not have uttered a word. His whole being was for the time a darkened void, where nought but a fearful apprehension and hot anger could penetrate his consciousness.

He walked beside his companion in silence, which was far worse than another man's rage.

"Why, John, I think I am more frightened of you than I was of the soldier," said Ellen at last. The silence had become too oppressive for her. "I can't imagine what ails you today. I thought you were the gentlest and quietest of men."

John stopped short in their walk, looked up a moment into the burning sky above him, stroked his beard with a slow motion, and with a little preparatory cough to clear away the dryness in his throat, he said in his drawling voice:

"Oh, don't be afraid; I would not injure even a soldier, if it were not wise or right to do so, my girl. I feel a little angry, that is all, that any one should seek to entangle our girls and draw them away from the safety and purity of their own innocent happy lives. That is all. Don't be afraid; I dare say both you and I are imagining a lot of things which will never happen. You will soon forget all about this handsome devil, while we will find Diantha down there quietly talking with Tom or Charlie Rose, or some other nice fellow, and she will be angry to see us come spying on her love affairs."

Yet, even as he spoke, his keen eyes detected away in the distant trees, where the brush had been cut away and the eyes could travel some distance in the green embrasure, a glint of a white dress, and he was sure that the coat beside the dress was a blue one, not the dark homespun he knew would be worn by his own people.

Both John and Ellen quieted every evidence of their approach, and Ellen fell behind her companion, with a dreadful shrinking fear at her heart, mixed even then with a bit of jealousy of her friend's apparent free understanding with her own cavalier.

"What are you doing here?" growled a low, husky voice behind the two, who were seated on a fallen tree, apparently absorbed in a book.

Diantha Winthrop looked up, startled, yet with full control of herself.

"Oh, John, this is Captain Sherwood, of the United States army, you know, and he is reading Shakespeare to me, for you know how fond of poetry I am."

"How did you come here?" again growled the husky voice, unheeding the brave, frank explanation so coolly offered him.

The young officer threw back his head, partly because he was encouraged by the apparent lack of fear on the part of his companion, and also because of the fact that no matter if possessed of every fault and sin in the decalogue, Captain Sherwood was no coward.

"Well, my good fellow, even if your question is not a very civil one, I will give you a civil answer. I came here, as I usually go everywhere, on the back of my trusty horse. I suppose that even a soldier is permitted to go where he pleases in this free and semi-civilized domain belonging to Uncle Sam. Have you any objections to my going wherever I please?"

John folded his arms and waited quietly for more explanations.

The soldier also waited a moment, and then, constrained to say something more, in spite of himself, he added:

"This young lady has condescended to let me read to her some of the eloquent classics found in our immortal Shakespeare. But perhaps you know nothing of poetry, and Shakespeare's name may not even have a meaning for you."

The insolence of this reply did not provoke the other to outward anger, although it certainly had its effect. Just at this moment Ellen came out from her retreat, and as the soldier caught sight of her he swept off his cap in a magnificent bow, and with a fine and dignified manner, the manner of a southern gentleman to a woman he wishes to please, he said softly:

"It is a rare pleasure to see Miss Tyler." Then as he saw that the girl's face was white with fear, and her hands clasped in evident pain, he bowed and added: "Do not be alarmed, madam; I am too insignificant for your friend to seek to harm me, and as for him, it is sufficient to know that he is your friend; he and his are sacred to me from this moment; I would not injure him or them even if my life pays the penalty."

There was a grandiosity about this speech which struck upon Dian's nerves a little unpleasantly,

but to Ellen the tone and manner seemed the most gentlemanly and elegant she had ever witnessed; while his evident emotion at seeing her flattered her vain soul with infinite sweetness.

All this while John had stood watching everything and saying nothing. At last Dian approached him, and laying her hand fearlessly upon his arm, she said in a slightly shaken voice, although still with perfect self-control:

"I hope, John, that you will remember that this gentleman has done nothing offensive, and that it was my fault that he remained here to read to me. You will allow him to return to his own place without the least molestation from anyone. For the rest, I alone am to be held responsible."

John groaned in spite of himself. Both the girls, like the women they were, would not cast blame upon the sneaking man, thus taking away his only weapon of revenge. That groan startled Dian, and made Ellen tremble like a broken reed in the wind, and even the soldier's face paled a little at its intensity. But Dian was equal to the occasion; her fine common sense stood her in good stead. This was no time to be romantic; good practical sense and reason was what they all needed now. She caught hold of his arm with her own small but firm hand and said calmly and distinctly:

"Look here, John Stevens, there's no sense in your getting angry. You know well enough that President Young has said repeatedly that there should be no blood spilt in these times, and you know, too, that this gentleman is not to blame if a girl chooses to accept his invitation to spend an hour in his company. Just calm yourself, for neither Ellen nor I have committed any sin, and we are old enough to have some rights of our own. And I am not going to be dictated to by any creature on this earth, man or woman! Whatever you want to say to me must not be said in anger."

John looked into the eyes of the woman beside him, and with such a look! He was muttering under his breath: "Oh, God help me!" And the anguish and love and anger and struggle for self-control which were shown in that look shook even Dian's heart with a vague trembling which she could not understand.

"Dian, you take Ellen and go home. I shall do nothing rash, God help me, and you need have no fear; but I beg you to go quietly home, and take good care of Ellen."

Moved by some inexplicable impulse, Dian drew herself close to him and in a low whisper she said:

"Don't be harsh, John," and then lower still, "if you love me, John."

XXIII.

DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

Diantha turned away, and putting her arm around her friend, they sped through the late afternoon sunshine to their home with flying feet, silent tongues and an unspoken prayer in both hearts for John Stevens that he might not be overcome.

As for John, he strode up to the soldier, as soon as the girls were out of hearing, and with the low roar of an angry lion, he growled:

"What is to hinder my choking the dastard life out of your lustful body?" As he spoke, quick as a flash, he had pinioned the man's arms, and with the grip of an infuriated animal, he had his hands around the white, gentlemanly throat, and for a moment his passion so blinded him that he knew nothing, saw nothing, but a huge, black cloud which overspread all nature and his own heart.

This murderous impulse passed, and with another awful groan, he released his hold, and with a fling, threw the stranger away from him, and quickly turning his back, buried his face in his hands, while one hot, silent tear scalded his repentant eyes.

The soldier, after a few moments of insensibility, came to himself, and with a profound effort, he dragged himself up, and shaking his body together, he stood upon his feet, and said, quietly and sneeringly, though somewhat hoarsely:

"You asked me a very queer question, my good fellow, and if I had not more regard for law and decency than you seem to have, I would answer it like this"—with the words, John felt the muzzle of a revolver at his ear. Again, with the flash of a tiger, John seized the other's arm, twisted the pistol out of his hand, and with a quick, backward spring, he had thrown the weapon into the brawling river beside them, while with a deep sneer in his voice, he answered:

"Do you think, you soldiers, that you are out here with nothing but squaws to oppose you? Men who have wives and homes to protect are not afraid of popguns." And then, as if mastered anew with the terrible emotions surging in his breast, John asked, slowly: "What is to hinder my sending your soul to hell, where it rightfully belongs?"

This time the soldier looked into the hot, angry eyes close to his own, and perhaps his own bravery had some effect in calming John, for after a few minutes, the soldier folded his own arms, and with a light touch indicating the epaulets upon his shoulders, he said, almost airily:

"Oh, I dare say that even you have some respect for this Government of ours. And perhaps, too, your wholesome fear of displeasing the notorious Brigham would hinder you from disgracing yourself."

John said nothing, and the other quietly went to the tree where his horse was fastened, and untying and mounting his steed, said lightly:

"Have you any messages to send to our fort? If so, I shall be pleased to carry them."

"Yes, you may tell your commander-in-chief that if he wishes to keep the heads of his men on their shoulders, he would do well to keep them away from our towns. We will defend our homes and our virtue with our lives."

The soldier was now on his horse, and comparatively safe, so he ventured to reply tauntingly:

"Ah, my dear fellow, don't trouble yourself; the women will hunt us up. I know the dear creatures better than you do. You are very unsophisticated, depend upon it. We shall soon have hard work to keep out of the way of them. Ta, ta!" And before John could move, he had dashed away in the trees, and was soon out of sight and hearing.

John Stevens was left behind with all the agonized load of fear and dread which swept over him like a mountain cloud-burst. He leaned against a tree and with arms folded across his breast and head dropped, he heaved many a sigh and shed some scalding tears. The thing he had most dreaded in the onslaught upon his people had come to pass. And to think that the two women he loved best upon the earth should be in the greatest danger from this scourge. Death for the men; hunger, cold, war, pain, all these were slight things compared with the danger which had been ever present. The temptation which would assail the youth of both sexes, but more particularly the young women, to forsake the simple, honest lives of their people, and to become involved in the sins and corruptions of the outside world; this had been his constant dread. Was this not Zion? Was God not coming from His hiding place to keep Babylon from our midst? With all the strength of his soul he loved chastity and purity. He had, at what cost no one but a strong man may tell, kept his own nature as sweet and pure as that of any woman, and he knew that in strictest chastity only there was safety and peace for either man or woman in this life or the life to come. Why was he so sensitive to all these impressions and fears? Why could he not be like Tom Allen, careless and unthinking as to past, present and future, unless it affected his own pleasure? But he knew he could not. Gifted with a peculiarly sensitive and keenly perceptive nature, he saw far beyond the present action; he saw the end to which such action tended, in a measure, and he suffered with the intensity of such a soul, when he or any he loved turned aside from the narrow, straight path of chastity and right.

After hours of silent suffering and struggle, he arose to find the stars shining above his head in a shimmering peace, and with a heavy, but quieted heart, he made his way home to the village beyond. He resolved that he would seek Bishop Winthrop the next day, and perhaps even go to President Young for some counsel in this terrible situation.

The bishop was much moved and excited over the events which had involved his own sister, as well as the step-daughter of his friend, Clara Tyler. The bishop suggested at once that they should go to see President Young, and lay the whole affair before him for counsel. They found President Young full of business cares and anxieties concerning the fate of his people, but when the two men entered, the President asked them to go with him to his inner room, and they could then present their business before him.

John Stevens told the whole story, not adding one detail, nor seeking in the least to exaggerate the danger or the wrong attempted. But his brief, quiet statement did more to lay the true state of the case before the President than a torrent of language could have conveyed. Bishop Winthrop was very much wrought up, and begged the President to take steps to prevent any such meetings in the future. He was for threatening to kill any soldier who was found outside of his own barracks.

The President listened to the wild talk and plans of his excited companion as he had to the quieter, yet intenser recital of John Stevens. After each had said all he cared to say on the matter, the President, who had been twirling his thumbs, as was his custom when in deep thought, turned his piercing eyes upon the two men so anxiously regarding him, and said slowly:

"It's no use, brethren, to try to force people to do right. You can't keep people virtuous by shutting them up in prisons. The only way that I know of to get men or women to walk in the path of virtue and righteousness, is to teach them correct principles, and then let each one govern himself. If our daughters want to do wrong, if they can't find any of our boys who will help them,

they will find plenty of men in the world ready to ruin them. After such girls have learned their lessons they will be glad to creep back to father's hearthstone, and to sit under the shelter they once despised. Teach all to do right and to live their religion, and give them their agency. Let parents live their religion and go quietly along, and some day their children will all come back to them."

This was hard counsel for these two men to follow; they were so anxious, so full of loving solicitude for the two beautiful girls in question. After a moment the President looked searchingly at John Stevens, and said inquiringly:

"Brother Stevens, why don't you court one of those girls and marry her yourself? The best way to drive out evil is by introducing good in its place. Women and men both desire to love and be loved; and I sometimes think our Elders will be held responsible for the loss of our girls, if they make no effort to give them a love worthy and pure."

The conference was ended, and John felt the whole burden had been flung back on his shoulders. Well, he was strong and willing; he was no coward, either. But how could he do the impossible?

XXIV.

ELLIE'S SECOND WARNING

The two girls avoided John all the next day, for with feminine instinct they divined their case would come up for grave consideration, and neither cared to be questioned or chastised.

When this startling incident came to the ears of Aunt Clara Tyler, she buckled on her aggressive armor of righteousness, but like the tactful soul she was, she drew over her steel coat the soft velvet robe of tender sympathy and bided her time.

Two nights after Dian's encounter, the girls were out at a neighboring party. Returning somewhat late, Aunt Clara's watchful ears heard them call out their merry good-nights to their companions, and the psychological moment was upon them.

The girls found her busy at their own wagon-box bedroom, and they were glad for a pair of sympathetic ears in which to pour out the story of "what he said" and "she said" with the evening's trivial happenings, all of such moment to young, fresh hearts.

"How good it is to get a word with you, Auntie," cooed Ellen, "you are off so much with the sick that I don't get a chance to hug you once a week."

Joining in their merry chatter, the two girls sitting cross-legged on their narrow bed, their mentor sat on the stool at the front end of the box, and gently led them into deep conversational waters.

"These brilliant men of the world do know how to say pretty things, don't they?" said Ellen, after Dian had related the river incident, in her own candid fashion.

"And he never said a rude word or did an offensive thing," finished Dian.

"Good manners, my dear, are only the real or the assumed expression of a truly unselfish soul. Tact is like charity—it sometimes covers a multitude of sins."

Ellen sat silent while this talk went on; Aunt Clara noted it and drew her own shrewd conclusions.

"Well, why must this sweet and gentle courtesy belong only to men who are not good, Aunt Clara?" continued Dian.

"It mustn't, and yet it too often does. Pioneer life in every country leaves very little time for young men especially to cultivate the amenities of life. Aren't our leaders courteous, and can you find lovelier ladies than Sister Eliza R. Snow and Zina D. Young? Our girls are as crude in much of their behavior as are our boys. First the marble must be hewn out, then comes the polish."

"I love the polish," murmured Ellen. And Dian added frankly:

"So do I! The rocks in the hillside are ugly!"

"Not ugly—their rough beauty appeals to an educated mind. And polish is so deceptive. You could enamel any cheap and poor surface, but heat or power would crush the false substance into powder. Ah no, my dear motherless girls, it is my duty to warn you! I see what your youthful eyes could not perceive. The allurements of bad men and corrupt worldliness, have ever been and ever

will be present with us in this world. 'Take away the devil's fascination, and you would cut off his right arm at the shoulder,' is an old proverb. The only safety for youth and inexperience is to take the counsel of their parents and guardians. I am a widow, and earn my living by nursing the sick. So I am obliged to leave you girls to watch yourselves much of the time."

"But taking counsel always means to do the thing you don't want to do," pouted Dian, "and to leave undone the things you would like to do."

"That pretty nearly sums up life's best discipline. And now let me warn you, my dear, precious girls, let that soldier alone, and every other man whose life and character is unknown to your guardians; have fun, enjoy yourselves, but don't go outside your own safe circle for pleasure or for peace."

"Oh, pshaw!" grumbled Diantha. But Aunt Clara knew that the temporary resistance of Diantha's frank nature would yield in time, and that above all, she could never quite bring herself to disobey any given counsel. That was the rock upon which the girl's character was builded. As for Ellen:

"Ellie," said her aunt, solemnly, "let me warn you and forewarn you against any evil temptation such as has just assailed Diantha. I'm sure I don't know how you would come out from such a test, my dear, for you do love admiration so well."

"Of course Diantha's the perfect one," replied Ellen, sharply; "I am never quite safe or quite right," but she was very glad Dian had kept her secret. For there was surely no need of Aunt Clara knowing all that!

Alack! The loyalty of youth to youth sometimes works them grave disaster. If Diantha had only been a little less loyal, Aunt Clara would have been set upon the watch tower; for she, with her riper years, knew the weakness as well as the charm of her pretty niece as inexperienced Dian could not then know. But both girls had now been rightly taught and cautioned, and so the elder woman kissed them good-night and left them to the deep slumber of youth and health.

XXV.

"DO YOU CARE FOR JOHN STEVENS?"

Several evenings later, at supper, Tom Allen remarked that the Snows were coming over to spend the evening, and he wondered if they could have some games in the front yard, as it was a bright, moonlight night. Both Diantha and Ellen were waiting upon the table, and no one for the moment seemed anxious to answer Tom's remark. Sister Winthrop, as well as Aunt Clara, had evidently heard something of recent events, and both were very serious and quiet. But the others of this large and oddly assorted family assemblage had heard nothing, and accordingly the idea of having some games to help pass away the brief summer evening with plenty of music of concertina and accordion was received with general favor.

It was a little puzzling to Diantha to see the lover-like attention of John Stevens to her friend Ellen that evening. They sat together, they chose each other for every game, they talked together in the most confidential manner, and at last ended by going off together for a walk before the evening was half over. Of course, she had seen them act just that way before; but then she had cared nothing whatever about it; John was always very queer, and she never knew quite how to take him. In fact, that was about the only reason she had retained the slightest interest in him. A girl does so dislike a man who lets her know all there is to know about himself! A little discreet reserve is such a charm in a man.

Now, my lady Dian felt that she had been actuated by a very uncommon feeling down in the grove, and she had actually stooped to ask a man to do a favor for her own sweet sake if he loved her, forsooth. Certainly that man ought to respond by devoting himself to her at once and forever. And that man was doing the very opposite thing. Dian had forgotten that she was wearing Charlie Rose's ring; had quite forgotten all that might be involved or inferred from such a circumstance. She watched and waited for their return from the walk, feeling for the first time in her life, that somebody had slighted her.

It was not altogether an accident that she sat under the cottonwood tree on the return of the two, nor was it wholly by design that my lady looked like the very spirit of the night, with her simple white dress, her pale yellow gleaming hair breaking about her face in rings and waves, while her white arms, bared to the elbow, rested on her lap and deadened the white of her dress by their warm, creamy tints.

Charlie Rose stood at a little distance, evidently enjoying every detail of the beautiful picture as

he leaned on the rude bars of the fence near Dian. Ellen came up to Dian, and as John sat down on one side of her, she slid close to her friend on the other side, and put her arms lovingly around her neck.

"Oh, Dian, isn't the night lovely?"

"Yes, dear, it is. But it is getting late and we must go in."

John sat so close to the fair-haired girl that he could see the starry shine in her soft blue eyes, and as he looked at her beautiful face the remembrance of the scene he had witnessed in the grove, and that this dear girl had been gazed at and admired by a wicked man, brought the hot tide of feeling welling up in his heart, and he was obliged to turn away his face from her dazzling beauty, while he slowly stroked his long beard, and listened to Charlie Rose exchanging poetic nonsense with the two girls.

"Two stars a-gleam in the silent night
Two girls a-dream in the soft moonlight,"

improvised Charlie.

"The girls have a dread of a cool evening breeze,
For they catch a stray cough, two colds and a sneeze,"

jeered Dian in response. And she took Charlie's arm as she allowed him to escort her into the house.

Ah, John Stevens, John Stevens, your lesson is not learned yet!

As the two girls said good-night to their friends they instinctively sat down on their wagon-box bed for a long talk, something neither had enjoyed for weeks; and they felt all the joy of recovered confidence. What if Dian did feel a little half jealous of Ellen, and Ellen was more than a little jealous of Dian! They were girls, and were sincere friends. Jealousy could not rob them of their real affection for each other; they were both too noble for that.

In the long and confidential talk which followed, Dian learned far more of the young soldier's visits than had been told John Stevens. And while Dian could see that her friend had been in a very dangerous position, her own foolish action of the afternoon before closed her lips against giving the good advice with which she was generally so ready.

"But, you know, Dian, that it is all over now, and I am going to behave myself after this. Say, Dian, do you care anything about John Stevens?"

The question was a frank one, and Diantha was not the person to evade any sort of a question. But she was also honest, and she sat some minutes before giving her answer. She wanted to tell the exact truth.

"No, I don't care about John, in the sense of the word that you imply; I don't know whether I ever could or not. I can't tell; maybe, if he really loved me, and tried awfully hard to make me love him, well, I don't know, I'm sure. But one thing I am sure of, I don't care anything about him now, only as a friend. Why?"

"Oh, I just wanted to know, dear; for I believe I could love him better than any man on earth, if he would let me."

"Well, my dear, just you go on loving him, for I am sure he loves you, and I hope you will be happy with him."

It would not be the truth to say that dignified Dian felt no inner pang of jealousy as she uttered these generous sentiments. There stirred in her heart a very indistinct wish to know the exact condition of her friend John Stevens' affections. Curiosity in a woman is not always a common thing, but if once roused, it is apt to be a very strong motive.

That night there rode into Provo the Governor of Utah, accompanied by a strong posse of Utah militia. He had come to expostulate with Brigham Young, and to induce him to return to Salt Lake City. John Stevens was on his way from the evening frolic to the President's home, to take up his guard duty, when he met the party just riding into town. Governor Cumming hailed John with hearty friendship.

"Captain Stevens, I am happy to see you here. Will you kindly inform President Young that I wish to see him as soon as possible?"

John at once complied with this somewhat hurried and informal request, and was on hand at the conference which, late as was the hour, proved not very long, but certainly full of interest.

The anxious and wearied Governor laid before the "Mormon" leader all the conditions through which the Territory had just passed; he rehearsed in no measured terms his contempt for the actions of some of the Federal authorities; he assured the "Mormon" leaders that Gen. Johnston,

who was now safely camped in the Cedar Valley, would do all in his power to bring about peace and harmony in the unhappy and distracted Territory. He told Brigham Young of the furor that the Southern Move, made by the whole population of Utah, had created in the East and in Europe. He laid before that leader of a hunted band of religionists copies of the "New York Times" and the "London Times," which contained bitter comments on this political blunder of the President of the United States. In closing his speech, he gave utterance to a manly appeal to Brigham Young to accept his pledges of security, and at once to take up his return march for Great Salt Lake City, saying:

"There is no longer any danger, sir. General Johnston and the army will keep faith with the 'Mormons.' Every one concerned with this happy settlement will keep faith and hold sacred the pardon and amnesty of the President of the United States. By—, sir, yes."

"We know all about it, Governor. Our memories are long. But we feel assured of your own integrity in this matter, and for that we grant you our fullest confidence and friendship."

"Then, sir," said the kindly-disposed official, "tomorrow, being the birthday of our glorious country, the Fourth of July, I shall publish a proclamation to the 'Mormons' for them to return to their homes."

"Do as you please, Governor Cumming," replied Brigham Young, with his quiet, shrewd smile. "Tomorrow I shall get upon the tongue of my wagon, and tell the people that I am going home, and that they can do as they please."

And it was so. The next morning in the cool daybreak, the leader of the hosts of that modern Israel stood upon his wagon seat, and in the clarion tones so familiar to his people, he called:

"To your tents, O Israel!"

And once more, but this time with paeans of mingled sorrow and rejoicing and songs of praise not unmingled with anxious future forebodings, the people prepared to take up the line of march backward to the deserted homes, to the grass-grown streets of Salt Lake City and to the sun-dried farms and fields of the northern Valley. The Southern Move was passing into the annals of a deeply engraved history.

XXVI.

COL. SAXEY EXPOSTULATES

The hurry, confusion and turmoil consequent upon packing were endured gladly by every one in Provo and vicinity, for every heart beat high with joy that their beloved lands and homes were not to be left behind once more and they themselves turned again into the desert, homeless and poor.

Diantha rode to the city with her brother in his spring wagon. As she sat on the front seat, she was soon covered with dust, and with the loss of her pink and white complexion came an appreciable decline in the thermometer of her generally sweet and cheerful disposition. No one ever accused Diantha of vanity, but there was nothing which made my dainty lady so thoroughly annoyed as to feel that she was looking ugly and commonplace; and above all to know that she was disheveled, disorderly, or unclean; all of which goes to prove that all are of the earth, earthy.

Ellen Tyler rode several teams behind Dian, in her father's wagon, the spring carriage being occupied by other members of the family. Now, no matter how dusty the road nor how much at a disadvantage dear little Ellen might be placed, if she were only treated lovingly and kindly by those she loved, and if she were sure of "one true heart beside her," as she herself put it, she was always cheerful and pleasant. And Ellen was in high feather, for John Stevens drove the wagon she was in, and the whole journey seemed more like a pleasure trip than a dusty two days' journey.

The party were toiling up the long and steep grade to the north of the village of Lehi, and John was out of the wagon, walking beside his team, whistling occasionally to his horses, and sometimes coming up to the wagon to hear the merry chatter of his companion. He had allowed himself to get some distance behind his team when he saw, in a sudden turn of the road, a small party of horsemen coming towards them, and as the dust cleared away, he discovered they were soldiers. He tried to hurry up so that he might be near or reach Ellen before they passed her, for instinct warned him that there was need, yet it was too late. As they passed him, he gazed at the dashing captain—for it was Captain Sherwood, his own despised enemy—to whom he gave a look of hate and repugnance. It was returned with a flash of sneering triumph.

The gay captain had cause to be triumphant.

As he passed by the long train of wagons, his eyes were eagerly searching each wagon for the two faces he had come out purposely to see. He hardly knew Diantha. He had seen her but once, and now the gold of her hair was a tawny clay, and the tiny curls were stiff with dust; while the enchanting pink and white of her skin was lost in a deep, sun-flushed crimson, covered over with the dun dust of the valley road.

As soon as he recognized her, however, and that only as they met face to face, he raised his cap with a courtly bow.

Whether Diantha was a little afraid of her brother's instant anger, or whether she was moved by her own sense of right and propriety, or whether there was mingled with it all an indignation that she had not been recognized because of her unprepossessing appearance, she herself never tried to fathom; but certain it was that my lady stiffened herself into an attitude of freezing hauteur, visible through all her dusty disguises, and with a stony stare of her gleaming blue eyes, she coldly looked into the laughing black eyes bent upon her, and gave the soldier the cut direct.

"I say, old chap, that young lady would give pointers to a New Orleans belle in giving a fellow his conge, but I should say she was not bad-looking when properly dressed." So spake a fellow officer as the two rode at the head of their squad. Captain Sherwood had urged his superior officer, Col. Saxey, to come along, as he had learned that this party were on the road, and he wanted his friend to see the two girls who had so taken his own fancy.

Ellen saw them coming, and first looking discreetly back to see that John was well out of sight, she gave the captain a laughing and apologetic smile, and then turned her head coquettishly aside, as the horsemen dashed by.

"That girl is as pretty as the other, only in a different way," said Col. Saxey. "But I would advise you, Sherwood, to let these women alone. You will make yourself and others a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and I can't see that it will do you or anyone else any good."

"Oh, d—n your advice, Saxey. What is life, anyway?"

"Life," answered Col. Saxey to his friend Sherwood, "is pretty much what we make it; good, bad or indifferent. But, really, Sherwood, I wish you would take an old friend's advice, and let those 'Mormon' women alone. You know these people are nearly wild with fear anyway, and I think it the height of folly for us to add to their discomfiture."

"I can't imagine how I am going to hurt anybody by falling in love with a pretty girl, and even marrying her, if worst comes to worst."

"You know quite well, old fellow, you would never dream of marrying one of these uneducated, uncultured western girls; and when you remember that she is of 'Mormon' stock; what an absurdity! Why, what do you think your proud family down in Louisiana would say to such a thing? Give it up, Clem; give it up."

"Say, Saxey," and the young officer turned and faced his companion, reining in his horse to a halt that he might look the other fairly in the eyes, "I want you to tell me what you and I or any of the rest of our fellows are going to do out here, thousands of miles from home and civilization? I say, what are we going to do? I certainly need the love and tenderness of a dear little woman, such as one of these girls."

"I am more than surprised, Clem, to hear you speak so coolly of the ruin of a good, innocent girl. What can possess you?"

"What can possess you, my virtuous friend? Where have you learned your lessons of life, if not in the school of experience? I must be in love with somebody, and lucky it is for me that I have such delightful material to waste a bit of my time and heart's affection upon. You see that I am refined enough to wish even my bacon to be of the choicest cut, and fricasseed to the most delicate brown, instead of fried in huge slices and served with chunks of bread."

They were riding slowly on through the dust and heat, and the elder officer turned and looked keenly into the face of handsome Captain Sherwood, who was stroking his small black mustache, and smiling at his inward fancies.

"Sherwood," he said, at last, "I must confess that I have never in my life realized the full meaning of all you imply until this hour. Men allow themselves to float down the current of custom and do and say many things which are, it seems to me, in my present mood, unmanly as well as impure. True, men of the world have always done the same things, and rarely stop to ask questions in regard to the matter; but—well, in fact, things look a little different now."

"What has changed the current of your opinion, my wise friend?"

"Something in the face of that haughty girl, as she looked her disdain to you, and the look of fierce hatred which that tall, red-bearded fellow gave you as he passed you, have set me to thinking. Maybe we are as guilty of crime in hunting out these people as were the Roman soldiers when they burned the Christians at the stake."

Sherwood gazed with more and more astonishment at the words of his friend, and at the close of the little, conscience-stricken speech, he burst into a hearty peal of laughter, and again and again he laughed as he recalled the absurdity of such a comparison.

"You must excuse me, old boy, but it is too utterly funny for words. These adulterous, ignorant, impudent 'Mormons' to be compared to the ancient Christians? Ha, ha, ha!"

The elder man winced a little under the fire of ridicule, but his own sense of right and honor told him his position was the true one, and he felt stealing over him a contempt and repugnance for the man who could so recklessly plan the destruction of innocent, helpless womanhood.

The soldiers reached the outskirts of their own camp late that afternoon, and as Col. Saxey gazed at the crowded hive of huts and tents, filled with men, a few women, and many squaws, which composed the nondescript village just across the stream from Camp Floyd, he felt a sense of horror and dislike for all that this motley crowd signified, which he had never before felt, and which was as surprising as it was new to him.

Camp Floyd had been laid out with the care and skill which characterized all the labors of General Johnston. At the hillside lay the officers' quarters, while down the river a little lower were stationed the quarters of the men, with the parade ground between. All the tents had been pitched on a low three-foot adobe foundation, thus giving some measure of comfort to their temporary structures. Outside the camp, and across the bridge which spanned the small mountain stream, was a collection of rude log huts, one or two small adobe houses, and a great many tents of all sizes, all pitched on the low adobe walls. Here were gathered the usual camp followers, those who did the store-keeping, the washing, the ironing, the makers and vendors of every commodity bought and sold in the camp. In this place all grades of camp-followers were sheltered.

Men were there, some few decent and eager only for the labor and exchange of money for that labor which came to them; others willing to buy and sell anything on earth which could be traded off. The most of them were drunken, carousing, miserable wretches, possessed of no impulse but that of a selfish and sensual gratification. Here a coarse woman, with a flaunting air and a ribald jest, passed through the throng, and there a squaw sat beside the road, her eyes red with the whisky she had sold herself for, and her face horrible with the soulless leer of savage, half-drunken invitation.

A wave of horror passed over the sensitive face of Col. Saxey as this accustomed scene appeared to him for the first time in its true colors. He almost hated himself that he was a man. Sherwood noticed nothing unusual, and as they passed a woman with a red scarf across her shoulder, he tossed her a coin, as he said lightly:

"There is enough for two drunks, Liz, and don't try to run them both into one, either; for the last time you did that, you raised such a row that the Colonel threatened to have the whole place cleaned out."

Louisiana Liz, as she was called, screamed back her thanks, and with her large, dark, but bleared and blood-shot eyes she flashed up at the young man her most fascinating gaze.

Arrived at their own quarters, the officers were met by an orderly, who instructed them to report at headquarters that evening.

"I particularly request you gentlemen," said General Johnston, when they reported at his tent, "not so much in a military capacity, as in the name of decency and honor, to remain as much as possible in your own quarters, and to keep away from these 'Mormon' villages. As for the men, I wish you to deal severely with any of them who go far from camp; in fact I wish all to be done that can be done to keep down unnecessary excitement. You understand, gentlemen?"

"I wonder if the gallant general imagines," said Sherwood, as they walked away from the general's tent, "that any one is going to obey strictly his orders and requests. Why," said he, as the two were returning to their own tents, "he is either very simple or else very tame if he expects either officers or men are to be entirely restricted in making some sport out of this dead, dreary and absurd campaign."

"I think the general is entirely right, Sherwood, and so far as I am concerned, I shall do what I can to carry out his orders; even to reporting delinquents, officers as well as men," he added significantly, as he gave a quick glance at his companion.

"Oh, well, 'catching comes before hanging,' is a true if a vulgar proverb, so I bid you a pleasant good-night."

As Captain Sherwood turned into his own tent, he was surprised to find a figure dimly outlined by the sputtering tallow candle, crouching near his bunk.

"What on earth are you doing here, Liz? Don't you know it would mean severe punishment to you and disgrace to me, if you were found inside these lines?"

The half-breed Creole laughed with a low, sneering sound and answered softly:

"Do you think I have forgotten all the lessons of my youth, learned in the silent swamps of our early Louisiana home? Fear not, the snake herself is not more silent, nor the night-bird more swift in her flight than I. Fear not!" And she laughed again, with a quiet, mirthless chuckle.

XXVII.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1858.

The days and weeks of the dry, brilliant summer and autumn flew along with dusty, burnished wings. For some time the efforts of the commanding officer at Camp Floyd were measurably successful in restraining undue intercourse between his men and the people of the neighboring settlements.

In the city of Great Salt Lake the affairs of the people went on with much the same regularity and soberness that had always characterized them. Yet, underneath every act and word, one could feel the current of silent expectation and preparation among this hunted people; expectation of anything sudden and vicious which the army of Utah might attempt to do; and a consequent preparation for defense and perhaps war. There was a small reign of terror, at times, rampant in those whilom silent city streets. While the officers might hold their own men in check, they exercised no authority over the crowd of vile camp-followers which sometimes swept up and over those city thoroughfares with a terrifying cloud of debauchery and crime.

President Young was threatened continually in divers ways; by anonymous letters; by wild and erratic apostates; and he knew through reports of authorized agents that no effort would be spared by the district judges or the military force to put his freedom and his life in jeopardy. Around him, therefore, was gathered a trusty band of his bravest and best friends; and among them was found our good friend, John Stevens. His watch at the President's office came at night, and he was therefore prevented from attending many of the parties and balls which still went on in every part of the city. Brigham Young knew his people too well to allow other and less innocent occupations to usurp the place of the dance and amateur theater.

On Christmas eve, 1858, there was to be a magnificent ball given in the fine, new Social Hall. Oh, the blessed memories clinging around that dear old hall! What scenes of enjoyment, and frolic, sweet and pure, have been celebrated within its gray walls! What hearts have met their fate, what lips have spoken the words of love eternal, while mingling in the happy dance—old and young, rich and poor! No class distinctions ever marred the festivities of that generous place! No separation of old folks from the young ever jarred upon the spirit of mutual love and confidence which marked the social intercourse of the Saints. And what wonderful plays were enacted by that remarkable company of players, headed by Hiram Clawson, John T. Caine, James Ferguson and Mrs. Wheelock and Mrs. Gibson! Dear are these precious memories to the children of the pioneers; for within these walls they learned, through definite object lessons, that religion was not merely a Sabbath affair, put on as a cloak! Ah, no; it entered into the very center of pulsating life and emotion, and was a living entity in the innocent, religious pleasures, as well as the simple, trustful sorrows of this blessed people!

"I am going to bring my dress over to your house, Dian," said Ellen Tyler, early that Christmas eve, "and get ready with you, for I want you to fix my hair; you have such lovely taste. I never look so well as when you arrange my hair and dress. And then I can get the use of your looking-glass, too."

Ellen did look lovely. She had a new pink print dress, and print dresses in those days were as superior to the common calicoes of today, as are the prices of today less than were those early standards of values. The skirt was made with dainty, flying ruffles, nearly to the waist, and edged with the prettiest of hand-crocheted lace; while the waist, full and gathered into the belt, was fitted with billowy sleeves of bishop shape. At the belt and near the left shoulder were flying bows of pink ribbon; while peeping behind the right ear, a tiny bow of pink made the chestnut brown hair richer for its suggestive contrast.

"Ellie, dear, you look just like one of Aunt Clara's spice pinks! I never saw you look so lovely. I could hug you myself for very admiration."

Dian stood afar off from her friend admiring her, and approaching Ellen at last, she bestowed upon the soft, pale cheek, a small pinch, to give the delicate tint needed to complete the exquisite picture.

"Well, it's no use telling you how you look, Dian, for I am sure you know it so well yourself; the fact of your own magnificent charm is so apparent that it is nonsense for anyone to try and flatter you."

"Are you making fun of me, Ellie?" queried Diantha, as she turned around from the tiny looking-glass to ask her question. "I know well enough that I have a passably good form, and that I do have some taste in dressing myself; but I hate these ugly red cheeks, and would give anything in this world for your clear, pale complexion."

The girl looked with a positive gleam of anger in her flashing blue eyes at the image of herself reflected in the glass, and muttered as she pretended to pinch her own rose-tinted cheeks: "Oh, you ugly, scarlet things, how I hate you!"

"It makes me unhappy, Dian, to hear you call yourself ugly. You know God has blessed you with rare gifts of face and form, and you ought not to speak as you do, let alone feeling so wicked about your red cheeks. They are lovely to me. They always make me feel as if I would like to take a bite out of them, as I would from a red June apple."

Dian was almost in tears now, at such a homely, unpoetic comparison, and her friend hastened to change the conversation.

"Say, Dian, do you think John Stevens can get off tonight to come down to the ball? I feel as if half of my fun would be gone without him."

"Oh, I don't know, I am sure. I haven't seen John for weeks. He is up at the President's office night and day, I guess."

"Well, I will have to content myself with Tom Allen, or Brother Leon, I guess, for I must have some fun with somebody. I am just wild for a frolic. I can hardly wait for Tom to come, I want so much to get to the party."

The girl was indeed full of the vitality of youth and health, and her pulse danced and tingled with expectant pleasure. She was young, lovely and loving, and she longed for love and admiration. Who could blame her?

XXVIII.

THE BALL IN THE SOCIAL HALL

Arrived at the hall, the girls left their escorts at the door, and hurried into the crowded dressing room under the stage. What hand-shakings and laughing exchange of greetings they found there! What merry peals of gentle laughter! What garrulous exchanges of confidences as to the causes and effects of the day's labors and pleasures, were buzzing in the two low-ceiled, square dressing rooms that happy night!

Up from the basement came the fragrant odor of baking meats, and delicious pastry. A small army of cooks was busy preparing the elaborate supper; for this was one of the good old-time parties, for which the tickets cost five dollars in scrip or produce, or less in cash; and the guests came at early dusk, and after dancing for three or four hours, were served at the loaded tables in the basement, with the luxuries and delicacies of mountain food and mountain cooking; after eating heartily of the supper, all were ready then for the dance to be renewed until the early morning hours; at any time, however, the merry-makers were glad to cease from the gay quadrilles, and listen to the wise counsel or appropriate remarks made, perchance, by the Presidency of the Church or other good speakers, who were ever the merriest and best dancers in the room. At these innocent revelries also, there was a grateful lack of unholy passions and impure thoughts and words begotten by the too frequent round dancing of novel-reading youths.

"Did you ever, in your life, see Diantha and Ellie look so pretty?" asked more than one unselfish mother, as the two girls came up the little stairway from the dressing room, into the main hall, followed by their cavaliers.

Diantha was entrancing in her simple, straight-skirted, pale-blue slip—for she scorned the balloon-like hoops of the day—with no ornament save the pale gold masses of her luminous hair, and the rich pink and white of her unappreciated but glorious complexion. She herself disliked her chief charm, the warm, rich coloring, which gave so much glowing life and fascinating vitality to the otherwise somewhat cold expression and haughty air.

Both the girls danced with the lightest grace and the keenest enjoyment, and each was besieged with partners, for both were recognized belles in their own circle. Ellen Tyler watched and waited in vain for the appearance of her beloved friend, John Stevens. She had never heard a word of love from his lips; indeed, she had never given him direct encouragement to offer such words; but she knew that, with a little insistence on his part, she could pour out to him the wealth of her young heart. And with all her swarm of admirers, she was unsatisfied, and yearning for the love that had never been offered her. Yet she was too sweet and womanly to think for a moment

of showing more interest in any man than his own interest in her justified. And so she waited and watched, trying to dance always in the set nearest the stairway which led to the outer north entrance of the hall.

She was not particularly surprised when a small boy came up to her and whispered that a gentleman outside wished to speak to her for a moment.

"Oh," she murmured in her heart, "it must be John."

She threw a shawl around her in passing the dressing room, and followed the boy outside. She saw no one when she got in the deserted doorway and was about to turn around and go back to the hall, for the lane looked very dark and forbidding at that late hour.

Just as she turned, a man with a dark cloak enveloping his whole form stepped out from the east corner of the building and, with a low bow, said softly:

"Forgive me, Miss Tyler, but the sight of heaven tempted me to try and draw out the angel, if but for one moment. I am lonesome, a stranger, and full of longing for the acquaintance of a sweet woman, be she sister or friend."

Ellen recognized the voice of her soldier acquaintance, and she involuntarily shrank back from him.

"Do not shrink from me, dear, sweet, gentle spirit. I am but a lonely, unhappy man, so near to a paradise of laughter, love and music, and yet unable to partake of one single element of all the glory that I see. You remember, even the angels are not ashamed to pity."

Just then someone came into the lane from the sidewalk, and Ellen hurriedly moved away to enter the deep doorway. As she turned, she felt a note thrust into her hand and then she was once more inside the safe precincts of the lighted, noisy building, and she put the note deep down into her pocket for future reference.

When she once more made her way into the dancing hall, she was surprised to find John Stevens dancing on the floor, and with no less a person than her dear friend Diantha. She wondered how she had missed him, but reflected that he must have come in while she was in the dressing room hunting her shawl.

"He will soon come to me," she whispered to herself, and waited impatiently for that coming.

But he did not come. Diantha and he danced together the first time and the second and the third time, and as Ellen had refused to dance, and was sitting on the side benches, she could easily follow them as the couple moved through the mazes of the quadrille and reel. Diantha's cheeks were glowing, and her eyes looked like blazing stars in the azure blue, while her lips were like the red balls on the winter wild rose bushes. And Ellen's sharp eyes noted that Diantha was not now wearing Charlie's ring. What was happening? Dian floated round with a rhythmical grace that was always so witching an accomplishment of her queenly beauty. Ellen watched and listened. She was too shrewd not to detect some meaning beneath all this throbbing excitement, and she knew that there was more than the usual effort to fascinate, in the manner of her friend Dian.

As for John, he seemed almost another man. Talk about blazing eyes; his almost burned into flame as he kept his intense gaze fastened upon the uplifted glances of his companion. He said little; Ellen could see that; but his look and his manner as he came near his dancing partner betrayed his whole secret. It was for the first time, too, for never before had he received such open, such undisguised encouragement from the girl beside him.

"John never looked at me like that," whispered Ellen in her own heart, "never, never!"

The two dancers were so absorbed in each other that they gave no heed whatever to anyone about them, and so it came to pass that the brief space of time spent by John in that eventful ball was spent wholly in the society of Diantha.

Ellen's enjoyment was all over. She felt nothing but a thrill of jealous regret, mingled with a passionate wish for another love to prove to John Stevens that she, too, could be sought and she felt as well an intense desire for the love itself. She was such a tender, clinging nature, physical love to her was not an incident, it was life itself.

When she was safely at home she opened her note and by the light of her tallow candle, she read:

"My Dear Young Friend:

"I trust you will pardon the seeming forwardness of this letter. Yours is such a gentle, forgiving nature, that you can but excuse, especially when you know that the act is prompted by as deep an affection and as earnest an admiration as could be bestowed by the heart of a man. I am heartsick and alone. I find myself filled with a love which is as hopeless as it is passionate; will you not let me at least have the mournful pleasure of expressing that love, although I know too well its hopeless character? You are so

good, so pure that it cannot hurt you to become the one star of peace in a stranger's dark horizon. I would offer you all the love, protection and devotion usual to my walk in life, if I knew that I dared.

"At least, let me have the opportunity of telling you, once for all, the love that fills my whole being for the angel who saved my life at the risk of the anger and ostracism of her own people. Will you not meet me for a few happy, happy moments while I tell you of my friendship and esteem? I will be on the northeast corner of the block on which you live, with a sleigh, tomorrow evening after nine o'clock. If you wear a white scarf over your head I shall see you in the distance, and know you are coming.

"I am forever your hopeless, despairing

"LOVER."

The note was written on heavy cream-tinted paper. It bore a beautiful crest or monogram in one corner, and it was sealed delicately with pink sealing-wax, stamped with a signet ring, which bore the device of some ancient French nobleman, and it was filled with a delicious perfumery, the odor of which floated around her like a visible presence. Ellen felt in her inmost soul that she should at once destroy this letter, and go to Aunt Clara with her whole secret; but it was such an entrancing letter! And John Stevens had flouted her so cruelly. No! She would keep the letter just to read it again! And then Ellen gave herself over to vague, delirious day-dreams.

XXIX.

DIANTHA'S SUDDEN AWAKENING

Three weeks after the ball in the Social Hall, the two girls were at a rag-bee at Aunt Clara Tyler's. There was the usual light gossip, and jolly laughter, and as was always the case at Aunt Clara's home, everybody felt unusually kind and pleasant. Aunt Clara had the faculty of making everybody feel desirous of doing and saying the best that was in them.

"Did you hear that Tom Allen and his girl are to be married at last?" asked Sister Hattie Jones, who was busily threading her needle.

"You don't mean it?" answered Rachel Winthrop. "I really thought he was going to 'play off' on her and marry Ellie."

"I don't know how you could think that, Aunt Rachel," said Ellen, a trifle sharply; "I have never had the least notion of trying to cut Luna out, and my friendship for Tom was of the most platonic nature, I assure you."

Mrs. Jones saw she had made a mistake, and to cover her confusion, she began on another subject.

"Our Mark says that these soldiers are getting pretty impudent around here. He says he has seen an officer riding around this ward in a sleigh every night for the last three weeks. And he says, too, that this stranger had one of our girls with him, for he saw her get out one night, and he declares it is one of the girls in our ward. But he won't tell who; he is going to get a better look at the girl, he says, before he tells anyone who it is. I declare I don't see what our silly girls are thinking of, to run around with these soldiers, who will ruin them as quick as a wink, and then if they felt like it, they would shoot 'em besides."

Diantha looked in quick surprise at Ellen, the moment this story began, and she saw with infinite alarm the sudden flush which spread over her friend's usually pale cheek; and with the quick intuition of love, she divined that Ellen was the guilty girl. What on earth could she do? The talk drifted on and on, and Diantha listened and kept her intent, loving gaze fixed upon the drooping eyes of her beloved friend. The two girls cleaned up the supper dishes. Ellen talked with rapid garrulity, as if to prevent a single word being said by her companion. At last, when bedtime came, Diantha said, as calmly and as indifferently as she could:

"I believe I'll stay all night with you, Ellie darling, for Aunt Clara is going out again tonight, she says, to nurse the sick; she has to go out so much, doesn't she? But what would we do without Aunt Clara? She is a whole Relief Society of herself, isn't she? You and I haven't had a good talk since Christmas."

"Well, all right. But," the girl added hesitatingly, "I'm afraid we'll have to sleep three in a bed, for Aunt Clara has sent Cousin Alice to sleep with me tonight."

"Never mind," cheerfully responded Diantha, resolved not to be balked in her endeavor to know

more about her friend's walks and ways; "I can easily do that, for I often have extra company, and you and I don't mind crowding a bit."

The girls hurried up to their room, soon after the evening prayers were over, and Diantha looked in vain for a third bedfellow. But she refrained from asking where the invisible Alice was, for she instinctively felt that Ellen had lied to her to make an excuse to prevent the talk Diantha had resolved to have with her friend. Dian was a wise girl, and she felt instinctively that it would not be prudent to urge herself upon her friend's confidence. So she chatted on other topics, and they were soon undressed and in bed. For some reason, Dian felt unusually wakeful, and she lay for a long time awake, with a curious feeling, a sort of expectancy of something, or somebody, which made the chills of uncomfortable fear race up and down her back. But at last she fell asleep, trying dimly to account for her strange sensations, and wondering vaguely who was coming. Sometime in the night she awoke, half-startled, and in a moment she was conscious, wide awake, and in perfect control of her faculties. It was the complete instant wakefulness which comes to mothers with sick children, or to men who watch their homes and loved ones in times of danger! She wondered for one brief instant why she was not in her own room, and then it flashed over her. She reached out her hand, and although she was in some way curiously prepared for it, she found her companion not at her side, and she felt all the shock of surprised dread which that discovery would necessarily entail. She lay still a moment, trying to persuade herself that Ellen had gone down stairs for a drink, or that she had gone into Aunt Clara's room, for some purpose, and at last she called out softly:

"Ellie, Ellie, dear!"

No answer came, and she was about to get up and find a light, when she heard the front door open, and directly after, the sound of hurried, muffled footsteps running up the stairs to her room, and she knew instinctively who it was.

"Ellen?" she said at once, as soon as the door opened.

"Yes," came the breathless answer, from out the darkness.

"Where have you been?" was Dian's rather stern question.

"Down stairs after some oil. I have a sore throat."

That was the second lie her friend had told her that night. Dian knew it would be useless to try to learn anything further, for more questions would only bring more lies, and she dreaded to hear another. It hurt her that her beloved Ellen should feel it possible to tell lies to anyone or for any purpose.

Dian could hear in the darkness the swift motions of the girl unrobing, and she rashly tried another question:

"What on earth did you dress for, Ellie, just to go down stairs after oil?"

"Would you like to run all over the house such a bitter cold night as this without any clothes on?" sharply asked Ellen.

Dian lay still after that, realizing how hopeless it was to think of probing the confidence of the girl she had driven away from her by her abstractions and neglect.

Dian's thoughts were bitter and remorseful. She could see now how at times she had paid little attention to the affectionate girl by her side, and how often she had allowed their confidences to remain unspoken when she herself was absorbed in some more congenial pursuit. She saw, too, her own thoughtless selfishness—was it selfishness? Dian was loath to admit that it was selfishness on her part which had driven Ellen to seek for friendship and confidence where it was given more freely. Was she, Dian, really selfish? Or was she just self-absorbed? And which was which? Whichever it might be, Dian felt she could never again be so self-centered. She must think of others more, and of her own life less. As to who had gained this confidence, even Dian dared not think. Neither of the girls could sleep, both were too agitated for repose. But neither felt to break the strained silence between them.

"I heard today at the rag-bee, Ellen," said Dian at last, gently, "that John Stevens was coming home from that trip into the north country. If he is here tomorrow night, we will have him over to our house, and have a candy-pulling."

"You'd better have him all to yourself, Diantha, for that will please both of you, and I guess it will hurt nobody else."

Ellen spoke in so low and bitter a tone, that Dian felt unable to say anything more until she had fathomed the reason for such anger.

"What has John, or what have I done that you should speak like that, Ellie?"

"Done? Done nothing, I guess!" still bitterly. "But it didn't take any smartness or particular discernment to see what was going on between you two at the Christmas ball. I can see as far

through a mill-stone as anyone else, as your sister-in-law Rachel says."

Diantha was silenced.

What could it mean; Ellen Tyler sarcastic, bitter, and deceitful? What did it all mean? Diantha lay quite still, but she could not sleep. Her past life and her own faults came before her with startling vividness and she felt that in some respects she had been a sorry failure. She hated herself for all the thoughtless disregard for other people's feelings which had at times hurt her best friends. And she knew, too, that within herself there lay a wealth of devoted self-sacrifice at the roots of her soul. Life was at last assuming an impersonal attitude to this awakening heart.

What about Ellen? One thing Dian knew, and that was that Ellen had really liked John Stevens, and what did her bitter anger and her sarcasm at herself mean? She concluded that Ellen was jealous of her. Jealous! jealous of her, Diantha! What, then? What had she done to make her jealous? To think that they two should be at loggerheads over big, silent John Stevens! She herself had always openly declared that she never could love a red-bearded man. Well, John's hair was fine and wavy and it was rich brown, any one could see that. But his long silken beard! As she thought about it, it really seemed to her to be not so bad either. The heroes in the few novels and theaters she had read and witnessed all had mustaches, silken mustaches. None of them were pictured with long beards. That was for old men and farmers. However, there was something harmonious in the long beard of the tall, silent John Stevens. As she reached this point, the girl beside her sighed a deep, heavy, heart-sad sigh, which struck Dian as very unusual, especially with sunny Ellen Tyler.

What was Ellen sighing for? Oh, yes, she was jealous of her and John Stevens. Well, what would she, Diantha, do about it? She resented the suggestion which came into her mind, that she would show forth fruits meet for repentance for all her past selfishness by now being supremely unselfish, and giving up every hope of John Stevens. Then there flashed into her mind the attentions which that wicked soldier had been paying on the sly to Ellen; and now that she thought of it, why, of course that was where Ellen had been that night. And that was the reason that she herself had felt so strangely when she awoke. Ellen was in danger, and the inspiration of the Spirit and her natural instinct had warned her of her friend's danger. Ellen had been out with him! Now that she was in possession of the whole fearful secret what should she do?

Another deep sigh by her side made Dian turn swiftly over, and putting her arms around the girl, she drew her to her and as Ellen burst into a fit of passionate weeping, Diantha stroked her hair and soothed her without asking questions or attempting to pry into the confidence of the sobbing girl. Diantha knew that forced confidence is neither full nor satisfactory. Ellen sobbed herself to sleep, after which Diantha did some very serious thinking. She made her decision at last, and then with a deep sigh from her own heart, she fell into a broken, restless sleep, which morning broke with a glad release.

What that resolve was, was shadowed forth in her next meeting with John Stevens.

XXX.

DIAN IS TRUE TO HER RESOLVE

It happened that when she came out of her home to attend her Sabbath services the next Sunday, she found tall, silent John Stevens on her doorstep, with a peculiar look in his eyes and a very fine new suit of homespun gray clothing his tall form.

"Oh," she gasped. Then as with a sudden impulse, "Come on, I am going to get Ellie as I go along. She must go to meeting with us this morning."

Now, as John had not seen Diantha since the memorable ball, and as he had certainly expected to get a greeting all his own without the mention of anybody else, he saw occasion to be very much surprised, if not a little annoyed. But as usual he said nothing, and they walked along, Diantha laughing with a quick, metallic sound, as if she were very happy or as if she were trying to conceal some undercurrent of emotion. John chose to interpret her looks and her manner to mean a rebuff to him, but he was slow to anger, and not easily disconcerted, so they strode merrily along the frozen path.

Ellen was very much surprised to see them enter her door, and she refused at first to go with them to church, as she had not made ready therefor, nor did she care to go. Diantha would not hear any excuses, and carried Ellen upstairs, to prepare hurriedly for the services.

As they approached the old—but then new—Tabernacle in the southwest corner of the Temple block, they could hear the organ's strains, accompanied by the united voices of the choir, as they

sang the opening hymn. They were too late to enter till after the prayer, and so they stood outside on the step, and, as they stood there, they saw several officers approaching the door as if to enter the sacred building.

John at once stepped up to them and inquired casually:

"Can I be of any service to you, gentlemen?"

"We wish to attend your divine service this morning," replied Colonel Saxey, "and we presume it will not be offensive, as we wish merely to listen to your beautiful choir, of which we have heard so many complimentary things."

"Certainly, sir, you will be welcome." But out of John's eyes there flashed a gleam of hatred and suspicion toward one of the officers who lingered in the background. It was none other than Captain Sherwood. Sherwood caught the look and at once was on his guard; with consummate skill he directed his glances and his whole attention to Diantha. She returned his looks of admiration with cold, proud contempt, and she even went so far as to force herself between him and Ellen as they all passed up the aisle.

John saw Captain Sherwood cast glances of admiration towards Diantha Winthrop, and he saw, too, that she forced herself in between Ellen and Sherwood, but he failed to see the expression on Diantha's face. What wonder, then, that he drew a wrong conclusion? After this, his whole thought was centered upon watching the soldier, and he heard nothing of the eloquent sermon preached by Elder Heber C. Kimball. And very little did he hear of the really fine singing by the splendid choir of fifty voices led by Prof. C. J. Thomas, accompanied as it was by the tender, tuneful playing of that most beautiful and accomplished of all President Young's pretty daughters, Fanny Young.

Before the services were half over the officers withdrew, and John quietly took up his hat and followed them out. He never lost sight of them until they were mounted on their horses and well out of town. John wondered what they had come to town for, but he was sure of one thing, and that was that Diantha Winthrop had once more changed her fickle mind. Well, John was as proud as he was silent, and he stroked his beard with long, gentle passes, as he reflected upon life and its uncertain meaning for him.

The weeks flew by, filled with excitement, parties, false rumors of danger, and then again a few days' quiet would give the city a needed rest and comparative peace.

Diantha kept so firmly to her resolve that John Stevens could not secure her hand, even for a quadrille at a dance, as she was always just engaged. She would not allow him to speak to her one moment in private, and this so successfully turned his attention to Ellen Tyler that she breathed freely and felt that the sacrifice had been accepted and that her friend was saved.

XXXI.

JOHN ALSO RESOLVES

The early spring had begun to clothe the towering mountain steeps with spotted robes of brown, gray and green; over the distant summits, the fleecy wind-clouds were torn and draggled as they trailed their white skirts across the sharp edges of the mountain tops. Out on the hills peeped the lovely rare bulb that the pioneer children called "sego-lily," and here and there nestled the early, pink star they called "Sweet Williams;" and rarer still, the tall, intensely blue bulbous flower that was known as "the blue-bell," hid its precious beauty beneath the gray walls of its shrubby friend the sage brush. Everywhere the sego lily nodded with its golden brown heart and its delicate, pouting lips of creamy white; while children ran and laughed and quarreled as they dug the mellow, luscious root they called in the Indian tongue, "segoes."

Boys began to drive the sheep from the valley winter quarters to the bunch-grass covered hills above; the herdsman took possession of his mountain hut beside the cold, moss-covered spring, perched high up in the tiny valleys of the upper mountain peaks. Out on the hills was heard the tinkling bell of the sheep, and the call of the herders echoed from peak to peak as they drove their hungry flocks through the upper vales. The low, dark green pastures on the marshy lands began to throw up their mellow juices into feathery wild oat stems, or filled the reedy grass with thin nectar for the few and very choice cows that waded around with slow pleasure in the Jordan meadows.

Down by the Jordan's banks the boys watched the cows through the early spring days, occasionally plunging into the cool water for a quick swim, longing for the hot summer days when hours could be spent in the water of the treacherous stream. Here and there a stray fisherman

threw his rude line into the stream and occasionally caught a mountain trout, the speckled beauty glistening like silver as he threw it upon the bank. At break of day, the husbandman—and who was not a husbandman in those early pioneer times in these valleys?—drove his team afield—not in the mellow soil known to the home he had left in the East, but in the hard, uncultivated earth of centuries of sun-baked, rainless summers, down in the bosom of the barren valleys. He dug out the tall, gray-spiked sage brush and huge, flaunting sunflowers, and everywhere he trenched his land in regular lines to train down upon it the cooling streams which gave life and fertility to the otherwise hopeless soil.

The first days of April brought the annual Conference, and everyone in Utah laid aside work and prepared to attend the great three days' meeting. Men in the city brought into their homes great stores of flour and food to feed the visitors who would tarry with them during the Conference. Women cooked meats and pastry, washed and ironed sheets and quilts and filled the extra straw ticks to make temporary beds in every spare corner to accommodate their usual country visitors.

For many miles on all the country roads could be seen teams of all descriptions wending their way to Conference. A few horses, some mules, and often great ox-teams plodded their way cityward. Men, women and little children cheerfully left their homes and comforts to take chances of any kind of hospitality for the privilege of attending the prized semi-annual religious services.

The yard of the Tithing office was filled with visiting teams and wagons of every description, and busy women prepared food and comfort for the hungry multitude gathered there. Children ran about, playing at hide-and-seek, or chased each other over the ground amid wheels and wagon tongues, grouped about in semi-confusion.

It was rather a cold and damp time, therefore the Tabernacle was well warmed for the people gathered in happy groups for this Friday morning. What exchanges of greetings were there as brother met brother and sister greeted sister! Months, perhaps years had elapsed since they had seen each other. Here was a family just come over from the "old country" standing up between the benches to greet the throng which crowded about them to shake their hands, for they had been good to the "elders" in England, and every elder wanted to take them by the hand and introduce them to his family. How quaint the old English pronunciation sounded on those newly imported English tongues, and how queer the children looked with their little bare, red arms, and their low, broad-toed shoes and white "pinafores," and how it made the Utah children laugh and stare to be told by these recent importations to "give over now, give over;" and how the elder would smile as the jolly mother of the new arrival would recall his words and ways while amongst them; and how his merry eyes would sadden and fill with tears as he heard the story of "our Mary who had died," or, far worse, perchance, had apostatized in spite of all teachings, and who had been left behind to her own backsliding ways! What great slaps were bestowed upon broad backs as Brother So-and-So came up behind Brother What's-His-Name and thus announced his pleasure at greeting his old-time friend!

As John Stevens entered the well-warmed and cosy building, a few minutes before the meeting was called to order, his eye involuntarily became brighter in sympathy with the merry confusion and bustle which he witnessed all around him. Everybody was standing up and talking to everybody else, while on the distant "stand" the elders were indulging in the same friendly and informal greetings. Crops, the weather, babies, death, marriage, sermons, soldiers, war, the millennium, new homespun coats, the possible advent of a woolen mill in the Territory, carpet looms, shoe lasts, prospective sawmills, and the best recipe for cooking dried service-berries, all these topics buzzed in endless variety and confusion around the well-filled hall.

But hark! all eyes are turned to the stand, as Brigham Young is heard calling the people to come "to order," and instantly all voices are stilled; the groups at once settle down into regularity, and the thoughts of the congregation are fixed upon the words of the heartfelt opening prayer of Elder Chas. C. Rich.

As the choir began its second hymn, John turned in his seat to see if Diantha and Ellen were in their seats in the choir. Yes, Diantha stood there with her lovely form clad in its classical, simple gown of homespun, fitting her like a molded glove, while the glorious eyes and scarlet lips were as beautiful as ever. He looked at her so long, and as she was unconscious of his gaze, so earnestly, that he forgot to look for Ellen.

After the hymn was over, however, he remembered Ellen and he soon saw that her place among the altos was vacant. Where was Ellen? he wondered; she was always at meeting.

John addressed to himself some very severe reflections, and as his mind left his own affairs and became partly absorbed in the sermon which Elder Orson Hyde was preaching, he gradually became conscious that he had formed a resolution. That resolution was to forget Diantha Winthrop as speedily as possible.

Now, this was a thing which John had never before contemplated. In all his past associations with the girl, no matter what coldness, neglect or discouragements he had experienced, he had never for one moment despaired of some day winning her for his wife. He knew intuitively something of human nature, and besides that he had felt in the depths of his own soul a whispering assurance that the girl belonged to him, and that his claim to her was one which had existed before they came to this earth. Therefore he had quietly gone along, never seeking to urge himself or his

attentions upon her nor indeed upon any girl; he had concealed from her as from everyone else the secret of his preference, and he had lived for years with the hope in his heart which made his daily sunshine and sweetened his every night vision. Yet now, with awakened consciousness on his part, he found himself forming an invincible resolution never again to permit his thoughts or his love to go out to this girl who had given him at one time plain encouragement, and who had since, for no reason whatever, turned upon him a colder, prouder face than she had ever done in the old days before she had guessed his secret.

He sought, with the old Puritanic inheritance of self-investigation, to fathom the cause of this resolution. He found his mind distracted from the sermon which had been so interesting, and involuntarily he turned around to look at Dian herself to see what expression she had now upon her face, and to see if perchance her looks might have had something to do with this strange decision. She looked as serene, as unconscious, as a statue. Her face looked slightly weary, as if she, too, had lost interest in the sermon, and her thoughts were on something else. But she did not look at John, and even if she knew where he sat, she seemed to avoid meeting his eyes.

As John's gaze left her witching face, and his eyes traveled over the choir seats, he observed Ellie's vacant seat, and he felt suddenly that Ellie had something to do with this decision. What and how did Ellie effect this? John was not an impulsive man, his thoughts were deep and rather slow in forming. He allowed his mind to play upon this thought which had come to him, and it seemed to him that a veritable inspiration flashed upon him that Ellie was in danger, and that she needed him. He had no superstitious notion that he could hear Ellen calling him, that is the way he would have put it to himself; yet if he had been a more imaginative man, he would have said that he could hear her voice in his soul pleading for help in her hour of extremest peril.

However it was, he was so strongly impressed that he struggled as long as he could to restrain the feeling which gave him no peace, until he finally arose and went out of the meeting, and hastened down to the home of the Tylers, and inquired for Ellen. Aunt Clara was at home, getting dinner for the rest of the folks who had gone to meeting, and she answered his knock at the door.

"Ellie, why, she is not well this morning, and she is still in bed. She did not sleep much last night, and I told her to lie still this morning, and she could perhaps go to meeting this afternoon."

John sat and chatted a while with his old friend, Aunt Clara, but he did not mention the dreadful impression which he had felt that morning, and he told himself again and again what a silly thing it was for him to give way to such notions.

He heard later from Tom Allen that Ellen was at the afternoon meeting and he added that fact to the scolding he had administered that morning to himself, and assured himself that there was plenty of time to try and persuade pretty Ellen Tyler to accept him and his home as her future destiny.

XXXII.

"SOUR GRAPES"

A few hours later, just in the cool edge of the late afternoon, John found himself eagerly looking over some new daguerreotypes of various of his friends in the shop of Marcena Cannon, the photographer, on Main Street. He was so busily engaged that he did not notice the slight noisy wrangle of some drunken men on the street until he saw a group of them darken the small doorway of the tiny shop. As his glance caught the fact that they were soldiers, he withdrew into the shadow and waited for developments. He was unwilling to embroil himself with these men, and yet he had caught sight of the dissolute face of Captain Sherwood in the crowd, and John remained to watch.

"Hello, Mr. Cannon," cried the tipsy captain, "we want our pictures taken. Can you take the picture of a gentleman as well as the ugly mugs of these d—d Mormons?"

The face of the photographer was drawn into a sneer of contempt for the insult thus offered himself and his associates, but he only said:

"Men in my profession must be as willing to try their hands at painting a fool as they are to take the likeness of an honest man. Are there any honest men in your party who want to pose before my camera?"

For answer the captain only leered about the shop, pausing unsteadily before first one picture and then another; finally he caught sight of a large daguerreotype of President Brigham Young, done by the enterprising pioneer photographer Marcena Cannon. Steadying himself in front of this picture, Sherwood raised his pistol, and shot through it, the bullet embedding itself in the

wall behind. His marksmanship was so unsteady that only the corner of the canvas was riddled; but the soldiers surrounded their captain at once, fearing that his overt act might precipitate some trouble. Sherwood yelled out as his shot rang into the dim silence of the room:

"That's the way I'd serve the old scoundrel if I could get him in the same place."

Instantly the room filled with street-loungers, although the sound was no unusual one in those unhappy Salt Lake days. As the smoke cleared away, Captain Sherwood found himself looking down the muzzle of John Stevens' own revolver, while a cool, grating voice hissed in his ear:

"Git out, vermin."

The soldier, sobered by his own folly, found his small squad of men were vastly outnumbered by the civilian police who now crowded into the tiny room, and without further parley he assumed a braggart air, and swaggered out of the place.

"'He who runs away'," quoth Charlie Rose, who was at John's elbow by this time, "'may live to fight another day.' But then again he may not. You can't sometimes always tell. Little Captain Sherwood may reach the place of his own seeking sooner than he anticipates."

The incident only served the better to reveal the unprincipled character of a man whom already poor John hated with a righteous vigor.

As the drunken captain, now somewhat sobered by his recent escapade, clanked noisily down Main Street, followed by his squad, he saw Diantha, clad in her usual comely habit, coming toward him. Instantly alert to any possible results of this chance encounter, Captain Sherwood straightened himself, and endeavored to assume his usual elegant swagger. But if he had removed the traces of his recent debauch from his walk, it still lingered in the dusky flame which burned in cheeks and chin, and above all there still glittered in the dusk of his leering eyes that signal of danger which thrills every weak human creature who beholds that black flag. Captain Sherwood sober had much to recommend him to polite society—but Captain Sherwood drunk betrayed the devil within him. Drunk or sober, he was the acme of grace, and it was with customary lightness that he swept off his blue cap and carrying it to his heart he bowed low with exaggerated politeness to the frightened girl, now opposite him.

With small trace of the raging fear within her, the girl turned her head proudly away, and with a slight motion of mingled fear and disgust she drew her skirts aside as if to avoid possible contact, and walked coldly on, leaving a short, dismayed silence behind her, as the men watched with common interest this second rout of their dissolute companion and superior officer.

"You won't speak to me?" the captain muttered thickly to himself; "well, my tragedy queen, I know somebody who will."

To his men he only gave the word of command and the party were soon astride of their horses and riding rapidly into the south.

It was Diantha's first experience with such evil forces; and after she was well out of sight she flew to her home, with her heart clamoring at her throat for swift release. Flinging herself down upon her knees she buried her face in her pillow as she sobbed out her broken prayers to that living Father whose tender protection she had never before sought with such abject humility. After her heart had ceased to pound in her neck, she scolded herself for a stupid coward of a girl—to be frightened in broad daylight, and on Main Street, where there were plenty of good men to protect her in case of real danger. Fright has no reason, has only eyes to see and ears to hear the nameless possibilities which sweep the spirit out into formless space. Presently the still small voice of reason reached her consciousness, and as thought settled quietly down upon its throne in her troubled soul, the question flashed along her mind: "Why is that man hanging around Great Salt Lake City so often of late?" Then—"Ellen?" was questioned and answered in a second illuminating thrill of pain.

Without another moment's hesitation, Diantha sprang up, bathed her face, and the fear that had oppressed her for her own safety was transferred to her friend.

Ellen was churning in her cool, quiet buttery. She greeted Diantha coldly, then bade her bring a chair for herself from the kitchen.

"No, I will stand," answered Dian, too excited yet to talk calmly. "I have had such a fright!" And she proceeded to relate her recent experiences, not adding to nor taking from one single point; the truth was brutal enough to this sheltered, pure-minded, unsophisticated girl. With that awful truth she had come to warn and shield her dearest friend.

Ellen listened with her brooding eyes fixed upon her frothing churn-dash. When the story was fairly told, she offered no word of comment.

"What do you think of that?" asked Dian, anxious to obtain her friend's point of view.

"I don't think anything," Ellen said, at last.

"Why, Ellie, he was dead drunk."

"How could you tell such a thing as that?" asked Ellen, judicially. "What do you or I know about drunken men?"

"Oh, his eyes, and his red face—and—and—everything—" stammered Diantha, confused to be thus put at a disadvantage, and upon the witness-stand. "And there was something so terrible about him every way that I just shuddered when he looked into my eyes."

Still Ellen refused to discuss the matter. Dian persisted:

"You can't think what a fright I was in. If you could have just seen him—"

The sullen listener busied herself with her churn. And at last, she sat down to work over her butter.

"Ellie," coaxed Diantha, "what do you think about the thing, anyway?"

The weak, delicate character of the love-sick Ellen had been turned from its own natural candid sweetness into the gall of secretive obstinacy, by her concealed passion; and when she was thus adjured, she simply raised her dash to clean off the remaining globes of gold, as she said, tartly:

"If you want to know what I think about you, Dianthy Winthrop, I'll tell you—'sour grapes'!"

Diantha was too frankly surprised for a moment to do aught but stare stupidly at the lowered face opposite her. Then suddenly comprehending, she said icily, her lips drawing into a sharp line across her face:

"Do you think I have made up all this story? That I am jealous? Jealous of a vile, wicked soldier? Oh, Ellen, you surely can't think such a terrible thing as that!"

"Would it be the first time you've been jealous of me?" asked the girl. Dian's truthful memory received this home-thrust in silence; but she was not thus to be thrown from her purpose.

"But, Ellen, he was drunk! Drunk, I tell you! And he is not fit to wipe your shoes on."

"Sour grapes," muttered the scornful lips of the girl before her.

"Ellen Tyler, I came here with an honest desire to give you a friendly warning. I don't imagine for one moment that you need it any more than I do, or that you are not just as good and just as wise as I am—maybe more so. But I am beginning to see things as they are: the glamor and glory and romance which once so fascinated me is fading away, thank God—anyway as it relates to men who drink and carouse or who do wrong. And especially do I begin to see how unsafe we are associating with any man outside this Church and kingdom. I have done my best to warn you, as Aunt Clara and my brother have warned us both time and time again. We are two orphaned girls, but God has sent us repeated warnings through our best friends and guardians to listen and obey. We girls may or may not come to harm when we follow our own path, but we can never come to a good end if we disobey the counsels of those who have a right to give us such counsel. I am going to try and heed that warning counsel. I dare not disobey. It is bred in my very bone to give heed to the voice of wisdom. I felt a strong impression that you needed this warning, too, and I have given it. I think now that I shall go to Aunt Clara and tell her exactly what I have told you."

Ellen's eyes lifted quickly. But with the subtle deceit of a weak, inwardly-selfish soul she said, smoothly:

"Don't bother to tell Aunt Clara, Dian. You have told me, and I will remember all you say. It might only worry Aunt Clara when there is no need."

Only half convinced, but wholly appeased by this seeming flag of truce, Diantha chatted with her friend awhile on indifferent things and then went away, resolved to seek some convenient opportunity after the Conference was well over to have a long talk with Aunt Clara.

Alas, that we wait for these laggard opportunities, instead of boldly going out to meet them in the highway! It is well to consider well before we do evil, but good should be done on the impulse.

The next morning, which was Sunday, Ellen was at her post in the choir, and John hurried home from meeting at noon to make arrangements with a friend to take his place in the evening so that he could spend that Sunday evening visiting with Ellen.

All afternoon he gently forced his mind to dwell solely and wholly upon the real sweetness and charm of pretty Ellen Tyler. He fancied what a dear little wife she would make and he drew all sorts of domestic pictures of what home with such a fond little wife would be. He knew she was good, true, lovely, and although weak in some points, he was sure that marriage would give her all the strength and force necessary for her perfection as a woman and as a saint. Yes, John had decided to marry—not Dian Winthrop, but sweet, impulsive, pretty Ellen Tyler—if he could get her! If he could! Ah, if he only could!

XXXIII.

WHERE IS ELLEN?

As the chill evening closed in that Sabbath night when the city was stilled of all its Conference bustle,—for Conference had been adjourned to meet again in six months—John Stevens hurried down to spend the quiet evening hours with Ellen Tyler. He had resolved to ask her to be his wife, and if she happily consented, he should insist that no delays of months or even weeks were necessary, but the sweet June month, not far away with its rose-blown days and its fragrant, mellow nights, should see their wedding day with its tender promise of loving reality.

"Well, Aunt Clara," he said to that good lady, "I am here again, you see. Who comes so often as I do?"

"No one that is half so welcome," she answered gently, with her kindly smile. "Come right in, John, and let me take your hat."

"How are you all, Aunt Clara, and I suppose I may as well out with it: where is Ellie?"

"We are well, John, and so is Ellie. She got over her little sick spell all right, and went to meeting this morning. But she is not at home tonight, nor will she be for a few days. I let her go home with the Meachams, who live in Provo, you know. I have had to be away from home so much this winter and spring, nursing the sick, that Ellen has been real lonesome. I felt a little sorry to let her go, for I don't like our girls away from home these times. However, you know I can't always have my way, and Ellen teased so long, and Brother Meacham said he would be very careful of her, and as she promised to be back inside of two weeks, I just had to let her go."

"Where did the Meachams stay, while they were here, Aunt Clara? Did they put up with you?"

"Oh, no; you know we had all of Jane's folks from Davis County, and we had eight of the new arrivals from England, some folks that Brother Kimball told to come here; they had been so kind to him while he was in England."

"I wonder where the Meachams did stay, then?" asked John, uneasily.

"I ain't sure, but I think they camped in the Tithing Yard; you know they have a good wagon, and as they are pretty independent, they would rather do for themselves than to stay with anyone, unless it was an own brother or sister."

John picked up his hat with his usual slow, decisive motion, and refusing Aunt Clara's warm invitation to stay awhile and chat with her, he left the house, with his long, swinging strides, and was soon out of the gate, on his way to the Tithing Yard. He did not stop to ask himself why he was going there, for he knew that most of the teams which had camped there would be on their hurried way for home, as soon as the Conference was once closed. Yet he walked as rapidly as was possible for him, and he told himself that all he hoped to find out was what hour the Meachams left, and who else was with Ellen Tyler.

It was a dark night in the early spring. Once inside the yard he made his way through the mass of debris and over outstretched wagon tongues to the one lone campfire burning brightly in a distant corner of the yard. The children were sitting with sleepy, bent heads upon their mother's knees, listening with all but unconscious ears as one or another gave the company the benefit of some imitation of Yorkshire dialect, or spun a yarn in canny Scotch. As John approached the group, he noted one face, with a positive start.

"James Meacham," he called out, unable to contain himself, "I thought you were on your road to Provo. I was told you had started this afternoon; and also, that you had Ellen Tyler with you, who was going with your wife and daughter to make a short visit. How is it I find you here?"

"Well, Brother John, you find me here because I am not there; I did not start, because I was not ready to start. And I haven't seen your precious young friend, Ellen Tyler; no more has my wife, nor my girl Maggie, I think. She was to be here tonight to let us know if she could go down with us. And what's more, I am wondering why it is you are so particular to know. Are you going to marry that fine young woman?"

"Where is Sister Meacham?" asked John, in a low tone, unheeding his friend's raillery.

"She is just gone to bed in the wagon. Here, Maggie," he called, at the side of the wagon, as he led the way for John, "here's John Stevens huntin' up pretty Ellie Tyler."

"Sister Meacham, have you seen Ellen today, and do you know whether she went to Provo with

anyone else?"

"Why, Brother Stevens, I saw Ellie yesterday, and she told me she was going to go with us down to Provo for a day or two, but she hasn't been around today, and as I thought maybe she was wanting to get a bit readier. I asked James to wait all night and we would go down to Tyler's in the morning on our way out of town and pick Ellie up. Have you been down to her house? I guess she is there, all right."

John said a few hurried words, and then hastened away in the silent night, leaving the Meachams with a little wonder on their minds, but no suspicion of anything serious. He remembered that Ellen often stayed at Winthrops over night when Aunt Clara had to be out nursing, and he would go there before he gave way to the horrible doubts and fears that were nearly overmastering him. His knock at the door was answered by Diantha herself, and she held out her hand to John with a pretty attempt which began at serious coldness, but which ended like an invitation to forgive and forget. John did not see her outstretched hand. He was too full of other emotions to even see the welcoming sparkle in her blue eyes. He merely took off his hat and asked laconically:

"Is Ellen Tyler over here?"

"No, I've hardly seen Ellen for weeks, that is, except at a distance." Her manner was cold at once. He had come hunting another girl.

John's next words dispelled this coldness, and communicated to her something of the excited fears which tore the breast of the man before her.

"Diantha, Ellen Tyler left her home this afternoon just after meeting, telling Aunt Clara that she was going to Provo with James Meacham's family to spend a fortnight. Aunt Clara is near worn out with nursing and Conference visitors, and consented to let Ellie go for two weeks. Ellen took her clothes with her, and bade them all goodbye. She is not with the Meachams, who are still encamped in the Tithing Yard, nor is she at home nor here. Where is she?"

Diantha looked with fixed, widening eyes at the pale face before her, and she repeated slowly and mechanically, as if too stunned to think:

"Where is she?"

XXXIV.

IS SHE AT THE CHASE MILL?

Diantha turned without another word to John, and, flying upstairs, she was down in a moment, with a shawl thrown around her shoulders and head.

"Come," she said, breathlessly.

"Where are you going?"

"Over to Aunt Clara, to ask her what to do. My brother Appleton is away, and Aunt Clara will know better than anyone else what to do."

They sped along in the cool, spring evening, not exchanging one word, for both hearts were heavy with the weight of remorse. Each knew that the word of inspiration had warned both that Ellen was on dangerous ground, and each knew that the word had not been heeded to the extent that it should have been.

"Oh, for one moment to undo the past," was the pitiful tale which each heart was telling its silent listener.

Aunt Clara's face whitened with a pallor like their own when the whole story had been told; but in spite of the sure feeling of catastrophe which assailed all three, Aunt Clara was too wise to allow fear to master her.

"Now, don't go to imagining that Ellen has run away because we can't just now get trace of her. Everything will turn out all right. You haven't half looked for her. She may have gone down with the Harpers instead of the Meachams. Or, she may have gone out to the Chase Mill, for you remember she did not see me the very last minute. She bade us goodbye before we went to meeting, for she said she would not wait till we got home, we always stay so long talking, and she wanted to get off. No, the thing to do tonight is to find out if she is at the Chase Mill. You see, if the Meachams have not gone, she may have found a chance to go down to the mill over night,

thinking she could go on with them in the morning."

There was a very faint glimmering of hope in this suggestion, and without saying anything further, it was arranged that John should get permission from the President for a three days' absence from his duties as night guardsman, and then he should come for both Aunt Clara and Dian in his own light spring wagon with a cover, for Dian would not listen to the others going without her. She felt so unhappy that she could scarcely bear her own sorrow, and she would have followed them on foot, so great was her anxiety to know the whole truth about her beloved friend.

She sat with Aunt Clara, telling her, now that it was too late, all the things that she knew and suspected of Ellen; of the night of the Christmas ball and of her subsequent determination to give John up entirely to Ellen; and of how Ellen had avoided her all winter, and how she had not broken through her reserve, for she had thought it was due to a little jealousy on Ellen's part on account of John. She also told her of how skilfully Ellen had parried all her questions and all attempts to draw her out the night they slept together; lastly she told of their stormy interview the day before.

All this the girl told with streaming eyes, and broken, sobbing breaths. Her self-reproach and agony were terrible, and Aunt Clara wisely allowed the first flood of her grief to spend itself before she interrupted or tried to calm the excited girl. At last, however, the elder woman saw a chance to relieve in a measure the unnecessary remorse, and she asked gently:

"Has Ellen ever told you she was in love with the soldier you speak of?"

"No, no indeed. The very last time we had a confidential talk, she said almost in as many words that she would give anything in this world if John Stevens would fall in love with her. But that was last winter, and I have treated him as coldly as I possibly could ever since, for Ellie's sake."

"Diantha, you are taking more of this on yourself than you have any need to do; you have not helped Ellen to do wrong, and if you spoke once to this wicked soldier, it was but for the once. Purity does not consist in never being at fault, or knowing what temptation is, but it is to resist that which on reflection we know to be wrong. Ellen ought to understand this as well as you do, dear, for, oh, I have tried to train her aright. I love her as my own life. I have spent many an hour in trying to persuade her to avoid temptation. I know the poor, dear girl is vain, and that makes her weak. She lacks the strength which helps us to keep our own good opinion of ourselves. She loves admiration and pleasure so well that, always, even as a child, she would sacrifice anything else on earth for it." Poor Aunt Clara was trying to drown her own self-reproaches with philosophy and moral reflection.

"But oh, to think of Ellen gone away, and to such a horrible doom! It is too awful," and again the girl broke into a sobbing fit. It was Dian's first real grief, her first experience of life and its deepest trials.

"Diantha, I can see where I have failed with my poor Ellie; I have been so anxious to nurse and help to save the sick bodies of the poor and destitute and to administer food and raiment to the needy, that I have been at times forgetful and careless of the sick and needy soul of my precious child, who is like the child of my own body. True, I did not suspect anything of what you are now telling me. But this is not wisdom. Let us not mourn over the past, but mend the future."

At that moment John drove up, and the three rode away in the late evening darkness, to visit the Chase Mill, on the outskirts of the city, and find out if Ellen had been there. Aunt Clara's surmise was correct; Ellen had ridden down there, according to the old gentleman who tended the mill, which lay just southeast of the city. Ellen came there alone, he said, and asked for a drink of milk. She also took some bread and butter, for she said she expected to be taken up either by the Meachams or the Harpers, and she was going to spend two weeks in Provo, visiting her many friends in that place.

"How did Ellen get here?" inquired John.

"She said she came down as far as the mill with Brother Sheets. She stayed with me here about an hour, and then, seeing a dust outside coming down the main road, she walked over there, carrying her bundle of clothes, and waited for the teams. I was busy getting up the cows and feeding the stock, and did not think any more about it for about an hour, and when I looked out to the main road for her, she was gone. I went right out, and happened to meet a team going south, and I asked the driver if the Meachams or the Harpers had gone on that way a little while before, and he said he thought the Harpers were just ahead of him, as they drove out of the city about half an hour before he did. So, of course, she has gone down to Provo. If you want to stay over night, I will rig up some straw ticks, and make you as comfortable as I can."

Aunt Clara could never feel satisfied to go back to the city without learning something definite and sure about their missing girl; and so it was decided to wait over night at the farm house, and to start very early in the morning for Provo, and bring back their loved wanderer with them on their return next day.

XXXV.

ON TO PROVO

What conflicting emotions swayed that little party of three as they rode rapidly along the next day towards the town of Provo!

Diantha had chosen to sit by John on the front seat, both to accommodate Aunt Clara, who was stout, and to comfort her own miserable heart, by resting on his great, fortress-like personality. She was too weak just now to stand alone, as she had done all her life. She was discovering that she was a true woman, and she needed someone to lean on in her hour of woe.

"John," she said, "do you remember when we came home last year from Provo, how we met those soldiers, almost here it was?" and then that brought up the thought all were trying to put away, and Aunt Clara interrupted:

"I wonder where the folks stayed all night! They couldn't drive clear through to Provo after meeting was out yesterday afternoon. We didn't think to inquire at Dr. Dunyon's at the point of the mountain, if they stayed there over night."

"I will ask at the Bishop's as we pass through Lehi, if he saw the Harpers on the road today."

Accordingly, they drove to the Bishop's, in Lehi, and he told them he had seen the Harpers driving along early that morning, but they did not stop over in the settlement.

"Did you notice if they had two or three girls with them? They had a grown daughter of their own, and Ellen Tyler came down with them. I was wondering if she sat on the front seat."

This was said as indifferently as it was possible, for John did not want to arouse unnecessary suspicion or cause unnecessary talk.

"Well, I can't say that I noticed. They had the wagon cover tied up at the sides, and there were women or girls inside, for I heard them laughing and singing as they passed by our fence."

This was cheering, and John consented, although somewhat reluctantly, to accept the Bishop's kindly invitation to stop and have some dinner, for he realized the women ought to eat, even if it were impossible for him to do so. It took some time for the worthy Bishop's wife to cook dinner, and she was very anxious to get the best she had, for John Stevens was an old friend, and he had done them many a good turn. Good as the dinner was, no one seemed able to eat much, although John drank some of the rich, cold milk which the Bishop's wife brought up from the springhouse.

It was past three o'clock when they left Lehi, and there were twenty miles to drive to Provo. But John's team was a fine one, and at seven o'clock in the evening, just at the early spring dusk, as they neared the edge of the bench overlooking Provo, they all strained with hungry, eager eyes at the little town stretched along the river bottoms, and each hoped and tried to believe that the object of their search was sheltered beneath one of those low, friendly roofs.

Diantha told herself that when she got hold of Ellen she would squeeze her and pet her until she would never need the love of another person. She would never leave her side again, for she would either forsake her own home to live with Ellen, or she would coax Aunt Clara to let Ellen live with her. And oh, what would she not do to make Ellen happy! She remembered that Ellen did not like to make beds, or wash dishes. Well, she would never have that to do again, for she would take all that work off Ellen's slender hands. She did not mind it, and Ellen should never have to do anything she disliked again.

On the other hand, the more experienced head of Aunt Clara was cogitating about the possible future when they found and brought the dear wanderer home, and she decided that Ellen must take up and faithfully perform some of the disagreeable things which all her life she had slighted and slipped over. She felt that perhaps she, herself, had favored Ellen too much, in that she had allowed her to please herself always, and that too, often at the expense of the comfort and rights of others. She saw now that what Ellen needed was not less affection, but more discipline, to learn that happiness does not consist in gratification of one's own wishes and desires, but in the cheerful sacrifice of self for the good and comfort of others. She realized now that her Ellen had that inner selfishness clothed with an outer lavish extravagance which deceives and entices the best of casual friends. Ellen would give up anything but her own vain pleasures. Aunt Clara had become so accustomed to sacrificing herself for those around her, that she began to fear lest she had thus deprived others of that chastening discipline. She resolved again and again that she would take up another line of action with her loved child, who was as dear as if she had been her own offspring.

John's thoughts were too deep to be discernible from his composed yet pale face, and he said nothing, unless questioned by the others, but guided his team with a firm yet gentle hand.

The low door of the Harpers' home opened at John's knock, and the girl Jenny, herself, opened it.

"Ellie Tyler? Oh, no, we haven't seen her. She said Saturday in meeting that she might come down with us, or she would come with the Meachams, and she has promised to spend one week with me. I guess she is on the road with the Meachams."

John knew better than that, but he would not set tongues to wagging, and so he said again, in his quiet, yet now wily way:

"Did you see that officer from Camp Floyd as you drove out of the city last night? I understand he has been attending our meetings. I wonder if any of those soldiers are really interested in our Church?"

The girl caught eagerly at the bait he had so skilfully flung.

"Oh, yes, I saw him. He had a spanking team, and he passed us just before we got to Chase's mill. He was alone, though, and if he was at meeting yesterday I didn't see him. But I believe he was there Saturday with some more soldiers."

John had caught the door post as she spoke, and he leaned against his arm heavily, as he said, huskily, still determined to avoid all unnecessary talk:

"We are going to find Ellen, as there is to be a theater in the Social Hall at the end of the week, and she is needed to take a small part. We will find her all right; thank you."

John got out to the carriage, and in a husky voice he repeated what had been told him, and he added:

"I am going to Bishop Miller's and get a fresh team and drive out to Camp Floyd tonight. You can both stay at the Bishop's all night, and I will arrange to have you driven home tomorrow."

"I shall not stay all night in Provo," said Diantha, harshly. "I will walk if you will not take me, but I am going to Camp Floyd myself this night."

"Get in, John," said Aunt Clara's quiet voice, "and drive on to the Bishop's and get your team. We will sit out in the carriage, and you needn't say to anyone that we are with you, for I am anxious as yourself to keep people from talking. We are both going with you."

John was already driving heedlessly down the street, for he had neither time nor words to waste.

Not a word was spoken, for miles, by the three who rode so rapidly along the dusty, rough new road which stretched ghostlike along the barren valley between the tiny settlements in Utah Valley, and the distant encampment on the other side of the western hills.

As they flew along in the bright young moonlight, the swift light clouds anon parted and then banked up again, thus alternately revealing and concealing the scene about them; at each side of the road the great bristling sagebrush which covered the plain rose up like a high, rough hedge. Here and there a startled rabbit flew over the lower sage bushes, losing himself in the faint moonlight and the distance. The lake now lay before them, now behind them, like a dark, purple shadow, its quiet ripples untouched by breeze, and unbroken by any current. The dark mountains shut them in, and as they neared the western rim, it seemed as if a wall of impenetrable gloom shut off further progress; but a narrow defile led through the low hills, and on they sped.

In the near distance a coyote yelped in shrill hunger, or answered his mate's warning cry from the distant foothills. The cool air grew chill around them, and Aunt Clara drew her own shawl about her, and threw upon Dian's unconscious shoulders the extra shawl she herself had remembered to add to their hasty preparations.

As they neared the dusky group of tents in the outer village across the stream from Camp Floyd even John was startled as a voice sang out suddenly:

"Who goes there?"

John saw the gleam of a musket barrel as the sentinel stepped from behind the cedar tree.

"A friend," John answered. "Harney's the word," and John thanked his happy fate that he had by accident or inspiration hit upon the right pass-word. The sentinel lowered the musket, and as he approached the carriage, Diantha shrank with a nameless terror of the night and its unknown perils close to John's side. Without a word, John put out his arm, and drew her to him, as if to shield her from even the gaze of wicked men; and thus he held her close while he parleyed with the soldier.

AT CAMP FLOYD

"I have important business to present to your commander. I bear with me letters and orders from President Brigham Young, endorsed by Governor Cumming. I must see General Johnston at once."

Diantha knew then that John had prepared himself for this before he had left the city, and she bowed her head in shame for all it implied concerning her beloved Ellen.

"I will leave you, Aunt Clara and Diantha," he said, as he drove on, "at the house of one of our people at the edge of the camp, while I go in and learn what I can from the commander. You will be perfectly safe, for Brother Hicks is the storekeeper, and he has his wife with him, and three grown boys. Wait here till I come for you."

John lifted Aunt Clara out, and gave the brother who came to the carriage directions to get her something to eat, for she was nearly worn out with her long and rough ride. Then he turned to the carriage, and taking Dian in his great strong arms, he lifted her to the ground, and without a word, he led her into the house, and shut the door between them.

He left the carriage at the house, and proceeded to the sleeping encampment on foot. It was midnight, and everything was dark and silent around the white-tented grounds. However, General Johnston arose at once in answer to the call, and with a slightly disgusted face listened to the story told by John.

"You will find Captain Sherwood in his own quarters, and you are at liberty to put whatever question you may choose to him, for Captain Sherwood has received strict orders on that subject from my own lips. My officers are gentlemen, and the soldiers are as decent and orderly as common men in any walk of life. I can't see on what grounds Governor Cumming interferes with my discipline in this way."

The general was intensely annoyed over the whole matter. Evidently a girl more or less was nothing to him. His rest and his discipline were of more consequence than all the women in the country. Yet he could not ignore the request of the Territorial executive, and so John was allowed to depart with permission to go where he pleased in the camp, and to secure and take away all the girls and women he could find or might choose to befriend. John found his way to the officers' tents, and as he approached them, he saw the light of a cigar in the front of one. He gave the pass-word and asked:

"May I inquire if I am near the tent of Captain Sherwood? I have business of importance with him."

"My name is Saxey," came the answer out of the darkness, and as the cigar was thrown away the colonel threw up the tent door and said:

"Come in, sir, whoever you are."

"My name is Stevens, and I am from Great Salt Lake City. I have reason to believe that Captain Sherwood has abducted a young girl from our midst, one Ellen Tyler. As she is the step-daughter of a widowed aunt, I have been authorized by the Governor and have received permission from your commander to do what I can to recover the young lady. Where can I find Captain Sherwood?"

John felt willing that any of them should know the object of his visit, for he keenly suspected that they must many of them be aware of it, anyway. Colonel Saxey stood toying with a small dagger on his low stand, and his kind face expressed something of the anxiety this disclosure had upon him. It was with a different tone of voice to that used by General Johnston that he replied:

"I have not seen any strange girl around the camp lately, but I am free to confess to you that Sherwood was not here at all yesterday. We only review twice a week, and so the commander did not know of his absence—an absence without leave, I must also confess. But I do not think that anything serious has happened, my dear Mr. Stevens. On the contrary, I hope you will find all your suspicions are groundless. Captain Sherwood is a gentleman." He winced a little as the familiar form of defense of a friend slipped from his lips. "I have every reason to believe that if you should find that the young lady you speak of has run away with the captain, he will marry her at once, even if he has not already done so."

John Stevens said nothing, but slowly stroked his beard, as he stood impatiently waiting to hunt the "gallant" captain up. The soldier noted the fiery gleam and glitter in the scintillating eyes of the mountaineer, and he felt that Sherwood would need all his skill to meet such a foe under any circumstances. He said no more, however, but silently led the way from his tent to Captain Sherwood's tent door.

A determined call brought out the sleepy orderly, who told Colonel Saxey that Sherwood had been away since yesterday morning, and he did not know anything about him. Saxey had feared

this would be the result, but he stood uncertain for a moment. Then turning to Stevens he said:

"Come," and they glided out into the night, leaving the drowsy orderly to return to his broken slumber.

They passed rapidly through the outer lines, after giving the night pass-word, and once beyond the chance of being overheard by soldiers within the camp and stragglers within the village, Colonel Saxey paused in the high sagebrush around them, and drawing near the tall, shadowy form of his companion, he said, distinctly but softly:

"I believe you are a good man; I have seen a little of this matter, and I did what I could to avert this disaster. I cannot tell you all I know; it would be dishonorable. I want you to promise me one thing, and that is, that no matter what has happened, you will not commit a greater crime to avenge yourself of a wrong. Murder will not wipe out sin. And there is hate enough in the Territory as it is."

"I am not a common butcher," said John, gloomily.

"I have nothing farther to say. But there is a small log cabin not far from here, where Sherwood sometimes stays at nights." He started to go back to his quarters; then turning back, he paused as if to speak. John waited, but no word came from the trembling lips of the agitated soldier.

John hurried away, too anxious to wait longer, and the colonel again slowly bent his way in the dim, midnight darkness, to the sleeping village of the white tents, and as he passed the outer guard, he murmured:

"Have I done right, or have I done a cowardly thing?"

The guard touched his cap, and said:

"I did not understand you, sir."

"No matter," answered the colonel, as he passed on more rapidly to his tent.

"The girl may yet be saved, or he may be made to marry her," he muttered, as he threw up his own tent door.

XXXVII.

"DEAD OR DISGRACED?"

John sped away between the high sagebrush and willows which skirted the stream running along west from camp. At one place he found himself on the bank and saw that the ditch ran far below in a small gully.

He could hear nothing, nor could he see any signs of human habitation. He turned his steps in another direction and hurried onward in his zigzag course, straining his eyes in the fading moonlight of the evening for sight of a habitation.

All at once he heard a distant or smothered cry. He stopped at once, and as he could hear nothing further, he fancied that he must have been mistaken, or that it was the screech of a far-away mountain lion. He turned again in his tracks, and by some instinct ran back to the hidden stream which flowed along down in the deep gully. That scream again! and he was sure it was a woman's voice. He flew now in the direction from which it had come. The moon was down, and he could see nothing but shadows and gloom, accustomed as he was to piercing these mountain nights with his keen, far-sighted eyes.

Again and again that scream, and this time he saw, not many rods distant from him, a door flung open, for it threw a stream of light across the brush between him and the cabin. He ran on and on, jumping over the brush occasionally and panting harder as his bounds drew him nearer the source of those piercing screams. A man's curses and three successive shots rang out upon the air, mingled with screams, then a hideous laugh in a harsh voice that was still a woman's, and John could just see a flying figure bound out from the door and disappear in the depths of the shadows of the gully.

"You she-devil!" yelled a man, as he dashed away after the figure flying away in the darkness.

John hesitated a moment whether to follow the two who had run away, or to make straight for the cabin; he chose the latter, and with hasty bounds, he was soon at the door with his eyes fixed upon a figure stretched upon the floor.

It was Ellen! A moment, and he was beside her, trying to stanch the pistol shot wound in her gaping neck, and calling softly under his breath for her to open her eyes.

He did not hear the heavy steps behind him, but he turned to meet the black, blazing eyes of Louisiana Liz, peeping in the door behind him, her smoking pistol still in her hand, and then he heard the woman howl with wicked laughter:

"You sought your flown bird too late, for the huntsman found her heart and the keen arrow of hate found her throat almost as soon. Ha, ha, ha!"

John's blood curdled in his veins, and he held the dying girl closer to him as he bent his head over her.

Ellie opened her eyes as she felt John's presence, and whispered painfully, "Tell Aunt Clara to forgive me; I am so sorry. I am—so—sorry—"

John never knew how he allowed that sweet life to flicker out, for he felt as if he could arise and grapple with Death himself and conquer the grim destroyer of all this beauty and youth.

"Well, my long-bearded friend," gasped a hoarse voice behind him; "you seem to have served your sweetheart a pretty ghastly trick."

John laid the body of his dead upon the earthen floor of the hut, and with a spring he was upon his adversary. But the soldier, who was too quick for him, dodged the blow, and ran out of the door. John followed, and ran this way and that, but the darkness and the unfamiliarity of the place rendered it impossible for him to find the villain who had thus dared to imply that he himself had been guilty of this awful deed.

In a moment, John knew how impossible it would be for him to prove anything. From the few words of so good a friend as Colonel Saxey he knew that it would only provoke hostilities and perhaps plunge the whole Territory into war and rob the leaders of their lives, if he added another crime to the one already committed.

His hands twitched and his throat ached as he entered that dreadful hut, for he felt that he would be justified in the eyes of God and man in taking the lives of such vile reprobates as were this soldier Sherwood and his octoroon paramour. Yet his first duty was to take the body of this unhappy girl home for decent burial, and then he might well leave the question of revenge to God and the future.

No one saw or molested him as he made his hasty preparation to carry the body away. He slowly and painfully made his way to the straggling village north of where he stood. He stepped more softly as he neared the village, for he had no mind to awaken the inmates of the huts around him. He had wrapped the body up in a quilt, and now he laid it carefully down just outside the window of the dwelling, whence shone the light that proved to him that his friends were awaiting him.

He stood a moment, to collect his strength a little before he met anyone; then he knocked softly. Aunt Clara came to the door, and asked as soon as she saw him, "Have you found her?"

John bowed his head; he could not speak.

"Is she dead or disgraced?" Aunt Clara never knew why she asked such a question, but it broke the calm of the man before her, and he leaned upon his arm against the doorpost, unable to control his voice. His body was quivering with a man's rare and awful sobs; they shook him as a heavy wind shakes the mighty canyon pines.

Aunt Clara stood gazing at him with glazed eyes of anguish. She could not speak, as Diantha followed her and asked:

"What is it, John; what have you found? Can't you speak? Where is Ellen? Why don't you tell us? Why don't you bring her here?"

"Dead or disgraced?" quivered Aunt Clara's lips, as she looked imploringly up into John's averted eyes.

John straightened himself, and answered with a shiver: "Both!" And poor Aunt Clara fainted at his feet.

XXXVIII.

The death of Ellen Tyler cast a heavy gloom over the whole community. The terrible circumstances surrounding it gave an added cause of enmity between the people and the army.

The funeral, which was held in the ward school house, was attended by nearly every one in the city. The people assembled in the quiet and undemonstrative fashion usual on such occasions; and long before ten o'clock, the time set for the services, the house was filled to overflowing. The windows were raised, and temporary benches arranged outside, so that as many as possible could hear the sermon.

The simple cortege made its way down the street. As the mourners entered the hall, no one wondered to see John Stevens assist the foster-mother of the girl as she leaned heavily on his arm. Aunt Clara's face was very pale, for her heart was well-nigh broken; and yet her eyes were lifted and clear while all who glanced at her saint-like, controlled face, felt calmed and quieted. Diantha was among the chief mourners, but she was not as tearless and as calm as Aunt Clara; her convulsed face betrayed her mute agony.

The whole awful story had swept from mouth to mouth, and some of the men who sat watching the sad procession file in felt the hot blood of revenge pour from heart to temple, and there were few present who would not gladly have taken up the ghastly burden of swift revenge in behalf of the dead girl.

The coffin was placed upon the table just below the pulpit. Its plain, mountain wood was unrelieved by ornament or trimming. Within, the girl lay, peaceful and silent, her sweet face just touched by the creamy, heavy petals of the sego-lilies which her small hands clasped. Those lilies were like her own life, beautiful and white, yet at the heart just purpled with the shadows.

President Young lastly passed in, and the congregation waited with anxious longing to hear his words upon this unhappy occasion. After a brief hymn, the President arose, and with slow, impressive sentences he pictured the sheltered life of such girls as the one before him. He touched upon the affectionate nature of woman, and told the Elders of Israel that to them in part was due the blame of such awful scenes as this. There was enough of love, plenty of safe, sheltered retreats for all good women in the hearts and homes of the men of Zion. Women should have as ample opportunity to select their partners as men, and if they showed a preference for a good man, why should he not consider her right to claim his affection, as carefully as he would expect her to consider a like claim from him? He spoke in strong, powerful terms of the wickedness of men who cared nothing for the virtue of womankind, and who respected nothing on earth or in heaven.

His words stirred the already excited hearts to a fiery pitch of indignation. As if he saw the unnecessary anger, he said in quiet tones: "It may prove useless to try to keep our girls and boys from running after sin, for if they have not the integrity to stand, they will fall. Now, this young girl has had good teachings, good examples, and she has been surrounded by love and kindness; she has not been neglected. In her weakness she loved too well the admiration of men, and she has herself sought and found her sin and its punishment. We must stand or fall for ourselves, and while we are responsible in a measure for the words we speak and the example we set, yet each must answer for himself or herself at the bar of Justice."

At his words, so solemnly spoken, Diantha felt her very heart stand still.

"Will this fair daughter of Zion never receive salvation?" asked the speaker. "Yes, she certainly will. She will learn her lesson. She will repent of her sin; and after suffering the necessary punishment will be reunited with her parents and friends, and with them share the blessings and privileges of the priesthood. She has already partly paid the penalty of her sin with her life. She will be saved eventually in the Kingdom of Heaven. I do not want the family to grieve too much, for this poor child is far better off than she could possibly be upon earth now; and her last words were words of repentance and affection. Some of these spirits, though weak in the flesh, are very choice and lovely. We love them and mourn deeply if they fall into error or are snatched away by death.

"If this be a grievous sin for a tender and delicate girl, what must be said of men who lead women to destruction? I would say that no pit is deep enough for them. I do not wish to excite any undue rage towards the vile wretch and his paramour whose work this is; for God will avenge the innocent on their enemies. But to you Elders of Israel, I say, beware how you treat the fair daughters of Zion! Man should protect and preserve innocent, pure womanhood. No woman can sin as deeply as a man, for she does not bear the same responsibility. If men expect to stand at the head of their families, let them see to it that they are without sin of speech or action. That which is a sin in a woman, becomes a crime in a man. Teach your sons to protect their virtue as they would their lives, and then there need be no fear of their assailing any woman. God loves these weak ones as well as we do, and He will overrule all things for the best to such as are sinned against and are thereby brought down into sin. Only let the parents so conduct themselves that their children will receive the benefit of their lives of purity and holiness, and all their tears of grief will be turned into joy in the hereafter."

Diantha felt the whole weight of this terrible lesson pressing upon her own sad heart, and it nearly crushed her with a double burden of grief. She wondered how she could ever for one moment have looked lightly upon her past actions and words, wherein she had said and thought

it no wrong to turn away from the Gospel and marry out of the Church. She asked herself bitterly whether a part of Ellen's guilt did not lie at her own door, for had she not given some measure of idle encouragement to this same soldier, and had she not said many foolish things and thought many vain, silly thoughts? She felt how inadequate were the theories of the world regarding love and its proper place in our lives, and she saw how foolish ideals and romantic poems and plays had rendered her conception of love fevered and unreal. She saw, while sitting near the dead body of her friend with its pitiful lesson, that love—that is, the romantic, unreasoning passion which is so often called love—is nothing but a base counterfeit. She felt that if love ruled the world, it must be the love of God and that love which is founded on respect and built in unselfishness. She could see that abase, vile passion which has for its only object the gratification of bodily desire, was a thing to fear and shun.

Diantha had filled the cold, lifeless hands of her dear friend with the sego-lilies, wreathing them about the neck, thus to hide the story told by the bandaged throat; but she saw how useless in eternity would be the least attempt to hide away the sins and shame of mankind.

"Oh, that I could tear away the lilies, and show to every girl in Zion the awful consequences of disobedience and vanity," she thought, as the strong, vivid words of President Young showed her the darkness of the abyss into which her own eyes had for one moment looked with fascinated gaze.

"Oh, that I could set this poor, desecrated body before every young woman in Israel, and let it preach its own heartrending sermon! And I, too, am I not saved as by fire? Oh, my gracious Father, forgive me and let a lifetime of repentance and faithfulness prove to Thee how humble and how dependent I am!" So prayed Diantha, as the benediction was being pronounced by the Bishop in charge. While the pale sego-lilies, with their purple stains, drooped and died on the breast of the dead girl!

XXXIX.

THE WOOING O'T

Three years is but a fleeting season to the mature, and is as a day to the aged; but to youth three years stretch out with apparent never-ending length. Three years of rapid history had been written in Utah since that vivid day in the tops of the mountains when A. O. Smoot, Porter Rockwell and Judson Stoddard had brought to the happy camp the terrible news of the coming of Johnston's army. Three years! Camp Floyd with its surging life, its frequent deaths, and its story of blunder and pathos had passed into history. The site where it once stood now lay desolate and burning beneath the hot summer sun. Weeds covered the rude foundations of the adobe and tented homes, and only the lonely prairie dog frequented the once busy streets. The soldiers had departed to the East, secession having already begun to rear its horrid shape, and only for the rich stores of a hundred rare comforts which they had sold in their hurried departure for less than a song, would anyone remember their unhappy visit.

Two years of peace and plenty had built up the village of the Great Salt Lake into a modest inland city. The trees along the sidewalks were heavy now with July verdure. The busy hum of industry throbbed in even beats along the city's arteries. The blacksmith whistled at his forge. The well-bucket creaked merrily in its frequent passage to the cool waters beneath, and the children sang as they went to and fro to school, or lingered in the shade of the cottonwood trees. It was the evening before the Fourth of July, 1860, and the hands of maid and matron were busy in swift preparation for such a celebration of local peace and prosperity as had not been theirs for years.

"Have you noticed what a change there is in Dian, the last year?" said Rachel Winthrop to Aunt Clara, as the two stood ironing in Aunt Clara's cosy kitchen.

"How changed?" asked Aunt Clara.

"Oh, she's so much softer and sweeter to everybody, and she is really making herself the friend of every poor girl in the ward. Why, I told her brother the other day that Diantha looked like another girl; she is so changed. She wants to do so much for me, and she is so good to the children, and you know that is unlike what she used to be. She was not unkind, only indifferent. She didn't show me much friendship, even if I was her sister-in-law, for I think she thought herself a little better and smarter than I. But she is mighty good to me now, and I love her a thousand times better for it, although I always loved her and was proud of her."

"I don't find Diantha is changed," answered Aunt Clara's gentle voice. "Don't you think that it is only that some of her latent powers and gifts are beginning to be developed? And then she has always been a reserved young lady, and while never uncivil or haughty, she is undemonstrative, and as young people are, concerned only with life as it affected her."

"Ah, Aunt Clara, you are always thinking the best of everybody. You never can see any fault in any one."

"Maybe I see the fault, but I see so much of the virtue mixed up with it that it quite obscures the small defect. I often think the latent possibilities, if once they are waked up in any soul, will lead us to eternal perfection. It is only that some natures are never awakened; but they go on and on, asleep in their inner souls, and only the body is awake and alive."

"Well, I have proved that God will help even the weakest of us to improve and get strong, if we will continually seek Him for help and light. Of course, any one as strong as Diantha will naturally be mighty good or pretty mean."

"Well, to me Diantha has always been one of the sweetest, strongest, and purest of girls. She is somewhat impulsive, but she has such admirable control of herself, people call it common-sense, that she rarely does anything silly or even unwise. And whoever saw her mean or small? She has had and still has faults, but they are like her own self, never small or spiteful. She loves deeply when she does love. Out of the fires of affliction, poor, proud motherless Diantha is rising to a higher, purer and more consecrated life. The death of Ellen has taught her to conform her life more to the standards of Christ and less to the promptings of a self-centered heart. She will make a grand woman, and a noble wife and mother."

"I don't know about the wife and mother. She is twenty-four now, and she has refused at least a dozen good, true men. I think she is going to be an old maid."

"Not she! She is waiting for a man as great, as noble and as pure-minded as herself. A great many men, as well as a great many women, are virtuous in action because they fear society or God's punishment. But Dian is pure in every thought and every act. Nothing low or vile could so much as reach her outer personality. She is well-educated and as intelligent as a girl of her age could well be. Why should she not demand that same exalted standard in her husband?"

"Oh, well, I guess she will go through the woods and pick up with a crooked stick at last, as mother used to tell us girls. Lots of our finest girls marry men who, while good enough, are inferior to themselves. I often wonder what they do it for?"

"God has some life lesson for them to learn. The Bishop says that's the way Nature evens up things. What you say is true oftentimes, but I am not going to have it so of our Dian. The voice of the Spirit has manifested to me many times that she will have a man as great and as gifted as herself."

"Say, talking of Dian's beaux, they say John Stevens will be home sometime this week from his mission to Europe. He has been away ever since Ellen's death. I thought at one time he liked our Dian, but I guess it was Ellen. He has taken her death very much to heart."

"John can love more than once, if he finds the right kind of a woman. He has a soul as big as all eternity. But he grieves as deeply as he loves."

Aunt Clara was not surprised, therefore, several evenings after this conversation, to see John Stevens step under her doorway; his tall head reaching nearly to her doorpost.

"I knew you would come to see me first thing, John, and I am glad you did. It does me so much good to see you." And she greeted him warmly.

John sat down, his eyes somewhat weary with long nights of wakefulness, for he was captain of the company of emigrants, and his limbs were worn with much travel across the seas and plains.

"I knew you would have some fried cakes and milk for me when I did come, Aunt Clara. I wonder if I came for fried cakes?" and he laughed in his low, soft undertone, as he held up one of the nutty brown, crisp cakes to admire its homely charm before he tested it further.

"You have come, John, to tell me all about your mission, and I want you to tell me something more. Rachel Winthrop was in here this afternoon, and we got to talking about our poor Ellen. She made a remark about your grieving over Ellen, and it struck me, too, that you have been grieving these two long years. I don't want you to do that, for Ellie is all right now, she has paid the penalty with her life. Now, John, that you are home, you must find some good girl, and marry and settle down. You must be nearing thirty, and it is very unusual for our young men to live so long single."

John had pushed away his plate, and left all its homely charm, for Aunt Clara's words had choked him with crowding memories. He sat still for some time, with his head in his hands. Aunt Clara watched him as she rocked back and forth, and wondered if she had for once been at fault. After a time, however, he raised his head and said, with an effort at lightness:

"I am not much of a fellow, Aunt Clara. Sometimes I do feel a bit lonely, and although I have enjoyed my mission, the thought of my homecoming has been a lonely one, except for you, Aunt Clara."

"Well, of course you are lonesome, John, and that's why I want you, now that you are home from

your mission, to get married, and have some comfort in life."

His head was drooped again, between his hands, and he said slowly:

"Aunt Clara, I have been a selfish one-idea fellow in my life. I deserve all your reproach and my own loneliness."

"Now, John, I want you to tell me just what you mean. You have something in your mind which needs airing. What is it?"

"I mean that from my earliest youth I have loved, with all the strength of my heart, a girl who never has and never will, I fear, care anything for me. For some years I felt that I could win her, through prayer and faith, and I hoped and was happy. But I did not succeed. I have tried to hide my feelings, though, and I don't think anyone has suspected me, unless it was the girl herself, occasionally."

"John, there is a belongingness in love as in life. We are not married by chance. I firmly believe that each has made covenant with his mate in the life before this. If that girl belongs to you, you will get her. If not, you don't want her. Who is it?"

"It is Dian."

He spoke with an effort, as if it were painful thus to speak her name.

"Oh!" Aunt Clara was not much surprised.

"What about Ellie?" she asked.

"I loved Ellen, but it was not as I love Dian. Maybe I have so set my heart all my life upon getting Dian that I did not give myself a chance to see other girls. Aunt Clara, forget that I have ever said what I am about to say; but I had a feeling that Ellen liked me. And I have felt all the remorse natural that I did not save her while I could."

"We can always see where we could do better, even in small things. But no one need destroy all hopes of eternity because love is not returned or because a loved one dies. This love plays such mischief, when it is not understood and governed!"

"Just so. I have failed to conquer my love, and it leaves me sore with defeat."

"Why should you conquer your love? Have you ever asked Dian to have you? Diantha is a noble girl; she is always so strong, so sweet, and so good."

"Don't I know it?" almost groaned John, as he pressed his hands across his eyes.

"Look here, John, I don't believe for one moment that God would let as prayerful a man as you waste years of your life upon a useless love. How do you know that Dian does not love you as well as you love her? Oh, mated love is such blissful, such divine joy!"

John shook his head, slowly.

"I don't want to think, John Stevens, that you are a coward. Go to that girl, and tell her what you feel, and trust God for the result. See here: You go into the front room, and I will bring Diantha over in two minutes. I will tell her you are in there, and if she wants to see you she will go in of her own accord. If she does not want to see you she can easily refuse to go in, and then I hope you will give her up and put your mind off the subject at once and forever."

Aunt Clara slipped out as she said the last words, and John waited for some time in moody, unhopeful silence, until he heard the two voices as they came into the yard. He sprang up, and put himself into the dark front room, its shadows only lifted here and there by the moonlight through the window casing.

Through the open door he saw Dian come in, her face aglow with a merry smile with which she listened to Aunt Clara's soft tones. Her white teeth gleamed like even pearls, and her red lips parted over them in the well-remembered bewitching ripples of laughter. Her bright eyes were wide and uplifted with clearest radiance. His eager eyes noted the gleam of her yellow hair, parted above the wide, white brows, and then lingered on the rich rose upon her cheek, and lighted upon the full, round chin, which he said to himself was like a cleft rose bud. The tender white throat rose up from her proud shoulders with a wondrous grace, and her soft and rounded arms were white under the soft muslin sleeve. She stood a moment unconscious of any gaze or presence, other than Aunt Clara's, and he wondered with a silent agony what expression would sweep over her expressive face when Aunt Clara made her disclosure.

"Diantha, John Stevens came home today."

The cheeks were drained of all their beautiful color, but the girl's voice was steady as she said simply, "Did he?"

"Yes; and he has been here to see me."

"Oh!"

John did not see the tense clasp of the fingers, he saw only the calm quiet of her face. Was it the quiet of displeasure?

He felt guilty, thus to watch her unconscious betrayal of self, but he told himself savagely that a man has a right to see the face of his executioner.

"John would like to see you, Dian." Aunt Clara waited a moment, then she said quietly: "He is in the front room. If you would like to see him, go in there and have a talk with him."

The girl stood a moment, with her tightly clasped hands, and her hesitation seemed like a year of suspense to the heart watching her from the other room, and then, with a little, half-troubled smile upon her lips at Aunt Clara, the girl glided into the other room, and, sheltered as well as blinded by its partial shadows, she closed the door behind her. She was so near the man that her muslin sleeve rested upon his arm.

He felt suffocated with that blissful touch, and he stood, silent, wordless, as if deprived of the powers of speech. She, too, felt his nearness, although she could see nothing, and she stood uncertain which way to go. Then she threw up her hand as if to shield herself, and she touched his cold cheek, and felt the silken mustache beneath her fingers. He snatched her hand and held it to his lips, its warmth and purity stilling, for a moment, the trembling of his soul. At last he took it away, and putting it upon his face, rested his cheek within its sweet cup, as if thus all sorrow were done forever. She stood silent, waiting, and as voiceless as himself.

This unbroken, sweet encouragement was almost more than he could bear; he was so unprepared for it, and it had all come so suddenly. After a moment, he reached out, and finding her so near, he laid his arm about her waist, and as she said nothing, he drew her to him with a close, tender embrace, and laying his own face down upon the soft hair, he held her to his throbbing heart in speechless bliss.

Neither knew how long they stood thus, so perfect was their peace. At last, he drew her face up to him, and whispered in her ear so close that his breath stirred all the tiny curls around her neck:

"Is it love, dear, or sympathy?"

For answer, she laughed softly, and putting her arms around his neck of her own accord, she murmured:

"It is my love, my life, John."

Words were too weak; he drew her face upon his shoulder, and in the shadowy silence, he put his big, rough hand under her rounded chin, and thus drawing up her mouth to his own bent lips, he told her with that long, wordless caress all the pent-up story of his life and its passion. He drew her to the casement, and in the flood of moonlight pouring in, he stood away for a moment and looked at her with his hungry eyes, as if he must make sure if she were real. He gloried in her beauty, for he loved all things beautiful and perfect of their kind; and he noted each gracious charm of face and form as he pinioned her arms down that he might hold her from fleeing away from his loving possession.

"So strong, so sweet, so pure," he murmured under his breath; "and all mine, mine for time and the long eternity!"

She laughed again, a little, happy, yet modest laugh, as she saw the gleam of adoration which lit her lover's eyes as he gazed down upon her in the moonlight, and then she struggled to free herself, as she remonstrated softly:

"You are not to hold me at arm's length, sir."

For answer, he caught her to him, and with his lips upon hers, he vowed to hold her in his heart of hearts forever and forever.

Presently, after what seemed to them a few moments of silence and sweet peace, Diantha lifted her head from his breast, and said:

"Come, John, Aunt Clara will wonder at our being in here without alight. Come, let us go out and thank her."

"Wait one moment, my girl." But she insisted, and together they opened the door, and stood with modest assertion of their love before their dearest friend.

John held his arm around the girl, as if fearing she might change her mind when once in the light, and observed by other eyes.

"This John of mine is a queer John, Aunt Clara," said Diantha, merrily, her breath quick with the joy of her expressed ownership in the big fellow beside her; "he seems to think, because I am glad to see him, that he can domineer over me, and he has kept me in there nearly half an hour,

simply to tell him that I am glad he has got home."

"Half an hour?" asked Aunt Clara, dryly; "you two have shut yourselves up in there for over two hours. It's after ten o'clock."

"Why, John Stevens, I am ashamed of you," said the girl, with sparkling eyes and soft laughter.

"A man has a right to say how-do-you-do to his wife, hasn't he?" he said, gravely.

"Oh, John, how could you?" breathed the girl; "how dare you speak so? You haven't asked me yet."

"We will be married, Aunt Clara, and, please God, one month from today."

"Oh, you John! What impudence! Aunt Clara, did you ever see anything like it? Here he has never courted me one bit in his life, and never even asked me to marry him, and now he takes the law into his own hands in that way!"

John drew her closer to his side, with his encircling arm, and looking down into her eyes, he said:

"Dear girl, I have been courting you in spirit all my life. Let me have my own way now, will you not?"

His tone was so gentle, so tender, that she answered softly, yet still half-mischievously:

"Well, Aunt Clara, I guess we will have to let him have his way. He is so big that he could crush us both if we didn't please him."

Aunt Clara's eyes were moist with tears, as she watched them. She rejoiced in their love, and she was content that she had helped a little. But as they started out of the door to leave her, and Diantha came back to kiss her once more in token of love and gratitude, Aunt Clara's heart flew back to their lost Ellie, and all the sad, miserable story. She went to the door and watched them go out of the gate, Diantha still full of bubbling mischief, with her quick, pretty gestures of teasing indifference as she refused even to take John's arm in the bright moonlight—it all brought back her Ellie's love for this same good man, and she turned back into her room with sobs in her throat; and then she knelt in silent prayer for these two who had gone out from her home to their blessed future.

As Diantha Winthrop herself knelt that night in her evening prayer, she poured out the wealth of her young heart in gratitude to God who had so magnified her life and its mission. After her prayer, she sat at her window and thought back on all the past, and she wondered anew that she could ever have called her lover cold, reserved or silent. His every look was pregnant with thought, and his presence was full of unspoken meanings. She could see how in her ignorant, thoughtless girlhood she could not appreciate him, as she could not appreciate the deep throbbing poems in the Bible until life opened them and sorrow put into her hand the secret key to their mysteries.

She had grown up to John now, and she wondered how it was that she could ever have permitted ordinary men to come near her. He was a king! Proud, intelligent, pure! With the wide-open eyes of experience, she recognized his matchless manhood and bowed down in mighty prayer that she might prove worthy of his love.

XL.

JOHN BUILDS A HOME

That was a busy month, and everybody in the neighborhood insisted on doing something for the coming wedding.

John bought a lot not far from Aunt Clara's home, and although it had only one log room on it for a house, he soon had a large front room added to it, and he put up a small lean-to for kindlings and wood. He did not propose, he said to himself, that his wife should have an unnecessary step to walk, and with that same thought, he dug a new well close to the kitchen door.

He put a good paling fence in front of the house, and promised himself that he would very soon replace the brush fence on the south side of the lot with a new one, to match the front.

How many times he peeped into the large front room, with its new, white pine floor, and its huge fire-place, and wondered how he could wait until the days were gone and Dian was there to fill every nook and corner with radiance. He wished he had time to pull down the old part and put up

an adobe room, but that must needs wait for the future. He planted, with patient care, several vines around the front "door stoop," for he knew Dian loved flowers and green things. And with what infinite pleasure at the last, he watched the putting down of carpets, bright new rag ones, that Dian and her sister-in-law and other friends had been busy getting made for the happy time of her wedding day. She and Aunt Clara came a day or so before the wedding and cleaned everything to spotless whiteness.

In the window Dian hung simple, unbleached muslin curtains with crocheted edge, which she had spent many days in bleaching. But they still retained enough of the original creamy tint to soften the plastered walls of shining white. Under one window Dian set a small pine table, painted red in imitation of mahogany, which held her three only books, one her Bible, a beloved Book of Mormon, and a prized copy of Shakespeare, which had in some way come into her possession. Under the other window was a square box, which John had fitted with hinges and a good lid, and Dian had stuffed the lid top with wool and then covered it with a pretty piece of cotton print and had hung a valence of the print around under the lid. This made a comfortable seat, and that was necessary, as chairs were rare and expensive. Inside the box-seat she had folded her modest store of linen.

Over the huge fireplace John had put a low, broad mantle, and Dian set upon the shelf her precious clock, which was one of the few things owned by her mother that she now possessed. On each side of the clock were two brass candlesticks polished like gold, and filled with tall, yellow tallow candles. Most precious of all prized treasures, John had bought the small melodeon from Bishop Winthrop, who was now in possession of a new organ for his music-loving family. John loved the dear old melodeon, out of whose slender case his beloved young wife would weave great color waves of sound and harmony; while to him alone she would now sing "Kathleen, mavourneen, the day dawn is breaking!" Ah, how he loved music and beauty and love! No one but God knew how he loved them!

A few chairs, the old-fashioned bed in the corner, a box which they called a trunk, and which had also an edged cover of white to hide its plain look, and the modest room was furnished. John had filled in the fire-place with spicy evergreens from the canyons, and he had searched the hills for the last columbines, which stood on the mantle shelf, their creamy whiteness falling into the bright color tone of the pretty room.

As John stood within its sacred precincts the night before he was to be married, he thought how the glorious presence of his beautiful wife would make it a haven of rest and happiness. He walked into the neat kitchen, and noted how carefully Dian had arranged their scanty, pioneer store of dishes, three plates, three cups and saucers, three bowls and a vegetable dish—all these had been placed up in brave show against the board he had nailed at the back of the shelves. The small cook-stove, called a "step stove," he was especially proud of, for it was a great luxury in those days. It shone with a brilliant lustre, and the few pots and pans belonging to it were hung upon the wall behind the stove with housewifely precision. He bent his face over the flowers in the kitchen windows, and whispered to himself that the delicate pinks were like Dian's cheeks, and their perfume was her breath.

As he finished his survey, he turned into the front room, and kneeling down, he offered, for the last time, his lonely evening prayer. He prayed that God would make him gentle, and worthy of such happiness, while he asked earnestly for the strength to love his religion well enough to put God first, and wife and home after. But even as he prayed, the voice of inspiration whispered in his soul, that wife and home, if rightly understood, are religion, and God was pleased with the man who could be worthy of them.

XLI.

DIANTHA ENTERS

If time permitted, it would be pleasant to tell of the merry wedding, and of the delicately mocking charm with which Diantha held her lover at arm's length, all that long, happy day. She was as winsome as a sprite, and as elusive. She had a thousand excuses to leave him to his own devices, after they had returned from the early morning wedding in the Endowment House. She must see to the dinner, for they were all at Aunt Clara's, who had insisted on getting the wedding dinner. So John folded his arms, after she had slipped from them at last, and quietly sat down by the window to read his book. She might go, she could never get away from him now, he reflected with a thrill of delight, and he could well afford to wait for her sure return.

Dian peeped in occasionally to see if he was all right, for the company would be there soon, she said, and she was very anxious to see if his collar and necktie were perfectly straight. She came in, as she found that he did not seem to notice her, and playfully ordered him to arise and let her see if he was in perfect trim. He arose at her bidding, and stood looking quizzically down upon

her, as she took a number of unnecessary minutes to arrange the already faultless collar and tie under the long beard. His eyes burned down into her uplifted, mocking blue orbs, but he said nothing, nor did he offer to touch her.

"I am very glad, Mr. John, that you have learned to keep your arms from around me, for at least this afternoon, for you will have to learn, you great, big, awkward John, that muslin dresses are not to be shaken, nor are they to be taken in such careless hands as these," and she held his unresisting hand a moment, then deftly put it about her waist.

He stooped down, and kissed her gravely upon the tender, red mouth, as if he found it impossible to resist his own forever.

Then she drew back, and with a sudden assumption of dignity she said, "Don't you know that it is very rude to kiss a lady, unless you have properly courted her, and she has promised to marry you?"

He laughed out of his eyes at her, and fell to stroking his long beard in the way she remembered so well.

"Now, I am going to stay right here, Mr. John, to punish you for not seeming glad to see me just now."

She sat down for a moment, but as John made as if to take her in his arms she sprang up, and with a sudden elusive gesture, she put out her pretty toe from the front of her dress, and made him a deep curtsy, saying mockingly:

"The lady must away to spread the feast of—well, not reason—but beef and chickens, and to thus assist the flow of—well, not soul, but small talk. Adieu," and she swept him another low bow, and tripped to the door, where she paused a moment, and turning back she tossed him a pretty kiss from the pink tips of her dainty fingers, as she laughed: "None but the brave deserve the fair," and was gone.

They had refused to have a dancing party, for both had still a deep, painful remembrance of the friend they had both loved and lost, and nothing but a simple gathering of the immediate family would they invite. As they left Aunt Clara's door that night after every guest had departed, Aunt Clara put her hands on their two shoulders, and with a silent tear in her eyes, she bade them, "Be true to God and each other," and they were alone at last with their wedded love and its pure, exquisite, heaven-ordained bliss.

Dian walked very primly down the midnight streets with her young husband, refusing to allow him to attempt to put his arm about her waist.

"You know it is exceedingly bad taste for people to show any affection in public; and even if you were to offer as an excuse that it is very late and no one is about, you remember that as children we have learned that we must do what is right whether there is any one to look at us or not. Eh?"

John assented, allowing her to place the merest finger tip on his arm, and he walked gravely down the moonlit streets between Aunt Clara's house and their own dear little home, which they were about to enter for the first time together.

Dian chatted and laughed nervously, asking and answering all sorts of questions, sometimes putting into John's mouth words he never would have uttered, for she said if he would not talk for himself she must do the talking for both. Presently they reached their own lowly gate; and he gravely held open the little wicket, for her to pass through. She stood with beating heart and quiet lips upon the small porch, while he unlocked the newly painted front door. And then she stood just inside the door, still silent, while John found and lighted the two candles on the mantle.

Then with a quizzical look in the keen loving eyes, he said, softly: "Sister Stevens, will you come in and take possession of your home?"

It was the first time she had ever heard herself so called, and she felt overpowered by all the blessed happiness the name implied. She stood a moment, and then put up her hands to cover the tears which would fill and overflow her eyes. The big fellow beside her waited a moment also, as if to make sure of the source of all these tears, and then he put his hand gently upon her shoulder and whispered, "You are not sorry, dear?"

"Oh, John," she sobbed, throwing her arms close about his neck, "I'm so happy that I must cry. Don't mind, it is only that I am so grateful to God for you and your dear love. To think, John, that I am yours, your true wife, for time and for all eternity," and she sighed with a happy, half-sobbing sigh, as she ceased her crying, and drew his face down to her own that she might kiss him on the lips, she said, to begin her married life aright, giving him always, first and last, her best loving devotion.

Then Dian opened the lid of her little organ, and played an evening hymn, while John watched her shining eyes and tender mouth as she offered up for them both a hymnal of praise in their new home. After the last note they both bowed in solemn prayer before the Throne of Grace!

XLII.

HOME, SWEET HOME

The next morning, Diantha began at once with housewifely care to clean and sweep her treasured dwelling. She scrubbed the kitchen floor, already white and new; she polished the shining brass candlesticks; she scoured the new tins, and as she worked she sang with gay abandon. There was song in her heart, and it could not but bubble up to her lips.

These small chores were done all too soon; then she dusted and arranged her modest belongings in the dainty "front room." After everything was carefully "put to rights," she looked with the happy eyes of ownership at the box, a plain, darkly-painted one, which had come clear from New England to Nauvoo, and which held all her husband's belongings. She would go through that, she said to herself, and see if there were any little bits of mending to do, for of course John had no mother to take care of his things.

She found everything folded with as exquisite neatness and care as she herself could have given them, and in the small wooden "till" she discovered many a little treasure. There were his small Bible and Book of Mormon, which he always carried when out on his trips, with a small rubber cup, also one of his traveling necessities. There was a box of needles, pins, and cotton which Dian appropriated gleefully, whispering to her own happy heart that her dear John should never need to put them to use again. She carefully brushed and folded away all the modest stores of clothing, and then she came to a small packet, on the bottom of the trunk, and wrapped up in a paper which was marked "Private."

It never occurred to Dian, for she was not much of a novel-reader, that there was anything mysterious in the packet; she knew her lover husband too well. She laid that out on the stand under the window, for she wanted John, himself, to show her all its contents, and she knew he would.

Ah, the happiness of that morning, for that blessed girl! Who could portray the bliss of her soul! It was a simple thing, the opening of a homely box, filled with homely articles, but they were the precious belongings of the one man in all creation to that girl-wife, and she felt that the little act, simple as it was, represented her taking formal possession of John and all that he could ever own. He was hers now, as perfectly as she was his.

John came in and found her on the floor, still dreaming over her future.

"Well?" he asked.

"Oh, John, I have just been looking over all your things; and I am so happy."

John did not exactly see what there was in so little a thing as that to give her so much joy, but saying nothing, as usual, he sat down and held out his arms for her to come to him. Then she brought the little packet, and with one of his quiet smiles, John unwrapped the little parcel and showed her his choicest treasures.

"Oh, yes," she exclaimed, as she held up a small, rather indistinct daguerreotype of herself and Ellen with their arms fixed primly around each other.

"I remember that," and her eyes streamed with sad tears in memory of Ellen. "I have one just like it. How did you get one? Aunt Clara has Ellie's."

"I bought it," laconically answered John.

Dian cried a moment, and then he gave her the four letters he had put away as the most precious of all his keepsakes. There was one from the Prophet Joseph Smith to his dead father, one from President Brigham Young to himself, one from his sainted mother, and a tiny little note of her own, written when she was only a girl of fourteen.

"Why, John, what on earth have you kept that little scrawling note for? I can just remember writing it to you in school one day, in answer to your own written invitation to go to a party."

"It is the only line you ever wrote to me, how can I help keeping it?"

"John," she said, facing him and looking him in the eyes, "do you mean to tell me that you liked me away long ago, when I was a little girl?"

He had never told her the story which he had confided to Aunt Clara. So he did not answer at once, but at length said, in his most drawling fashion:

"Do you think I would ask a girl to go to a party if I did not like her?"

"Now, John dear, you are not going to bother me in that way. I want you to tell just how long you have liked me, you know, loved me, in a really truly way?"

It seemed to cost John a little effort to answer, for he loved silence, especially when he was put upon the witness stand. However, he answered at last, taking her face between his hands as he spoke, and kissing both pink cheeks:

"I think I have loved you, sweetheart, since we sang together with the morning stars and shouted in unison with our companions when the foundations of this earth were laid."

"But on this earth, John; what about this earth?"

"Well, I can hardly answer. If you were to ask me when I did not love you, I could tell you—never. Ever since I saw you, a tiny, silver-haired tot of a girl, I felt that you were apart and separate from everything human for me, and I loved you."

John, with his every-day clothes on, was out in the lot daily that fall, plowing and planting for his little wife. He said little. John never was a talker; but he proved by his constant labors that no unnecessary task should be put upon the slender hands of his wife. Wood, kindlings—why, Diantha used to laugh and say that John was getting in a supply to last five years. Gentle assistance also he often silently rendered in her many household tasks. She used to order him away, but he knew the feet must get weary, after a hard day's work; and Diantha had much to do, to spin, weave, color and prepare their clothes for the coming winter. Outside her door, the yard was packed, and wetted down, and swept, until Diantha declared she could trail her wedding dress over it without harm.

It was amusing to see him out at his work, driving his team across and around the lot; and then, when Diantha came out, as she very often did, singing as she came, he would stop and look over at her with a gleam of rapturous love in his eyes, while he would wait until she threw the dainty kiss she was sure to toss before she went inside the house. Sometimes he could not resist the spell, and tying up his team he would saunter after her, and once at the door, stand wiping his brow meditatively.

"John Stevens," she would cry, "what have you left your work for, and what do you want, sir?"

And then he would go up, and putting his hand under her chin, he would draw up her face to his own bent lips and kiss her saucy red lips, while he said sometimes, in answer to her mocking question, "I only want to look at my wife."

Then she would be silenced, for that sweet word "wife" always poured over her soul such a flood of happiness that she could not speak for a time. At other times John would beg his wife to sing him one song, or to thread a tune on the mystic ivory keys, and he would let his soul go out to God and his wife on the sound-waves that beat upon his throbbing breast. Ah, John had much to thank God for, and he knew it!

One Sabbath day, as usual, they both dressed in their simple, homely best, and together walked up to the Tabernacle; Diantha felt as if she were walking upon air. She looked up at her big, sober, gentle, masterful and yet tender husband, and she knew there was not his superior in all Zion. How proudly she sat in the congregation while John paced his slow way to the stand, for he had lately been appointed to an important position in the Church. Her heart echoed every word of the ringing homely hymn, "Do What Is Right," and she thanked God that she had been helped by His matchless power to follow the simple but noble advice.

Elder Orson Pratt, who spoke, dwelt upon some of the peculiar beliefs of the Saints, and then launched out upon the great topic of marriage, and spoke with mighty power upon the eternity of the marriage covenant. Diantha's heart swelled with rapture to know that she and John had been sealed by the power and authority of the Priesthood for time and for all eternity. And to think that three short months ago she had been so full of grave misgivings as to whether John would ever seek her again, for he had made no sign for the two whole years of his missionary life! How she had grown in these two years, to love the sound of his slow, drawling voice, the glance of his keen, beautiful, yet gentle eyes. How ardently she listened to the mere mention of his name by others. She would sit with her heart all a-tremble if his name were being discussed. And now to think he was all her own! For time and for all eternity! Oh, God, what bliss divine!

The speaker touched upon the privileges of parents who bear children under the new and everlasting covenant. What a thrill of joy swept over her as she thought that she would some day be mother to John's children! Her heart almost ceased its beating for a moment, it was so new and so beautiful to think of. She looked up at John as the thought came, and he must have been led to the same reflection, for he had turned from the speaker and was looking at her with a love in his eyes which she could see from where he sat; and she colored, half with joy, half with modest shrinking, as she dropped her eyes and sat still for a moment.

"John," she said, as they were walking home at noon, "what a beautiful sermon Brother Pratt preached this morning."

"Yes," assented John.

"And, John, what a happy thought, that I—that we—that—I, that—"

John could not speak, he was too full of emotion to say a word; but when they had entered their own door, and closed themselves from the gaze of the public, he took her in his arms and held her close to his own throbbing heart, and said in her ear, "The mother of my children. For time and in all eternity."

Let us leave them now. We like the last view of our friends to be the brightest and best. This much, however, must be told, that John and Diantha are as happy today, although in the whitened years of old age and long experience, as they were in those early days of their newly wedded love.

One day when I asked John to tell me about his courting days, he answered gravely, putting his arms around the motherly shoulders of his wife:

"Why, I have just begun to court my wife. It takes a man a long time to get ready, and then the courting, to be well done, must never end, but continue throughout the long eternities."

Transcriber's Note:

Some obvious printer's errors have been corrected as seemed reasonable, such as certain punctuation errors (like omitted periods, periods to commas or semi-colons to commas, and some mismatched quotation marks). Some inconsistent or obvious spelling errors or typos within the text were also corrected (e. g. merily to merrily, cariages to carriages, we'l to we'll, according to according, Stevvens to Stevens, Govenor to Governor, Congress to Congress, cheeful to cheerful, rythm to rhythm, etc.).

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