

floating far away over dark marshes, and then disappear—these were the days of his wasted life. He saw a star fall from heaven, and vanish in darkness. This was an emblem of himself; and the sharp arrows of unavailing remorse struck home to his heart. Then he remembered his early companions, who entered on life with him, but who, having trod the paths of virtue and of labor, were now happy and honored on this New-Year's night. The clock in the high church tower struck, and the sound, falling on his ear, recalled his parents' early love for him, their erring son; the lessons they had taught him; the prayers they had offered up on his behalf. Overwhelmed with shame and grief, he dared no longer look toward that heaven where his father dwelt; his darkened eyes dropped tears, and, with one despairing effort, he cried aloud, "Come back, my early days! come back!"

And his youth *did* return; for all this was but a dream which visited his slumbers on New-Year's night. He was still young; his faults alone were real. He thanked God, fervently, that time was still his own, that he had not yet entered the deep, dark cavern, but that he was free to tread the road leading to the peaceful land, where sunny harvests wave.

Ye who still linger on the threshold of life, doubting which path to choose, remember that, when years are passed, and your feet stumble on the dark mountain, you will cry bitterly, but cry in vain: "O youth, return! O give me back my early days!"

STORIES OF SHIPWRECK.

THE Magpie, commanded by Lieutenant Edward Smith, was lost during a hurricane in the West Indies, in 1826. At the moment of the vessel going down, a gunner's mate of the name of Meldrum struck out and succeeded in reaching a pair of oars that were floating in the water; to these he clung, and, having divested himself of a part of his clothing, he awaited, in dreadful anxiety, the fate of his companions. Not a sound met his ear; in vain his anxious gaze endeavored to pierce the gloom, but the darkness was too intense. Minutes appeared like hours, and still the awful silence remained unbroken: he felt, and the thought was agony, that, out of the twenty-four human beings who had so lately trod the deck of the schooner, he alone was left. This terrible suspense became almost beyond the power of endurance; and he already began to envy the fate of his companions, when he heard a voice at no great distance inquiring if there was any one near. He answered in the affirmative; and, pushing out in the direction from whence the sound proceeded, he reached a boat to which seven persons were clinging; among whom was Lieutenant Smith, the commander of the sloop. So far, this was a subject of congratulation; he was no longer alone; but yet the chances of his ultimate preservation were as distant as ever. The boat, which had been placed on the booms of the

schooner, had, fortunately, escaped clear of the sinking vessel, and, if the men had waited patiently, was large enough to have saved them all; but the suddenness of the calamity had deprived them of both thought and prudence. Several men had attempted to climb in on one side; the consequence was, the boat heeled over, became half filled with water, and then turned keel uppermost; and, when Meldrum reached her, he found some stretched across the keel, and others hanging on by the sides.

Matters could not last long in this way; and Mr. Smith, seeing the impossibility of any of the party being saved if they continued in their present position, endeavored to bring them to reason, by pointing out the absurdity of their conduct. To the honor of the men, they listened with the same respect to their commander as if they had been on board the schooner; those on the keel immediately relinquished their hold, and succeeded, with the assistance of their comrades, in righting the boat. Two of their number got into her, and commenced baling with their hats, while the others remained in the water, supporting themselves by the gunwales.

Order being restored, their spirits began to revive, and they entertained hopes of escaping from their present peril: but this was of short duration; and the sufferings which they had as yet endured were nothing in comparison with what they had now to undergo. The two men had scarcely commenced baling, when a cry was heard of "A shark! a shark!" No words can describe the consternation which ensued; it is well known the horror sailors have of these voracious animals, who seem apprised, by instinct, when their prey is at hand. All order was at an end; the boat again capsized, and the men were left struggling in the waters. The general safety was neglected, and it was every man for himself; no sooner had one got hold of the boat than he was pushed away by another, and in this fruitless contest more than one life was nearly sacrificed. Even in this terrible hour, their commander remained cool and collected; his voice was still raised in words of encouragement, and, as the dreaded enemy did not make its appearance, he again succeeded in persuading them to renew their efforts to clear the boat. The night had passed away—it was about ten o'clock on the morning of the 28th: the baling had progressed without interruption; a little more exertion, and the boat would have been cleared, when again was heard the cry of "The sharks! the sharks!" But this was no false alarm; the boat a second time capsized, and the unhappy men were literally cast among a shoal of these terrible monsters. The men, for a few minutes, remained uninjured, but not untouched, for the sharks actually rubbed against their victims, and, to use the exact words of one of the survivors, "frequently passed over the boat and between us while resting on the gunwale." This, however, did not last long; a shriek soon told the fate of one of the men: a shark had seized him by the leg, dyeing the water with

his blood; another shriek followed, and another man disappeared.

But these facts are almost too horrible to dwell upon; human nature revolts from so terrible a picture; we will, therefore, hurry over this part of our tale.

Smith had witnessed the sufferings of his followers with the deepest distress; and, although aware that, in all probability, he must soon share the same fate, he never for a moment appeared to think of himself. There were but six men left; and these he endeavored to sustain by his example, cheering them on to further exertions. They had, once more, recommenced their labors to clear out the boat, when one of his legs was seized by a shark. Even while suffering the most horrible torture, he restrained the expression of his feelings, for fear of increasing the alarm of the men; but the powers of his endurance were doomed to be tried to the utmost; another limb was scrunched from his body, and, uttering a deep groan, he was about to let go his hold, when he was seized by two of his men, and placed in the stern-sheets.

Yet, when his whole frame was convulsed with agony, the energies of his mind remained as strong as ever; his own pain was disregarded; he thought only of the preservation of his crew. Calling to his side a lad of the name of Wilson, who appeared the strongest of the remaining few, he exhorted him, in the event of his surviving, to inform the admiral that he was going to Cape Ontario, in search of the pirate, when the unfortunate accident occurred. "Tell him," he continued, "that my men have done their duty, and that no blame is attached to them. I have but one favor to ask, and that is, that he will promote Meldrum to be a gunner."

He then shook each man by the hand, and bade them farewell. By degrees his strength began to fail, and at last became so exhausted that he was unable to speak. He remained in this state until the sun set, when another panic seized the men from a re-appearance of the sharks; the boat gave a lurch, and the gallant commander found an end to his sufferings in a watery grave.

The *Anson* was lost, in 1807, off the coast of France. The ship was no longer an object of consideration; Captain Lydiard felt that he had done his utmost to save her, but in vain, and that now every energy must be put forth for the preservation of human life. The tempest raged with such fury, that no boat could possibly come to their aid, nor could the strongest swimmer hope to gain the shore. It appeared to Captain Lydiard, that the only chance of escape for any of the crew was in running the ship as near the coast as possible. He gave the necessary orders, and the master run the vessel on the sand which forms the bar between the Loe Pool and the sea, about three miles from Helstone. The tide had been ebbing nearly an hour when she took the ground, and she broach-

ed to, leaving her broadside heeling over, and facing the beach.

The scene of horror and confusion which ensued, on the *Anson* striking against the ground, was one which baffles all description. Many of the men were washed away by the tremendous sea which swept over the deck; many others were killed by the falling of the spars, the crashing sound of which, as they fell from aloft, mingled with the shrieks of the women on board, was heard even amidst the roar of the waters and the howling of the winds. The coast was lined with crowds of spectators, who watched with an intense and painful interest the gradual approach of the ill-fated vessel toward the shore, and witnessed the subsequent melancholy catastrophe.

Calm and undaunted amidst the terrors of the scene, Captain Lydiard is described as displaying, in a remarkable degree, that self-possession and passive heroism which has been so often the proud characteristic of the commander of a British ship-of-war under similar harassing circumstances. Notwithstanding the confusion of the scene, his voice was heard, and his orders were obeyed with that habitual deference which, even in danger and in death, an English seaman rarely fails to accord to his commanding officer. He was the first to restore order, to assist the wounded, to encourage the timid, and to revive expiring hope. Most providentially, when the vessel struck, the mainmast, in falling overboard, served to form a communication between the ship and the shore, and Captain Lydiard was the first to point out this circumstance to the crew. Clinging with his arm to the wheel of the rudder, in order to prevent his being washed overboard by the waves, he continued to encourage one after another as they made the perilous attempt to reach the shore. It was fated that this gallant officer should not enjoy in this world the reward of his humanity and his heroism. After watching with thankfulness the escape of many of his men, and having seen, with horror, many others washed off the mast, in their attempts to reach the land, he was about to undertake the dangerous passage himself, when he was attracted by the cries of a person seemingly in an agony of terror. The brave man did not hesitate for a moment, but turned and made his way to the place whence the cries proceeded. There he found a boy, a protégé of his own, whom he had entered on board the *Anson* only a few months before, clinging, in despair to a part of the wreck, and without either strength or courage to make the least effort for his own preservation. Captain Lydiard's resolution was instantly taken: he would save the lad if possible, though he might himself perish in the attempt. He threw one arm round the boy, while he cheered him by words of kind encouragement; with the other arm, he clung to the spars and mast to support himself and his burden. But the struggle did not last long; nature was exhausted by the mental and physical sufferings

he had endured; he lost his hold, not of the boy, but of the mast, the wild waves swept over them, and they perished together.

JOE SMITH AND THE MORMONS.

BY PROF. JAMES F. W. JOHNSTON.

IN the future history of mankind, if present appearances are to be trusted, the counties of Wayne and Ontario, N. Y., are likely to derive an interest and importance, in the eyes of a numerous body of people, from a circumstance wholly unconnected either with their social progress, or with their natural productions or capabilities. In these counties lie the scenes of the early passages in the life of Joe Smith, the founder of the sect of the Mormons.

Born in December, 1805, in Sharon, Windsor County, State of Vermont, he removed with his father, about 1815, to a small farm in Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, and assisted him on the farm till 1826. He received little education, read indifferently, wrote and spelt badly, knew little of arithmetic, and, in all other branches of learning he was, to the day of his death, exceedingly ignorant.

His own account of his religious progress is, that as early as fifteen years of age he began to have serious ideas regarding the future state, that he got into occasional ecstasies, and that in 1823, during one of these ecstasies, he was visited by an angel, who told him that his sins were forgiven—that the time was at hand when the gospel in its fullness was to be preached to all nations—that the American Indians were a remnant of Israel, who, when they first emigrated to America, were an enlightened people, possessing a knowledge of the true God, and enjoying his favor—that the prophets and inspired writers among them had kept a history or record of their proceedings—that these records were safely deposited—and that, if faithful, he was to be the favored instrument for bringing them to light.

On the following day, according to instructions from the angel, he went to a hill which he calls Cumorah, in Palmyra township, Wayne County, and there, in a stone chest, after a little digging, he saw the records; but it was not till four years after, in September 1827, that "the angel of the Lord delivered the records into his hands."

"These records were engraved on plates which had the appearance of gold, were seven by eight inches in size, and thinner than common tin, and were covered on both sides with Egyptian characters, small and beautifully engraved. They were bound together in a volume like the leaves of a book, and were fastened at one edge with three rings running through the whole. The volume was about six inches in thickness, bore many marks of antiquity, and part of it was sealed. With the records was found a curious instrument, called by the ancients Urim and Thummim, which consisted of two transparent stones, clear as crystal, and set in two rims of a bow—a pair of pebble

spectacles, in other words, or "helps to read" unknown tongues.

The report of his discovery having got abroad, his house was beset, he was mobbed, and his life was endangered by persons who wished to possess themselves of the plates. He therefore packed up his goods, concealed the plates in a barrel of beans, and proceeded across the country to the northern part of Pennsylvania, near the Susquehanna river, where his father-in-law resided. Here, "by the gift and power of God, through the means of the Urim and Thummim, he began to translate the record, and, being a poor writer, he employed a scribe to write the translation as it came from his mouth." In 1830 a large edition of the *Book of Mormon* was published. It professes to be an abridgment of the records made by the prophet Mormon, of the people of the Nephites, and left to his son Moroni to finish. It is regarded by the Latter-day Saints with the same veneration as the New Testament is among Christians.

The Church of the Latter-day Saints was organized on the 6th of April, 1830, at Manchester, in Ontario County, New York. Its numbers at first were few, but they rapidly increased, and in 1833 removed to the State of Missouri, and purchased a large tract of land in Jackson County. Here their neighbors tarred and feathered some, killed others, and compelled the whole to remove. They then established themselves in Clay County, in the same State, but on the opposite side of the river. From this place again, in 1835, they removed eastward to the State of Ohio, settled at Kirtland, in Geauga County, about twenty miles from Cleveland, and began to build a temple, upon which sixty-thousand dollars were expended. At Kirtland a bank was incorporated by Joe and his friends, property was bought with its notes, and settled upon the Saints, after which the bank failed—as many others did about the same time—and Ohio became too hot for the Mormons. Again, therefore, the Prophet, his apostles, and a great body of the Saints, left their home and temple, went westward a second time to the State of Missouri, purchased a large tract of land in Caldwell County, in Missouri, and built the city of the "Far West." Here difficulties soon beset them, and in August, 1838, became so serious that the military were called in; and the Mormons were finally driven, unjustly, harshly, and oppressively, by force of arms, from the State of Missouri, and sought protection in the State of Illinois, on the eastern bank of the Mississippi. They were well received in this State, and after wandering for some time—while their leader, Joe Smith, was in jail—they bought a beautiful tract of land in Hancock County, and, in the spring of 1840, began to build the city and temple of Nauvoo. The Legislature of Illinois at first passed an act giving great, and, probably, injudicious privileges to this city, which, in 1844, was already the largest in the State, and contained a population of about twenty thousand souls. The temple, too, was of great size and