

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

WIFE No. 19,

OR

THE STORY OF

A LIFE IN BONDAGE,

BEING A

Complete Exposé of Mormonism,

AND REVEALING THE

SORROWS, SACRIFICES AND SUFFERINGS OF
WOMEN IN POLYGAMY,

BY

ANN ELIZA YOUNG,

BRIGHAM YOUNG'S APOSTATE WIFE.

WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTES BY

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ILLUSTRATED.

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1876.

TO THE

MORMON WIVES OF UTAH.

I Dedicate this Book to you, as I consecrate my life to your cause.

As long as God gives me life I shall pray and plead for your deliverance from the worse than Egyptian bondage in which you are held.

Despised, maligned, and wronged; kept in gross ignorance of the great world, its pure creeds, its high aims, its generous motives, you have been made to believe that the noblest nation of the earth was truly represented by the horde of miscreants who drove you from State to State, in early years, murdering your sons and assassinating your leaders.

Hence, you shrink from those whom God will soon lead to your deliverance, from those to whom I daily present your claims to a hearing and liberation, and who listen with responsive and sympathetic hearts.

But He will not long permit you to be so wickedly deceived; nor will the People permit you to be so cruelly enslaved.

Hope and pray! Come out of the house of bondage! Kind hearts beat for you! Open hands will welcome you! Do not fear that while God lives you shall suffer uncared for in the wilderness! This Christian realm is not "Babylon," but THE PROMISED LAND!

Courage! The night of oppression is nearly ended, and the sun of liberty is rising in the heavens for you.

ANN-ELIZA YOUNG.

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TO THE WIVES OF BRIGHAM YOUNG.

SHOULD this book meet your eyes, I wish you most distinctly to understand that my quarrel is not with you. On the contrary, the warmest and tenderest feelings of my heart are strongly enlisted in your favor. As a rule, you have been uniformly kind to me. Some of you I have dearly loved. I have respected and honored you all. My love and respect have never failed, but have rather increased with separation. I think of you often with the sincerest sympathy for your helpless condition, bound to a false religion, and fettered by a despotic system; and I wish from the depths of my heart that I could bring you, body and soul, out from the cruel bondage, and help you to find the freedom, rest, and peace which have become so sweet to me since my eyes have been opened to the light of a true and comforting faith.

Since I have left Utah, I know that some of you have censured me severely, and have joined in personal denunciations. But I know that you are actuated by a mistaken zeal for the cause which you feel yourselves bound to sustain. You, no doubt, regard my course with horror. I look upon your lives with pity.

I have taken the liberty of describing your characters and situations. I was not prompted by the slightest animosity toward you, but because the public are interested in you, and curious concerning you, and I felt that I could give to the world a true story of your lives, and, at the same time, do you justice, and let you be seen as you are in my eyes, which are not dimmed by prejudice.

I was driven to the course I am pursuing by sheer desperation, as some of you, with whom I have exchanged confidences, well know. The motives which have been attributed to me, and the charges that have been made against me, are as utterly false and foreign to my nature as darkness is to light. You, at least, should not misjudge me. You should know me better, and you do. Even your bitter prejudice, and your disapprobation of the step I have taken, cannot make you believe me other than I am. You know that apostasy from Mormonism does not necessarily degrade a person, and sink them at once to the lowest depths of infamy.

If, as is taught, — and as I suppose you believe, — I have lost the light of the gospel, and departed from “the faith once delivered to the saints,” am I not rather deserving your compassion than your censure? Your own hearts and consciences must answer that.

The women of Utah should know that I shall vindicate their rights, and defend their characters, at all times and in all places. Their sorrow has been my sorrow; their cause is my cause still. My heart goes out to them all, but more especially to you. *You* have been my companions and my sisters in tribulation. Now our paths diverge. I go on the way that I have chosen alone, while you stay sorrowing together. I wish I had the power to influence you to throw off the fetters which bind you, and to walk triumphantly forth into the glories of a faith, whose foundation is in God the compassionate Father, whose principles are those of a tender mercy, whose ruling spirit is love. Alas! I cannot do it; but I pray that the good Father in His infinite mercy may open your eyes to His glory, and lead you forth His children to do His blessed will.

ANN-ELIZA YOUNG.

CHAPTER V.

MY FATHER'S PLURAL WIFE.—CHILDHOOD IN POLYGAMY.

Childhood in Mormondom. — A striking Contrast. — The Sorrows of my Earliest Years. — How my Mother received Polygamy. — Submitting to the Rod. — Clinging to Love and Home. — Resigning all for Religion. — Strange ways of glorifying God. — The Reward of Faithfulness. — The Prophet Joseph imparts a New Religious Mystery. — The Breaking-up of a Home. — Fears of Rebellion. — The Struggle of Faith against Nature. — Seeking Rest, but finding None. — Brigham's "Counsels." — A New Wife Selected. — My Parents enter into Polygamy. — The New Bride, Elizabeth. — The Marriage Ceremony. — My Mother Sealed. — She is to become a Queen. — Domestic Arrangements in Polygamy. — Bearing the Cross. — A First Wife's Sorrows. — "Where does Polygamy Hurt?" — The Mormon Husband; his Position and Privileges.



OFTEN wonder if there is a child in Mormondom, born under the blight of polygamy, who knows what it is to have a happy, joyous childhood, rendered more happy and more joyous by the smiling, calm content of the mother in whose arms its tiny infant form lies cradled. I fear the cases are as rare as happy women are.

True, childhood always has a certain careless happiness of its own, that even the saddest surroundings cannot wholly repress; but even this happiness is embittered by the tearful eyes that gaze into trustful baby ones, and the lips that

quiver with pain, as they try to smile back into laughing baby faces.

In the happy homes which I have visited since I broke the chains that bound me, and came forth a free woman, unshackled in thought and untrammelled in action, although a wanderer on the face of the earth, with no abiding-place where to stay my weary feet, I have been compelled to contrast the difference between childhood in a monogamic country and in a polygamous one; and when I have seen the mother's face grow almost divine in its radiant content as she smiled down into the face of the little one sheltered so closely in her heart, I have felt my heart throb and ache with jealous anguish for the little ones in Utah, and above all for their weary-hearted mothers, to whom maternity brings no such joy, and added love, and tender care.

I was consecrated to sorrow by the baptism of my mother's tears upon my baby brow. I never remember on her face one such look as I see daily upon mothers' faces now. My baby hands wiped away tears, my baby fingers stroked a cheek furrowed by them, and my baby eyes never saw beyond the mist in hers. I came to her when the greatest misery of her life was about to fall upon her; and that misery came to her, as it came to all the women then, under the guise of religion — something that must be endured "for Christ's sake." And as her religion had brought her nothing but persecution and sacrifice, she submitted to this new trial as to everything that had preceded it, and received polygamy as a cross laid upon her, but which strength would be given her to bear.

She had never questioned any of Joseph Smith's "revelations," and she did not dare do so now, although this one came to her like a sudden and heavy blow, hurting heart and soul, and rendering the thought of life unendurable. Hitherto, although her sufferings had been severe, and her privations many, yet through them all she had been sustained

by her husband's love. That was hers, and together they had shared poverty and tasted plenty. Their sufferings had brought them closer together, and whether in plenty or poverty, they had been happy in each other and in their children, and had made a home, and a cheerful one, wherever they had been, one in which the spirit of love ruled supreme. Now, her religion told her that she was selfish and wicked to try and keep this home and husband. The one must be broken and desolated, the other shared with some one else. "The Lord commanded it." What a blasphemy and satire on Him who is the God of Love, that He should make His children unhappy, and wreck all hopes of peace and content, for His glory! It seems as though this one act of Smith's alone should have opened the eyes of this deluded people, and shown them that their false Prophet was not taught of God, as he pretended, and they so fondly believed, but that he was impelled by the demons of covetousness and lust. But their eyes were blinded, and they could not see; their reason was intralled, and they did not know it was bound; their wills were obedient to his, and he held them soul and body, and played with them as though they were so many puppets, helpless and lifeless out of his hands.

Being accounted among the specially "faithful," my parents were among the first to whom polygamy was taught by Joseph Smith himself, and my father was commanded by him to "live up to his privileges," and to take another wife.

At first, the thought of taking a second wife to share his home with the one whom he had first loved, who had been the object of his youthful dreams and of his manhood's devotion; who had stood by him, through every reverse, with the courage, and consideration, and love which only a strong-natured, tender-hearted, earnest-souled woman could show under such circumstances; who was, in every sense, a helpmeet, and, above all, the mother of his children, — was

hateful to him. It took a long time, too, to overcome his aversion to the new system. He and my mother had many a long, tearful talk over it; and although they received the doctrine, believing that it must be right, they could not for some time make up their minds to put it in practice. In the mean time Joseph was assassinated, and for a little time they were left to each other in peace. But Brigham Young was bound to carry out Joseph's revelations, and this one relating to the plural wife system was strongly, though secretly, urged upon the Saints. Both my father and mother were visited by Brigham, and "counselled" in regard to the matter. My mother has often said that the "Revelation" was the most hateful thing in the world to her, and she dreaded and abhorred it, but she was afraid to oppose it, lest she should be found "fighting against the Lord." The thought that she might be obliged to live in a polygamous relation with another woman filled her with horror and fear; but she was assured by her religious leader, that the feeling was merely the effect of her early training, which she would soon outgrow under the benign influences of the gospel. For several months she struggled with herself over this subject, before she could think patiently of it for even a minute. She wanted to have it made easy and plain to her, for she could not bear to repudiate any of her beloved Prophet's teachings. She agonized over it day and night; she prayed incessantly to be given the true "spirit" of submission; if it was God's will, she wanted strength to endure it; and she believed she should have it, for surely the kind and loving Father would not impose upon his children burdens greater than they could bear. She had not learned, as she has since, that the God of the Mormon belief was not the heavenly Father whose love the Saviour taught, but a jealous God, a cruel, avenging Spirit, who demanded blood-offerings to appease his awakened wrath. He was not the tender Parent, all-wise, all-powerful, and all-loving, whom she revered and adored. There was little

use in looking towards her people's God for help or comfort. Retribution, and justice untempered by mercy, were all He had for His subjects, not children.

During all these months of wavering doubt and untold misery, my father never attempted to influence my mother's decision in the least; she had her battle to fight, and he his; the end was inevitable for both; but for all this the contest was no less severe. Brigham's "counselling" began to assume the form of commands, which at last grew so imperative that they were obliged to be obeyed. My mother did not rebel; she looked upon it as duty, and she was determined to do it silently and uncomplainingly, if not willingly and cheerfully. My parents consulted together regarding the choice of the new wife, and fixed upon the person with surprising unanimity. They were each anxious to help and comfort the other in this as they had been in every other emergency of their lives. My father wished, if he must take another wife, to choose one who should be agreeable to my mother, or rather as agreeable as one woman could be to another under such circumstances; and my mother was, for her part, equally determined not to oppose him in his selection. But opposition was not necessary, as his choice fell upon the very person whom my mother would have selected, had the task rested with her alone.

A short time after my birth, a Miss Elizabeth Taft came, with a younger sister, to live in our house. She was a very pleasant, cheery, affectionate person, and all the family became very much attached to her. Father, mother, children, all quoted "Elizabeth," and she became almost a part of our very selves. She was thoughtful of my mother, and tender to us little ones, petting us and indulging us in our childish whims, and we, in return, loved her very dearly. She was a good woman in its highest interpretation, and devotedly religious. Naturally enough, seeing her so constantly, both my parents thought of her

as the new wife. If they must enter polygamy, they knew they could do no better than to take her into the family, if she could be induced to consider the subject in the same light. My father made proposals to her, and my mother seconded them. The thought of living in a polygamic relation with any one was very unpleasant to her, as indeed it is to every true woman; but she desired to live her religion; and believing this to be a part of it, accepted my father's proposal, and became his first plural wife when I was about a year old.

Her parents were in Michigan at the time, and Elizabeth wished to wait until their arrival; but Brigham, who, as a matter of course, was interested in the affair, counselled the marriage to proceed, and of course it was considered right and prudent to obey his counsel; and as he was hurrying forward the endowments in the Nauvoo Temple, preparatory to leaving for the West, the parties most nearly concerned in the matter thought it best to hasten the nuptials.

My mother was to be "sealed" at the same time, as, according to Joseph's Revelation, her former marriage, having been performed in the Gentile form, was not binding. The place of sealing was the Temple; and there, one midwinter day, in the beginning of the year 1846, my mother was sealed to my father for "time and for all eternity," after which she gave him Elizabeth as his wife according to the Mormon marriage formula. It was with a steady voice and calm composure that she pronounced the words that gave another woman a share in her husband's love; but it was none the less with a heavy, breaking heart. Think of it, wives, who are happy in undivided homes, and in your husbands' unshared love! What if your religion commanded you to give another woman to your husband as a wife; who was to have an equal right with you to his attention and his love; who should bear his name, and be a mother to his children; that all this should be done "in the

name of the Lord," and without shrinking or complaint on your part. Take this home to yourself, and you will be able to appreciate as never before the horrors of Mormonism:

It was in January that my father obeyed the "counsel" of his Prophet and leader, and in March his new wife's parents returned, and were shocked and grieved beyond measure to find their daughter married into polygamy; yet, being strong in the faith, and much attached to their church and their religion, submitted without a murmur, like the good Saints they were.

My mother was so quiet and uncomplaining in the position which she had voluntarily assumed, that she was praised by the officious brethren and sisters for submitting with such good grace, and was told by them that great glory awaited her as a reward, and also, as she had so readily made the great sacrifice, she would always be recognized as the first wife, which, among the Mormons, is considered an exceeding great honor. One of the sisters, who was a strong advocate of the new "Celestial" system, said to her:

"You will stand at the head of your husband's kingdom as a queen; no one can ever take your place from you, but you will be honored to stand by his side through the endless ages of eternity." It was by such nonsensical talk and absurd promises as these that the Mormon leaders tried to make polygamy attractive to the women who were already married, and render them more willing to enter it. Such absurdities may have weight with some women, but they did not affect my mother, nor render the cross she had assumed any more easy to bear. Her husband's undivided love during time was better than royal honors in eternity.

The new wife lived in the family, and to outward appearance everything was unchanged. Only a few of the "very faithful" knew of the new arrangement; it was deemed best to keep it a secret from the majority of the people, to whom polygamy was not a fixed fact, and who were waver-

ing slightly in the faith on account of it. The time had not yet come to promulgate the doctrine freely, and many left Nauvoo for the West quite ignorant that the system really existed in their midst. I think many of them never would have crossed those endless plains, and sought shelter under the shadow of the Rocky Mountains, had they known what unhappiness awaited them. But unchanged as our family circle was to those outside it, within was unhappiness and bitterness of spirit. It was much harder to endure, even, than my mother had anticipated. Terrible as was the thought, the reality was much more horrible. She thought she had counted the cost; she found she had, in her ignorance, been unable to estimate it. Every hour of her life her heart was torn by some new agony. She was compelled to see many of the tender, wifely little offices, trifles in themselves, that she had been accustomed to perform, done by other hands, and she herself always turned off with the excuse, "You see, dear, you have the children to attend to, and I did not wish to give you trouble." Trouble! as though anything done for him, with a heart full of love, could be accounted as such! That hurt her almost as much as to see another doing what it had always been her delight to do.

As is the custom of men in polygamy, my father fell more easily into the new arrangement, and even found a certain comfort and content in it, and he wondered very much that my mother could not be happy as well. Indeed, he was a little impatient, after a while, that she would not say she was content and satisfied in the new relation.

"I don't understand it," he would say; "you were willing at first. What is the difficulty now? Don't you think Elizabeth a good, true girl?"

"Yes, indeed," was always the reply; for my mother was too just a woman to do even a rival a wrong.

"Don't you believe in polygamy, then?" he would ask, determined to get to the bottom of the mystery.

"Yes, I suppose so. I wish to live *my* religion," was the dreary reply.

"Well, what is to be done about it?" was the next anxious question.

"O, I don't know," my mother would say, in bitter despair; "but I can't endure this life."

"And yet you entered it voluntarily. I don't understand you; you are strangely inconsistent."

Her remonstrance and his comfort never went beyond this point. There was nothing more to be said. She had protested with unutterable anguish against the life that she felt was false and in direct contradiction to every law of moral right, although she was told to look upon it as "divine;" and the only answer she could get was, "You are inconsistent; you entered the relation voluntarily." The very truth of this reply silenced her, but it did not make her burdens any lighter or easier to bear.

She saw that patient endurance was all that was required of her, and all she could give. Her husband was hers no longer; she herself had given another woman the same right to his care that she had; and now she turned to all that was left her in life that she could call her own — her children. Had it not been for us she would have prayed to die. I was the baby, and she has said that at that time I was the strongest tie which held her to life. If it had not been for me, lying helpless in her arms, she would have taken her life into her own hands, and put an end to it then and there. But she could not endure the thought of leaving me, her only daughter, — her baby girl, — alone and unshielded by a mother's care. My brothers, who were quite large boys at that time, she thought would not miss her, nor need her so much; and many a time she has knelt with me clasped fast in her arms, the tears falling on my wondering face, and prayed frantically that we both might die. The thought that she had brought a girl into the world to suffer as she was now suffering, to find her whole life's happiness

made a wreck by the religion which should be a stay and a comfort, drove her almost wild. She had buried one little girl, and I have often heard her thank God that He had taken her to Himself before life became a terrible bitterness and burden. She often says, in referring to her sufferings at that time, and the desperate state she was in, she wonders she did not commit suicide; what kept her from it she cannot tell to this day, unless the thought that these polygamous relations did not end with time, but were carried on through all eternity.

She had to keep a double guard on her tongue and on her actions. She did not like to vex her husband, and neither did she wish to grieve the young wife, whose position was no pleasanter than her own. Besides, a husband in polygamy is very sensitive regarding the treatment of the last wife by those who have preceded her, and she knew that no act of hers would escape her husband's notice, even had she been inclined to ill-treat her rival.



"DO YOU THINK I HAVE NO TRIALS?"

Once, very mildly and kindly, she tried to tell some of her troubles to Elizabeth, and begged her not to add to her sorrow by bestowing so many marks of affection on my father in her presence. The young wife turned on her quickly, and demanded, bitterly, —

"Do you think *I* have no trials?"

"God forgive me, and help us both; *I know you have,*" was my mother's quick and sympathetic answer.

After all, what could she say or do? She had influenced the girl quite as much as my father had, believing she was only doing what was right, and that the act, hard as it was, would bring its own blessing with it. Instead, it brought what polygamy always does bring — the curse of a wrecked home and a life's unhappiness.

A gentleman visiting Salt Lake City for the first time once asked me where polygamy hurt the most.

"It hurts all over, body and soul, mind and heart," was my reply. "I can't tell a spot that it does not hurt."

"It is even worse than I thought," he replied, with a shudder.

The reply which I gave then I would give again. Never, until a woman ceases to love her husband, can polygamy cease to be anything but a series of cruel stings, alike to pride and conscience.

I have tried to portray a little something of the misery that fell upon our family by the introduction of polygamy into it, but I have utterly failed to give an adequate idea of it. No pen can possibly depict the heart-breaking sufferings that are endured by women in this relation, and no one can imagine or understand them who has not experienced them. And yet, in spite of all this unhappiness, we were accounted a model family, and were pointed out as the best exponents of the system. "They are so united!" was the admiring verdict. This was due a great deal to my mother's exertions and her conscientiousness. Having taken this new mode of life as a religious duty, she was determined not to be found wanting in readiness to perform whatever it required of her. A happy, contented spirit she could not give; but she could show patience, long-suffering, and a calm, though by no means cheerful, face and manner.

Then, my father was very just in the treatment of his wives. One did not fare better than the other in any respect. If he purchased an article of wearing apparel for one, he got its counterpart for the other; in every particular they shared alike. His position was by no means an enviable one; still it was preferable to that of either of his wives. Men, as I said before, always get the best of it in polygamy, and always become more easily reconciled to it than do the women. At meetings and all social assemblies, my father appeared with both wives, and they deferred to each other in the most charming way, both of them being too sensible and too proud to show the slightest feeling where it might be commented on. Then, too, in spite of the natural bitterness of feeling between them, there was a mutual respect and regard between them, and each was too just to lay her troubles at the door of the other. Had these two women, with their generous natures and firm principles, met on any other ground, they would not only have "got along" amiably and quietly as they did, but they would have been warm, earnest friends, and the respectful regard would have grown into positive affection. As it was, they had nothing but kind words for each other, my mother, especially, pitying the young wife as she did herself. Elizabeth was still kind to us children, and gained the love which she has held ever since, and which she fully deserved. Still the introduction of polygamy into our midst was not a pleasant thing, and we little ones, even, felt instinctively its baleful influence.

But we were to be diverted from the contemplation of its miseries by a new and absorbing excitement. The Mormon people were again compelled to move, leaving their beautiful new city in the "defiled hands" of the Gentiles; and in the very midst of our first family trouble and unhappiness came the command to seek another Zion, since this could no longer be a shelter for the Saints.

CHAPTER XVII.

TROUBLES IN OUR OWN FAMILY.— LOUISE COMES UPON THE SCENE.

Increase of Polygamy. — Marrying going on Day and Night. — "Taking a Wife and Buying a Cow." — A Faithful Husband in a Fix. — How Men get "Married on the Sly." — How Wives were Driven Crazy by their Wrongs. — My Father Marries Considerably. — He "Goes in" for the Hand-Cart Girls. — Marries a Couple to Begin with. — Takes a Third the same Month. — Rapid Increase of his "Kingdom." — How the Girls Chose Husbands. — Instructing the New Wives in our Family. — Louise doesn't want to Work. — My Father goes on Mission Again. — Louise Flirts and Rebels. — She is Scolded and Repents. — Goes to Bed and Weeps. — Bestows her Goods on the Family. — "Lizzie" Interviews Her. — She Poisons Herself. — Is a "Long Time Dying." — She gets a Strong Dose of Cayenne. — Is sent on her Travels. — The Last we Heard of Her.



ONLY A WIFE OUT OF THE WAY.

NOTHER immediate effect of the "Reformation" was to increase the practice of polygamy. To alter an old rhyme to suit the occasion, —

"Then were those wed who
never wed before;
And those who once were wed
now wed the more."

Marrying and giving in marriage was carried on to such an extent, that, as in the old days of the first "Endowments" in Nauvoo

Temple, the ceremony of sealing was literally going on day and night. "The man who refuses to enter poly-

gamy will be eternally damned," announced Brigham Young from the Tabernacle. "Who marries out of the church marries for hell," supplemented Heber C. Kimball. Polygamy was preached from the platform, and taught by the ward-teachers in private. It was not only advised, — it was commanded, and no one dared of disobeying the prophetic mandates.

There was scarcely a family in the Territory at that time which was not increased by a plurality of wives. Men married in the most reckless fashion, with nothing in the world on which to support their families. Girls went to the Endowment House in the morning to take their Endowments, with no idea of marrying, and came away in the afternoon sealed to some brother whose fancy they had taken, or who, being advised by Brigham or Heber to avail himself of his "privileges," had left the matter in apostolic hands, and submitted to everything, even to the choice of a wife.

Wives did not know when their husbands would bring home another woman to share their home and their husband; for the clause in the "Revelation" that declared that a man should seek his wife's consent to a plural marriage, and that she should herself give the new wife to her husband, "even as Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham," was merely a dead letter, and was not minded in the majority of cases. Indeed, the men many times did not consider it at all necessary to inform the wives of their intentions, and the poor women would know nothing of the new marriage until the husband brought home his latest acquisition, or until she was informed of it by some outsider.

Those were the days when even the most trusting wives lost faith in their husbands; when solemn, oft-repeated promises were broken, evidently without the slightest qualm of conscience; when the tender, watchful affection of the husband and father was swallowed up in mad desire of

possession of the brute. There were tragedies enacted then that the world never will hear of; women died of broken hearts, and their sad fates brought no pang, or repentance, or remorse to the men who were as much the murderers as though they had deliberately taken their lives with the knife, the bullet, or the poisoned cup.

"Only a wife" out of the way; and what did that matter? — plenty more were to be had for the asking. "I think no more of taking a wife than I do of buying a cow," was one of Heber Kimball's delicate remarks, made from the stand in the Tabernacle to a congregation of several thousand. Most of his hearers thought even less of it, for they would have had to pay money for the cow; and as for the other, he had only to throw his handkerchief to some girl, and she would pick it up and follow him.

All the finer feelings and sensibilities of man's nature were killed by this horrible system. He regarded women's suffering with utter indifference; he did not care for their affection; their tears bored him, and angered rather than touched him. He lost all the respect and chivalrous regard which he once had for the sex, and spoke of his wives as "my women," "my heifers," or, if he, a Heber Kimball, "my cows." He was taught that they were his inferiors, dependent on him for everything, even for their future existence, and he considered that it was sufficient that he gave them his name; the rest they might get for themselves. He believed that the Mormon Church was to bring about the time "when seven women shall lay hold on one man, begging to be allowed to be called by his name," and should promise to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel. The latter they have been not merely allowed but obliged to do ever since they entered the system, and poor and scanty have been both bread and apparel in the majority of cases. It makes, in short, a brute of what might be a man.

I know a first wife who was driven to such utter despera-

tion by the total neglect of her husband, that she determined to take her own life, since it had grown such a burden that it was intolerable to bear.

One night, in the dead of winter, the snow falling thick and fast, and the wind sweeping down the mountains and through the cañons, cutting to the very bone, as only a mountain wind can, she wrapped a tattered shawl about her, and rushed madly through the night and the snow to the river, intending to lay down her life and her miseries



LIFE A BURDEN.

together. With a wild prayer for mercy, she was about to throw herself into the water, when she was restrained by a strong, imperative hand, and her husband's voice, hissing angrily in her ear, bade her go home and not make a fool of herself.

He was on his way home, or, rather, to his first wife's house, for a change of linen, that he might attend his second and more favored wife to a party, when he caught sight of the flying figure, and, suspecting her intentions, followed her swiftly, and was just in season to prevent her from taking the fatal step.

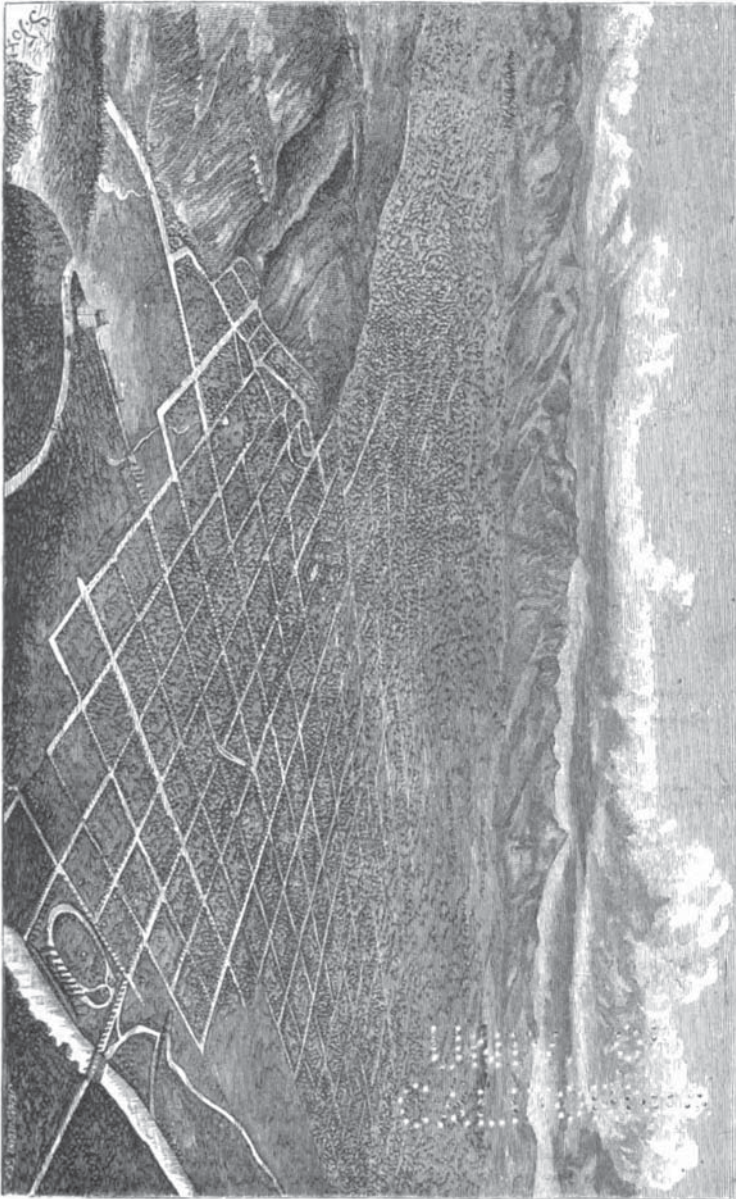
He had no word of sympathy for her; on the contrary, he was angered at what he called her obstinacy "and determination to make a fool of herself." Her anguish of heart brought no response of tenderness from him; he made her return home, get the articles of apparel which he wished, and assist him in his preparations for taking her rival out for the evening. In her frenzy, the maternal instinct which is so strong in every woman utterly failed her, and she went away to seek the death she coveted, leaving her little baby wailing piteously in its cradle.

My mother had a friend whose husband had, for a long time, withstood the desires and counsels of the priesthood, and had incurred their marked displeasure by neglecting for so long to "live up to his religion," and "avail himself of his privileges." At the time of the Reformation, however, he did not dare neglect his "duty" any longer, and decided to take a second wife. Neither did he dare tell his first wife of his determination, for he knew how entirely she loved and trusted him, and he knew, too, how bitter an opponent she always had been to polygamy. He knew as well how many times he had assured her that she had nothing to fear; that he would be faithful to her, as he had promised to be in the old days when he married her, and before God had vowed to "cleave to her only until death should them part." And he felt how bitter would be her sorrow, how justly indignant her feelings towards him, how intense her anger, and he did not dare to brave it all; so he stole quietly away to the Endowment House one day, leaving his true and confiding wife ill in her bed, and fresh from her sick room, took the blasphemous vows which claimed to bind him to another woman for time and for eternity.

The first wife knew nothing of what had transpired until she was very delicately told by a kind neighbor, who, knowing that she must find it out sooner or later, thought it her duty to break the news to her as quietly as possible.

She was almost maddened by the intelligence, and at first

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF SALT LAKE CITY.



she utterly refused to believe it. It could not be possible that the husband of her youth, the man whom she had so loved and trusted, would betray her thus; would take advantage of her illness to skulk away and take another wife, and that, too, after all his repeated promises to her.

"It can't be true," she cried, wringing her hands, and growing deadly pale. "It *isn't* true! I can't believe it. I won't believe it. O my God, help me if it is true. Tell me that it isn't; that you are mistaken."

But no such assurance could be given her, and her friend tried in the gentlest manner to comfort her; but what consolation could she bring that would heal a shattered faith or bind up a broken heart?

This story has had many, many repetitions since then, until now it has got to be "an old, old story often told."

It was all very well for this man to take this step as a religious duty, if he had been sincere. But would he, or would any true man who believed fully that he was obeying the revealed law of God, and doing what he did for conscience' sake, be afraid to meet any opposition, from whatever quarter it might come? Is not this very lack of courage a tacit acknowledgment that he does not believe in its divinity at all, and that conscience stings, rather than approves him for his cowardly act?

Another wife, whose husband had promised her as faithfully that he would not take another wife, did take one in the same way, and under precisely the same circumstances. On hearing the news she became a raving maniac, and died in the insane hospital. Still another, who was as bitter an opponent of the system of "Celestial Marriage" as either of the other two, was one day invited by her husband to go for a drive. Touched by this unusual act of kindness, — for he had been anything but kind to her, since he could not obtain her consent to his taking another wife, — she quickly made herself ready, and went with him. He drove her to the insane asylum, and left her, and she is

still an inmate of the place, although she is as sane as I am at this moment.

I could cite hundreds of such cases that occurred during the first years that directly followed the Reformation, and that have multiplied since, until the recital of them would fill a large volume ; but I will, instead, tell a little what the "Reformation," and the subsequent "Celestial Ordinance" fever, did for our own family.

It added several more to our circle in a very short time. My father was counselled, as were most of the Mormon men, to take some of the "Hand-Cart girls," as they must be provided for some way. My mother had already had her burden given her ; and after she had been obliged to see another woman taking the love and care that by right belonged to her, and her alone, she grew indifferent on the subject, and declared that a few wives, more or less, would make little difference to her now, and she would be as well satisfied with one fourth of a husband as with one half. That is generally the way first wives argue ; if there is to be a plurality of wives, it may as well be half a dozen as one. The hurt comes with the first plural wife ; no suffering can ever exceed the pain she feels then.

The second wife was made ill, however, by the new arrangement ; it was the first time she had felt the hurt of being superseded ; but she bore it very patiently, and made no complaint. After she recovered from her illness, she joined my mother in her efforts to make friends with the other wives, for two had already been added to the family, and placed under the same roof with us.

The Hand-Cart girls, not being disposed of rapidly enough to satisfy the authorities, they urged them to make proposals to the brethren, which, by the way, they were not at all backward in doing. One young lady selected "our" husband, to use my mother's expression ; and to quote from her description, "as it was done in obedience to counsel, we extended our arms to receive her, the third one

that we had welcomed within the month. Our 'kingdom' was increasing, but each individual share of husband was growing 'small by degrees and beautifully less.'

This last acquisition proved to be anything but an agreeable one, and she made plenty of trouble for us all. When she offered herself to my father, after having been counselled by the authorities to do so, he received her proposition somewhat coolly and cautiously, for, to tell the truth, he would much have preferred to make his own selection, and Louise (for that was her name) would, most emphatically, have not been his choice. Yet he would have been openly ridiculed, and held up to derision in the Tabernacle, had he ventured to refuse; so there was nothing to do but to take her, and make the best of it.



THE NEW ADDITION.

He had been so long absent that his affairs were by no means in a flourishing condition, and he needed all the assistance he could obtain from his wives. My mother and Elizabeth were both hard-working women, and as hard as they had labored during their husband's absence, they did

not relax their exertions in the slightest now that he had returned. My mother took the young wives at once under her protection, and commenced teaching them to be useful. The two first ones proved very nice girls, and worked with a will, showing a great readiness and aptitude at learning, and a genuine desire to do their part.

But the "free-will offering," as Elizabeth and mother always called Louise, did not love work, and she would not do it. She said she was a milliner, and had once been an actress, and declined "to soil her hands with menial labor." That was her speech in refusing to assist about the household work.

There was some little friction in the running of the household machinery on account of this; but Mormon women are expected to exercise patience, and there was very little fault found audibly, although it was quite apparent that the new wife was unhappy, and that all the rest were disgusted with her selfishness and indolence, which amounted to laziness.

My father was appointed to another mission in the States, directly after he was married to Louise, and he left his entire family living all together on a farm about seventy miles west of Salt Lake City.

During his absence Louise made herself disagreeable in every possible way. It actually seemed as though she had made up her mind to annoy us all as much as possible, and that she tried every expedient she could devise to accomplish her intentions.

My mother was particularly annoyed by her familiarity with the men employed on the farm, and remonstrated with her on her undignified behavior. She was very impertinent, although mother had spoken to her in the kindest possible way, and informed her that she should do as she pleased; that she was my father's wife, and her rights in the house were equal to any other person's.

Fortunately, my father remained away but a short time,

and on his return he was speedily made acquainted with the state of affairs. He disapproved of her conduct quite as much as my mother had done, and treated her with such a marked coolness that she demanded the cause. He told her that he was greatly displeased with her, annoyed particularly at her lack of respect for herself, him, or his family, and that he did not feel at all like acknowledging her as his wife unless she would most decidedly behave in a more becoming and dignified manner.

She was very penitent, and promised all sorts of things if he would only allow her to remain in his family ; she went about the house the very personification of grief and humility, until my father was called by church business to Salt Lake City. No sooner was he fairly started than she determined to create a sensation in the family.

She shut herself up in her room, after announcing that she wished to be left quiet and not intruded upon by any one. However, one of the younger wives entered her room on some pretext or other, and found Louise in bed.

"Are you ill?" she inquired.

"O, no ; only heart-broken !" was the reply, in the most doleful tone which she could possibly assume, and a great display of grief in the shape of a pocket-handkerchief which she applied to her eyes, then flourished in the air, and then returned to her eyes. After some more conversation, Eliza came out with a pair of valuable ear-rings in her hand. Mother asked her where she got them.

"Louise gave them to me," was the reply.

"Isn't that a sudden freak of generosity?" inquired my mother.

"She says she shall never want them any more, and she cried when she said it," was the answer.

Louise had always seemed to like Eliza better than she did any of the other wives, and my mother at once fancied that there was some trickery going on, and that Louise was trying to win Eliza over to her. I was a little curious my-

self, as girls of thirteen are very apt to be when anything unusual is going on in the family which they do not fully understand; so I determined to visit Louise myself, and see what was the matter with her.

She was very pathetic in her conversation with me, and made me quite miserable by the recital of her wrongs. Somehow I felt as though I was personally to blame for all her misery, and yet I didn't see how that could be. She gave me her watch and chain, which I had always admired and coveted, and told me she had done for ever with such gewgaws. I was so delighted with the jewelry that I quite neglected to be properly sympathetic, and rushed off to show my gift to my mother, and tell her what Louise said.

She began to be a little startled by this new development of affairs, and asked Lizzie, the third wife, to go up to her. Lizzie was not a great favorite with Louise, and my mother did not anticipate that she would receive such fine presents, to say the least. She came back, saying that Louise said she was going to die, and then she wished her wardrobe divided among the family. She also wished that my mother would come to her. She at first felt inclined to refuse, but upon consideration, and being urged by the different members of the family, she went, and found her groaning with pain, real or pretended. She couldn't tell which then.

"What is the trouble?" she asked.

"O," said Louise, with a groan, "I am dying. I shall never cause any more trouble in your family."

"It is not right for you to talk in that manner," replied my mother; "if you are ill, I will do all I can to relieve you."

"I don't want anything done; I only want to die: my husband does not love me, and I cannot live; all I desire is death," wailed the woman.

"It is not always so easy to die when we desire," was my mother's somewhat crisp reply, as she was a little annoyed by what she considered Louise's "foolishness."

"But I have made sure," answered she; "I have taken poison."

"You surely cannot be so wicked as that," was mother's surprised reply. "You are certainly telling me a falsehood."

Louise called on all heaven to witness the truth of what she had said, and made so many solemn asseverations to the truth of her having poisoned herself, that my mother began to fear that she had really done so, and that the affair was much more serious than she had supposed, for she had really no idea that Louise would do so desperate a thing as that, for she seemed altogether too fond of the good things of this life to relinquish them voluntarily. We had all considered before this that Louise was giving us a taste of her dramatic powers, and that it was a piece of very poor acting, after all. But if she really had taken her life into her own hands, determined to throw it away so recklessly, she must be looked after at once.

So everything that could be thought of as an antidote to poison was given to her; she all the time groaning and screaming with pain. There was no physician within thirty miles, and our nearest neighbor lived five miles away. My brother was summoned from the hay-field, where he was at work, and sent for our father. There was not a horse to be had, as it happened, and my brother started on foot to try and overtake father, who had set out on horseback some hours before. He would necessarily travel very slowly, however, as he was driving cattle. The boy had to climb high mountains, and consequently made but slow progress; yet, on descending, he ran as fast as possible, and succeeded in overtaking his father when about fifteen miles from home. He was perfectly exhausted by his efforts, and fell fainting at his father's feet, after he had managed to gasp out, "Father, Louise has poisoned herself!"

It was some time before he recovered sufficiently to tell the whole story, which my father instantly pronounced a hoax. "However," he said, "I will go back and settle the difficulty."

During all the time that elapsed between my brother's

departure and his return with his father, Louise was continuing the tragedy in a way that was calculated to frighten the whole family. She reached out her hand and bade us all farewell, at the same time exhorting us to greater piety. She said it had been her desire to do right, but she knew she had failed in her most earnest endeavors; this she regretted, as she was now nearing her end, and had no means of rectifying her past wrong-doing. Yet she wished to die in peace with all, and she forgave the wrongs she had received at the hands of some members of the family.

After talking on in this strain for some time, until, indeed, she had exhausted the topic and could find no more to say, she tried her hand at acting a kind of stupor; from which she soon aroused, however, and recommenced her exhortation, and ended by informing my mother that she had never understood her, and had never sufficiently appreciated her, and that she would rather die than be the cause of contention.

My mother at last was beginning to understand her most thoroughly now; and losing all patience with her, and feeling very indignant at her shallow attempt at deception, which was beginning to be very patent to us all, said, —

“It seems to me you are a long time dying, Louise; I feel quite satisfied that you are deceiving us all, and as I do not care to be duped any longer, we'll call the farce ended — for you can't make a tragedy of it, try hard as you may.”

“It is your fault that I am not dead,” Louise answered, her eyes flashing suddenly, and a great deal of the old-fashioned spirit in her will; “if you hadn't administered an antidote, against my will, I should be dead now.”

We none of us could restrain a smile at her mention of the “antidote,” for salt and water, salt and vinegar, and mustard and water, were the only medicines we had given her. With these very simple remedies, — none of which had the slightest effect on the patient, — my mother's “medicine box” was exhausted, and there was nothing else which she could do, except to abandon the case, which she did.

Her friends, the hired men, came in at night anxiously inquiring after Louise. We were all totally undeceived by the ruse, and one of the wives replied to their questions, that they need have no fears about her, as she no doubt would outlive all the rest of the family; and they had all decided to "leave her for Mr. Webb to deal with." The men thought this very heartless, and said they had feared they should find her dead.

My mother, who had overheard the last remark, replied, rather sharply, that nothing would kill her unless it was the mixture she had administered, for she was positive that she had taken no poison. Her object had been to frighten the family, and she had succeeded admirably. She had turned the house topsy-turvy, and sent Edward off on a wild-goose chase, and we were all getting quite angry.

About nine o'clock in the evening my father returned. My mother met him at the door.

"There's nobody dead!" was her greeting.

"I didn't expect there was," he replied, passing her and entering Louise's room.

"What are you in bed for?" was his inquiry.

At first she declined to reply to him, but on his repeating the question, and insisting on an answer, she told the same story that she had told to the rest of us. He was as sceptical regarding the truth of it, as the rest of us had been, but said that he would suggest the free use of cayenne pepper, and asked my mother to make her some tea of it. I am afraid there was a little malice in her heart, as she asked if she might make it as strong as she liked.

"Yes," he replied; "give her a strong dose. She shall have enough to make her sick of her nonsense."

There was no further assurance needed, and I fancy there never was a stronger decoction mixed than the one my mother prepared for the impostor. At first Louise declared she would not take it; but my father insisted upon it, telling her that he knew nothing better for people who

had poisoned themselves, and she was compelled to con-
low the whole of it. frighten

There was no need, after that, for her to pretend illne-
for she was sick enough for one hour to thoroughly frighten
her, and to satisfy the rest of the family, who felt that she
deserved just the punishment she was getting for the de-
ception she had practiced, and the fright she had caused,
which was genuine for a while.

My mother was specially angry because my brother was
made very ill by his long run after his father, and he came
very near losing his life in consequence. After Louise had
recovered somewhat from the paroxysms of pain into which
she had been thrown by the cayenne pepper, my father had
a serious talk with her, and told her that she must no longer
consider herself a member of his family. Her conduct had
been such that she had forfeited all right to consideration,
and he would not have such a woman as she had proved
herself to be in the house with his wives and his young
daughter; so she must go away and find a home for herself
elsewhere.

She had not expected this, and she suddenly changed
her tactics, and begged to be allowed to remain in the family
in any capacity whatever. She confessed that she had
been trying to frighten us all, and that she had taken no
poison, but had got up the scene in order to create sympa-
thy for herself. She professed great sorrow at her actions,
and again pleaded to be allowed to remain.

But my father was inexorable; and, in spite of tears, en-
treaties, and protestations, she was taken to Salt Lake City,
and we none of us ever saw her again, although we heard
of her several times. She married again in a very short
time, and in three weeks was divorced from her second
husband, to whom she had been sealed "for time and eter-
nity." After leaving this husband of three weeks, she
went to the southern part of the Territory, and married
another man, whom she persuaded to take her to St. Louis.

Her friend she suddenly went away one day, taking her inquisitor's money and leaving him behind. When next she returned from, she was on her way to England. Her last husband made no attempt to follow her, but returned to Utah without either money or wife, yet entirely reconciled to the loss of one, since it had been the means of ridding him of the other.



A SCENE IN POLYGAMY—"GREETING THE FAVORITE."

Louise was the only one of all my father's wives who ever made the least trouble. The rest of them were good women, doing their best to make things pleasant. They did not like a polygamous life, and only endured it because they thought they must. They were not happy women, — no women in polygamy are happy, however loudly they may claim to be, — and they made no pretence of being. Neither did they quarrel with each other, or complain of one another to their husband. Whatever difficulties they might have they settled among themselves, and did not trouble any outsiders. In fact, in my father's family the best side of a polygamous life was shown, but the best side was by no means a bright one.

This episode of Louise shows the absurdity of marrying without previous acquaintance, and also the miseries that may be endured by other wives when there is one bad woman in their midst.