

The Letters of an
Apostate Mormon
to his Son

By HANS P. FREECE

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Illustrated by VERONA P. TURINI

A PERSONAL WORD.

This is the third edition of this little book. When we put the first few hundred dollars into the first edition we were fearful lest our effort, time and money might be lost. We dedicated it to the cause of spreading the truth about the Mormon Peril. In one year the first edition was exhausted; we were reimbursed our expenditures and the surplus we put into the Mormon work. Again we put our capital into a second edition. Once more we have been repaid our investment and the surplus once more has been given over to the Mormon work. Thus by charging 50 cents for the book we have been enabled to receive a small steady income on the investment, which income we have devoted to the printing of many thousands of pages of anti-Mormon literature which has been distributed free of cost both in England and in America.

If at any time you wish information on the Mormon question or if you desire literature to combat the Mormon evil drop us a line and we will do our best to fill your need.

Any mail addressed to us in care of Columbia University, New York City, will always be forwarded.

BLANCHE K. STEWART-FREECE.

HANS P. FREECE.

New York City.

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A TRIBUTE.

DR. WISHARD.

Almost a score of years ago it was announced to the children of a small mission school in Utah that "there will be services to-night in the (Mormon) meeting-house. Tell your parents to come, because the new minister wishes to meet them." The announcement that a Presbyterian clergyman would occupy a Mormon pulpit may seem strange to some, but those familiar with the Utah situation will smile because they know that when the Mormons very graciously and gallantly offered the use of their building, the mission teacher and a few scholars, accompanied in some cases by a parent, would comprise the audience. And it was so in this instance, there being present about twelve, all told. The small boys, perhaps, had ideas as to what a Presbyterian was like, but sorrowful was the disappointment when an ordinary looking individual, wearing a square coat and straggling side-whiskers, came into the room, distributing smiles and handshakes to each and all. But whatever of disappointment was pictured on their faces gave way to awe and rapture when the deep, sweet tones of "Is my name written there?" came rolling out. It was the first time that they had heard a man's voice raised in song, and such a voice! One small boy sitting behind the writer whispered to his mother, "He looks like a pig, don't he, ma?" to which he received an affirmative reply. That settled it. He must be punished, and he was actually receiving his just dues behind the "meeting-house," after the meeting, when two big brothers came to his rescue, and the whipping that a certain boy received has not yet been forgotten. Such was our first meeting with Dr. S. E. Wishard, the "old man eloquent of the West." To meet him was to love him; to hear him was to trust him; to follow him was to find Christ. One day word came to the mission schools, one by one, that Dr. Wishard lay seriously ill at his home in

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Ogden. Many prayers ascended to the throne, and were answered. He recovered from his illness, and his years of service in Utah were almost doubled. The work was large, the need was larger. Who can tell of the kind words he spoke? Who can tell of the comfort he gave? Who can tell of the assurance he brought to the struggling Christian? Who can tell of the broken hearts to which he has applied the Hearing Balm? Only those of Utah and Idaho who have come to him laden with sorrow, and have been pointed to the cross. And for all these kindnesses the Mormon hierarchy has ridiculed him, hated him, and abused him. But he is a man who has stood firm through all these years, and yielded not one whit. He is the one man most feared and hated by the Mormon hierarchy. When Dr. Wishard struck, he struck with the grace of God because of that which was in him. With his faithful band of chosen few he did wage a battle for righteousness through many years. It was a struggle in which there could be no compromise, for he knew that "God is not mocked." Missionaries came and went, health was broken and spent, but this stalwart soldier of the Cross, "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, having his loins girt about with truth and bearing the shield of faith," endured the conflict, and when he is called home he will, like the Spartan youth, come to his own bringing his shield with him.

He has gone from the work in Utah to a well-earned rest, but although in body in Los Angeles, in spirit he is in Utah. In the Utah work "he has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to him at that day."

Let this be to Dr. Wishard the humble tribute of a little lad, now grown to manhood, who has fought for him, loved him, and who fain would follow him.

New York City.

HANS P. FREECE.

The American Tourist in Mormondom.

UTAH, September, 1906.

MY DEAR BOY:

The cry of persecution has for many years been the stock argument and the chief cause for a favorable consideration of the Mormon propaganda. This cry protected them for many years in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, but it is a significant fact that, in every State where they have settled, the Gentiles of the community have been forced to band themselves together for protection from the assaults of the Mormons. In two States where the Mormons were numerically strong—Missouri and Illinois—it became necessary for the Gentiles to call on the State authorities to protect them from their assaults and ravages. Even to-day, fifty years after the Mormons were driven from Nauvoo by the State militia, the old settlers of that region are ever ready to pour into the listening ear harrowing tales of cruelties and indecencies practiced by the Mormons. But when we call to mind the fact that the blackest pages of Mormon history have been written in Utah, and that their revolting indecencies and murdering of hundreds of American citizens occurred in Utah, is it any wonder that American citizens of the Mormon-infected districts appeal to both Church and State for redress? If the citizens of New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois were not able to tolerate them in their midst in the earlier stages of the Church, what must the conditions have been in the West after the complete development of the Mormon propaganda, the height of cruelty, lasciviousness and oppression having culminated after their departure for Utah?

However, this same cry of persecution has protected them in the West for many years, but the recent Smoot investigation, the earlier case of B. H. Roberts, and the

period of inquiry by the Federal courts previous to the granting of statehood of Utah, make clear the fact that religion and sectarian differences do not enter into the question of persecution, but that it is a matter of obeying the laws of the land, the laws of common decency, and a demand that the members of the hierarchy shall come within a code of morals that will not be a stench in the nostrils of outraged humanity. Therefore this cry of persecution can no longer be used to work upon the feelings of a sympathizing public; but a new mode of attack has been strongly and effectively organized—that of capturing the American tourist.

Every summer thousands of tourists go West. Most of them, the Mormons say about 100,000, stop over in Salt Lake to visit the Tabernacle, hear the organ and see the Temple with all of its mysteries. For the convenience of these many visitors the Mormon Church maintains a bureau of information on the Temple Square. Here the sightseers are met by old and young men or pretty girls, to suit the occasion, who receive the visitors with open arms and bland smiles; they feed the gullible, and make themselves agreeable to the better informed. The finer points of Mormonism, which points are the palatable truths of Christianity appropriated from the Christian Church for the occasion, are explained; but the real facts of Mormonism are guardedly kept in the background. The common tourist is directed to the auditorium of the Tabernacle for the organ recital, but the visitors of note and the newspaper men are taken to the inner sanctum, and there sit with bated breath during the most pleasing of organ recitals. It often happens that these noted visitors are next shown through the city, and a visit is made to the points of interest. As a natural result, when these visitors are later interviewed by the reporters from the official Mormon paper, they have many

kind and complimentary words to say in behalf of these apparently abused and misunderstood Mormon people. In fact, they answer the reporter that they have seen no polygamy, no immorality; that the Mormons had received them very kindly, and that they are a peaceful and liberty-loving people. Consequently, when the newspaper men return to their respective papers they give an account of their trip, and in their articles entirely exonerate the hierarchy from the many slanders which the (un) Christian ministers seem to delight to heap upon them. It is safe to state that the annual visiting tourists do more to spread a favorable view of the Mormon propoganda than the combined efforts of the 2,200 Mormon elders on the mission field today.

In view of the above, permit us to present the experiences of one man only. He is a well-known Presbyterian divine. On his way West he stopped off in Salt Lake to visit a brother pastor, and, incidentally, to learn something of the Mormon system from personal observation. He and the Salt Lake pastor, going to Temple Block, were received by a young woman who was rather good looking, educated and intelligent, with a pious mein. Questions put to her were met and disposed of with an assurance that begets confidence. The old Doctor was delighted, and in reply to his questions as to whether the Mormons still taught and practiced polygamy, she said: "No, sir; we used to, but we don't any more." With such a startling statement from that particular young woman the Salt Lake pastor suggested to his visiting brother that he ask the young lady her name before leaving the grounds. Accordingly, when the party returned to the Bureau of Information the young woman asked the visitors to register, and then gave them some literature (mis) representing Mormonism, with the hope that they would be kind enough to read the same, and thus overcome their prejudice against the abused Latter Day Saints. At this point the gentleman from Philadelphia sug-

gested that she give him her name, so that when he returned to his home he could send her literature presenting his view of the Bible. She readily gave him her name. As the two men left the grounds the visiting pastor grew eloquent in his admiration of this young woman. He was positive that if there were more such young women in the church, polygamy would soon be an issue of the past, etc. The Salt Lake pastor quietly took him to his study and produced there Salt Lake newspapers, all of the same date, with the large headlines, stating that some few weeks before this very young woman had become the mother of a child, and that a well-known polygamist was the father of the child.

YOUR FATHER.

Polygamy.

UTAH, October, 1906.

MY DEAR BOY:

When polygamy was officially announced to the Mormon Church in Europe many of the converts who had not yet gone to Utah turned from the Utah Branch of the church and joined the Josephites, the Strangites and others. But in Utah the people received it. The original Revelation, together with the sermons of Orson Pratt and Brigham Young, in favor of it, were printed in the *Deseret News* (Extra), September 14, 1852, also in the *Journal of Discourses*, Volume 4, Page 77.

In Utah a rush was made for desirable wives. Old men married girls, trading their young daughters to one another. It was the crowning joy of a great privilege for the true believers. The duty and importance of polygamy was presented Sunday after Sunday. It was the main theme of discourse. Hundreds of girls thirteen and fourteen years of age were either persuaded or forced into it. Girls not yet in their teens were sealed to old reprobates with an agreement with the latter that they should wait until the children should be old enough to act as wives. Events occurred which would seem incredible to-day had we not lived and acted ourselves in those days. If I am not mistaken, a very recent president of the church was married to a fourteen-year-old girl just before he died.

One man married a woman, her daughter and her mother—three generations. Some men even took their own daughters as spiritual wives. So many marriages, formed so loosely, naturally resulted in much divorce. Consequently many women were married and remarried again and again to different men. Girls were married and divorced many times, thus going the rounds of the priests.

Demoralization set in and vulgarity became rank. When

I entered Utah there were manifest many sad results. Young girls were mothers, but whether they were married or who were the father of their children were minor questions. Apostle Kimball used to refer to his wives as "my cows."

The entrance of Johnston's Army produced a reaction. The later anti-polygamy legislation was passed and men found it convenient to desert women and children dependent upon them.

Brigham Young had wives galore. Besides his twenty-three or so of well-known wives in Salt Lake City, he had many spiritual wives scattered throughout the territory.

That was the worst stage of polygamy. It has gradually grown better and decreased only under much pressure. From time to time it has taken an upward bound, but as many times has again been partially checked by legislation.

The Mormon Church, however, still holds to the Revelation as a Divine command. They have no intention of giving up polygamy.

Some of the most fanatical really believe that the day will come when the practice can be openly revived, and that is to come through political influence.

But the system cannot live in civilization. We need but to observe India, Africa and the Malay Peninsula, where there is a system of polygamy and has always been, and we find those nations at the lowest ebb of civilization and education. But on the other hand, in England, France and Germany, where there is not polygamy, we find those nations at the head of the world's powers and in the advance of civilization. If we drag women down and make a slave and a chattel out of them, they will drag their sons down with them. But if we elevate woman and place her by the side of man where God placed her, she will lift her children up with her and thus we will have our nation.

YOUR FATHER.

The First Glimpse of Utah.

UTAH, November, 1906.

MY DEAR BOY:

You ask me to tell you about our journey across the plains from Council Bluffs to Utah. My boy, that can never be told. Words cannot be found in the English language to depict those horrible days. It is a story so pathetic, so dramatic and so unreal that no author needs draw upon his imagination to depict what might have existed in any stage of society. To tell of their sufferings and their horrible retaliation for wrongs inflicted upon them, calls to mind the crimes of religious fanatics far back in the earlier centuries.

But we cannot inflict punishment upon the Mormons today for crimes committed in those dark days, nor can the prayers of saints wash the blood-stains from the hands of Brigham Young and the blood-cursed Danites.

Joseph Smith was a man of commanding mien and peculiar genius; a man to whom it might have been given to lead thousands and thousands of souls onward and upward to a better life, but who chose the path of crime and destruction, leading the besmirched souls of his crazed followers down, down into the depths of darkness and misery, all to gratify a lustful passion.

Drunk with the influence he exercised over his people, weakened by his own passion and overcome by his own selfishness, he tried to exercise his influence over the pale of the *"White City" and fell, meeting his death at the hands of an infuriated mob.

With their leader gone, the Saints scattered right and left and the Mormon Church might not even have lived in history had it not been for that indomitable leader, Brigham Young. Gathering a few of the remaining people together, and placing their household goods in hand-carts, they turned

their faces westward and began that memorable journey
*Nauvoo, Ill.

that has gone down in history as the most hazardous task ever attempted by man. Almost before the journey was well begun many of their number had died, and during that awful winter the old Salt Lake trail was blazed each morning with fresh mounds of earth.

On the 24th of July, 1847, Brigham Young, with only a few of those who had started across the plains with him, stood on the summit of the Wasatch Mountains on Ensign Peak and looked into the valley beyond. He saw below him only a vast and dry desert, blown with sands and alkali dust. Great Salt Lake glistened in the sun, and as Brigham Young cast his eyes over that dreary waste he said: "Thank God we have found a place where our enemies will not care to come!"

I stood near the same spot not long since and cast my eyes over that same valley. Below, that once dreary waste was now a garden spot. The miles and miles of orchards, the ripening wheat, patches of greenest alfalfa, plowed land—all combined to make a beautiful picture, and the entire scene appeared as a beautiful home-woven carpet, spread out in the sun.

Far to the west could be seen the shining Provo Lake, out of which flowed the Jordan River, winding its way down the valley, and at last emptying into the great salt sea, making a picture not unlike that which Moses must have seen so many centuries ago as he stood and looked into his promised land.

It would seem as though God had led His children into the most fertile and richest land in the continent. The Mormons like to point it out and explain it in that way.

The Great Salt Lake, into which two large rivers are continually pouring their streams, has no visible outlet. It rises and falls several feet at several year intervals. Bathers



BRIGHAM YOUNG'S FIRST VIEW OF THE GREAT SALT LAKE.

float on the water's surface and no bottom has as yet been reached. The Jordan River runs through a valley unsurpassed in scenery and fruit-growing. In Southern Utah there is an outcrop of iron ore fifteen miles long and five miles wide, owned by the Standard Oil Company. In Dixie, Southern Utah, the farmer grows figs, almonds, pomegranates and other semi-tropical fruits. Almost all minerals have been found near the surface, and Utah, almost untouched in mineral development, stands already third in the Union as a mineral-producing state.

When the business men of the East shall have been assured that their ventures into Utah will not be destroyed and thwarted by Mormon priesthood, Utah will have a great awakening and emigration will set in to such a great extent that the Gentiles will be in the majority. I hope that day may soon come.

YOUR FATHER.

Jorgen.

UTAH, December, 906.

MY DEAR BOY :

I seem to have what some people call a religious weakness and in the course of my enthusiasm was led into Mormonism. But in this letter I want to tell you about a friend of mine. We were thrown together as children. His mother died, his father married again, bringing into the home a cruel step-mother. As a result, his father began to lay by an occasional dollar and placed it on interest for the lad. As Jorgen grew up,—that was his name,—he also worked hard and saved his money, so that when he neared his majority he had almost \$1,000 in the bank. He was handsome, prosperous and a good dancer. He moved in the best society of the community and was considered an all-round fine fellow. But his trouble began with a young woman, the details of which you may assume. The affair brought shame and pain to him, but he still refused to marry the young woman. About this time the Mormon elders came into our community, bringing with them, we believed, the Christian doctrine in all its purity. The Mormon missionaries were kind, they were willing to work on the farms for their board, and the people began to look upon them as superior and Godly men. To these missionaries Jorgen came with his heavy conscience. They told him that the only possible escape from his sin was to join the Mormon Church. "But," said Jorgen, "people say that Brigham Young is a polygamist. How do I know that Joseph Smith is not one of the false prophets of which the Bible speaks?" But the elders said that Brigham Young was not a polygamist, that polygamy was not a part of the Mormon system, and that the Book of Mormon opposed polygamy.

Shortly after this, the Mormon elders held meetings about ten miles from Jorgen's home. He promised to come and bring his father. But being very weary from his hard

day's work, he did not go to church, but went to his room. He realized then that he had broken his promise to the elders, and for the first time he felt the need of a higher power and at last he knelt by his bed to pray. He prayed earnestly, tears came to his eyes, his voice choked, and then,—what was that on the wall? A light? Yes, surely it was. Yet, it was a testimony from God that the Mormons were His messengers. He became a believer and was shortly baptized.

The summer passed. Winter was well on its course when the Mormon elders began to prepare their converts for the ingathering to Zion (Salt Lake) in the spring. I was one of the last to board the ship. I met Jorgen. What had happened to him? He was downcast, poor and sickly. He had lost the springing step and the buoyant smile. He had lost the hearty grip in the hand-shake and the gleam from his eye. He told me one day: "What shall I do? I have left behind me the sweetest baby and the most innocent girl. I have sinned against the girl, against God, and have wronged myself. If I could only die!" No one but myself saw much of his movements during the voyage.

When we landed in New York we took rail to Omaha and started on our journey across the plains. Here again I saw Jorgen from time to time, walking sometimes behind the carts, sometimes beside them, always forlorn and cast down. I saw him go away in the woods to pray. I heard him pray aloud on his knees with hands stretched upward, praying for relief. He grew weaker and weaker and finally was left behind, too feeble to follow the train. He was picked up by following ox teams stuffed into a covered wagon on top of some boxes. The wagon jolted and his bruises festered. The flies settled on him and soon his sores and bruises were full of life. No one cared for him. His suffering was indescribable. One evening he was dragged out of the wagon, utterly helpless, and placed in a tent. The next morning he was dead.

YOUR FATHER.

Why I Became a Mormon.

UTAH, January, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY :

I hardly know how I happened to become a Mormon. My earliest recollections go back to the farm in Denmark where I was reared by a man who was a stranger to me. He used to tell me that I was crazy when I was about sixteen. I met the Mormon elders and listened to them. But it hurt me most when I was called crazy for listening to and sympathizing with a people in whom there was no guile, but were preaching repentance to the world. I had always been an innocent boy, neither drinking, nor gambling, nor swearing, and yet I was ridiculed for listening to what I thought was the Word of God. But I have changed my mind. The Mormons taught us that we should some day be gods, and if we would accept the faith we should soon be able to perform miracles. Did not Jesus say: "You shall do greater things than these because I go to my Father?" So it was that many of us believed that the Mormon priests were capable of performing miracles, and in time we should do likewise. I remember a blacksmith who had received the Celestial powers, and it was said he was performing miracles; but when I came to Utah and looked him up, this glory had worn away.

Lest Satan should put doubt into our hearts, preparations for our departure to America were hurriedly made. On board the ship we were under the command of certain priests of the Melkisedec Order. We believed that they would perform miracles. One day a storm came up and the waves threatened to sink the ship. I was sure that the elders would still the sea, but they huddled together frightened like the rest of us. But surely they would raise the dead! No, they died by the score and were thrown into the sea. But it was rumored that they had healed many sick

and cast out devils in the steerage. By and by some of the weaker passengers were taken ill and became filthy and were removed to other parts of the ship. I could not understand. We had been taught from the beginning that we should all eat and dress alike and should be equally blessed and kept by God. But in our eagerness to come to Zion, the city of God, we forgot these minor matters. The priests read to us daily from the Book of Life (Mormon books) and spoke to us in the name of God. Said one priest: "You have no need of the Bible. I am your Bible. From me cometh the living words of God." But one day this man of God found it necessary to knock down one of the brethren because he insisted that the priest had falsely taken from him some of his emigration funds. The priests would take our money and buy our tickets and provide for our food, and I had heard many complaints to the effect that they were defrauding the believing followers. And such is life. But to be knocked down for asking justice, it meant for this brother that he lost his faith and as soon as we landed in New York he went his way. For a Mormon priest to strike a brother was permissible, because he did it with authority from God. We were taught in Utah for many years that it was our duty to knock down any man who spoke against the Lord's Anointed, i. e. Brigham Young.

As I look back over those early years, they seem to me a dream. I am near the brink of the grave and I do not care which way the wind blows, but at that time we had come to the long-looked-for Zion, the city of God which should be taken up into the skies to meet the coming of the Saviour, and that coming should be in a few years. As we lay resting in the tithing-yard we were much encouraged and rejoiced to see Brigham coming to shake hands with us. As many as were able were put into the line. Behind Brigham came Heber Kimball, the First Counselor, dressed in a summer suit and coatless. He is the man whose re-

ligious writings compose the vilest and most revolting stuff that I have ever seen in print. He was smiling and saying pleasantries to the eager emigrants. Brigham was then Prophet, Seer and Revelator for the entire world. As I lay near the fence too weak even to stand I thought that if he would only say "Arise," or if I could touch the hem of his garment I would immediately take up my bed and walk.

To my surprise, God's chosen people in Zion appeared much as other human beings. They did not have all things in common as did the Saints in the olden days. They were not all dressed alike. Some were well-to-do, while others were poor. Farmers had come into the settlement and they were poorly clad, while the smaller children had very few clothes on them. My attention was attracted to one young man who wore buckskin pants and around his hips was buckled a revolver, and cartridges were in his belt. I was told it was customary to carry fire-arms, and that Brigham's sons made a practice of it. I could not understand why such was necessary in the city where all was love and brotherly kindness.

To my great surprise, our hand-carts were taken from us to pay a debt to Brigham when the supply trains had come to meet us. We had purchased those carts in Council Bluffs, and the provisions which had come to us through the rescue party had been donated by the people. Still, Brigham took our carts to pay for them. I did not understand, but it did not occur to me for one moment Brigham could possibly do wrong or make a mistake.

We were left to shift for ourselves. My wife and I had each a blanket, one tin cup, each a suit of clothes and a few other rags and a frying pan. Such were our sole possessions, and I was still weak and helpless from my long siege of mountain fever. I again saw my wife, the tender girl-bride that she was, crying, and as I think of that day

now, although it is many years ago, the tears force themselves out. She had been first helping this one and then the other to pull the hand-cart across the plains. She had buried her mother, and I was helpless, without a covering for our heads. And so it was that the pure, deep love which we had had for each other when we left our native land had been worn away on the dreary deserts. The real joy that had been ours had gone, never to come back, and she realized it then more than ever before.

YOUR FATHER.

The Mountain Meadow Massacre.

UTAH, February, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

You have asked me several times what I knew of the Mountain Meadow Massacre. I dislike to bring to mind those dark days, and would that all might forget those awful crimes. If the leaders of the Mormon Church to-day would live within the law of the land, and observe the rules of common decency, I would refrain from writing of this event or any of the other dark deeds. But since Reed Smoot so boastfully declares that he is "not ashamed of the position and the power of the Mormon Church to-day and the more I study the history of the church the more am I convinced that it is at all times the same," it is well that you know some of the things of which Reed Smoot is not ashamed.

The murdered emigrants were of the Methodist faith and were on their way to California to seek new homes. The chief cause of the massacre was a desire on the part of the Mormons to come into possession of the new wagons, fine horses and the abundant farming implements which the emigrants had; all valued at about three hundred thousand dollars. The first policy was to starve the emigrants. Accordingly one of the apostles was sent ahead of the train to warn the settlers that they must sell these emigrants food for neither man nor beast. For a time this apostle actually traveled with the emigrants, camped near them, and advised them where they might camp and recoup their tired animals before setting out on their journey across the desert. It was on the very spot advised as a resting-place by the apostle, a vertible trap, where the massacre occurred—Cane Springs, about forty miles south of Cedar City.

On their way thither, as they were passing through

Cedar City, a young man, Aden by name, met a man whom his father had befriended in Kentucky a few years previous, when the former had been a Mormon missionary in that state. He gave Mr. Aden a meal and allowed him to take some onions away with him. This kindness was deserving of punishment from his Mormon neighbors, and one, Barney Carter, pulled a picket from the fence and struck him over the head, and from that day to the time of his death he remained an idiot.

This company of emigrants were no sooner camped at Cane Springs than they were attacked by a band of Indians, who subsequently proved to be a band of painted Mormons manoeuvring under command of John D. Lee, Lieutenant at Cedar City, he being under Brigham Young, the then Governor of Utah Territory. Their repulse was quick and decisive. The emigrants threw up embankments, but they were not in a position to protect themselves, because they were camped between two knolls, from whose tops the Mormons poured in a cross-fire. It was the place selected for them by the apostle, and they had fallen into the trap.

The vigil kept by the besiegers was so severe that it was instant death to go to the spring for water, only a short distance away. Several men were shot down attempting to reach the spring. One of the most cruel and revolting deeds was the cold-blooded murder of two little girls as they were going after water. The attempt to commit this massacre while posing as Indians proved futile. Accordingly, John D. Lee resorted to strategy. The besiegers were called off, and in a short time the emigrants saw a company of soldiers approaching bearing the Stars and Stripes. Men heaved a sigh of relief, women wept for joy, and the old pastor of the flock knelt down and thanked God for deliverance. Mr. Lee is said to have shed tears when he saw the plight and awful suffering of the people. Kind-hearted Mr. Lee! He had come to their rescue! First



THE MOUNTAIN MEADOW MASSACRE

he must talk to the Indians and appease their supposed wrath. Retiring for a pretended consultation, he returned, stating that the Indians had promised to stop the siege, but the emigrants must give up their arms to him, as he was the accredited military authority under Governor Brigham Young, otherwise he could not protect them. Give up their arms? Certainly. Guns, pistols and knives were given up and placed in the wagons with the dead and wounded. The women and children followed behind the wagons and the men came next, each guarded by one of Lee's men, and the company headed toward Cedar City. And now, God help them! When they reached the point of the hill, Bishop Dame cried out, "Israel, do your duty!" And at that command the soldiers murdered the men in cold blood, and then ran forward to join the Indians, who had previously been concealed in the cedars, to complete the massacre. O God! was it not enough that those innocent and tender maids should see fathers and sweethearts slain before their eyes, and then die with them, before they should suffer a thousand deaths and shame? But we close the awful scene. When night came stealing down the mountain side it hid from vulgar gaze the nude and mangled bodes of 130 human beings. The murderers had stripped the bodies and left them to become carrion.

The spoils were sold later at auction by the bishop at Cedar City. The bell on the tabernacle in that city to-day is said to have been taken at the "Siege of Sebastopol," as the Mormons leeringly termed the slaughter. The bodies were finally buried by a lone Mormon, but not until the bones had been picked clean by the coyotes and vultures. Two years later representatives of the War Department, as they were camped on the spot, investigating the massacre, buried the remaining bones. Over these bones were erected a monument, and a cross placed thereon, on which was written: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

The monument put up by the United States soldiers has almost fallen away, but the remains of the foundation may yet be seen. The meadow to-day is not the beautiful spot that it was. It would seem that the curse of God has fallen on the soil. Where the green grass cheered, there is bleak soil, and the wind blows an unwelcome chill into one's bones as he stands and views the scene of that awful crime. The floods have washed a large and unsightly ravine through the center of the barren waste, and it is almost impassable even on foot. As far as I am able to ascertain, the last Indian who had a share in the massacre died last summer at Pan-guitch Lake, in Southern Utah, during the tent meetings which the Presbyterian missionaries were conducting there at that time. I have been told that there is but one surviving white man who took a part in the massacre, a man by the name of Knight, living in Southern Utah. Mr. Higbee, who was first in military authority during the massacre, died a year ago in Cedar City. The latter part of his life was a hell on earth. He was partially insane most of the time, and his fears of imaginary foes and the shrieks of murdered women and children ringing in his ears made an awful Nemesis which pursued him to his grave.

YOUR FATHER.

The Walk from Council Bluffs to Salt Lake City.

UTAH, March, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

In the spring of 1859 a company of men and women were camped at Florence Hill, seven miles west of Omaha, Neb. We were all newly made Mormon converts, having just arrived from Denmark after passing through perils on the sea and the land. We were divided into hundreds and tens, after the custom of the Israelites, and a man, Rowley, was my captain. We had been instructed to build small handcarts after a special design given to Brigham Young by God. We were assigned two men to a cart and a very nice young man was my partner. The first day's journey was delightful, but before long the wheels broke off. It seemed strange that these carts, specially designed by the Almighty and warranted by Him to stand the journey, should wear out so soon. Yet it did not occur to any of us that we might possibly be dupes. In a few weeks I was utterly worn out and finally fell to the ground, unable to proceed further. My wife hitched herself into my place, and with a strange man toiled day after day, pulling the cart, while I toiled on behind the best I could. Besides pulling at the cart all day, when evening came she had to prepare food for eight persons. She was but a girl, a bride of a few months, taken from the ball-room, as it were, from the pleasures of girlhood, and had given up all to go with me into Mormondom. All was disappointment to her, and her life was being filled with hardships. I was delirious with the mountain fever and she had to care for me. Still worse, the entire company was running short of food. There was nothing left but a little flour, and soon that was gone. But we must move on, on, on. Men grew weak and fell in their tracks. I shall never forget one evening, while lying in the tent, that the captain said to my wife's father, just after the camp had

been hitched: "Your wife has fallen by the roadside some distance back." My wife was by the fire, trying to prepare some ox soup, and I could see what an awful struggle she was having to stifle the tears. Soon her father returned, carrying her mother on his back. She was more dead than alive. We buried her next morning before we left camp. We had left Florence Hill with a few ox teams to draw heavier loads, but they had died one by one and we were now not only without food, but we had double loads to draw. Some of the sick and worn oxen were killed and we made soup. This we drank with a relish without bread or vegetables. Naturally the entire company was diseased.

I recall one morning while camping near a stream that we discovered some berries on the bushes. As we were finding relish in them, the cry was raised that a relief party from Salt Lake was in sight. I will never forget the cries of joy that rent the air, the prayers offered and tears of gladness that were shed. The poor souls fell over each other, begging and crying for the food. I was able to move toward the wagons by the aid of a stick in my right hand. Some fell and were unable to rise. Some rolled down the hill and embankment. It seemed an age before we could get anything out of the wagons. Flour and water were stirred together and poured into the frying pan, and as soon as it was hard we seized and ate. I have never tasted anything so delicious. No one knows what it is to suffer for food until he has tried it. If a man gets hungry enough he will eat anything that he can find. I remember a young mother with a babe that was often trailing far behind. I wondered how she could keep up her strength without food. It afterward developed that she picked her food from the carcasses which we left lying along the trail. There was a girl in her teens who had left a home of luxury against the will of her parents to go into Mormondom and save her soul. Reared in luxury, she was now offering her gold ring for

a meal of flour. With tears in her eyes, she cried piteously: "I am so hungry—so hungry!" The provision train brought needed relief, but not until many had died. However, when we entered Salt Lake there was plenty, and we who had survived forgot our sufferings and took joy in the fact that we were now in Zion among the Lord's anointed.

I am now an old man and have had many years to live under Mormon influence. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young and others high in the church have said that they have as much right to organize and control a church as had the Pope. But if this is a land of religious freedom and personal liberty, the lawmakers of our land ought to see to it that such men be not permitted to take an ignorant lot of people out on the plains over a thousand miles from habitation and leave them without food or relief. The situation in Utah is just the same as it was in the days of the beginning. What right has Joseph F. Smith to keep these many thousands of people in ignorance and bondage and collect from them tithes amounting to almost two millions per annum, and using that sum of money for any purpose desired and making no accounting of it to the people? And this he does under the special command of God. What right has Joseph F. Smith to maintain a harem of five establishments in Salt Lake City and bring illegitimate offsprings into this world? And this he pretends to do under the blasphemous assumption that he is God's anointed. This hierarchy has fastened itself upon the superstition and ignorance of these thousands of followers and the government ought to see to it that coming generations shall have a right to the privileges which accrue to them because they have been born under the Stars and Stripes.

YOUR FATHER.

Early Experience in Utah.

UTAH, April, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY :

It was quite a common thing when I first came to Utah for a woman to leave her husband and become the concubine of a man who was higher up in the priesthood. The more priesthood a man had, so much higher would he sit in the heavenly seats. I have known many such instances. In fact, this world was but the organization for the coming life, and the higher a man stood here in the rites of the church so much higher would he stand in Heaven. The bonds of matrimony on this earth were not sacred. Children were of no avail except that each one counted one in the contest wherein the man who had produced the most children here on this earth would receive the prize for industry in Heaven. For that reason, also, if a man had but two wives and his neighbor had several, these wives might go to the neighbor and help him to produce children, and thus get glory when the final decision was rendered. But with my wife and myself there was a difference. We had been married on the ship by an apostle and whatsoever he bound on earth was bound in Heaven. (Read Smoot has that power now). In our ignorance we were happy in this belief, and it is well that it was so, for could I have looked into the future I should not have been here to tell the tale. We stood together as two stray sheep upon the barren hills of Utah, looking forward to green pastures, but our lot was to become serfs to a band of cruel and blasphemous friends calling themselves the special servants of God.

Next morning when I awoke in the camping yard, most of the emigrants had already gone; some to relatives, others to find employment. Near our bed was a few measures of meal and a squash which had been given to us by the Saints when we came into the city. When I had built a fire and

had put the frying pan on to fry the squash, my wife sat up from under our one ragged quilt and said: "Oh! what a headache I have." She looked ill. No wonder. She had been crying most of the night. She was too sick to move; otherwise I believe she would have gone from me that morning, leaving me in possession of our quilt and scant provisions never to return again. Just then her father came up with a brother in the Gospel, whose acquaintance he had made. Seeing her condition, they took her to the house of a widow (?) in the town, and spreading the blanket on a clumsy, home-made bedstead, they laid her on it. The following three weeks she lay near death's door, suffering and delirious. When the fever had broken she had practically forgotten where she was and how she had come. She asked about her mother and her father. She had forgotten that her mother had died seven weeks before on the plains. This same morning, when the fever had broken, a brother came in and suggested that the Bishop be called to lay hands on her, which, of course, would make her well and save her life, because the members of the priesthood had power to heal disease and cast out devils. It did not occur to me at the time that the Bishop might have been called earlier and administered the rights when she was very low and was not expected to live. But the idea that a Bishop was to come made me excited. Could it really be that one of the priesthood was to visit my wife and lay hands on her? Surely she would soon recover. He came—a man of medium size. His trousers of homespun were bespattered with mud and lime. His denim shirt was torn and his shoes were made from untanned cow-skin. Could this man be a great Bishop? He took a bottle of olive oil out of his pocket. He poured his palm full of oil, and, smearing it over the sick woman's head, said: "In the name of Jesus Christ I anoint you." He then called his companion, and the two, laying their hands on her body, the Bishop said: "I command the evil

spirits herewith to leave the body of this sister, and in the name of Jesus I command the Devil to forever depart from this house." The Bishop then prophesied that "from this moment the woman will be well. She shall become a great mother in Israel and in the days to come her children shall rise up and call her blessed." She did improve from that time, of course, and about two weeks later I secured employment from one of the twelve apostles, Erastus Snow. He employed me for a bushel of wheat per day and my dinner. And such a dinner, delicious, and so much. A big piece of meat was put on my plate, but I did not dare to touch it lest it was put there just to try me. But how could it be that these of the priesthood could fare so sumptuously, while so many others were actually starving? We had been taught in Denmark, before embarking for America, that all the Saints lived and fared alike.

The next Sunday I went to the Tabernacle to hear Brigham Young preach. I had just found a seat when Apostle Kimbal, Brigham's right-hand man, came in and took his seat on the platform, and immediately Brigham called him to say a few words. When he began to speak the people smiled, and then shortly they burst out laughing, all but one woman who blushed, then turned pale, got up and went out. Then Kimball said something more as she disappeared and the congregation laughed again. Being a foreigner, I could not understand, but coming out of the building I met one of my own countrymen, and, walking down the street, he explained to me what had been said in the Tabernacle: "You noticed," he said, "that Apostle Kimball came in late. When Brigham called him to speak he stated that the reason why he was late was because . . . (here the language of the reason given by the Apostle is so filthy that we must omit it, as it is unprintable) . . . Here you noticed that the people laughed, but Kimball said: 'Don't be mistaken. I did not mean to be vulgar, for I was reared by a dear

mother who was as fine a woman as ever . . . (here again we must omit the words). You noticed that the people all laughed but one lady, who was insulted and went out. When he saw her start for the door, he said: 'I came pretty near saying . . . (again we must omit), . . . but I guess I won't.' The brother, in conversation, said that this woman who went out was not a Mormon anyway.

This newly found countryman proved to be from San Pete County, and he offered to take my wife and myself to his town, where he thought we might find employment. With our ragged quilts, the frying pan and a feather bed which her father had given us, our sole possessions, we started on the 125-mile journey with the ox team. The very first night that we camped we fell in with a man who was taking two women to the Endowment House, where they were to be "sealed to him for time and eternity." He had his wife with him, a woman of about sixty. The one woman to whom he was going to be sealed was about forty, rosy-cheeked, looking well, but her mouth was slightly twisted to one side. The other woman was about thirty. She had been a dressmaker in Denmark, was crippled, and wore crutches. As we sat around the sage-brush fire, the conversation naturally turned toward the principles of polygamy. "It is this way," said the man. "Jesus in a parable said, 'In that day it will be as a man going into a far country.' He called his servants and said unto them, 'To you I will give five talents,' meaning five wives; to the other he gave two, and to the other one. When the Lord returned he found that the servant to whom he had given five wives had increased by rearing many children. The second servant had also reared as many children as possible with his two wives, but the man with one wife had been unfortunate. Then the Lord will take the one wife from the one man and give her to the one that has five, and who has increased his talents, and will say to him, 'Well done thou good and faith-

ful servant; take thou this other man's wife. Thou hast been diligent with a few wives. I shall make thee lord over many.' But the one man who had a wife but did not increase his talents shall never be permitted to enter into the joy of the Lord. I know this is true, because the Prophet, Joseph Smith, told us these things, and he said that the children were the inheritance of the Lord."

I felt very much built up in the holy faith after this conversation, and turning, looked at my wife, but she seemed dissatisfied.

During our journey to San Pete County, this newly found friend told me of his early experiences. He had been a tailor in a large city in Denmark. He had come to Utah just before Johnston was ordered to march here with his regiment. He had been sent with others to oppose Johnston's entrance to Salt Lake Valley. He had never been on a horse before, but he was placed on an old mule with an old saddle and was given a gun. He could not guide the mule and he sat on its back, hunched up, while the other boys drove it. All he could do was to cling to the saddle or fall off. How the poor fellow suffered. Stiff and sore and miserable. They assembled in the pass at Echo Canon, but he did not think that much was accomplished, as Johnston did not try to get in. In fact, the Mormons had succeeded in driving away his mules and oxen and burning his supply trains. Brigham Young had prophesied that in the name of the Holy Priesthood the soldiers would never be able to enter Salt Lake City. Kimball prophesied also that if any of them did come they would each be killed as one man if the Lord should chase ten of the enemy and ten should chase a thousand. Kimball cried out in the Tabernacle that the blood of the enemy of God should yet run through the streets. But when the army did come the next year, my friend said that the Lord had directed Brigham Young to take his people and go southward for a journey, as the sol-

diers were going to burn Salt Lake City. But when the soldiers marched peacefully through the valley and camped on the banks of the Jordan River, Brigham returned to Salt Lake City and announced that he had done that just to try the Saints. He said that the Lord had purposely sent the Gentiles to Utah with tools and implements to be dropped at the feet of the Saints for a little flour and hay and straw. But the Lord also commanded that no one could deal with the soldiers but Brigham Young. But some of the brethren traded with the soldiers on their own account and came very near "going to hell and losing their souls" because of it. And so it developed that the Lord had sent the army, not to destroy the Saints, but to supply them with the necessities for everyday pursuits.

But to my great surprise and disappointment, my friend was in doubt whether Brigham could know the plans of the Lord; at least, he never did tell anything until it was all over and done.

When we arrived in San Pete County we were taken into a family of five, and we all lived in a log room measuring seven feet by twelve.

YOUR FATHER.

More Experience in Utah.

UTAH, May, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY :

My wife and I lived with this family of which I told you in my former letter, for about three weeks. She helped with the routine house duties and I worked about the farm. They fed us on potatoes and biscuits, the best they had. It seemed impossible for me to get enough to eat, so great was my hunger after my fever while crossing the plains. I would eat until there was no more in sight and would feel ashamed of myself. Shortly after this, one Sunday morning I broke a walking stick from among a bunch of willows, and, taking my coat under my arm, started toward the west. At evening I arrived at a settlement and found there a relative of my wife's who had been in Utah almost two years.

Here was more to eat. I sent for my wife and she hired out for a bushel of wheat per week, and at the end of four weeks she was to have a chicken in with the bargain.

This relative of my wife's told me many things that had happened the year before in their town. He showed me the log "meeting-house," where a certain young man had been ruined. The elders of the church had ordered him to come to the meeting-house with others, and when he was inside a blanket was thrown over his head,—a high Mormon official himself used the knife. The young man was left bleeding profusely, and from that day until his death, many years afterward, he was "lunny" and was running around the country a harmless fool. I saw also the place between two settlements where one cold winter's evening a man had been dragged from his wagon, had inflicted upon him the grossest indecency with awful pain, and left in the snow. He dragged himself to the town on hands and knees and the trail of the blood showed all the way. These things were done in the name of the Lord, and we thought they were all right, because the priesthood said they were. These were days of

reformation. Some were treated this way by the leaders for vengeance, but this cruelty was inflicted upon others because they were small men. It was the purpose of the church to have only large and strong men in Zion. The women were fostered, but the small men were—(we cannot print the indecency inflicted)—and the result was they usually became weak-minded or complete idiots.

There were very few skeptics or apostates, and these few did not let it be known, because Brigham Young had said that he would not be treated as had been Joseph Smith, and he decreed that apostates should not flourish in Utah even if he should unsheath his bowie knife and put them all to death.

They told us wonderful tales of the superhuman power of the elders. It always seemed strange to me that I could never witness any of these miraculous deeds. An old woman with whom I had become acquainted and who had crossed the plains before I had come, told me that during the journey one of the oxen had fallen sick and could not rise. The elders came together, laid hands on it, prayed, and the ox then rose and walked. She told me of a man who had broken his back. The elders laid hands on him and prayed. The bones began to crack so loudly that they could be heard over much of the camp; the back was made well, the man arose, and went to his dinner. When I looked as though I hardly believed these tales, she upbraided me and said: "Don't you know that Joseph Smith once upon a time called a certain man to help him do his work, and the man being a farmer, in the field busy with the plow—that the Lord sent an angel to plow the land while the man was away with Joseph Smith?"

She then told me that her husband had been to England as a missionary and had brought back a young woman with him who had become his second wife. She said: "Oh! no woman can ever know what I have suffered since. Night after night I have lain on my lonely bed, alone and com-

fortless. I have walked the floor for hours, and have walked to and fro through the night between my cabin and the cabin where he always stays with his other wife." Years afterward she said to me: "Thank God! I am all over it now. I do no care for anything now. I am not a woman—only a stone." She broke down and cried, and I left the house with doubts as to the hardness of such a life because I had not yet been tried by the curse of polygamy.

This woman's husband was made a Bishop, but he was not successful in demanding tithes and money from the people, so he was made a patriarch. He had the power to bestow blessings upon all those who could pay for them. He usually charged a bushel of wheat per blessing.

YOUR FATHER.

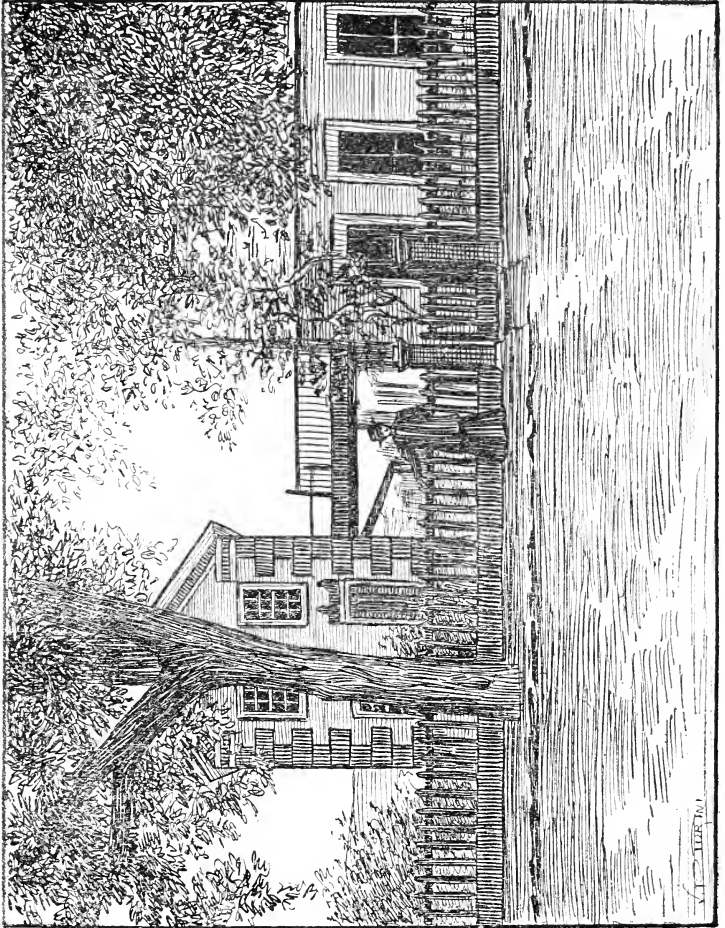
A Mormon Family.

UTAH, June, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

I once knew an old Mormon who had come from Nauvoo with Brigham Young, after Joseph Smith had been shot. He was called an "Elder in Israel." He had several sons, and I want to tell you first about one of them, whom we will call No. 3. He is dead now. He left a wife, who is 75 years old, and she looks better and happier to-day than she did years ago, because she says now she is free. She no longer lives in terror lest her drunken and domineering husband should come home and knock her about. His wife No. 2 is also living. She walks along the way, bent, looking absent-minded, but yet thinking of days gone by when she might have lived a happy and pleasant life had it not been for the curse of polygamy. On one occasion he ordered this wife No. 2 to move out of her dug-out and go and live with wife No. 1 in a log cabin. But her woman's intuition told her that it would be impossible for the two women to live together. Her husband became so enraged at this refusal that he carried straw into the dug-out and strew it about the room and bedding and was on the point of setting fire to it to burn her out, and would have done so, had not one of her sons rushed at his father with an axe and driven him away.

His third wife is dead now. She was a pretty, innocent girl, in her teens, when she became his wife. She had left an ardent lover and married into polygamy because she thought she was doing the will of God. She had never forgotten her first love, and her husband knew it and chafed under it. One day he invited her to go riding with him and he took her on a hay-rake. When they came to a ditch full of water he seized her, new hat and all, and threw her into the ditch. She died shortly afterward from the exposure and her death scene was one of pity, cursing polygamy, and she died without a glimmer of hope.



A Polygamist's Home in Southern Utah, made from Photograph taken in 1907.
Notice the bridge connecting the house of two wives.

This man had a goodly number of children by his other wives. One of them, a married man, some time ago was sent to the insane asylum. His wife, by hard and constant work, has supported their children. Her one hope is to get away from the county and secure a divorce before her brutish husband shall again be permitted to return to her.

His other sons are drunkards for the most part and are constantly fighting. If they cannot find a common foe, they fight each other. On one occasion two of them (half-brothers) were fighting over a saddle and the one had almost succeeded in killing the other when neighbors, having been summoned by the screaming mother, came to her rescue.

One of his daughters, the mother of several children, and whose husband died two or three years ago, has just become a mother again and the father of the child is a married man. Poor woman, she said to me: "Oh, if I could only have committed suicide before the child was born! But I could not leave my fatherless children without care or protection. But I may have to kill myself yet, for I have not a friend in the world."

This son No. 3, the father of these twelve polygamous children, had always kept out of the penitentiary, although he was a murderer. He had killed an Indian once, who had been converted to the Mormon Church for his own protection, because he had been assured that Mormons would never kill Indians who were Mormons. This was in the days when the Danites were flourishing in Utah. This Indian had lived peaceably among his white brothers for years; but in his innocence he had to die to satisfy the passion of a brutish, vulgar polygamist.

But another son, the brother of No. 3 (we will call him No. 2) had also married two wives, and afterward a widow. But the latter knew how to handle him. No doubt that might be attributed to her earlier experience. He had to come and go as she said and he did not often have opportunities to visit his first two wives. The third wife could not allow it. They lived each in a log cabin some distance away,

and it was said that he furnished only their flour and wood, but their half-grown boys always followed their father into the field with hoes and shovels and worked on the farm. They were a tough set. I saw one of them one day walk along the sidewalk and with a sharp hatchet cut down a long row of young shade-trees. All the neighbors were afraid of these boys, for such a tough crowd could rule the whole neighborhood during those early days. I have seen these boys on the street half dressed and barefooted in the coldest winter days, with half frozen feet, but they were always fighting and stealing.

But the son No. 2 was not as shrewd as his brother. He could readily steal calves and chickens, and consequently his family suffered. By and by his first wife became insane. She had come from a fine family, but now in a strange land, hungry and cold, and suffering from disappointment in polygamy and Mormonism, she naturally lost her mind. One day I saw two of her sons fighting like roosters. Their old father could not separate them and the neighbors were finally called in to pull them apart.

One of these boys married a young girl and then did not support her. He said he had as much right to starve a woman as anybody.

But the "old man," as his sons called him,—the last I saw of him he was wandering over the country without a home, carrying an old coat under his arm.

But there was still another son of this original "Elder in Israel." We will call him No. 1. When I first met him I could tell by his old but substantial-looking trousers that he had seen better days. He was also a polygamist,—married two sisters; but he was past the prime of life, and as he grew older his family grew larger. But he was a good-looking man, had small feet and a large head. He was always ready to stand up for the other fellow, but during the eight or nine years in which I knew him he had but one fight. At that time he hit a brother in the church over the

head with a hoe, breaking the handle. I saw the brother washing the blood from his face at the ditch shortly afterward and he took it quite cool. No doubt the man assaulting was reprimanded by the Bishop for his unbrotherly act,—that is, since he was a poor man.

One of this man's sons committed suicide and one of his daughters was sent to the insane asylum. She was the mother of a large family.

All these misfortunes and bad characteristics could be traced directly back to the old grandfather, the "Elder in Israel."

But the children of the son No. 1, whose mothers were sisters, were of a different character. These sisters had come from an old Christian home. They were religious and taught their children to fear God, pray for Brigham Young and pay their tithing. This just shows that a polygamist mother can have some influence over her children.

This old "Elder in Israel" was a thief, liar and a hypocrite of the worst stripe. His children inherited his wickedness. He had no faith and was a Mormon simply because he was then privileged to have all the wives he wanted, and he was supported and taken care of by the church. He was given an office, too. The facts were that he knew too much about Brigham Young and the Danites when the United States was investigating in Utah, and to protect himself, Brigham Young was compelled to make him his bed-fellow and support him.

YOUR FATHER.

A Sad Tale.

UTAH, July, 1907.

MY DEAR BOYS:

A few years ago I attended a funeral. Let me tell you the story of the old man's life. Thank God! one more comrade has gone beyond the influence of the Mormon curse.

In the month of October, 1899, a starving old man came to me, pleading for something to eat. I could hardly believe my eyes. Just thirty-nine years before this same man had been a guest at my home in Central Utah. He was at that time on his way to the Endowment House in Salt Lake City with his wife, her baby and the hired girl, where he intended to make the latter his plural wife. On the morrow his wife expressed a desire to remain at my home until her husband and his newly-acquired wife should return from Salt Lake City. As soon as they were on their way and out of hearing, the mother, with her babe held closely to her breast, came rushing into the house, flung herself on the floor, and cried: "Now they have gone. My God, my God, how can I bear it! I would rather see him in his grave than go off with that woman." With frightened excitement the little babe held closely to its mother's neck while she sobbed: "If it was not for this little thing, I could drown myself. But how can I destroy my child?" We tried to comfort her by saying that her husband was only obeying the law which the Lord had given to Joseph Smith, the prophet, and that her husband was a good man in that he was obeying the commands of God in taking another wife. The wretched woman, having calmed herself somewhat, but still sitting on the floor with her child, continued: "Oh! if I had only done it! But I could not. How many nights I have wandered on the banks of the creek near our home, intending to throw my child into the water and then drown myself; but I could not. I

was afraid that I might strangle my baby and then not have the courage to take my own life. And then I would think of my husband sitting in the kitchen with the hired girl, and make a new resolve to end my life, but the roaring of the cold water would frighten me away. Going to the house, I would find them sitting together in the dark kitchen, he lavishing all of his affections upon her, with never a kind word for me. Sometimes I would speak sharply to them, and then again softly, almost always weeping, but he never loves me, nor does he speak a kind word to me. It is always the same cruel rebuke of 'you are an apostate, a devil, you do not love the Lord, nor will you heed his commands.' "

Ten years after the above events he was sent on a mission to Europe. Returning in two years, he brought back a beautiful, innocent Danish girl just in her teens. They were married in the temple before going to his southern home. In the meantime, his first wife had gone to make her home with a grown son. When he arrived home with his new bride, his second wife refused her admittance. She in turn was beginning to reap the fruits of the Mormon curse. He also realized within the next few years that to live the Mormon religion required an abundance of natural grace. On one occasion when he was leaving the dwelling of his second wife she followed him to the river's bank, pushed him into the deep water, and then, when he had reached safety and had gone to his third wife, the second still followed and threw stones at them through the window. The poor young and inexperienced girl was overcome with fright. She had been taught by the Mormon missionaries that Zion was a land of love, peace and plenty. It was a sad awakening for her. Although she had just become a mother, she decided quickly, and that night went out from that roof never to return.

And now it is forty years since first I saw the man. The last of his property has been deeded to his second wife. He

is penniless. His second wife, now the legal one, will **not** recognize him or even permit him to be at the home that **had** once been his own.

Can this old man sitting before me now be that **same** young man, who, forty-five years before, in the bloom of his youth and so joyfully taking the young girl to the temple to obey what he believed to be the command of God to Joseph Smith: "My people shall enter into polygamy and a man shall have more than one wife or be damned"? Now he is lame, with a sore which never healed. He wanders from place to place, now toward his home—but he cannot go there, not even for a mouthful of food. His oldest **son** will not receive him, and his daughter with a home of her own will not grant him admittance. Such are the fruits of polygamy. Attempts to visit any of his wives or children are met with rebuke and rebuff, and so he wanders, a starving, broken-down, sad old man, and all this because he has tried to live his religion.

The last time I saw him he was coming to my home with a freighter who had permitted him to ride in his wagon. In our last conversation I reminded him of his wife and **children**, but he said: "No, my folks do not care for me." His wife had a tale to tell just as pitiable. He would steal into the kitchen at night, eat what he could find, and then **go** away before daylight. One morning, however, when his wife came into the kitchen she found him with a rope around his neck hanging to a rafter, cold and dead.

YOUR FATHER.

"The Order of Enoch."

UTAH, August, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

Did you ever hear of the "Order of Enoch"? It was decreed by Brigham Young one day that the "Saints should have all things in common." In the town where I lived we had not only provisions and store-houses in common, but all ate at the same table. On one occasion Erastus Snow, one of the twelve apostles, objected, and said it was no more necessary for all to eat at the same table than to sleep in one bed. The grumblers became so numerous that in 1875 Brigham Young called a halt; and thus the Lord had made another mistake.

With me, the "Order of Enoch" had become an important factor. We had been taught (and I believed) that through this means we would all be taken up into Heaven. Thus it was that I began to doubt and wished that I could leave the church with a clear conscience. Several years after this I was "cut off" from the church because I had said that the twelve apostles were not the apostles of God; that there was no power in the name itself; that we might as well call them twelve shoemakers or any other old thing. Not satisfied with the following I had in my own town, I went to other settlements and preached the gospel of apostacy. My followers were abused and called crazy, but we were a sincere and peaceable company. Our contention was that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and without it nothing can live.

It can easily be seen that when the "Order of Enoch" was broken up and the property divided, there was but little for each man. This had simply been a scheme on the part of Brigham to get the church brand on our cattle and our stores into his barn.

When I came to Utah years before, I came because I meant it; I was sincere; I had believed all that had been

taught. It grieved me that the "all-things-common" idea was given up. For that was my faith; it was built on the principle contained in the Bible where we read that in the days of the Apostles of Christ the saints should live together and have all things in common. It has been my position to deal out provisions and wearing apparel during the "order." I had seen the wants of poor families when there had not been anything to give them.

I began to study the Gospel for myself, and when I think of the visions and the dreams which I had experienced, let me warn all religiously inclined people to beware: Religion is all imagination for me to-day. Yet it is just as natural for a man to seek fame through a corrupt religion as it is for a man to grow rich through licensed dishonesty.

The Mormon Church claims to be the only true church on the earth. But we have yet to find the first church or government that has remained true to its first principle. When John the Baptist was preaching in the wilderness he said: "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." And when the people asked: "What shall we do?" he answered: "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." When Christ began to preach He told the people the same story, for He admonished them not to turn away him that asketh, nor him that wisheth to borrow. And so it was that the saints and the apostles had come to the conclusion that the only way in which you could do unto others as you would have others do unto you was to have all things in common.

But the world has declared that it cannot be, and so we stand helpless until we are willing to be led. For what god is there that can force a people into happiness against their will? If you hate one another, you will have sorrow, but if you love one another you will have joy. Let the church and the nation learn this lesson, that to live and let live, to love and let love, are the only means through which there can be had happiness and salvation.

The Mormon priesthood has failed to lift the heavy millstone from the heart of the inner soul. Salvation does not come through the priests or false prophets, but by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and by this ye shall know and be known if ye love one another.

One day when I had spoken, some people came forward to encourage me on the stand I had taken, and one woman told me the following story: "I do not care now, for you have opened my eyes. I know now what polygamy means and I won't be afraid of my husband any more. You know, my first husband was almost a crank on polygamy, but otherwise he was good enough. But I could not stand his other wife and so I left him. When he married me the first wife left him; in fact, she had to, because he did not care for her any more. You should have seen how he treated her as we were coming home from Salt Lake, where we had been married in the temple. One day when she had been walking for a distance and wanted to get into the wagon, he would not stop. She screamed and held to the wagon, but our husband drove all the faster. I cried out: 'If you don't stop, I'll jump out!' He told me afterwards that she was crazy, but who wouldn't be crazy in her place? She finally had to leave him, but she got the property, for she was his first and legal wife and had never been divorced. The first wife and our husband had been born and brought up as children in northern Europe. Their parents having died when they were small, they were taken and brought up as brother and sister in the same family and were deeply attached to each other. They wandered together many a moonlit night talking of future plans and happiness. They were married and came to Utah, but polygamy ruined their happiness. He began to follow the girls about. But what could be done? It was not only allowed, but also commanded. One evening while going home from a party he actually left her standing in the street while he followed a girl going in another direction. 'I cried loudly after him,' she said, 'and had it not been

for the little child which I carried in my arms I should have jumped into the near-by creek. He came back and took me home, then turned and went away, I knew not where, and did not return until late at night."

But while the woman was talking, some one called her and she left. And as I was thinking over what she had said, I called to mind the many times I had been in court and had heard plural wives falsify in order to protect these polygamous husbands. I have seen older men wander away from home after having raised a polygamous family, but the women usually stay to the end and seldom commit suicide or go crazy. I know of but one instance only where one woman cut another's throat, although they often threaten to poison and kill each other. A woman in polygamy may act desperately, hang or drown herself, but on the witness stand she will defend her husband, and in testimony meeting she will declare that she knows that polygamy comes from God; that it is the happiest life, and that she would live in no other way. She believes that her polygamous husband is a god and a king. Then she will go home with a heavy heart, crying, scolding, screaming and threatening to run away. But by and by she realizes her position; her husband will be a god and king; she will be a queen, and will rule nations and worlds forever.

YOUR FATHER.

Why I Left the Mormon Church.

UTAH, September, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

Do not be disturbed about the rumors in regard to my actions when breaking away from the Mormon Church. I had not intended to tell you of those miserable, dark days of discouragement and persecution, but since others are taking pains to falsify and cast aspersion on proper motives, I shall from time to time attempt to tell you why I took the steps that I did.

It was about the year 1877 that I last attended the general conference of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. Brigham Young, with his twelve apostles, occupied the platform in the tabernacle. Apostle Orson Hyde, being the first speaker, delivered an address on the resurrection of the body and the state of life hereafter, whereupon Brigham Young arose and stated that while he knew nothing in regard to the resurrection of the body and the life hereafter, yet he knew as much about it as Brother Hyde.

I had been in the Mormon Church about twenty years and was beginning to feel skeptical in regard to Brigham Young's doctrine, but the thought had not entered my mind that Joseph Smith could have been a false prophet. I felt keenly disappointed, and about a year after my visit to Salt Lake I became convinced of Brigham Young's falsity, and feeling sorry for my townsmen in this delusion, I decided to take a stand openly. Being a frequent speaker, I took the platform one Sunday and told the people that the priesthood could not bring happiness, but the love which we have for our fellow-men. With outstretched hand I cried: "Do you not know that when you do good you will feel happy, but if you harm anyone you will feel sorrow? That the priesthood has power only as granted by the people? That the law of tithing is but the invention of man? That the gospel is to love and not hate your brother? Do you hear? Do

you not know that the Mormon Church has been led astray by priestcraft and that the church to-day is no more than any other church unless we live the better life? We shall each be judged by our own acts. I will prove to you that we have Mormonism in our own hands, and that if we live a Christian life, then are we the Church of God, independent of the priesthood."

I had broken the ice and was a happier man. But such sufferings as were to follow! I was pronounced an apostate, a sinner, an ungodly wretch. My outbreak was the talk of the town. I was hated and accused of vile things, but I felt that I was right and a few of my townsmen rallied to my support, protecting me from cruel vengeance of the Mormon authorities. I became a fanatic, and in my zeal fled to the mountains, and for three days preached to the trees and prayed through the night. When hunger, thirst and fatigue had weakened my mind and body I began to dream and see visions. Yes, with wide-open eyes it seemed that I looked upon two heavenly messengers and voices from above were saying, "Preach repentance to these people." Later the angel Gabriel seemed to come, assuring me that he would be my Guardian Angel. The third night found me so famished that I intuitively turned toward home. Coming to a field, the first edibles I could find were some raw potatoes, after which I had eaten I was afraid that I had sinned because I had vowed to fast three days.

However, it was almost twelve o'clock. In the morning, having slept, I felt better and was prepared for any questions that my friends might ask, or for abuse from my enemies; had I not been visited by heavenly beings who had commanded me to preach repentance with the assurance that the angels would protect me? A few of the best citizens came to my support and pledged themselves to stand by me, saying that my teaching was from God. They felt that Brigham had gone astray, and in fact he had said more

than once that he was not a prophet, and that if the people could see as he saw they would all leave the church. Our little band was dropped from the church and a series of ridicule gave way to abuse and persecution. We were hated and pronounced a set of insane people. On myself and family came the most bitter hate and vituperation. However, we felt it incumbent upon ourselves to tell the people that Brigham Young had led the church astray. We preached that man should have but one wife, that the law of tithing was from man, that God did not dwell in houses built by hands, but in the hearts of his children. From this time forth we would be free from the tyranny of Mormonism. We exhorted men to love each other and to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ only. So zealous did I become in my endeavors that a marshal marched me out of an assembly and a polygamist followed me out of town, declaring that I had disturbed his family in that I was preaching against polygamy. By this time, about 1885, those who had promised to stand by me were losing their zeal; some went back to the Mormon Church, others became infidels, while a few cast their lot with the Presbyterians who were beginning to open mission schools in Utah.

As for myself, my property was gone, my fervor for telling the story of my visions was ebbing away and I was beginning to doubt the existence of anything supernatural in my experience. I was doubting myself. Of the women whom I had taken for my wives, one was in sympathy with me, and the other, although still a Mormon in faith, wished to remain my lawful wife.

With the help of my wives and small children we set our faces toward the problem of securing lost property and gaining a livelihood. After seven years of hard labor my daughters working in the fields, we began to reach an independent state. My children have now gone away to their various callings, one especially to tell of the blighting effects of Mormonism. Old age is creeping on and we are almost alone.

And I shall say that while I write my eyes feel wet, or did a drop of water fall on my paper? Not from scrow, but satisfaction of attempted duties, perhaps not performed, with a hope for the future and wonderings of the deep, deep mysteries of life.

YOUR FATHER.

What I Saw in the Endowment House.

UTAH, October, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

Yes, I have been in the Endowment House more than once. In 1865 my first wife and I, with others of the faithful, went through. We stepped into a little room where the great man, McAllister, who was noted for his abruptness toward the Saints when taking their names, greeted us with a growl and a frown. He said that "you might as well speak to an ass as to try to tell a foreigner anything." We were next led into another room, undressed and smeared with grease. We swore by God and all the powers to be faithful and to do all in our power to destroy the enemies of the Mormon Church. Next we put on our ghost-like clothes and burial suit and proceeded to a larger room, where Heber Kimball was stationed to crack jokes with the half-naked congregation. When we proceeded into the next room the Devil came also, but we were immune from his powers. Although he had caused Adam and Eve to fall, he could not approach us, because we had received new names, and we had lost our identities. My new name was a secret until I heard some one yell into the ear of a deaf brother, "Your new name is Abraham." I gave a sudden start, for I thought that name was for me alone.

Forty years have rolled by, and every man with whom I have had conversation has told me that his name was Abraham. We went through various sundry performances and toward the close of the day my wife and I were placed on each side of a narrow table, myself kneeling on a low stool. Brigham Young, who was lounging on a sofa with several apostles and one of them sitting on a chair, carelessly leaning back, with his feet on the table, married us for time and eternity. My wife had been baptized for several dead relatives and they were sealed to me for time and eternity, which

means that they will be my wives in heaven. I had also been baptized for some of my dead relatives.

I had often been called in to counsel with the elders of the church and had proved to be a faithful member of the saints. My wife could stand in prayer-meeting and declare that polygamy was a revelation from God. And, in fact, "whosoever did not enter into polygamy should be damned."

There was in our town a young girl, a Mormon convert, who had just come from Denmark. She was poor, dressed plainly, but was very neat. She was invited to our house a number of times and my wife insisted that she should stay, be one with us, and finally become my second wife. (For I must have at least another wife in order to fulfill all righteousness.) But my first wife should be the queen and should rule her family for time and all eternity. The double sorrow of married life began when I admitted to her that we had been out walking together one day. I hesitate to write you of the unpleasant affair of the morning when we began our journey to Salt Lake City to go before the priesthood and receive that pretended benediction which has since kept all three of us burning in a continuous hell. Upon our departure the demon of jealousy entered the heart of my first wife and she has struggled with it from that day to this. A neighbor told me this story when I came back:

"When you were only a few rods from the house and the wagon was still in sight, she ran out, crying: 'How shall I stand it? They have gone. If he had only known what I have suffered all this time he would not have done it. But now it is too late. What shall I do?' She acted like a crazy person and could not be comforted." When we came back from Salt Lake City with the girl as my wife all should have been well. My first wife appeared pleased enough, but there was something wrong. My second wife in innocent girlhood was wondering what wrong she had done. She has not gotten over it to this day, but is wondering how she could

have been so ignorant.

You have often asked how I came to leave the Mormon Church. In 1877 I was beginning to doubt the truth of Mormonism, and especially Brigham Young; for he himself had said that he was no prophet, although he had been "profitable" to the Mormon people. I believed at that time, however, that the Kingdom of God had been established by Joseph Smith. I felt that I must have an angel come from heaven and tell me all about it, so that I might know the truth, but here my real trouble began. I thought of my dead parents and brothers and prayed that they might show me the way. Should I come out and take the stand against the church? But I had two families. What if I should fail?

Thus it is to be religiously intoxicated, a malady coming no doubt to the more ignorant people. It may be construed as a strong imagination; but could it not be the same as when a drunken man sees snakes in his boots? I suffered with the former. I felt sure that I had been visited by my dead mother, and also by an angel with whom the Devil himself was hobnobbing. One night I heard a ringing voice say: "Speak repentance to these people." I saw two personages in the sky looking down at me. It was then that I broke away, for I had been called by a voice from heaven. But the mystery to me to-day is to wonder how a delusion could have such a power over people.

I could convince people, and every word I spoke went deep into their hearts for a time. I soon discovered that the leaders of the church cared very little for God and the church; only the priesthood. After undergoing much persecution in the town where I lived, and having received some encouragement I took my Bible and the Book of Mormon one Sunday morning and went to a neighboring town to tell my story. I called on the Bishop; he was an infidel. And when I told him of Brigham Young's mistakes he kindly slapped me on the shoulder and said: "Ha, ha! I thought

you knew better." That afternoon I preached on the streets, for I could not get a house. One of the apostles had preceded and warned them to have nothing to do with me. In the next town I met the Bishop and his counsellors in his office. He told me in an insulting way that he was not smart enough to understand my point; that he had been told before to look out for me, and that I was a dangerous person. However, I stayed in the town, preached on the street, and received encouragement. The next town I entered I found the people gathered on the street waiting for me. They appeared to be an ignorant and superstitious lot. After preaching to them, they refused me admittance to any of their homes. That night at eleven o'clock I left for the next town, and it was next morning before I could find food or friends.

One Sunday I entered a larger town than usual and met a liberal class of people; but they refused me the use of their church or school-house. I stationed myself near the meeting-house door and when the crowds had collected about me I held up the Book of Mormon and declared that, according to this, their own book, the church had wandered away from God. One man spoke up and said: "Come, let's get out of here. That man is crazy." Another man stepped forward from the crowd, shook hands with me, and to my great consternation I recognized in him the man who had baptized me in my native home when I became a Mormon convert. He informed me that he had left the church years ago when he had discovered that Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon were false. This bit of truth has been worth to me much more than all the visions and dreams that I have ever had.

There is a time for all things. I did not then realize that my life had been in jeopardy. A Bishop had told his people in church that nothing was too bad for a man who would use his influence to preach against the Gospel of Jesus

Christ, and that he would destroy my family. Another polygamist Bishop told his folks not to use their right hand in greeting me, but to shake hands with the left. He said I had evil influence over people, and I couldn't blame him, for two of his wives had already left him because of my preaching.

YOUR FATHER.

Dark Days in Utah.

UTAH, November, 1907.

MY DEAR BOY:

During these days that I was tramping around I had been seeking a God that did not exist; a God that would direct me in every-day life—such as what to wear, eat and drink. Brigham Young had said: “Yes, the priesthood of God shall yet direct how we shall shape our clothes; yes, even tell us how to build a pig-pen.” It was with such anxiety to know what the Lord wanted me to do that I was led away by superstitious dreams and visions. One evening, after having tramped around all day and the night before, I went away from speaking to a hostile crowd and went to sleep on a shed. While sleeping I heard a voice say: “It is now as it was in the days of old. In long hair there is strength.” I looked around, but saw no one. So I felt sure I had had a vision. Indeed the Saints in the olden days did not cut their hair; one can see it in their pictures. Samson wore long hair. This was a revelation. So I did not have my hair cut for a long time. As my hair grew I felt stronger in the faith.

Coming into town one day, I met the Bishop and asked permission to use the meeting-house. On going to other families I learned that they had all been warned of my coming and consequently presented a hostile front. I crawled on top of a barn with my long hair and began to preach repentance and the whole town came out to see what that “crazy” man was doing—just what I wanted them to do.

Once I came into a town and asked the Bishop for the meeting-house. He said I could have it if after I had spoken he could appoint some one to answer me. The elder appointed to do that was a polygamist, a fortune-teller, and, what is more, a thorough infidel. I knew him very well. He said that my doctrine was all right, but I was about forty years too late, as Joseph Smith had promulgated that long ago. He asked me, “When did you lie? I heard you say

once that the Mormon Church was the true church of God, and now you say it is not?" He turned to the congregation and said, "Which statement shall we believe?" He continued, "No, let us choose the priesthood of God and let this intruder go where he belongs. Let us have our wives and children safe." The people were much disturbed and excited. It was whispered that had this happened back in the fifties some one would have been appointed to put me out of the way. One man came to me in the night and warned me to flee. I was told afterward that certain individuals were disappointed that night when they came seeking me where I had slept.

That same evening I came to a family of friends who were interested in my cause, and the woman of the home said that I could not expect to succeed if I went around the country in old clothes and long hair. I had given my property to the needy. My hair had been growing and I must have looked peculiar. She said, "You must work on and be successful. Think of the freedom of mind that we have had since you began to work for us. We are not afraid now to oppose polygamy, because we have learned that many are against it. All we need is a leader to take the first step. But you must not appear odd in this work. You must command respect and dignity." I was on my way home, where I had a large following, and I finally agreed to let her cut off my long hair. When it was done I was sorry. I had gone away with long hair and had pretended that therein lay my strength and influence. What would my fellow followers think about it? A strange feeling of weakness began to creep over me and I felt my strength giving way. My career had been remarkable and my followers could be numbered in almost every town. Was it all imagination or was it real?

The first man I met when I came into town was a friend, but he had a mind of his own. Said me, "I have been waiting

to see you, but now you have had your hair cut." One of my wives just looked at me and the other said, "I thought you couldn't stand that long hair." Another friend cried after me, "You have had your hair cut; it is all over town that the new prophet has had his hair cut and has given up his mission." The first Sunday I met with my followers. Those who had stood by me in adversity and had been my staunch friends through all my career said, "We put our faith in you and depended on you, but now you have had your hair cut. What next?" Another young man said that the best thing that we could do, if we could do it at all, was to establish a new sect, and there were already enough of those.

It seemed as though all my friends were deserting me because of my hair having been cut. But the real reason was that most of my property had been given away to the needy, and there was no material benefit to be reaped. My enemies rejoiced and I was almost heart-broken. These few years of mental and physical struggle had been sapping my vitality, and thus I came back to my home and for the sake of my children I began life anew. But it seemed almost impossible to catch up the broken thread and many a time a silent pang came to my heart and I grieved that I had been born. Many a night have I wandered around the little pond as it beckoned to me, for I had not a friend on earth. I had been deceived and I was called a deceiver. I wandered along the creek and asked myself if the stream should be my silent resting-place and death be my friend. But I suddenly awoke; my two noble wives had not forsaken me—though opportunities had been presented, for polygamy was not dead. Many suitors had offered their hand and I had seen them prowling about at night. Should I leave these two true women and nine helpless children? No, not until I had to.

YOUR FATHER.

A Paradox.

UTAH, January, 1908.

MY DEAR BOY:

Here is a paradox. The Mormons claim that the denominations doing religious work in Utah are stirring up unnecessary strife and discord, and that their presence is and has always been a detriment to the good and welfare of the state.

Then, strangely, on the other hand, they claim that if Mormonism was left alone and persecution would cease, there would be no Mormon question. What does this mean? The first statement is either false and they will have to acknowledge that the denominations are a benefit to Utah and her people, or that Mormonism is a bad thing and a benefit would accrue to the state should it cease to exist.

The fact of the case is that the work of the denominations has been of great service to the Mormon people. In the first place, the work of the Mission Schools has forced the Mormons to adopt a system of education, and has also compelled the priesthood to drop from their present-day teachings some of the most absurd and degrading doctrines.

Furthermore, when I was an ardent worker in the Mormon Church we were taught by the priesthood that no other church would ever be able to come into Utah; that God would not permit His most holy people to be contaminated by the influences of the wicked and filthy sects known as Christians, and that He had established His church in Utah and all other sects would sooner or later (no doubt later) be subservient to the Mormon priesthood.

The doctrine was promulgated to us that we should have all the wives we wanted; that each man should have a church, a harem, or what not, all of his own, a sort of god, and all of these minor churches should find its general head in the Mormon priesthood.

But strange—I have it from good authority—that the Book of Mormon was never printed with the intention of founding a church, but was gotten up to sell. The book was a curious concoction and the most significant fact of it to-day is that it expressly forbids polygamy. No man can be a believer in the Book of Mormon and be a polygamist. Polygamy was brought into the church through natural circumstances in the life of such a man as Joseph Smith proved himself to be.

In the beginning of the career of Joseph Smith and until the Mormons had been driven out of New York, Ohio, Missouri, and settled in Nauvoo, polygamy had never come into the church. Joseph Smith was a good preacher, kind to his friends, and of marked personality. He preached Love and God to his people. It was natural that his young converts should go to him with all confidence. They felt that they could come to him with many troubles and discouragements. Every minister of the Gospel becomes an adviser to men, women, and also some girls. Many affidavits have been advanced to show beyond any question that Joseph Smith not only abused the confidence of trusting girls, but used disgraceful methods and trickery to force them under his power. He was never brought into court for any of these crimes, so it is impossible to legally prove that he was a criminal in that sense. At any rate, as it was expressed at that time, "His wife, Emma, would not stand for it." And so it became necessary for an angel to come to Joseph Smith in the night, bearing in his right hand a two-edged sword, with which he threatened to cut Joseph in two if he did not marry all of these young girls who had no husbands; and so polygamy was introduced into the church.

The Mormon Church has not increased because of the doctrine of polygamy. Lust has not been the means of bringing the great mass of people into the church. Although most of the converts have been drawn from the poorer classes, yet they are of such intelligence and social standing

that they naturally abhor such vileness as polygamy. The fact is that many people who are now Mormons were assured upon conversion that "polygamy is not and never has been a doctrine of the church, and it is not practiced by Brigham Young or others in Utah." In Denmark when it was rumored that Brigham Young had twelve wives and we asked the elders if it was true, they said that he did not. In after years I met this same man in Utah who had assured me in Denmark that Brigham Young did not have twelve wives and asked him why he told me a falsehood. He answered that he did not falsify, because at that time Brigham did not have twelve wives, but about thirty. If polygamy was promulgated openly among prospective Mormon converts there would be few accessions to the church. But once having joined the church and having accepted the priesthood as infallible they are compelled, for the sake of a heavenly home and a glory hereafter, to accept and practice polygamy. When a man goes into polygamy he becomes distinctly Mormon. He is, under the circumstances, set against law and against his fellow-citizens who stand for law and order .

He becomes one of the "despised Mormons" against whom, according to priesthood teaching, all the wicked world has combined to destroy. He is identified with crime and he necessarily stays with his fellows. Few men have the courage in the face of these circumstances to come out and publicly acknowledge that he has been duped.

It must not be imagined that because these men have become the victims of this system that they are bad at heart. One morning I saw a Bishop pull off his coat and give it to a boy who was going to the hills for a load of wood. At another time I saw a Bishop pull a poor woman's tooth without price because she asked him; and when she cried because it hurt he took a dollar out of his pocket and gave it to her. I knew a "brother" who once took an older woman as his plural wife so that he would feel it incumbent

upon himself to support her. But such deeds as these are the great exception. At heart the great mass of the Mormon people are of that kind-hearted class whose sympathies can be reached by smooth-flowing words. They form the bulwark of the church, pay the tithing, and any good that is in the church is there because it is a part of the make-up of these poorer people who have become the victims of such designing leaders as Smith, Roberts and Smoot. These hard-working people, earnest in heart, pay the lawyers who go to Washington to pave the way for apostles and priests who are sent to have laws enacted which will give them still greater power over their victims. They pay Smoot's attorneys, support Joseph F. Smith and five women to whom he is not married, in all their riotous and sumptuous travels and migrations.

It is the same spirit that actuates the simple-hearted and simple-minded Mormon missionary to go out without script or purse and preach the gospel as he has been instructed by his "file leader."

These missionaries go and return, work hard, very hard, for the rest of their days, to support their families and pay their tithing and die happily in ignorance. The great power of Mormonism is carried on the shoulders of the hard-working, honest men, who are for the most part European workmen, tillers of the soil, as well as the "blue blood" from the South. The Southern States are becoming their richest field.

The trusting simplicity of these converts is remarkable. They are taught and actually believe that when they have hands laid upon them for the "gift of the Holy Ghost," that they do and have power to heal the sick. Every Sunday here at home the elders, boys whom I have known from childhood, bless bottles of oil, after which performance it contains divine healing properties, and the patient to whom it is administered will become whole. Almost every day the elders are called to the sick-bed to lay hands on the stricken,

and if the patient recovers it was through the power of the priesthood. If he does not, it is because of his lack of faith.

It is now about thirty years since I stood in Utah all alone, having left the church under striking circumstances. For twenty-nine years I had been a firm believer and an ardent advocate of the faith. How could I under the circumstances take up with any other sect? I began to live and act in the light of my knowledge and convictions and then it was in my loneliness that I found a clear conscience.

It was freedom. How sweet and how pleasant it was to be free from the fear of the priesthood; to be no longer under the dominance of the false prophet, of those things which every Mormon recognizes in his heart of hearts is wrong and tyrannical, but from which he cannot escape and from which he must pretend that he does not care to escape.

The rank and file of the Mormon Church are waiting for some one of their number to rise up, who has a heart big enough and intellect enough to openly denounce Joseph F. Smith, Smoot, Brigham H. Roberts and others who are living in luxury from the tithes of those oppressed people. From time to time petty attempts have been made to throw off the severest form of this bondage, but each insurgent has been immediately and severely dealt with. When Moses Thatcher opposed the violation of their covenants with the government, he was immediately deprived of his place as apostle, deacon and elder. He was ruined in business; he took to his sick-bed, and while he lay apparently dying a committee of the priesthood waited on him and compelled him to sign a document to the effect that all these calamities had come upon him because he had opposed the Lord's anointed.

YOUR FATHER.

“What Fools We Mortals Be.”

MY DEAR BOY:

It is not the religious man that is honored in the Mormon Church, but the keen hypocrite. The smartest and the shrewdest are made Bishops. Often when a man loses the faith he remains in the church for business reasons. I knew of a young man coming home from a mission who had lost his faith, but he did not speak against the church and its elders. After he had caroused with the other boys and had been drunk a few times he was appointed a Bishop. When I think of Brigham saying, “If you could only see as I can see you would apostisize,” it could only mean that we were only a set of fools. When Apostle Kimball said that he believed that the Bible was inspired just like any other good book was inspired, it was the same as to say that it was not inspired. I remember at one time when one of the apostles had read a passage from the Bible he laid it down and began to preach about a saw-mill which he wished the bretheren to build up close to the timber line. And this was all meant to save souls for God’s Kingdom.

The Book of Mormon, once supposed to be the foundation of the Mormon Church, is now considered dangerous for faithful Mormons to read. I know that from experience. I read it over and over again until the church could not hold me. A Bishop told a brother that if he did not stop reading the book he would become an apostate. This same brother was afterwards brought to trial for heresy and when he attempted to read his answers from the Book of Mormon he was compelled to put it away.

The doctrine of the Mormon Church is also subject to much change. It is a repetition of the attempt on the part of Joseph Smith to retranslate the Bible. He began by putting more into it, and he had gone over but a small portion of the book when his friends began to call his attention to numerous contradictions that were creeping in.

It was the only safe course for them to pursue when they stated that the Bible and other books were nothing in comparison to the "Living Oracles." Brigham Young was a prophet to the people and his words were inspired, coming directly from God to the people. The Mormon leaders today would gladly erase from the records some of the sayings of Brigham Young, Apostle Kimball, Jedediah Grant and others. They would gladly blot out the dark and bloody deeds that have been traced to the responsibility of these inspired men. But the records stand and history cannot be changed. Now they are trying to place some of these indecent doctrines in the background of their propaganda.

There is an old man, one of my neighbors, who sat at the feet of Brigham to learn. He learned the "Adam God" doctrine. Now the young men of the church are trying to eliminate that part from the active creed. The other Sunday this old man wished to speak. He arose and began to discourse on the "Adam God" theme. Those in authority sitting behind his back began to jerk his coat-tails. He turned and said, "What fur you pull my coat-tail?" When he continued, they tried to pull him down again. This time he said, "You young pups, you don't know anything. Brigham Young told me that this was the truth. You young fellers are goin' off after the Presbyterians. I will tell the truth." He was not allowed to speak, however.




The Book of Mormon originally was against polygamy. That was before Joseph Smith's awful record of rank immorality had come to light. Now some of the young people are in a mood to eradicate polygamy from the doctrine of the church. Verily the "Living Oracles" are convenient.

One time when two priests came to tell one of the brethren, an older man, the way he should walk, he said he did not believe that Adam was our God. But one of the priests clapped his hands in the old man's face and said that he would have to believe or get left. It was taught then that no

man could get into Heaven unless he had a recommendation from the Bishop. It was taught also that Brigham Young would be our God in heaven and Joseph would be the same as the Saviour who was crucified. But Hiram Smith, his brother, who had protested against polygamy, would be in disgrace. I have listened to this hard doctrine and pondered it through the valleys of Utah. I have hunted and still hunt in vain for words of salvation. The other day a Mormon said to me, "Come, join us and receive the truth." I could only answer, "Oh, man! knowest thou thyself?"

YOUR FATHER.

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