

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE.—The Story of two Emigrant Trains—The Journey across the Plains—Arrival in Salt Lake City—Denied Provisions in the Mormon Settlements—The Travel to the Mountain Meadows—A Militia Regiment follows them—Indians and Mormon Militia attack the Train—A Fight for Four Days—Mormon Officers betray the Emigrants under a Flag of Truce—They lay down their Arms under Promise of Protection—A Hundred and Twenty Men, Women, and Children butchered—Seventeen Children preserved—The Story of the Massacre confirmed by the Affidavit of Bishop Smith—The Author's Letter to Brigham Young—Superintendent Forney's Report—Names of the Little Ones saved—Judge Cradlebaugh's Speech in Congress—Sale of the Emigrants' Property—Major Carlton's Story of the Monument—"Vengeance is mine, I *have* repaid"—"Argus" defines Brigham Young's Responsibility—Congress deaf to the Demand for Investigation.

A FEW weeks in advance of the United States Expedition to Utah in 1857, there were two trains of emigrants crossing the plains with the purpose of going to southern California. The one was from Missouri, the other from Arkansas. The former was composed chiefly of men who named themselves "Missouri Wild-cats;" the other train was a company of highly-respectable persons, sober and orderly, and in their associations seemed like a large gathering of kindred, or very near friends. The first were probably venturesome spirits seeking fortune; the others, citizens seeking new homes.

The latter company was wealthy, and there were around them every indication of comfort, and everything in abundance for pleasant travelling. In addition to the ordinary transportation wagons of emigrants, they had several riding carriages, which betokened the social class of life in which some of the emigrants had moved before setting out on the adventure of western colonization.



THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE.



They were in no hurry, but travelled leisurely, with the view of nursing the strength of their cattle, horses, and mules, in order to accomplish successfully the long and tedious journey which they had undertaken. In that company there were men, women, and children, of every age, from the venerable patriarch to the baby in arms. It was a bevy of families related to each other by the ties of consanguinity and marriage, with here and there in the train a neighbour who desired to share with them the chances of fortune in the proposed new homes on the golden shores of the Pacific.

One of their number had been a Methodist preacher, and probably most of the adults were members of that denomination. They were moral in language and conduct, and united regularly in morning and evening prayers.

On Sundays they did not travel, but observed it as a day of sacred rest for man and beast. At the appointed hour of service, this brother-preacher assembled his fellow-travellers in a large tent, which served as a meeting-house, within their wagon-circled camp, for the usual religious exercises, and there, on the low, boundless prairies, or in higher altitudes at the base of snow-capped mountains, he addressed them as fervently, and with as much soul-inspiring faith, as if his auditory had been seated comfortably within the old church-walls at home, and they too sang their hymns of praise with grateful, feeling souls, and with hearts impressed with the realization that man was but a speck in the presence of that grand and limitless nature that surrounded them, and of which they were but a microscopic part.

Those who passed the company *en route*, or travelled with them a part of the way, were favourably impressed with their society, and spoke of them in the kindest terms as an exceedingly fine company of emigrants, such as was seldom seen on the plains.

Though utterly unlike themselves in character and disposition, the "Wild-cats" contracted for them much respect, and came as near to them in travelling as was convenient for the grazing of the cattle and the purposes of the camp at night. Within sight of each other they would form their corrals, but, while the one resounded with vulgar song, boisterous roaring,

and "tall swearing," in the other there was the peace of domestic bliss and conscious rectitude.

A gentleman, a friend of the Author, travelled with this Arkansas company from Fort Bridger to Salt Lake City, and speaks of them in the highest terms: he never travelled with more pleasant companions. Hearing the nightly yells of the "Wild-cats," he advised the Arkansas company to separate from them as much as possible while passing through the settlements, and in going through the Indian country. At that time it was easy to provoke a difficulty; the whole country was excited over the news of the "invading army;" and so much was this gentleman impressed with the necessity of great prudence on the part of the emigrants that, after he had left them on his arrival at Salt Lake City, he afterwards returned and impressed upon the leading men the urgency of refusing to travel further with the Missouri company so near to them. The kindly suggestions were appreciated, and they expressed their desire to act upon them. Up to this time the journey of the emigrants had been prosperous, and everything bade fair for a pleasant termination of their travels. Like all other pilgrims, they had counted upon replenishing their stock of provisions at Salt Lake City, and to do this, and to rest their cattle, they concluded to camp awhile by the Jordan.

In early times of overland travel, the arrival of a Gentile emigrant train was usually a pleasant season for trade and barter, and those who thought proper to visit the camp could readily exchange the fruits of the garden and the produce of the dairy or the field for tea, coffee, sugar, and similar useful articles, which the emigrants had in greater abundance. Many a sister in Salt Lake City has bedecked herself with apparel advantageously purchased from the passers-by with the eggs and butter she had accumulated for just such an opportunity.

But a change had come over the spirit of the people in 1857. The Federal troops were advancing upon Zion, and the Saints were preparing for the defence of their homes. The Indian is not the only human being who fails to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty.

Since that date it has been frequently asserted by the Mor-