

**ELKSWATAWA, OR, THE
PROPHET OF THE WEST: A
TALE OF THE FRONTIER.
IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649572823

Elkswatawa, or, The Prophet of the West: A Tale of the Frontier. In Two Volumes. Vol. II by
James Strange French

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JAMES STRANGE FRENCH

**ELKSWATAWA, OR, THE
PROPHET OF THE WEST: A
TALE OF THE FRONTIER.
IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II**

Uyoo

ELKSWATAWA;

OR,

THE PROPHET OF THE WEST.

A TALE OF THE FRONTIER.

" A noble race! but they are gone,
With their old forests wide and deep,
And we have built our homes upon
Fields where their generations sleep."

BRYANT.

French, James S.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

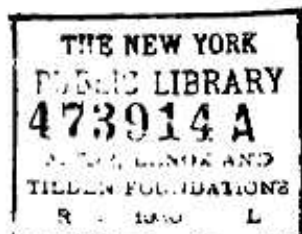
NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,

NO. 82 CLIFF STREET.

1836.

H.K.



[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836,
by HARPER & BROTHERS, in the Clerk's Office of the Southern
District of New-York.]

WILLIAM H. COLYER, Printer,
No. 104 Beekman-street.

ROY WAIN
1836
1837
1838

ELKSWATAWA;

OR,

THE PROPHET OF THE WEST.

CHAPTER XIII.

" His was the strength the weak that sways,
The glance the servile herd obeys,
The brow of majesty, where thought
And care their deepest lines had wrought."

YANOVDEN.

THE circumstances which we have detailed in the last chapter, sad as they may be, are culled unvarnished from the page of history; and were that wanting, I believe there are witnesses living who can attest their truth. They have been brought forward to prove the power of the Prophet. How great must have been his influence, when he could make a brother become the executioner of a brother, and order to the stake, certain that his orders would be executed, the most influential chiefs of his own or the neighbouring tribes, men, who had worn out the prime of their lives in fighting the battles of their country, and whose lips were then regarded as fountains of wisdom and experience. And yet this in

many instances did Elkswatawa do, and so dread was the influence attached to his name, that even those who differed with him in opinion were afraid to express their sentiments; and unrestrained, he continued, by the power of witchcraft, to remove all whom he even suspected of being hostile to his plans. When we reflect that he was originally an humble individual, not even entitled to the rank of a chieftain, and that he should by the assumption of a character generally deemed of low repute, and the weakness of which he was well aware of, have pursued such a course of petty devices, trickery, and cunning as to have established for himself among the tribes so vast a power, we cannot but wonder at the design, as well as at the mind which enabled him to conceive and execute it. And yet the deep policy and prudence which he exhibited for years, in concealing from the red men as well as the white his chief object, namely, the union of all the tribes as a warlike measure, is a matter of still more surprise. But absolute as his power may seem, it was exercised only through the agency of the band which accompanied him. This generally amounted to several hundred, they were restless spirits, and many of them spoke different languages, and yet, so implicit was the obedience which they paid to Elkswatawa, that even though calm, he could at a moment's bidding, lash them into fury and set them raging like howling beasts, or when excited, by the wave of his hand, hush them into silence deep as that of the grave.

But while he was thus occupied in removing all

who were hostile to him; his emissaries were at work, preaching his doctrines to distant tribes, and endeavouring to unite them all in one great bond of union. His conduct now became a subject of discussion among the whites, and many believed that his ultimate intentions were hostile, although, as yet, against them, not an unfriendly act had been committed. And there were many who regarded him as the agent of the English, and believed that in exciting the Indians, he was only acting in accordance with orders received from the Canadian posts. The burning of the Delaware chiefs, however, created so much excitement throughout the frontiers that General Harrison, Governor of Indiana Territory, within the borders of which, many of the scenes described had taken place, was induced, through a spirit of humanity, to interfere with a hope of preventing a farther sacrifice of victims through the machinations of the Prophet. And in accordance with this view, he sent a messenger to the Delawares, where most of these occurrences had taken place, with the following speech, which we insert for the purpose of making more explicit the Prophet's answer, which follows.

“ My Children,

“ My heart is filled with grief, and my eyes are dissolved in tears, at the news which has reached me. You have been celebrated for your wisdom above all the tribes of red people who inhabit this great island. Your fame as warriors has extended to the remotest nations, and the wisdom of your chiefs has gained for you the appellation of

grand-fathers from all the neighbouring tribes. From what cause, then, does it proceed, that you have departed from the wise councils of your fathers, and covered yourselves with guilt?—My children, tread back the steps you have taken, and endeavour to regain the straight road which you have abandoned. The dark, crooked, and thorny one which you are now pursuing will certainly lead to endless wo and misery. But who is this pretended Prophet who dares to speak in the name of the Great Creator? Is he more wise or virtuous than you are yourselves, that he should be selected to convey to you the orders of your God? Demand of him some proofs at least of his being the messenger of the Deity. If God has really employed him, he has doubtless authorised him to perform some miracles, that he may be known and received as a prophet. If he is really a prophet, ask of him to cause the sun to stand still, the moon to alter its course, the rivers to cease to flow, or the dead to rise from their graves. If he does these things, you may then believe that he has been sent from God. He tells you that the Great Spirit commands you to punish with death those who deal in magic, and that *he* is authorised to point them out. Wretched delusion! Is, then, the Master of life obliged to employ mortal man to punish those who offend Him? Has he not the thunder and all the powers of nature at his command? and could he not sweep away from the earth a whole nation with one motion of his arm? My children! do not believe that the good and great Creator of mankind has directed

you to destroy your own flesh; and do not doubt but that, if you pursue this abominable wickedness, his vengeance will overtake and crush you.

"The above is addressed to you in the name of the 'Seventeen Fires.' I now speak to you from myself, as a friend who wishes nothing more sincerely than to see you prosperous and happy. Clear your eyes, I beseech you, from the mist which surrounds them. No longer be imposed upon by the acts of an impostor. Drive him from your town, and let peace and harmony once more prevail among you. Let your poor old men and women sleep in quietness, and banish from their minds the dreadful idea of being burnt alive by their own friends and countrymen. I charge you to stop your bloody career; and if you value the friendship of your great father, the President, if you wish to preserve the good opinion of the 'Seventeen Fires,' let me hear, by the return of the bearer, that you have determined to follow my advice."*

To this speech, which served in a great measure to arrest the mad fury of Elkwatawa and his followers, the Prophet, who happened to be present at the time of its reception, delivered to the messenger who brought it in the presence of the assembled Indians, the following speech, which he requested him to write down, and hand over to Gen. Harrison. It will be seen from this that the governor had sometime previously charged the Prophet with being influenced by the English, an opinion which was current long before hostilities ac-

* See note A.